

# **“Governance by Sound Bite”<sup>1</sup>: The White House Briefing, Television, and the Modern Presidency**

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*Beginning in 1995, White House Press Briefings conducted by the President’s Press Secretary were televised and broadcasted in their entirety. In this paper, I argue that the decision to televise these briefings was both consequential and unwise. I will first detail the White House Briefings, with a focus on the effect that television has had on the briefings. Next, I will discuss the effect of televised briefings on the nature and function of the Press Secretary and the press. Lastly, I will broaden the analysis of televised briefings to include theories regarding the decline of the Modern Presidency, which are inextricably linked to the rise of television media. I conclude that the advent of televised media causes style to trump substance and deprives the American public of information necessary in the successful operation of democracy*

## **Introduction**

The White House Press Secretary has an important and influential function in the modern White House. Advocating the policies and governing style of the President and the President’s Administration, the Press Secretary must respond to a daily barrage of questions, rumors, and speculations from an over-eager and unafraid White House Press Corps. On a daily basis, the Press Secretary confronts this ferocious pack of reporters at the noontime White House Press Briefing. In 1995, Mike McCurry, then press secretary to President Bill Clinton, decided to allow television cameras to tape the press briefing in its entirety. While this decision may have been considered innocuous at the time, the introduction of cameras into the White House Briefing Room has created an atmosphere of showmanship and theater that has come to characterize today’s White House Briefings.

In this paper, I argue that the presence of cameras into the White House Briefing Room, which led to the live broadcasting of White House Press Briefings, has had a deleterious effect on the Press Secretary, the President, and American Democracy. First, I will detail the White House Press Briefing and the way in which television cameras have contributed to the stylization and dramatization of briefings. Because of cameras, the press has become more rabid and the Press Secretary has become a master of circumlocution. Next, I will examine the

transformation of the Press Secretary and the way in which televised briefings are changing, and ultimately reducing, the ability of the Press Secretary to communicate effectively. Lastly, I will broaden the analysis of televised briefings to include theories of the decline of the modern presidency. I conclude that the advent of televised media causes style to trump substance and deprives the American public of information necessary in the successful operation of democracy.

### **The White House Press Briefings**

According to Doris Graber, the primary purpose of the White House Press Briefing is for the President to supply the press with information.<sup>ii</sup> Like press releases, the briefings allow the President to articulate positions on public policies, comment on international or domestic events, and inform the press on the occurrence of official (and unofficial) presidential activities. The briefings also offer the Press Secretary the opportunity to manipulate news in the White House's favor. The Press Secretary can supply the ever-insatiable press corps with positive reports on government programs, or the Press Secretary can act to neutralize negative press by countering bad news with optimistic news. Often, the briefing gives "the President a mechanism to provide spin on current events and, hopefully, to set the agenda for the day's news".<sup>iii</sup>

Formal White House Press Briefings began when President Franklin Roosevelt appointed the Stephen Early to become the White House's first Press Secretary. Early's briefings "were regarded as a forum where reporters would get information in both the appropriate form and the speed required by their new organizations".<sup>iv</sup> At this time, the relationship between the press and the President was still adversarial, but there were clear standards and limitations that most members of the press respected. For example, unlike today, President Roosevelt and the press both assumed that everything said by the President or the Press Secretary was off-the-record, unless the President or the Press Secretary stated otherwise.<sup>v</sup> This policy gave the President ample leeway to deny any statement attributed to him and to craft the news in a way that would draw the most favorable picture of the administration.<sup>vi</sup> Certainly there are downsides to sort of mutual understanding. The press could be duped easily and the President could suppress valuable and relevant information. Still, the existence of boundaries surrounding the relationship between the President and the press was advantageous for both the President and the press.

The relationship between the President and the press underwent a fundamental shift after Vietnam and Watergate, resulting in a more combative press corps and a sharper White House Briefing. President Nixon, who was obsessive about his media image, ordered a White House pool to be cemented over to create a new, formal setting for White House briefings.<sup>vii</sup> Believing that the public's perception of the effectiveness of the President was as important as the actual effectiveness of the President, Nixon envisioned the White House Briefing Room as an area where he could control and subdue the White House Press Corps. Instead, the White House Briefing Room raised the level of seriousness of the previously

informal briefings and raised the expectations of reporters regarding how much information was to be disclosed to the press.<sup>viii</sup> Similarly, the sentiment among the press that they had been misled by the Johnson Administration on Vietnam and lied to by President Nixon with respect to Watergate engendered a more cynical, skeptical, and fearless Press Corps. By the 1980s, the White House Press Briefings had become a stage for members of the White House Press Corps to attack and question the Press Secretary and, by extension, the President.

This ambiance placed added pressure and stress on an already over-burdened White House Press Secretary. Described as a “theater of the absurd”, the briefing forced press secretaries to juggle the dual role of “manager of the message and messenger boy”.<sup>ix</sup> Press secretaries, according to Richard Perloff, became “captive” to journalistic expectations and were required to provide clear and concise responses to a range of questions.<sup>x</sup> The preparation needed to conduct a successful and productive briefing began to occupy more time in the Press Secretary’s day. Jody Powell, press secretary for President Jimmy Carter, remarked that this preparation was “not worth the time” that press secretaries spent on it.<sup>xi</sup>

For contemporary presidents, the relationship with the press, which is nurtured by the Press Secretary, can determine both the degree of public support that can be garnered and the amount of progress an administration can achieve. Howard Kurtz notes that during the second half of President Clinton’s first term in office, a primary goal was to “broker a cease-fire between the President and a hostile press corps”.<sup>xii</sup> Kurtz suggests that “by the time McCurry inherited the podium, the press operations had become increasingly critical to the success or failure of any administration”.<sup>xiii</sup> Mike McCurry, Clinton’s second press secretary, assumed his position in 1995 and took several efforts to appease the press corps, including a grant of permission to televise the White House Briefing in its entirety.

### **Television in the Briefing Room**

Television cameras were first introduced into the White House Briefing Room by Marlin Fitzwater, President George H. W. Bush’s Press Secretary.<sup>xiv</sup> Fitzwater established the rule that the cameras could only capture the first five minutes of the briefing, without the addition of sound, to “give the networks some fresh video wallpaper for their voice-over reports”.<sup>xv</sup> In his autobiography, Fitzwater explains that his decision not to allow cameras to tape the briefings fully and to record an audio version of the briefing was a preventative measure, that “if [he] made a mistake during the briefing, the networks couldn’t show it every night for a week”.<sup>xvi</sup> Fitzwater concedes that his limiting the access of cameras and recordings of the briefings was an act of “self-protection”, so that neither he nor the President would be caught making claims that neither would agree with or could verify.<sup>xvii</sup>

President Clinton’s first Press Secretary, Dee Dee Myers, reversed Fitzwater’s decision and permitted the taped recordings of the first five minutes of the briefings to include sound. However, this decision led to unfavorable and unintended consequences. Mike McCurry commented that in the aftermath of this policy the briefings “got really panicky because correspondents would try to cram

all of their sounds bite questions into the first two or three minutes”.<sup>xviii</sup> In 1995, McCurry, who succeeded Myers, made the ultimate, and “unilateral”, decision to allow cameras to record both the visual and audio components of the White House Briefing.<sup>xix</sup> According to McCurry,

The radio and television guys, primarily the radio guys, argued that they ought to have access to the full briefing. They were at a handicap against the print people because their reports used the sound from the briefing. The radio guys... made the most passionate appeal...I thought that was a reasonable argument.<sup>xx</sup>

McCurry believed that opening up the briefing room to full television coverage was “journalistic fair practice in order to make sure that the TV and radio could have equal access to the content of the briefing”.<sup>xxi</sup> Nevertheless, even McCurry admits that he had neither the foresight nor the prescience at the time of his decision to predict the implications and effects of his decision.

Televised in their entirety and broadcasted live daily, White House briefings have now become less productive and less informative than they were and ought to be. The Press Secretary is more cautious and less inclined to divulge information to the press when he or she stands before live cameras. Joe Lockhart, President Clinton’s press secretary and Mike McCurry’s successor, imagined that if cameras were eliminated from the briefing room, “there would be more give and take”.<sup>xxii</sup> P. J. Crowley, also an official within the Clinton Administration, agrees and argues that “the White House Press Briefings have become sharper and more contentious with the advent of television in the Press Room”.<sup>xxiii</sup> This outlook cuts across party lines. Marlin Fitzwater has stated that “the press briefing...has lost much of its usefulness” due in large part to the entrance of cameras into the briefing room.<sup>xxiv</sup> Ari Fleischer, President George W. Bush’s first press secretary, has expressed frustration and powerlessness regarding the presence of cameras in the briefing room. For Fleischer, the briefing “had an air of theater to it” and was “a spectacle in which the media did their best to pressure the White House...into admitting that much of what the President is doing is wrong”.<sup>xxv</sup>

Outside of the briefing room, the White House Press Secretary and several deputy press secretaries confront the press in an informal meeting, known in Washington parlance as a “gaggle”, that occurred most weekday mornings. Taking place in the office of the Press Secretary, the morning gaggle allows the Press Secretary to preempt members of the press corps on developments and news that is expected to take place during the course of the day. Members of the press are permitted to ask relevant questions and record responses given by the Press Secretary. This setting, where cameras are absent and the temperature of the discourse is markedly cooler than it is at the televised briefing, has several benefits. P. J. Crowley recalled the impact of the gaggle.

It had benefits on both sides. It usually lasted 15 minutes or so but you got a sense from the Press as to what they were interested in and you would have an

early opportunity to sign “here’s the news that we’re likely to impart today”.<sup>xxvi</sup>

Ari Fleischer has stated in the past that the gaggle is both more “informative and serious than the briefing”.<sup>xxvii</sup> Joe Lockhart has openly agreed, observing that the morning briefing is “a much more casual and much more informative session” than the afternoon televised briefing.<sup>xxviii</sup>

At the afternoon briefing, members of the White House Press Corps engage in self-indulgent acts of “showmanship”<sup>xxix</sup> and “political posturing”<sup>xxx</sup> in order to impress viewers and colleagues. “Yesterday’s news hounds have become today’s show dogs”<sup>xxxi</sup>, and the new generation of reporters are “younger, more driven, and less awed by the job”.<sup>xxxii</sup> Joe Lockhart has mentioned that “reporters like to look slightly smarter than maybe they are...and that can stilt the conversation and it can also raise the temperature level a little bit”.<sup>xxxiii</sup> Fringe journalists, or journalists who write for either extreme left-leaning or extreme right-leaning publications, attend the briefings more frequently in order to appear on television.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Instead of trying to extract information from the Press Secretary, these individuals grandstand in the briefing room so that their message is heard. This type of behavior, while possibly amusing for viewers, reduces the quality of dialogue at the briefings.

Even the consensus among mainstream reporters in the White House Press Corps is strongly against the presence of cameras into the afternoon briefing. The *Washington Post*’s Dana Milbank commented that “TV has destroyed the afternoon press briefing...the whole briefing is Hollywood”.<sup>xxxv</sup> Ann Compton, White House Correspondent for *ABC News*, believes that the “briefings are ultimately useless”.<sup>xxxvi</sup> David Sanger, White House Correspondent for *The New York Times*, has repeatedly bemoaned the decline of the White House Press Briefing and the largely irrelevant rhetoric presented to reporters by the Press Secretary.<sup>xxxvii</sup> Sanger notes that “while broadcasting the briefings is a victory for on-the-record transparency, it flushes insight down the drain”.<sup>xxxviii</sup>

Though some reporters may relish in the limelight of live broadcasting, the attack-and-defend style of the briefing may contribute to an overall negative impression of the press corps. Larry Sabato, of the University of Virginia, contends that the televised briefings make the press appear angry, overly hostile, and aggressive, which causes the American public to look down upon the profession and the news media.<sup>xxxix</sup> The press plays a critical role in American democracy; one that guards the public against an over-reaching or clandestine government. When the American public loses confidence in or distrusts the Press, then the compact between the press and the public becomes broken. Mike McCurry fears that “when the citizen sees this [the briefing] on television, the citizen thinks that this is completely impolite behavior on the part of the journalist and their respect for the press declines even further”.<sup>xl</sup>

Several arguments could be proffered to defend the presence of cameras in the briefing room. Unlike any other time in our nation’s past, nearly every American has the ability to view White House Press Briefings and see how the government and the Press function together. Joe Lockhart claimed that “there are positives involved...anyone who’s interested can turn on CSPAN everyday and see

what the White House has to say”.<sup>xli</sup> The visibility of the White House and the Press Secretary at the briefings has a certain populist appeal for individuals who value a personalized and modernized form of politics. As George Reedy, Press Secretary for President Lyndon Johnson, once pointed out, “The Press Secretary began [because]...the President of the United States became very close to us”.<sup>xlii</sup> Indeed, the prospect of television, and transparency, in any branch of government would seem to foster more accountability and responsibility within government. When more citizens have greater access to government, it follows that elected officials must respond and represent citizens more effectively in order to maintain office.

Unfortunately, transparency does not always breed accountable, and access to governmental information alone does not ensure that citizens will seek out, absorb, or understand such information.<sup>xliii</sup> Any argument in favor of televised briefings on the grounds of increased transparency assumes that the information presented at televised briefings is the same information that would be passed on at non-televised briefings. The argument assumes *ceteris paribus*, all other things equal – that no change in behavior or action would be exhibited by either the Press Secretary or the Press Corps with the introduction of television. But television cameras do change the behavior of the Press Secretary and the Press Corps. Television cameras engender transparency, but the benefits that individuals associate with such transparency are lost in the game of charade played by the Press Secretary and the Press.

### **The Press Secretary and the Press in Televised Briefings**

Since the Press Secretary can only be held accountable for what he or she says on camera, less explanation and analysis is revealed during White House Press Briefings for fear of the potential repercussions that such pronouncements would unleash. This cautionary approach to the briefings is due in large part to the President’s need to control news. Since the administration of Franklin Roosevelt, the media was viewed as “an instrument to communicate the President’s message to the people”.<sup>xliiv</sup> In fact, Doris Graber argues that the Office of Communication and the Press Secretary were conceived in order to give the President a stronger grasp on the flow of news emanating from the White House.<sup>xlv</sup> With the dawn of the television age, Press Secretaries can only control news if they can control the presentation of news. Larry Speakes, press secretary for President Ronald Reagan, admitted in his personal memoir that to become a successful spokesman, he “had to think like a television producer”.<sup>xlvi</sup>

It would be most rational, then, for the Press Secretary to only communicate information to the Press that would ameliorate the image the President. The Press, for their part, reinforces this notion. Overtly negative and magnetized to the most prurient of scandals, the press corps has abused their information-seeking capability. On the subject of Presidential Press Conferences, Larry Speakes wrote that “in the wake of Watergate and Vietnam, Press Conferences have deteriorated into a game of ‘How can I trip him up?’ and ‘I gotcha!’”.<sup>xlvii</sup> For Speakes, the relationship with the Press “was Us against Them”, adversarial and

oppositional.<sup>xlviii</sup> Most members of the Press were motivated to act aggressively because of the competitive atmosphere within the profession, especially those reporters who make up the White House Press Corps.<sup>xlix</sup> Helen Thomas, the matriarch of the press corps, describes these reporters as “self-appointed watchdogs, anointed by none, feared by some, and guided...to pursue the truth where ever it leads”.<sup>1</sup> However, with modern news media outlets guided by increasing pressure from executives to remain profitable, the truth reporters may seek to pursue may not be in the best interest of the American public.

Jody Powell has commented that the relationship forged between the press and the Press Secretary is “basically flawed” because “it fails to provide the public with the quantity and quality of information that they have a right to expect and that they need in order to make decisions necessary to self-govern”.<sup>li</sup> Televised briefings bring out the worse in the Press Secretary and the press at the expense of the public. The successful functioning of our democracy requires a forthcoming Press Secretary and a press corps that is has the self-control to disclose information that is relevant to the public. Live television makes it more difficult for both of these requisites to be fulfilled.

### **Television and the Modern Presidency**

It would behoove any analysis of the negative impact of television in the White House Briefing Room to examine the issue within the broader context of the decline of the modern presidency. In providing this perspective, it becomes clear that televised briefings are a reflection of the growing demands of the modern media and the growing difficulty to govern effectively under an omnipresent press. Like his Press Secretary, the President has had to cope with a merciless media presence, and most of the theoretical assessments of institution of the Presidency in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century revolve around the struggle between the President and the Press.

Richard Neustadt, the authority on presidential power in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, argues that “the essence of presidential persuasion power” is the ability to convince other public officials and opinion makers that “what the White House wants of them is what they ought to do for their own sake”.<sup>lii</sup> For Neustadt, presidential persuasion power is akin to “collective bargaining” rather than “reasoned argument”, and the collective bargaining power of any president rests heavily on how others view the President.<sup>liii</sup> This notion of public prestige, or how the public sees the President, is strategically important and ought to be guarded by any president hoping to accomplish a comprehensive set of legislative goals.<sup>liv</sup> Since public prestige is fundamentally shaped by the images that radiate from television screens across the country, Presidents must be conscious of and concerned with their media image.

Jeffrey Tulis, author of the seminal text *The Rhetorical Presidency*, criticizes Neustadt for “institutional partisanship”, or observing the President from the perspective of the President.<sup>lv</sup> By examining the president from outside the Neustadtian framework, Tulis is able to conclude that the modern presidency will be a struggle between the President’s traditional constitutional demands and the

contemporary demands of the mass media. According to Tulis, “political rhetoric is, simultaneously, a practical result of basic doctrines of governance and an avenue to the meaning of alternative constitutional understanding”.<sup>lvi</sup> This alternative constitutional understanding is conceptualized in what Tulis terms “the second constitution” or, more generally, a constitution of the contemporary popular perception of the presidency in which rhetorical leadership is necessary.<sup>lvii</sup> The danger of this situation is that the president as policy-maker will be forced to abandon his obligations to the Constitution in order to fulfill the obligations of this new, second constitution. Such a danger manifested itself in the Johnson administration, when President Johnson relegated the control of public policy decision-making to subordinates to the extent that “the ability of the President himself to discharge his responsibilities” was compromised.<sup>lviii</sup> Similarly, Presidents who see their rhetorical leadership as a component of their bargaining power, as Neustadt would argue, will focus less on policy-making and more on policy persuading.

Other theorists have come to similar conclusions, but for different reasons. In *The Image-Is-Everything Presidency*, St.Clair, Waterman, and Wright claim that unreasonable expectations of the American public about the ability of the President to satisfy demands of the job pigeonhole presidents into “creat[ing] desirable illusions and images”.<sup>lix</sup> Whether true or misleading, these illusions require presidents to “put the public relations cart before the policy horse”; in essence, presidents are told to speak more, but say less.<sup>lx</sup> Television has raised the stakes of such image-making.

...Television is the news source of choice for most Americans... consequently, ‘making-the-news’ in a favorable light is critical for both office-seekers and office-holders. Those who shape the content of television news...also influence how Americans think about politics

Presidents, in order to amass as much public support as possible so that their initiatives are embraced by others, must conform to the way in which television projects leaders. Style, then, becomes a necessary ingredient in advancing substantive goals.

Frederic Smoller concurs, but takes the claim a step further by arguing that television’s overwhelmingly negative portrayal of the White House forces the president to manage news in such a way that “will subvert democratic values”.<sup>lxi</sup> In *The Six O’Clock Presidency*, Smoller’s finds that “presidential decline is an unintended consequence of the judgments that influence the gathering and editing of news”.<sup>lxii</sup> Smoller’s primary fear lies in the type of information that will be presented to the public and the complexity by which that information is presented. Television’s “visual imperative”, or the requirement of television news to accompany news reports with an image, simplifies and often misrepresents information being conveyed.<sup>lxiii</sup> As such, the public will be deprived of substantive information because the President will be unwilling to disclose such information

due to the overwhelming negative and misrepresentative nature of modern news outlets.

While these theories may paint a bleak and unpromising picture of the modern presidency, reality neither belies nor contradicts their outlooks. Howard Kurtz observed during the Clinton Administration that “the mundane reality of White House life was that the top players spent perhaps half their time either talking to the press, plotting press strategy, or reviewing how their latest efforts had played in the press”.<sup>lxiv</sup> Vice President Dick Cheney has stated that “to have an effective presidency...the White House must control the agenda”.<sup>lxv</sup> Pursuant to Neustadt’s conjecture, Cheney also claims that “public support is the most visible source of ongoing political power”.<sup>lxvi</sup>

It is then no surprise that by 1995 the White House Press Briefings, which bridge the Press and the Presidency in the White House, were televised live and in their entirety. It is also no surprise that, like the modern presidency, the quality of the briefings have decreased due to the presence of television cameras. Recently, George W. Bush chose to appoint Tony Snow as White House Press Secretary, making Snow the first Press Secretary to have experience in television news. Julie Mason, of the Houston Chronicle, treats this selection as an indication of “the elevation of style over substance” in the White House.<sup>lxvii</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Where, then, does this leave the American citizen and voter? How are citizens expected to cut through the rhetoric and showmanship that has come to characterize contemporary politics? With regard to White House Press Briefings, has trumped substance and both the President and the Press Secretary have adapted to increased television media presence by withholding information from citizens rather than providing it to the Press in a deep and nuanced way.

Although our democracy is damaged, it is not in serious peril. While a public deprived of information is a threat to our nation’s well-being, the American electorate operates in ways similar to economic market forces - through the capital of a collective vote, the electorate is capable of rectifying wrongs and redirecting the focus of government. A public educated enough to discern fact from fluff in White House Briefings will ensure that our democracy survives and prevails.<sup>lxviii</sup>

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- <sup>i</sup> This quote was taken from a personal communication with P.J. Crowley, former Special Assistant to the President of the United States for National Security Affairs during the Clinton Administration.
- <sup>ii</sup> Doris Graber, *Mass Media and Electoral Politics*, 2002.
- <sup>iii</sup> Richard M. Perloff, *Political Communication: Politics, Press, and Public in America*, (Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998), 68.
- <sup>iv</sup> Grossman, Michael Baruch and Kumar, Martha Joynt, *Portraying the President: The White House and the News Media*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981) 133.
- <sup>v</sup> *Ibid*, 133.
- <sup>vi</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>vii</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>viii</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>ix</sup> *Ibid*, 253.
- <sup>x</sup> Perloff, 68.
- <sup>xi</sup> Kenneth W. Thompson (Ed.), *Three Press Secretaries on the Presidency and the Press: Jody Powell, George Reedy, and Jerry terHorst*, (Lanham: University Press of America, 1983) 139.
- <sup>xii</sup> Howard Kurtz, *Spin Cycle: Inside the Clinton Propaganda Machine*, (New York: The Free Press, 1998)
- <sup>xix</sup>.
- <sup>xiii</sup> Kurtz, 17.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Henry Jaffe, "Correspondents Call White House Press Briefings 'Useless'", *The Washingtonian*, [<http://www.washingtonian.com/buzz/2003/briefings.html>], 26 September 2003.
- <sup>xv</sup> Kurtz, 17
- <sup>xvi</sup> Marlin Fitzwater, *Call the Briefing! Bush and Reagan, Sam and Helen: A Decade with the President and the Press*, (New York: Times Books, 1995) 98.
- <sup>xvii</sup> Fitzwater, 99.
- <sup>xviii</sup> M. McCurry, personal communication.
- <sup>xix</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>xx</sup> M. McCurry, personal communication.
- <sup>xxi</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>xxii</sup> J. Lockhart, personal communication.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> P. Crowley, personal communication.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Steve Holland, "White House Briefings Need Change – Spokesman", *Reuters*, 3 May 2006.
- <sup>xxv</sup> Ari Fleischer, "Showtime at the White House", *The Washington Post*, 27 April 2006, A7.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> P. Crowley, personal communication.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Fleischer. A7.
- <sup>xxviii</sup> J. Lockhart, personal communication.
- <sup>xxix</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>xxx</sup> M. McCurry, personal communication.
- <sup>xxxi</sup> Fredric T. Smoller, *The Six O'Clock Presidency: A Theory of Presidential Press Relations in the Age of Television*, (New York: Praeger, 1990) 37.
- <sup>xxxii</sup> Kurtz, 39.
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> J. Lockhart, personal communication.
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> Christopher Cooper and John McKinnon, "White House Press Room as Political Stage", *The Wall Street Journal*, 25 February 2005.
- <sup>xxxv</sup> Jaffe.
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> Jaffe.
- <sup>xxxvii</sup> David E. Sanger, "Spell 'No Comment' for Us, Please", *The New York Times*, 23 April 2006,
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- <sup>xxxviii</sup> Sanger, D1.
- <sup>xxxix</sup> Holland.

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- <sup>xi</sup> M. McCurry, personal communication.
- <sup>xli</sup> J. Lockhart, personal communication.
- <sup>xlii</sup> Kenneth W. Thompson (Ed.), *Three Press Secretaries on the Presidency and the Press: Jody Powell, George Reedy, and Jerry terHorst*, (Lanham: University Press of America, 1983) 8.
- <sup>xliii</sup> This point was made abundantly clear in several class discussions on civic participation in the electoral process.
- <sup>xliv</sup> Perloff, 41.
- <sup>xlv</sup> Graber, 289.
- <sup>xlvi</sup> Larry Speakes, *Speaking Out: The Reagan Presidency from Inside the White House*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988) 220.
- <sup>xlvii</sup> Speakes, 235.
- <sup>xlviii</sup> Speakes, 217.
- <sup>xliv</sup> Smoller, 24
- <sup>l</sup> Kenneth W. Thompson (Ed.), *The White House Press on the Presidency: News Management and Co-option*, (Lanham: University Press of America, 1983) 40.
- <sup>li</sup> Thompson, *Three...*, 13.
- <sup>lii</sup> Richard E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan*, (New York: The Free Press, 1990) 30.
- <sup>liii</sup> Neustadt, 40.
- <sup>liv</sup> Neustadt, 78-79.
- <sup>lv</sup> Jeffrey K. Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987) 10.
- <sup>lvi</sup> Tulis, 14.
- <sup>lvii</sup> Tulis, 17.
- <sup>lviii</sup> Richard T. McCulley and Emmette S. Redford, *White House Operations: The Johnson Presidency*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986) 3.
- <sup>lix</sup> Gilbert St. Clair, Richard W. Waterman, and Robert Wright, *The Image-Is-Everything Presidency*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999) 3.
- <sup>lx</sup> St. Clair, 4.
- <sup>lxi</sup> Smoller, 5.
- <sup>lxii</sup> Smoller, 6.
- <sup>lxiii</sup> Smoller, 28.
- <sup>lxiv</sup> Kurtz, xxiv.
- <sup>lxv</sup> John Anthony Maltese, *Spin Control: The White House Office of Communications and the Management of Presidential News*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992) 1.
- <sup>lxvi</sup> Maltese, 4.
- <sup>lxvii</sup> Rebecca Dana, "Live and Direct, Tony Snow is the New Face – and Hair – of the White House", *The New York Observer*, 1 May 2006, 20.
- <sup>lxviii</sup> This sentence is loosely based on a speech given by William Faulkner in 1949.

When a new president takes office, the White House press corps gets a new face behind the briefing podium. The White House press secretary is the key to controlling the flow of information between the presidential administration and journalists—putting together press releases, holding briefings for the press corps, and facilitating access to top officials in the administration. But the idea of an official White House press secretary is more recent than you might think. He came to regret this when TV stations began broadcasting his briefings live during the Monica Lewinsky scandal, later calling it "the dumbest thing I ever did." And the position of press secretary is (slowly) evolving, too. The modern presidency cannot work effectively if it is constantly at war with the media." White House press secretary Jen Psaki says she'll resign next year when it's 'time for somebody else to have this job'. THOMAS COLSON. In fairness, press secretaries have often done this in our modern era; the only difference is she no longer needs to deliver the official talking points from a podium or have a regularly-scheduled conversation with reporters. But she continues to be someone that reporters can ask whenever they cannot get Mr Trump or the First Lady to comment on an issue, or when they want clarification about something the president said. A2A. New White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany's first briefing started with her promising to never lie, but then, she told multiple lies. The White House. Office of the Press Secretary. For Immediate Release. March 28, 2011. Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on Libya. European allies declared their willingness to commit resources to stop the killing. The Libyan opposition and the Arab League appealed to the world to save lives in Libya. And so at my direction, America led an effort with our allies at the United Nations Security Council to pass a historic resolution that authorized a no-fly zone to stop the regime's attacks from the air, and further authorized all necessary measures to protect the Libyan people. Ten days ago, having tried to end the violence without using force, the international community offered Qaddafi a final chance to stop his campaign of killing, or face the consequences.