

GUBERNATORIAL GIRLFRIENDS:
AN ANALYSIS OF NEWS MEDIA FRAMES OF POLITICAL SCANDAL

RICHARD ANDREW MARRS

Thesis submitted to the faculty of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
In
Political Science

Craig L. Brians, Chair
Karen Hult, Committee Member
Charles Walcott, Committee Member

May 5, 2010
Blacksburg, Virginia

Key Terms: Political Scandal, Political Sex Scandal, Media Reporting, Political Infidelity

GUBERNATORIAL GIRLFRIENDS:
AN ANALYSIS OF NEWS MEDIA FRAMES OF POLITICAL SCANDAL

Richard Andrew Marrs

Abstract

Since the earliest days of the American republic, political sex scandals have been a part of the political discourse. Despite the passing of several hundred years, much discussion is still given to political sex scandals by the popular media. Little attention, however, is paid to research into the relationship among political sex scandals, the media reporting of sex scandals, and the ways in which politicians are able to use the media during admissions of sex scandals. This project analyzes the most common characteristics within three major newspapers reporting on five cases of gubernatorial admissions of extramarital affairs. The multiple case studies analysis observes 89 newspaper articles to secure data from the initial speculation of a gubernatorial extramarital affair to the admission of an extramarital affair and the period of time (up to one month) following the admission of an extramarital affair.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge with deep gratitude my thesis committee. Many thanks go out to my chair, Dr. Brians, for his many hours of assistance and conversation on and off the topic of my thesis. The time we were able to spend together has been an inspiration to my work as a young researcher and my growth as a person.

To my committee members Dr. Hult and Dr. Walcott, who provided one of the most memorable college classroom environments during my first graduate class, the Executive Branch. The willingness to be a part of this process was, and still is, greatly appreciated and the contributions to this project have certainly not gone unnoticed.

I can say with great certainty that a finer group of educators and mentors would be hard to find.

Much love and thanks goes to my Dad who understood that golf during the spring of 2010 would have to be put on hold. To my dear mother who initially gave me the idea for this thesis and who allowed me to call and vent during times of frustration, love is not strong enough a word to express myself. To my brothers who show tough love at all times, but love nonetheless, and to my dear friends who have been pillars of strength and support and sources of laughs, tears, and wonderful memories – each of you mean the world to me.

I also appreciate the many friends of the graduate student body within the Political Science Department for their assistance, including Sandra Via and Courtney I.P. Thomas. I also must express my gratitude to Dr. Edward Weisband for encouraging me to give graduate school a try.

A final word of appreciation is expressed to the many members of my extended family who have offered support during this project and many others.

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
List of Tables	vii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
<i>Importance</i>	3
<i>Political Sex Scandals in History</i>	6
<i>Media Reporting</i>	9
<i>Chapter Summary</i>	11
Chapter 2: Literature Review	15
<i>What are Political Scandals?</i>	15
<i>Social, Moral, and Private Transgression</i>	21
<i>History of Media and Political Scandal</i>	26
<i>Political Infidelity</i>	30
<i>Media Framing</i>	31
<i>Apologia Speech</i>	32
<i>Research Questions</i>	35
<i>Conclusion</i>	37
Chapter 3: Methodology	39
<i>Type of Research</i>	40
<i>Multiple Case Study Analysis</i>	41
<i>Framing</i>	43
<i>Admission of Marital Infidelity</i>	44
<i>Gathering Data</i>	44
<i>Analyzing News Stories</i>	48
<i>Individual Level Characteristics</i>	49
Chapter 4 – Qualitative Study	55
<i>Paul Edward Patton – Governor of Kentucky (D-KY)</i>	56
<i>Previous Scandal</i>	57
<i>Previous Statements Reflecting Hypocrisy</i>	57
<i>Previous Denial</i>	57
<i>Past Accomplishments</i>	58
<i>Criminal Activity</i>	58
<i>Family Status</i>	59
<i>Emotionality</i>	59
<i>Presence of Wife at Press Conference</i>	60
<i>Inclusion of Quotes from Press Conference</i>	60
<i>Future Plans</i>	61

Partner By Name.....	61
Post Sex Scandal Life	61
<i>Robert Ellsworth Wise - Governor of West Virginia (D-WV)</i>	63
Previous Scandal, Previous Statements Reflecting Hypocrisy, Previous Denial, Criminal Activity,	
Presence of Wife	64
Past Accomplishments	65
Family Status	65
Emotionality.....	65
Inclusion of Quotes from Press Conference.....	66
Future Plans	66
Name of Partner	67
Post Sex Scandal Life	67
<i>James Edward McGreevey - Governor of New Jersey (D-NJ)</i>	69
Previous Scandal.....	70
Previous Statement Reflecting Hypocrisy	71
Previous Denial.....	71
Past Accomplishments	71
Criminal Activity	72
Family Status	72
Emotionality.....	73
Presence of Wife at Press Conference	74
Inclusion of Quotes from Press Release.....	74
Future Plans	75
Name of Partner	75
Post Sex Scandal Life	76
<i>Eliot Lawrence Spitzer – Governor of New York (D-NY)</i>	77
Previous Scandals	78
Previous Statements Reflecting Hypocrisy	79
Previous Denial.....	80
Past Accomplishments	80
Criminal Activity	80
Family Status	81
Emotionality.....	81
Presence of Wife at Press Conference	82
Inclusion of Quotes from Press Release.....	82
Future Plans	83
Name of Partner	84
Post Sex Scandal Life	84
<i>Mark Sanford – Governor of South Carolina (R-SC)</i>	85
Previous Scandals	86
Previous Statements Reflecting Hypocrisy	86
Previous Denial.....	86
Past Accomplishments	87
Criminal Activity	88
Family Status	88
Emotionality.....	88
Presence of Wife at Press Conference	89
Inclusion of Quotes from Press Release.....	89
Future Plans	92
Name of Partner	93
Post Sex Scandal Life	93
Chapter 5 - Analysis of Cases	95

Chapter 6 – Conclusion	101
<i>Importance</i>	101
<i>Limitations</i>	104
<i>Research Questions</i>	105
Bibliography	109
Appendix	113

List of Tables

Table 4.1 – Patton.....	62
Table 4.2 – Wise.....	68
Table 4.3 – McGreevey.....	76
Table 4.4 – Spitzer.....	84
Table 4.5 – Sanford.....	94
Table 4.6 – Total.....	104

Chapter 1: Introduction

“If there’s one thing Democrats and Republicans have in common, it’s sex scandals.”¹ Political sex scandals are not new phenomena to the American political landscape, nor are they aligned to a particular political party. For over 200 years, political sex scandals have maintained a strong presence in the history of the American political culture. Since even before the current population of elected officials was born sex scandals were as much a part of the political culture as campaigning, voting, and debating.

Dating as far back as the late-eighteenth century, sexual scandals have long been a part of the political discourse surrounding politicians, political behavior, and public response.² Many of the most prominent and recognizable leaders of the American history have possessed “skeletons in the closet” that would be newsworthy in the eyes of the contemporary media. Some of those very skeletons involved a sexual act outside the social norms of the day, norms that may or may not be held in the same standard in modern times. Moreover, political sex scandals are a part of the larger study of political scandal, which encompasses the vast array of scandalous acts including financial, sexual, or abuse of power scandals.

Within the last fifteen years, most discussions of political scandal, particularly political sex scandal, have included a discussion of President Bill Clinton. While the scandals during Mr. Clinton’s presidency are not the primary focus of this thesis, the discourse of the vivid details of the scandal that emerged as a result of the Clinton-

¹ K. Keck, “Political sex scandals a nonpartisan affair,” *CNN.com*, 14 October, 2009.
<<http://www.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/07/14/political.sex.scandals/index.html#cnnSTCText>>

² Davis, Lanny J. 2006. *Scandal: how "gotcha" politics is destroying America*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 3.

Lewinsky scandal forever changed the way in which Clinton is remembered. A large reason the Clinton presidency is remembered for sexual scandal and infidelity is because of the attention, both media attention and congressional attention, given the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal. The public knowledge of the scandal, the gathering of details of the scandal, and the attention toward the congressional proceedings associated with the scandal were broadcast through various media sources. Thus, the public gathered information on the scandal through the journalistic efforts of the major media outlets. Among the media disseminating information were major news periodicals.

It is reasonable to expect that informing the public of pertinent political issues is a key reason for news content being presented in various media sources. The content, word choices, and style of language used in newspaper articles is likely to impact the public's stance on a particular issue, including political sex scandals and political infidelity, or the extramarital relationships of elected officials. Therefore, I will demonstrate that the content present in newspaper articles following an admission of a political sex scandal, specifically marital infidelity, delivers information within a series of characterizations and frames that are similar across many instances of political extramarital affairs. Additionally, I will demonstrate that similarities exist across usages of language in newspaper reports on political sex scandals. I expect that the language used in newspaper articles reporting sexual scandals will highlight issues across a broad spectrum including basic information on the scandal as well as a range of other issues: previous scandalous activity by the politician, political hypocrisy, illegal activity, activity outside the bounds of widely accepted social norms, and other potentially non-related historical information. This presentation of information, therefore, is expected to present the politician in a

certain viewpoint for the readers. Thus, the growing relationship (and possible dependence) between journalist and politician will be examined. Furthermore, the ways in which the two professions influence each other will also be an element of this study.³

This thesis will examine three key questions relevant to the growing field of political communication and the coverage in various media relative of political sex scandals. The first research question to be examined is whether newspaper articles report admissions of marital infidelity in a series of characterizations, frames, or tones that are reported in similar ways across all of the sample cases. The first research question will be examined to see what characteristics of the extramarital affair admission were the foci of the journalistic reports. A second research question is to determine if a particular tone was present in newspaper articles reporting on the marital infidelity of a governor. A third research question will examine whether press releases and public addresses admitting extramarital affairs prime newspaper articles to report stories in a particular fashion. Since it is in the best interest of politicians to control the media to the greatest extent possible, a question arises as to the ability of a politician to prime news media. It is possible that the usage of direct quotes from press releases is an additional means for politicians to express themselves during apology addresses and press releases but through the mouths and words of journalists.

Importance

Political scandals have the ability to permeate many levels of public office, including local, state, and federal elected officials. With decisions being made that affect

³ Since 1994, only one female elected official has admitted to an extramarital affair, and that affair occurred years before her election to office. Congresswoman Helen Hage is no longer in office, however, due to an automobile accident. [Archibold, Randal C.. "Helen Chenoweth-Hage, 68, Former Representative, Dies ." October 2006.http://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/04/washington/04chenoweth.html?_r=1 (accessed March 2010).]

the lives of the citizenry each day, it is important to examine how the reporting of scandals can impact the ability of an elected official to perform his or her duties of office. Unfortunately, the few publications available within the genre of political scandal insufficiently discuss the relevance of political sex scandals. Moreover, little to no discussion has been granted to scandals affecting the highest executive office of a U.S. state: the governor.

Sub-presidential politics, such as politics surrounding governors and other state-executives, are as much a part of the field of political science as presidential or senatorial level politics. Yet, it often appears as if governors, although present in each state, do not receive the media attention despite the closer proximity to the electorate when compared to the proximity of the office of the president to the electorate. Additionally, governors possess powers that are similar in nature to the president, and such job experience often leads to governors being potential candidates for the nation's highest office.

Governors perform many symbolic and official roles in the daily workings of the office of governor in the U.S. state which they lead. Instances of gubernatorial corruption, for example, can cast a negative light on a given state. Likewise, governors exercising leadership and charisma can be reported nationally as emerging stars in the national political arena. Both of these instances can be impacted by a political scandal should one arise. Moreover, a political scandal associated with an extramarital affair can receive national media attention even if the governor was previously unknown outside his or her state borders.

Although scandals receive media attention during their emergence, they do not receive much scholarly research. This is true in the case of national and state-level

political scandals. Revelations of an abuse of power, a backdoor financial agreement, or some type of sexual activity that has occurred by a politician often makes newspaper headlines but rarely is discussed beyond water cooler conversations. The available research on political sex scandals and the effects of the frames in print media sources reporting elected officials involved in political sex scandals is even more limited. Few resources have been devoted toward an examination of governors who admit to extramarital affairs while in office.

Most individuals point toward sources of media as the primary location for gathering information. With each new generation, a new form of media seems to develop. From the earliest print and audio sources of media, such as newspapers and radio, to the more advanced visual and interactive sources of information, such as television and online social networks, media sources continue to morph into forms that allow for greater coverage of a greater number of issues. Moreover, popular sources of media are also the avenue through which campaigns distribute information for or against a particular candidate. Various media outlets are the medium through which most elected officials reach constituencies with news, information, and job performance updates in addition to gathering news themselves.

Media outlets also distribute information on elected officials, candidates, and campaigns. Many times, this information is presented in a negative light, often times because of a slow news day. This lack of newsworthy material is frequently the primary cause of political scandal formation. When reporters take bits and pieces of information from the discourse within the political sphere and create a political scandal story, elected officials inadvertently become the focus of a story. On occasion, these stories that lack

any credibility are brought to the attention of an elected official's office or staff, dismissed as rumors or gossip by the staff, and never discussed again by either the staff or the mainstream media. Usually, these stories that are rebuked by the politician's staff are further discredited by concrete evidence such as travel schedules or witnesses. Other times, rumors can lead to a snowball effect of sorts where more stories, both credible and fictitious, develop as a result of the original accusation. These credible stories may lack the magnitude that is desired by the media member, but exist in the realm of political fact nonetheless. Then, on the rarest of occasions, scandalous accusations that have developed in stories which began as bits and pieces of information will result in an admission of guilt by an elected official. This is particularly true in terms of accusations of marital infidelity, or cheating, as has been the case over the last fifteen years.

If a newspaper is presenting bits and pieces of information to form a story, readers are left to formulate an opinion about the political story. Likewise, if a story is presenting information in a certain frame, readers will possibly formulate an understanding of the situation parallel to the themes and characterizations presented in the newspaper reporting. Thus, determining if the news presents the admission of an extramarital relationship, or discusses something other than the relationship during media reports of political sex scandals, is important to an understanding of media reaction to sex scandals. More specifically, there are important reasons to explore the commonalities among the various cases of gubernatorial extramarital affairs being studied within this thesis.

Political Sex Scandals in History

Political sex scandals are neither a new phenomenon nor an ancient occurrence. Rather, political sex scandals have been one of the relatively few aspects of American

political culture that are considered by some to be constant across all sessions of Congress, all political party platforms, and impartial toward the race, gender, or level of office. In fact, some of the chief architects of the Republican *Contract with America* later admitted to acts of marital infidelity.

Among the very first political sex scandals to have been rumored to have occurred was a scandal of the eighteenth century. This first well-noted and well-documented scandal involved Thomas Jefferson and an enslaved woman named Sally Hemings. According to archived reports and writings, Jefferson maintained a relationship with the woman, and even was rumored to have fathered children with his slave. Political opponents also sought to use the relationship as political fodder for individuals against Jefferson, but as Joshua D. Rothman noted, “the relationship between the moral character and the political stature of an individual was somewhat indeterminate.”⁴ The release of information about Jefferson’s scandal, however, would foster a retaliatory effort by Jefferson supporters five years later against another politician in the late eighteenth century. Alexander Hamilton was found to have had an affair in 1791 with a married woman named Maria Reynolds, and in 1797 Hamilton’s affair with Reynolds would become very public and personally destroying.⁵ Despite the apparent hostile environment, the political discourse for the remainder of the eighteenth century and much of the nineteenth century would not include discussion of political sex scandals.⁶

⁴ Apostolidis, Paul, and Juliet Williams. 2004. *Public affairs: politics in the age of sex scandals*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press. 103.

⁵ Davis, Lanny J. 2006. *Scandal: how "gotcha" politics is destroying America*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan., 22

⁶ The usage of the term “political sex scandal” refers to a wide body of sexual activity, including marital infidelity, sexual harassment, homosexual or polygamous relationship, or sexual conduct with a minor. For the purpose of this introduction, the phrase ‘political sex scandals’ will simply imply an understanding of conduct involving some element of sexuality, including but not limited to the aforementioned categories. As this thesis progresses, the definition of ‘political sex scandal’ will be refined.

The historical nature of political sex scandals provides legitimacy to the parallel between political sex scandals and the existence of a political governing body. As noted earlier, some believe political sex scandals to be as much part of the governing process as citizen input, debate, and conference committees. As society continues to derive pleasure from the “over-sexing” of culture, sex scandals will seep into all aspects of life. From sports to business figures to elected officials, the idea of sex scandals provides a certain excitement to the contemporary culture. It is important to note that not all allegations of sex scandal are credible or worthy of significant popular reaction, political sex scandals notwithstanding; however, allegations of deviance from generally accepted sexual behavior often does focus attention toward the public figure and the figure’s previously private lifestyle. This illumination into the lifestyle of the public figure frequently is derived from an increase in media attention, and often covers both public and private aspects of the public figure’s life.⁷

As is the case with elected officials, the media is the predominant source of news information for the vast majority of the public. Particularly in the case of public officials, this information ranges from policy stances to financial data and even familial matters. Moreover, this news information often emerges in times of scandal or apparent scandal, and it is through various media sources that individuals derive an opinion on a certain issue. Nevertheless, as noted by McCombs and Shaw, the media has an impact on the information presented to the public since the mass media often is the only contact many

⁷ Adut, Ari. 2008. *On scandal: moral disturbances in society, politics, and art*. Structural analysis in the social sciences. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 176.

have with politics.⁸ This is true in the case of political sex scandals and how such scandals are covered by the media.

Media Reporting

The coverage of the media of political sex scandals relative to public information is a crucial link between the public official and the public represented by the elected official. In times of political sex scandal, the media helps to inform the public on the actions of elected officials, including behavior before, during, and after the political sex scandal. For the purpose of this thesis, the role of the media following an admission of sexual deviance will be examined to determine the ways in which political sex scandals are reported.

During the mid-term elections of 1994, Newt Gingrich, along with several prominent House Republicans, introduced a bill to bring sweeping change across the United States legislative process. Included in the language presented in the bill to be known as the Republican *Contract with America* was a desire for the bill “to end (Congress’) cycle of scandal and disgrace.”⁹ As a result of the 1994 introduction of the *Contract with America*, and the subsequent Republican victories of the 1994 mid-term elections, a period of moralization entered the previously policy-driven debate of politics. While social morals and norms have always been a part of political discourse, the overarching moralization that was present with the *Contract with America* would establish a clear message that immoral activity was no longer an acceptable form of

⁸ McCombs, M.E., Shaw, D. L., "The agenda-setting function of mass media." *Public Opinion Quarterly* xxxvi, no. 2 (1972): 176-187.

⁹ House of Representatives, "Contract with America." September 1994. <http://www.house.gov/house/Contract/CONTRACT.html> (accessed March 2010).

behavior within the United States House of Representatives. As a result, this study will utilize the period beginning with the fall of 1994 as the start of data collection wherein the moralization of the American political landscape was more recently planted.

From the introduction of the Republican *Contract with America*, specifically the declaration of the “end-of-scandal” clause, to the present, several political sex scandals have occurred. In the years since the emergence of the investigative reporting, multiple allegations of political sex scandals have been discussed. Ranging from state-level legislators to presidents, sexual scandals have been reported in great detail and frequency. It is reasonable to suspect that the demand for political scandal articles originates in the readership of various media outlets.

Sexual scandals of elected officials, particularly elected officials of an opposite political party, have become an avenue to develop political fodder for use during political campaigns. While the degradation of an opponent may resonate well with strong supporters of the attacking politician, the perception that political sex scandals are closely related to a particular party can be used as a platform for another political party. While not the core argument or foundation of the Republican Revolution of 1994, morality was in fact a theme utilized by Rep. Gingrich and the Republican Party during the 1994 congressional mid-term elections.

Chapter Summary

This thesis, through close examination of five scandals, will identify commonalities in press coverage of political sex scandals of U.S. state governors. Using major print publications, the similarities of newspaper reports will be the basis of our study. As the internet and other electronic forms of media gain ground in terms of popularity and usage, the sometimes nostalgic and widely assumed legitimacy of print newspapers will be examined as the primary source of providing information for this study. One reason for this legitimacy may rest with the standardized methods of media reporting as encouraged through various communication and journalism schools. Moreover, newspapers are considered to be a more accurate and legitimate source of news due to the usage of symbolism and the continuation or longitudinal effect of stories.¹⁰

I have decided to examine stories including the names of the elected official from the date of the first discussion of the governor's involvement in a sexual scandal to the date of resignation, or one month from the date of the admission of the sex scandal, whichever occurs first. Each chapter of this thesis will attempt to provide a contribution to the discipline of political science by discussing how newspaper reporting of self-admitted sexual scandals may play a role, due to language in newspaper articles, in the formation of frames and characterizations used in the reporting of sexual scandals. Within this study, I will focus on three newspapers to determine the types of language

¹⁰ Muzzatti and Featherstone, 2007 - Muzzatti, S. & Featherstone, R. (2007). Crosshairs on our backs: The culture of fear and the production of the D.C. sniper story. *Contemporary Justice Review*, 10(1), 43-66.

and frames used in the reporting of sexual scandals. These newspapers represent the three most subscribed newspapers of the country¹¹ in terms of daily subscribers.

The primary research question of this thesis involves the analysis of the similarities used in the print media coverage of admissions of sexual scandals by governors from the introduction of the Republican *Contract with America* in September 1994 to the present. The newspapers selected will include the three most widely subscribed newspapers from across the country. While it could be argued that the entire population of elected officials involved in a sexual scandal could be tabulated, such a conclusion eliminates the fact that some elected officials may be currently involved in some type of sexual scandal or have previously been involved in such a sexual scandal and have “gotten away” with such behavior. Therefore, the sample that will be studied includes only those governors who have admitted to a sexually deviant activity from September 27, 1994 until May 2010 while in office. I will illustrate that print media coverage, specifically the descriptive content and frames included in the print media coverage, portrays political sex scandals in a very specific tone, which may influence the ways in which public knowledge of sex scandals is formed.

According to Weaver, McCombs, and Shaw, media framing is a focus on how issues are reported by news media as well as what is emphasized in such reporting¹². Since each news story is covered by a journalist and editor who collectively determine what information to include or exclude, multiple frames can be present within a single

¹¹ The *Wall-Street Journal* was omitted from this selection of papers despite being the second-most subscribed paper in the United States. The reason for this omission is due to the *Wall Street Journal* serving as a specialty (financial/economic) paper. This omission is supported by numerous other studies of the most prominent newspapers, including recent research conducted by Project for Excellence in Journalism and Rick Edmonds of The Poynter Institute on newspaper content analysis.

[http://www.stateofthemediamedia.org/2005/narrative_newspapers_contentanalysis.asp?cat=2&media=2]

¹² Weaver, McCombs, and Shaw. 2004. Agenda setting research: issues, attributes, and influences. In L.L. Kaid, *Handbook of political communication research* (257-282). New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

story. The language used in print media stories following admission by an elected official of a sex scandal plays a crucial role in the information that is passed to the public and potentially the political or electoral pressures that are placed on the elected official. I also hope to identify if the major newspapers used in this thesis report sexual scandals from the actual language of the press releases or speeches delivered by the governors. These speeches represent an attempt at apologizing to the public for actions self-determined to be worthy of an apology.

Chapter Two is the literature review of this thesis. The literature review will provide a more in-depth background of the current publications available on political scandal, political sex scandal, political infidelity, media reporting and public knowledge formation. Included in this section will be explanations, historical information, and contemporary theories on the disciplines relating to political sex scandals and extramarital affairs of politicians.

Chapter Three will provide an explanation of the methodology used to formulate conclusions of the primary research questions. Within the methodology section, information will be provided on the type of research, the research questions, how the data were gathered, and how the study was performed. Furthermore, a discussion on the various limitations will be provided to illustrate not only the importance of such a study on the political science discipline, but the relative infancy of such a study. This chapter will outline the descriptive content analysis that will be performed on the newspaper articles.

The fourth chapter will provide a brief study of each of the members of the sample. Within this section, a biography of the governor will be provided, followed by a

short background on the candidate and his sex scandal. With the background information provided, an analysis on the language used in newspaper articles about the state executive will be provided, including direct quotes from the three newspapers (if all three newspapers provided quotes). This will help to provide an example to the reader on the actual language being used about each of the elected officials.

In the fifth chapter, a description and analysis of the frames present in the newspaper articles will be discussed. Some of the initial findings of the research will also be included in this chapter. Additionally, since the primary focus of this research is related to the language used in newspaper articles referring to political sex scandals and marital infidelity of governors, it is important to acknowledge the sources from which major news periodicals collect information. One such source is the actual language used by the politician. Thus, the fifth chapter will include a short analysis of the relationship between language being utilized in apology and admission speeches by the legislators and the usage of such quotes in newspaper articles. Transcripts of the press releases and public apology speeches will be examined and compared to newspaper articles in hopes of providing an indication of the correlation to public apologies and news journalism.

The sixth and final chapter will summarize the implications of the study on the field of political science, the study of political infidelity, and the impact of this study on future research. As the field of political communication continues to evolve and expand to include new technologies, new consumers of information, and new means of information distribution, this thesis will help contextualize the similarities in the ways major news periodicals have discussed political sex scandals.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Political scandals have produced a large volume of scholarly literature and rightfully so. As individuals in positions of leadership and “public trust” behave in ways that challenge the respect of the office being held and the respect of the people being represented, the voting public will become upset and situate the elected official into a situation of maximum discomfort.¹³ Scandals permeate all levels of political society, from local non-party positions to the highest and most prestigious office of the land. Likewise, scandals have been a part of nearly every political party and to varying degrees most elected officials in some shape or form.

What are Political Scandals?

There is a popular assumption that the term political scandal can be applied to any wrong-doing by any elected official. To some extent, there exists some truth to this statement; but the many layers associated with the term political scandal may not be given the attention they deserve by such a blanket statement. A more thorough understanding of the ways in which scholars classify political scandals may be of benefit. Political scandals are public phenomena where private behavior, which is situated and bounded by morals and values, becomes publicly revealed and widely deemed morally outrageous.¹⁴ This behavior is not exclusive to sexual misconduct as financial secrecy or manipulation as well as the abuse of power could fall within the context of political scandals. Unfortunately, the literature fails to provide an adequate discussion of what

¹³ Garrard, John, and James Newell. 2006. *Scandals in past and contemporary politics*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press. 17

¹⁴ Garrard, John, and James Newell. 2006. *Scandals in past and contemporary politics*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press. 17

exactly “moral” activity entails, although an understood or implied definition does exist. One reason that “moral” and “scandal” are linked becomes evident following a brief look to the Greek, Latin, and Judeo-Christian origins of the term. According to John Thompson, the word scandal eventually entered English usage during the sixteenth century as conduct unbecoming of a person of religion. Thus, in religious studies, the term scandal was used to refer to events and occurrences in one’s life that may interfere, block, or be an obstacle toward one’s closeness with God, which closely relates to the Greek word *skandalon*, meaning obstacle. Therefore, contemporary usage of the term scandal appropriately aligns these two usages of scandal to illustrate a lapse or block of moral judgment.¹⁵

Most often, the moral activity that is associated with scandal is from widely accepted social norms, such as the understanding that all persons should abide by the laws of the land. It is not important whether the immoral actions disclosed are legal or illegal, but rather that the norms transgressed have some degree of morality within the society. The norms transgressed do not have to be norms that are legally enforced, nor do they have to be shared by all members of the public. Instead, there must exist a sufficient degree of breached morality that the publicity of such actions will be accompanied by public expressions of disapproval and that the actions will be regarded by some individuals as improper and immoral conduct.¹⁶

While this definition may be used to define scandal in a universal context, Garrad and Newell note that the American political culture formulates scandal with notions of

¹⁵ Thompson, John B. 2000. *Political scandal: power and visibility in the media age*. Cambridge: Polity Press., 12

¹⁶ Thompson, John B. 2000. *Political scandal: power and visibility in the media age*. Cambridge: Polity Press., 120

political misconduct (or allegations thereof), media coverage, political contestation, public awareness, and concern.¹⁷ Apostolidis and Williams also reinforce the understanding that scandal is a public event. Specifically, scandal is the publicization of a transgressed social norm, as the transgression of such a norm would remain private without publicity. Moreover, Robert Williams indicates that a political scandal is a lapse of judgment by an elected official as measured against a normative standard.¹⁸ Important to note, however, is that Williams correctly indicates that a scandal does not necessarily include illegal activity.

Due to the individual nature of each political scandal, applying a ‘cookie-cutter’ definition to political scandal would be of no benefit to an understanding of political scandal. Rather, understanding that political scandals normally evolve from a plethora of facts, fictions, and suspicions provides a clearer understanding why political scandals are such a varied area of study. Likewise, any elected official from any level of office is susceptible to the rumors and myths that formulate the vast majority of political scandals.¹⁹

While officials from any level of public office may face accusation of scandal, political scandals themselves vary based on the nature of the moral, social, or value-based transgression at the root of the scandal. For example, a politician involved in a vehicular accident on private property may not warrant any discussion of a possible political scandal. Since motor vehicle accidents occur daily involving individuals from all walks of life, the occurrence of a minor motor vehicle accident by a politician does not

¹⁷ Garrard, John, and James Newell. 2006. *Scandals in past and contemporary politics*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press., 57

¹⁸ Williams, Robert. 2000. *Political scandals in the USA*. Chicago, Ill: Fitzroy Dearborn Pub.7

¹⁹ Williams, Robert. 2000. *Political scandals in the USA*. Chicago, Ill: Fitzroy Dearborn Pub.7

necessarily warrant or hint toward a scandal. While the motor vehicle accident is by law considered a social transgression (since controlling one's vehicle is required by law), it is important to note that such an event is too minor to establish classification as a scandal. Moreover, the occurrence of a genocide or similar mass killing, such as the Rwandan genocide, would be far too egregious and insulting to the thousands of souls lost to classify the event as a scandal, simply because of the transgression of a near-universal acceptance that murder is wrong. Thus, Thompson notes that scandal typically is a term used to apply to events that fall within these aforementioned extremes of societal or moral transgression.²⁰

While the term political may, on the surface, mean the scandal is associated with some type of elected official or politician, Thompson indicates that such an assumption of the term political would require a deeper understanding of the institution or social agreement made between the political official and the political. Therefore, Thompson urges the association of political scandal and politician to focus on a different set of social principles, mainly the violation of legally bound laws and rules that are exercised through a governing body possessing political power rather than focusing on the official himself. By aligning the term political within this framework, political scandal therefore remains an open, public, and inclusive concept which avoids any exclusion that someone who fails to agree with previous societal institution may feel. In other words, regardless of level of office or duties of the office held by the elected official, breaking the rules associated with the publicly legitimated office would constitute a political scandal.²¹

²⁰ Thompson, John B. 2000. *Political scandal: power and visibility in the media age*. Cambridge: Polity Press., 14

²¹ Thompson, John B. 2000. *Political scandal: power and visibility in the media age*. Cambridge: Polity Press., 91

Robert Williams also provides a discussion of political scandals in the United States, particularly in terms of the realm of public and private action. According to Williams, political scandals are public events because they expose conduct which would otherwise remain private or at least only be known to the players involved.²² Some would consider this breach of privacy to be an issue, and some scholars would agree. Others, however, believe that a revelation of immoral private behavior while in the confines of public office is behavior that should be given to the public. Since a private action is normally seen as a public offense once an abuse of power is present, an assumption of power corruption is thus applied to the elected official. As quoted by N.R. Kleinfield in a March 2008 edition of the *New York Times*, Tom Fiedler of the Harvard Kennedy School notes that the enmeshing of politics and sex “reinforces the lessons of the aphrodisiac of power” that one assumes with become the apparent “alpha male” of the political arena.²³

John Thompson reinforces the idea that politicians behave in ways that contribute to a perception of a corrupt power-seeking individual. These power-seeking individuals, most often seen in the form of an individual seeking elected office (the candidate), assume the risks associated with campaigning, but do so with an understanding that a great reward, power, awaits if elected to office. Thus, as a means gaining support from the public, politicians establish positions across a broad array of issues which may or may not adhere to the established norms and values of the voting public.²⁴ Therefore, when a political scandal occurs and is made public, many people may be shocked by the activity

²² Williams, Robert. 2000. *Political scandals in the USA*. Chicago, Ill: Fitzroy Dearborn Pub. 122

²³ Kleinfield, N. R. . "Politics, and Scandal, as Usual ." March 11, 2008.<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/11/nyregion/11cnd-scandals.html> (accessed March 2010).

²⁴ Thompson, John B. 2000. *Political scandal: power and visibility in the media age*. Cambridge: Polity Press., 126

of the elected official even those the actions of the official do not transgress a personal norm or value that is held closely by the member of the public.

Furthermore, the public may feel a sense of resentment toward politicians who have encouraged members of the public to prescribe forms of behavior which they themselves have failed to adhere and abide by.²⁵ This action is more commonly known and discussed as political hypocrisy. The American public is often forgiving of personal mistakes but isn't as forgiving when a politician does something that directly contradicts the core arguments that they, or their party, have been making in the public arena."²⁶ Political hypocrisy is considered a political tool employed by some individuals, such as political opponents for public office.

Hypocrisy is an effective tool used by political opponents and journalists alike for furthering scandal since perceived hypocrisy may exacerbate the political effects of a scandal. During the 1884 Grover Cleveland sex scandal, the Republican aggressively banked on the 'hypocrisy rule', which suggests that the scandal itself, especially in the case of sexual misbehavior is less important than the fact that the person accused has sanctimoniously praised his own purity and integrity up to the release of the scandal.²⁷ Especially in terms of political scandal associated with gay and lesbian politics, hypocrisy is often a tactic used to inflame political scandal when conservative gays, who

²⁵ Thompson, John B. 2000. *Political scandal: power and visibility in the media age*. Cambridge: Polity Press., 126

²⁶ Zelizer, Julian E. 2000. Clio's Lost Tribe: Public Policy History Since 1978. *Journal of Policy History*, 12 , pp 369-394

²⁷ Davis, Lanny J. 2006. *Scandal: how "gotcha" politics is destroying America*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan., 31

have long opposed any “pro-homosexual” public policy, are outed and placed high upon the hypocrisy pedestal.²⁸

Thus, questions are often asked why such individuals would adapt to a lifestyle of elasticity relative to personal norms, values, and morals. According to Carol Ostrom, politicians are often extreme risk takers who have found personal motivation in the drive for success.²⁹ Therefore, since many politicians are risk-takers and have taken bold steps in previous endeavors, politicians are often prone to behave in ways that are viewed as risky by everyone except themselves. Abiding by this logic requires an assumption that risk-taking politicians will continue to push the envelope, including activity that pleases the most sensitive of senses: sexual behavior.

Social, Moral, and Private Transgression

The phrase ‘political scandal’ serves as the umbrella phrase for all occurrences of social norm transgression by an elected official. Included in this potpourri of political scandal types for the purpose of this thesis are sex scandals.

Many scholars do not agree that sex scandals are part of the study of political scandals. Markovitis and Silverstein strongly defend their claim that sex scandals are not political scandals at all. From their view, political scandals are only occurrences where activity seeks to increase political power at the expense of democratic process and procedure.³⁰ Therefore, in the eyes of Markovitis and Silverstein, because due process is

²⁸ Adut, Ari. 2008. *On scandal: moral disturbances in society, politics, and art*. Structural analysis in the social sciences. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 207

²⁹ Ostrom, Carol. "What sex scandals say about politics." November 2007. http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/politics/2003992771_curtis04m.html (accessed March 2010).

³⁰Thompson, John B. 2000. *Political scandal: power and visibility in the media age*. Cambridge: Polity Press. 92

not believed to be breeched during most political extramarital affairs, the sexual scandals are not aligned with their theory of political scandal in any fashion.

For Robert Williams, a similar approach is taken in regards to the classification of political sex scandals. Williams believes that “such scandals may well have political consequences but they are not politically motivated and they do not generally involve corruption or the abuse of power.”³¹ Williams further ascertains his claim that political sex scandals are not political scandals when he notes that political scandals must involve a public official using the public office for private benefit.

Yet, while many scholars believe that sex scandals are not part of the larger study of political scandal, other scholars believe that sex scandals should be studied, understood, and classified in the context of political scandal. I agree that political sex scandals are a part of the larger body of political scandal research. To affirm my claim, I use the words of Robert Williams, a proponent of the separation of political scandal and political sex scandal: “a political scandal involves a departure or lapse from the normative standards that guide behavior in public office.”³² Therefore, as is reinforced by several other scholars, the deviation from the normative standard of honesty with one’s wife is a departure from the expectation of honesty that is among the most important behaviors of a public official.

To support my claim, Lanny Davis, a colleague and public defender of Bill Clinton, further identifies that political sex scandals have been a part of the American political landscape since Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson used them to hurt the

³¹ Williams, Robert. 2000. *Political scandals in the USA*. Chicago, Ill: Fitzroy Dearborn Pub.7

³² Williams, Robert. 2000. *Political scandals in the USA*. Chicago, Ill: Fitzroy Dearborn Pub. 7

other politically.”³³ However, before a discussion of the historical nature of political sex scandals, a definition of what a political sex scandal is, and is not, may be of benefit.

While some space has been given to address the reasons why sex scandals should not be included in the more general study of political scandal, it is nonetheless important to have an understanding of the types of sex scandals that are accepted within the field as being political sex scandals. Political sex scandals occur when the misconduct of a government official for sexual purpose involves the improper use of the public office or involves an act that is seen as morally offensive to the community.³⁴ Within each of these two broad categories, several sub-categorizations exist. In the instance of a public official using the public office in an improper fashion, Bollens and Schmandt suggest that wrongful use falls under two classifications. The first classification includes instances where the government official uses the public office to acquire or pay for the sexual acts. The second classification includes instances where sex is used as an incentive in the influence of a public official or a public official’s policy.³⁵

While the broad study of political sex scandals is limited in the field of political science, the discussion within the subfield of political sex scandal is quite active along the debate of what exactly constitutes a political sex scandal.

As suggested by John Thompson, political sex scandals (or sexual-political scandals) involve public revelations and allegations concerning the private life of public figures. Political sex scandals may involve criminal activity, but do not necessarily have

³³ Davis, Lanny J. 2006. *Scandal: how "gotcha" politics is destroying America*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan., 3

³⁴ Bollens, John Constantinus, and Henry J. Schmandt. 1979. *Political corruption: power, money, and sex*. Pacific Palisades, CA: Palisades Publishers. 185

³⁵ Bollens, John Constantinus, and Henry J. Schmandt. 1979. *Political corruption: power, money, and sex*. Pacific Palisades, CA: Palisades Publishers. 185

to include criminal activity. Likewise, a politician's activities that cause the arousal of public attention may have at one time or another been illegal; however, on occasion, these perceived illegal acts are now officially considered legal. Homosexual relationships, physical positions during sexual intercourse, and relationships among individuals of multiple or different races may be among the relationships that, albeit legal, would be considered an offense worthy of sexual-political scandal status by the public.³⁶ Bollens and Schmandt note that while no justification exists to classify homosexual sex scandals any differently than heterosexual sex scandals, Bollens and Schmandt indicate elected officials fare much better politically if the relationship is a heterosexual relationship.³⁷

Political sex scandals on occasion can also include criminal activity such as sex with a minor or the solicitation (and prostitution) of sexual activity. The vast majority of sexual-political scandals, according to Thompson, do not involve criminal offense of any kind.³⁸ This notion of most political sex scandals not being criminal is further reinforced by Bollens and Schmandt since the act of sex with another person other than a spouse is not bounded by any rules or regulations of any particular government office.³⁹

Recently, political sex scandals have also evolved to include a broader series of sexual acts between politicians and the non-spousal partner. A popular misconception is that political sex scandals reach their climax with consummation in the relationship between the politician and the political sex scandal partner. However, as noted by Brenda

³⁶ Allen, Anita L. Privacy and The Public Official: Talking About Sex as a Dilemma For Democracy, 67 *George Washington Law Review*. 1165, 1165 (1999)

³⁷ Bollens, John Constantinus, and Henry J. Schmandt. 1979. *Political corruption: power, money, and sex*. Pacific Palisades, CA: Palisades Publishers. 197

³⁸ Thompson, John B. 2000. *Political scandal: power and visibility in the media age*. Cambridge: Polity Press., 120

³⁹ Bollens, John Constantinus, and Henry J. Schmandt. 1979. *Political corruption: power, money, and sex*. Pacific Palisades, CA: Palisades Publishers. 202

Cossman, political sex scandals can occur without any sexual contact at all. Flirtatious conversation via computer instant messaging programs, email messages, text messages as “sexts⁴⁰”, or phone conversations can all be considered possible avenues for a non-contact sexual relationship.⁴¹ It is difficult to determine what new methods of sexual contact or sexual non-contact will develop as new technologies are formed. One can appropriately assume that Facebook messages, secretly coded “Tweets,” or an increasingly interconnected mobile telephone industry will add to the ways in which politicians and their partners communicate, especially when secret hotel rooms and private airplanes are not enough to satisfy the sexual desires of the sex desiring politicians. And while the new forms of intimacy may be a growing part of the ways in which politicians are able to engage in extramarital relationships, it is important to remember that more traditional forms of affection, particular in the case of physical affection, are still very applicable toward the study. Physical hugging and kissing, sexual intercourse, and intimate touching are still actions that can lead to political sex scandal status.

While the history of political sex scandals is to be discussed, it is important to note that sex scandals themselves are not unique to the political field. As Thompson rightly notes, sex scandals occur across a wide spectrum of lifestyles, including athletes, religious leaders, or media personalities.⁴² One can easily focus attention on the PGA

⁴⁰ According to the Pew Internet & American Life Project, sexting is considered the sending or receiving of nude or semi-nude pictures via a text message program. While primarily a phenomenon among teens with cellular telephone, there exists no restriction on adults from sexting or becoming a part of the sexting population. The information included here was derived from a CNN article:
<http://www.cnn.com/2009/TECH/12/15/pew.sexting.survey/index.html>

⁴¹ Cossman, Brenda. "The new politics of adultery." *Columbia Journal of Gender and Law* 15 (2006): 274-296.

⁴² Thompson, John B. 2000. *Political scandal: power and visibility in the media age*. Cambridge: Polity Press., 123

Tour of 2010 to see the ways in which sex scandals can affect the lives of even the top athletes in the world, namely Tiger Woods in this example.

History of Media and Political Scandal

Most politicians believe that all political scandals are a creation of the media and therefore regard the media as cynical, negative, unfair, and biased. The print press, television reporters, and internet bloggers have a large role in determining what is political scandal, how much air or print space should be devoted to the scandal, and the longevity of the scandal coverage. Therefore, many legislators believe that the public distrust and scandal-saturated image of the political arena can be attributed to its negative coverage in the mass media, print newspapers not withstanding.⁴³

Politicians themselves also contribute to the media coverage of political sex scandals by increasingly negative attacks on each other. The mass media, who many consider to be starved for conflict to report in the first place, will undoubtedly report such political conflict when it arises.⁴⁴ Therefore, since the public is attuned to the seemingly consistent behavior of politicians behaving badly, the public is therefore appreciative of the media for keeping politicians somewhat honest.

Nevertheless, the question remains as to why media should be involved in the formation of political sex scandals. The likely answer to such a question lies in the most local levels of political discourse. As can be expected, scandals begin at the local levels of politics and discussions of such scandals begin in small, assumed-loyal circles of the politician's trustees. Yet, these scandals undoubtedly leak and unfold into larger media circles and thus engulf the larger political conversation.

⁴³ Williams, Robert. 2000. *Political scandals in the USA*. Chicago, Ill: Fitzroy Dearborn Pub, 118

⁴⁴ Williams, Robert. 2000. *Political scandals in the USA*. Chicago, Ill: Fitzroy Dearborn Pub, 128

It is important to trace back to the roots of the current relationship between political sex scandals and the media. Those roots of scandal and media exist during the same timeframe as the origins of the American republic. Political sex scandals, unlike the new forms of intimacy, are anything but new. For centuries, political sex scandals have occurred. Among the first political sex scandals to breach the United States involved the first Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton, who was a crucial contributor to the Federalist Papers, was involved in a scandal with Mrs. Maria Reynolds. As scandals do today, information leaked to the press, and journalist Thomson Callender made the affair public with the publication of a pamphlet titled *History of the United States for the Year 1796*. Hamilton was among the citizens who read the pamphlet and issued a response admitting his relationship with Mrs. Reynolds but denying any abuse of Secretary of Treasury powers.

Callender also fueled the scandals encircling the life of Thomas Jefferson and his affair with Sally Hemmings. While the exact number of children fathered by Jefferson with Hemmings is unknown, it is believed at least five offspring were born. Surprisingly enough, the affair between Jefferson and Hemmings did not reach the national political scene until Jefferson became president. The reason for the national attention toward the issue was a result of an article in the *Richmond Recorder* written by none other than James Thomson Callender. Despite the article, Jefferson refused to comment on the published scandal and would instead be reelected President just two years after the article's first print.⁴⁵⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Thomspson, 143-144

⁴⁶ Davis, Lanny J. 2006. *Scandal: how "gotcha" politics is destroying America*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 17

Interestingly enough in its own right, Davis points to the various avenues used to address mediated scandal, even during the earliest examples available. While Hamilton addressed the issue by providing some details, Jefferson, in a sense, denied the events from ever occurring by refusing to address the issue.

The emergence of early-American political scandals did not stop with Hamilton or Jefferson. As politics intensified in the early United States, political parties learned the advantages of exploiting opposition politicians who were ensnarled in public scandal. Political sex scandals, however, waited to emerge again in 1884 with the public disclosure that New York Governor and candidate-for-president Grover Cleveland had fathered an illegitimate child. Rather than hide from the accusations as suggested by Cleveland's advisors, the Democratic candidate instead insisted for his advisors to take one action: tell it all.

Grover Cleveland's opposition still insisted on showcasing the affair. From campaign slogans to campaign art, the Republicans insisted on reminding the public of the governor's scandal. Yet, Cleveland was still elected president, and according to Davis, his election was a result of his insistence on telling the truth sooner rather than later.

Excluding a few brief issues that could be classified as scandal, the political environment from Grover Cleveland's scandal until the late 20th century was essentially scandal-less. The reason that nearly 100 years of political scandal silence emerged was largely a result of the "gentlemen's agreement". This agreement implicitly stated that the scandals within politics would be treated according to the scandal type, and regardless of the scandal, the details better emerge from the smokiest of smoking guns. Despite the

agreement, scandals involving abuse of power or ignorance of financial law remained slightly vague. The same could not be said for sexual scandals.⁴⁷

Sexual scandals were not to be reported. It was the clearest of codes in the gentlemen's agreement during the period from Cleveland to Kennedy. Sexual scandals were only allowed to be discussed if the scandal involved a compromise of national security or a compromise of public performance as a result of blackmail.⁴⁸

While the reporting of such scandals is a modern development, the 160 years following the Jefferson-Hemings scandal were not necessarily scandal-less. Instead, news of political sex scandals was simply limited. During this time, politicians and political whistleblowers alike abided by the "no notes, no discussion" policy of the "gentlemen's agreement"⁴⁹. The gentlemen's agreement between politicians and media members, and the secrecy that it ensured, included silence on several facets of political misbehavior, not the least of which included "marital infidelity and alcohol abuse".⁵⁰

The gentlemen's agreement continued for several more decades, protectively covering the sexual activities of presidents ranging from Franklin Roosevelt's affair with Lucy Mercer to Dwight Eisenhower's affair with Kate Summersby.⁵¹ Yet, the life of the gentlemen's agreement in sexual scandals came to a halt with the presidency and ensuing assassination of John Kennedy.

⁴⁷ Davis, Lanny J. 2006. *Scandal: how "gotcha" politics is destroying America*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan., 34

⁴⁸ Davis, Lanny J. 2006. *Scandal: how "gotcha" politics is destroying America*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan., 34

⁴⁹ Davis, Lanny J. 2006. *Scandal: how "gotcha" politics is destroying America*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan., 33

⁵⁰ Segrave, K. 1990. *Sex and politicians*. Branden Pub Co.

⁵¹ Davis, Lanny J. 2006. *Scandal: how "gotcha" politics is destroying America*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan., 38

The gentlemen's agreement ended with the assassination of President Kennedy. His assassination, along with the culture of the 1960s, all but erased the gentlemen's agreement. While Davis admits that the 1960s were a type of catalyst in regards to how politically driven scandals developed, he notes that the 1990s brought a drastic change the ways in which political scandal was discussed. Due to a somewhat predictable development of "hate and hyper-partisanship", the 1994 mid-term elections proved to be the start of a new era of politics in which scandal was a tool to be utilized as a mechanism of great destruction against one individual and great success for another.

The reason for the end of the gentlemen's agreement was multifaceted, but mainly arose as a result of the need for media outlets to use scandal as a means of attracting readership to each reporter's respective production. This style of investigative reporting would continue through the Vietnam War and through the Watergate era of American political history.

Political Infidelity

Scholars of political sex scandals have long included extramarital affairs and political infidelity among the list of sexual acts worth of the scandalous title. While extramarital sex is a common behavior in American society, and while such behavior is generally a private matter, Bollens and Schmandt believe that extramarital affairs become a public concern when officials misuse their position in the process of engaging in such affairs.⁵² Yet, the act of infidelity has constantly evolved over time. According to Brenda Cossman, the nomenclature of marital infidelity as being normal heterosexual intercourse

⁵² Bollens, John Constantinus, and Henry J. Schmandt. 1979. *Political corruption: power, money, and sex*. Pacific Palisades, CA: Palisades Publishers. 204

with someone other than a spouse is among the most basic classifications of marital infidelity.⁵³ As expressed earlier, acts of infidelity can reach far beyond the bounds of conventional sexual intercourse to the point where infidelity does not have to involve any physical touching at all as long as the emotional or sexual intimacy, and trust in the exclusivity of emotional and sexual intimacy with a spouse, is violated.⁵⁴

It is also important to note that some variance lies with the legality or illegality of the violation of a monogamous heterosexual relationship. Extramarital relationships remain a criminal offense in several states, but the rate of prosecution of such an act is rare.⁵⁵ The reasoning for the criminality of adultery was not entirely grounded in preventing immoral behavior. Rather, the roots and justifications for the criminality of adultery are grounded in economic reasons. In 1838, the New Jersey Supreme Court legitimated this economic logic when the court delivered a ruling along reasons associated inheritance for one's children.⁵⁶

Media Framing

During the coverage of any news event, journalists will have the final determination of what information is to be reported and what information is to be omitted. Often times, the omitted information will return to the story after a few days of publication and discussion. During any news event, the media will reformulate the events of the story to keep the story fresh in the eyes of the reader. This adjusting of details of a

⁵³ Cossman, Brenda. "The new politics of adultery." *Columbia Journal of Gender and Law* 15 (2006): 274-296.

⁵⁴ Peterson, Karen S.. "Infidelity reaches beyond having sex." *USA Today*, January 2003, http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2003-01-08-workplace-usat_x.htm.

⁵⁵ According to Brenda Cossman, the following states still criminalized adultery as of 2006: Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin

⁵⁶ State v. Lash, 16 N.J.L. 380 (1838)

story is referred to as “frame-changing”.⁵⁷ The concept of framing is defined well by Entman when he notes that framing involves selecting some aspects of a story and promoting those aspects through their selection, emphasis, and elaboration.⁵⁸ Chyi and McCombs establish that frames occur at five levels: individual, community, regional, national, and international.⁵⁹ For the purposes of this study, the individual level will be the only level given attention.

From this frame, readers will be exposed to neutral information in a particular light. Thus, readers are expected to process, remember, and repeat the information in the same context as it was originally presented to them. This repetition of a media frame may be seen during casual conversation or may be expressed during a trip to the voting booth. The themes presented in the various articles are likely to be reinforced or established along similar perspectives and opinions about the governors, who are the center of the individual-frame focus in each article.

Apologia Speech

Press releases and speeches are official apologies on behalf of the politician for behavior unbecoming of the public office or the expectations of the public official. For a politician facing any political scandal, the moment when he or she faces the public can be quite difficult. On occasion, the politician addressing the political scandal will seek to speak to the people through published press releases from behind closed doors and away

⁵⁷ Chyi, H. I. & McCombs, M. E. 2004. Media salience and the process of framing: Coverage of the Columbine school shootings. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 81(1), 22-35.

⁵⁸ Entman, R. 1993. Framing: Towards clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51-58.

⁵⁹ Chyi, H. I. & McCombs, M. E. 2004. Media salience and the process of framing: Coverage of the Columbine school shootings. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 81(1), 22-35.

from cameras. Other politicians will address the cameras live, but sneak away before journalists can ask questions about the scandal being address. Even more brazen are the politicians who deliver speeches and then face questions from the likely large contingent of media who have gathered. This type of speech and communication is known as apologia.

The field of apologia is closely aligned within the field of political communication and rhetoric. It is also necessary to be included in this study because an analysis of language used in newspaper articles is a key element of this study. It is important to determine if the language used in the newspaper articles is, in fact, the language of the politician in the headline of the newspaper articles.

The study of apologia speech and speeches of atonement from political leaders has long been a part of the political discourse. Ware and Linkugel have established that apologia speech is sufficiently distinctive to form a separate genre from the more generalized field of public address.⁶⁰ Speeches within this genre of political communication include instances where an attack on one's character warrants a response from that person. It is important to note that the attack, whether from the public or from the media, is on the person's character and not on the performance or policies of the office holder. Therefore, the challenging of one's morals, values, or reputation is significantly different than critique of the public office.⁶¹ Moreover, such a challenge of a public official's morals, values, and reputation creates a desire from the public for a

⁶⁰ Ware, B. L., & Linkugel, W. A. (1973). They spoke in defense of themselves: On the generic criticism of apologia. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59, 273-283.

⁶¹ Ware, B. L., & Linkugel, W. A. (1973). They spoke in defense of themselves: On the generic criticism of apologia. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59, 273-283.

public response, whether in self-defense of the actions or in the form of apology and atonement.

Because the cases warranting an apology are different, each apologetic speech is different as well. Public officials address various scandalous charges from a variety of situations and respond through the use of many unique strategies. Ware and Linkugel seek to establish if relations exist across the study of apologia by focusing on characteristics of apologia speech. Since most apologetic speeches are delivered by some public rhetor in hopes of further explanation or defense of an act or series of acts, apologia speeches form from four general themes: denial, bolstering, differentiation, and transcendence. Speeches of denial will be the primary focus of this research.

A public official may deny facts, feelings, objects, or relationships in so long as the denial is not a misrepresentation of reality or a distortion of other known facts held by the public official's audience.⁶² Speeches of denial seem to be an obvious element to include in the study of apologia. Simply put, denial is an attempt of the public official to clearly reject any participation, relation, or emotion toward whatever it is that deters the public toward the public official. Apologia speeches containing a theme of denial can also be used in instances where denial of the entire series of events would be falsifying the actual realities. In these instances, denial of intent is used by the public official in hopes of explaining that whatever action has caused discontent among the public occurred as a larger sequence of events.⁶³ Essentially, denial of intent implies that the public official did not intentionally try to hurt the public during his course of behavior.

⁶² Ware, B. L., & Linkugel, W. A. (1973). They spoke in defense of themselves: On the generic criticism of apologia. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59, 277.

⁶³ Ware, B. L., & Linkugel, W. A. (1973). They spoke in defense of themselves: On the generic criticism of apologia. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59, 273-283.

John Thompson identifies how crucial a role denial plays in the life of a political leader when he notes that from fear of “damage that could be caused to their reputations and careers by public revelations about their private lives, [political leaders] would respond with public denials. But public denials carry their own risks, and they may have consequences that are more serious than the original transgressions they were meant to conceal.”⁶⁴

Research Questions

Several questions were established to help support the proposition that the content within newspaper articles has an impact on public knowledge and public perception relative to political sex scandals involving admission of marital infidelity since 1994. This impact is tapped by examining the usage of key terms and phrases associated with political sex scandals and the variance within those key terms and phrases relative to the eleven characteristics.

#1. Were the three major newspapers, during their reporting of admissions of extramarital affairs, consistent in the reporting of gubernatorial scandals using similar characteristics in each of the scandals?

Through the reading of newspaper articles from the major newspapers, it should be clear whether or not articles reporting extramarital affairs were identifying characteristics that could influence, in a positive or negative manner, the public’s opinion toward a scandal-enthralled governor. Some articles may present both negative characteristics and informative characteristics. One way this analysis will be performed is by examining the language used in the articles. Beginning with the headline of the article and continuing

⁶⁴ Thompson, John B. 2000. *Political scandal: power and visibility in the media age*. Cambridge: Polity Press., 143

through the language in the body of the article, each article will be investigated to determine if the politician is being presented through various characteristics in a fashion which could lead to a negative bias toward the politician, a more favorable bias toward the politician, or if characteristics of the politician are discussed at all. Articles that do not include a discussion of individual level characteristics in the reporting will be considered biographical. These tabulations will be included in the frequencies and proportions section of each case study.

Some of the cases in this study include governors who admitted to extramarital affairs and resigned from office during the same press conference or press release. While the two actions are assumed to be related, the relationship between them is not the focus of this study. Thus, attention is anticipated to be given toward the language used in newspaper articles reporting both the extramarital affair and the resignation in way that still allows for an analysis of the characteristics of the governors.

#2. *Was any language used in the press releases and speeches of admitting politicians also present in the newspaper reports?*

Using transcripts and press releases from the admission of the extramarital affair, the articles will be examined to determine if language used in the public admissions of extramarital affairs primed the newspapers to publish stories that included similar themes when describing the characteristics of the governor.

#3 *Did each of the scandals have all of the anticipated characteristics in the reports from the major three newspapers?*

Since the newspapers selected for this study have very large subscription bases, an analysis needs to be conducted to determine if the characteristics of political infidelity

reports are applied consistently across all five gubernatorial affairs. This is of importance in the event that future research seeks to identify if similarities exist in the way local journalists frame stories compared to national journalists.

Conclusion

According to a December 2009 Gallup Poll, only 15% of Americans believe that state governors are moral, honest, or ethical.⁶⁵ Additionally, the profession ‘state governor’ was ranked 14th out of 23 professions based on the percentage of respondents giving governors a high ethics rating.⁶⁶ This indicates that governors have a very low public opinion, and therefore the question remains to be answered: are newspapers reporting scandalous stories because it is what the public expects, or are politicians providing the negative stories for the newspapers to report? Furthermore, a recent Gallup Poll measured Americans’ reaction to various social issues. Included in this list of social issues were extramarital affairs. According to the data, nearly 9 out of every 10 Americans believe that extramarital affairs are morally wrong.⁶⁷

Many political sex scandals have involved varying degrees of sexual behavior which the media considered to be outside accepted social norms and thus worthy of media attention. However, this study focuses its efforts on office holders, both past and present, of governors from the United States. More specifically, from among the governors meeting the above criteria, these office holders are only included in this study if they have admitted to an extramarital relationship with an individual or group of individuals other than their wives, and have admitted to such a relationship occurring

⁶⁵ Telephone interview conducted November 20-22, 2009; 1, 017 adults responded

⁶⁶ Telephone interview conducted December 2006; 1,009 adults responded

⁶⁷ Conducted March 2-4, 2004; telephone interview with 1,000 adults

while in the current elected office. To be included, these elected officials must have admitted to the relationship occurring while in their present office. Thus, an admission of an extramarital affair by the likes of New York Governor David Patterson would be excluded from this study since the affair he admitted occurred before his appointment as governor. A total of five cases of governors involved in extramarital affairs have been found to research.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The data analysis in this thesis were drawn from a multiple case study of the extramarital affairs of five governors as reported in three major newspapers in the United States. These newspapers, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and *USA Today*, represent the three most subscribed newspapers in the United States. *The Wall Street Journal*, which is actually the second-most subscribed newspaper publication in the United States, was omitted from the selection since it serves largely as a specialty publication. These newspapers will be searched using an analysis of the language, wording, and themes used in the stories.

This analysis will seek language used by newspapers in the stories reporting an admission by a governor to an act of sexual infidelity or extramarital affair. Each case will be described from a biographical standpoint, a description of the scandal as it unfolded, an inclusion of the press release or speech admitting the sexual scandal, and then a frequency and proportion analysis of the articles associated with each particular scandal.

Thus, the analysis will seek language used by reporters in the various stories and determine the similarities of the various reports of governors admitting to extramarital affairs. The articles will be compared using quotes showcasing the frames, themes, and other tones generated within the newspaper stories. Archived articles for usage in this research will be pulled from various databases available including LexisNexis, Factiva, and Access News. The articles will be investigated from the first day of sex scandal suspicion until one month following the admission of the extramarital affair.

Following each of the analyses, an indication should be present of the general attitudes being represented by newspapers and if any similarities exist in the type of coverage among gubernatorial sex scandal admissions in national newspapers.

Type of Research

The purpose of examining language used in stories reporting admissions of marital infidelity is to seek similarities in their reporting of political infidelity among governors across the five selected cases. It is possible that these characteristics, if reported frequently enough, could influence actions of the elected official through perceived and self-measured pressures from the public. Language emphasizing negative tones, such as criminal or illegal activity and hypocritical activity, for example, is expected to be discussed at greater length than positive or informative attributes of the elected official and scandal. Moreover, the depth and repetitive nature of certain language is expected to occur and influence the pressures being placed on elected officials to admit marital infidelity. This theory is expected to be applicable across each of the cases included in this research.

It is also important to note that editorial content (such as letters to the editor) were omitted from the sample. While the many pages of letters to the editor provide an insight into the political environment and attitudes of the public, the public reaction and involvement in sexual scandals is not being measured in this study. While such a study would very likely complement this study, the focus of this thesis is to analyze newspaper article themes, frames, and characteristics in an effort to understand how newspaper reporters portray admissions of extramarital affairs, and whether this portrayal is constant

across the five political sex scandals. The examination that will take place through the interpretation of the language will largely be the qualitative aspect of the research thesis.

Because of the multiple examples available since 1994, this study will be conducted as a multiple case study analysis. This type of research has been utilized by other scholars when comparing and contrasting events of similar style, outcome, and individual status. Since each of the cases represents state governors who have admitted to extramarital affairs since 1994, the cases appear to have enough similarity to be considered appropriate for a multiple case study analysis. Important to note, however, is that some variation does still exist within each of the cases, such as previous political experience and the location of the U.S. state being studied.

Multiple Case Study Analysis

Much attention has been given toward single case study analyses. For this thesis, I will employ a multiple case study analysis. This research design will allow me to examine multiple cases selected in an effort to obtain similar results and explore patterns identified in similar cases. Therefore, if all or most of the cases provide similar results, there can be substantial support for the development of a theory that describes the occurrences of language relative to political sex scandals.⁶⁸ While no rules exist on the number of cases required to perform a multiple case study analysis, I have identified five relevant and closely related cases to examine. Some researchers suggest six cases, but

⁶⁸ Yin, R. 1994. *Case study research: Design and methods* (2nd ed.). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publishing.

this study will instead use five strongly applicable cases rather than searching for a sixth case simply for numeric satisfaction.

This thesis also utilizes a combination of two additional comparative methodologies. The first comparative design is the most-similar-systems design. This design is incorporated into this thesis because of the many similar foci of this thesis. The level of office (governor), the time frame (post 1994), the sexual act (extramarital affair), and the admission of the affair by the sitting governor are all similar (if not the same) across the cases. Additionally, the newspaper articles used in the reporting of the cases are all drawn from three newspapers. Through the utilization of this design, the common characteristics (level of office, time frame, sexual act, and admission) can all be excluded as reasons for variance among the cases if such variance exists.⁶⁹

The second comparative design identifies what is likely obvious: each sexual scandal is somewhat different. While the cases included in this study are similar across many areas, there is still variance among the five selected cases. Political party affiliation, for example, is different across the cases, as is identified by Mark Sanford being the lone Republican in the study. Moreover, because the scandals of five different governors of five different states are examined, each of the states represents a difference to our study. Other differences include the number of articles reporting the gubernatorial affairs for each of the governors, the time the governor remained in office following the admission of the affair, and other factors as identified by the characterizations listed later in this thesis. Therefore, utilizing the most-different-systems comparative design allows for

⁶⁹ Brians, Craig Leonard, Jarol B. Manheim, Richard C. Rich, and Lars Willnat. *Empirical Political Analysis (8th Edition) (Mysearchlab Series for Political Science)*. 8 ed. Alexandria, VA: Prentice Hall, 2010. Print.

these differences to be excluded as reasons for common results across the cases if such common characteristics exist.⁷⁰

By using a combination of the two cases, a unique analysis and incorporation of findings can develop. By being able to eliminate possibilities for variance among the findings through constant characteristics within the cases, and by being able to determine that difference among the cases lacks influence across the different-systems cases, a more narrowed conclusion is possible.

Framing

The main focus of each of the articles in this multiple case study is the elected official, which indicates the articles are written from an individual frame. Individual level frames focus entirely on the individual being discussed in the scandal, such as the actions of the governor in the extramarital affair scandal. In addition to the governor, the individual frame also includes the governor's family, the partner in the relationship, and the governor's immediate circle of friends and advisors. While other framing levels such as community, national, and international exist, the individual frame appears to be frame from which the vast majority of newspaper articles relative to scandal are written.

When articles include multiple characteristics, they may be utilized more than once in the study. Therefore, proportions may not tabulate to exactly 100%.

⁷⁰ Brians, Craig Leonard, Jarol B. Manheim, Richard C. Rich, and Lars Willnat. *Empirical Political Analysis (8th Edition) (Mysearchlab Series for Political Science)*. 8 ed. Alexandria, VA: Prentice Hall, 2010. Print.

Admission of Marital Infidelity

According to the Forest Institute of Professional Psychology, nearly 50% of all first-time marriages end in divorce, with the percentage rising after each subsequent marriage. Some of these cases are a result of marital infidelity while others, according to Brenda Cossman, are a result of irreconcilable differences. For the purposes of this thesis, I would consider marital infidelity to be any sexual act with any individual who is not a spouse. Due to the private nature of these sexual acts, I will not establish whether marital infidelity is only sexual intercourse or some other physical relationship. As noted earlier, sexual activity can include a broad collection of sexual acts, including vulgar language, the sharing of pictures and song, non-penetrative sex. Essentially, marital infidelity and extramarital affairs can occur when the promise of emotional and sexual exclusivity is violated.⁷¹ Rather than establishing a definition of marital infidelity, each member of the sample being studied will, by their own admission, determine if their behavior was worthy of categorization as an act of marital infidelity. While allowing each elected official to self-classify and self-categorize their actions as an act marital infidelity may be seen as ambiguous, the very nature of political sexual scandals and political extramarital affairs can be seen as exactly that: ambiguous.

Gathering Data

In order to analyze whether the themes, frames, and characteristics presented in newspaper articles vary across gubernatorial admissions of extramarital affairs, it was necessary to find politicians that met the study's criteria. The first data filter placed on the

⁷¹ Cossman, Brenda. "The new politics of adultery." *Columbia Journal of Gender and Law* 15 (2006): 274-296.

study was that the admission of the affair must have occurred after the introduction of the *Contract with America*, which occurred on September 27, 1994.⁷²

A second and closely related criterion was that the admission of the affair had to be personally addressed by the politician who was involved in the affair, and the affair must have occurred while in the current elected position. Admission of affairs that occurred years prior or admissions of affairs by politicians who no longer held the office during which the affair took place were omitted. Thus, it was necessary to begin searching for individuals who met these criteria. Fortunately, some of the men who would be included in the analysis were men who I was aware had committed, and admitted to, extramarital affairs. From this starting point, I was able to research articles, books, and scholarly journals referencing these men. It was during this initial collection of research that I was able to find more individuals who had been involved in political sex scandals. Using the keywords “political sex scandal” produced far more articles than phrases such as “extramarital affairs” or “political infidelity”. This held particularly true in terms of popular media articles, television journalism shows, and online media.

From these search parameters, I was able to gather a list of 53 elected officials. Once I had gathered this list of officials, I then began to further eliminate members of the sample. One of the first elimination measures was based on the type of office held. While this information may be useful for future studies, many of the elected officials were legislators from state legislatures. On the opposite end of the scale, Bill Clinton fit the criteria to be included in my study up to this point. However, both the former president and the state legislators were not included since they did not meet my next criterion: the

⁷² Jacobson, Gary. 1996. “The 1994 House elections in perspective”. *Political Science Quarterly*. Vol. 111, Issue 2. 203-223

elected officials must be sitting governors. The elected official could only be a part of the sample if the admission of the affair occurred while the individual held the office of governor.

Since the list of politicians who had been involved in political sex scandals since 1994 had been narrowed, I was left with a population of five governors who had admitted to an extramarital affair while in office. To gather more information on each politician, I performed several searches of articles, books, videos, and other media transcripts from a variety of sources. These sources included articles on popular search engines (Google), popular television news stations (CNN.com), and various databases (LexisNexis). Biographical information was also gathered from current or official biographies as listed on websites of current officeholders.⁷³

With each politician, a file was created that included biographical information, various articles from throughout the politician's political career as gathered from databases of archived media reports, articles related to the sexual scandal involving the politician, and articles beyond the admission of the sexual scandal. I also utilized various sources to pull transcripts of the press releases or speeches admitting the actual affair. These transcripts were utilized in my analysis of apologia speech as influence on the content included in newspaper articles.

Three newspapers were chosen for their national coverage of politics and large readership. Following previous research models, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and *USA Today* were selected as the three newspapers to search for similarities of political sex scandal coverage of gubernatorial infidelity. While not the most nationally geographically representative of available newspapers, my initial desire to include the

⁷³ Current as of March 2010

Los Angeles Times was nullified as a result of my five cases involving state executives east of the Mississippi River. Nevertheless, these newspapers are available across the country and had (or still have) bureaus across the country, including Los Angeles.⁷⁴

I also only utilized newspaper articles and avoided reader-submitted editorial comments. With the newspapers selected, I conducted a specified search on various databases for the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *USA Today*. Then, with each governor who had admitted a scandal, I entered his name into the search field and set date parameters using the first day references were made to a sexual scandal until one month after the admission of the extramarital affair. The reason for these date parameters are multifaceted but justified along a few reasons. One reason is that I wanted to include as many articles as possible from as large a date range as possible while still maintaining a feasible collection of articles to search. In addition, my research indicated that the majority of articles including information on the scandalous politician are printed within a week or two of the admission of the extramarital affair. Furthermore, for the elected officials who immediately resign from office, those articles tend to be printed initially and then are reduced in number significantly following the same one-to-two week period.

With the newspapers and date parameters in place, I began searching for each of the politicians by name. The reason for this broad search was due to the multiple types of language used to classify extramarital affairs, such as infidelity, polygamy, and adultery, in addition to the more humorous and most original classifications of “hanky panky” and the like. After the articles were obtained, it was necessary to sort through them to determine which printed stories were pertinent to my research. Each of the articles that

⁷⁴ The *Washington Post* closed its Los Angeles bureau on November 25, 2009. The *New York Times* still maintains a Los Angeles bureau as well as bureaus in other parts of the country.

were returned according to the search criteria were printed and placed in files labeled by the politician's name.

Analyzing News Stories

Once the sample of politicians to study had been established, it was necessary to begin reviewing the articles. Many of the articles that were recovered included the key terms necessary for the search but were unrelated to my analysis. Some of the articles referred to the various scandals for humorous effect while others simply began stories with language such as *“If you are tired of the [politician’s name] scandal, I have good news: this article is about food.* While there may be some value to references such as these during a study of triggers in media, these articles did not include significant information to determine if the articles were negative or informative in nature. Therefore, these articles were not included in my research and were purged.⁷⁵

I also collected biographies on each case in my sample. While this biography is mainly to introduce the elected official to the particular case, much of the information included in the biography could be included in an additional study (religious affiliation, age, hometown, etc). I also provided a brief history of the scandal to bring awareness of the storyline being told in the local newspaper articles, mainly from newspapers printed in the state capital cities.

After sorting through the articles and eliminating those extraneous to my research, 89 articles meeting the criteria remained. I read each article and then noted characteristics of the reporting frames that I observed within the articles. After examining the articles, I

⁷⁵ Many thanks to the Orlando-based crew of Allegiant Air flight 754 for allowing me to dispose of several hundred unwanted articles from my window seat in row 29.

tabulated the articles to create the frequencies and proportions included in the analysis chapter. A coding sheet was also utilized in the analysis of the articles.⁷⁶

Finally, after determining the frequencies and proportions of the articles, I provided a brief synopsis of the current state of the politician. In another words, the details of what happened to the politician following the admission of the extramarital affair is included in the analysis chapter following the evaluation of the newspaper articles. This analysis of newspaper articles coupled with frequency and proportion comparisons should create a clear picture as to whether similarities exist in the ways newspaper articles portray politicians admitting extramarital affairs.

Individual Level Characteristics

With the individual level frame as the focus level of this study, it is important to establish the characteristics that I expected to be present in the articles discussing admissions of extramarital affairs. I produced a list of 11 characteristics that are used in the portrayal of the governors. Those characteristics are listed as follows:

1. Previous Scandal – the newspaper article indicates that the governor has a history of other political scandal involvement or supposed involvement, including financial scandal, abuse of power scandal, or possibly other political sex scandals.
2. Previous Statements against Extramarital Affairs – the hypocrisy characteristic, as this characteristic is more commonly labeled, will portray the governor as a hypocrite in terms of the involvement in his scandal as compared to language or action taken during a previous sex scandal of an elected official.

⁷⁶ See Appendix for Code Sheet

3. Previous Denial – if the governor was accused or rumored to be involved in a sexual affair or another scandal related to the sexual affair, and the governor denies involvement, this characteristic occurs if the newspaper article reminds readers that the governor previously denied the extramarital affair
4. Past Accomplishments – the newspaper article highlights successes or legislative achievements of the governor, including past careers; such past careers, however, can also be portrayed in negative, hypocritical fashion.
5. Criminal Activity – the newspaper article highlights activity that is illegal, unethical, or worthy of legislative or legal oversight, thus encouraging inference that the governor may be a criminal or at the very least, may have considered ‘criminal’ activity. Criminal activity also includes instances where the governor or governor’s office may be under some type of investigation
6. Family Status – the newspaper article mentions the governor’s wife, children, or other family members. While the governor must be married to qualify for this study, mention of previous wives may also be included here.
7. Emotionality – the newspaper article indicates that the governor showed some type of emotion, whether it be weeping, blank stares, or minimal eye contact during admission of the affair
8. Presence of Spouse – the newspaper article mentions the spouse of the governor at the press conference
9. Inclusion of Quotes – the newspaper article includes quotes from the press conference in which the scandal was admitted
10. Future plans – the newspaper article discusses the future of the governor

11. Name of the Extramarital Partner – the newspaper article mentions, by name, the governor's partner in the extramarital affair

These characteristics represent a combination of previous scholarly research and personal observation. Many of the characterizations were noted in similar cases of political sex scandal. Other characterizations were found in television reports, internet blogs, scholarly books, and local newspaper articles of cases of political sex scandal.

Since this thesis is focused on the usage of frames in the reporting of political sex scandal, I incorporated literature from the field of political communication into my thesis. Some of the above characteristics represent elements of frames within political communication while other characteristics represent empirical observations as noted during the review of the details of the articles.

The study of framing in mass media reporting focuses on the assumption that how an issue is characterized in news reports can influence how an issue is understood by an audience.⁷⁷ According to Scheufele, five factors generally contribute to the ways in which journalists and editors will frame an issue: social norms and values, organizational pressures and constraints, pressures of interest groups, journalistic routines, and political orientation of journalists.⁷⁸ Previous research has indicated that from those five journalistic perspectives, five generic frames are created and present in mass media reporting. According to Semetko and Valkenburg, the five generic frames are the conflict

⁷⁷ Scheufele, D. A., Tewksbury, D., "Framing, agenda setting, and priming: the evolution of three media effects models." *Journal of Communication* 57 (2007): [9-20].

⁷⁸ Scheufele, Dietram A. "Agenda-setting, priming, and framing revisited: another look at cognitive effects of political communication." *Mass Communication and Society* 3, no. 2 & 3 (2000): [297-316].

frame, the human interest frame, the economic consequences frame, the morality frame, and the responsibility frame.⁷⁹

The conflict frame focuses on conflict between individuals, groups, political parties, or institutions as a way of maintaining audience attention. This frame is commonly found in articles highlighting close political races or visible political unrest between politician and political party. Within this thesis, the conflict frame may be present in articles discussing the current state of the politician's marriage, the relationship between the politician and his political party, and references to the relationship between the politician and the electorate.

The human interest frame is present when media reports apply emotion to a story. The emotionality of a story encourages the audience of the story to attach to the details of the story. Therefore, emotionality or the emotionalization of news is represented in the human interest frame. Articles mentioning the emotions of a governor will be included in this frame category. Additionally, the human interest frame often highlights information in stories that most other individuals can relate, such as the status of one's family. Therefore, references to family are triggers present in the human interest frame.

The economic consequences frame generally characterizes news reports in terms of the financial impact of an event on the audience. Within this thesis, the economic consequence frame is likely to be present in discussions of the public costs of the extramarital affair. For some fiscally conservative governors, for example, the economic consequences frame may highlight an element of hypocrisy and thus be classified as a retraction from previous statements or actions.

⁷⁹ Semetko, Holli, and Patti Valkenburg. "Framing European Politics: A Content Analysis of Press and Television News." *The Journal of Communication* 50, no. 2 (2000): 93-109.

The morality frame permeates many of the articles within the sample. Due to the nature of this study and the previous research indicating that scandal is a transgression of a moral norm, the morality frame is present in most of the articles. Important to note, however, is that the morality frame allows for empirical statements to be made in articles about the scandal without having to force a particular moral belief onto the audience. In another words, because audience members are assumed by the journalists and editors to possess moral inclinations (as evident by a moral frame existing), newspaper articles can simply mention factual information about an affair and allow the moral paradigm of the audience to formulate an opinion on the story. The morality frame is also considered to be the “right versus wrong” frame, thus references to criminal activity in articles reinforces the presence of the morality frames in the articles.

The final frame is the responsibility frame. The responsibility frame presents information in media reports that allows the audience to determine who is at fault for a particular incident. For this thesis, the responsibility frame is likely to be present in a variety of ways in the articles. One way the responsibility frame is likely to be present is in the reporting of the name of the partner in the affair. By identifying the girlfriend in the affair, the journalist has applied the responsibility frame to that individual and is allowing the audience to determine if it was the partner who is at fault for the extramarital affair of the governor. Moreover, the responsibility frame may also be present in the event of criminal activity. If a governor is found to be guilty of a transgression of the rules and laws of the office held, the responsibility frame will likely highlight those criminal tendencies.

In addition to these five frames, other elements were present in the articles. Among the elements present, many of the articles included various facts about the cases including the past accomplishments of the governor (such as past careers, past legislative accomplishments, and corporate board appointments) or prognostication about the politician's future. Many of the articles also included quotes from the press releases and press conferences where the governor admitted to an extramarital affair. The usage of quotes serves as both a continuation of the framing theory as well as a possible avenue for future research. Therefore, the articles were examined for the usage of frames and facts in the reporting of political sex scandal.

These frames and facts represent some of the basic notions around the study of political communication and the framing theory. It is important to remember that many other circumstances beyond the five journalistic influences are likely to contribute to the way frames are formulated and facts are presented. Local reporters, for example, may incorporate more human interest, morality, or economic consequence elements into the stories rather than a focus on the conflict or responsibility frames. Political subculture, a possible extension of this study, could appropriately examine the variance between frames utilized by local reporters and national reporters. Additionally, it is possible that the national reporters are able to influence the frames and characterizations present in newspaper articles because of the assumed legitimacy and broad readership of some of the nation's largest newspapers.

Chapter 4 – Qualitative Study

In order to appropriately perform a multiple case study analysis to determine if newspaper language used similar or different individual level characteristics, it is necessary to provide background information regarding the cases. Some of the information included is biographical information. Other information included in the analyses are samples of the articles that were found in the research collection with particularly relevant phrases or tones. These phrases and tones were reflective of the media frames being utilized in this study. The reason for the large amount of information is to allow for the potential of further studies examining relations between place of birth, date of birth, political party identification, past careers, or marital status, to name a few. While these various groupings of information may not be the focus of the study, they do shed additional information on each case that could be utilized in more in-depth case study analyses.

The newspaper article will be the unit of analysis in this study. The five cases are discussed in chronological order, from the oldest to the most recent.

Paul Edward Patton – Governor of Kentucky (D-KY)

Paul Edward Patton was born in Fallsburg, Kentucky on May 26, 1937. In 1979, Patton accepted an appointment by then-Governor John Y. Brown, Jr to serve Kentucky as a deputy secretary of transportation⁸⁰. In 1987, Patton ran unsuccessfully for the office of Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky, but was victorious during his second attempt for office when he was elected Lieutenant Governor in 1991.⁸¹

Four years later, Patton was elected Governor and reelected again in 1999, the first governor in Kentucky elected to a second consecutive term in 200 years.⁸² Patton enjoyed a margin of victory of only 20,560 votes over Larry Forgy in 1995 but enjoyed wide margins in his bid for reelection in 1999.⁸³

The joyous cheers of political victory silenced on September 17, 2002 when a story surfaced linking Governor Patton to a lawsuit brought forth by Tina Connor. The suit alleged that Governor Patton had given preferential treatment to Tina Connor's nursing home during a two year affair. After Connor ended the relationship with Patton, Connor alleged that Patton used his power as governor to essentially close the nursing home facility in western Kentucky through government issued health and safety violations. On September 18, Patton denied the reports of the affair or any contact with Connor. The Governor's denial of the affair was further reinforced when the registration

⁸⁰ University of Kentucky. <http://www.engr.uky.edu/alumni/hod/patton.php>

⁸¹ Kentucky Historical Society. <http://history.ky.gov/sub.php?pageid=27§ionid=8>. (Accessed March 2010)

⁸² National Governor's Association.

<http://www.nga.org/portal/site/nga/menuitem.29fab9fb4add37305ddcbeeb501010a0/?vgnextoid=7a66ae3effb81010VgnVCM1000001a01010aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=e449a0ca9e3f1010VgnVCM1000001a01010aRCRD> (Accessed March 2010).

⁸³ Harrison, Lohell. 2004. *Kentucky's Governors*. Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky. 259.

documents from the event Connor indicated was their first exchange of contact information showed that Tina Connor was not in attendance.

Then, on September 20, Patton read a prepared statement that altered his previous stance, specifically admitting to having an “inappropriate personal relationship” with Connor. Segments from that statement are included as follows:

“I have now apologized to the people of Kentucky and asked for your forgiveness. I do believe that now I am on the right path. It is not easy for me to discuss private failings in a public forum, but I do so because I want to be honest with the people of Kentucky and try to earn their trust and respect again.”

Therefore, the analysis of newspaper articles relating to the extramarital affair of Paul Patton will range from September 18, 2002 until October 18, 2002.

Previous Scandal

No articles in the collection of reports on Paul Patton referenced previous scandal.

Previous Statements Reflecting Hypocrisy

No articles in the collection of reports on Paul Patton referenced previous statements against extramarital affairs of other politicians

Previous Denial

Governor Patton initially denied the report on September 18, 2002 that he was involved in a political sex scandal. Out of the ten articles examined, five included mention of previous denial. The following sample of excerpts indicates this characteristic of reporting:

“Gov. Paul E. Patton reversed his earlier denials and confirmed today that he had had an extramarital affair with a woman who is now suing him.”

“Earlier this week, Governor Patton, a Democrat, had firmly denied the affair with Tina Boyd Conner, 40, the owner of the Birchtree Healthcare home in Clinton, in Western Kentucky.”

“Patton denied the relationship Wednesday at a news conference with his wife of 25 years, Judi, at his side.”

“The woman, Tina Conner, alleged that she had a two-year affair with Patton, and that the governor turned state inspectors loose on her nursing home in western Kentucky after she ended the relationship. Patton denied it. "Under no circumstances have I or anyone under my direct control tried to punish Mrs. Conner," he said. "I hope she will go forward with her life as I am going to try to go forward with mine."

Past Accomplishments

Two articles identified previous accomplishments during the tenure of Governor Patton. One such accomplishment was refereeing to Governor Patton as the Chair of the National Governors Association, indicating a level of respect and leadership ability among his gubernatorial peers. The same article made reference to his reelection. The references to his previous accomplishments are listed below:

“Patton, 65, chairman of the National Governors Association, is in his second term and cannot seek reelection in 2003. He has been considered a candidate to challenge first-term Sen. Jim Bunning (R) in 2004.”

“Paul Patton is no Buddy Cianci -- he lacks the flamboyance -- but he is like him in one way: He has been a genuine leader, arguably one of the most impressive American governors of recent times. Mr. Patton brought a traditionally sluggish state government into the 21st century in a whole host of fields -- education, economic development, information technology -- often without attracting or seeking much attention for it.”

Criminal Activity

Patton’s scandal began as a lawsuit alleging harassment and outrageous conduct. Throughout the articles reporting on the extramarital affair, references are made to the investigations into illegal activity, particularly in regards to abuse of power of office. In total, five of the ten articles include reference to investigations occurring simultaneously

as details of the extramarital scandal unfold. A sample of the inclusion of the characteristics is below:

“Ms. Conner filed a lawsuit on Wednesday accusing the governor of showering her business with state support during the affair. When she ended it, she contends, Mr. Patton retaliated by flooding the nursing home with state inspectors, who found many violations. The nursing home was disqualified for Medicaid and Medicare coverage and forced into bankruptcy, Ms. Conner contends. The governor harassed her extensively and lewdly in his later phone calls, her suit says. Mr. Patton, however, told the people of the Kentucky, "I have not let my personal weakness affect my administration of government." The Executive Branch Ethics Commission is expected to investigate Ms. Conner's charges, and state transportation officials are looking into her contention that Mr. Patton applied pressure during the affair to make a construction company she owned eligible for special aid as an enterprise run by a woman. Mr. Patton promised full cooperation with the ethics commission's investigation. "I'm confident they will conclude that I have done nothing wrong in my capacity as governor," he said.”

Family Status

Among the articles discussing Governor Patton’s affair, two articles mentioned his position as a father and/or a husband. A sample quote is included:

“Practically everyone in this tiny capital city can recognize Tina Conner in an instant. She has talked about her affair with Gov. Paul Patton -- a father of four who has been married for 25 years -- over and over in the week since she filed a sexual harassment lawsuit against him.”

Emotionality

It is anticipated that emotion may resonate with readers of newspaper articles in one of two ways: either present the governor as remorseful or present the governor as a good actor. Nevertheless, four of the articles did highlight emotions (or lack thereof) of the governor.

“Kentucky Gov. Paul Patton this week tearfully acknowledged an affair and announced that he would not run for the U.S. Senate.”

“Gov. Paul E. Patton put his political career on the line on Friday night when he admitted an extramarital affair with a woman who did business with the state and

now accuses him of sexual harassment." My mistakes are mine alone," Governor Patton declared, teary-eyed at a news conference. "I take full responsibility for them."

Additionally, one article highlighted emotion without directly attaching the emotionality to any given individual. Instead, the emotion is attached to the entire state. This highlights a frame level above the individual level focus of this research, but indirectly addresses the emotions of the governor since he is considered the reason for the emotions.

"State political leaders expressed sorrow at the governor's admission, and a measure of sympathy. "This is a sad and difficult day for all Kentuckians, however, not just for those directly involved," said the speaker of the State House of Representatives, Jody Richards, a Democrat. David Williams, president of the State Senate and a Republican, said he had sympathy for Mr. Patton's family "and all those who have been injured."

Presence of Wife at Press Conference

Only one article mentions Judi Patton by name but a second article references her as Patton's wife. Both articles indicate Judi Patton's presence at the press conference where Governor Patton denies the affair. Neither of the articles indicates where Judi Patton was during the admission of the affair. A sample is below:

"Patton denied the relationship Wednesday at a news conference with his wife of 25 years, Judi, at his side. The governor said today he had worried about the impact the public disclosure would have on his family and realizes the denial was a mistake."

Inclusion of Quotes from Press Conference

Governor Patton released a statement on September 20 admitting his extramarital affair with Tina Connor. Segments of that press release appeared on television broadcasts and in newspaper reports. Two of the articles, the articles published closest to the

admission of the scandal, include direct quotes from the press release. None of the articles published after September 21 quote directly from the press release.

Future Plans

Three articles from the collection of ten indicate that Governor Patton was considering a run for United States Senate during the 2004 election. Each of the three articles indicates that it is unlikely Patton would pursue the Senate seat.

Partner By Name

Tina Connor was identified as the mistress in the Patton extramarital affair scandal. She is mentioned by name in eight of the ten articles utilized in this case.

Post Sex Scandal Life

Paul Patton did not seek election on the Democratic ticket for United States Senator. Following his term in office as governor, Patton remained away from the spotlight, with the exception of an occasional reference to his scandal by various media sources. However, on August 19, 2009, Paul Patton reemerged momentarily in the spotlight during his appointment as President of Pikeville College in Pikeville, Kentucky.

84

⁸⁴ Pikeville College, <http://www.pc.edu/news/news/Former-Gov-Paul-E-Patton-appointed-Pikeville-College-president>, 539.aspx (Accessed March 2010)

Table 4.1 Paul Patton Characterizations in Ten Articles	No.	%
Previous Scandal	0	0
Previous Statements/Votes Against Scandal (Hypocrisy)	0	0
Previous Denial	5	15
Previous Accomplishments	2	6
Mention of Criminal Activity	5	15
Condition of Family	2	6
Emotionality	4	12
Presence of Spouse at Press Conference	2	6
Inclusion of Quotes from Press Conference	2	6
Indication of Future Plans	3	9
Name of Extramarital Affair Partner Stated	8	24
Total Characterizations	33	99%

Source – Data taken from author’s own research of newspaper articles from the Washington Post, New York Times, and USA Today (Sept 18-Oct 18, 2002)

Robert Ellsworth Wise - Governor of West Virginia (D-WV)

Bob Wise was born on January 6, 1948 in Washington, DC. In 1981, Wise entered the political arena when he was elected to the state Senate of West Virginia, but did not serve long as he was elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1982. Wise served in Congress until his district was merged into another West Virginia congressional district and thus began his efforts to win the governorship in West Virginia. Wise's opponent in 2000, Cecil Underwood, had previously served as governor and was considered to be a tough opponent for Wise. Nevertheless, Wise was elected as the 33rd Governor of West Virginia.⁸⁵

During the early months of 2003, much attention was given to Wise and the state of West Virginia. The reason: the return of Army P.O.W. Jessica Lynch. While news surrounding Wise had been positive, May 12, 2003 changed the tone of the political discourse in the Mountain State.

According to a statement on May 12, Wise admitted to an extramarital affair with Angela Mascia-Frye, an economic advisor in West Virginia. Following the admission, several hundred e-mails between Mascia-Frye and Wise were released to the public, and in those e-mails, more details emerged about the relationship between the governor and his economic advisor. A large portion of the press release is included in this case analysis:

"Several weeks ago, I had to do the toughest thing I have ever done - tell my family I had not lived up to their trust, expectation and love. I was not faithful to my family," Wise said in a release from his press office. "I knew it was wrong, and now I must take full responsibility.

⁸⁵ Alliance for Education biography for Bob Wise. Accessed April 2010. [http://www.all4ed.org/about_the_alliance/bob-wise]

"I apologize deeply to the people of our state for my actions. In my private life, I have let many people down." "I believe in accountability. I also hope one day for forgiveness, but I know that forgiveness must be earned," Wise said in the statement. "This is a very personal issue for my family and I ask for privacy during this time. I particularly ask that the privacy of my wife and children be respected."

Coverage of the Wise extramarital affair is quite limited. During the search for articles from the three major newspapers chosen within the date range May 12, 2003-June 12, 2003, only three articles were retrieved including a discussion of the Wise affair. Initial indications point toward a few reasons for the limited number of articles. One indication is that the scandal appeared 'out-of-the-blue' as no previous scandalous activity was in the news in West Virginia. This negates any findings in the *previous scandal* characterization category. Additionally, in the research efforts for biographical information, it appeared as though most of the articles related to the scandal of Bob Wise were from within the state of West Virginia. This discovery may point toward an additional finding related to the coverage of news at the national level versus the coverage of news at the state level. Lastly, as a result of the three articles, many of the characteristics to be studied are not included in this analysis. This certainly represents a limitation of the study. Nevertheless, future research using these same characteristics could be applied to more local or regional newspapers, producing greater numbers of characterizations.

Previous Scandal, Previous Statements Reflecting Hypocrisy, Previous Denial, Criminal Activity, Presence of Wife

All of these characterizations were absent from the three articles extracted from the databases when searched using the key terms *Bob Wise* and date parameters May 12, 2003-June 12, 2003.

Past Accomplishments

In one of the articles, the author mentions Wise's previous history as a politician.

“Wise, a former representative, plans to run for what would be his second term as governor.”

This quote identifies not only Wise's previous service as a member of the House of Representatives, but also notes that he had a substantiate level of support to justify a run for a second term in office as West Virginia's governor.

Family Status

Bob Wise was married and had two children at the time of the extramarital affair.

Those family members were noted in an Associated Press newswire release on May 13, 2003.

“Wise, a Democrat who is married and has two children, issued a statement in response to inquiries from The Charleston Daily Mail, which reported that a man was accusing the governor of having had an affair with his estranged wife, who works in the West Virginia Development Office.”

Emotionality

The usage of the emotionality characterization is again difficult to interpret in the analysis of Governor Wise. One of the main reasons for this difficulty is that an entire article focuses on the emotions of the governor. In an article titled Interoffice Male; W.Va. Governor's Missives to State Employee Go Very Public, Wise's e-mails were included in a three page account of the conversations that occurred between the governor and his mistress.

While none of the emotions in the article portray the Governor during his admission or immediately after his admissions, the article does provide an insight into the romance present between the two individuals. Furthermore, this article reinforces the

earlier notion that extramarital affairs and adultery can occur, or at least continue, through sexual but non-physical, non-intercourse relationships.

Inclusion of Quotes from Press Conference

While the entirety of Wise’s press release was omitted from the three articles extracted from the databases, two of the three articles did use the same words as a direct quote from the governor. Those quotes are listed below:

“In a statement May 12, Wise admitted to having been “unfaithful to my family.”

“Accused of having an affair with a state employee, Gov. Bob Wise acknowledged he “was not faithful” to his family and asked for forgiveness.”

These quotes, both of which offer a form of the word ‘faith’, represent the extent to which the three major newspapers reported quotes from the Bob Wise press release. Much like the reflection earlier that local papers report the stories in greater depth, a more thorough inclusion of the press release was incorporated into many local and regional stories in the West Virginia media market.

Future Plans

From knowledge of living within a few miles of West Virginia, the Bob Wise case is a case of personal interest. Therefore, many of the facts and figures are from recollection of memory from discussions that occurred in my hometown and neighboring city, Bluefield, WV. As I am aware from my personal collection of information through television broadcasts and other local media, Bob Wise did not seek re-election for governor in 2004. Then Secretary-of-State Joe Manchin indicated his desire to run for the office of governor and was elected by a large margin. Nevertheless, two of the three

articles indicated that Wise intended to campaign for reelection during the first month following the admission of the extramarital affair.

Name of Partner

In two of the three articles, the girlfriend's name (Angela Mascia-Frye) is given. One of the articles identifies the woman's entire name while the second article identifies the name of the girlfriend's former husband. The third article provides all of the information about the husband and mistress but fails to mention either by name. The information provided in the third article includes occupation, relationship status between the two Fryes, but never identifies either the first or last name of either party.

Post Sex Scandal Life

Governor Wise did not seek reelection, in part because of the scandal and because of current Governor Joe Manchin's announcement to challenge Wise in the Democratic primary. Currently, Wise serves as the president of the Alliance for Excellent Education and recently published a book titled *Raising the Standards: How High School Reform Can Save our Youth and our Nation.*⁸⁶

⁸⁶ http://www.all4ed.org/about_the_alliance/bob-wise

Table 4.2 Bob Wise Characterizations in Three Articles	No.	%
Previous Scandal	0	0
Previous Statements/Votes Against Scandal (Hypocrisy)	0	0
Previous Denial	0	0
Previous Accomplishments	1	11
Mention of Criminal Activity	0	0
Condition of Family	1	11
Emotionality	1	11
Presence of Spouse at Press Conference	0	0
Inclusion of Quotes from Press Conference	2	22
Indication of Future Plans	2	22
Name of Extramarital Affair Partner Stated	2	22
Total Characterizations	9	99%

Source – Data taken from author’s own research of articles from the Washington Post, New York Times, and USA Today (May 12-June 12, 2003)

James Edward McGreevey - Governor of New Jersey (D-NJ)

James “Jim” McGreevey was born in Jersey City, New Jersey and attended Catholic University of America and Columbia University. In 1981, McGreevey earned a law degree from Georgetown University and in 1982, a master’s degree in education from Harvard.

McGreevey was elected as a Democrat to serve as Governor of New Jersey in January 15, 2002. His start in politics began as a member of the New Jersey General Assembly with his election as Mayor of Woodbridge Township. During 1993, McGreevey was elected to the New Jersey Senate, which meant he was both a mayor and senator during the four-year term. McGreevey initially tried to make the leap from senator to governor in 1997 but was defeated. He was, however, elected in 2001 to the office of governor.

Raised in a socially conservative home, McGreevey found disagreement with the Roman Catholic Church hierarchy on a number of issues. Disagreement with the Roman Catholic Church was seen in some of McGreevey’s policy implementations, including those in stem cell research and domestic partnership laws. Few individuals realized that the signing of domestic partnership laws in 2004 would be a precursor to a larger story to unfold around the topic of homosexuality and politics.

On August 12, 2004, Governor McGreevey admitted to having an affair with a man and resigned from the office of the governor effective November 15, 2004. The reason for the admission of the affair was reportedly a sexual harassment lawsuit being filed by Golan Cipel, a former aide to the governor. Additionally, the reason for the delayed resignation quickly became a topic of discussion in New Jersey as some Republicans considered the move to be politically motivated.

As a result of the lawsuit, admission of the affair, and subsequent resignation, several articles were published in the three major newspapers. In total, 18 articles were found from August 12, 2004 until September 12, 2004 and within those articles, various characterizations of McGreevey occur.

Previous Scandal

McGreevey had come under pressure earlier in his tenure as governor for the hiring of the man who would later be his partner in the extramarital affair. Golan Cipel, whom McGreevey met in Israel on a business trip, would be hired as a member of the New Jersey Homeland Security detail for a salary exceeding six figures. Additionally, McGreevey's name was being linked to an investigation into two of McGreevey's top fundraisers. As a result of his connections to the men, McGreevey's name appeared 83 times on the indictment, and the fundraisers, McGreevey, and Cipel were all interconnected in the fundraising efforts.

Of the 18 articles collected and analyzed from the search, four of the articles referenced the existence of a scandal prior to or during the announcement of the extramarital affair. Two such examples are as follows:

“McGreevey has other political problems. In recent months federal prosecutors in Newark have indicted two men who are top fundraisers for him. McGreevey's name appears 83 times in the indictment of one of the men, and Cipel recently worked for the other fundraiser.”

“McGreevey faces other political problems. In the past two months, federal prosecutors in Newark have indicted two men who are top fundraisers for him. McGreevey's name appears 83 times in the indictment of one of the men, and Cipel recently worked for the other fundraiser. [But] could McGreevey have survived outing himself? Probably,” said Jon Shure, a top aide to a former Democratic governor. “But he had no political capital left in the bank.”

Both of these statements were published in the Washington Post and were both authored in part by Michelle Garcia. Hence, much of the language appears to be repetitive.

Nevertheless, the frequency in which such stories appear are important in the analysis of the characterizations of governors in articles reporting admission of extramarital affair.

Previous Statement Reflecting Hypocrisy

None of the 18 articles had any indication that Governor McGreevey had ever spoken against extramarital affairs.

Previous Denial

One article presented a discussion of McGreevey experiencing denial in the context of his admission of an extramarital affair. Specifically, the denial was framed as a denial of his sexuality and not necessarily of the affair. Nevertheless, by denying his sexuality, he was also denying the fact that his affair had occurred. Further examples of McGreevey denying his sexuality were noted by David Rebovich when he noted that McGreevey had long appeared to be “haunted” by some internal emotions that he refused to expel.

“Still, the governor’s pained talk of his lifelong denial of his bisexuality was riveting for gays who watched the television news conference.”

Past Accomplishments

Many of the articles that referenced McGreevey’s career in politics also discussed his abilities as a politician. Additionally, several articles highlighted his ability to maintain his duties as governor while serving the lame duck phase of his governorship. Essentially, the past accomplishments characterization encompassed any reference to

leadership ability, indicating that his past accomplishments of being elected to office represent an assumed leadership capacity which, in several articles, was very present and frequently characterized (6 of 18 articles).

Criminal Activity

The McGreevey admission of an affair was saturated with discussions of investigations, criminal proceedings, lawsuits, and indictments. Particularly because of the resignation announcement having occurred simultaneously as the admission of the affair, many articles focused on the criminal proceedings surrounding the various scandals in which McGreevey was involved. Of the 18 articles, eight included reference to the criminal activities occurring alongside the discussions on McGreevey and his extramarital affair admission. Samples of those discussions of activity are included:

“State House staff members were still dazed by Jim McGreevey’s announcement on Thursday that he was gay and had had an extramarital affair with another man. That man, identified as Golan Cipel, a former aide, then stepped forward to deny the affair and accuse Mr. McGreevey of sexual harassment. The subsequent charges between the two sides – with the governor’s lawyers accusing Mr. Cipel and his lawyer of an extortion attempt and Mr. Cipel’s lawyer responding that they were offered hush money to avoid a lawsuit – are under investigation by the F.B.I.”

Family Status

Regardless of heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual orientation, a married heterosexual couple remain husband and wife until a divorce proceeding. Therefore, several characterizations were made in articles about how McGreevey’s admission of an affair was as equally difficult for his wife, Dina. In seven of the 18 articles, references are made to McGreevey’s wife. Some of the articles also reference his two children.

“Leonard Lance, Senate minority leader and a possible Republican gubernatorial candidate, said he was praying for Governor McGreevey and his family after the stunning announcement that he was homosexual, had a relationship with a former male aide, and was resigning. Douglas Forrester, the unsuccessful Senate candidate who is also interested in running for governor, noted that it had been a “painful, personal” time for McGreevey and that he and his loved ones “deserve every bit of privacy.”

Emotionality

Indication was given in half of the articles that McGreevey displayed or expressed a particular emotion during the conversations surrounding his admission of an affair.

From the press conference admitting his affair to subsequent meetings with the media, McGreevey seemed to be constantly struggling with his emotions, and members of the media identified the tussle.

“McGreevey’s voice hitched several times but he retained his composure.”

However, the struggle of emotions also includes the variety of positive and negative emotions being presented in the various articles.

“Mr. Rasmussen said that the governor was in ‘incredibly good spirits’ and was determined to stay until November 15.”

“A little more than a week ago, New Jersey Gov. Jim McGreevey stood before the TV lights and launched into a sermon about the deceptive life he has led, a married man involved in an affair – with another man whom he had hired for a government job...Last week, McGreevey was seen in Trenton, NJ going about his gubernatorial duties, a wide smile upon his face, his arms bulging with papers.”

These three quotes illustrate the variance in emotion that was being characterized in articles on Mr. McGreevey. The seemingly constant roller-coaster of emotions is an issue that is to be determined by each individual reader: is the governor satisfied with his admission or is he using apparently happy spirits to mask an upset and troubled individual?

Presence of Wife at Press Conference

The presence of the wife was interpreted by some media reports as an indication of McGreevey's spouse in public support of her husband. Others interpreted her presence at the press conference as a required duty as the office of New Jersey First Lady. Others will see her presence as a reflection of her spirit, personality, and nature as a person. Regardless of the reason for the presence of Dina McGreevey, her attendance was an element of five of the 18 articles.

Inclusion of Quotes from Press Release

Throughout the articles following McGreevey's admission of his extramarital affair and subsequent resignation, authors utilized direct quotes from the press conference rather sparingly. The majority of the direct quotes occurred in newspaper articles in the immediate days following the announcement. Of the 18 articles discussing the McGreevey scandal, only four include direct quotes from McGreevey's press conference.

“Gov. James E. McGreevey resigned Thursday announcing that he had an affair with a man and that it had left him vulnerable to ‘false allegations and threats of disclosure.’ ‘My truth is that I am a gay American,’ the married father of two said at a news conference at the State House. ‘This is the 47th year of my life, is arguably too late to have this discussion. But at a point in every person’s life, one had to look deeply into the mirror of one’s soul.’ ‘I engaged in an adult consensual affair with another man.’”

As evidenced by the language used in this article, McGreevey's press conference speech does, in fact, provide details into the affair with Mr. Cipel. Specifically, the fact that McGreevey's quote signifies the consensual nature of the relationship is a direct contraction to press releases that would be offered days following McGreevey's announcement.

Future Plans

Quite possibly the biggest discovery in the analysis of the third of five cases was the significant discussion on the future plans of McGreevey. Of the 18 articles, 13 articles referenced McGreevey's future. Frequently, the articles discussed the November 15, 2004 resignation date and whether the choosing of that date was a political move encouraged by the New Jersey Democrats. Additionally, many articles referenced the Republican request for McGreevey to resign immediately, rather than continue to serve the citizens of New Jersey in a lame duck period.

“Even as McGreevey resigned, he faced the charge that his timing was politically calculated. Aides portrayed his decision not to leave office until mid-November as driven by the need for a smooth transition in this time of a terrorism alert. Republicans dismissed the explanation, saying the timing is purely political.”

It is reasonable to argue that as a result of the admission of the affair and announcement of resignation occurring during the same press conference, the media members shift focus that would be given to stories involving resignation and instead focus those energies toward a discussion of ‘what is next’ for the governor.

Name of Partner

Golan Cipel's name was referenced in a significant number of the articles. Of the 18 articles, ten mentioned Cipel by name. Several plausible reasons exist for this phenomenon. One possible reason is as a result of the lawsuit and counter-suit involving McGreevey and Cipel. Another possible reason is that members of the media, who were fond of McGreevey, were constantly reminding the public of the other actors involved in the Governor's scandal, specifically the fact that Cipel was being investigated for extortion. The inclusion of Golan Cipel's name as one of the main characterizations of

the articles presents an interesting finding, especially considering that “future plans” were the only other category discussed more frequently than Cipel’s name.

Post Sex Scandal Life

Since resigning from the office of governor, McGreevey has since enrolled in, and graduated from, General Theological Seminary. He and his former wife divorced on August 8, 2008.

Table 4.3 Jim McGreevey Characterizations in Eighteen Articles	No.	%
Previous Scandal	4	6
Previous Statements/Votes Against Scandal (Hypocrisy)	0	0
Previous Denial	1	1.5
Previous Accomplishments	6	9
Mention of Criminal Activity	8	12
Condition of Family	7	10.4
Emotionality	9	13.4
Presence of Spouse at Press Conference	5	7.4
Inclusion of Quotes from Press Conference	4	6
Indication of Future Plans	13	19.4
Name of Extramarital Affair Partner Stated	10	15
Total Characterizations	67	100%

Source – Data collected from author’s analysis of articles. (Aug 12-Sept 12, 2004)

Eliot Lawrence Spitzer – Governor of New York (D-NY)

Eliot Spitzer was born June 10, 1959 in New York City. He attended Princeton University, graduating in 1981, and then enrolled at Harvard Law, receiving his J.D. in 1984. Following graduation from Harvard, Spitzer served as a law clerk for U.S. District Judge Robert Sweet. After a two year stint with Judge Sweet, Spitzer entered private practice until joining the Assistant District Attorney's office of Manhattan in 1986. Over the next 12 years, Spitzer alternated between public law and private law practice. Then, in 1999, Spitzer was elected as Attorney General of New York. During his tenure as attorney general, Spitzer was considered to be a no non-sense official, with particular emphasis on aggression toward the elimination of illegal sex circles, including prostitution and child sex trades. Vowing to eliminate the partisanship of New York, the Democratic Spitzer was elected governor in 2007.

Approximately 14 months following Spitzer's election as governor, the *New York Times* reported on March 10, 2008 that Governor Eliot Spitzer had told several key advisors of his involvement in a prostitution ring. Later that afternoon, Spitzer held a press conference to admit his involvement in an extramarital affair with a prostitute. Spitzer admitted, with his wife and the mother of his three children by his side, to his involvement in the prostitution ring and the extramarital affair. He did not offer to resign from his position as governor as a result of the investigation into the prostitution ring.

The search for articles using the key phrase Eliot Spitzer and dates March 10, 2008 – March 13, 2008 (date of resignation) returned 34 articles. The number of articles after the resignation of Spitzer greatly decreased in number. Nevertheless, it was determined that a sufficient number of articles for this case were collected. These articles

were analyzed for characterizations of the governor's behavior. The breakdown of results is as follows:

Previous Scandals

Before any indication of Governor Spitzer's affair, the Spitzer administration was already engulfed in scandal. The New York Post reported in July 2007 of an apparent dispute between Governor Spitzer and State Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno. According to the report, Spitzer ordered the New York State Police to follow Bruno on a trip to New York City. The Spitzer administration and the state police denied the authenticity of the reports. Nevertheless, Bruno insisted the district attorney address the concerns for possible gubernatorial abuse of power and political espionage. From this point forward, the relationship between Spitzer and Bruno deteriorated greatly. In addition, reference to the accusation of scandal increased within the governor's office and was expressed on occasion in the articles gathered for this research. Of the 34 articles from March 10-13, 2008 highlighting Spitzer's scandal, seven included characterizations referencing previous scandals.

“Midday Sunday, the Times sent an email message to the governor's communication director, Christine Anderson, requesting the governor's travel records for the week of February 11, 2008, specifically February 11 through February 15. The message also requested the names of all the hotels he stayed at, where he traveled, flight records and any available records of receipts billed to the state. Ms. Anderson peppered the Times with questions and alerted the governor's staff that a story was apparently breaking. Ms. Anderson assumed that an article was being prepared related to the continuing investigation into efforts by Mr. Spitzer's aides to discredit Joseph Bruno, the Senate majority leader.”

As indicated by this quote from the *New York Times*, even the Governor's staff initially considered the information request to be related to an existing scandal. Six other articles reiterated similar themes in that Spitzer's administration was saturated in scandal.

Previous Statements Reflecting Hypocrisy

Politicians make statements about scandalous situations involving other politicians. As discussed earlier, the proliferation of scandal can be an effective tool in any political or smear campaign. Yet, when politicians make statements about situations that they later find themselves in, articles frequently characterize such statements as being hypocritical. In the case of the former New York governor, Spitzer campaigned for both statewide offices on a platform of morality, legality, and prosecution of offenders. Thus, when it was revealed that Spitzer was himself involved in an issue of moral elasticity, illegality, and criminal offense, Spitzer was characterized as being a hypocrite by the articles. This characterization of hypocrisy occurred 14 times across the 34 articles analyzed.

One of the most direct characterizations of the hypocrite classification occurred in the March 12 edition of the *New York Times* when Nina Bernstein noted the following:

“As New York’s attorney general, Eliot Spitzer had broken up prostitution rings before, but this 2004 case took on a special urgency for him. Prosecuting an international sex tourism business based in Queens, he listened to the entreaties of women’s advocates long frustrated by state laws that fell short of dealing with a sex trade expanding rapidly across borders. And with his typical zeal, he embraced their push for new legislation, including a novel idea at its heart: Go after the men who seek out prostitutes.

It was a question of supply and demand, they all agreed. And one effective way to suppress the demand was to raise the penalties for patronizing a prostitute. In his first months as governor last year, Mr. Spitzer signed the bill into law.

Now the human rights groups, which credit him with what they call the toughest and most comprehensive anti-sex-trade law in the nation, are in shock. Mr. Spitzer stands accused of being one of the very men his law was designed to catch and punish.”

Previous Denial

Governor Spitzer never officially denied involvement in any accusations of an affair or accusation of involvement in the prostitution scandal. In fact, it appears from the various newspaper reports that the Governor was quite aware of the possibility that a story would break, thereby illuminating his involvement in the prostitution ring in Washington D.C.

Past Accomplishments

Governor Spitzer was attorney general prior to his election as governor. As attorney general, Spitzer was the state's legal expert and chief legislative enforcer. Therefore, reference was frequently made to Spitzer's previous position as New York's top cop in regards to his current involvement in potentially criminal activity (the prostitution rings). Of the articles collected and analyzed, 20 mention the former attorney general's past accomplishments as major characterizations of Governor Spitzer.

“Spitzer, who parlayed his crime busting credentials into the governor's mansion, has become the latest official to test the parameters of public acceptance.”

“In fairness, Spitzer clearly thought he was also buying one other value commodity; secrecy. At those [hourly] rates [for sex], everyone could be trusted to keep quiet. Spitzer, however, clearly forgot what he'd learned in Prosecutions 101, which is that nothing intrigues a prosecutor more than unexplained silence.”

Criminal Activity

It is reasonable to argue that if the investigation into the illegal prostitution ring had not occurred, Governor Spitzer's scandal may never have been disclosed. Yet, since the investigation into the Emperors Club prostitution ring did occur, Spitzer's secret was officially in the open. Nevertheless, only three of the 34 total articles failed to mention a

characterization of criminal activity in the articles. Discussions of investigations, indictments, sting operations, and other undercover maneuvers are just a few of the criminal characterizations that were frequently used to frame Eliot Spitzer in articles reporting on his admission of an extramarital affair.

Family Status

Spitzer was married and was the father of three children at the time of his admission of the extramarital affair. Ten articles characterized Spitzer as a member of a family or as a husband. The point of view from which these characterizations were presented could be considered both positive and negative.

“With his ashen-faced wife by his side, the governor apologized and said his behavior ‘violates my obligation to my family and violates my or any sense of right or wrong.’”

“New York Governor Eliot Spitzer could not have been more wrong in his brief public appearance after the world learned that he was suspected of patronizing prostitution. He did not just betray his family in a private manner. He betrayed the public, and it is hard to see how he will recover from this mess and go on to lead the reformist agenda on which he was elected to office.”

Again, it becomes clear the references made to Spitzer’s family as well as the characterizations used to classify Spitzer as a member of a family in which he was a crucial contributor to its creation.

Emotionality

The characterization of Spitzer during the three days of articles associated with the scandal included a variety of emotional expressions. As indicated by the quote, some articles characterized Spitzer as being emotionless. Other articles portrayed Spitzer as being full of emotion, albeit awkward and overly exuberant in nature. Of the articles

examined, 12 included characterizations of Spitzer showing some type of emotionless or altered emotion response.

“[Governor Spitzer] and his wife got up onstage, they stood close, he took responsibility, he took no questions. We’ve seen all this before, but across America, people watched for the panic, the angst, the teary eyes and, most of all, for that moment of clarity when Silda Wall Spitzer might rear back and slug her husband in the jaw. That, of course, didn’t happen. None of it did.”

“To read the court documents that pertain to Spitzer’s alleged participation in a flurry of telephone calls and negotiations related to his alleged February 13 activities in room 871 of the Mayflower Hotel...is to understand the central erotic quality of any hotel. It’s exhausting to read Client 9 (Spitzer) worrying about his deposit, the timing, the key, the room.”

Presence of Wife at Press Conference

As referenced above, the presence of Silda Wall Spitzer was identified in some of the articles. In total, her presence was noted alongside her husband in nine of the articles.

Inclusion of Quotes from Press Release

Eliot Spitzer addressed the accusations of his involvement in a prostitution ring on March 10, 2008. His remarks are as follows:

“Over the past nine years, eight as attorney general and one as governor, I have tried to uphold a vision of progressive politics that would rebuild New York and create opportunity for all.

We sought to bring real change to New York, and that will continue. Today, I want to briefly address a private matter.

I have acted in a way that violates my obligations to my family, that violates my -- or any -- sense of right and wrong. I apologize first, and most importantly, to my family. I apologize to the public, whom I promised better.

I do not believe that politics in the long run is about individuals. It is about ideas, the public good and doing what it best for the state of New York.

But I have disappointed and failed to live up to the standard I expected of myself. I must now dedicate some time to regain the trust of my family. I will not be taking questions. Thank you very much. I will report back to you in short order.

Thank you very much.”

Several segments of this press release were used in the articles analyzed for this case study. Generally, the usage of quotes from the press release contributed to the general tone of the characterization of Spitzer within that article. Therefore, articles that addressed the *Presence of the Wife or Family Status* characterizations often utilized quotes that referenced family.

Future Plans

Governor Spitzer admitted to his participation in the March 10 press release. At that time, Spitzer refused to state whether he would remain in office or resign. For the three days following the initial press release, several articles (n=11) characterized Spitzer from the perspective of the future, meaning recommendations and prognostications were offered by numerous members of the political and media spheres about the actions Spitzer should or should not take. Eventually, Spitzer would resign on March 13, 2008. Quotes illustrating this characterization are included below.

“Governor Eliot L. Spitzer’s political future was thrown in doubt yesterday after he was identified as an anonymous client heard on a federal wiretap arranging to pay money and buy train tickets for a high-priced New York prostitute to meet him at a downtown Washington hotel.”

In fact, the above quote is located in an article that highlights the significance of Spitzer’s future with the phrase “Does Not Resign” included in the title.

Name of Partner

The articles in this study only refer to Spitzer's sexual partner as Kristen. No actual name is given to the employee of the Emperors Club VIP. The escorts name is revealed publically after Spitzer's resignation which falls after the dates used during the search for articles discussion Spitzer's extramarital affair.

Post Sex Scandal Life

Since resigning from the office of governor, Spitzer has maintained a very low profile. The few appearances made by Spitzer are to an occasional television program or a guest/editorial column for a publication. It was also noted that Spitzer is undergoing couples therapy with his wife.

Table 4.4 Eliot Spitzer Characterizations in 34 Articles	No.	%
Previous Scandal	7	5.7
Previous Statements/Votes Against Scandal (Hypocrisy)	14	11.4
Previous Denial	0	0
Previous Accomplishments	20	16.4
Mention of Criminal Activity	31	25.4
Condition of Family	10	8.2
Emotionality	12	10
Presence of Spouse at Press Conference	9	7.4
Inclusion of Quotes from Press Conference	8	6.6
Indication of Future Plans	11	9
Name of Extramarital Affair Partner Stated	0	0
Total Characterizations	122	100%

Source – Data collected from author's analysis of articles (Mar 10-Mar 13, 2008)

Mark Sanford – Governor of South Carolina (R-SC)

Mark Sanford grew up in Fort Lauderdale, Florida where his father was a cardiologist. He attended Furman University and the Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia. Following his graduation from UVA, Sanford spent a couple of years working in Manhattan, which is where he met his wife, Jenny Sullivan. While in Manhattan, Sanford worked in real estate financial and investment and then pursued the same field following their move to Charleston, SC.

Once in Charleston, Sanford considered the leap into politics. He was elected without any prior political experience to the United States House of Representatives. A frugal conservative, Sanford was known for his “penny pinching”, including the watchful eye and fiscally conservative approach to the spending of the operating budget for his congressional offices.

In 2002, Sanford was elected governor and was reelected in 2006. Yet, in the summer of 2009, Governor Sanford all but disappeared. The list of individuals who were unaware of his whereabouts included his wife, his parents, his chief advisors, and even his lieutenant governor.

Then, on June 23, several newspapers reported a release that the governor was hiking the Appalachian Trail and would return to Columbia on June 24. Much to the surprise of those members of the media gathered in the capitol rotunda in Columbia, the news conference was anything but a story about the Appalachian Trail. Instead, Sanford admitted to an extramarital affair at the June 24 press conference. The 24 articles pulled from the three major newspapers discussing the extramarital affair admission are analyzed below.

Previous Scandals

According to a *New York Times* column in the June 25 edition, an anonymous man sent e-mails to *The State* newspaper in Columbia, SC. To authenticate the e-mail messages, *The State* asked for a verification of the information. The tipster never replied to the authentication request. Therefore, the e-mails were temporarily discarded until news of the scandal emerged.

Only one newspaper article characterizes Sanford as having previous scandalous activity.

“About six months ago, an anonymous tipster sent *The State* newspaper in Columbia, S.C. copies of e-mail messages supposedly exchanged between Gov. Mark Sanford and a woman named Maria in Argentina. Reporters sent e-mail back to the originating email address and to the woman, whose address was included, in an effort to verify that the messages were genuine. They never heard back, and so the paper did not publish them until Wednesday, after Mr. Sanford admitted having an affair.”

Previous Statements Reflecting Hypocrisy

During Sanford’s tenure in Congress, he was a member of the Republican voting bloc to vote for the impeachment of President Clinton. As a result, Sanford made several speeches about Clinton’s actions. Thus, when Sanford admitted to his extramarital affair, he was characterized in the articles as being hypocritical. Seven of the 24 articles highlight Sanford as being hypocritical. An example of this characterization is as follows:

“The governor was not known as a moralist but has frowned on infidelity and as a congressman voted to impeach President Bill Clinton after the Monica Lewinsky affair. ‘He lied under a different oath and that’s the oath to his wife,’ Mr. Sanford said at the time on CNN. ‘So it’s got to be taken very, very seriously.’”

Previous Denial

Governor Sanford was also considered to be a very frugal and fiscally conservative member of the Republican Party. Therefore, when accusations were made in

regards to the payment of his trips to visit his mistress in Argentina, rumors circulated that the funds were state/public funds. The ten articles that highlight this initial denial and then retraction through admission of his usage of state funds for personal enjoyment are exemplified by the following examples:

“But Sanford was so clearly in the wrong on that count that his supporters quickly turned to matters of finance and whether he had traveled to Argentina on his own dime. He said he had – although he backtracked on a promise to prove it. And he agreed to reimburse the state for an earlier economic development trip to South America that he re-routed to Buenos Aires in the name of love.”

Moreover, Sanford denied his staff the knowledge of his whereabouts throughout the week-long absence from the state-house.

“But his confession and apology, in a rambling nationally television news conference, left other mysteries unsolved, like whether he had lied to his staff members as late as money about his whereabouts, whether the affair had definitely ended, whether he would resign from the governorship and whether he would even have acknowledged the affair had he not been met at the airport in Atlanta by a reporter upon his return.”

Past Accomplishments

Many of the references to Sanford’s past are characterizations of his fiscal conservative, hyper-Republican partisanship as well as his previous political jobs, including his time as a member of the South Carolina house delegation and chair of the Republican Governors Association. There are seven articles that include characterizations of Sanford as an accomplished or experienced member of the political arena.

Criminal Activity

Most references to Sanford's behavior in a criminal, illegal, or unethical manner were in regards to the possibility of state funds being used for private purpose. The characterization of criminal activity present in the articles (five articles total) is illustrated by the following quote:

“On Tuesday, the state's attorney general, Henry McMaster, a Republican, like the governor, called for an investigation into whether Mr. Sanford used any other public money on his affair. Mr. McMaster had for days been resisting calls to do so.”

Family Status

The well-being and impact of the political infidelity scandal between Sanford and the woman from Argentina on Sanford's wife and children was the focus of 17 of the 24 total articles. One can argue that such attention is given to the family either as a result of the popularity of the first family in the state, the cultural attitudes of the state, or a result of Jenny Sanford's absence from the press conference (see *Presence of Wife* for greater discussion).

Emotionality

The visible emotion during the press conference of Mark Sanford has been a topic of much discussion. The details of the emotional expressions are best categorized in this quote from the *Washington Post*:

“But this was something entirely different. At a time when every last bit of political life is scripted, here was a powerful man wiping tears from his cheeks and talking about the intimate details of his shameful behavior. His wife wasn't at his side – she'd kicked him out and told him not to call. ‘The bottom line is this: I – I've been unfaithful to my wife,’ the governor said. ‘I developed a relationship which started out as a dear, dear friend from Argentina. It began very innocently,

as I suspect many of these things do, in just a casual e-mail. But here recently, over this last year, it developed into something much more than that.”

Twelve of the articles analyzed characterized Sanford in some emotional portrayal. Some articles used the emotion to indicate that he was not emotionally stable. Others noted that the emotions were an indication of the sincerity of his apology. Either way, the emotional characterization was prevalent in half of the analyzed articles.

Presence of Wife at Press Conference

As mentioned earlier, the focus on the family in the articles that were analyzed was among the most emphasized elements. Additionally, some of the articles took the *Family Status* to an additional level by identifying that Jenny Sanford was absent from her husband’s side during the press conference. This noticeable absence of Ms. Sanford was a stark contrast to the wives of Governor McGreevey and Governor Spitzer, and many of the articles characterized Sanford as having deeply hurt the First Lady of South Carolina.

Inclusion of Quotes from Press Release

The press release that included the admission of the extramarital affair by Mark Sanford originally was expected to be an explanation of the governor’s disappearance for nearly one full week. Yet, it was quickly evident the press conference was not going to be solely on the governor’s trip to the Appalachian Mountains. Below is a transcript of Governor Sanford’s speech on June 24, 2009:

“I won't begin in any particular spot. Let me just start with ... I don't see her, where's Gina Smith? Not here? Ok. I had a conversation with Gina Smith this morning when I arrived in Atlanta and I told her about my love of the

Appalachian Trail. I used to organize hiking trips. Actually, when I was in high school I would get a soccer coach or a football coach to act as chaperone, and then I'd get folks to pay me \$60 each, or whatever it was, to take the trip and then off we'd go and have these great adventures in the Appalachian Trail.

And I told her of adventure trips both in college, was a campus representative for Eastern Airlines and could fly free, which meant I'd fly to different places around the world, get myself a job, carry \$100 in emergency money and either find a job there with locals and come back, or come on home. Told about my years in Congress, and early years in governorship, of different adventure trips of leaving and traveling different places, because what I have found in this job is that one desperately needs a break from the bubble. We're in every word, every moment is recorded, just to completely break and I've found that to be true in trips to the farm, or in trips to other places further afield...and all those things were true.

I talked about the profound frustrations that I felt over this last legislative session in the battle that was in place with the government stimulus package, the \$700 million in play, and how in an emotional level I found it exhausting.

I tried making as good as stand as I could, not for a further political office. What was interesting is always viewed of you doing this to climb some further political office? It was always based on that idea that I genuinely believe that that actually would be bad for the taxpayers and made the stand as I did.

So all those things we talked about this morning were true, but they're not the whole story, and that's obviously why everybody's gathered here right now. So let me lay out that larger story that has attracted so many of you all here. I'm a bottom line kind of guy. I'll lay it out. It's gonna hurt, and we'll let the chips fall where they may.

In so doing, let me first of all apologize to my wife Jenny, and our four great boys Marshall, Landon, Bolton and Blake for letting them down. One of the primary roles well before being a governor is being a father to those four boys who are absolute jewels and blessings that I've let down in a profound way. And I apologize to them. And I don't like apologizing in this realm, but given the immediacy of y'all's wanting to visit and my proximity to them, this is the first step in what will be a very long process on that front.

I would secondly say to Jenny, anybody who has observed her over the last 20 years of my life knows how closely she has stood by my side in campaign after campaign after campaign and literally being my campaign manager and the raising of those four boys and in a whole host of other things throughout the lives that we've built together.

I would also apologize to my staff, because as much as I did talk about going to the Appalachian Trail, that was one of the original scenarios that I'd thrown out to Mary Neal, that isn't where I ended up. And so I let them down by creating a fiction with regard to where I was going, which means that I then in turn given as much as they relied on that information, let down people that I represent across this state.

And so I want to apologize to my staff, and I want to apologize to anybody who lives in South Carolina for the way that I let them down on that front.

I want to apologize to good friends. Tom Davis came over to the house, he drove up from Beaufort, and he had been an incredibly dear friend for a very long time.

In my first race for governor he moved up and he lived in the basement of our house for six months and we called it 'Jurassic Park' 'cause it was the kids' dinosaur shoes and all kinds of different folks were living there in the campaign and he gave of his time and his talent and his effort for ideas that he believed in, to try and make a difference in those ideas. And so I have in a very profound way, have let down the Tom Davis' of the world.

On the ride over here I called the house and in the background I could hear my parents in laws who had come up to be with Jenny, and I've let them down.

I had the most, you know, surreal of conversations a number of weeks ago with my father-in-law, laying some cards on the table and he was incredibly, gentlemanly, as you cannot imagine, in saying here were some things I was struggling with regard to where my heart was, where I was in life, those different kinds of things. And I let him down.

I've let down a lot of people. That's the bottom line.

And I let them down and in every instance I would ask there forgiveness.

Forgiveness is not an immediate process, it is in fact a process that takes time and I'll be in that process for quite some weeks and months and I suspect years ahead. But I'm here because if you were to look at God's laws, in every instance it is designed to protect people from themselves. I think that that is the bottom line of God's law. It is not a moral, rigid list of do's and don'ts just for the heck of do's and don'ts, it is indeed to protect us from ourselves. And the biggest self of self is indeed self. If sin is in fact grounded in this notion of what is it that I want, as opposed to somebody else.

And in this regard let me throw one more apology out there and that is to people of faith across South Carolina or for that matter across the nation, because I think that one of the big disappointments when -- believe it or not I've been a person of faith all my life -- if somebody falls within the fellowship of believers or the walk of faith, I think it makes it that much harder for believers to say well, where does that person come from or folks that weren't believers to say where indeed was that person coming from. SO one more apology in there.

But I guess where I'm trying to go with this is there are moral absolutes and that God's law indeed is there to protect you from yourself, and there are consequences if you breach that. This press conference is a consequence.

And so the bottom line is this. I've been unfaithful to my wife. I have developed a relationship with a...what started as a dear dear friend from Argentina. It began very innocently as I suspect many of these things do in just a casual email back and forth in advice on one's life there and advice here. But here recently over this last year it developed into something much more than that.

And as a consequence I hurt her, I hurt you all, I hurt my wife, I hurt my boys, I hurt friends like Tom Davis, I hurt a lot of different folks. And all I can say is that I apologize.

I would ask your ya'lls, I guess I'm not deserving of indulgence, but indulgence not for me, but for Jenny and the boys, you know there are a team of cameras and

crews and all those sorts of things camped out down at Sullivan's Island, and I would just ask for a zone of privacy, if not for me, for her and the boys. As we go through the process of working through this there are going to be some hard decisions to be made, to be dealt with. And those are probably not best dealt with through the prism of television cameras and media headlines. You know I'm committed to that process of walking through with Jenny and the boys, with the Tom Davis' of the world, with the people of South Carolina in saying 'where do we go from here?' I would simply say I go back to that simple word of asking for forgiveness. Just as a declarative statement, one more before we open up for a couple of questions and then I'll move on. You know, I've tried to think of...one of the first steps is clearing out more time as we go through this process of reconciliation and figuring out what comes next. I'm going to resign as Chairman of the Republican Governors Association. I'm going to tender my resignation -- one, because I think it's the appropriate thing to do given other governors across this nation and my role as Chairman of the RGA, and two frankly just from the standpoint of time. You know if I think about this process, now it doesn't begin at a family level it begins with a family of South Carolinians, and so that means me going one by one and town by town to talk to a lot of old friends across this state in what I've done and be asking their forgiveness, and that'll take time, time I probably can't devote to the RGA.”⁸⁷

As evident by the transcript, Governor Sanford’s admission of the affair covered a broad array of topics. Many of these topics were addressed in articles as being irrelevant to the purpose of the press conference. Therefore, some articles mocked the Governor’s address. Other elements of the press release were key components of various articles, such as that below:

“Sanford spoke amid a media throng at a hastily arranged news conference hours after returning from Buenos Aires. He said he met the woman eight years ago during an economic development trip. What began “very innocently” with him advising her to reconcile with her estranged husband developed into a “remarkable friendship,” he said in a halting voice.”

Future Plans

Many references (n=14) to the future of Governor Sanford were mentioned in the articles. Specifically, most characterizations of Governor Sanford’s future dealt primarily

⁸⁷ <http://www.wistv.com/global/story.asp?s=10590732>

with either his presumed status as a potential 2012 Presidential ticket position or his likely resignation. While the two may seem to be very polar outcomes, the two were frequently presented within the same paragraph during article analysis.

“First, it further damages the GOP brand, potentially driving away more voters or at least making it more difficult to win back some of those who abandoned the party in the past two elections. Second, it could disillusion social and religious conservatives – a critically important part of the Republican coalition – who may now wonder whether those who share the Republican label truly share their values. Third, the Sanford saga removes one more new-generation GOP leader from the field of prospective 2012 candidates.”

“Sanford’s and Ensign’s (Senator from Nevada who admitted to an extramarital affair one week prior to Mark Sanford) mistakes are, no doubt, disqualifying for whatever future political hopes they might have had.”

Name of Partner

Governor Sanford’s mistress, Maria Belen-Chapur, was characterized as Sanford’s mistress in 9 articles. All references to Belen-Chapur simply listed her name.

Post Sex Scandal Life

Governor Sanford remains in office as South Carolina’s governor. Plans for future office have not been discussed or disclosed. His divorce with Jenny Sanford is final.

Table 4.5 Mark Sanford Characterizations in 24 Articles	No.	%
Previous Scandal	1	1.1
Previous Statements/Votes Against Scandal (Hypocrisy)	7	7.4
Previous Denial	10	10.5
Previous Accomplishments	7	7.4
Mention of Criminal Activity	5	5.3
Condition of Family	17	17.9
Emotionality	12	12.6
Presence of Spouse at Press Conference	5	5.3
Inclusion of Quotes from Press Conference	8	8.4
Indication of Future Plans	14	14.7
Name of Extramarital Affair Partner Stated	9	9.5
Total Characterizations	95	100%

Source – Data collected from author’s analysis of articles (Jun 24-Jul 24, 2009)

Chapter 5 - Analysis of Cases

Across all five cases, a total number of 89 articles were analyzed. Several conclusions can be drawn.

The analysis of the Patton (D-KY) case presented findings appropriate to the research. One of the initial findings was the lack of previous scandal or previous statements against sexual scandal. As discovered through the study of the articles, hypocrisy did not seem to play a factor in any of the ten articles. Patton's denial of an extramarital affair was mentioned in five of the articles following his admission of an affair, as was the discussion of possible criminal activity on Patton's behalf, reinforcing the responsibility frame in half of the articles. The responsibility frame was also reinforced through the eight mentions of Patton's partner in the affair. The human interest frame was represented in discussions of Patton's family, his emotions during the press conference, and the presence of his wife at the press conference. Additionally, it was noted that quotes from Patton's press conference were used in several articles as well.

The analysis of Bob Wise (D-WV) presented somewhat of a challenge to this research. Even with the multiple methodologies applied, Wise's case was limited. Only three articles were drawn from the three newspapers examined. This case provided the strongest support for the inclusion of local or more regional papers in the study of political sex scandal. The notion of including local papers is further reinforced by the next two cases where McGreevey and Spitzer were covered significantly more in the newspapers, in part because of the *New York Times* serving as a local paper to the New York and New Jersey markets.

Wise was reported in the newspapers along a few of the frames and facts noted earlier. The human interest frame was present in the articles from the Wise case as references to the condition of his family and to the emotional condition of the governor at the press conference was observed in the analysis. The Wise case lacked any discussion of previous scandal, denial, or hypocritical statements against extramarital relationships, but did include articles where quotes were extracted from Wise's admission remarks.

The McGreevey (D-NJ) case represented the first of two cases that could be considered to be local cases considering the usage of the *New York Times* in our study. Of the 18 articles examined, McGreevey was characterized by ten of the eleven characterizations. The only characterization that was not observed in the articles was hypocrisy.

McGreevey was discussed in the articles along nearly all of the frames. The inclusion of references to previous scandal highlighted elements of economic consequence and responsibility frames, in addition to providing information on McGreevey's political background. The condition of McGreevey's wife and children reinforced the human interest frame while the fact that McGreevey was having an affair with a man allowed newspaper reporters to tap into the morality frame present in some members of the audience. The discussion of criminal activity noted elements of the responsibility frame and also indicated a conflict arising between New Jersey Republicans and other McGreevey opponents, including those researching McGreevey's conduct. Much like the previous governors, McGreevey was also directly quoted in several of the articles.

Eliot Spitzer (D-NY) is the fourth and final Democrat to be examined in our study. He is also the second governor in our study to be covered by the *New York Times* as a local politician. Moreover, one possible reason for the abundance of articles referencing Spitzer (n=34) is because his affair was occurring in Washington D.C. Therefore, the Spitzer scandal was a local issue to be reported by both the *New York Times* (as a result of his New York residence) and the *Washington Post* (as a result of the affair occurring in Washington, D.C.). This further reinforces the notion that local and regional papers provide greater and broader coverage of political sex scandal.

Spitzer was characterized in 34 articles in just four days. Nine of the eleven characterizations were indicated in the analysis of the articles. Among the most prominent characterization was the indication of criminal activity with the Spitzer case. This abundance of reference to criminal and illegal activity employed multiple frames, including the responsibility and conflict frames, as well as the morality frame in the contextualization that illegal actions are immoral actions. Additionally, the cold-emotions of the governor were noted in several articles, and while the indication of an emotionless governor fails to provide much depth to the article, it does personify and emotionalize the environment for readers of the story, thus establishing a human interest frame.

Lastly, Spitzer's case highlighted the possibility of state funds being used for his prostitution service, which is incorporated in many articles with the criminal activity. Such a possibility of illegal usage of state funds reinforces the economic consequence frame, as well as provides much insight into the facts being examined by the law enforcement officials. In fact, the very coincidence that Spitzer was an attorney general before governor is highlighted in multiple articles and provides a very strong thematic

presence of hypocrisy within the articles. Furthermore, much like the previous cases, direct quotes from Spitzer's press conference were used in the articles.

The fifth and final case examined happened to be the only case involving a Republican. Mark Sanford (R-SC) was discussed in 24 articles following his admission of an extramarital affair with an Argentine woman. One of the initial challenges to this case was that many articles existed prior to the press conference about the unknown whereabouts of Sanford. Many reporters expected the press conference held by Sanford on the date of his admission to be about his spontaneous "vacation", but instead the press conference turned into a long, drawn-out discussion of his life, his actions, and his desire for forgiveness.

Sanford was the only case where each characterization was applied to the governor in at least one article. Sanford was also highly scrutinized in the articles for his previous denial of an affair, his previous statements against extramarital affairs, and a small inkling to previous scandal as reported in a tabloid magazine. The most prominent frame in the Sanford case was the human interest frame, with significant attention paid to Sanford's weeping on stage, numerous questions about his wife and children, and the lack of a spouse at the conference. Sanford was also characterized using the morality frame, and by his own admission, when he stated his actions were immoral and non-Christian during an appeal for forgiveness. Fiscal issues were discussed regarding the possible criminal activity of usage of state funds, but as of April 2010, no ruling had been delivered on the use of state funds for private purpose. Additionally, the Sanford case included many quotes from the press conference, often utilized in a way to reinforce one of the five frames present in the articles.

After carefully studying each of the five cases, the research questions can be better answered. Throughout each of the articles, various characteristics were portrayed in greater frequency according to the details of the scandal. However, each of the 89 articles did in fact have at least one characteristic from the possible 11 characteristics. Variance occurred according to the details of the scandal, such as legal investigation, financial inquiry, or absence of family members (Q1). Nevertheless, issues that would be expected to be presented in a negative fashion (criminal activity, hypocrisy) indeed were presented in a negative, critical, or unfavorable light. One unexpected finding related to previous political experience was the possibility for previous experience being as a negative characteristic, such as an attorney general being arrested for illegal activity. Additionally, the incorporation of local and regional level newspapers would greatly enhance the validity of this study, as would a second coder to help establish inter-coder reliability.

Furthermore, each of the five cases included articles that used direct quotes from the governor's press releases or statements (Q2). This indicates the possibility for a study to develop based on politicians framing the media to report scandals in a certain light, as well as the possibility for the governors to have influence, through the bully-pulpit, for agenda-setting opportunities. The articles that were examined were also noted to incorporate quotes in a way to reinforce a critical analysis of the governor, such as the case of Mark Sanford.

Lastly, some of the cases did not have a sufficient number of newspaper articles to analyze in our study. This is likely a result of using three national newspapers and having two relatively small-state governors in the study. On the opposite end of this

spectrum, governors from New York and New Jersey were essentially covered by a hometown paper, the *New York Times*, and therefore produced a significant number of articles. An extension to include more regional and local papers as well as an extension of the date parameters may increase the number of articles to be analyzed according to the characterizations used to portray individual governors. The case that contradicts this statement is in regards to Mark Sanford, Governor of South Carolina, who was reported in sufficient depth by the three major newspapers. It is possible that other factors are influencing the coverage of Mark Sanford, such as soft-news television programs or unusual characteristics associated with that respective case.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion

This thesis examined the content in newspaper articles reporting admissions of extramarital affairs by state governors from 1994 until the present. Using multiple case study analysis, the articles were analyzed and broken down to establish if any of the articles included one or multiple indicators from a set of 11 characterizations of individual governors or portrayal of governors' behavior. While searching for similarities among the cases, a number of characteristics were noted about the articles that could contribute to the future study of political sex scandal.

Importance

While the distribution of consumption of media has changed, Americans continue to collect information from all media sources, including newspapers. From the media, citizens receive information about a variety of issues, including sports, financial news, and politics. Within this political information, members of the public will interpret news events based on the ways in which media reports are presented. Therefore, the framing and characterizations present in newspaper articles are reasonably assumed to influence the creation of a perspective as held by the public about an issue. If articles are presenting stories through a particular bias, frame, or characterization, McCombs and Shaw indicate it is plausible to assume that members of the public who are gathering information from those articles will formulate perspectives on the issue similar to the frames being presented.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ McCombs, M.E., and D.L. Shaw. (1972) The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 36 p.176-187

Another contribution this study provided was the significant difference in media coverage of the sex scandal cases. In terms of total number of articles, Governors Wise and Patton had far fewer references in the major news articles than did Governors McGreevey, Spitzer, and Sanford. One reason for this discrepancy in coverage is due to the *New York Times* being a national paper and a local paper for McGreevey and Spitzer. It is possible that another factor or series of factors contributed to this disproportionate news coverage despite the similarities in the cases. For example, it is possible that elements such as hypocrisy toward political sex scandals encourage the media to report these stories in greater frequency than compared to sex scandal cases where hypocrisy was absent. As was noted with the Wise and Patton case, neither of those governors had reports of hypocrisy in the articles. Therefore, one must consider whether the existence of hypocrisy is a lynchpin of sorts between minimal news coverage and abundant news coverage.

A second factor that appears to contribute to the amount of news coverage is the perceived criminal nature or attitude of the governor. With the exception of Bob Wise, each of the governors had reports of alleged criminal activity associated with the extramarital affair. It is important to note that the criminal activities discussed were legal transgressions punishable by law and not the traditional laws associated with marital obligations. Future studies examining the lasting effects of the Clinton scandal could be applied to the study of this factor.

A third commonality was the presence of direct quotes from the press conferences and apologia speeches. This usage of quotes in newspapers represents the possibility of politicians having the ability to use journalists as an audience priming tool. Specifically,

if journalists are reporting political stories using the exact language of the politician, the politician could utilize the journalist as a means of free publicity, issue focus shift (either away from or toward an issue) or part of the gubernatorial bully pulpit.

Only Mark Sanford's case represented an example of all eleven article characteristics being presented, and only one article was present in the previous scandal category. This indicates a focus on the part of the journalist to prioritize certain issues above other possible story lines. Again, such a focus could be used to the advantage of the politician, while at the same time representing a disadvantage in the event that the story is negative. I assume that this characteristic would apply to any level of office, particularly in the case of political scandals and political sex scandals.

Performing the study on five governors represented several efficiencies during the analyzing of the major news periodicals. One of the first benefits to using five governors since 1994 is that each of the cases existed during the period of the internet, could be examined during a period of similar national political culture, and represent five executives in charge of a state. Rather than having to examine the office of the president (the other logical executive to study) over a period of forty or fifty years to reach a sample size of five cases, using gubernatorial infidelity enabled a multiple case study analysis to be conducted over a 15 year period.

Table 4.6		
Characterizations Across All Articles	No.	%
Previous Scandal	12	3.7
Previous Statements/Votes Against Scandal (Hypocrisy)	21	6.4
Previous Denial	16	4.9
Previous Accomplishments	39	12
Mention of Criminal Activity	46	14.1
Condition of Family	37	11.3
Emotionality	38	11.7
Presence of Spouse at Press Conference	21	6.4
Inclusion of Quotes from Press Conference	24	7.4
Indication of Future Plans	43	13.2
Name of Extramarital Affair Partner Stated	29	8.9
Total Characterizations	326	100%

Source – Data collected from author’s analysis of newspaper articles

Limitations

As with most research projects, this thesis is not without its limitations. One of the predominant limitations is associated with the fact that no political scandal, or political sex scandal, is like any other. Because of the unique nature of each scandal, a test cannot be applied to all cases of gubernatorial or political infidelity to determine if such case is applicable to the findings of this research. Moreover, other issues may be involved in political infidelity that will never be known by the public or by the reporting media. Personal circumstances such as blackmail attempts on an elected official, marital troubles, financial hardship, work stress, or psychological imbalances could contribute to a politician’s reasoning to participate in an extramarital affair. There also exists the possibility that other politicians have not admitted to or been caught in extramarital affairs. This leaves the chance for a case to be both added to the existing study but also present information that could challenge many of the findings of this research project.

The assumption that major newspapers are framing stories within a series of characterizations challenges the possibility that all frames are representative of the attitudes and opinions of the readership. Moreover, political sex scandals may be a small part of an entirely separate political culture within the politician's repertoire of activity unbecoming an elected official. While the neutral observer position is beneficial in an attempt to eliminate bias, lacking the information that a constituent would have of a local or state level official contributes to a weakness in this research design.

There also exists a limitation in the number of articles available. While the possibility of a second or third research design develops from the notion that local or regional papers may carry more in-depth reporting than national newspapers, this study focused on national newspapers. Therefore, the limited numbers within the first two governors studied is a serious limitation to the study.

Among the remaining limitations, it should be noted that a single coder performed the analysis of these articles. Such a research method does not bode well in the pursuit of coder reliability. Ideally, this research project would have involved other coders to establish some type of inter-coder reliability. Despite the lack of a second or third coder, every effort was made to maintain a bias-free research project.

Research Questions

From the newspapers that were selected from the study, the initial focus of the research was to determine if the newspaper reporting of admissions of extramarital affairs was consistently using the same characteristics across the five cases of extramarital affairs (Q1). Through the analysis of the newspaper articles from the three major newspaper sources, it was clear that newspaper articles do, in fact, utilize a combination

of all 11 characterizations of gubernatorial officials during extramarital affair admissions. Additionally, the characterizations were presented from a combination of favorable, unfavorable, and neutral standpoints, which helped to reduce bias within the newspaper articles.

An additional element of the study was to determine if language from the press releases and apologetic speeches were utilized in any of the articles. From the analysis of the articles, select quotes were used in each of the five cases (Q2). Across the entire sample of 89 articles, a total of 24 articles included usage of direct quotes from the press releases. This represents a proportion of 27% of the articles. This leads to the possibility of further studies of the relationship between apologetic speeches, press releases, and the opportunity for politicians in scandalous settings to help establish the frames presented to the public in the reporting of scandal.

Because of some variance in the cases selected, not all of the five were covered in the same depth by the major newspapers. One reason for this variance is expected to be due to the geographic location of three of the five cases (Kentucky, West Virginia, and South Carolina governors outside the daily coverage area of the *Washington Post*, *New York Times* but not the *USA Today*). Therefore, an inclusion of more local and regional papers would assist in the analysis of Q3. Additionally, a study focusing on the similarities among local and regional papers and those newspaper characterizations may be of benefit in deciding how stories are reported at the more local level. Furthermore, comparing the frequencies and proportions of the characterizations within national papers and more regional papers may indicate a reason why varying pressures exist on the

politician to remain in office and complete the term, resign from office immediately, or seek reelection.

Many other future research studies are possible from the foundations of this thesis. One area of possible research is an examination of the relationship between governors and the possibility of a governor being elected President of the United States. Throughout history, governors have been elected president 20 times. Therefore, governors are logical candidates for ascension into the Oval Office. Thus, a possible research question could examine whether the attention given by the media toward a gubernatorial political sex scandal is prohibitive of the governor running for president?

Another research possibility lies in the ways in which members of Congress are reported during sex scandals. More specifically, are newspapers reporting sex scandals of Representatives and Senators in the same fashion as governors? Additionally, other factors may contribute to the breadth which scandals are reported. If a political sex scandal is reported and details of the scandal are widely considered to be beyond the previous expectations of the public, other media sources may influence the coverage of the scandal. Television shows of a comedic origin, such as late-night television, may present an additional set of frames from which the scandals are reported.

Since public knowledge of political scandal is derived from the media, a study into the relationship between media coverage and public opinion could also be examined. Finding existing data, such as polls, could help to determine if the frequency of media reports is related to the rise or fall in public opinion polls.

Lastly, future studies into political scandal and political sex scandal should include a discussion of the culture in which the stories emerged. Specifically within the

examples utilized here, Wise's scandal emerged during the rescue of a prisoner of war. Therefore, the Governor was reported in a positive manner during the recovery of the soldier, but also reported in a negative manner during the affair. An examination into the influence of the culture during which the scandal emerges could play a role in the ability for an elected official to remain in office or even be reelected.

Numerous other studies are possible from the foundation of this thesis. Studies involving the relationship between sexual scandals, extramarital affairs, public approval ratings, and media reports could be further examined in hopes of providing insight to the effects of political scandal on an elected official or an elected official's party.

The findings of this thesis imply that content does vary across newspaper reports and despite similarities within political scandals, variance still exists in the type of details covered in newspaper reports of political scandal. Research expanding beyond the scope of this thesis could include hypothetical studies involving test and control groups, a more in-depth analysis of frames during political scandal, and a deeper content analysis of newspaper reporting. It can be argued, however, that the infant stage of political sex scandal research enables a wide range of possible studies to occur.

Bibliography

Adut, Ari. 2008. *On scandal: moral disturbances in society, politics, and art*. Structural analysis in the social sciences. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Apostolidis, Paul, and Juliet Williams. 2004. *Public affairs: politics in the age of sex scandals*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press

Archibold, Randal C.. "Helen Chenoweth-Hage, 68, Former Representative, Dies ." October 2006.http://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/04/washington/04chenoweth.html?_r=1 (accessed March 2010).

Bauer, S. W. 2008. *The art of the public grovel: Sexual sin and public confession in America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Bollens, John Constantinus, and Henry J. Schmandt. 1979. *Political corruption: power, money, and sex*. Pacific Palisades, CA: Palisades Publishers.

Bowler, S, & Karp, J. 2004. Politicians, scandals, and trust in government. *Political Behavior*, 26(3), 271-287 .

Breuer, T., & Amann, J. 2007. *The Brotherhood of the disappearing pants*. New York: Nation Publishing.

Brians, Craig Leonard, Jarol B. Manheim, Richard C. Rich, and Lars Willnat. *Empirical Political Analysis (8th Edition) (Mysearchlab Series for Political Science)*. 8 ed. Alexandria, VA: Prentice Hall, 2010.

Chyi, H. I. & McCombs, M. E. 2004. Media salience and the process of framing: Coverage of the Columbine school shootings. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 81(1), 22-35.

Cossmann, Brenda. "The new politics of adultery." *Columbia Journal of Gender and Law* 15 2006: 274-296.

Davis, Lanny J. 2006. *Scandal: how "gotcha" politics is destroying America*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

DeLeon, P. 1993. *Thinking about political corruption*. New York: M E Sharpe Inc.

Edmonds, Rick. The Poynter Institute. 2005. *Annual report on American journalism*. [http://www.stateofthedia.org/2005/narrative_newspapers_contentanalysis.asp?cat=2&media=2]

Entman, R. 1993. Framing: Towards clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51-58.

- Franck, T. M., & Weisband, E. 1975. *Resignation in protest*. New York: Grossman Publishers.
- Gamson, J. 2001. Normal sins: sex scandal narratives as institutional morality tales. *Social Problems*, 48(2), 185-205.
- Garrard, J. & Newell, J. L. 2006. *Scandals in past and contemporary politics*. New York: Manchester University Press
- Harrison, Lohell. 2004. *Kentucky's Governors*. Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky. 259
- Jacobson, Gary. 1996. "The 1994 House elections in perspective". *Political Science Quarterly*. Vol. 111, Issue 2. 203-223
- Johnston, M., & Heidenheimer, A. 2002. *Political corruption*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishing
- Kagay, M. 1999. Presidential address: public opinion and polling during presidential scandal and impeachment. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 63(3), 449-463.
- Keck, K. 2009, July 14. Surviving a political sex scandal. *CNN*, Retrieved from <http://www.cnn.com/2009/politics/07/14/political.sex.scandal.survival.index.html>
- Kellner, D. (Ed.). 2000. *The End of politics*. New York: Guilford.
- Kentucky Historical Society. <http://history.ky.gov/sub.php?pageid=27§ionid=8>. (Accessed March 2010)
- King, John. "House impeaches Clinton." December 19, 1998.<http://www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/stories/1998/12/19/impeachment.01/> (accessed March 2010).
- Kleinfield, N. R. . "Politics, and Scandal, as Usual ." March 11, 2008.<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/11/nyregion/11cnd-scandals.html> (accessed March 2010).
- McCombs, M.E., Shaw, D. L., "The agenda-setting function of mass media." *Public Opinion Quarterly* xxxvi, no. 2 (1972): 176-187.
- McLaughlin, K. & May, P. 2009. In the sleezy world of political sex scandals, not all are created equal. *The Mercury News*.
- Miller, A. H. 1999. Sex, politics, and public opinion: what political scientists really learned from the Clinton- Lewinsky scandal. *Political Science and Politics*, 32(4), 721-729.

National Governor's Association.

<http://www.nga.org/portal/site/nga/menuitem.29fab9fb4add37305ddcbeeb501010a0/?vgnextoid=7a66ae3effb81010VgnVCM1000001a01010aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=e449a0ca9e3f1010VgnVCM1000001a01010aRCRD> (Accessed March 2010).

Ostrom, Carol. "What sex scandals say about politics." November 2007. http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/politics/2003992771_curtis04m.html (accessed March 2010).

Peterson, Karen S.. "Infidelity reaches beyond having sex." *USA Today*, January 2003, http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2003-01-08-workplace-usat_x.htm.

Pikeville College, <http://www.pc.edu/news/news/Former-Gov-Paul-E-Patton-appointed-Pikeville-College-president>, 539.aspx (Accessed March 2010)

Ross, S. 1988. *Fall from grace: Sex, scandal, and corruption in American politics from 1702 to the present*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Scheufele, Dietram A. "Agenda-setting, priming, and framing revisited: another look at cognitive effects of political communication." *Mass Communication and Society* 3, no. 2 & 3 (2000): [297-316].

Segrave, K. 1990. *Sex and politicians*. Branden Pub Co.

Semetko, Holli, and Patti Valkenburg. "Framing European Politics: A Content Analysis of Press and Television News." *The Journal of Communication* 50, no. 2 (2000): 93-109.

Summers, J. H. 2000. What Happened to sex scandals? Politics and peccadilloes, Jefferson to Kennedy. *Journal of American History*, 87(3), 825-854.

Thompson, John B. 2000. *Political scandal: power and visibility in the media age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

University of Kentucky. <http://www.engr.uky.edu/alumni/hod/patton.php> (Accessed March 2010)

Ware, B. L., & Linkugel, W. A. (1973). They spoke in defense of themselves: On the generic criticism of apologia. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59, 273-283.

Weaver, McCombs, and Shaw. 2004. Agenda setting research: issues, attributes, and influences. In L.L. Kaid, *Handbook of political communication research* (257-282). New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Williams, Robert. 2000. *Political scandals in the USA*. Chicago, Ill: Fitzroy Dearborn Pub

Yin, R. 1994. *Case study research: Design and methods* (2nd ed.). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publishing.

Zelizer, Julian E. 2000. Clio's Lost Tribe: Public Policy History Since 1978. *Journal of Policy History*, 12, pp 369-394

Appendix

Article Date _____

Periodical _____

Elected Official _____

Characterizations (circle all that apply in each article):

Previous Scandal – article mentions accusations/linkages/assumption of previous scandal

YES NO

Previous Statements Against Extramarital Affairs – article mentions a “have it both ways” tones; mentions hypocrisy or hypocritical behavior YES NO

Previous Denial – the governor denied behavior associated with the scandal YES NO

Past Accomplishments – the newspaper article highlights successes or legislative achievements of the governor, including past careers YES NO

Criminal Activity – article highlights activity that is illegal, unethical, or worthy of legislative or legal oversight YES NO

Family Status – the newspaper article mentions the governor’s wife, kids, or other family members and/or their well-being/location/response YES NO

Emotionality – the governor’s display of emotion is described in the article YES NO

Presence of Spouse – the spouse of the governor was at the press conference YES NO

Inclusion of Quotes – the article includes quotes from the governor at the press conference YES NO

Future plans – the newspaper article discusses the future of the governor YES NO

Name of the Extramarital Partner – the newspaper article mentions, by name, the governor’s partner in the extramarital affair YES NO