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An analysis of media-generated and party-generated news in presidential primary election coverage

Brian McMahon
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**AN ANALYSIS OF MEDIA-GENERATED AND PARTY-GENERATED
NEWS
IN PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY ELECTION COVERAGE**

**A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Journalism
and Mass Communications
San Jose State University**

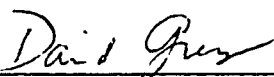
**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science**

**By
Brian McMahon
December, 1989**


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ABSTRACT

AN ANALYSIS OF MEDIA- AND PARTY-GENERATED NEWS IN PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY CAMPAIGN COVERAGE

By Brian McMahon

This thesis examined U.S. presidential primary news coverage in the press in 1960, 1968, 1980, and 1988, and found that the news was generated primarily by the media, political parties, and presidential candidates.

Particularly, the study addressed the relationship between media- and party-generated news during the years examined. Results showed a significant increase in the amount of media-generated news from 1960 to 1988. However, no significant decrease in party-generated news was found, thus casting doubt on widely-held notions by political science and mass communications researchers that the media has assumed informing, electoral mobilizing, and identifying functions once held by the political parties.

The study also showed a significant increase in candidate-generated news, providing evidence to support the assumption that party reforms during the 1960s and 1970s opened the way for candidates to make greater initiatives through the primaries and the media to cultivate mass electorates.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The weakening of the American political party, as noted by Rubin (1981), "is a theme that runs consistently through the work of academics and journalists alike" (p. 182, 183). The political party, he argued, has declined considerably in strength "as a mediating institution standing between the people and the government" (p. 183). Although the decline of the political party is the result of many long-term causes, a major change in mass communications such as television (and in turn, mass media as a whole) "must be viewed as a critical factor in the vastly accelerated rate of the party's decline" (p. 192).

As explained by Barber (1980):

Much as the old party bosses used to pass themselves off as mere "coordinators" and powerless arrangers, so some modern day titans of journalism want themselves thought of as mere scorekeepers and messenger boys. Yet the signs of journalists' key role as the major advancers and retarders of presidential ambitions are all around us.

Rubin (1981) noted that "no public institutions have been more affected by the immensely heightened impact of the mass media than the presidency and the political parties . . ." (p. 181). These public institutions--the presidency and the political parties--are the very institutions that have structured America's political choices by defining to a large number of individuals the range and nature of political alternatives (p. 182).

Rubin (1981) then asked some important questions that should be asked by every American who is concerned about the way present and future leaders

will be chosen: If the parties and their leadership lose political power (i.e., the ability to pick and choose candidates), do others gain it? Does the loss of influence by party leaders mean that the ordinary party members have captured it, or do media leaders or other political activists gain a new and decisive role in determining political choices? What are some of the critical changes in the institutional relationships of press and party, and how have the changing dynamics of political communications altered the structure, organization, and opportunities for political conflict? (p. 182).

In The Emergence of American Political Issues: The Agenda-Setting Function of the Press, Shaw and McCombs (1977) stated that media behavior "is intimately connected with how our political environment is perceived, how our agenda of public issues is shaped, and how we cast our votes." The authors noted:

It is also important to understand how competing groups in our society influence the shape of the political issues which concern all of us (and sometimes are critical in the outcome of a particular election). Every society must have processes by which the myriad problems, concerns, and questions of its many citizens are translated into succinct issues, are operationalized in government action of some sort, and perhaps finally are perpetuated as cultural values (p. 150).

One of these "competing groups," the American political party, is quickly losing its influence on how political information, particularly in a presidential campaign, is presented to voters while the American mass media is quickly gaining prominence in this area.

One of the most important media-related changes that affected the political party as an organization is the development of the presidential primary system (Rubin, 1981). Although the primaries have both democratized the process of

choosing a party's presidential candidate and, as a result, weakened the traditional party structure, they also have opened the way for the press "to gain a major role in the nomination process that it previously lacked" (p. 184). Rubin noted that the press has stepped into the presidential primary nomination arena, which consists of a more fluid and volatile combination of contesting political activists and ordinary party voters, as the main entity that organizes information, appraises candidates' qualities, and evaluates trends and outcomes. With the increased importance of the primaries in the presidential nomination process, the press has gained increasing importance in its function as an organizing, appraising, and evaluating system, that function having previously belonged to the parties themselves.

Taking the above points into consideration, it is time to measure how much impact the press has on the presidential primary campaign. But, one may ask, how should one go about it?

According to Blumler and McLeod (1987), "more research is needed on the processes responsible for the formation of election issue agendas in the mass media" (p. 33). They have noted in recent studies indicators have been devised to help determine the degree to which campaign coverage reflects a "party logic" or a "media logic"-- or to put it another way, a political party influence or a mass media influence. Blumler and McLeod noted that these indicators not only are well-suited to a comparative approach, but also can "bring empirical evidence to bear on a core debate in our field between those who assign the mass media a discretionary role and autonomous function in society and those who regard them as highly dependent on the prime power and cultural forces of society" (p. 33).

A study by Mazzoleni (1986) evaluated mass media election coverage of the 1983 Italian general elections through indicators Mazzoleni labeled media logic and party logic. One main function of mass media output in an election campaign, Mazzoleni wrote, is the capacity of the media to introduce certain issues, thereby influencing to a degree the political debate by the parties. This capacity of the media to introduce certain issues varies according to two basic patterns of message production. The first is what Mazzoleni called party logic, where the political parties govern or have control over the campaign news presented in the media. The second, a media logic, is defined by Mazzoleni as what Althiede and Snow (1979) described as the set of values and formats through which campaign events and issues are "focused or treated, and given meaning by news workers and news organizations in order to promote a particular kind of presentation and understanding that is compatible with, for example, scheduling and time considerations, entertainment, values, and images of the audience" (p. 197).

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the election news covered by the press during the U.S. presidential primaries from 1960 to 1988 was generated primarily by the media, the candidate, or the political parties. Particularly, the purpose was to see if there have been changes in these elements over time. This was done by examining the press' presidential primary news coverage for the years 1960, 1968, 1980, and 1988. The study aimed to identify the type of information the public receives from the media during political campaigns, particularly a presidential primary campaign. If media behavior "is intimately connected with how our political environment is perceived and how we cast our votes" (Shaw & McCombs, 1972, p. 150), then it

is important to understand what kind and what manner of campaign information the American voter receives as his or her daily political diet.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

To support the argument that a media "influence" prevails in the press' presidential campaign coverage, this literature review will cover the following three main points: 1) the mass media and the presidential primary's role in the presidential nominating process; 2) the difference between political party- and mass media-influenced issues in an election campaign; and 3) media power/influence.

The Mass Media and Presidential Primary's Role in the Presidential Nominating Process

Mass communication and political researchers (Keech and Matthews, 1976; Patterson, 1980; Polsby, 1980; Smith, 1980; Rubin, 1981) have documented the trend in the past 30 years of the U.S. media's increasing role of serving functions previously performed by the political parties, such as informing and mobilizing the electorate, and identifying, recruiting, and testing candidates.

Keech and Matthews (1976) have noted that television is now the principal means of nationwide communication and tends to "dramatize and nationalize the previously parochial skirmishes of the [presidential] primaries" (p. 94). Presidential candidates, the authors added, look with favor on the primaries and, therefore, the media, as a means of "gaining national exposure and demonstrating their attractiveness to voters" (p. 94).

Smith (1980) reviewed the widely accepted trend toward the gradual disappearance of the political party as the major informing and issue-initiating

force in U.S. presidential politics. If this is true, one would expect to find little "party influence" in 1988 presidential campaign news stories.

The media and parties, according to Smith (1980), began to alter their relationship dramatically in the 1950s when television came to "rob the party of one of its basic functions--the organization and management of campaigns" (p. 22). The rise of the broadcast media and the reemergence of primaries, Smith noted, altered the scope and nature of the political battle.

Patterson (1980) reported that the introduction of the direct primary in 1904 was a threat to the control the party leaders had over the nominating process. But it was not until the 1950s and 1960s that the parties' leadership authority was regularly challenged in the primaries. He noted that the media have gained importance because the voters have come to depend more heavily on the information they provide. Today, Patterson wrote, the press is less willing to act as a common carrier and is intent on playing a more active part in determining what is important in a presidential campaign.

Rubin (1981) suggested that, through their intense coverage of the primaries during the late 1960s and early 1970s, the news media helped legitimize primaries "as the democratic way to make nomination choices" (p. 192). Rubin's assessment is based on his examination of network television news transcripts from 1967 through 1976. Although renewed interest and demand for primaries came first from candidates challenging entrenched politicians, once television journalists "grasped the professional opportunities offered by expanded primary politics, they were quick to capitalize and expand on a process economically and politically advantageous to the medium" (pp. 191, 192). Rubin noted that the basic political posture of television journalism

toward alternative nomination processes was to favor primaries versus state caucus/convention methods. This was because, compared to print journalism, television had far more difficulty in covering stories of "complex elite negotiations than election campaigns and action-oriented events" (p. 192).

Rubin's (1981) examination of CBS news coverage of the 1968 primaries revealed that the network's evening news only once ran a feature story on nonprimary delegate selection procedures even though almost six out of ten delegates as well as the nominee himself were chosen by these methods rather than in primaries. In 1972, CBS aired a four-minute segment on the Iowa caucus in January and, after that, nonprimary methods of selection were slightly covered "until the Texas convention was examined in June of that year" (p. 192).

According to Polsby (1980), the major party reforms and legal changes since 1968--such as Democratic party reforms that came out of the 1968 McGovern-Fraser Commission and federally-provided matching funds for the primary election races--have changed the rules of the presidential candidate nominating game so that the nominating process has shifted from cultivation of presidential candidates by party leaders and party organizations to direct initiatives by the candidates themselves to cultivate mass electorates through the primaries. Thus the influence of the party leaders and organizations to control the presidential nomination process since 1968 has been replaced by those who have access to the "devices and the channels of mass publicity such as public relations, media technicians, and professional journalists. . . whose direct access to the news media gives them influence over the content of the national news diet" (p. 55).

According to Rubin (1981), "it is clear that many, though not all, of the

functions of the political party have been lost to the new mass media, specifically the party's primacy in electoral mobilization, and to an increasing extent, in identifying, 'recruiting', and 'testing' potential candidates" (p. 181). This emergence of the media as an organizer of information, mobilizer of voters, and recruiter of potential candidates, he noted, "directly challenges much of the traditional strength and functional underpinnings of the parties" (p. 181). The weakening of the American political party, he added, is a theme that runs consistently through the work of academics and journalists alike. This is one more reason one would expect to find the press expressing more of a media influence than a party influence in covering election campaigns.

The primaries, Rubin (1981) stated, expand the nomination arena from one dominated by established party leaders to a more fluid and volatile combination of contesting political activists and ordinary party voters. These activists and voters enable the press to serve as a crucial link between candidates seeking nomination and a party's rank and file. The press' role in organizing, informing, appraising candidates' qualities, and evaluating trends and outcomes--a role which was once a function of the party--has grown with the increasing importance of the primaries in the nomination process.

Weaver et al. (1981) noted that "guidance from the media is also more essential in the primaries than at other times because party labels are not available to help the voter in making choices" (p. 76).

The press, Rubin (1981) explained, uses candidates to generate news for its own journalistic purposes, while the candidates of necessity must use the press to reach and persuade their potential audience. Some political scientists view this interaction between political actors and the press as an "exchange process"

where each side seeks to advance its own professional interest, producing a resultant "news outcome." Both primary candidates and the press, Rubin noted, clearly seek to develop news that will suit their own professional and organizational purposes.

The Difference Between Political Party- and Mass Media-Influenced Issues in an Election Campaign

To study what types of issues are presented in the media in presidential campaign stories, it is necessary to review what kind of campaign issues both the political parties and the mass media deem important.

Shaw and McCombs (1977), stating that the mass media influence the awareness toward certain political issues, argued that a considerable amount of campaign news is not devoted to discussion of the campaign, but rather the major political issues. The media, according to the authors, appear to exert a considerable impact on voters' judgments of what they consider to be the major issues of the campaign. The authors stated that the media act as the major primary source of national political information and, for the most part, provide the best and only easily available approximation of "ever changing political realities" (p. 185).

Graber (1976), in her study of the 1968 and 1972 presidential campaigns, divided the campaign issues covered by the media into two groups. Relations with foreign countries were labeled as international politics. Domestic issues were divided into four subgroups: economic policy included such issues as taxes, farm and business policy; social problems covered health care, problems of the elderly, race relations, housing, crimes, and drugs; campaign issues involved clean and dirty strategies for winning the current election, appraisal of

the status of various voting groups, endorsements, and discussion of media coverage of the campaign; and domestic affairs were defined as the regular operations of government, such as the presidency, Congress and the courts, regular functions of political parties, and basic philosophies of government.

Smith (1980) explained that members of the press and "elders of the parties are different individuals with different responsibilities and goals" (p. 24). Journalists, he stated, seek out conflict and present both sides of an issue. Politicians, on the other hand, seek to hide conflict or take one side of an issue. Patterson (1980) and Stovall (1982) discussed the tendency of candidates to prefer "diffuse" (party-influenced) issues as opposed to journalists' preference for "clear-cut" (media-influenced) issues. Colin Seymour-Ure (1974) said these "clear-cut issues" for which the press has an affinity are what neatly divide the candidates, and can be stated in simple terms, usually by reference to a shorthand label such as health care or taxes.

Politicians, Stoval (1982) noted, often emphasize issues where there is broad agreement--even to the point of agreeing with their opponents. Journalists, however, like the issues where there is a clear difference between the candidates and which are likely to determine the course of the campaign.

Patterson (1980) stated that diffuse issues include "broad policy proposals where the candidates' appeals differ mostly in style and emphasis, as in the common commitment to something like maintain a healthy economy" (p. 32). One reason why candidates emphasize broad issues, Patterson explained, is that they often are of major concern to the voters. He noted that "the economy, peace, government efficiency, and other general problems usually rank higher in the public's mind than do the more specific problems that lend themselves to

clear-cut solutions" (p. 32).

The press' bias toward clear-cut issues, Patterson (1980) noted, is that "they provoke conflict and controversy among both candidates and voters, providing colorful copy as well as a ready audience" (p. 32). The major reason for this is the press' patterned view of events, which is closely related to storytelling. Diffuse issues, Patterson wrote, "lack the qualities prized in news stories" (p. 34).

Patterson (1980) called clear-cut issues that arise during a presidential campaign "campaign issues" (p. 34). These campaign issues receive preferred treatment from the press, according to Patterson. He noted that they have a "special appeal to the press in part because they conform with traditional news values--they are unexpected, colorful, and unique" (p. 36). In addition, campaign issues build upon themselves, "creating suspense and expectation as they unfold" (p. 36). Diffuse issues, however, seldom receive preferential treatment by the press, and "are neither placed in the headlines nor covered for more than a day or two" (p. 36).

Media Power

To understand media influence in a presidential campaign, it is necessary to understand what mass communication researchers say about the importance of a presidential campaign to the media, particularly in terms of how the media wield a certain power to make or break candidates, or to present certain issues.

Shaw and McCombs (1977) stated that "a political campaign is a key place to study mass communication influence because media behavior is intimately connected with how our political environment is perceived, how our agenda of public issues is shaped, and how we cast our votes. In other words, the political

agenda of the mass media is highly related to the shape of political power" (p. 150).

Rosenbloom (1976) added that campaigns and government provide an arena for the press to wield and use power. Reporters, he explained, are also political actors, both within their own news organizations and in the public arena.

Press institutions, Rosenbloom (1976) wrote, "will oppose strong, continuing political organizations because they are a threat to the news organizations' central position in the political system" (p. 21). Smith (1980) noted that it is possible to "infer that parties have only a limited influence over what issues become real for the public" (p. 25). The nominating process, Keech and Matthews (1976) explained, has become more "plebiscitary" in nature and, as a result, "the media have taken on a central role in candidate selection" (p. 223).

If it is true that the media oppose strong political organizations and that the media have taken on a central role in the selection of political candidates, then one would assume that issues presented in the media's campaign coverage would definitely represent those issues the media deem important.

Barber (1980) noted that the mass media's position in filling virtually the whole gap in the electoral process left by the default of other independent elites (i.e., the political parties) who used to help manage the choice "is all the stronger because it looks, to the casual observer, like no power at all. Much as the old party bosses used to pass themselves off as mere 'coordinators' and powerless arrangers, so some modern day titans of journalism want themselves thought of as mere scorekeepers and messenger boys. Yet the signs of journalists' key role

as the major advancers and retarders of presidential ambitions are all around us" (p. 8).

Smart candidates, Barber (1980) wrote, recognize that power and hurry to adapt their strategies to it. They learn to use journalism, as journalism uses them. According to Barber, the candidates and the journalists "grapple in a reciprocal relationship of mutual exploitation, a political symbiosis. If the journalists are the new kingmakers, the candidates are the new storytellers, active plotters of dramas they hope will win for them" (p. 8).

According to Tichenor (1983):

It is . . . no exaggeration to say that the media can make or break presidential hopefuls. Not only may they determine who will be nominated, but their ability to project advantageous or disadvantageous images for candidates and link them to suitable issues also may decide who will be elected. . . . Campaigns, which are crucial political scenes in the electoral drama, are continually altered and adjusted to meet the media's needs and preferences (p. 488).

As described in Mazzoleni (1986), media power during election campaigns can assume two main forms: 1) the presentation of politics on the basis of mass communication formats (production of spot ads with commercial techniques, the replacement of discourse about issues and policies with a greater personalization of leaders, etc.); and 2) the information system's assumption not only of an autonomous role in relation to the parties but also of a leading one.

Gurevitch, Blumler, and Weaver (1986) discussed a discretionary power of the media, where the media are capable of a leading role in shaping the agenda of election campaigns (p. 3). The authors identified some variables that might be relevant to understanding the discretionary power exercised by the media, and, in turn, understanding media influence. The following includes those

variables: the position of politics and politicians in society; journalists' orientations toward politics and politicians; the degree of professionalization of election campaigns; and variation of media competition (p. 3).

One way that these discretionary powers have been identified by researchers is through media logic and party logic indicators.

Media logic is defined by Altheide and Snow (1979) as:

. . . the set of values and formats through which campaign events and issues are focused on, treated, and given meaning by news workers and news organizations in order to promote a particular kind of presentation and understanding that [is] compatible with, for example, scheduling and time considerations, entertainment values, and images of the audience (p. 197).

Media logic, Altheide and Snow (1979) noted, is:

. . . the process through which media present and transmit information. Elements of this form include the various media and the formats used by these media. Format consists, in part, of how material is organized, the style in which it is presented, the focus or emphasis on particular characteristics of behavior, and the grammar of media communication. . . . For a major medium such as television, audiences have become so familiar with different formats that they automatically know when something on television is news, comedy, or fictional drama. In a like manner, radio, newspaper, and magazine formats have become second nature to listeners and readers. Thus, the logic of media formats has become so taken for granted by both communicator and receiver that it has been overlooked as an important factor in understanding media (p. 10).

Altheide and Snow (1979) described mass communication as an interactive process between media communication as interpreted and acted on by audiences. In place of a "conspiracy or conditioning" model of the media, the authors proposed in their book, Media Logic, that "both communicator and

audience members employ a particular logic--a media logic--that is used to present and interpret various phenomena" (p. 10).

Altheide and Snow (1979) noted that the "present-day dominance of media has been achieved through a process in which the general form and specific formats of media have become adopted throughout society so that cultural content is basically organized and defined in terms of media logic" (p. 15). It is not a case of media dictating terms to the rest of society, the authors wrote, "but an interaction between organized institutional behavior of media. In this interaction, the form of media logic has come to be accepted as the perspective through which various institutional problems are interpreted and solved" (p. 15).

In his study of the Italian General Election of 1983, Mazzoleni (1986) identified four indicators of mass media output in an election campaign: 1) propaganda; 2) information; 3) spectacularization, or campaign messages that are oriented toward entertainment, e.g., horse race elements, and image-making; and 4) topicalization (the media's capacity to to introduce certain issues, thereby influencing the agenda of political debate by the parties).

These indicators, according to Mazzoleni (1986), vary according to two basic patterns of message production: 1) Party Logic, which he defined as the structural and cultural assets that govern the communications enacted by the parties; and 2) Media Logic, which he defined as the set of values and formats through which campaign events and issues are focused on, treated, and given meaning by the media to promote a particular kind of presentation and understanding that is compatible with, for example, scheduling and time consideration, entertainment values, and images of the audience.

Even though Mazzoleni (1986) could not conclusively say that a media logic predominated over a party logic in the Italian election coverage, one would assume, given the relative "maturity" of the media systems in the United States, that there should be strong empirical evidence that "political life is being recast to fit the demands of the major media" (Altheide and Snow, 1979).

Summary

Chaffee (1987), noted that the established parties today are in such general disrepute that "most voters decline to ally closely with them, and candidates run by name, face, and slogan with relatively minor mention of party affiliation" (p. 37). He explained that this increases the opportunity for media variance to replace party ID variance in explaining the way people vote (p. 37). One way of measuring media variance and party ID variance, as well as media influence and party influence in the media, is by studying media-generated and party-generated sources found in news stories.

In his analysis of news sources of The New York Times and The Washington Post, Sigal (1973) described channels, or paths by which news information reached a reporter. He classified these channels into three categories: routine, informal, and enterprise. Routine channels included official proceedings such as trials, legislative hearings, and election tabulation; press releases as well as reports monitored over official radio or from TASS; press conferences, including daily briefings by "official spokesmen" and broadcast interviews; and nonspontaneous events, such as speeches, ceremonies, and staged demonstrations. Informal channels included background briefings; leaks; nongovernmental proceeding like association meetings or trade union conventions; and news reports from other news organizations, interviews with

reporters, and newspaper editorials. Enterprise channels included interviews conducted at the reporter's initiative; spontaneous events which a reporter witnesses firsthand, like fires, riots, and natural disasters; independent research involving quotations from books and statistical data; and the reporter's own conclusions or analysis.

According to Sigal's (1973) findings, despite the expansion of bureau networks and staff size at both the Times and the Post from 1949 to 1969, most patterns of channels and source use did not change markedly during the period. Brown, Bybee, Wearden, and Straughan's (1987) replication of Sigal's study implied that not much has changed in the use of news sources despite major technological and organizational changes in the industry since Sigal performed his study.

Research Question and Hypotheses

Research evidence suggests that, in a presidential campaign, the present-day media have taken on the role of the informing, electoral mobilizing, identifying, recruiting, and testing functions previously performed by the political parties. This leads to the assumption that this media role can be observed by determining the amount of media-generated news as opposed to party-generated news found in primary campaigns. Data from newspaper accounts of the 1960, 1968, 1980, and 1988 presidential primaries were gathered to answer the research question: Does the content of newspaper articles about the presidential campaign change over time in regard to media-generated and party-generated news?

Five hypotheses related to the research question were tested. These hypotheses were based on two assumptions: 1) the increasing role the media

has gained as an organizing, appraising, and evaluating system during a presidential campaign (that function having previously belonged to the parties themselves), and 2) the increasing importance of the presidential primary in choosing the party's presidential candidate.

Hypothesis 1: There will be a greater amount of media-generated news in the 1988 presidential primary coverage than in the 1968 presidential primary coverage.

Nineteen sixty-eight will be used as a comparison year because, according to Polsby (1980), the major party reforms and legal changes since 1968 have changed the rules of the presidential candidate nominating game. Such changes include the Democratic party reforms that came out of the 1968 McGovern-Fraser Commission and federally-provided matching funds for the primary election races.

Polsby (1980) noted that the nominating process has shifted from cultivation of party leaders and party organizations by political candidates to direct initiatives by the candidates themselves to cultivate mass electorates during the primaries. Thus, it is expected that the influence of the party leaders and organizations to control the presidential nomination process since 1968 has been replaced by those who have access to the "devices and the channels of mass publicity" (p. 55) such as public relations, media technicians, and professional journalists. If this observation is correct, there should be an increase in the amount of media-generated news found in the 1988 primary coverage from the 1968 primary coverage.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a greater amount of media-generated news found in the 1980 presidential primary coverage than the 1960 primary coverage.

The rationale for this hypothesis is based on the premise that the media, with the help of the expanded role of the presidential primaries (especially after 1968), have taken on the role of the political party in mobilizing, identifying, recruiting, and testing potential presidential candidates. Therefore, there should be a greater amount of media-generated news found in 1980 presidential campaign coverage than in 1960.

Hypothesis 3: During the combined 1988 and 1990 presidential primary coverage, there will be a greater amount of media-generated news than party-generated news found in the election news stories examined.

This hypothesis is based on the premise that the media, with the help of the presidential primary (especially after 1968), have taken on the role of the political party in mobilizing, identifying, recruiting, and testing potential presidential candidates. If this is true, there should be a greater amount of media-generated news found in the combined 1988 and 1990 presidential primary coverage than party-generated news.

Hypothesis 4: During the combined 1960 and 1968 presidential primary coverage, there will be a greater amount of party-generated news than media-generated news found in the presidential primary news stories examined.

This hypothesis is based on the assumption that the primaries' role in selecting presidential candidates had not become fully realized until after the 1968 presidential campaign. Therefore, in 1968, the media would not have

placed so much importance in the primaries as a means of gaining an audience. One would expect, therefore, that party-generated news during the combined coverage of these two years would outnumber media-generated news.

Hypothesis 5: There will be a greater number of media-generated news found in the combined 1988 and 1980 presidential primary coverage than in the combined 1968 and 1960 presidential primary news coverage.

Again, this hypothesis is based on the premise that the media, with the help of the presidential primary (particularly after 1968), have taken on the role of the political party in mobilizing, identifying, recruiting, and testing potential presidential candidates. If this is true, there should be a greater amount of media-generated news found in the combined 1988 and 1980 presidential primary coverage than in the combined 1968 and 1960 coverage.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

The method of this study is a content analysis of media-generated and party-generated news found in the presidential election news coverage in the prestige press (The New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, and The Washington Post) for the 1960, 1968, 1980 and 1988 presidential primary campaigns. The New York Times was chosen because it is the closest of all American dailies to being a newspaper of record, and for its in-depth coverage of political events (Merrill, 1980). The Los Angeles Times was chosen for the study because of its large circulation and because, with the exception of 1960, it operates domestic bureaus in many American cities including Washington, DC. In addition, after 1960 when Otis Chandler became publisher, the paper has been recognized as being politically independent and balanced (Merrill and Fisher, p. 188). The Washington Post was used because it is rated by every informed critic and journalist as one of America's two greatest newspapers alongside The New York Times (Merrill and Fisher, p. 352). In addition to reaching 98% of the principal government executives in Washington, including virtually all U.S. senators and congressmen, the paper is read by an overwhelming majority of the executive level decision-makers in business, labor, and lower levels of government (Merrill and Fisher, p. 344).

Sampling

The time period studied for each year included the first Sunday of the year through the Saturday following the last primary. The time periods included the

following dates: 1988--January 3 through June 11; 1980--January 6 through June 7; 1968--January 7 through June 15; and 1960--January 3 through June 11.

For each year, two constructed weeks were examined. To form the constructed weeks, the number of weeks for a given year were written on pieces of tape (e.g. for a year containing 15 weeks in the primary season, 15 pieces of tape with numbers 1 through 15 written on them were used). Each piece of tape was placed on a penny, and, for each day of the week, two pennies were chosen at random. The numbers chosen were used to determine which week during the primary period would be examined for that particular day of the week (e.g., if 13 and 8 were chosen for Monday, the 13th and 8th Monday of the primary season were examined). This procedure was repeated for each day of the week for each year. This entire procedure was repeated for each newspaper, so the total number of constructed weeks for the entire study was 24.

Measurement

The coding unit was the paragraph, and only news stories containing the following presidential primary election items were coded: the presidential candidate or his supporters and/or staff; major political party/parties; and any development relating to the campaign itself. Editorials, commentaries, columns, and letters-to-the editor were not included in the analysis. In addition, headlines and subheads were not coded. Primary election stories found only in the first section of each paper were examined.

Operational Definitions

The category "News Generation" was used to test the five hypotheses. This

category was divided into four subcategories:

Party-generated news was identified as that presidential primary campaign news wherein the control of the news was from one of the major political parties. This included other sources such as political grassroots organizations, party workers, and party leaders/spokespersons/groups. For example, "Americans for Democratic Action said today that Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas does not measure up as a liberal, and the Democratic party should not nominate him for President," was coded as party-generated news.

Media-generated news was identified as presidential primary campaign news wherein control of the news in the paragraph was from the mass media. This included reporters' enterprise stories, media-sponsored opinion polls, interviews where fewer than three reporters were present, news on media endorsements or other general reportage by the media. For example, "Gore's campaign received a potentially important boost when it landed the endorsement this weekend of Wisconsin's largest newspaper, the Milwaukee Journal," was coded as media-generated news.

Candidate-generated news was identified as that presidential primary campaign news wherein the control of the news in the paragraph was from the candidate, his grassroots organizations or his staff/spokespersons (including family members). For example, "Sen. John F. Kennedy (D-Mass) predicted today that no Democrat will be elected president who has not run in one or more state primary elections," was coded as candidate-generated news.

Other included all other-generated news not covered by the above three sub-categories.

The following includes a list of other categories coded but not used in the

actual hypothesis testing. (See Appendix A for examples of coded paragraphs for all categories.)

Campaign Coverage

Campaign coverage was coded when the campaign itself was being described. For example, "Jackson overwhelmed Dukakis in Democratic Party caucuses Saturday in the Virgin Islands," was coded as campaign coverage. This category was coded either yes or no.

Issue

Issues were coded into three subcategories: economic (taxes, inflation and any governmental programs designed to affect the general economy); domestic (dealing with non-economic, non-foreign affairs/defense subjects, e.g., governmental programs such as social security); and foreign affairs (concerning diplomacy, treaties, defense, relationships with allies or adversaries, abilities of candidates to conduct foreign affairs, etc). For example, "He proposed to accept what he termed the exciting challenges of domestic problems with an improved educational system," was coded as a domestic issue event. If none of the above sub-categories applied, this category was coded as other.

Topic

Topic was coded when the news was about the media, the candidate, or the party. If none of the three sub-categories were applicable, a sub-category of other was coded.

Caucus Coverage

Caucus Coverage was coded each time only if the word "caucus" appeared in the paragraph. This category was coded either yes or no.

Delegate Count

This category was coded each time there was a mention of the number of delegates a candidate had or had to have to win the party's presidential candidacy or how many delegates were at stake for a particular primary. This category was coded either yes or no.

Candidate Character

Candidate Character was coded when any mention was made of a candidate's character, morals, personal life, or anything that related to his fitness for office. This category was chosen for analysis because, according to Barber (1980), "Americans long ago realized that they were electing a man, not a philosophy, and that the character of the President, as he wrestled with the challenges of his time, shapes the quality of political life" (p. 187). It is for this reason, Barber stated, that "the moralists in journalism" in this century "looked beyond the issues and platforms to the person" (p. 187). Reporting of a candidate's character and fitness for office would, therefore, indicate the presence of the media's role of generating and influencing the campaign news. This category was coded either yes or no.

In addition to the above categories, each story was coded as to whether it was placed on a special campaign news page. This included front page news stories that continued on special formatted pages.

Intercoder Reliability

To calculate intercoder reliability for the actual study, two coders looked at 10% of the presidential primary news stories chosen at random from the 359 stories that comprised the study. Paragraphs were coded for news generation (media, party and candidate), campaign coverage, issue (economic, domestic,

and foreign affairs), topic, caucus coverage, delegate count, and candidate character.

The formula (Budd, Thorp, and Donohew, 1967) $R = 2(C_{1,2})/C_1 + C_2$ ($C_{1,2}$ representing the number of coded category entries both coders agreed on and $C_1 + C_2$ representing the total number of coded category entries made by both coders) was used to determine intercoder reliability for 10% of the actual study. Intercoder reliability was 91%.

Statistical Tests

Independent Variables.

An independent variable is a variable which is manipulated, measured, or selected by the researcher to observe its relation to the subject's response to some other observed variable. There was one independent variable used in testing the five hypotheses in this study: time--1960, 1968, 1980, and 1988.

Dependent Variables.

A dependent variable is the variable which is observed and measured in response to an independent variable. There were two dependent variables used in testing the five hypotheses: 1) media-generated news; and 2) party-generated news.

To test Hypothesis 1, a t-test was performed between media-generated news found in the 1968 presidential primary coverage and media-generated news found in the 1988 primary coverage. To test Hypothesis 2, a t-test was performed between media-generated news found in the 1960 presidential primary coverage and media-generated news found in the 1980 primary coverage. For Hypothesis 3, a t-test was performed between the

media-generated news identified and the party-generated news identified in the combined 1988 and 1980 presidential campaign coverage. Hypothesis 4 was tested by a t -test between the media-generated news identified in the combined 1968 and 1960 presidential primary coverage and the party-generated news identified in the same time period. To test Hypothesis 5, a t -test was performed between the combined media-generated news identified in the 1988 and 1980 presidential primary coverage and the 1968 and 1960 presidential primary coverage.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the election news covered by the press during the U.S. presidential primaries from 1960 to 1988 was generated primarily by the media, the candidates, or the political parties. Specifically, the purpose of the study was to determine if there have been changes in these elements over time. This was achieved by examining the press' presidential primary news coverage for the election years 1960, 1968, 1980, and 1988. A total of 359 stories were studied with 5,323 paragraphs coded.

It should be noted that each campaign year was unique in regard to the type of campaign or other news that had an influence on the campaign. For example, the 1960 campaign coverage centered a great deal around John Kennedy's candidacy and his religious beliefs; the 1968 primary campaign was marred by the assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King; in 1980, Jimmy Carter was in the midst of dealing with the Iranian hostage situation; and 1988's primary campaign comprised of numerous candidates, most of whom had well-organized, well-oiled campaign machines that had been operating one or two years before the actual primaries.

Table 1 breaks down all coded categories into percentage distributions per year. It is interesting to note that media-generated news, with the exception of 1980, stayed relatively at the same level throughout the four years studied. Party-generated news, while representing a relatively small percentage of

coded paragraphs, dropped by 7% from 1960 to 1988. Candidate-generated news, while staying relatively stable in 1960 through 1980, jumped 9% from 1980 to 1988. (See Tables B-1 through B-8 in Appendix B for the percentage breakdown for each newspaper separately, as well as the means for all newspapers combined and each newspaper separately.)

Table 1

Percentage Distributions for All Categories for All Years, and All Newspapers

| | <u>1960</u> N=716 | <u>1968</u> N=1,366 | <u>1980</u> N=1,654 | <u>1988</u> N=1,587 |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. <u>News Generation</u> | | | | |
| Media-Generated | 50% | 52% | 57% | 49% |
| Party-Generated | 10% | 6% | 4% | 3% |
| Candidate-Generated | 36% | 34% | 34% | 43% |
| Other | 4% | 8% | 5% | 5% |
| 2. <u>Campaign</u> | | | | |
| Non-campaign | 47% | 38% | 44% | 48% |
| | 53% | 62% | 56% | 52% |
| 3. <u>Issue</u> | | | | |
| Economic Issue | 6% | 2% | 10% | 8% |
| Domestic Issue | 8% | 3% | 5% | 10% |
| Foreign Issue | 6% | 11% | 7% | 10% |
| Non-Issue | 80% | 84% | 78% | 72% |
| 4. <u>Topic</u> | | | | |
| Media Topic | 3% | 2% | 2% | 5% |
| Party Topic | 15% | 14% | 7% | 6% |
| Candidate Topic | 57% | 60% | 66% | 66% |
| Other | 25% | 24% | 25% | 23% |
| 5. <u>Caucus</u> | | | | |
| Non-caucus | 0% | 0% | 4% | 5% |
| | 100% | 100% | 96% | 95% |

Table 1 (Continued)

Percentage Distributions for All Categories for All Years, and All Newspapers

| | <u>1960</u> | <u>1968</u> | <u>1980</u> | <u>1988</u> |
|--------------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | <u>N=716</u> | <u>N=1,366</u> | <u>N=1,654</u> | <u>N=1,587</u> |
| 6. <u>Delegate Count</u> | 5% | 3% | 7% | 3% |
| Non-Delegate Count | 95% | 97% | 93% | 97% |
| 7. <u>Character</u> | 3% | 2% | 2% | 4% |
| Non-Character | 97% | 98% | 98% | 96% |

The amount of paragraphs coded in the campaign category remained relatively constant, with the exception of 1968 when the percentage dropped to 38%. This may reflect, however, the chaotic nature of the campaign season that year.

There was a surprisingly small percentage of issues found in the campaign stories for the four years studied. The largest percentage of economic issues was found in 1980, most likely reflecting the economic troubles the country was having at that time. The largest percentage of foreign issues was found during the 1968 campaign, reflecting the impact the Vietnam war had on the campaign. Domestic issues reached a high of 10% during the 1988 campaign.

There were a very few times throughout the four years studied that the media was the topic of the paragraph. However, the amount was highest in 1988 with 5%. The amount that the party was the topic of the paragraph steadily declined from 15% in 1960 to 6% in 1988. The number of times the

candidate was the topic of the paragraph increased from 57% in 1960 to 66% in 1988.

For the four years studied, caucuses were mentioned either hardly at all, or in a relatively small percentage of the paragraphs studied. Caucuses were virtually never mentioned in the stories studied for 1960 and 1968; however, the number of times caucuses were mentioned increased from 0% in 1968 to 4% in 1980 and to 5% in 1988.

The delegate count for the four years studied was also very low. Although the expectation was that the delegate count would increase for each succeeding campaign year, there was no discernable pattern in the years studied. The only noticeable change was a 4% jump from 1968 to 1980, and a 4% drop from 1980 to 1988.

Character, which also was expected to increase in later years, had its highest percentages in 1960 and 1988 with 3% and 4% respectively. The 1960 percentage could have been higher than 1968 and 1980 because of discussion about whether Kennedy was fit to be president because of his religious beliefs.

Out of all of the above-mentioned categories, only the candidate-topic category and the caucus category showed any consistent frequency increase from 1960 to 1988. The increase of caucus mentions from 1960 to 1988 was contrary to what was expected. According to Rubin's (1981) examination of CBS news coverage of the 1968 and 1972 primaries, very little nonprimary methods of candidate selection, such as the caucuses, were covered. He assumed that the media, particularly television, would tend to cover presidential primary news rather than nonprimary election methods such as the caucuses.

Rubin (1981), however, noted that, compared with print journalism,

television had far more difficulty in covering stories of complex negotiation than action-oriented events such as election campaigns. Therefore, one might expect the press to cover caucuses more often than television, although Rubin's observation does not explain the rise in the amount of caucus coverage (0 to 5%) from 1960 to 1988 in the newspapers examined for this study.

The increase in candidate topic news could be interpreted two ways. One explanation would be that since the press has gained a greater role in informing the public about political candidates, the increase in news about the candidates should naturally increase. Another explanation would be that there is an increased interplay between candidates and the press as noted by Rubin (1981). He explained that the press uses candidates to generate news while the candidates go to the press to reach their potential audience. Both of these reasons might explain the increase of news about the presidential candidates.

In addition to the extra categories examined above, each story was coded as to whether it was placed in a special "politics" or "campaign" page in the newspaper. It was assumed that the number of these special play stories would increase, particularly after 1968, when it was expected that the amount of media-generated news would increase. This was done to provide empirical data relating to Altheide and Snow's (1979) assertions that a media logic or a way of presenting events that is compatible with entertainment values and images of the audience prevails in the media (p. 197). Mazzoleni (1986) also noted that one form of media power during an election campaign was in the presentation of politics on the basis of mass communication formats. As was expected, Table 2 shows that the amount of stories found in special campaign sections increased from 1960 (0%) to 1988 (58%) for all the newspapers combined. However, it

also should be noted that, during this period, the packaging of all types of news became increasingly important.

Table 2

Percentage of All Primary Campaign Stories Used in Special Politics or Campaign Sections

| | <u>1960</u> | <u>1968</u> | <u>1980</u> | <u>1988</u> |
|----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| | <u>N=22</u> | <u>N=15</u> | <u>N=36</u> | <u>N=37</u> |
| <u>Los Angeles Times</u> | 0% | 0% | 33% | 51% |
| <u>The Washington Post</u> | <u>N=23</u> 0% | <u>N=44</u> 48% | <u>N=34</u> 20% | <u>N=25</u> 56% |
| <u>The New York Times</u> | <u>N=27</u> 0% | <u>N=36</u> 0% | <u>N=35</u> 37% | <u>N=25</u> 60% |
| <u>Total (1960-1988)</u> | <u>N=72</u> 0% | <u>N=95</u> 22% | <u>N=105</u> 30% | <u>N=87</u> 58% |

Of the five hypotheses tested, Hypothesis 1, which stated that there would be a greater amount of media-generated news in the 1988 presidential primary coverage than in the 1968 presidential primary coverage, and Hypothesis 4, which stated that during the combined 1960 and 1968 presidential primary coverage there would be a greater amount of party-generated news than media-generated news, were not statistically supported. Hypotheses 2, 3, and 5 all showed a significant increase in media-generated news.

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 stated that there would be a greater amount of media-generated news in the 1988 presidential primary coverage than in the 1968 presidential primary coverage. A one-tailed t -test for independent groups was used to analyze the media-generated news found in all three newspapers as well as in each newspaper separately. There was no significant difference in the mean ($M = 8.98$) of media-generated news in 1988 than in the mean for 1968 ($M = 7.53$), $t(180) = 1.39$, $p = .08$.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 stated that there would be a greater amount of media generated news found in the 1980 presidential primary coverage than in the 1960 primary coverage. A one-tailed t -test for independent groups was used to analyze the total number of media-generated news found in all three newspapers as well as in the Los Angeles Times, The Washington Post, and The New York Times separately.

The results show that there was a highly significant difference in the mean of media-generated news for 1980 than the mean for media-generated news for 1960. In fact, the amount of combined media-generated news increased by

more than 46% from 1960 to 1980. Table 3 shows that the hypothesis was supported. As shown in Table 4, when each newspaper was tested separately, The Washington Post and the Los Angeles Times showed significant differences. However, for The New York Times, no significant change was found.

Table 3

Hypothesis 2: One-Tailed t-test on the Difference between Media-Generated News in 1980 and 1960 for All Newspapers

| <u>1980</u> | <u>1960</u> | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----|---------|-------------|
| <u>Mean</u> N=105 | <u>Mean</u> N=72 | df | t-value | Probability |
| 9.05 | 4.93 | 173 | 3.84 | <.001 |

Table 4

One-Tailed t-Test on the Difference between Media-Generated News in 1980 and 1960 for the Los Angeles Times and The Washington Post

Los Angeles Times

1980 1960

Mean Mean df t-value Probability
N=36 N=22

10.61 5.83 55 2.47 .008

The Washington Post

1980 1960

Mean Mean df t-value Probability
N=34 N=23

11.18 4.61 55 3.10 .002

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 stated that, during the combined 1988 and 1980 presidential primary coverage, there would be a greater amount of media-generated news than party-generated news found in the election news stories examined. A one-tailed t-test was used to test this hypothesis. The t-test showed a significant difference in the mean of media-generated news for 1980 and 1988

combined and the mean of party-generated news for the same two years. In fact, there was an 89% difference between the the means of media- and party-generated news for the two combined years. Table 5 shows that the hypothesis was supported.

Table 5

Hypothesis 3: One-Tailed t-Test on the Difference between Media- and Party-Generated News for the Combined Years of 1980 and 1988 for All Newspapers

| <u>Media</u> | <u>Party</u> | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----|---------|-------------|
| <u>Mean</u> N=192 | <u>Mean</u> N=192 | df | t-value | Probability |
| 8.96 | 0.59 | 382 | 13.56 | <.005 |

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 stated that during the combined 1960 and 1968 presidential primary coverage, there would be a greater amount of party-generated news than media-generated news found in the paragraphs examined. A t-test was used to test this hypothesis. The t- test showed that there was a highly significant difference in the mean of party- ($M = 0.92$) and media-generated news ($M = 6.40$) during this time period, $t(334) = 11.18, p < .005$. However, since media-generated news far outnumbered party-generated news, the

results were opposite the differences hypothesized; therefore, Hypothesis 4 was not supported.

Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis 5 stated that there would be a greater number of media-generated news in the combined 1988 and 1980 presidential campaign coverage, as compared with the combined media-generated news in the 1968 and 1960 presidential primary campaign coverage. A one-tailed t -test for independent groups showed that there was a highly significant difference in the mean of media-generated news for the combined years of 1988 and 1980 than the mean of media-generated news for the combined years of 1968 and 1960. As shown in Table 6, there was a 30% jump in the mean for media-generated news from the combined years of 1968 and 1960 ($M = 9.03$) to the mean for the combined years of 1988 and 1980 ($M = 6.41$), $t(357) = 3.42$, $p < .001$. Table 7 shows that, for each of the newspapers separately, there was a significant difference for both the Los Angeles Times and The Washington Post, but not The New York Times. The Washington Post showed more than a 40% gain in media-generated news from the earlier two years to the later two years, while The New York Times showed just a 7% increase from the two pairs of combined years.

Table 6

Hypothesis 5: One-Tailed t-Test on the Difference between Media-Generated News in Combined Years 1988 and 1980, and Combined Years 1968 and 1960 for All Newspapers

| <u>1988 & 1980</u> | <u>1968 & 1960</u> | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----|---------|-------------|
| <u>Mean</u> N=192 | <u>Mean</u> N=167 | df | t-value | Probability |
| 9.03 | 6.41 | 345 | 3.42 | <.001 |

Table 7

One-Tailed t-Test on the Difference between Media-Generated News in
Combined Years 1988 and 1980, and 1968 and 1960 for the Los Angeles Times
and The Washington Post

Los Angeles Times

1988 & 1980 1968 & 1960

| <u>Mean</u> N=73 | <u>Mean</u> N=37 | df | t-value | Probability |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----|---------|-------------|
| 9.78 | 6.41 | 108 | 1.45 | .08 |

The Washington Post

1988 & 1980 1968 & 1960

| <u>Mean</u> N=59 | <u>Mean</u> N=67 | df | t-value | Probability |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----|---------|-------------|
| 10.54 | 6.27 | 124 | 3.29 | <.001 |

Additional Analyses

Several variations of Hypotheses 1, 2, and 5 using media-, party-, and candidate-generated news also were tested.

A one-tailed *t*-test was performed to determine if there was a greater amount of media-generated news in 1988 than in 1960. Table 8 shows that, as in most of the other tests of media-generated news, there was a highly significant difference in the mean of media-generated news for 1988 than in the mean of media-generated news for 1960--about a 45% jump from 1960 to 1988. Table 9 shows that each newspaper when tested separately showed a highly significant difference in the mean of media-generated news for 1988 than in the mean of media-generated news for 1960. Once again, The Washington Post showed the greatest jump in the amount of media-generated news--53%--from 1960 to 1988.

Table 8

One-Tailed t-Test on the Difference between Media-Generated News in 1988 and 1960 for All Newspapers

| <u>1988</u> | <u>1960</u> | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----|---------|-------------|
| <u>Mean</u> N=87 | <u>Mean</u> N=72 | df | t-value | Probability |
| 8.99 | 4.93 | 152 | 3.88 | <.001 |

Table 9

One-Tailed t-Test on the Difference between Media-Generated News in 1988 and 1960 for Each Newspaper

Los Angeles Times

1988 1960

| <u>Mean</u> N=37 | <u>Mean</u> N=22 | df | t-value | Probability |
|---------------------|---------------------|----|---------|-------------|
|---------------------|---------------------|----|---------|-------------|

| | | | | |
|------|------|----|------|-----|
| 8.97 | 5.23 | 57 | 1.92 | .03 |
|------|------|----|------|-----|

The Washington Post

1988 1960

| <u>Mean</u> N=25 | <u>Mean</u> N=23 | df | t-value | Probability |
|---------------------|---------------------|----|---------|-------------|
|---------------------|---------------------|----|---------|-------------|

| | | | | |
|------|------|----|------|------|
| 9.68 | 4.61 | 46 | 2.54 | .008 |
|------|------|----|------|------|

Table 9 (Continued)

One-Tailed t-Test on the Difference between Media-Generated News in 1988 and 1960 for Each Newspaper

The New York Times

| <u>1988</u> | <u>1960</u> | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|----|---------|-------------|
| <u>Mean</u> N=25 | <u>Mean</u> N=23 | df | t-value | Probability |
| 8.32 | 4.96 | 50 | 2.36 | .01 |

If, according to the literature presented in Chapter II, there occurred a major shift in the way the major political parties were structured from 1968 to 1988, resulting in the media performing the role once held by the party leaders and organizations in controlling the presidential nomination process, there should have been less party-generated news in the 1988 primary campaign coverage from the 1968 primary coverage.

A one-tailed t-test was used to determine if this were the case. For all newspapers combined, there was no significance found. However, as presented in Table 10, The New York Times showed a significantly lesser difference in the mean of party-generated news for 1968 than in the mean of party-generated news for 1988--about a 67% decrease.

Table 10

One-Tailed t-Test on the Difference between Party-Generated News in 1988 and 1968 for The New York Times

| <u>1988</u> | <u>1968</u> | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|----|---------|-------------|
| <u>Mean</u> N=87 | <u>Mean</u> N=95 | df | t-value | Probability |
| 0.60 | 1.81 | 50 | 1.66 | .05 |

In addition, a one-tailed t-test was used to determine whether there was a greater amount of party-generated news in the 1960 primary campaign coverage than in the 1980 primary campaign coverage. If, according to Polsby (1980), the party leaders' and organizations' controlling influence over the presidential nomination process since 1968 has been replaced by those who have access to the "devices and the channels of mass publicity" (p. 55), there should be some indication of the party's loss of control shown in the amount of party-generated news from 1960 to 1980. However, there was no significance found in tests in which the three newspapers were tested together or when each paper was tested separately.

A one-tailed t-test was also used to determine if there was a greater amount of party-generated news in the combined 1960 and 1968 coverage than the combined 1988 and 1980 presidential primary coverage. Again, there was no significant difference found when all newspapers were tested together and

when each newspaper was tested separately. In The New York Times, however, the probability was found to be .06.

Party-generated news for 1960 and 1988 was also analyzed via a one-tailed t -test. As with the other tests of party-generated news, there was no significance found.

Since no significance was found in testing the amount of party-generated news between 1960 and 1988, this could indicate that there is no relationship between the decline in power of the political parties and the rise in power of the media and the presidential primaries in choosing presidential candidates. There still is the possibility that such a relationship does exist, but for that to be true, the change from a greater amount of party-generated news to a greater amount of media-generated news would have had to occur earlier than 1960.

Another observation was made to determine any relationship between media- and party-generated news. As shown in Table 11, a percentage comparison was made between media- and party-generated news for all the years studied. It is interesting to note that, from 1960 to 1968, the amount of party-generated news dropped from 17% to 10%, and that the difference in the amount of party-generated news from 1960 to 1988 was 11%. In fact, a chi-square test performed for media- and party-generated news for 1960 and 1968 showed that there was a significant change in the percentages for the two years, $X^2(1, N = 1,222) = 10.33, p < .05$). One could conclude from these results that there could be some kind of relationship between the increase in media-generated news and the decrease of party-generated news.

Table 11

Percentage Comparison between Media- and Party-Generated News for All Years

| | <u>1960</u> | <u>1968</u> | <u>1980</u> | <u>1988</u> |
|-------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Media | 358 (83%) | 710 (90%) | 943 (93%) | 778 (94%) |
| Party | 72 (17%) | 82 (10%) | 66 (7%) | 48 (6%) |

Candidate-generated news found in the newspaper stories was also tested. As described by Rubin (1981), the press uses candidates to generate news for its own journalistic purposes while the candidates use the press to reach and persuade their potential audience. Both candidates and the press, Rubin noted, seek to develop news that will suit their own professional and organizational purposes. The major party reforms are also believed to have had an effect on the way candidates run a campaign. According to Polsby (1980), candidates have taken a greater initiative in selling themselves to the public--usually through the media--since the major party reforms of the late 1960s and early 1970s. One would conclude then, that if the amount of media-generated news in the press rose significantly from 1960 to 1988, the amount of candidate-generated news should have done the same.

A one-tailed t-test was performed to determine whether there was a greater amount of candidate-generated news in the 1988 primary coverage than in 1968 presidential primary coverage. The results showed that there was a highly significant difference in the mean of candidate-generated news for

1988 than the mean of candidate-generated news for 1968. In fact, Table 12 shows there was a 38% increase from the mean in 1968 to the mean in 1988. As presented in Table 13, when each newspaper was tested separately, The Washington Post was the only paper that did not show any significant difference in the mean of candidate-generated news for 1988 from the mean of candidate-generated news for 1968.

Table 12

One-Tailed t-Test on the Difference between Candidate-Generated News in 1988 and 1968 for All Newspapers

| <u>1988</u> | <u>1968</u> | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----|---------|-------------|
| <u>Mean</u> N=87 | <u>Mean</u> N=95 | df | t-value | Probability |
| 7.87 | 4.88 | 180 | 3.48 | <.001 |

Table 13

One-Tailed t-Test on the Difference between Candidate-Generated News in 1988 and 1968 for the Los Angeles Times and The New York Times

Los Angeles Times

| <u>1988</u> | <u>1968</u> | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|----|---------|-------------|
| <u>Mean</u> N=37 | <u>Mean</u> N=15 | df | t-value | Probability |
| 8.19 | 3.33 | 43 | 3.18 | .002 |

The New York Times

| <u>1988</u> | <u>1968</u> | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|----|---------|-------------|
| <u>Mean</u> N=25 | <u>Mean</u> N=36 | df | t-value | Probability |
| 7.80 | 4.33 | 59 | 2.64 | .006 |

An additional one-tailed t-test was performed to determine whether there was a greater amount of candidate-generated news in the 1980 primary coverage than in 1960 coverage. Table 14 shows that there was a significant difference in the mean of candidate-generated news for 1980 than the mean of candidate-generated news for 1960, although not nearly as great as when the means for 1968 and 1988 were tested. Table 15 shows, however, that when the newspapers were tested separately, the only paper that showed a significant difference was the Los Angeles Times.

Table 14

One-Tailed t-Test on the Difference between Candidate-Generated News in 1980 and 1960 for All Newspapers

| <u>1980</u> | <u>1960</u> | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----|---------|-------------|
| <u>Mean</u> N=195 | <u>Mean</u> N=72 | df | t-value | Probability |
| 5.39 | 3.58 | 175 | 2.32 | .01 |

Table 15

One-Tailed t-Test on the Difference between Candidate-Generated News in 1980 and 1960 for the Los Angeles Times

Los Angeles Times

| <u>1980</u> | <u>1960</u> | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|----|---------|-------------|
| <u>Mean</u> N=36 | <u>Mean</u> N=22 | df | t-value | Probability |
| 5.11 | 2.59 | 56 | 2.07 | .02 |

A one-tailed t-test was performed to determine whether there was a greater amount of candidate-generated news in the 1988 primary coverage than in 1960 coverage. Table 16 shows that there was a highly significant difference in the mean of candidate-generated news for 1988 ($M = 7.87$) and the mean of candidate-generated news for 1960 ($M = 3.58$), $t(157) = 4.74$, $p < .001$. This represented about a 55% increase in the mean for candidate-generated news from 1960 to 1988. As shown in Table 17, when tested separately, each newspaper showed a significant difference with the Los Angeles Times showing the greatest difference (69%) and The Washington Post showing the least amount of change (43%).

Table 16

One-Tailed t-Test on the Difference between Candidate-Generated News in 1988 and 1960 for All Newspapers

| <u>1988</u> | <u>1960</u> | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----|---------|-------------|
| <u>Mean</u> N=87 | <u>Mean</u> N=72 | df | t-value | Probability |
| 7.87 | 3.58 | 157 | 4.74 | <.001 |

Table 17

One-Tailed t-Test on the Difference between Candidate-Generated News in 1988 and 1960 for Each Newspaper

Los Angeles Times

| <u>1988</u> | <u>1960</u> | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|----|---------|-------------|
| <u>Mean</u> N=37 | <u>Mean</u> N=22 | df | t-value | Probability |
| 8.19 | 2.59 | 57 | 3.43 | <.001 |

The Washington Post

| <u>1988</u> | <u>1960</u> | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|----|---------|-------------|
| <u>Mean</u> N=25 | <u>Mean</u> N=23 | df | t-value | Probability |
| 7.48 | 4.30 | 46 | 1.75 | .04 |

Table 17 (Continued)

One-Tailed t-Test on the Difference between Candidate-Generated News in 1988 and 1960 for Each Newspaper

The New York Times

| <u>1988</u> | <u>1960</u> | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|----|---------|-------------|
| <u>Mean</u> N=25 | <u>Mean</u> N=27 | df | t-value | Probability |
| 7.80 | 3.78 | 50 | 3.07 | .002 |

A final one-tailed t-test was performed to determine whether there was a greater amount of candidate-generated news in the combined 1988 and 1980 primary coverage than in the combined 1968 and 1960 coverage. Table 18 shows that there was a highly significant difference in the mean of candidate-generated news for 1988 and 1980 combined ($\bar{M} = 6.52$) and the mean of candidate-generated news for 1968 and 1960 ($\bar{M} = 4.32$), $t(357) = 3.74$, $p < .001$, with a 34% difference in the means between the two groups. When each newspaper was tested separately, both the Los Angeles Times and The New York Times showed significant differences with a 57% and 32% change respectively between the means of the two combined years. However, as shown in Table 19, The Washington Post did not show any significant difference between the two combined years.

Table 18

One Tailed t-Test on the Difference between Candidate-Generated News in Combined Years 1988 and 1980, and 1968 and 1960 for All Newspapers

| <u>1988 & 1980</u> | <u>1968 & 1960</u> | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----|---------|-------------|
| <u>Mean</u> N=192 | <u>Mean</u> N=167 | df | t-value | Probability |
| 6.52 | 4.32 | 357 | 3.74 | <.001 |

Table 19

One-Tailed t-Test on the Difference between Candidate-Generated News in Combined Years 1988 and 1980, and 1968 and 1960 for Each Newspaper

Los Angeles Times

1988 & 1980 1968 & 1960

| <u>Mean</u> N=73 | <u>Mean</u> N=37 | df | t-value | Probability |
|---------------------|---------------------|----|---------|-------------|
| 6.67 | 2.89 | 95 | 3.81 | <.001 |

The New York Times

1988 & 1980 1968 & 1960

| <u>Mean</u> N=60 | <u>Mean</u> N=63 | df | t-value | probability |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----|---------|-------------|
| 6.00 | 4.10 | 119 | 2.19 | .02 |

Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study provide a partial basis to support the notion that the media have increased their influence over presidential campaign coverage from 1960 to 1988. For the most part, however, the results of this study cast doubt on certain notions commonly held by political science and mass communication researchers regarding a role reversal of media- and political party-influences found in presidential primary coverage.

The general assumption, as discussed by researchers Keech & Matthews (1976), Patterson (1980), Polsby (1980), Smith (1980), and Rubin (1981), that, over time the media have assumed an increasing role or influence in the presidential election process once held by the political parties, was supported in part by Hypotheses 2, 3, and 5. Tests of Hypothesis 2 revealed a highly significant increase in the amount of media-generated news from the 1960 primary campaign coverage to the 1980 coverage. Hypothesis 3, which stated that there would be a greater amount of media-generated news than party-generated news during the combined 1988 and 1980 presidential primary coverage, was also strongly supported. The finding in Hypothesis 5 that there was a highly significant increase in the amount of media-generated news from the combined years of 1960 and 1968 to the combined years of 1980 and 1988 strengthens the argument that there has been a major shift in the way the media have covered the presidential primaries from 1960 to 1988.

In addition to the increase in media-generated news, the study showed a

substantial increase in the number of stories found in special campaign sections in the newspapers examined. This finding supports Mazzoleni's (1986) assertion that a "media logic," or way of presenting events compatible with entertainment values and images of the audience, exists as a form of media power during an election campaign.

One prevailing notion discussed in the literature review, that political party-influenced elements in presidential primary campaign coverage have significantly decreased from the late 1960s to the present, was not supported in this study. This notion is partially based on the theory that, since the late 1960s, and gradually over time, there has been a role reversal between the political parties and the media in regard to influence over presidential primary campaign coverage.

Polsby's (1980) argument that the rules of the presidential candidate nominating game have shifted from party leaders and organizations to media technicians and professional journalists in controlling the presidential nominating process would lead one to expect that there would be an increase of media-generated news from the 1968 presidential primary coverage to the presidential primary coverage in 1988.

However, Hypothesis 1 revealed no significant increase in media-generated news found in 1988 over media-generated news in 1968. Also, the findings in Hypothesis 4 do not support the assumption that there was a greater presence of political party-generated news in the presidential campaign coverage in 1968 and earlier. In fact, the results of Hypothesis 4 indicated that there was a much greater amount of media-generated news than party-generated news for the combined years of 1960 and 1968. This could indicate either that the influence

of political parties over presidential primary news was overestimated, or that the political parties' influence over presidential primary news occurred earlier than 1960.

Other t-tests performed for party-generated news also failed to support the assumption that there has been a significant decrease in the amount of party-influenced news in the presidential primary coverage over time, thus casting further doubt on the commonly-held theory discussed in the literature review. There was, however, a significant decrease in the amount of party-generated news found in The New York Times from 1968 to 1988, leading one to believe that this relationship should be studied further.

The study's results also cast doubt on another prevailing assumption discussed in the literature review, particularly Mazzoleni's (1986) and others' assertion that media influence during election campaigns can be determined through the media's capacity to introduce certain issues, thereby influencing the agenda of political debate. It was assumed that, with the increase of media-generated news, there would be an increase in the number of issues that the media is said to prefer to cover, such as domestic or economic issues. The results, however, show no strong increase or decrease in the amount of domestic or economic issues covered from 1960 to 1988, the same period when there was a significant increase in the amount of media-generated news. (There was a large jump in domestic issues covered in The New York Times between 1980 and 1988; however this was the only indication found in all of the newspapers examined of a strong increase in media-oriented issues.)

One interesting finding was that candidate-generated news found in the campaign coverage had increased significantly from 1960 to 1988, indicating

that the candidates have assumed some degree of power in influencing the media's campaign coverage. This finding supports Rubin's (1981) assertion that the candidates and the press seek to develop news that will suit their own professional and organizational purposes. Since there was an increase both in media-generated news and candidate-generated news found between 1960 and 1988, this would be a strong indication that the relationship described by Rubin exists to some degree.

In addition to the significant increase of candidate-generated news, the results showed a strong increase in the amount of times the candidate was the topic of the news examined. These findings corroborate Barber's (1980) statement that candidates and journalists "grapple in a reciprocal relationship of mutual exploitation. . . . If the journalists are the new kingmakers, the candidates are the new storytellers, active plotters of dramas they hope will win for them" (p. 8).

The significant increase in the amount of candidate-generated news since 1960 points to a potentially strong relationship as described by Polsby (1980)--that the major party reforms during the 1960s and 1970s helped change the rules of the presidential candidate nominating game, with the candidates making greater initiatives via the presidential primaries to cultivate mass electorates. This also could support Rubin's (1981) observation that the candidates use the press to reach and persuade their potential audience, while the press uses the candidates to generate news for its own journalistic purposes. The strong increase in media- and candidate-generated news found in this study also could indicate that the political parties possess less power because press institutions oppose political organizations for they threaten the news

organizations' central position in the political system (Rosenbloom, 1976).

Although the results discussed above, in general, showed a significant increase in the amount of media-generated news from 1960 to 1988, there was no way, based on tests of party-generated news examined, to determine whether the increase in media-generated news was related to the decrease in party-generated news. Thus, no strong relationship can be discerned from the study's results that the media have assumed more of the informing, electoral mobilizing, identifying, recruiting, and testing functions in a presidential election previously performed by the political parties.

However, the increase in both media- and candidate-generated news as observed in this study, support the theory addressed in the literature review that some kind of synergetic relationship exists between the media and presidential candidates in influencing campaign news.

Contribution to the Literature

This study challenges the widely-held assumption by political science and mass communications researchers that there has been a significant decrease, particularly since 1968, in the amount of party-influenced news found in the presidential primary coverage. The value of this study was that it provided an empirical test of this assumption, as well as other related theory that has been, for the most part, based on informal observations.

In addition, the significant increase in both media- and candidate-generated news provided evidence to support the assumption that party reforms made during the 1960s and 1970s opened the way for candidates to make greater initiatives through the presidential primaries, and therefore through the media, to cultivate mass electorates.

Directions for Further Research

The answer to the research question--whether the amount of media- and party-generated news found in newspaper coverage of presidential primary campaigns has changed from 1960 to 1988--was "yes" and "no." The study showed a significant increase in the amount of media-generated news; however no evidence was found supporting an increase in the amount of party-generated news from 1960 to 1988.

An interesting study would be to go back further and examine party- and media-generated news in the presidential primary coverage of the 1940s or 1950s and compare those findings with the results of this study. There is still a question in this author's mind whether the amount of party-generated news in the press's primary coverage began to diminish earlier than 1960 or whether it has stayed constant since the 1940s and 1950s.

A similar study examining media-and party-generated news in the presidential primary coverage on television also could be used to make comparisons with the findings of this study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A
Samples of Coded Categories

News Generation

Party-Generated.

"They [The House Republican Policy Committee] said the President described Nixon's showing in the polls as only a temporary handicap, however, he was quoted as saying it will disappear once Nixon gets the Republican Presidential nomination and is free to express his own views" (Los Angeles Times, April 8, 1960).

"Oregon Republicans, pressing the candidacy of Nelson A. Rockefeller in their state primary, brought their case to the New York Governor today, but came away, they said, with no definite commitment" (The Washington Post, March 18, 1968).

"Mr. White [the Democratic National Chairman] responded by refusing to step aside, denying that he had compromised his position and calling it 'inescapable' that the President would have enough delegates at the August convention in New York City to defeat Senator Kennedy" (The New York Times, May 6, 1980).

"Democrats will try to use the Iran-Contra affair against any GOP presidential nominee, Republican Party Chairman Frank J. Fahrenkopf Jr. said Friday, but he asserted that several House Democrats also are vulnerable on ethics issues and called for an independent council to investigate them" (Los Angeles Times, January 30, 1988).

Media-Generated.

"A representative cross section of West Virginia's weekly newspaper editors today picked Sen. Humphrey of Minnesota as the likely victor over Sen. Kennedy of Massachusetts in the May 10 Democratic Presidential preferential primary" (Los Angeles Times, April 24, 1960).

"A poll of 900 Oregon voters gives Sen. Robert F. Kennedy a slight edge over other Democratic presidential candidates and former Vice President Richard M. Nixon a flat majority among Republicans, the National Broadcasting Co. said today" (The Washington Post, May 18, 1968).

"The challengers hate to hear it said because it creates a bandwagon psychology, but the fact of the presidential primary process as it now stands is this: President Carter and Ronald Reagan will almost certainly be the finalists" (Los Angeles Times, April 24, 1980).

"With scarcely more than a week to go before the Iowa caucuses and the Democratic presidential race knotted in a virtual three-way tie, few political observers here are willing to predict who will win the first major electoral contest of 1988" (The New York Times, January 30, 1988).

Candidate-Generated.

"'It would hardly enrich my possibilities,' he [Hubert Humphrey] told a press conference here. But he added, 'I've just made a talk on the power of positive thinking and I'm not contemplating losing in Wisconsin' (The Washington Post, February 11, 1960).

"Sen. Eugene McCarthy, appearing relaxed and reasonably untroubled, said Thursday he now thinks he has 'a very good chance' of wresting the Democratic presidential nomination from President Johnson" (Los Angeles Times, January

12, 1968).

"'He's running for President. He's not running for vice president,' emphasized Bush campaign director James Baker. 'The results in Pennsylvania are going to change the dynamics'" (Los Angeles Times, April 24, 1980).

"Saying 'we're hanging by our fingernails,' Bob Dole announced today that he planned a final appeal over Illinois television Saturday night in an effort to salvage his Presidential campaign" (The New York Times, March 12, 1988).

Campaign

"Senator John F. Kennedy (D-Mass.) breezed into Indiana today for two days of primary campaigning and opened fire on administration policies" (Los Angeles Times, April 8, 1960).

"Senator Eugene J. McCarthy began the last day of the Nebraska primary campaign today with an effort to catch up with what he called 'gross misrepresentations' of his Senate attendance record by workers for Senator Robert F. Kennedy" (The New York Times, May 14, 1968).

"With Kennedy scheduled to arrive in Wisconsin Saturday night for a two-day blitz of the state, Mondale this morning expanded his own Wisconsin campaign schedule to keep him in the state on three of the final four days before the voting" (The Washington Post, March 29, 1980).

"The civil rights leader is still campaigning actively for votes in California's June 7 primary but Tuesday's speech and the appearance at the South African Consulate appeared to be aimed more at building support for his positions at the Democratic National Convention in July" (Los Angeles Times, May 25, 1988).

Issue

Economic Issue.

"The last eight years, he [Kennedy] said, were not year of all-time prosperity, but 'years of economic failure'" (The New York Times, February 6, 1960).

"Sen. Robert F. Kennedy today attacked the proposed income tax increase and budget reductions now before Congress as a dangerous package that might add 750,000 people to the unemployment rolls" (The Washington Post, May 18, 1968).

"Mr. Carter received four standing ovations and many more bursts of applause as he assailed efforts in Congress that he said would 'destroy the gains that have been made for the working people in America.' He further warned that wage and price controls, advocated by Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts, would freeze wages but have little effect on soaring energy and food prices" (The New York Times, April 2, 1980).

"Simon began the criticism by saying that 'a primary is when you express differences' and adding that he and Gephardt differed over the 1981 and 1986 tax bills that Gephardt supported and Simon opposed. Simon contended that both bills 'reduced taxes for the wealthy and did a lot of other damage,' including creating the budget and trade deficits" (Los Angeles Times, February 14, 1988).

Domestic Issue.

"At the luncheon, the Senator [McCarthy] was asked at a question period to speak out clearly on the issues of Negro unemployment, education and housing. His questioner was Charles Hendricks, president of the Radical Action Program"

(The New York Times, April 19, 1968).

"Like the other Republican candidates for President, Dole has said that he would not raise taxes, but, more than any of his opponents, he has talked about increasing social spending--in such areas as education, Medicaid, and drug rehabilitation programs" (Los Angeles Times, January 30, 1988).

Foreign Issue.

"Nixon concluded with an impassioned appeal to the unchosen Democrat who will be his probable opponent in November to remove the issue of foreign aid from the campaign debate" (Los Angeles Times, April 24, 1960).

"Senator Robert F. Kennedy objected tonight to the White House action earlier in the day laying down new terms for opening Vietnam talks" (The New York Times, April 19, 1968).

"And there was a degree of toughness in his [Reagan's] campaign speeches. For example, when discussing possible violations of the Panama Canal treaties, he told a crowd of 2,000 cheering Oklahomans, 'If they step over the line just once in violation of that treaty, we'll step in'" (Los Angeles Times, March 25, 1980)

"The Rev. Jesse Jackson told Los Angeles business and civic leaders Tuesday that the nation must seek further arms reduction joint ventures with the Soviet Union and a new relationship with Third World countries that steers away from military intervention" (The New York Times, May 25, 1988).

Topic

Party Topic.

"The entire Republican record must be regarded as a solid foundation upon which to build greater accomplishments in the future, Nixon said" (Los Angeles

Times, January 28, 1960).

"Yesterday's meeting was the first statewide gathering of the New York 'dump Johnson' movement, known as the Coalition for a Democratic Alternative. It is affiliated with a national anti-Johnson organization known as the Conference of Concerned Democrats" (The New York Times, January 7, 1968).

"Robert Teeter, the Republican pollster who is advising Bush, said the GOP electorate as a whole never became sharply conservative despite Reagan's dominance in recent years. 'The Republican Party is a center-right party, not a right-wing party,' he said. Teeter said it remains dominated by what he called 'regular' or mainstream Republicans who are conservative on economic issues and foreign policy, but were less so on social issues and who, for example, backed the civil rights efforts of the '1960s" (The Washington Post, January 23, 1988).

Media Topic.

"One Republican said the President made the point that the more a person's name is mentioned by newspapers, magazines, and radio and TV, the better showing he will make in a public opinion poll" (Los Angeles Times, April 8, 1960).

"Newspapers here have welcomed him as a man of integrity and courage. But the general political assumption in Florida is that 1968 is likely to be a Republican year" (The Washington Post, May 18, 1968).

"The Journal acknowledged that its survey began before Ford's announcement that he would not run" (Los Angeles Times, March 25, 1980).

"While Republican Pat Robertson and former Colorado Democratic Sen. Gary Hart have been trying to run against and around the media by taking their

campaigns to 'the people,' Babbitt's message seems to be: 'Let the media decide'" (The Washington Post, January 16, 1988).

Candidate Topic.

"Sen. Kennedy has reached a critical point in his quest for the Presidency. His personal charm, his money, his religion and his dispassionate intelligence have carried him to a high plateau, still far below the summit but, ironically these very same factors are now beginning to cause him trouble" (Los Angeles Times, April 8, 1960).

"Kennedy later got an encouraging boost from Sen. George McGovern (D-SD). Introducing Kennedy to a Sioux Falls Chamber of Commerce meeting, McGovern offered a most flattering 'nonendorsement'" (Los Angeles Times, April 17, 1968).

"Rosalynn Carter is a cheerleader, a seemingly tireless bundle of political energy. She speaks without notes but her message is always the same, 'I am proud of Jimmy Carter and I think he's a great President'" (The New York Times, February 24, 1980).

"When Rep. Richard A. Gephardt (D-MO) portrays himself as the presidential candidate of 'change,' he doesn't mean his voting record, his beliefs or the temperature of his rhetoric" (The Washington Post, February 11, 1988).

Caucus

"Baker said that Bush's last private poll, taken March 1, showed him 12 percentage points behind the former California governor in Florida. That poll coming on the heels of Bush's overwhelming loss to Reagan in New Hampshire, reversed an earlier tally taken after Bush's victory in the Iowa caucuses January 21 . . ." (Los Angeles Times, March 8, 1980).

"With scarcely more than a week to go before the Iowa caucuses and the Democratic presidential race knotted in a virtual three-way tie, few political observers here are willing to predict who will win the first major electoral contest of 1988" (Los Angeles Times, January 30, 1988).

Delegate Count

"Kentucky's Republicans gave Vice President Nixon their 26 votes for the Presidential nomination today but were unable to draft Sen. Thurston Morton as their choice for his running mate" (Los Angeles Times, April 24, 1960).

"Sen. Eugene J. McCarthy of Minnesota outpolled non-candidate Lyndon Johnson in the Wisconsin presidential primary today and claimed the bulk of the state's 60 delegates for his future fight against Sen. Robert F. Kennedy (D-NY)" (The Washington Post, April 3, 1968).

"Kennedy has campaigned in the South but will not return before the primaries. For him, the focus is on Illinois March 18, when 179 delegates are to be won. He will spend every day until balloting begins here except for three brief visits to Washington" (Los Angeles Times, March 8, 1980).

"Vice President Bush tonight gained a potentially decisive lead in the battle for Michigan's 77 Republican convention delegates as supporters of Pat Robertson and Rep. Jack Kemp (R-NY) stalked out over 20 county conventions where party rules favored Bush" (The Washington Post, January 15, 1988).

Character

"Instead, he [Kennedy] finds himself widely regarded as a Catholic personality-boy, and while this is useful in the preliminary skirmishes for the nomination, it is too shallow and theatrical an image for the decisive phase of the campaign" (Los Angeles Times, April 8, 1960).

"But what he [Robert Kennedy] does have is the absolute personal integrity and honesty of a Woodrow Wilson, the stirring passion for public leadership of Andrew Jackson and the profound acquaintance with personal tragedy of an Abraham Lincoln" (Los Angeles Times, April 17, 1968).

"Meanwhile, criticism of Kennedy mounted with the continued discussion of his role in the fatal Chappaquiddick accident in 1969 and his separation from his wife in recent years. Even though Joan Kennedy made several effective personal and television appearances on behalf of her husband, the most recent Globe poll showed an extraordinarily high 48 percent disapproval figure for Kennedy as an individual" (The Washington Post, February 27, 1980).

"In the weeks ahead, as Gephardt, 47, is introduced to a national electorate that knows little about him beyond his "\$48,000 Hyundai" ads, he'll try to show that the apparent incongruities in his political personality complement each other, and that the changes he's made on some major issues reflect growth and flexibility. His opponents will argue that the former is a product of packaging, the latter opportunism. They've already labeled him a 'fly-by-night populist'" (The Washington Post, February 11, 1988).

Appendix B
Supplemental Tables

Table B-1
Mean per Category Per Story for Each Year in All Newspapers

| | <u>1960</u> | <u>1968</u> | <u>1980</u> | <u>1988</u> |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| | <u>N=72</u> | <u>N=95</u> | <u>N=105</u> | <u>N=87</u> |
| 1. <u>News Generation</u> | | | | |
| Media-Generated | 4.90 | 7.50 | 9.10 | 9.00 |
| Party-Generated | 0.96 | 0.93 | 0.67 | 0.60 |
| Candidate-Generated | 3.60 | 4.90 | 5.40 | 7.90 |
| 2. <u>Campaign</u> | 4.60 | 5.50 | 7.00 | 8.80 |
| 3. <u>Issue</u> | | | | |
| Economic Issue | 0.64 | 0.28 | 1.70 | 1.40 |
| Domestic Issue | 0.75 | 0.39 | 0.79 | 1.90 |
| Foreign | 0.60 | 1.50 | 1.10 | 1.80 |
| 4. <u>Topic</u> | | | | |
| Media Topic | 0.26 | 0.26 | 0.33 | 0.99 |
| Party Topic | 1.50 | 2.00 | 1.00 | 1.10 |
| Candidate Topic | 5.70 | 8.60 | 10.20 | 12.00 |
| 5. <u>Caucus</u> | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.55 | 1.10 |
| 6. <u>Delegate Count</u> | 0.46 | 0.38 | 1.10 | 0.55 |
| 7. <u>Character</u> | 0.31 | 0.31 | 0.36 | 0.67 |

Table B-2
Percentage Distributions per Category per Year for the Los Angeles Times

| | <u>1960</u> | <u>1968</u> | <u>1980</u> | <u>1988</u> |
|---|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| | <u>N= 188</u> | <u>N= 220</u> | <u>N=615</u> | <u>N=663</u> |
| 1. <u>News Generation</u> | | | | |
| Media-Generated | 61% | 67% | 62% | 50% |
| Party-Generated | 8% | 2% | 3% | 2% |
| Candidate-Generated | 30% | 23% | 29% | 39% |
| Other | 1% | 8% | 6% | 9% |
| 2. <u>Campaign</u>^a | 52% | 28% | 45% | 41% |
| 3. <u>Issue</u>^a | | | | |
| Economic Issue | 9% | 0% | 14% | 7% |
| Domestic Issue | 9% | 1% | 7% | 8% |
| Foreign | 13% | 6% | 5% | 13% |
| 4. <u>Topic</u> | | | | |
| Media Topic | 3% | 0% | 2% | 8% |
| Party Topic | 15% | 20% | 6% | 3% |
| Candidate Topic | 44% | 60% | 62% | 64% |
| Other | 38% | 20% | 30% | 25% |
| 5. <u>Caucus</u>^a | 0% | 0% | 1% | 6% |
| 6. <u>Delegate Count</u>^a | 5% | 7% | 11% | 4% |
| 7. <u>Character</u>^a | 4% | 3% | 5% | 4% |

Note. ^a categories were coded as yes/no.

Table B-3
Percentage Distributions per Category per Year for The Washington Post

| | <u>1960</u> | <u>1968</u> | <u>1980</u> | <u>1988</u> |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | <u>N=226</u> | <u>N=625</u> | <u>N=634</u> | <u>N=476</u> |
| 1. <u>News Generation</u> | | | | |
| Media-Generated | 47% | 50% | 60% | 51% |
| Party-Generated | 8% | 3% | 3% | 4% |
| Candidate-Generated | 44% | 41% | 34% | 39% |
| Other | 1% | 6% | 3% | 6% |
| 2. <u>Campaign</u>^a | 47% | 38% | 39% | 55% |
| 3. <u>Issue</u>^a | | | | |
| Economic Issue | 6% | 2% | 8% | 8% |
| Domestic Issue | 6% | 3% | 2% | 4% |
| Foreign | 5% | 12% | 8% | 6% |
| 4. <u>Topic</u> | | | | |
| Media Topic | 2% | 2% | 2% | 6% |
| Party Topic | 10% | 8% | 4% | 9% |
| Candidate Topic | 71% | 65% | 68% | 72% |
| Other | 17% | 25% | 26% | 13% |
| 5. <u>Caucus</u>^a | 0% | 0% | 5% | 6% |
| 6. <u>Delegate Count</u>^a | 5% | 1% | 5% | 3% |
| 7. <u>Character</u>^a | 4% | 2% | 1% | 3% |

Note. ^a categories were coded yes/no.

Table B-4
Percentage Distributions per Category per Year for The New York Times

| | 1960 N= 302 | 1968 N= 521 | 1980 N=405 | 1988 N=448 |
|---|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. <u>News Generation</u> | | | | |
| Media-Generated | 44% | 49% | 47% | 46% |
| Party-Generated | 12% | 12% | 9% | 3% |
| Candidate-Generated | 34% | 30% | 41% | 44% |
| Other | 10% | 9% | 3% | 7% |
| 2. <u>Campaign</u>^a | 43% | 42% | 53% | 55% |
| 3. <u>Issue</u>^a | | | | |
| Economic Issue | 5% | 2% | 9% | 8% |
| Domestic Issue | 8% | 3% | 6% | 20% |
| Foreign Issue | 3% | 11% | 7% | 9% |
| 4. <u>Topic</u> | | | | |
| Media Topic | 3% | 2% | 2% | 2% |
| Party Topic | 20% | 19% | 12% | 8% |
| Candidate Topic | 55% | 54% | 63% | 67% |
| Other | 23% | 25% | 23% | 23% |
| 5. <u>Caucus</u>^a | 0% | 0% | 5% | 6% |
| 6. <u>Delegate Count</u>^a | 4% | 2% | 4% | 2% |
| 7. <u>Character</u>^a | 2% | 1% | 1% | 4% |

Note. ^a categories were coded yes/no.

Table B-5
Mean per Category per Story for Each Year for the Los Angeles Times

| | <u>1960</u> | <u>1968</u> | <u>1980</u> | <u>1988</u> |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | <u>N=22</u> | <u>N=15</u> | <u>N=36</u> | <u>N=37</u> |
| 1. <u>News Generation</u> | | | | |
| Media-Generated | 5.20 | 9.90 | 10.60 | 9.00 |
| Party-Generated | 0.68 | 0.27 | 0.44 | 0.43 |
| Candidate-Generated | 2.60 | 3.30 | 5.10 | 8.10 |
| 2. <u>Campaign</u> | 4.40 | 4.10 | 7.60 | 7.00 |
| 3. <u>Issue</u> | | | | |
| Economic Issue | 0.77 | 0.00 | 2.40 | 1.30 |
| Domestic Issue | 0.77 | 0.20 | 1.30 | 1.30 |
| Foreign Issue | 1.10 | 0.87 | 0.86 | 2.30 |
| 4. <u>Topic</u> | | | | |
| Media Topic | 0.27 | 0.07 | 0.36 | 1.40 |
| Party Topic | 1.30 | 3.00 | 1.00 | 0.51 |
| Candidate Topic | 3.70 | 8.70 | 10.50 | 11.00 |
| 5. <u>Caucus</u> | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.19 | 1.00 |
| 6. <u>Delegate Count</u> | 0.41 | 1.00 | 1.80 | 0.65 |
| 7. <u>Character</u> | 0.32 | 0.53 | 0.78 | 0.62 |

Table B-6
Mean per Category per Story for Each Year for The Washington Post

| | <u>1960</u> N=23 | <u>1968</u> N=44 | <u>1980</u> N=34 | <u>1988</u> N=25 |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. <u>News Generation</u> | | | | |
| Media-Generated | 4.60 | 7.10 | 11.20 | 9.70 |
| Party-Generated | 0.74 | 0.43 | 0.56 | 0.84 |
| Candidate-Generated | 4.30 | 5.90 | 6.40 | 7.50 |
| 2. <u>Campaign</u> | 4.70 | 5.40 | 7.20 | 10.50 |
| 3. <u>Issue</u> | | | | |
| Economic Issue | 0.61 | 0.34 | 1.60 | 1.50 |
| Domestic Issue | 0.61 | 0.39 | 0.38 | 0.80 |
| Foreign Issue | 0.48 | 1.80 | 1.50 | 1.20 |
| 4. <u>Topic</u> | | | | |
| Media Topic | 0.17 | 0.34 | 0.35 | 1.10 |
| Party Topic | 0.96 | 1.10 | 0.79 | 1.70 |
| Candidate Topic | 7.00 | 9.30 | 12.80 | 13.80 |
| 5. <u>Caucus</u> | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.91 | 1.10 |
| 6. <u>Delegate Count</u> | 0.52 | 0.21 | 0.94 | 0.64 |
| 7. <u>Character</u> | 0.35 | 0.34 | 0.18 | 0.64 |

Table B-7
Mean per Category per Story for Each Year for The New York Times

| | <u>1960</u> | <u>1968</u> | <u>1980</u> | <u>1988</u> |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | <u>N=27</u> | <u>N=36</u> | <u>N=35</u> | <u>N=25</u> |
| <u>1. News Generation</u> | | | | |
| Media-Generated | 5.00 | 7.10 | 5.40 | 8.30 |
| Party-Generated | 1.40 | 1.80 | 1.00 | 0.60 |
| Candidate-Generated | 3.80 | 4.30 | 4.70 | 7.80 |
| <u>2. Campaign</u> | 4.80 | 6.10 | 6.10 | 9.80 |
| <u>3. Issue</u> | | | | |
| Economic Issue | 0.56 | 0.33 | 1.10 | 1.40 |
| Domestic Issue | 0.85 | 0.47 | 0.69 | 3.70 |
| Foreign | 0.30 | 1.50 | 1.00 | 1.70 |
| <u>4. Topic</u> | | | | |
| Media Topic | 0.33 | 0.25 | 0.27 | 0.32 |
| Party Topic | 2.20 | 2.70 | 1.40 | 1.40 |
| Candidate Topic | 6.10 | 7.80 | 7.30 | 11.90 |
| <u>5. Caucus</u> | 0.04 | 0.00 | 0.57 | 1.00 |
| <u>6. Delegate Count</u> | 0.44 | 0.33 | 0.51 | 0.32 |
| <u>7. Character</u> | 0.26 | 0.17 | 0.11 | 0.76 |