

2013

## Governing through Permanent Campaigning: Media Usage and Press Freedom in Ecuador

Maria J. Flor Agreda

*University of Nevada, Las Vegas, floragre@unlv.nevada.edu*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/award>



Part of the [Comparative Politics Commons](#), [Journalism Studies Commons](#), and the [Latin American Studies Commons](#)

---

### Repository Citation

Flor Agreda, M. J. (2013). Governing through Permanent Campaigning: Media Usage and Press Freedom in Ecuador.

Available at: <https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/award/15>

This Thesis is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Scholarship@UNLV with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Thesis in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself.

This Thesis has been accepted for inclusion in Calvert Undergraduate Research Awards by an authorized administrator of Digital Scholarship@UNLV. For more information, please contact [digitalscholarship@unlv.edu](mailto:digitalscholarship@unlv.edu).

GOVERNING THROUGH PERMANENT CAMPAIGNING:  
MEDIA USAGE AND PRESS FREEDOM IN ECUADOR

By

Maria José Flor Ágreda

Honors Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment

for the designation of Department Honors

Journalism and Media Studies

Political Science

Dr. Paul Traudt

Dr. John Tuman

Dr. Andrew Hanson

Greenspun College of Urban Affairs

College of Liberal Arts

May 2013

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
Media and politics in Latin America.....	3
Democracy and Press Freedom.....	3
Purpose of the Study .....	7
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	8
Introduction.....	8
The permanent campaign.....	8
Correa’s plebiscitary governance.....	25
Media situation in Ecuador .....	30
CHAPTER 3 METHOD .....	38
Hypothesis.....	38
Content Analysis .....	39
Sampling .....	40
Measures.....	42
Permanent Campaigning.....	42
Opinion Columns.....	43
Coding.....	46
Analysis Plan .....	50
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS .....	51
Permanent Campaign and Press Freedom.....	51
CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION.....	54
Overview and general discussion.....	54
Implications.....	57
APPENDICES.....	59
Ecuadorian Government and ownership of media.....	59
Number of chains reported to have been against media/journalists .....	59
Measures of permanent campaign .....	60
Coding Sheet.....	61
Code Average.....	65
REFERENCES.....	67

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my most profound gratitude to my thesis chair, Dr. Paul Traudt, who has helped me with the thesis project from the very beginning. Dr. Traudt has always been there for me and motivated me to perform my best throughout the entire research process. He has supported and guided me through the development of my thesis and his lessons and patience have allowed me to progress into an industrious and persistent researcher. I will be eternally grateful for all his help, perseverance and encouragement.

Likewise, I will be forever indebted to Dr. John Tuman, who has aided me ceaselessly in the research process. He has believed in my intellect and capabilities even at times when I did not, and his continual confidence in me assured me of my academic qualities. Dr. Tuman was always open to speak to me and help me with every portion of the thesis. He welcomed all my inquiries and always made time to answer my never-ending questions.

I also owe my deepest gratitude to Dr. Marta Meana and Dr. Andrew Hanson. They have supported me throughout my research process and participated avidly in the successful completion of the thesis.

Lastly, I would like to thank my friends and family, who have been there for me throughout my academic career, providing motivation and encouragement. The successful completion of this thesis would not have been possible without them.

## ABSTRACT

by

Maria Jose Flor Ágreda

In Ecuador, media and politics have been historically tied together. Over time, the banking industry has had financial stakes in the media and vice versa. Yet, from the time that President Rafael Correa took office in 2007, the situation has been turned around. Correa has used a permanent campaign to appeal to the public and change the media ownership environment of the country. The President's strategy has included the acquisition of private media such as newspapers, and radio and television station; as well as the establishment of governmental media entities. Additionally, as part of Correa's permanent campaign scheme, the president has used state-mandated time slots in all public and private broadcasting channels — known as cadenas nacionales (national chains) — to carry out his political agenda and to criticize the press and its coverage of the government.

This has created a political rift between the public and private sector, giving way to a media war. Through it, the media criticize the president and his policies, and the president, in turn, verbally attacks the media. Due to that, national and international media organizations have concluded that there is a chilling effect among the Ecuadorian press.

This paper analyzed the content of opinion columns for one of the most important privately owned newspapers in Ecuador, *El Universo*. The research analyzed the negativity levels of the columns for three periods during the time that Correa has been in

office, and showed increasing levels of negativity in them. Thus, the analysis lends support to the argument that Correa's public criticisms on the media have not created a chilling effect.

**KEYWORDS:**

Ecuador; Rafael Correa; Permanent Campaigning; Press Freedom; Chilling Effect; Media.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Media and Politics in Latin America

Given that mass media have significant political impact among a country's electorate, in Latin America, the mass media — mostly print and broadcast — (Rettberg and Rincón 20) have been described as the fourth branch of government (Rettberg and Rincón 2). Journalists and media corporations impart information upon the public and through that, promote transparency among the political systems of various Latin American countries. This means that, because of the information imparted to the public, mass media have assumed the role of guardians of government (Rettberg and Rincón 2).

Yet, given that media are a business in need of survival, which are mostly owned by private media corporations, they fall victim to economic competition. It is therefore common for media to depict content that is sensationalized and appeals to the emotions of consumers instead of reporting content that is important and in the public's interest. Hence, the coverage that media competition produces often causes cynicism and alienation among the electorate of a country. This ultimately leads for people to begin to distrust government and its entities (Rettberg and Rincón 2).

The purposes of educating the public through promoting governmental accountability while at the same time having to compete for an audience in order to economically survive are the root of a turbulent relationship that media have had with political systems and governments in most Latin American countries (Rettberg and

Rincón 4). This relationship raises questions regarding whether media are vital for governmental functioning and the promotion of democratic values, an evil to be combatted, or both (Rettberg and Rincón 3).

Do private media ownership and its interests affect a media entity's news coverage? Do mass media get used and abused by politicians, journalists, or owners of media entities? Do media represent a contribution or an obstacle to democracy in a nation (Rettberg and Rincón 1)? These are frequent questions that arise pertaining to the value that media have in the politics of a country and the importance between governance and the press.

It is widely understood that press freedoms are an important aspect of democracy and civil liberties in a country (Rettberg and Rincón 21). Yet, through the use of permanent campaigning — which comprises an aggressive method of “political marketing ... and the trend towards personality and image-based politics” (Sparrow and Turner 985) — plebiscitary governments tend to advance an agenda that has the potential to greatly silence an opposition (Rettberg and Rincón 2). Therefore, given that the interests of private media owners tend to be incompatible with those of many country executives, the media in such countries have become an inalienable type of opposition to the governments of such countries (Santander 232).

This, in turn, leads for another conundrum. If privately owned media become the opposition, then they tend to fight a constant battle with certain governments (Santander 231). Such governments, then, can fight back by restricting and censoring such media. Therefore, if the battle between the media and political powers propagate in a country, what happens to the country's press freedom?

## Democracy and Press Freedom

Adherents to the concept of liberal democracy state that politics in any country should look to establish a great degree of liberty for people, which includes the granting of rights such as freedom of speech and the right of association, as well as providing a governmental system that is supported by competition, participation, and contestation (O’Neil 110). Hence, in a liberal democracy, people have the power to participate in government through voting in elections and/or competing for public office — including political party associations and the right to compete in fair elections (Danziger 75). Scholars use the term “liberal democracy” to indicate a specific form of “political system that promotes participation, competition, and liberty” (O’Neil 110).

Thus, it is typically understood that in a liberal democracy the media are “free to publish whatever they want” (Rettberg and Rincón 21). In a country where liberal democracy exists, the media are expected to freely criticize and even attack the government with the “purpose of improving society” (Rettberg and Rincón 21). For this to occur in a democratic manner, journalists and journalistic entities must be autonomous in their decisions regarding coverage and criticisms of government.

Information about governmental actions, intrinsic to a society that promotes democratic values, results in wider public participation (Rettberg and Rincón 3). However, for the democratic values of such a society to thrive through the press, media outlets need not focus on the political formation of the citizenry and instead focus on providing useful information to the public. This means that for democracy to thrive

through the press, the media must provide well-produced and unbiased information (WANIFRA 6).

Yet, in some cases, the private interests of those who own media, often compromise the democratic values that the press is set to promote (Rettberg and Rincón 3). Consequently, private media entities in Latin America have been known to corrode the information passed along to the public. It is important to note that private media, which have private interests in their coverage due to their dependency on advertising revenue, can censor information much like a government in need of public approval is likely to adapt information for the public's eyes (Checa-Godoy 4).

Given the aforementioned conflicts of interest that privately owned media constantly face, some governments in Latin America have pushed for the establishment of a media system that is “socially responsible.” In such governments, media have the “obligation to provide information and balance to society” (Rettberg and Rincón 21). While this may not be considered to be a free system of media by the liberal democracy standard — because media cannot simply publish anything they want — the establishment of social responsibility among the media of a country allow for “the construction of civil society” (Rettberg and Rincón 21).

Through the propagation of the idea of civil responsibility among media, some governments in Latin America look to propagate balanced coverage and equal access to media (Waisbord 97). Such government then create responsibilities for privately owned media — voted or decreed into law — to have balanced and diverse content and inform the public on the important issues of the day (Rettberg and Rincón 24). In fact, “compared with the more spontaneous liberal model, the benefits of the social

responsibility model in the press are clear” (Rettberg and Rincón 24) as they seek to protect society. In a sense, the protection the state looks to guarantee relates to tasteless content as well as information that “could generate panic or violence” (Rettberg and Rincón 24). Hence, governments that want to establish a model of social responsibility for the media, tend to want to institute a sort of national political consensus, brought about by their concept of balanced coverage.

Even though the social responsibility model can be established in order to guarantee fairer news coverage, private economic factors remain a dominant force when it comes to news coverage (Punín Larrea 2). Given that private media have a necessity to survive through advertising revenue, the press in countries with a social responsibility model for media become subject to two types of censorship or control. These include censorship from the state, which seeks to ensure balance in the coverage, and the censorship that comes from the private interests of media owners (Rettberg and Rincón 2).

This leads to further issues, however, as the commercial and political elite, which have ownership of media in most of Latin America, tend to “not act as guarantors of the democratic order” (Checa-Godoy 3). Consequently, instead of being socially responsible with coverage, media owners are likely to use media to protect their private financial interests and those of their friends (Checa-Godoy 3). Hence, when private interests, and not newsworthy coverage — stories that appeal to the public interest — are the driving factors of media reportage, private ownership of media becomes a threat to press freedom and to the spread of democratic values (Rettberg and Rincón 3). Additionally, all of those who are against the interests of such private groups —which often include governments

or certain governmental figures — become rivals of the media and are consequently attacked by it (Waisbord 100).

In countries such as Argentina, Ecuador, and Venezuela, such attacks to media come from those governments' permanent campaigning methods. A permanent campaign can be described as the method to seamlessly join the “techniques of political campaigning with the act of governing” (Conaghan and de la Torre 267). Thus, a permanent campaign is the constant branding of a government in broadcast and print media. In the aforementioned countries, governments' permanent campaigning strategies have prominently used national chains as a method of reaching out to people and spreading their message to raise public approval for their political agenda. National chains are “public service messages” (Conaghan and de la Torre 267) that are broadcasted over a number of television and radio stations at the same time. Consequently, in such governments, national chains have not only been use as a method of permanent campaigning to raise public approval, but also, as a mechanism to openly criticize media and its coverage in front of a country's entire electorate.

This has led to a rise in conflict between leftist, populist countries in Latin America and the privately owned media in such countries, giving birth to their “oppositional polarization” or “media wars” (Kitzberger 5). These “media wars” — between governments and media — are “fought openly in front of the public” (Kitzberger 5), becoming a prominent political feature among populist governments in Latin America. Such fights make such governments seem as though they are constantly fighting to restrain press freedom and democratic values — as understood by standards related to liberal democracy (Kitzberger 6, 8).

## Purpose of the Study and Summary

This study looked at the permanent campaign style of Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa and his uses of media for the permanent campaign. With the understanding that his permanent campaigning infringes upon normal news broadcasting and is often used to target journalists and media outlets through constant public criticism (Ayala 7), I analyzed the existence of a possible chilling effect. Through this, I attempted to grasp the chilling effect that the permanent campaign in Ecuador, and Correa's plebiscitary rule has on privately owned media. In order to assess this, this study used content analysis to analyze columns from a prominent, Ecuadorian privately owned newspaper, *El Universo*. The columns were measured for levels of negativity to infer if the newspaper had press freedom, represented by it printing increasingly negative columns about the government, or if the newspaper is under a chilling effect, represented by an increase in positivity regarding the government.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

This chapter integrates the scholarship pertinent to the areas of research relevant to the proposed analysis. In order to complete this research it was important to explore our current understanding of 1) what is a permanent campaign, how it works, and how it is applicable in the case of Ecuador and its current President Rafael Correa; 2) what is plebiscitary governance, how it affects politics and how it is relevant to current Ecuadorian politics; and 3) the media situation in Ecuador with a recent historical overview and its relationship to politics in the country. The combinations of these three concepts comprise the foundation upon which this study is based — that the rising plebiscitary governance of president Rafael Correa, which includes a permanent campaign suggested to be partly used to attack private media in Ecuador, is likely to lead to a decrease in press freedoms in the country by creating and inducting a chilling effect among journalists and commentators of such media. Such a chilling effect, journalists say, has the potential to cause “a reluctance to publish freely and pursue stories aggressively” (Trager, Russomanno, and Dente Ross 134) out of fear of attack by the government or legal repercussions by such, which can include lawsuits and/or imprisonment.

#### The Permanent Campaign

In December 1976, Patrick H. Caddell, a young pollster for the Jimmy Carter presidential campaign, submitted a memo to the then-president-elect titled *Initial Working Paper on Political Strategy*. The memo expanded on Caddell's conclusions that governing with public approval requires a continuing political campaign or a permanent campaign. Caddell realized that media could have an enormous impact on public opinion (Klein). This was a significant conclusion, as the American presidency had to constantly appeal to its constituency to increase and maintain high levels of public support (Ornstein and Mann 17).

The concept of the permanent campaign was also embraced by journalist Sidney Blumenthal, who, in his book *The Permanent Campaign*, described the method of governance as a perpetual method of promotion, which turns government into an institution meant to maintain an elected official's popularity (Blumenthal 11). In fact, Blumenthal stated that the permanent campaign became a form of analyzing presidential politics, and how country executives marry their techniques of political campaigning with their act of governing in a seamless junction (Conaghan and de la Torre 267).

Therefore, through the wide-ranging concept that comprises the permanent campaign, Americans, as well as people and politicians from other parts of the world, have come to understand its importance. In fact, the permanent campaign has been persistently used as an essential element in the act of governing (Conaghan and de la Torre 269). This comes from the understanding that permanent campaigning occurs when the "process of campaigning and the process of governing have each lost their distinctiveness," (Ornstein and Mann 219) and allows for a single process of campaigning and governing.

Hence, by combining political campaigning techniques with the act of governing, the permanent campaign becomes indispensable in the analysis of the success of presidential politics based on a politician's popularity (Blumenthal 11). This leaves politicians and candidates for public office in a continual campaign mode, always working for public attention (Conaghan 47). Consequently, by joining political marketing techniques with actual governance, politicians and elected officials can use the media for the purpose of augmenting executive power, and increasing their popularity and acceptance among the electorate (Conaghan and de la Torre 268). This makes the permanent campaign an intrinsic aspect of modern politics, as through mass media, political groups and candidates for office can take advantage of "attention grabbing media events to communicate their causes directly to a mass audience" (Ornstein and Mann 22).

Given that the most obvious and relatable description of the permanent campaign is "campaigning and governing merging into one indiscriminate mass" (Ornstein and Mann 1), it is important to note that the study of a permanent campaign is prevalent because it directly affects people. In fact, a permanent campaign "is not the way the electorate does politics, but rather, the way politics is done to the electorate" (Conaghan and de la Torre 268), by politicians and political consultants. Permanent campaigning has therefore become the only stable means of political involvement that most people experience. This is mostly due to the fact that political marketing and its inescapability take place in a perpetual manner, which allows politicians to obtain the vital public support and approval needed for their political success (Ornstein and Mann 1-3).

This has turned the permanent campaign into more than a package of techniques

used to promote presidential popularity. For instance, in some Latin American countries, the permanent campaign has become an intrinsic practice that presidents and governments use to “stay in power and to pursue political projects aimed at reconfiguring power relations” (Conaghan and de la Torre 281). Nowadays, Latin American presidents — especially those in the political “left” or “pink tide” — have become increasingly concerned with their “public communication strategies ... [and have established] media practices intended for direct communication with larger publics” (Kitzberger 9).

Politicians in Latin America, especially populist ones — who form part of Latin America’s political left turn — are aware of the importance of poll-driven and media-focused election campaigns (de la Torre and Conaghan 337). This mindfulness goes beyond the media’s usefulness in terms of elections, but also of its usefulness once a politician is elected to office. For instance, given the necessity to connect with “the mass public in unmediated ways and keeping presidential polling numbers high” (Conaghan and de la Torre 269) has led for media-centric country executives to constantly seek to mobilize public opinion even after being elected. Therefore, through a pervasive media presence, such presidents “sought to mobilize public approval” (Conaghan and de la Torre 269) so as to carry through with their political agenda.

The permanent campaigning strategy is then born through constant media presence and is created in such a way that campaign consultants and media experts play a significant role in influencing government and policy (Ornstein and Mann 219). By turning the process of campaigning and the process of governing into an amalgamated endeavor, the permanent campaign transforms governance into a “twenty-four hour campaign cycle of pseudo-events for citizen consumption” (Ornstein and Mann 30). This

way, the permanent campaign becomes the constant push to “connect the president directly to voters, with minimal interfering or ‘filtering’” (Conaghan 53).

In the case of newly rising leftist, populist governments in Latin America, presidents’ need to directly appeal to the public has risen from the area’s “acute crisis of governability” (Conaghan and de la Torre 269). Due to this, newly elected leftist governments have turned to practices that include “regular or sporadic presidential broadcasts, travelling cabinets<sup>1</sup>, and the communicative instrumentalization of public occasions or ceremonies” (Kitzberger 9). They have used such not only to spread their political agenda among their electorate, but also to increase their popularity and approval. Hence, given that presidents are in constant communication with their electorate, they tend to reject practices such as press conferences and interviews with the press (Kitzberger 9) as they provide information to the public through their own means.

Through the constant media presence presidents have in their countries, their electorate is able to learn about national affairs and participate in the government’s politics and political agenda. Sometimes, governments tend to use ulterior motives that tell the people what they want to hear in a manner that furthers a politician’s cause against his or her opposition (Ornstein and Mann 32). Consequently, elected officials are able to manipulate public approval and even mobilize public opinion in ways that enable them to govern without the necessity of congressional approval to implement new policies (Conaghan and de la Torre 269). This is due to the fact that through an effective permanent campaign, politicians can make their case and convince their electorate to

---

<sup>1</sup> A travelling cabinet refers to when a president travels throughout his or her country and brings members of his or her cabinet along so as to have a greater political presence.

support their cause more easily than they would the legislature (Conaghan 47).

Additionally, in order to further their agenda with the public and spread their political agenda to as many people as possible, “pink tide” presidents have resorted to practices that “bypass and contest mainstream media journalism, which is deemed to be dominated by media owners and therefore biased and distorting” (Kitzberger 9). Thus, to further their permanent campaigns, presidents use mostly public media to disseminate their message, or privately owned media that is “politically aligned” with the president’s public agenda (Kitzberger 10). When presidents communicate with their electorate, their messages are likely to contain criticism of media and journalistic coverage of governmental issues with intention to “unveil and contest” (Kitzberger 9-10) such coverage.

Arguably, the most important tools that Latin American governments use to communicate directly with their electorate are *cadena nacionales* or “national chains.” Governments use national chains to “spread official messages about the different functions of the State” (FUNDAMEDIOS 1). These messages are called chains because they are “by law, broadcasted on all radio and television channels” (Cronista), causing a chain effect as individuals cannot change the television or radio channels without running into the government’s mandated broadcast. Given the laws of some countries, such as Argentina, Ecuador, or Venezuela, laws state that national chains be broadcast on all channels, including those that don’t publically support the government (Republic of Argentina, Law 26.522, Article 75). Additionally, in some countries such as Ecuador, laws state that “television stations are obliged to provide the government with free air time for national public service broadcasts” (Conaghan and de la Torre 276).

Thus, through the permanent campaign, every message that is disseminated to the public becomes a tactic to get votes or approval (Ornstein and Mann 17). Therefore, the study and understanding of the permanent campaign and its possible effects on democracy is important. This is due to the fact that, depending on how it is used, permanent campaigning can increase hostility and recklessness in politics as it disregards the fact that a country's electorate can mistake political persuasions for reality (Ornstein and Mann 4).

Yet, permanent campaigns, which target entire electorates and have the power to reach people in remote areas through mass media, can be considered to be one of the most democratic forms of governance and campaigning (Ornstein and Mann 233). This can be understood as such given that permanent campaigns constantly bombard the populace with propagandist information, making everyone who watches and/or listens to the message, a potential participant in the process (Ornstein and Mann 125). Given that elected officials can use mass media to get their message out to the public, governments can sometimes take advantage of the varied resources such as broadcast and print media. Thus, through such resources, governments can create permanent campaigning environments that result in "uneven playing fields" for a country's political opposition (Conaghan and de la Torre 281).

While a permanent campaign might consist of democratic values in the sense that it looks to appeal to the general public, it has the potential to turn a government into a plebiscite (Lowi 97). A plebiscitary government is one that seeks public approval so that the public constantly participates and, through referenda, passes legislation in favor of the president (Conaghan and de la Torre 281). This renders a country's legislation without

actual power to legislate as the president can bypass it by making the people vote legislation that abides by his or her agenda (Conaghan and de la Torre 268).

The permanent campaign has over time developed into a government's new approach of governance in the sense that "presidents seek to mobilize public opinion directly in order to govern 'over the heads of congress and the party leaders'" (Conaghan and de la Torre 282). Hence, with the progressively overwhelming amount of public support that a country's executive is able to obtain through his or her permanent campaigning, opposition parties run the risk of having weaker power in a country's legislation system (Lowi 195). This, in turn, allows for a president to stop his or her role of "bargainer" with the country's legislators, as he or she can easily opt to publically appeal to the electorate and make a case for public support (Conaghan and de la Torre 260). Hence, as previously stated, through permanent campaigning, a country's executive can bypass a noncompliant legislature by simply appealing to the public.

If country executives use governmental resources to saturate their electorate with messages through national chains and/or constant advertisements, media usage by the opposition has the potential to become highly disproportionate to that of the government's (Conaghan and de la Torre 281). Thus, in governments where presidents take advantage of their country's media resources to suppress the political power of their opposition, a permanent campaign can be regarded as a "potential minefield for democratic politics" (Conaghan and de la Torre 282).

Given that democracy promotes equalized governmental participation and competition (Danziger 75), the fact that in some countries, permanent campaigning has the potential to transform politics to enhance the power of the governing president or

political party, can be construed as antidemocratic (Tenpas and McCan 350). As permanent campaigns are enhanced by a government's regulatory policies, presidents can implement restrictive campaign laws that limit or prohibit the use of public resources for political purposes while using them limitlessly to further their political agenda (Conaghan and de la Torre 281). Through this, governments can block the opposition from exposing its views to the electorate through the media.

The uneven playing field turns a permanent campaign into something far more than a technique for maintaining or obtaining public support, but instead, a method of silencing the opposition. Silencing the opposition becomes increasingly vital to presidents and governments in order to remain in power (Conaghan and de la Torre 281). Consequently, in such cases, a permanent campaign is not a promoter of equal participation. Instead, the permanent campaign has polarizing effects in the politics of a country and promotes inconsistency in its governance as the incumbent president has a disproportionate advantage over his or her opposition (Charnock 18).

Although the permanent campaign is a concept coined by American strategists, given the internationalization of American electioneering, in places such as Latin America, the rise of an extreme form of a permanent campaigning has the potential to turn government figures into avid permanent campaigners (Conaghan and de la Torre 269). As previously stated, such governments have developed to constantly focus on appealing to the public, instead of legislators (Conaghan and de la Torre 268).

Much like their American counterparts, Latin American presidents confront factionalized and unpredictable legislations and unmanageable party coalitions (de la Torre and Conaghan 339). Therefore, the use of unmediated ways of connecting with the

electorate become vitally necessary to keep a country's executive's support numbers high and become "normal tools of the trade," (Conaghan and de la Torre 261). In this manner, country presidents become media-centric, realizing that outreach through media is a key "strategy aimed at highlighting their personal attributes" (de la Torre and Conaghan 347) and political agenda.

As much as high acceptance among the electorate and high public approval priority for most Latin American countries, those in the Andean region have stood out as countries with extreme forms of permanent campaigning that have led to extreme plebiscitary governments (Conaghan 47). Over the last decade, in countries such as Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador, plebiscitary governments have risen out of acute crises of governability, which have led the institution of the presidency of those countries to become highly plebiscitary (Conaghan and de la Torre 269).

In fact, the plebiscitary governance, a direct result of the permanent campaign, has become a new development for Ecuadorian politics as the country has gone through "multiple dysfunctions associated with the party system and its leadership," (Conaghan, 48). Throughout Ecuador's recent history, especially from the transition out of military rule in 1979, the country has experienced one of the highest indexes in party fragmentation in Latin America as well as electoral volatility (de la Torre and Conaghan 339). In fact, the executive, legislative and court system of the country have been long described as innate and corrupt, where governance and legislation were made as measure of contracts with the purpose of carrying out the private endeavors of those who participated in them. Additionally, the political situation in Ecuador was volatile as the

ten years prior to 2006; three presidents had been unable to complete their four-year terms (Conaghan 48) and were thrown out of office.

In order to maintain power and support from the electorate, Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa Delgado — who won the 2006 presidential election and took office in 2007 — has followed in the footsteps of Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez and Bolivian President Evo Morales, in launching a campaign that mobilizes public opinion not only to “win battles with congress, but to launch projects aimed at ‘re-founding’ their respective republics,” (Conaghan & de la Torre, 269). Though this, Correa took office with an agenda that was heavily dependent on public approval. If he was able to obtain the approval he needed from the electorate, then he and his political party, Alianza PAÍS - Patria Altiva I Soberana, *PAÍS Alliance - Proud and Sovereign Fatherland* (Conaghan 47) could gain majority power. Successive winning of important electoral contests, which included referenda, constituent assembly elections, and a succeeding round of presidential elections (Conaghan & de la Torre, 269), became crucial to Correa’s success. Hence, he and his government established a permanent campaign to accomplish such goals.

Therefore, as Correa assumed office during a politically unstable time in Ecuador, he came into power with the full knowledge that he had to re-make the political system in the country through a “series of rapid-fire electoral events” (Conaghan & de la Torre, 269). This allowed him to restructure and change the country’s constitution, grant the post of the executive more power, and reorganize the country’s party system to suit his and his party’s political agenda (Conaghan 47).

As previously stated, in the decade before Correa became president of Ecuador, the country was one of the most insecure democracies in Latin America. From 1997 to 2005, the Ecuadorian public had forced three elected presidents: Abdalá Bucaram, Jamil Mahuad and Lucio Gutiérrez, out of office, before each was able to complete his four-year term (de la Torre and Conaghan 339).<sup>2</sup> This type of political precariousness, defined as “presidents interrupted” (de la Torre and Conaghan 340) made Correa supremely aware of the instability his office once sworn in as president. This was especially true given that mass public protests against an executive’s economic policies or corruptive manners had been responsible for the removal of Ecuador’s three previous presidents from office, mostly “with the tacit approval of the armed forces” (Conaghan and de la Torre 271).

Consequently, it was important for Correa to take into account the unstable political situation in Ecuador when he took over the presidency so that he and his government could create an effective permanent campaign (Conaghan and de la Torre 271). Such an effective campaign would help Correa not only remain in power, but also obtain high public approval levels. This was critical at the time, as power and approval were something that politicians from all parties, including governmental entities, lacked (Conaghan and de la Torre 271).

When Correa began his campaign for the presidency in 2006, he did so as an outsider to the Ecuadorian political arena (Conaghan and de la Torre 271). In fact, before his presidential campaign, he had never run for public office and the only political post he had held was a just-over-100-days position as Minister of Economy to which he was

---

<sup>2</sup> Ecuadorian presidents are elected to four-year terms with the contingency to run for reelection to another four years. They have a limit of two terms.

appointed to by interim president Alfredo Palacio in 2005 (de la Torre and Conaghan 339) — Correa’s training as an economist, holding a doctorate from the University of Illinois helped him get appointed to the position (de la Torre and Conaghan 340). Yet, his swift tenure as minister of economy assured him an “image as a maverick and a virulent critic of neoliberal economic policies<sup>3</sup>” (Conaghan and de la Torre 271).

Thus, Correa’s image allowed him to quickly form a political party and use it as a vehicle to run for the presidency in 2006. Even though Correa’s newly formed political party enticed many people who belong to leftist movements — especially those that had been instrumental in the removal of President Lucio Gutierrez from office in 2005 (Conaghan 49) — the fragmented nature of Ecuadorian political parties indicated that Correa, even if elected, would have a hard time getting candidates elected as members of the incoming congress (Conaghan 50). Therefore, with the knowledge that it would be near impossible for him to obtain congressional support for his policies, “Correa decided to run against the system itself” (Conaghan and de la Torre 271) by not having anybody from his political party run for Congress.

During his campaign to the presidency, Correa promised Ecuadorians that he would sign an executive decree that authorizing for the country to carry out a referendum enabling for the creation of a constituent assembly — an ad-hoc legislative group that would serve the purpose of drafting a new constitution (del la Torre and Conaghan 339). The new constituent assembly became the backbone of Correa’s discourse as he promised

---

<sup>3</sup> In terms of economic policy, neoliberalism refers to the idea that “cooperation can create great benefits through trade” (Goldstein and Pevehouse 87). Thus, economic neoliberal policies require opening of trade markets, support for private sectors and reduction of the role of government in a country’s industry (Smith 14). The basis of neoliberal economic policies assume that countries are unlikely to restrict open markets and trade for fear of retaliation such as the placement of high tariffs on their exporting goods (Goldstein and Pevehouse 87).

that it would help end the country's long history of "a partyarchy" (Conaghan and de la Torre 271) — a form of political party bureaucracy in which the strongest and most influential political parties effectively assume sovereign power in a state.

Given that initially, no individual from his political party ran for congress, when Correa took office he "immediately faced the consequences of having ceded congress to his political rivals" (Conaghan and de la Torre 273). Because of this, he needed immediate public support not only to remake the legislative system by switching it from a bicameral to a unicameral congress. Additionally, he needed public approval to conduct a referendum proposed during his campaign and support to have it passed so that he could "enjoy complete control over the writing of the new constitution" (Conaghan and de la Torre 274).

Through his permanent campaign, which included strong advertising for approval of the constituent assembly, Correa was able to obtain support from "82 percent of the electorate" (Conaghan and de la Torre 273) for the constitutional assembly, ensuring his party control over the writing of the new constitution with 80 of the 130 seats available.

In order to maintain his popularity and his achievements present in the minds of Ecuadorians, Correa and his communications team established a weekly radio show — this is due to the fact that radio had proven intrinsic to the presidential campaign in 2006 (Conaghan and de la Torre 275). Correa inaugurated a weekly radio program called *The President Dialogues with his Constituents*. The two-hour program was broadcasted every Saturday on 154 radio stations throughout the country (Conaghan 53). — The program went on to be broadcasted on radio and television under the title of Enlace Ciudadano (*Citizen Liaison*). — The weekly shows provided (and continue to do so) an outlet for

Correa to boast about his accomplishments as president and a forum to admonish his opposition (Conaghan & de la Torre 53).

This gave the president a weekly platform to “publicize his government’s accomplishments and lambaste his opponents” (Conaghan and de la Torre 275). Additionally, such broadcasts have been continuously held throughout the country, providing the president and members of his cabinet with a chance to meet constituents in diverse locales, allowing the president “fertile ground for politicking” (Conaghan & de la Torre 53). Thus, when the president and his ministers travel to different towns in the country to broadcast his radio show, it creates a “direct political impact on the places that the president visits” (Conaghan and de la Torre 275).

Additionally, given that the country could take advantage of free airtime for broadcasts related to public interests, Correa’s government also began to use national chains in television. The Correa administration has described national chains to be a tool that chronicles “the administration’s latest accomplishments, with President Correa figuring prominently in each installment” (Conaghan and de la Torre 276).

Yet, the government has shown that it uses national chains excessively and “resorts to using these special announcements, normally reserved for the used in cases of emergency to warn or inform the public” (WANIFRA 5) and to push its political agenda. Such chains have, on average, lasted from three to 15 minutes (FUNDAMEDIOS 4) and used as weekly, primetime “newsreels that chronicled the administration’s latest accomplishments” (Conaghan and de la Torre 276). Even though these presidential addresses have only lasted a few minutes each, the president has used them not only to speak about the progress of his government, but also to “respond to criticisms in a

particularly aggressive fashion, by discrediting, abusing and insulting his critics” (WANIFRA 4).

In order to maintain his power in office and continue on with electoral victories, Correa and his communications team have maintained a constant, perpetual campaign by using the country’s media. National mandated chains have been used in increments from the time Correa first became president, and as a form of permanent campaign have served to boost the president’s popularity (Ornstein and Mann 112).

FUNDAMEDIOS — *Fundación Andina para la Observación y Estudio de Medios* (Andean Foundation for the Observation and Study of Media) — a multidisciplinary group formed in 2006 with the means to “protect the rights and freedoms of expression, press, access to information and association” (FUNDAMEDIOS 4) stated that the usage of national chains is the most powerful tool the government of Ecuadorian president Rafael Correa uses to impart the agenda of Correa’s Citizen Revolution. The foundation’s Special Report on the usage of Governmental Media *Uso de cadenas nacionales: ¿Herramienta para contrarrestar la opinión disidente?* (Usage of national chains: a tool for offsetting dissenting opinions)? published in November 2012, states that from 2010 to 2012, the Ecuadorian government used 138 national chains on more than 200 television and radio stations free of charge. The 138 national chains accounted for 1,464 minutes of broadcasting. Out of these, 137 chains, amounting to a total of 1,029 minutes, included messages of “general interest,” which according to FUNDAMEDIOS’ report, are used to “polemicize” against the governments opposition. On some occasions, Correa used the slots to address the public directly, letting loose with

attacks on opponents. On other occasions the slots were used for “negative advertising targeting critics” (Conaghan, de la Torre, 276).

Additionally, FUNDAMEDIOS stated that at the top of Correa’s list of his opposition are media and press personalities, whom he has branded as “la prensa corrupta,” (*the corrupt press*), closely followed by political opposition in government and those who have dissenting opinions from that of the government’s ideology and actions.

Therefore, given the media landscape of the country, privately owned media have come to be part of the opposition forces in Ecuador regularly criticized during the chains. The FUNDAMEDIOS’ report stated that from the 1,364 national chains that have been mandated by the government of Rafael Correa, 46 have been reported to the Foundation as having been used to attack media or journalists (including political opposition personalities).

FUNDAMEDIOS stated that among the chains (which are proven to have increased over time) that Correa used, in part, to attack journalists, Correa used phrases such as *¿Es esto un periodismo imparcial, independiente?* — Is this impartial and independent journalism? *¿Hasta cuándo?* — Until when? *Por esto es que Piero alguna vez cantó...: “Y todos los días, todos los días, los diarios publican porquerías.” Y Victor Heredia, ante tanta infamia, lo reafirmó diciendo: “Y ese miento miente, que forma de mentir.”* — That’s why Piero once stated: “And everyday, every single day, newspapers publish rubbish,” and Victor Heredia, facing such infamy, reaffirmed it by saying: “And they lie, lie, what a form of lying.”

According to journalists and media entities such as FUNDAMEDIOS, comments such as the above, made by the president, set a precedent for a chilling effect.

## Correa's Plebiscitary Governance

A plebiscitary governance is understood as a “way in which presidents can use direct, unmediated appeals to public opinion in order to govern ‘over the heads of other institutions, especially legislatures” (Conaghan 47). This is especially true as “political leaders have become ever more attentive to and sophisticated in gauging public opinion” (Ornstein and Mann 32), which in turn, develops a permanent campaign doctrine and pushes “unceasing forays for public approval” (Blumenthal 8). Thus, the permanent campaign results in a plebiscitary form of government, as without public approval, country executives would not be likely to carry out their political agendas (Blumenthal 39).

As previously mentioned, given that Chávez, Morales and Correa, who represent Latin America's “Left Turn” — a more “open-minded, reformist and internationalist” (Castañeda 29) left — and the so called “twenty-first-century socialism” — an economic model that “explicitly rejects the Soviet model of socialism, seeing it not only as dictatorial and ultimately an economic failure but also rooted in a historical context that is no longer relevant” (Kennemore and Weeks 1) — they have used the permanent campaign strategy to appeal to their electorate. In fact, through their permanent campaign, such presidents have been able to effectively push aside their opposition so as to carry out their leftist transformations (Conaghan 48).

It is important to note that although permanent campaigns by Latin America's new left governments have created a plebiscitary form of governing that was effective in undermining opposition in congress, “they did so in a fashion that ensured a fair share of domestic and international legitimacy for the process” (Conaghan & de la Torre 269).

Recurring electoral validation has been the cornerstone of Correa and Chávez's governments, as it allowed them to carry out the presidents' promised mandate (Conaghan & de la Torre 270). Hence, the permanent campaign and its plebiscite, have become the driving feature of how both of the Ecuadorian and Venezuelan governments function (Ellner 99).

After being elected president in 2006, Correa's post-election communications strategy was aimed at remaking Ecuadorian political elections through serial elections and a high percentage of public support, winning such elections became the "primary objective of the new administration; thus, the permanent campaign was born out of necessity and directed as a larger scheme of political transformation" (Conaghan and de la Torre 280). Therefore, given the president's push for electoral and governmental reform, he needed public support in order to call for a constituent assembly that would change the constitution of the country, and thereafter, change the legislative system in the country (Conaghan and de la Torre 270).

After winning the presidency, Correa needed a strategy to appeal to the Ecuadorian electorate and their demands. Thus, in order to be "perceived by the electorate as the leader who provides the only access door to a quota of power and satisfaction to the people's needs" (Ayala 8), he needed to do so through the media. After winning his first election, Correa stated even though he had won the presidential election, given the political factions of other parties within the Ecuadorian National Congress, he had not won power (Conaghan 47). He recognized that the "power" within the Ecuadorian congress was "controlled by economic interests, the banks, the partyarchy and the media connected to the banks" (Conaghan 47).

Consequently, in order to change the power structure in the country, vital to the continuance of Correa's political agenda, the president tied his governance of the country to the consecutive success in elections (Conaghan 47). These elections included the approval of the constitutional assembly and filling the seats with members of his party (Conaghan and de la Torre 279), and another presidential election success in 2009 after passing the new constitution, and another in 2013 for his second term in office after the passing of the constitution.

This meant that Correa needed to mobilize public opinion effectively in order to maintain his position as President of Ecuador. To obtain wide approval, he orchestrated a permanent campaign through media to further his agenda as well as to disorganize and defame his political opposition. This, in turn, caused an "extreme version of the plebiscitary presidency" (Conaghan 47). Through his constant campaigning, Correa was able to garner enough public support to bypass the National Congress and turn it into an irrelevant institution. This turned the post of the president into a very powerful position "[closing] the book on a decade of political instability" (Conaghan 48) in the country.

Yet, Correa's plebiscite — a direct result of his permanent campaign (Ellner 99) — while ubiquitous, may have had a negative impact in the advancement of Ecuadorian democracy (Conaghan and de la Torre 282). Correa's media campaign used a variety of resources afforded to him by the presidency, which included the ability for Correa to spread his message with minimal filtering from media outlets (Conaghan 53). Thus, it can be argued that by constantly seeking public approval to govern over the country's legislature, Correa may have furthered political polarization and decreased his government's accountability (Santander 234).

Throughout his tenure as Ecuadorian president, Correa has been effective in using the media to appeal to the Ecuadorian electorate (Conaghan 51). In fact, he understood the necessity of the usage of his position as the Ecuadorian Executive to shape “public opinion and [advance] his agenda for the constitutional assembly,” (Conaghan 52). He has also used public opinion polls effectively, as well as media and communication resources available to the presidency to “disorient, demoralize, and disorganize political opponents” (Conaghan 47).

Given his skill in public relations, Correa became the “great communicator ... who skillfully conveyed popular, commonsense messages by means of a persona that appeals to a wide spectrum of the public” (Conaghan 53). In order to maintain a high percentage of public support among the electorate, Correa’s communications strategy has used a perpetual media advertising campaign to keep the public firmly aligned with him and his government (Conaghan and de la Torre 274). Correa’s constant appeal to the hearts and minds of the Ecuadorian electorate not only allowed him to completely bypass and render the country’s 100 member National Congress obsolete, but it also garnered him the political stability that had been vacant for over a decade in the South American country (Conaghan 53).

From the beginning of his presidency, much like Chavez and Morales, Correa compiled a media campaign strategy formulated from inside the presidential palace<sup>4</sup> that included the efficient control of its communications secretariat (Recalde 21). Correa’s team was well aware that “the antagonists of the electoral campaign would return” (del

---

<sup>4</sup> Ecuador’s seat of government is referred to as the Palace of Carondelet (*Palacio de Carondelet*).

Torre Arauz 5) and try to undermine his office as the executive and deter him from accomplishing his plans.

The entire media operation used to propagate Correa and his agenda to popularity was synchronized by the country's Secretariat of Communication and expedited from the presidential palace (Conaghan and de la Torre 275). The communication strategy, much like his campaign strategy, included television and radio as the main instruments for spreading the president's message (Freidenberg 137).

Additionally, the communications strategy consisted of ubiquitous advertisements on radio and television on behalf of Alianza PAÍS, which cost the government an estimated \$6.938 million (Conaghan and de la Torre 276). The actual value of the advertisements was \$16.7 million, but Correa was able to obtain discounts of as much as 60 percent for being the Ecuadorian President (Conaghan and de la Torre 276).

During his communications campaign, Correa passed legislation that prohibited political parties and their candidates to the National Assembly to use any governmental broadcasting slots and prohibited the private purchase of broadcasting time slots (Conaghan and de la Torre 278). Correa and his administration stated that this measure was meant to prevent wealthy parties and candidates from having an unfair advantage in terms of securing airtime (Conaghan and de la Torre 277). Moreover, Correa took to publicly attacking newspapers and journalists who criticized the executive's dubious usage of public resources (Punín Larrea 12).

Through the permanent campaign that Correa developed from the time he became president of Ecuador, he has been able to garner a great deal of public support (Ayala 9). This, in turn, has allowed for him and his political party to rule over the heads of the

Ecuadorian legislative system. Correa is certain that his government's permanent campaigning efforts have allowed him a high percentage of public support (Conaghan and de la Torre 273). With such, he acted with security and firmness in granting his office more power. That way, he has been able establish his political agenda not only through his influence in the legislative system, but also in the judicial (Ayala 10).

### Media situation in Ecuador

By the year 2000, Ecuador and its media were considered to be one of the most corrupt in Latin America (Conaghan and de la Torre 271). As stated in previous sections, from the 1990s to the mid 2000s, the country underwent a period of high political instability. In fact, three of Ecuador's democratically elected presidents were overthrown and "half a dozen coups or attempts occurred" (Checa-Godoy 3) during that time. This led to a deep economic crisis in the South American country and a banking crisis from the year 1999-2000, which "highlighted the deep links between the country's financial power and the country's major media" (Checa-Godoy 3).

The crisis shed light on the fact that even though Ecuador had not had major issues relating to the oppression of press freedom, banks' ownership of media indicated that media were not reporting important issues (WANIFRA 1). In fact television stations and newspapers were used to further the financial interests of the banks that owned them and purposefully hid "the imminent arrival of the crisis" (WANIFRA 1).

The lack of reporting of Filanbanco and Banco del Progreso's — two of the most important banks in Ecuador in the 1990s — financial issues points to the assertion that the media in the country backed the interests of the "commercial and political elite,"

(Checa-Godoy 3). Additionally, the lack of coverage points to the fact that the media did not fulfill their purpose of informing the public fairly on a variety of issues in the public's interest (WANIFRA 1). Moreover, the banking crisis resulted in an economic recession, which led to the decline in newspaper readership in Ecuador (Checa-Godoy 2). Not until 2009, did newspaper readership pick up to 900,000 daily copies with the most sold newspaper in the country being *El Universo*, from Guayaquil (Checa-Godoy 8).

Given the deep ties between the banking system in Ecuador and its ownership in the media, and media ownership in banks, the 1999-2000 banking crisis brought about a loss of credibility in the privately owned media. Additionally, it showed that journalists who worked for such media “clearly followed the interests of their perspective groups” (Checa-Godoy 6). Thus, Correa has been able to capitalize on the situation by publicly “connecting media elites to the discredited banking institutions and political actors” (Kitzberger 14) in the country. In fact, Correa's discourse against privately owned media and coverage practices served to shape “his path to the presidency as a political outsider” (Kitzberger 19). Correa's discourse, which rejected economic neoliberal policies and Ecuador's political powers, catapulted him to popularity, turning Correa into a “strong political authority” (Kitzberger 19).

The Ecuadorian President has stated that the private press in the country has been historically immoral and failed the public by not providing information that is in the public interest (Kitzberger 20). Correa has stated that “private business providing a public good,” (Kitzberger 20) is a contradictory concept that endangers democracy through media in the country. Therefore, it was the government's duty to unmask the media and provide varied options for news coverage — state sponsored or owned — for the

Ecuadorian public (Checa-Godoy 16). The creation of state-controlled media was put forward as a method to cope with the private media sector and increase “community media-fostering policies” (Kitzberger 11). According to the president, the newly created governmental media in the country “are not the government’s media” (Kitzberger 21) but belong to the Ecuadorian people. Additionally, Correa has stated that the public media are a positive aspect of a growing democracy, as “they do not have the deep dilemma between the pocketbook and social compromise in communicating objectively” (Kitzberger 21).

In addition to the creation of public media, given that the privately owned media in the country was tied to private economic interests, the Ecuadorian Government increased media regulations (Conaghan and de la Torre 277). According to the ideology of the Ecuadorian government, these regulations were put forward not to hinder the private media’s ability to reach an audience, but to democratize the media system in the country and change the historical dynamics of media ownership (Checa-Godoy 16). This included governmental media expansion and ownership of television and radio stations, as well as newspapers (Punín Larrea 8).

In order to deal with issues of private-media ownership and market concentration of media (Kitzberger 11), Correa has looked to “alter the ownership relations in the media sphere” (Kitzberger 21). During the first year of Correa’s government, Correa took advantage of his initial popularity and public support to reverse operating licenses on some radio and television stations. Later in his tenure as president, Correa used the newly established constitution to ban media monopolies in the country (Kitzberger 21).

Unlike newspapers, however, radio has maintained its audience from before the banking crisis and “continues to be a key industry in the Ecuadorian media” (Checa-Godoy 8), covering the whole country and broadcasted in both Spanish and Quechua — the main indigenous language in the country. Radio is widely popular in the country and has historically provided educational components apart from informational and entertainment content. It was estimated in 2004 that “287 medium wave radio stations and 487 FM stations” (Checa-Godoy 10), existed in the country. Additionally, the Catholic Church has maintained a major presence in radio as the Conference of Bishops in the country has ownership of approximately 15 stations among the major cities of the country.

Television is another powerful medium in the country, but has been historically monopolized by five channels that date back to the 1960s and 1970s and include Ecuavisa, Teleamazonas, Gamavisión, TC Televisión, and Telecentro (Checa-Godoy 10). These channels, although prevalent, have traditionally broadcasted frivolous content. As much as television has remained a powerful medium in country, there has been no public ownership of television stations until 2008, where Ecuador gained Gama Television (Gamavisión), and TC Televisión “after their owners failed to pay their debts to the State after the banking crisis” (Checa-Godoy 12). Additionally, in 2006 TeleSUR, “the inter-American channel supported by Venezuela, had coverage in most of the country,” (Checa-Godoy 12) and in 2008 the Ecuadorian State established a national channel, Ecuador TV. The variety of channels has caused for the Ecuadorian audience to be divided. Currently, there is not one channel that garners “more that 20 percent of the audience share “(Checa-Godoy 12).

Correa has used attacks against the media through his permanent campaign throughout his presidency. Yet, that is not the only way he has been able to hurt the media. In fact, Correa and his government have gone as far as legally persecuting newspapers and media entities for reasons such as defamation. In fact two of the major cases, *El Universo* and *El Gran Hermano*, have been deemed by journalists as a direct attempt from the government to silence journalists (Punín Larrea 4). Given that Correa has stated “it is one thing to express an opinion, and quite another to speak with certainty, make allegations and defame someone” (WANIFRA 6), legal cases against media entities are described as milestones to change society.

The case for *El Universo* took place after Emilio Palacio wrote a column titled “No a las Mentiras” (“No to lies”) was published (WANIFRA 7). President Rafael Correa sued the writer of the column and the newspaper for defamation. In 2011, the justice system sentenced Palacio and two owners of the paper to three years in prison and having to pay \$40 million in damages to the President for the crime of “insulting the mandatarly” (Ayala 4). Correa eventually pardoned the newspaper and Palacio and did not seek monetary compensation (WANIFRA 7).

The case for *El Gran Hermano* took place after journalists Juan Carlos Calderón and Cristhian Zurita published a book by the tile “El Gran Hermano” (“The Great Brother”). In this book, the authors chronicled how the President’s brother, Fabricio Correa, obtained government contracts worth millions of dollars (WANIFRA 7). Correa has asked for \$10 million in compensation for moral damages from both journalists (Ayala 6)

Furthermore, in 2009, Correa signed a decree into law prohibiting that the private media sector in the country have contracts outside of the country (Ayala 4). Thus, media entities such as El Comercio, El Universo, La Hora (main newspapers in Ecuador) and Vanguardia Magazine, which had at least 19 percent participation in the Caribbean Virgin Islands, United States, Panama, the Caiman Islands, the Bahamas and the United Kingdom (Ayala 4).

In addition to media entities having to give up their foreign investments and assets, they had to deal with the government cutting on its advertising with such entities. In fact, through the new constitution, passed due to the president's plebiscite in 2008, the country experienced "gradual cuts to the participation of the financial powers in the media" (Checa-Godoy 13). In fact, the constitution established that the financial sector could not have "total or partial stakes in companies operating outside the financial activity" (Checa-Godoy 13). This resulted in financial entities being secluded from any type of financial relationship with the media in the country.

Not only did the constitution allow for a decrease in financial influence on private media, but also for the rights of government to establish a state media sector (Checa-Godoy 13). In fact, throughout Correa's presidency, the Ecuadorian Government has "managed to agglutinate and convert a series of mass media into a strange figure called 'public media'" (Punín Larrea 7). During Correa's presidency, the government "has seized some media entities and created others" (Vázquez and Saltos 332). Refer to appendix.

The media seized by the government comprised of entities that were owned by the countries media and banking monopolies and had not paid their tax dues. Filanbanco

(Checa-Godoy 16) — one of the banks that went bankrupt in the late 1990s and which was partly responsible for the Ecuadorian banking crisis — for instance, had major shares in the Isaías media group and “allegedly owed US \$661 million to the state” (WANIFRA 2) after collapsing. The State nationalized the entity because it had dues to the government and had not paid its debt for years (Checa-Godoy 16).

While legally, they may not be as financially interlinked as before Correa became president, the private media and the banking sector have indicated that the President is “an obstacle to an open market and a threat to freedom of the press and expression (Ayala 9). Thus, given the constant confrontation between the media and the government, the private sector in the country has created an opposition coalition, which includes the media (Ayala 9).

Thus, it is widely accepted that the laws and policies put forth by the government are limiting and “chill assertive reporting” (Hughes and Lawson 5). In fact, organizations such as WANIFRA — World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers have stated, “the personal attacks by the president have a chilling effect on the independent press” (WANIFRA 4).

Thus, In Ecuador, Correa’s permanent campaign scheme has allowed him high levels of public support, turning his government into a plebiscitary one and allowing him to legislate the country over the heads of the country’s legislative body. Yet, Correa’s permanent campaign strategy, which uses national chains, is assumed to affect press freedom as he uses chain broadcasts to constantly criticize media. Yet, if there is a lack of press freedom in the country, such has the potential to come from the private sector, which has media interests, as much as it does from the government.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHOD

### HYPOTHESIS

As expanded in the previous chapter, Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa's permanent campaigning strategy has been criticized to be an infringement on press freedom in the country. To assess if this is true or not, this study analyzed Correa's method of permanent campaigning through media and how it could create a chilling effect among the Ecuadorian press.

This study examined opinion column content from one of Ecuador's major newspapers, *El Universo*, for three-month periods in three separate years: 2007, 2009, and 2012. This study compared variables levels of permanent campaigning through mandated government broadcasts on all private and public channels also known as national chains, and analyzed levels of negativity among opinion columns for all three years. Two hypotheses follow.

H1: There was an increasing numbers of *cadena nacionales* from the time President Rafael Correa took office in 2007 up until 2012.

H2: There was an increased chilling effect among opinion columns in *El Universo*, represented by a decrease in the negativity levels of the content of the columns.

### CONTENT ANALYSIS

Content analysis was the method chosen for this study. This method of analysis was chosen because it is “the study of recorded human communications” (Babbie 330) and allows for the “studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables” (Wimmer and Dominick 141). Content analysis is also a “valuable tool in answering many mass media questions” (Wimmer and Dominick 141) and is “particularly well suited to the study of communications and to answering the classic question of communications research” (Babbi 331). Such questions include the “who says what, to whom, why how and with what effect” (Babbi 331)?

When it comes to media and mass communication, “some topics are more appropriately addressed by content analysis” (Babbi 331). Thus, this method provides for the evaluated content to be “selected according to explicit and consistently applied rules” (Wimmer and Dominick 141). Content analysis “is limited to the examination of recorded communications” (Babbi 342), thus, given that messages contained in the mass media are “increasingly popular research topics in both the academic sector and the private sector” (Wimmer and Dominick 141), this research method provides for an effective way of observing data relating to media.

Content analysis is also an objective method of analyzing data given that “the researcher’s personal idiosyncrasies should not enter into the findings” (Wimmer and Dominick 141). Therefore, when used, content analysis should yield the same results if another researcher were to perform the same research. While a perfectly created criterion for choosing and coding the sample is non-existent, content analysis provides a clear and replicable form of evaluation (Babbi 342).

Furthermore, given that content analysis is a quantitative research method, it “provides an accurate representation of a body of messages” (Wimmer and Dominick 141). This allows for precision in summarizing the results of the research. Content analysis simplifies the standardized procedure of observance, and provides the researcher with statistical tools that help in the interpretation of the analysis process and the results of the research (Wimmer and Dominick 141).

Content analysis allows for the correction of errors by making it easier to repeat portions of the analysis and “permits the study process occurring over a long time” (Babbi 342). Hence, for a media analysis, this research method allows for the observance and analysis for a period of months, even years.

## SAMPLING

Cadenas nacionales — governmental programs used as service announcements (Conaghan and de la Torre 276) — are one of the government’s most effective tools in communicating with the electorate. Chains allow for the government to broadcast its message over a multitude of channels on television and radio stations, reaching even the most remote rural areas in the country. According to FUNDAMEDIOS, national chains are often used as a medium of propaganda to popularize to the electorate the different functions being carried out by the government. FUNDAMEDIOS, which is located in the Ecuadorian capital of Quito, has stated that it “supports the development of democratic media and the exercise of quality journalism” (FUNDAMEDIOS 4).

Throughout his presidency, Correa has used two different types of chains to communicate with his electorate. The first type of chain is the one most commonly

utilized as it is a mandated chain, meaning that whenever the government feels the need to inform the public about something, it forces all media channels including privately owned radio and television stations to tune into the government's signal (FUNDAMEDIOS 2). This is a service provided for the government by radio and television stations free of charge (Conaghan and de la Torre 276). Thus, through mandated chains, the government is able to reach out to a great number of people as its signal gets broadcast in every possible channel in the country.

The other type of chains only uses the government's media outlets to pass on the message. For instance, from the start of his presidency, President Correa has used chains called Sabatinas (broadcasted every Saturday), which are used to report the progress of the government to the electorate (WANIFRA 4). These, however, are mostly only broadcast through governmental owned or sponsored media, which comprise approximately 20 radio and television broadcasting channels (FUNDAMEDIOS 1).

Given that there is no archive to check upon the time the government has used for either type of chain since Correa took over as president, this research used the only quantification available for the number of chains and minutes broadcasted. These numbers are provided by the FUNDAMEDIOS Foundation and are available from the beginning of Correa's presidency in 2007 up until August of 2012 for mandated chains only.

As aforementioned, in order to come to a conclusion regarding the existence of a chilling effect among the Ecuadorian media, this research sampled media from 2007, 2009, and 2012. In order to objectively analyze and reach an equitable generalization as

to the journalistic content of the Ecuadorian media, the research looked at opinion column content of *El Universo*, the major newspaper in Ecuador's most populous city, Guayaquil, as its units of analysis. *El Universo* has had a daily distribution rate of approximately 120,000 copies from 2002 to 2010 (Checa-Godoy 7). Given that Sundays are when newspapers have their biggest audiences, the analysis looked at the Sunday opinion columns for three months of each year: June, July, and August. These months were chosen because August 2012 was the last month FUNDAMEDIOS provided available numbers for governmental usage of national chains, making the analysis of June, July, and August for each year simpler to accomplish.

## MEASURES

### Permanent Campaigning

In order to quantify rising or decreasing levels of permanent campaigning in Ecuador, the study analyzed the number of mandated national chains — broadcasts by the government on all privately and publicly owned broadcasting channels, forcing them to tune in to the government's broadcasting signal so the same signal plays on all radio and television channels.

Given that there is no archive of these broadcasts, the study looked at quantified numbers by FUNDAMEDIOS. The organization published a Special Report in 2013 on the usage of governmental national chains in Ecuador titled "Use of National Chains: Tools to contrast dissident opinion." In the document, FUNDAMEDIOS reports its own

data as well as data from the ETHOS foundation, quantified the number and the minutes used for mandated national chains from 2007 through August of 2012.

### The Chilling Effect

The samples for the editorials analyzed were chosen from the *El Universo* newspaper, which is Guayaquil's largest, privately owned newspaper. The columns were accessed through the newspaper's website, [www.eluniverso.com](http://www.eluniverso.com), from which the tab Ediciones Anteriores (previous editions), led to the search of the columns. By isolating newspaper issues by year and then month, the newspaper website showed a calendar view that allowed choosing only Sunday. While the website did not provide PDF archives for each issue, it provided a long list of all the written contents in the newspaper for each day. The website then listed articles by the section in which they were published. The criteria used for choosing articles to analyze were based on articles containing at least one of the following ten words within their content:

#### *Correa*

Correa is the last name of the Ecuadorian president. When translated into Spanish, the word means "belt," but articles containing the word were only chosen when used as the president's last name.

#### *Presidente*

In English, the word means president. All articles containing this word were chosen.

#### *Ejecutivo*

In English, the word means executive, i.e. a country's executive. Articles that used this word in reference to the president of a country were used.

### *Estado*

In English, the word means State. Similar to Spanish, the word can be used to refer to a country, i.e. the State of Venezuela (El Estado Venezolano); or as a noun to describe the condition of something, i.e. the state of nature or the gaseous state of water (el estado de naturaleza o el estado gaseoso del agua). Only articles that used the word in reference to a country were used.

### *PAÍS*

PAÍS refers to President Rafael Correa's political party, Alianza PAÍS — Patria Altiva I Soberana (PAÍS Alliance — Proud and Sovereign Fatherland). In English, the word directly translates to "country," but only articles that contained the word in reference to the president's political party were used.

### *Revolución*

Referent to Revolución Ciudadana (Citizens' Revolution). This is President Rafael Correa's and his political coalition's project of implementation of XXI Century Socialism in Ecuador. In English, the word directly translates into "revolution," but only articles containing the word in reference to the Citizens' Revolution were used.

### *Asamblea*

In English, the word means assembly. For purposes of the article, however, only words referent to a form of legislative body were used. In Ecuador, the unicameral legislative body is called Asamblea Nacional (National Assembly). Additionally, President Rafael Correa's agenda has called for an Asamblea Constituyente, or a *Constituent Assembly* to draft a new constitution. This happened in 2008 after 80 percent of the Ecuadorian electorate voted for its approval via referenda.

### *Constitución*

In English, the word means Constitution. Only articles containing the word in reference to a country's constitution (written body of fundamental principles) were used.

### *Gobierno*

In English, the word means government. All articles containing the word were used.

### *Dictador*

In English, the word translates into "dictator." All articles containing this word were used. The context in which this word is used to discriminate articles referent to government from those that are not, is that in early 2012, an opinion column by *El Universo*'s columnist Emilio Palacio described the president as a dictator. The president went on to sue the newspaper and the writer, winning defamatory damages of \$40 million, while the writer and publishers of the newspaper were sentenced to three years in prison. President Rafael Correa ultimately issued a pardon to the writer and publisher and did not pursue the damages.

As per the established process of discriminating columns that were related to

government though an article's usage of at least one of the aforementioned 10 words, under the link "*Columnistas*" (Columnists), each issue had the title and author of the different columns published for that day. Therefore, one by one, each column was checked for the usage of the ten words through the computer's control/find function for each word on the list.

### CODING

In order to reach a conclusion about how *El Universo* newspaper refers to the government and whether the privately owned media in Ecuador have indeed become a form of movementism in the nation by converting themselves into part of the opposition, I had to analyze the existence of a chilling effect among Ecuadorian privately owned media.

This study examined the levels of negativity among opinion columns. A set of standards was used in order to infer whether the articles refer to the government in a positive, negative, or neutral manner. The articles were then coded to account for their portrayal of government. The coding numbers ran from 1 to 5 indicating if opinion articles were negative, slightly negative, neutral, slightly positive, or positive regarding the government of Rafael Correa, his presidency, ideology, governmental figures, and/or actions. An additional coding number, -1, was given to those articles that contained at least one of the ten words, but were unrelated to government in Ecuador or elsewhere. These were excluded from the final calculation of the mean and standard deviation of the stories for each year in the sample.

When an article had at least one of the ten words, it was printed. At the end of

each three-month period, all articles were numbered. After having printed the articles from 2007, 2009, and 2012, all articles were read and given a code from 1-5 (from negative to positive), and -1 (for columns that were not relevant to the government). The coding standard works as follows.

#### Negative (1)

For a column to be coded negative it had to contain harsh criticism of the current Ecuadorian government or the government's actions. The column had to contain criticism of government in more than one place in the article (two or more paragraphs). The column could be qualified as negative if the author insulted him/herself and/or described himself as "bruto," "pelucón," "chuta" (stupid, rich, damn it — colloquial word usage signifying insults — "pelucón" is a word dispersed by Correa to describe wealthy individuals) in a sarcastic tone, referring to his or her lack of understanding or servile manner towards the Ecuadorian government. For the article to have been coded in this category, it needed to have overly used adoring language towards government, clearly intended to be sarcasm. In order to identify sarcasm, insults and colloquial words meant to signify insults are usually enclosed in exclamation marks. Additionally, the usage of sarcasm and double-meaning words to convey negativity about the government i.e. "*el muy inteligente Presidente*," "the very intelligent President," were also coded as negative.

For a column to be coded in this category, its author could have written a personal attack against the government or government representative such as the president, ministers, etc. Most of the time, in order to write deleteriously about a governmental figure, the author of a column could have referred to representatives with the word "el" in front of their last names i.e. "el Correa," "el Patiño." The author could have also used

harsh language to attack government or governmental figures.

### Slightly Negative (2)

For a column to have been coded as slightly negative, and to distinguish it from a column that was coded as negative, there needed to have only been slight criticism of a governmental action by the author. This means that while an author clearly disagreed with a particular governmental action, he or she did not attack specific governmental figures and did not use insults or sarcasm to prove his or her point. Therefore, even though the column clearly mentions a dissenting opinion from governmental action, it is straightforward about its dissent with government and direct about the delivery of the idea without recurring to the use of insults or sarcasm.

### Neutral (3)

For a column to have been coded as neutral, it needed to have mentioned facts about the functioning of government but did not state dissent or approval. The column needed to contain some sort of discussion about the Ecuadorian government's actions and/or situations that involve government, yet the author did not criticize, nor praise government or governmental figures.

Another way that a column can be coded as neutral is if the author mentions disagreement with some governmental actions, but also mentions agreeing with others in the same article. Therefore, in order for a column to have been classified as a neutral column, it needed to have a fair amount of positive as well as negative writing relating the Ecuadorian government.

#### Slightly Positive (4)

For a column to be coded as slightly positive it had to mention agreement with governmental actions, yet, in it, the author did not seek to attack or offend the government's opposition. The author merely suggested approval of government, but did not praise its governmental figures.

#### Positive (5)

For a column to be coded as positive, it had to strongly approve of the government. Columns that contain phrases such as "*buen trabajo*," (the good work) were qualified as positive. Columns that contained words such as "*nuestro*" (ours), i.e. "*nuestro presidente*," "*nuestra patria*" (our president, our fatherland), were coded as positive. Additionally, columns that retaliated an article or column by media in the opposition (national or international) and criticized them with words such as "incapaz" (incapable), when referring to the governmental opposition, were coded as positive.

#### Not related to Government (-1)

Although the measuring system for choosing the columns to be analyzed from the sample allowed for a criteria that targeted content related to the Ecuadorian government, some columns that contained at least one of the 10 words used for measurement purposes, did not actually relate to the government and /or was irrelevant to governance or government in Ecuador or elsewhere.

In order for a column to be coded as not being related to government, their authors must not have referred to the Ecuadorian government, its actions, or ideology

and/or must not have acknowledged the Ecuadorian government, its politics, or its governmental figures in any way.

#### Analysis Plan

Results for the research proposed by this study are included in Chapter Four. First an overview of the data is reported and analyzed, including the total number of *cadenas nacionales* and the minutes used for them over time, as well as the total number of opinion columns from *El Universo* that were examined. The total numbers for the coding of each column are then averaged for each year (mean average). Both hypotheses were analyzed to come to a conclusion of whether there exists a chilling effect inflicted by the government, mostly through permanent campaigning, among Ecuadorian privately owned media.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

#### Permanent Campaigning and Press Freedom

While permanent campaigning from ‘pink tide,’ leftists governments in Latin America may not be a new development, the possible increase of such may be a factor in determining how a government is able to affect politics and the media in his or her country. In the case of Rafael Correa the claim that his permanent campaigning scheme has increased over the years is, in fact, true. By using data from FUNDAMEDIOS, I came to the conclusion that Correa used 156 television and radio stations in 2007, to a projected 237 in 2012 — even though there was a slight decrease (by 13) in the number of chains used by the president from 2007 to 2008. This is a definite increase in the usage of chains by the government over a period of five years. In fact, not only do the number of chains increase, but also, the number of minutes used for such chains increase as mandated national chains used 700 broadcasting minutes in 2007, to a projected 1,545 minutes in 2012. Even though the number of minutes used by chains was at an all-time high in 2009, with 3,636, there is still a significant increase in the minutes from the baseline year of 2007. Thus, as shown in Appendix III, there is definite evidence that Correa’s permanent campaigning scheme, which uses national chains to constantly appeal to the Ecuadorian electorate, has increased in number and in minutes from 2007 to 2012, lending support for the first hypothesis.

Inversely, hypothesis 2 was not supported, which was that in order to avoid trouble with the government and being personally called out by the president of the

country, Ecuadorian journalists claim that they must self-censure the negative information they publish about the government and this creates a chilling effect, was not supported by the data. In fact, of the political columns, quantified and averaged by each year (See Appendix Table 3 and 4), there is no definitive evidence of a chilling effect. If a chilling effect had occurred, one would have expected to find that the score for the stories would have become more positive, on average, both after the passing of the new constitution and Correa's reelection in 2009, as well as after the president sued both the journalists who wrote *El Gran Hermano* and the newspaper *El Universo*.

Furthermore, the average of negativity went from 1.74 in average in 2007; to 1.33 in 2009; to 1.44 in 2012. This means that the columns published by *El Universo* have been negative over time. Thus, the data suggest that, on average, column content show the opposite effect than what the chilling hypothesis suggests as the negativity levels in such columns has increased.

Counting those that are explicitly political columns, there is a shift to the columns being more negative over time, disproving the chilling effect hypothesis of media being "unable" to question the President Correa and/or criticize him and his government. The data don't support the chilling effect. In fact, the non-government media are becoming more negative and more strident in terms of criticism. This happens because, as compared to the baseline, which is 2007, the average of each year tends to be negative, never returning to its original base number.

Thus, if the chilling hypothesis were to be true, it would be expected that the score be well above 2 or 3 in average for each year, suggesting more positive content. However, the averages are below where they were in the 2007 baseline — 1.74 — with

1.33 in 2009 and 1.44 in 2012. Even though in 2012 is a bit higher than in 2009, the numbers never return to base number and remain considerably lower.

In fact, in addition to the calculation of the mean average, which is used as a measure of the central tendency of the classifications of the columns per year, the standard deviation was calculated for each year's totals. The standard deviation in the baseline year of 2007 was 0.85, a slight increase in 2009 with 0.96, and a decrease in 2012 with 0.51. Thus, while there are no anomalies in the standard deviation numbers for each year, through the decrease in the number from 2012, I concluded that while the columns are getting more critical of the government over time, they are also more similar in their classification at the same time.

Therefore, while a permanent campaign exists and the president has used his means of permanent campaign to criticize private media and its journalists, there is no evidence of a chilling effect among the Ecuadorian private media as it continues to publish increasingly negative content.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

#### Overview and General Discussion

The interruption of regular programming among radio and television stations, so that the government's signal can be broadcasted nationwide is considered by FUNDAMEDIOS as a breach on freedom of the press, because it precludes coverage of events by any other entity than the government, which may or may not cover events fairly. Private media entities in Ecuador argue that the public exposure of the president's antagonism as he "points to the corruption and mediocrity of the mass media" (Rettberg and Rincón 80) corrode press freedoms and democracy in the country. The mass media, therefore, argue that they are the sole "defenders of the democratic liberties and the only ones that can create a front of opposition to the supposed authoritarianism of the Government" (Rettberg and Rincón 80).

FUNDAMEDIOS, which agrees with the mass media argument, uses the 29<sup>th</sup> Article of the Reformatory Law to the Television and Radio Broadcasting law to make the argument that by overusing national chains — which are also used to criticize mass media — the government is acting against the laws it enacted. The article in the law states that governmental transmissions should take place during a compatible time with the schedules of television and radio broadcasting stations, unless in case of emergency, which must be constitutionally declared. According to FUNDAMEDIOS, the government is acting against its laws as the national chains often cut into news broadcasts for illegitimate reasons. FUNDAMEDIOS states that the Ecuadorian government uses chain broadcasts to "correct" journalists' statements and to defend its positions and political

agenda. Therefore, given the constant criticism of the media and journalistic coverage within the content of national chains, FUNDAMEDIOS maintains that there is an increasing lack of press freedom as print and broadcast journalists become more prone to self-censoring out of fear of being publically accused as corrupt by the government (FUNDAMEDIOS 5). Thus, the mass media, supported by FUNDMEDIOS, state that the president's permanent campaigning strategies, which include constant criticism of the private media, have resulted in the expansion of a chilling effect (WANIFRA 4). Not only that, but international actors such as Polity and Reporters Without Borders have criticized the Ecuadorian Government for its lack of press freedom, alleging that their indexes, which do not provide analysis of content actually published — point to that conclusion.

Additionally, FUNDAMEDIOS argues that the government forces the Ecuadorian public to obtain its information from a single source, the government, and qualifies the practice as anti-democratic as it has the potential to undermine the press freedom of each station by intervening and cutting into their broadcasting time and space.

FUNDAMEDIOS makes the argument that if the chain minutes continue to increase and the government increasingly continues to obligate broadcasting stations to broadcast its message, then private stations run the risk of having to broadcast the government's message on a permanent basis.

Yet, even recognized by FUNDAMEDIOS itself, under the premise of democratic discourse, it is in the public's interest that government and its authorities give the public a regular account of their actions. In fact, the Inter-American Court of Human rights has established that it is the government's duty to inform the public of its actions for which the use of mass communication (including private media forms) is necessary.

Nonetheless, the imperative measure of freedom of the press is based upon a chilling effect and whether or not private media entities and journalists that work for such self censure themselves in order to prevent trouble with the government or with the public that is likely to support the government.

Through the measures explained in the above chapters, the levels of negativity were measured for opinion columns Ecuador's most popular privately owned newspaper for three years: 2007, 2009, and 2012. For each year, political columns from each Sunday in June, July and August were analyzed. It was found that over time, there is no contingent chilling effect as columns have rising levels of negativity instead of rising levels of positive rhetoric among them.

This means that although many organizations and media entities assert a chilling effect and a decline in press freedom in the country, their published rhetoric in opinion columns actually proves otherwise.

Thus, my conclusions contradict the general understanding of press freedom in terms of the broader literature on democracy. While it is clear that Correa used his permanent campaign to let loose on media and verbally attack journalists and journalistic entities, the numbers calculated through content analysis do not support the theory that these attacks actually result in a chilling effect among the Ecuadorian press.

This is a unique finding in the sense that indexes of press freedom such as Reporters Without Borders and Freedom House, have a tendency to not analyze the actual content published or broadcasted by the press, to instead base their analysis on interviews with journalists, laws enacted by governments, or other actions taken by a governments that can be construed as posing a threat to press freedom. In fact, for "pink tide," leftist

governments in Latin America such as Argentina, Ecuador and Venezuela, the press freedom scores in such indexes has drastically decreased since presidents took to national chains to criticize media.

Thus, given that the content analysis provides an inverse result than what was expected, I can also conclude that major democracy and press freedom indexes are lacking in analysis for their conclusions. Given that content analysis showed that public criticism of media does not result in a chilling effect in the case of Ecuador and its major newspaper *El Universo*, the popular claim that pink tide regimes have become illiberal democracies that restrict press freedom, might also prove to be invalid if such analysis was done in those countries.

## IMPLICATIONS

The study aimed to provide a broader overview of how the columns and columnists portray the government in order to disseminate whether or not a chilling effect exist in Ecuador. It would have been ideal to overview more than one newspaper, especially *El Comercio*, Quito's (the Ecuadorian capital) largest privately owned newspaper and one of the largest in the country. However, due to its archiving system, it was impossible to retrieve the complete data necessary to make the analysis for the years 2009 and 2012. Given that the analysis could not be carried out with only data from 2006, the overall analysis only focuses on data from *El Universo* instead.

It would be ideal to analyze columns from more than one newspaper in order to have a better idea of the existence of a chilling effect among the Ecuadorian media. Because of time constraints and a lack of resources, I was unable to analyze the opinion

columns of other newspapers. It would be interesting not only to access the archives to analyze the existence of a chilling effect over time, but also to compare different mediums to each other. An analysis between public and privately owned media or media printed and broadcasted in different regions of the country would be ideal.

Not only that, but a more thorough analysis would improve the statistical significance of the results. For instance, if replicated, this study should look to analyze more than three years, and look at all Sundays for the entire duration of the presidency of Rafael Correa and a few years before so as to have a measure and base for comparison.

Likewise, it would be essential for the study to have more validity if for the content analyzed; the methods also included inter-coder reliability. Through that, there can be a more accurate depiction of the actual analysis of the data and more reliable and replicable results.

## APENDIX I

### Ecuadorian Government Ownership of Media

The following are data of the governmental media in Ecuador. As stated in the text, when President Rafael Correa took office in 2007; he looked to re-establish the media ownership system in Ecuador. Thus, from the beginning of his mandate the government seized private media entities that were in debt with the government, created new media, and administered other media.

Media Seized by the State	Public Media
*El Telégrafo	EcuadorTV
GamaTV	Radio Pública del Ecuador
TC Televisión	El Telégrafo
Cable Noticias	PP El Verdadero
Cable Deportes	
Radio Universal	
Arthur Oh	
Carrousel	<b>State-run Media</b>
Radio Super 1000	El Ciudadano (print and digital)
La Onda Magazine	Radio de la Asamblea Nacional
El Agro	ANDES Ecuadorian News Agency
Valles	
Samborondón	

Data obtained from WANIFRA's Report on Press Freedom in Ecuador. January 2012.

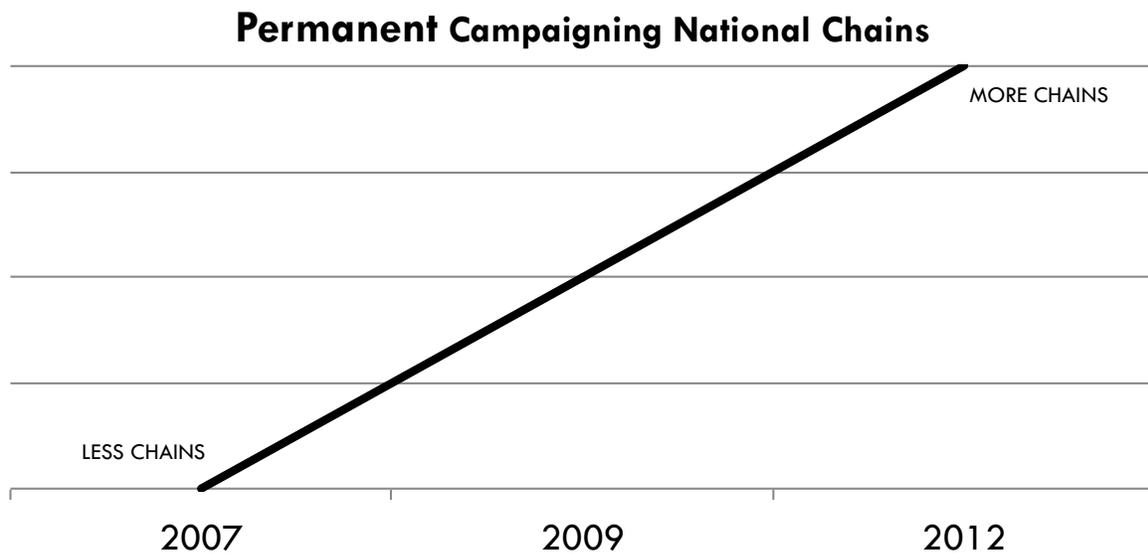
\* Seized by the government before Correa was elected as president.

## APENDIX II

### Expectations for first hypothesis

The first hypothesis of this study questions the existence of the permanent campaign in Ecuador through the usage of national chains. Given the literature retrieved

and reviewed, I hypothesized that there was a prevalent permanent campaign in Ecuador and it existed through increasing numbers of national chains during President Rafael Correa's tenure as mandatory. Thus, the expectation for my hypothesis was that over time, from 2007 to 2012, there would be a constant increase in the number of chains and they would have a steady presence throughout the President's tenure.



### APPENDIX III

#### **Measures of permanent campaign**

In the literature review, it was stated that a reliable measure of permanent campaigning would be the number of national chains that the Correa and his government had used throughout his tenure as president. Although two types of chains have been used over the years, the first imposed by the government on all public and private broadcasting channels and the second represented by weekly chains broadcasted on the state-owned and state-sponsored television and radio stations only.

The following table provides data of the number of imposed chains the president used from 2007. All data were obtained from FUNDAMEDIOS, which provided numbers of national chains up until August 2012.

Year	Television Chains	Radio Chains	Total Chains (Television and Radio)	Total Broadcast Minutes
2007	73	83	156	700
2008	95	48	143	1191
2009	275	58	333	3636
2010	152	71	223	2110
2011	264	87	351	2645
*2012	126	32	158	1030
<b>*Total</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>11793</b>
**2012	189	48	237	1545
<b>**Total</b>	<b>1048</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>1443</b>	<b>11827</b>

Data obtained from FUNDAMEDIOS' Special Report on the Usage of Governmental National Chains in Ecuador.

\*2012 data only calculated from January through August of that year.

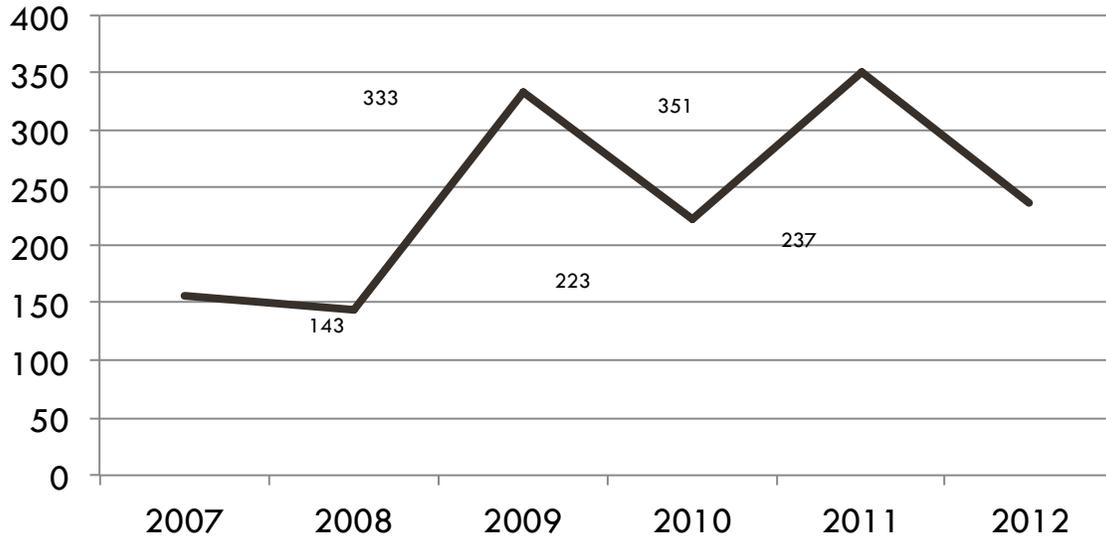
\*\*Projected number of chains for the entire duration of 2012

Given that the data only provided partial data for 2012, I calculated a projected number of chains that would represent the trends of chain usage by the government for the duration of the entire year.

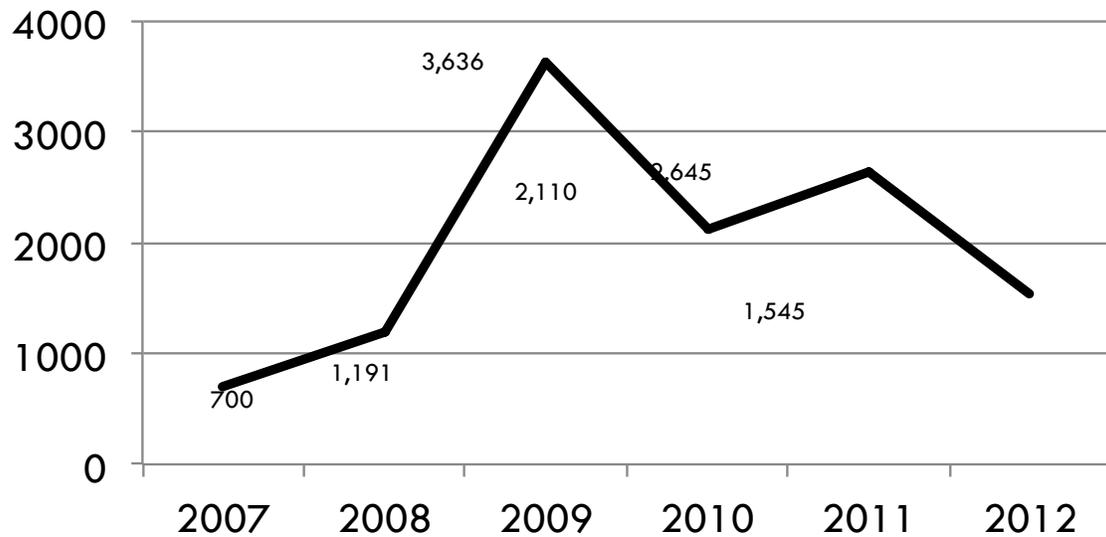
Year	Television Chains	Radio Chains	Total Chains (Television and Radio)	Total Broadcast Minutes
2007	73	83	156	700
2008	95	48	143	1191
2009	275	58	333	3636
2010	152	71	223	2110
2011	264	87	351	2645
**2012	189	48	237	1545
<b>**Total</b>	<b>1048</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>1443</b>	<b>11827</b>

Data obtained from FUNDAMEDIOS' Special Report on the Usage of Governmental National Chains in Ecuador.

### Annual Chains



### Annual Chain Minutes



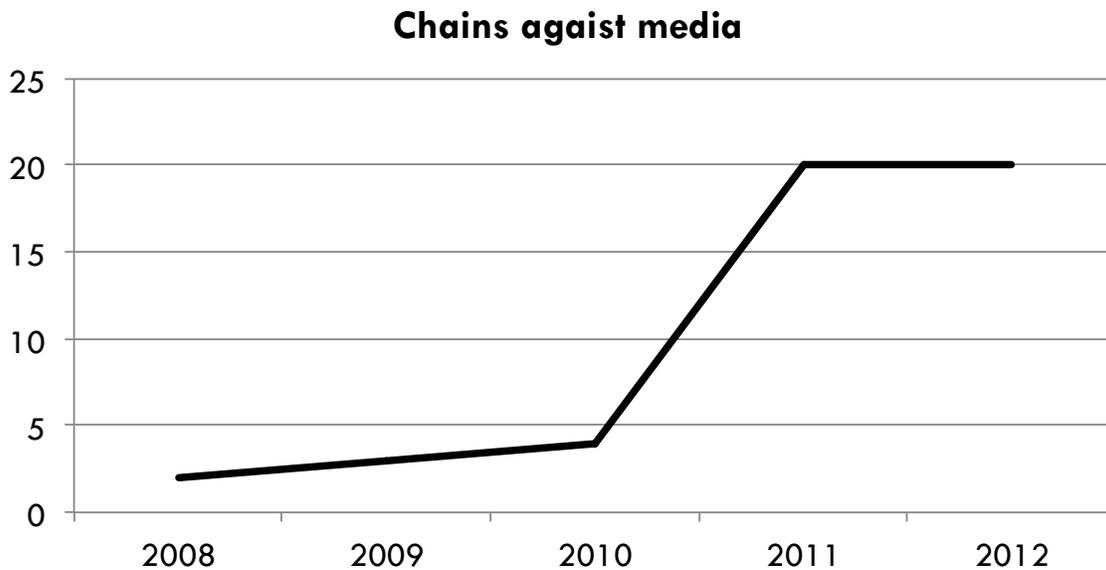
## APPENDIX IV

### Number of Chains reported to have been against opposing media/journalists

As stated within the text, Correa has used national chain broadcasts to let loose on attacks on journalists and media entities that have been critical of him and his mandate. The following table highlights the number of national chains used by the president to specifically attack journalists or media entities from the time that he came into power as president.

Year?	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Chains	2	3	4	20	20

Data obtained from FUNDAMEDIOS' Special Report on the Usage of Governmental National Chains in Ecuador.

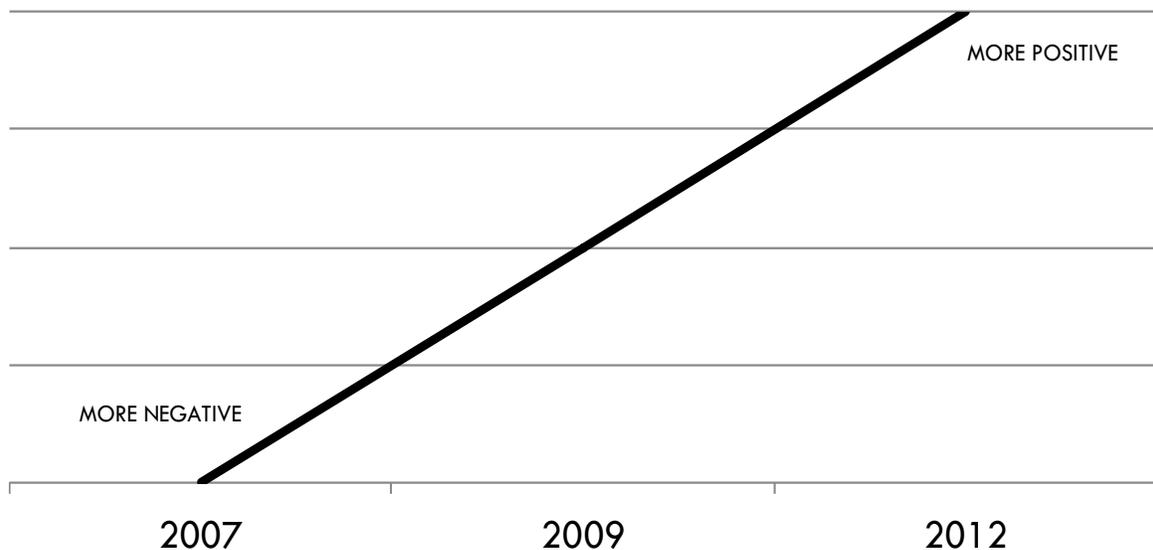


As the chart above shows, there is a sharp increase in the number of chains used solely for the purpose of criticizing or “correcting” claims made by the private media. From 2010 to 2011 the government increased the number of chains against the media by 16 (from 4 to 20), and maintained the 2011 number of chains for 2012.

## APPENDIX IV

### Expectation for second hypothesis

Given that through the first hypothesis, it was found that a permanent campaign on behalf of Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa is prevalent through steady numbers (and minute usage) of national chains. Additionally, from the beginning of his tenure as President in 2007, there has been an increase in the number of chains used to attack journalists and media. This led me to the hypothesis that over time, media would be likely to publish more positive content about the government and the President. Given that media entities and journalist are not likely to want to end up being criticized by the Correa on a national platform, they would be prone to publishing less negative content about him. Thus, the expectation for the second hypothesis were that over time, the columns from *El Universo* would refer more positively about the Ecuadorian government and Correa.



## APPENDIX VI

**TABLE 1: Coding**

The method of analysis for this thesis was content analysis. The following table is a depiction of the coding of El Universo opinion columns for all three years analyzed — Three months per year: June, July and August. The chart shows the date in which each opinion column was published, its title and coding or classification number (the lower the number, the more negative it is). Data from 2009 forward also contain the name of the opinion column’s author. These data were unavailable for 2007.

### 2007

Number	June	Title	Classification
1	3	Otra Comisión	2
2	3	Los problemas de la altura	1
3	3	Emigrantes en Estados Unidos	3
4	10	Patihorror	1
5	10	Recuerdo de la Asamblea	1
6	17	Rosanna y Alexis	1
7	24	Trampita	2
8	24	Paranoia	1
9	24	¿Habrá reforma tributaria?	2

Number	July	Title	Classification
10	1	Mangajo	1
11	1	Metodología inicial	2
12	8	Miedo	1
13	8	El maestro y las reglas	1
14	8	La esquina del idioma	-1
15	8	Mindo, cinco años después	-1
16	15	Patifiesta	1
17	15	Grabaciones, filmaciones, prohibiciones	1
18	15	Rendición de cuentas	1
19	22	El de antes	1
20	22	El homenaje a Alfonso	2
21	29	Un instante de silencio	1
22	29	A la der...	2
23	29	Una carta para Rafael	1
24	29	Suben precios	3

Number	August	Title	Classification
25	5	El himno	1
26	5	Cheerleaders	1
27	5	Es difícil ser columnista	3
28	5	Puerto Morona	3
29	12	La foto	1
30	12	5—5—5	2
31	12	El costo del dinero	3
32	19	Las ofertas	3
33	19	Bronca	3
34	19	Disolverán el Congreso	2
35	26	El migrante emigrado	1
36	36	Obstáculos	3
37	26	Socialismo del siglo XXI	3

## 2009

June	Title	Author	Classification
7	El poder y el miedo	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
7	Chamanes y 'doras'	Fernando Coronel	1
7	Tu voz	Emilio Palacio	1
7	Nacionalismo metodológico	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	3
14	Sacrilegio	Emilio Palacio	1
14	Los comicios andinos	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	4
14	¡Mucho es el Correa!	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
21	Desafío comercial	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	3
21	Susan Boyle y la envoltura	Fernando Fougères	3
21	Horrores y errores	Emilio Palacio	1
21	Silencio y poder	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	2
21	Brothers & Co.	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
28	San Vicente, Ecuador, Antigua	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	3
28	La pelea sigue	Emilio Palacio	1
28	Las lecciones de Irán	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	-1
28	La revolución humanizada	Francisco Febres Cordero	1

July	Title	Author	Classification
5	Conferencia Magistral	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	2
5	Meda Pena	Emilio Palacio	1
5	La Democracia, un Bien Público Regional	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	-1
5	Ventajas de la Involución	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
12	Tracalada de Valientes	Emilio Palacio	1
12	Las Relaciones con Colombia	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	2
12	Adivinanzas	Francisco Febres Cordero	2
19	Otra Vez Premiado	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	2
19	Shh... Secreto	Emilio Palacio	1
19	Ramon Espinel, Ministro de Agricultura	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	4
19	El Milagroso	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
26	¡Que Tallen Ellos!	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
26	Caos en la Ciudad	Vianna Maino	-1
26	El tiempo Torre	Emilio Palacio	1
26	Centrarse en lo Fundamental	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	1

August	Title	Author	Classification
2	Capitalismo y Socialismo	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	-1
2	Lenin, Despierta	Emilio Palacio	1
2	Conflictos entre Países Bolivarianos	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	3
2	Sin Espiro	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
9	Desabastecimiento	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	2
9	La hora de los locos	Emilio Palacio	1
9	El discurso	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	3
9	El aprendizaje	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
16	Salarios Justos	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	2
16	Los contreras'	Bernard Fougères	3
16	Dos Demandas	Emilio Palacio	1
16	Precios y Agricultura	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	4
16	Los Comités	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
16	La Esquina del Idioma	Piedad Villaviciencio Bellolio	-1
23	Compás de Espera	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	2
23	7 Esperan	Emilio Palacio	1
23	Evidencias Silenciosas	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	2
30	Caridad en la Verdad	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	-1
30	Enamorada del Niño Maestro	Bernard Fougères	-1
30	Autogolpe	Emilio Palacio	1
30	Unasur	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	2
30	La Ausencia	Francisco Febres Cordero	1

2012

Number	June	Title	Author	Classification
1	3	¿Burbuja? Sobre endeudamiento?	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	2
2	3	Las Tarjetas	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
3	3	Más sobre semillas y variedades	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	2
4	10	Personas Jurídicas y Responsabilidad Penal	Xavier Zavala Egas	-1
5	10	Contra Colombia	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
6	10	Desigualdades Territoriales	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	-1
7	17	Buitres	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
8	17	Ley del Hielo	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	1
9	24	Retornan controles	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	1
10	24	Una foto	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
11	24	Un panorama sombrío	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	-1

Number	July	Title	Author	Classification
12	1	Wen'ñabao en Sudamérica	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	-1
13	1	El club de los perseguidos	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
14	1	Confianza en el futuro	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	2
15	8	Dar para recibir	Daniela Trujillo	-1
16	8	Happy Birthday, Julian	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	2
17	8	Carros	Cecilia Ansaldó Briones	-1
18	8	Los nudos	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
19	8	Realineamientos Sudamericanos?	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	-1
20	15	Ecuador quiere colocar bonos	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	1
21	15	El pirata del Guayas	Cecilia Ansaldó Briones	-1
22	15	La batalla perdida	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
23	22	¿Qué pretendemos con Irán?	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	2
24	22	Diagnóstico Taurino	Francisco Febres Cordero	2
25	22	Funcionarios del Estado	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	2
26	29	¡Despacito!	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
27	29	Elogio de la locura	Mauricio Gándara Gallegos	1

Number	August	Title	Author	Classification
28	5	Novedades en el Golfo	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	2
29	5	Las Firmas	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
30	5	Confrontación y desarrollo económico	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	-1
31	12	Mercosur no nos conviene	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	2
32	12	Ciudad mínima	Cecilia Ansaldo Briones	-1
33	12	Me aburren las tarreteras	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	2
34	19	Control de cambios	Walter Spurrier Baquerizo	2
35	19	Regreso del Chucky Seven	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
36	26	El imposible aprendizaje	Francisco Febres Cordero	1
37	26	Me robaron la capacidad de elegir	Manuel Chiriboga Vega	2

**TABLE 2: AVERAGE**

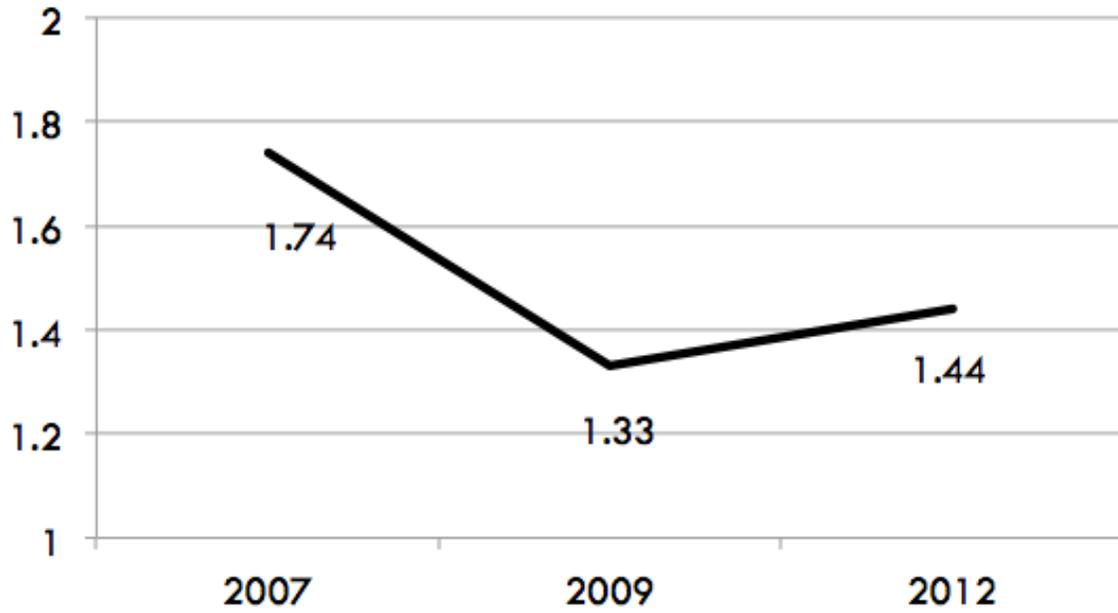
The following table represents the average number of the column coding classifications for each year. The mean average for each year was quantified after removing the columns coded as -1 from the sample. Because such columns were not related to the newspaper's depiction of the government, their classification made them invalid for the analysis.

Year	2007	2009	2012
AVERAGE	1.74	1.33	1.44
ST. DEV	0.85	0.96	0.51

As shown in the table above and the chart below, the average of the classifications of the columns provides further understanding in how the second hypothesis was not valid. In fact, the results oppose the expectation of the hypothesis as they show a continual increase in negativity of columns. While the average for 2012 is slightly less negative than in 2009, the difference does not represent a sufficient change to be

considered not negative, especially since it is still below the 2007 average.

The standard deviation was also calculated for each year, showing that the sample gets closer together in average over time.



## REFERENCES

- Ayala, Rubén. "Entre el respeto y la libertad: la prensa y su relación compleja con el gobierno ecuatoriano." *Revista Andina de Estudios Políticos*. 9 (2011): n. page. Web.
- Babbie, Earl. *The Practice of Social Research*. 13th ed. Belmont: Wadsworth, 2010. Print.
- Blumenthal, Sidney. *The Permanent Campaign: Inside the World of Political Operatives*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1980. Print.
- Blumenthal, Sidney. *The Permanent Campaign of Rafael Correa: Making Ecuador's Plebiscitary Presidency*. Revised ed. New York: A Touchstone Book, 1982. Print..
- Brader, Ted. *Campaigning for Hearts and Minds: How Emotional Appeals in Political Ads Work*. 1st ed. . Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006. Print.
- Castañeda, Jorge. "Latin America's Left Turn." *Foreign Affairs*. 85.3 (2006): 28-43.
- Charnock, Emily Jane. "George W. Bush and the Permanent Campaign Trail." *Public Purpose*. III. (2011): 17-32. Print.
- Checa-Godoy, Antonio. "The banking sector and media ownership: the case of Ecuador." *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*. 67. (2012): 125-147. Print.
- Conaghan, Catherine. "Ecuador: Correa's plebiscitary Presidency." *Journal of Democracy*. 19.2 (2008): 40-60.
- Conaghan, Catherine, and Carlos de la Torre. "The Permanent Campaign of Rafael Correa: Making Ecuador's Plebiscitary Presidency." *The International Journal of Press/Politics*. 13. (2008): 267-276. Print.

- Danziger, James. *Understanding the Political World*. 10th ed. New York: Longman, Pearson Education, 2011. Print.
- de la Torre, Carlos, and Catherine Conaghan. "The Hybrid Campaign: Tradition and Modernity in Ecuador's 2006 Presidential Election." *The International Journal of Press/Politics*. 14. (2009): 335-352.
- del Torre Arauz, Patricia. *¿En qué escenario ganó Correa? La sorpresiva primera vuelta*. Quito: Observatorio Político Cela, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Quito, 2007
- Ellner, Steve. "The Distinguishing Features of Latin America's New Left in Power : The Chávez, Morales, and Correa Governments." *Latin American Perspectives*. 39. (2011): 96-114.
- Freidenberg, Flavia. "Ecuador 2011: Revolución Ciudadana, Estabilidad Presidencial y Personalismo Político." *Revista de Ciencia Política*. 32.1 (2012): 129-150. Web.
- FUNDAMEDIOS,. *Informe Especial — Uso de Cadenas Nacionales: ¿Herramienta para contrarrestar la opinión disidente?*. Quito: FUNDAMEDIOS Expresión de Libertad, 2012. Print.
- Goldstein, Joshua, and Jon Pevehouse. *International Relations*. 9th. Longman, Pearson: New York, 2010-2011. Print.
- Hughes, Sallie, and Chappell Lawson. "The Barriers to Media Opening in Latin America." *Political Communication*. 22.1 (2007): n. page. Web.
- Kennemore, Amy, and Gregory Weeks. "Twenty First Century Socialism? The Elusive Search for a Post-Neoliberal Development Model in Bolivia and Ecuador." *Bulletin of Latin American Research, Journal of the Society for Latin American Studies*. (2011)

- Kitzberger, Philip. *The Media Activism of Latin America's Leftist Governments: Does Ideology Matter?*. Hamburg: GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies (Leibniz-Institut für Globale und Regionale Studien), 2011. Web.
- Klein, Joe. "The Perils of the Permanent Campaign." *TIME*. 30 10` 2005: n. page. Web. 14 Apr. 2013.
- Larrea , T. (2007). *En qué pensamos los ecuatorianos al hablar de democracia? estudio cualitativo de las percepciones y actitudes ciudadanas sobre la democracia ecuatoriana*. Quito: Participación Ciudadana.
- Lowi, Theodore. *The personal presidency: power invested, promise unfulfilled*. 1st ed. . Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985. Print.
- Dunn Tempas, Kathryn, and James McCann. "Testing the permanence of the permanent campaign: an analysis of presidential polling expenditures, 1997-2002 ." *Public Opinion Quarterly*. 71.3 (2007): n. page. Print.
- O'Neil, Patrick. *Essentials of Comparative Politics*. 3rd ed. . New York: W. W. Norton & Company. , 2010. Print.
- Ornstein, Norman, and Thomas Mann. *The Permanent Campaign and its Future*. 1st ed. . Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute and The Brookings Institution, 2000. Print.
- Polity IV Country Report 2010: Ecuador. In (2010). *Polity IV*. Retrieved from <http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity06.htm>
- Punin Larrea, María Isabel. "Rafael Correa y la Prensa Ecuatoriana: una Relación de Intrigas y Odios." *Razón y Palabra, Primera Revista Electrónica en América Latina Especializada en Comunicación*. 75. (2011): n. page. Web.

- Recalde, Paulina. "Elecciones presidenciales 2006: una aproximación a los actores del proceso." *Íconos, Revista de Ciencias Sociales*. 27 (2007): 15-25. Web.
- República Argentina. Autoridad Federal de Servicios de Comunicación Audiovisual. *Law 26.522, Article 75*. Buenos Aires: , 2009. Web.
- Rettberg, Angelika, and Oman Rincón. *Medios, democracia y poder: una mirada comparada desde Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela y Argentina* . 1st ed. Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes, Facultad de Ciencias Sociales-CESO: Facultad de Artes y Humanidades-CEPER, 2012. Print.
- Santander, Pedro. "Latin America: political communication and media discourse in contexts of social and revolutionary transformations." *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*. 5.3 (2010): 227-237. Web.
- Sparrow, Nick, and John Turner. "The permanent campaign the integration of market research techniques in developing strategies in a more uncertain political climate ." *European Journal of Marketing*. 35.9/10 (2001): 984-1002. Web.
- Trajer, Robert, Joseph Russomanno, and Susan Dente Ross. *The Law of Journalism and Mass Communication*. 2nd ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, SAGE, 2010. Print.
- UNESCO. *Assessment of Media Development in Ecuador — 2011*. Quito: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization / International Programme for the Development of Communications, 2011. Web.
- "Uso y abuso de la cadena nacional en América Latina." *Cronista* 31 07 2012, n. pag. Web. 15 Apr. 2013.
- Valenzuela, Arturo. "Latin American Presidencies Interrupted." *Journal of Democracy*. 15.4 (2004): n. page. Web.

Vázquez, Lola, and Napoleón Saltos. *Ecuador, su realidad*. 19th ed. Quito: Fundación José Peralta, 2011-2012. Print.

Waisbord, Silvio. "Between Support and Confrontation: Civil Society, Media Reform, and Populism in Latin America." *Communication, Culture and Critique*. 4 (2011): 97-117. Web.

WANIFRA,. *Increasing Media Plurality or Controlling the Debate: a Report on Press Freedom in Ecuador, January 2012*. Paris: WANIFRA - World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers, 2012. 1-10. Print.

Wimmer, Roger, and Joseph Dominick. *Mass Media Research, an Introduction*. 7th ed. Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth, 2003. Print.