Balancing the Ticket:

How Selecting A Vice President Has Changed in the Modern Era

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Abstract

Over the past century, the role of the vice presidency has increased drastically, to the point that some view the president and the vice president as a co-presidency. When this started and who perpetuated the change is up to debate, but the fact that the vice presidency and the vice-presidential selection process have increased in visibility and importance is not. This project analyzes the changes that occurred in the selection of the vice-presidential running mates in the last four decades by comparing the news coverage of the vice-presidential selection process in the years 1968 and 2000. What characteristics (such as ideology, compatibility, moral character, experience, etc.) do the media value most when reporting on the vice-presidential selection? The study observes the presidential election-year months of March through December in order to acquire data from the time the veepstakes speculation starts—after a presidential candidate secures enough delegates to win the nomination—to after the general election–where the electoral impact of the vice-presidential choice can be interpreted.

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Contents

List of Tables and Figures

Chapter 1; Introduction

A Brief Summary of the History of the Vice-presidential Selection Process

Concerning the seemingly contrasting vice-presidential roles as campaigner and office holder, Vice President Hubert Humphrey quipped, "He's like the second stage of a rocket. He's damn important going into orbit, but he's always thrown off to burn in the atmosphere" (Light 1984, 11). Humphrey thought that he and other vice presidents before his time were exclusively useful in helping the president get elected.

It is doubtful that Vice Presidents Al Gore and Dick Cheney, the two vice presidents who have served in the twenty-first century, would share Humphrey's sentiments. If such a change has occurred, how and why have the roles of vice president and vice-presidential candidate changed? The vice presidency has increased in publicity and governing importance in the twentieth century, particularly in, and as the result of, the nuclear age. No longer does the nation risk what it did during World War II when Vice President Harry Truman was not even informed about the Manhattan Project before he succeeded to the presidency. Furthermore, from August 1944, when Truman was announced as a running mate, to April 1945, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt died, the two men saw each other just eight times. When Truman became president, he saw to it that the vice president received daily briefings (Natoli 1988, 81-83).

With potential nuclear disasters and terrorist attacks a contemporary reality, it is more vital than ever that the vice president be capable of governing the nation at a moment's notice. Not only must vice presidents be ready to govern, but also they must realize they might have a more difficult time governing than their predecessor. Dean

Keith Simonton (1985) found that *accidental presidents*—vice presidents who ascended to the presidency via death or resignation—experienced a greater number of cabinet resignations and veto overrides, and had a more difficult time getting cabinet and Supreme Court nominations through the Senate than duly elected presidents (1985, 80). Simonton attributes these difficulties to a lack of legitimacy rather than a lack of political experience—often the VP has more political experience than the president when they enter their respective offices; this will again be the case when Barack Obama and Joe Biden are inaugurated in January (1985, 96). Akhil Reed Amar and Vikram David Amar observed that even though the accidental president was "the handpicked successor of the fallen president," the mandate granted his successor does not easily transfer because the voters are not afforded the opportunity to directly cast a ballot for the vice president as a result of the Twelfth Amendment (1995, 131). Vice presidents are effectively appointed—or determined by "an electorate of one" (Hurwitz 1980, 510). The electorate of one concept is technically true, but in practice, there is input from many.

Most presidential candidates rely on the advice of others. Also, according to Joel K. Goldstein (1982), those seeking the vice-presidential slot "discreetly encourage public and private displays of support to convince the standard-bearer of his talents and popularity." This is done all the while publicly denying that they are interested in the post (Goldstein 1982, 49). Other presidential nominees consult party leaders as Dwight D. Eisenhower did in 1952 (1982, 54). It is also important to point out that the president should have a great deal to say about the only person in his administration whom he can't fire (1982, 88).

The vice president who succeeds to the presidency in the middle of a term faces unique challenges. Consequently, this person must have a special character in order to deal with this adversity. In order to pick the right person for the job, campaign advisors and the electorate must be aware of the electoral and governing challenges a vice president will face when considering the selection of a running mate.

In the modern era—from 1952—even the vice-presidential candidate from the losing ticket is set up to be a front runner for the party nomination in subsequent elections (Lacayo and Duffy 1996). Some observers, however, wonder if the vice presidency is a "stepping stone or a stumbling block" to the presidency (Natoli 1989, 77). The office of the vice president almost automatically makes the occupant a front-runner for a future presidential election; but there is a certain trap that comes with the office—exposure is increased, but independence from the existing administration is decreased (Schlesinger 1974, 476). Even after some time has intervened, a vice president running for a presidential term of his own is tied to the record of his former boss. When Walter Mondale was four years removed from his vice presidency, the record of the Carter administration still served as an "albatross about the nominee's neck" (Natoli 1989, 78).

Once John McCain and Barack Obama secured enough delegates to be the presumptive Republican and Democratic presidential nominees (respectively), national focus shifted to the increasingly high profile quadrennial task of selecting a running mate—a process known as the *veepstakes*. Over the years there have been many changes in the selection of the vice president. Some of these changes have occurred due to constitutional amendments, others due to alterations in the political landscape. What is important at present is to understand how the current process affects the governing of the

nation. While it may never be clear why a campaign selects one prospective vice-presidential running mate over another, it is the hope of the governed that the vice-presidential selection process helps provide good future leadership. Clearly, history is substantially altered by each choice of a vice-presidential running mate. Not only has the power and significance of the office of the vice presidency increased substantially since World War II, but the vice presidency since then has become a stepping stone to the presidency as five of the last eleven presidents have at one point held the office of vice president first.

Over the course of 220 years of the American republic, the vice presidency has fluctuated in both electoral and administrative importance. A concentration of this project is on the electoral component of the vice presidency, more precisely, on the national thinking about the selection of running mates. While the media is concerned with vice-presidential candidates' electoral contributions to the presidential ticket takes place during the thick of the campaign cycle of presidential election years, we must recognize that the would-be vice presidents' eventual performances in office is of greater importance. However, one must acknowledge that there is an appropriate overlap of these two concerns; they are not dichotomous. There is a normative concern among researchers studying this subject that pits the campaigning potential of a prospective veep candidate against his or her governing potential. It is imperative that those involved in the selection strongly consider the governing potential of their choice, since by the mere nomination the chosen one will almost automatically be moved up in the pecking order of future presidential hopefuls in four or eight years. However, it should be acknowledged that the campaigning talents of candidates would also most likely translate into governing

prowess because skills needed on the campaign trail—such as charisma, effective public speaking, and the ability to persuade—can also help advance a governing agenda; so one cluster of skills is not necessarily the enemy of the other.

Choosing the Vice President

Throughout much of the two-party era vice-presidential candidates, it appears through media accounts, were selected through the process of *balancing the ticket*, whereby presumptive presidential nominees select a vice-presidential running mate that broadens the appeal of the ticket. This project defines balancing the ticket as choosing a running mate who possesses at least one significant asset that the presidential nominee does not, with the idea that votes will be added to the ticket as a result. In the past this was done more obviously to unite party factions and national regions; but today the phenomenon is less clear. This broadening can be accomplished in many ways.

The broadening of the appeal of the ticket occurs, of course, in the context of the Electoral College. Perhaps the most obvious and blatant way that balancing the ticket occurs is by selecting a vice-presidential candidate from a battleground or swing state in the Electoral College in hopes of securing that state's electoral votes. In recent elections, pundits and campaign strategists have highlighted three states—Pennsylvania, Ohio and Florida—as most crucial in the Electoral College. Today, if a presidential ticket loses all three of these states, or even two of three, it is likely it will lose the election. Can a vice-presidential candidate deliver his home state? How much of a difference, if any, can a vice-presidential candidate make in his home state?

If presidential candidates select running mates with the primary aim of winning the election, choosing the vice-presidential candidate that will attract additional votes to the ticket, it is fitting to think that governing concerns (i.e., leadership potential both as vice president and as a possible future president) are of secondary concern. While the two positions are not mutually exclusive, most party and campaign officials involved in this decision historically have given greater weight to electoral concerns over governing concerns; this was particularly the case in the nineteenth century (Nelson 1988, 34). Generally, as Goldstein pointed out, "Politicians are reluctant to admit that they use other criteria…ability seems to at best be a subsidiary condition" (1982, 66).

Although a presumptive presidential nominee would certainly not admit to making electoral concerns his primary motivation in making this crucial decision, most weigh both governing and electoral possibilities when making this crucial decision; but since 1945, Michael Nelson found that campaigns are moving toward being more concerned with governing criteria than in the past (Nelson 1988, 859). Ideally, the vice-presidential selection should be sensibly made with the anticipation that this man or woman will eventually become president. While most vice presidents never become presidents, many do—often accidentally, via death or resignation. Some, such as Martin Van Buren, Richard Nixon and George H. W. Bush, primarily due to their national exposure in the office of the vice president, waged victorious presidential candidacies of their own.

Since the development of the atomic bomb, more than one in three vice presidents have become commander-in-chief. One concern among political observers is that presidential candidates and their campaign staffs may give too much deference to the

notion of balancing the ticket and too little concern to the governing capability of their choice. Ideally, campaign operatives should follow the initiative of Representative Elias Boudinot in 1789 who said that the vice president should be selected "to obtain the second best character in the union to fill the place of the first, in case it should be vacated by any unforeseen accident" (Wilmerding 1953, 23). Campaign staffs are learning that not only is it fitting to give chief concern to the governing prospects of their choice, but that the choice of a vice-presidential candidate is unlikely to help or hurt the candidacy, even in the vice-presidential candidate's home state (Dudley and Rapoport 1989, 537).

Research Question

The primary focus of this thesis is to discover how establishment thinking, as revealed by media sources, has changed over the years with regard to the strategy of balancing the ticket. This thesis will add to the research and thought on the topic of vice-presidential selection by focusing on changes, such as the introduction of investigative journalism, that have occurred post-Vietnam and post-Watergate. While we could question why the balance-the-ticket strategy is still being used, this is not the focus of this study. I acknowledge that it still exists, and it will likely continue to exist, regardless of the merits. The central question in this thesis is this: how is the implementation of the vice-presidential selection strategy changing according to the perceptions of the media? If a change is observable, we can theorize that this change came about due to the events of Vietnam and Watergate, advancements in video coverage, the increase in the significance of the vice presidency, the rise of investigative journalism, and cultural and political changes in the last four decades.

In short, like so many areas of politics, it appears that the vice-presidential selection process and the balance-the-ticket strategy have been influenced by the Vietnam and Watergate era. Of course, Vietnam and Watergate were affected by an increase in the type, amount, and intensity of media coverage. Since then, not only is the coverage of candidates greater in volume and visual content, but also in its negativity (Patterson 1994, 183-87).

As a result, even capable potential presidents can have a minor shortcoming— such as Gerald Ford's clumsiness or Walter Mondale's dullness—appear as a potentially disqualifying flaw. In the era of the Internet, 24-hour television news cycle, and morning, afternoon, and evening political talk radio—a candidate's imperfections can be exposed and overexposed. As a result, campaigns have to look at their candidate in a new way. In order to get elected, a candidate must take an honest look at his or her own weaknesses and select a running mate who compensates for those weaknesses. Balancing the ticket is still in full effect; but the manner in which it is done is changing. Even before Vietnam and Watergate, the American political culture was being transformed from one of party-centered presidential campaigns, to candidate-centered ones. With this change came new ways of selecting a running mate.

Many scholars and observers agree that there seems to be an exceedingly large amount of concern paid by presidential candidates and campaign officials to a prospective vice-presidential selection's electoral advantages vis-à-vis his governing potential (Schlesinger 1974, 476; Nelson 1988, 34; Sigelman and Wahlbeck, 1997 855-56). In 1803, Senator Samuel White predicted this tactic would occur if the Twelfth Amendment—which allowed parties to establish a "ticket" for president and vice

president—was ratified. White said, "The question will not be asked, is he capable? is he honest? But can he, by his name, by his connexions, by his wealth, by his local situation, by his influence, by his intrigues, best promote the election of the President?" (Learned 1912, 170). It is unlikely that presidential candidates disregard electoral concerns in the future when making decisions about running mates. Since the ratification of the Twelfth Amendment in 1804, political parties, candidates, and strategists have thought that selecting the right vice-presidential running mate can help the ticket win the general election. The influence of the vice president has proven to be marginal. But in spite of the evidence, many in the media and in campaigns perceive that it helps (David 1967, 736-43; Wattenberg 1995, 504).

Using news stories and other writings from the era, this research project seeks to uncover the private decision-making processes of presidential candidates and influential campaign officials in selecting a running mate by surveying the more open views of the media elites, as the views of each group will reflect one another. The project theorizes that many of the balancing-the-ticket concerns and characteristics that have been revealed in news stories in the past have changed, but that the campaign strategy of taking electoral concerns into account when making this crucial vice-presidential decision remains in place and observable. In comparing the coverage of 1968 and 2000, this project predicts that the characteristics of character, compatibility, ethnicity, personality, religion, race, and sex will increase in exposure; and other characteristics such as ideology, region/section, and state will decrease.

Additional Concerns

Republican pollster and media consultant Jon Lerner said, "The vice presidency might be an inconsequential office in itself. But the ripple effects have the potential to transform American government for years to come" (2008). One motive of Nixon's, when he considered dropping Spiro Agnew from the 1972 ticket for John Connally was to give Connally a "head start" for the presidency in 1976 (Nixon 1978, 168-68). Ford surpassed Ronald Reagan as the frontrunner for the 1976 Republican nomination on the impetus of being appointed to the vice presidency following Agnew's resignation (Sirgiovanni 1994). Furthermore, this ripple effect is now generational as Reagan's choice likely led to a combined twelve years of George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush.

Some former presidents and presidential candidates implied that they had regrets about their (or their party's) running-mate decisions. Knowing more about the mistakes that past campaigns have made will allow future campaigns and candidates to make wiser judgments. This project will reveal the press perceptions of the selection process. If those involved in the vice-presidential vetting processes can be made aware of the enticements and confinements of the balancing-the-ticket strategy that are often more perceived than real (meaning that they are overvalued and don't translate into substantially more votes), this will most likely produce better vice presidents.

The claim of this project is this: the characteristics of the balancing-the-ticket strategy have changed in the last forty years based on candidate strengths and weaknesses in the context of contemporaneous issues. This trend of changing the criteria based on current realities is likely to continue in the near future; political thinkers must take this knowledge into consideration when reflecting on possible choices for the second highest

office in the land. While it is naive to think that strategists shouldn't contemplate the electoral advantages of picking the right running mate—after all, governing capacities mean little if the ticket is defeated—their consideration for the future leadership of the country should be paramount. The topic of electoral and governing criteria in selection a running mate has been a major concern of vice-presidential scholars. The next chapter is a literature review that will cover this topic in greater detail. Other key topics explored by researchers in the next chapter include the electoral value of the number two to the ticket both in the selection's home state, and nationally; and the changing role of the press in politics in general and in the vice-presidential choice specifically.

Chapter 2; Literature Review

A review of the literature shows that the chances are slim that the number two man or woman on the ticket will be the difference in the outcome of a race, but the literature claims that candidates still try to balance the ticket. There are examples when the ticket with the more popular vice-presidential candidate lost the race. It is also unlikely, but not unprecedented, that an election will come down to the vice-presidential candidates' home states. Different presidential campaigns used different criteria and processes in selecting running mates, but these choices occur behind closed doors. Ultimately, it is difficult to get the full, behind-the-scene story from inside the campaign, even after years have passed. From what can be witnessed however, scholars report that changes have occurred in the balance-the-ticket strategy over time. These changes are in the areas such as ideology, diversity, and personality.

Winning the Vice-presidential Candidate's Home State

There are two areas where the vice-presidential running mate could conceivably help the ticket: nationally, and in his or her home state. One main source of inquiry among researchers is what is now known as the *Hearnes' Rule*—the notion that the vice-presidential candidate helps his or her party's presidential ticket in his home state. Carl D. Tubbesing (1973) found that since 1896, vice-presidential candidates' home states have registered voting percentages for their favorite son's ticket higher than the national average in a given election over 70 percent of the time; this home-state help was also more likely to come in competitive states (1973, 710-15). In a study of the years 1948-

1972, Steven J. Rosenstone (1983) found that voters in the vice-presidential candidate's home states were 2.5 percent more likely to vote for the ticket than had their favorite son not been on the ticket (1983, 87). Robert L. Dudley and Ronald B. Rapoport (1989) later found that this advantage was only 0.3 percent (1989, 537).

While considering if one can deliver his or her home state, it must be understood that rarely is an election even decided by one state, let alone the vice-presidential candidate's home state—although clearly, 2000 and 2004 were anomalies. In over 70 percent of presidential elections, no single state would have made a difference in the outcome; and such was the case again in 2008. In 1916, the Democrats would have lost the White House had they not won the vice-presidential candidate's home state of Indiana; interestingly, the Republican vice-presidential candidate was from the same state (Adkison 1982, 334).

The size of the home state also factors into the amount of help a vice-presidential candidate can contribute to the ticket. Because of a perceived home-state advantage, most selections come from large states (Sigelman and Wahlbeck 1997, 861). Throughout the twentieth century, over 85 percent of vice-presidential candidates carried their home state and two-thirds came from large states (Adkison 1982, 334). Dudley and Rapoport (1989) revealed that the smaller the state, the greater the advantage for the ticket in the vice-presidential candidate's home state. The home-state advantage is more obvious in some elections and states than others. Edmund Muskie received 56 percent of the vote in his small home state of Maine when running with Humphrey in 1968. By comparison, the traditionally rock-rib Republican state of Maine only gave previous Democratic tickets an average of 43 percent (1989, 539-40). Earl Warren was a very well liked governor in the

populous state of California when running for vice president in 1948; but he was not able to deliver the state for Thomas Dewey (Schlesinger 1974, 484). Muskie's home-state results were unusually good; vice-presidential candidates Adlai Stevenson I in 1892 and Mondale in 1980 also helped deliver their home states of Illinois and Minnesota respectively (Dudley and Rapoport 1989, 539-40). According to Gallup, Lyndon Johnson added 4 percent to Texas in 1960 (*Time* 1984).

Influence of the Vice-presidential Candidate on the National Electorate

The supposition that vice-presidential candidates have little to no influence on the outcome of presidential elections is not universally accepted; there is a question as to how much help, if any, a vice-presidential candidate can lend to the ticket overall, or nationally. Goldstein stated that the VP choice could affect the race, even if it hasn't been established empirically (1982, 91). Nelson W. Polsby and Aaron B. Wildavsky (1968) failed to find any evidence that the vice-presidential running mate helps or hurts the popularity of the presidential candidate (1968, 108). According to Robert Albert (2005), the vice-presidential impact on a presidential election nationally is approximately one percent (871). Danny M. Adkison (1982) found that it is more likely that a vice-presidential candidate will hurt a candidate, rather than help (1982, 333). However, "not hurting" the ticket can "help" the ticket if the opposing veep candidate hurts his or her own ticket.

Other scholars think that the vice-presidential candidate can be a difference-maker in the election. On the contrary, Paul T. David (1967) estimated that in addition to his home state of Texas, Johnson was also the difference for John Kennedy in his 1960 battle

with Nixon in North Carolina and South Carolina; and that Humphrey was key to the 1964 Democratic victories in the plains states, an area that went heavily Republican in 1960 (1967, 736-43). Henry Cabot Lodge helped Nixon in the Northeast, Mondale helped Carter in the Northeast and Midwest, and Bob Dole helped Ford in the South and Midwest (Goldstein 1982, 91). There are other instances where the vice-presidential choice may have affected the outcome of the race. According to George Sirgiovanni (1988, 73), President Ford's decision to replace Vice President Nelson Rockefeller on the ticket with Dole for the 1976 campaign may have been the difference in him losing to Jimmy Carter. If Ford had won Rockefeller's home state of New York, he would have won the election. Moreover, Ford may have suffered nationally for his decision to *dump*—when the incumbent president or party removes the first-term vice president from the ticket for the reelection campaign—Rockefeller (Sirgiovanni 1994). Goldstein found that Muskie contributed four percent to Humphrey, while Agnew was a four-point drag on Nixon. Also five percent of voters swung to Carter because of negative attitudes about Dole (1982, 131-32).

For the electorate, the vice-presidential selection plays a significant role in voter decisions "even after controlling for party, ideology, and likes and dislikes of the candidates" according to Martin P. Wattenberg (1995, 504). In selecting Dick Cheney, Bush disregarded the notion of using the selection to gain the electoral votes of Cheney's home state, as Wyoming was a lock to go Republican anyway and yielded just 1.1 percent of the vote total needed for a majority (Baumgartner 2006, 106). Moreover, at the time of the selection, Cheney was residing in Bush's home state of Texas and needed to "move back" to Wyoming in order to satisfy the constitutional requirement that the

president and the vice president be elected from different states. The Bush campaign's strategy in selecting a running mate seemed purely national.

The dilemma of offsetting campaigning concerns with potential governing concerns when picking a ticket mate is evident in news reports and scholarship. John Kerry reportedly selected John Edwards in 2004, even though he thought Richard Gephardt would have made a better vice president (Albert 2005, 874-75). Other presidential candidates have been unhappy with the choice of their running mate. William Jennings Bryan and Warren Harding were displeased with the choices their parties made for them. When FDR bucked the party system in 1940 by selecting his own running mate, it was so controversial that his choice, Henry Wallace, didn't even make an acceptance speech. (Goldstein 1982, 47). According to Ralph B. Levering, if Ford would have picked a woman, he could have won. It would have also helped his image of not having imagination (Levering 1998). In 1968, Nixon said, "The Vice President can't help you. He can only hurt you" (Adkison 1982, 332). Goldstein (1982) established that veep candidates do more harm than good; and found that veep candidates are more likely to make the news for negative reasons (1982, 123-32). The latter point, however, could also be said, at least to lesser extent, about presidents and presidential candidates. But others, such as Tubbesing, think that the number two "can help win or lose elections." (1973, 702). He also reported that from 1836-1972, vice-presidential nominees have won their home state just 53.5 percent of the time. In most cases the veep candidate is usually not the difference in winning and losing the home state (1973, 705-15).

Home-state advantage can also be viewed in terms other than pure victories and defeats. Some candidates may widen the gap in a win or narrow the gap in a loss, as the

latter was the case with Estes Kefauver for the Democrats in Tennessee in 1956. If we use the criterion of "help or hurt" rather than "win or lose," vice-presidential candidates help the ticket in their home states 60 percent of the time; by comparison, presidential candidates in their home states help at a rate of 70 percent. Another criterion for determining if the veep candidates help in their home states is how the state performs versus the national trend. In this case the vice-presidential candidates are of some, but not major, assistance (Tubbesing 1973, 709-15). This seems to suggest weak support for the Hearnes' Rule. In terms of home-state advantage for the presidency, Democrats, incumbents, and small-state candidates had a greater advantage historically (Lewis-Beck and Rice 1983, 555)

One way to examine the effects of a veep choice on the ticket is to consider what would happen if voters had the opportunity to split the ticket for president and vice president. According to Richard C. Friedman, given the chance voters would have elected a Republican president and a Democratic vice president in 1956 and 1968 (1988, 1726); the same could probably be said about 1988. Wattenberg (1995, 509) found that 31 percent of voters who preferred one party's candidate for president and the other party's candidate for vice president, voted according to their vice-presidential preference if their differences were stronger for the vice-presidential option than the presidential one. According to Adkison, in the election of 1972, 38 percent of those who liked Agnew and disliked Nixon still voted for the ticket (1982, 334). In data collected between 1968 and 1992, approximately 10 percent of voters had conflicting favorites for president and vice president, preferring one party's presidential candidate, and the other's vice presidential candidate (Wattenberg 1995, 504).

In devising a prediction model for selecting vice-presidential running mates, Lee Sigelman and Paul J. Wahlbeck found that those who competed for the presidential nomination in the past had an advantage in being selected over those who had never competed for the nomination or who had challenged for the current nomination (1997, 859). In the 1960s, Johnson and Nixon both conducted polls to see what running mates worked best (Adkison 330). Johnson also floated trial balloons on veep prospects Mike Mansfield, Sargent Shriver, and Robert McNamara. In 1976, Carter used polling for 14 possible veep candidates (Goldstein 1982, 61); in 1980, Reagan did the same with 18 possible candidates (Hunt 1980). Today, polling as an apparatus for selecting running mates is common procedure.

Ideological Balancing

In the era when parties picked the running mate, tickets were more ideologically balanced than in the modern era where the presumptive presidential nominee makes the choice (Goldstein 1982, 74). Some political strategists and presidential candidates give more weight to an ideological balance than others. Reagan and his advisors seemed to believe in an ideological balance. In 1976 the conservative Reagan, without clinching the nomination, named moderate-liberal Republican Richard Schweiker as his running mate. Also, in 1980 Reagan considered naming former president Gerald Ford, a moderate, before settling on George H. W. Bush. Reagan's advisor's thought the pick was "make or break" and that the pick needed to be one of the moderates: Bush or Howard Baker (Raines 1980; Cannon 1980). In retrospect, it most likely wasn't a make-or-break situation.

Others cared not for such a balance, but strove for ideological homogeneity. The Clinton campaign scratched Lee Hamilton from its short list when Hamilton publicly stated that he agreed with a court decision that put some limits on abortion (Suro 1992). Historically, ideological balance was found in 43 percent of the tickets (Sigelman and Wahlbeck 1997, 863).

Ideological balance might be largely symbolic, and therefore might become something of the past. Where an ideological balance exists it, for most practical matters, evaporates after the team takes office. The president's ideology is what becomes the governing philosophy of the administration (Baumgartner 2006, 75). Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. said that the idea of a balanced ticket is "a fraud on the public," and that an ideological difference in the ticket is just about as bad as a party difference (1974, 484-85). "Balance" dominates the strategic campaign discussions of veep selection (Sigelman and Wahlbeck 1997, 855).

If there is a new trend to have ideological homogeneity, it might make governing in the White House easier. In the past, in spite of the change in the vice presidency over time, vice presidents have not always marched in lock-step with their bosses. Spiro Agnew reserved the right to publicly disagree with the president, while Mondale considered resigning due to differences between his own views and President Carter's (Levering 1998).

Since party is an extension of ideology, some have suggested that a "party" balance is not that much different than an ideological balance. Some candidates have even considered a party balance, as Humphrey considered selecting Rockefeller in 1968 (Goldstein 1982, 57), and Nixon strongly considered Connally, a registered Democrat in

1972. This move would have also required the dumping of Agnew (Sirgiovanni 1994). In the summer of 2008, some were suggesting that McCain might pick Democrat Joe Lieberman.

Sometimes it appears that the choice of vice-presidential running mate is irrelevant to the outcome of the election. Lloyd Bentsen was exceedingly more popular than Dan Quayle; but Bush-Quayle won handily in 1988 nevertheless (Sirgiovanni 1994). Other research shows that Quayle was an eight-point drag on the ticket (Baumgartner 2006, 104) as he was held in near "universally low esteem" (Amar and Amar 1992, 917). Even running as an incumbent, Quayle may have been have hurt Bush's reelection cause. In April 1991, 67 percent of voters thought that Quayle was unqualified to be president, while just 19 percent said he was qualified (Amar and Amar 1992, 917).

Adkison, however, found that in an attempt to balance the ticket for the greatest electoral gain, it would be best to try for national ideological balance, even if the candidate hailed from a small state, rather than selecting someone from a large state who does not offer an ideological balance to the ticket (1982, 334-35). Muskie was able to attract great media coverage and was very popular compared to his opponent Agnew, but it seemed to help little nationally for the Democratic ticket in 1968.

From Party- to Candidate-centered Selections and Other Historical Changes

One tangible vehicle of change in vice-presidential selection started in 1940, when incumbent presidential candidate Roosevelt wrestled control of the vice-presidential selection process from national party officials. Hitherto, veep selections were made by party elites at the convention. To place this move in perspective, consider that

William Jennings Bryan in 1896 didn't even allow his state delegation to vote on the running mate to avoid party battles and creating an appearance of manipulation (Sigelman and Wahlbeck 1997, 855). Adlai Stevenson II in 1956 threw the vice-presidential nomination open to the delegation. This was probably done for several reasons. First, he didn't want to offend anyone; second, he wanted to draw a distinction between his democratic selection model and the secretive political manner that the Republicans chose Nixon. Stevenson's way has its risks, as the process gives the choice more independence once in office; and of course there is the reality that someone incompatible might be chosen. But in Stevenson's case, he was probably happy with all the possibilities that year (Goldstein 1982, 54). Ultimately by 1960, both parties' presidential candidates had control of this official act for good. This brought a change of outlook to the vice-presidential selection. While both groups rewarded loyalty, party leaders of the past valued "service," while the candidates' campaigns of the modern era preferred "competence" and "compatibility" (Baumgartner 2006, 5).

Another significant historical change was the decision to keep the sitting vice president on the ticket if the incumbent president was running for reelection. Dumping was common in the past, but uncommon today. In the modern era—from the mid-twentieth century—it would be viewed as admitting to a blunder (Sirgiovanni 1994, 765). President Dwight D. Eisenhower considered dumping Nixon by suggesting to him that he take a cabinet position. But Nixon turned it down, knowing full well that the power and influence of the vice presidency had changed for the greater during his tenure; and that this move would be accurately viewed as a demotion (Sirgiovanni 1988, 67). Harold Stassen, a White House staffer, actually took leave from the administration to actively

lobby to a remove Nixon in favor of Governor Christian Herter of Massachusetts. But the party rallied behind Nixon and he remained on the ticket (Goldstein 1982, 51).

Before the modern era, the vice-presidential slot was often used to gain endorsements or delegates. In 1912, Woodrow Wilson gave the slot to Thomas Marshall in exchange for Indiana's votes at the convention. But in the modern era, according to Goldstein, "deals aren't related to conciliation" (1982, 80). This was evident in this year's battle for the Democratic nomination where Obama and Hillary Clinton finished with nearly the same popular vote; Obama did not strongly consider her for the second position (Kranish 2008).

The Politics of Personality

Personality is yet another aspect that is considered in balancing the ticket. In the modern era with television it seems that personality (or candidate image) is easier to witness and evaluate. As a result, personality shortcomings might need to be balanced. One party official said of George McGovern's choice of Shriver, "Shriver gives us a sense of security. He makes up for the strangeness of McGovern" (Goldstein 1982, 96-100). Leslie H. Southwick (1998) noted that the Mondale campaign selected Geraldine Ferraro in part because of her out-going, articulate and humorous style, which was counter to Mondale's (1998, 739). Southwick also noted that Jack Kemp's image, although positive, was too similar to Reagan's in 1980 to be selected by him as the running mate (1998, 786). Kemp was eventually chosen in 1996 in part due to his "vision and optimism" to offset Dole's "asperity and narrow focus" (Holbrook 1994, 520). In 1992, Bill Clinton may have been helped by Gore to balance his infidelity problems

(Baumgartner 2006, 77). Bob Woodward observed that Gore played the taskmaster to the wavering Clinton. This helped the team not only in campaigning, but also in governing; it was particularly noticeable during the planning and passage of the 1993 economic plan. And Baumgartner described Cheney as playing the role of CEO to Bush's chairman of the board (2006, 132). These style and role variations were evident both in campaigning and governing.

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, the media was looking into the personality/image of candidates. In fact, various influential journalists started multiple groups to meet with individual office holders and office seekers for off-the-record conversation over a meal in order to get a better sketch of his or her moral character and personality/image (Crouse 1973, 43). In the new era of journalism, candidates make attempts to communicate directly with the electorate, bypassing the traditional media by going on talk shows, in a way that best reveals his or her personality (Patterson 1994, 170). In 1976, 80 percent of the media analyses of the results of the Republican primaries were based on events and personality, rather than ideology and regional patterns within the party (1994, 181).

Other Ways to Balance

Occasionally, a presumptive nominee will select a running mate whom he has just defeated in the primary race; in the summer of 2008 some were speculating that Obama might select Hillary Clinton or John Edwards (before his marital affair was exposed), and that McCain could have done the same for Mike Huckabee, Mitt Romney, or Fred Thompson. Even though some presidential nominees select those they just defeated for

the nomination, most select someone with whom they never competed against: 83.5 percent. Most vice-presidential running mates are selected from those having competed for the presidential nomination in a past election; 16 percent of selections, as defined by "first choices," never competed for a nomination, while 12 percent competed for the current nomination (Sigelman and Wahlbeck 1997, 859-61).

Other factors may come into play as well. For example, if a request to join the ticket is denied, the presidential candidate will then likely only extend the invitation to someone else whom he is certain will accept it; in fact the presidential candidate might not even ask his initial choice unless he knows the offer will be accepted (Sigelman and Wahlbeck 863). The vice-presidential spot has been turned down on numerous occasions. Rockefeller turned down Nixon in 1960; Edward Kennedy turned down Humphrey in 1968 and McGovern in 1972; and Ford turned down Reagan in 1980 (Goldstein 1982, 63). The horserace projection might also play a role. If a candidate, such as Mondale in 1984 when he selected the first woman major-party vice-presidential candidate, is thought to be substantially trailing in the race, he might gamble on a high risk/high yield selection. Otherwise, one might play it safe and consider the Nixon imperative that the vice-presidential candidate can only hurt the ticket.

There are many different ways to balance the ticket; and it is nearly impossible to balance it in all areas. Of the 16 major party tickets from 1952-1980, 15 offered regional balance, 7 legislative-executive balance, 6 ideological balance, and 5 religious balance (Dudley and Rapoport, 1989, 537). Of the modern candidates before 1980, only McGovern and Ford seemed to consider prospects from their own region (Goldstein 1980, 71). There was not a significant balance within the characteristics of ideology and

religion, but there was a mild connection in the area of type of experience, albeit in an ironic way. Outsiders chose insiders 75 percent of the time; but insiders also choose insiders at an even higher 93-percent clip (Sigelman and Wahlbeck 861). From the Senate, the "incubator" for vice presidents and would-be presidents, came two-thirds of vice-presidential nominees from 1944-1972 (Peabody, Ornstein, and Rohde 1976, 239); and the trend has continued to present. Such is the propensity to choose a Washington insider that in the modern era, that only two vice presidents—Agnew and Rockefeller—held a sub-national position just prior to taking office as vice president (Baumgartner 2006, 50). A study of the years 1940-1992 found that balancing the ticket was done primarily on size of state, rival to nomination, and age (Albert 2005, 874-75).

Role of the Media

The media play an influential role in vetting the potential vice-presidential candidates before and after the selection is announced and nominated. Stanley Kelley said, "A political campaign is first of all, a campaign to win support in the press" (1969, 60). The reports of the media are important in two areas. First, such reports can influence a campaign's thinking, and therefore, the particular individual selected. Second, the media can have a strong influence on the way the electorate views the choice, both before and after the nomination.

The press plays several indirect roles in the overall selection of vice-presidential candidates. Baumgartner observed that the elites and the media must accept the vice-presidential selection; Ferraro and Quayle were not accepted by these forces and were viewed as a liability to their respective tickets. The media are influential in the vetting

process in terms of background checks (2006, 50-63). If the media are made aware, either through leaks or on-the-record communications of the names of those being considered and the criteria being used, they can actually play a functional role for the campaign in terms of the legwork for background checks. It is also sound practice to keep the press informed as a mechanism for gaining favorable coverage. Carter's vice-presidential search was conducted in this open manner and is now looked at as the model for the selection process (2006, 62). However, Goldstein pointed out that the Carter model would not have been possible before the new party primary rules were put into effect when the actual decision—not just the announcement—was made at, or just leading up to, the convention (1982, 65).

The changes in the type and amount of media coverage of the president and the presidential elections might have a constructive outcome. According to Michael Nelson, the "interplay of public expectations and presidential responses" has led to better vice-presidential selections (1988, 96).

As mentioned in the introduction, the media in the television age have the capacity to make a candidate's flaws appear problematic to his or her election. Media exposure can have the same effect after the election. Wattenberg (2004) suggested that network news strongly contributed to the downfall of the Johnson, Nixon, and Carter presidencies "due to the way they drew attention to these presidents' shortcomings."

Wattenberg highlighted several factors that have occurred since the Vietnam-Watergate era that contributed to the change in the media, and consequently, campaign communications. These factors include: the shift from broadcasting to narrowcasting, the decline of newspapers and network news as predominant sources of public information,

and the introduction of cable, the VCR, and the remote control. As a result, Wattenberg theorized that candidates and office holders today have a more difficult time getting their message out, than several decades ago. Moreover, the new generation of voters is less likely to get their political information from traditional sources: nearly as many citizens under the age of 30 get their information from comedy shows as from the network news. Younger people in the current generation in general are less likely to follow the news; in spite of their seemingly ubiquitous use of the web, just 20 percent responded that they get information about the campaign from the Internet (2004). Also, press coverage of the vice-presidential candidate decreases as the campaign moves into the latter months (Goldstein 1982, 123-24).

"Pack journalism" is another concern to social scientists researching the relationship between the press and politics. Timothy Crouse (1973) described pack journalism this way: "A group of reporters were assigned to follow a single candidate for weeks or months at a time, like a pack of hounds sicked on a fox. Trapped on the same plane, they ate, drank, gambled, and compared notes with the same bunch of colleagues week after week" (1973, 7). As a result, there is little variation among news outlets and independent thought on the part of individual journalists. According to Crouse, reporters answer to editors who want it both ways. They want the inside scoop, but they don't want anything on page one that might be different from what the other papers are reporting. With controversial reports, these editors may even accuse their own reporters of fabrication (1973, 9-13). The mindset of the paper editors affects the reporting, as writers will align their stories with the notoriously non-controversial wire services to prevent "call-backs" from editors (1973, 22).

Another reason for flawed reporting from individual reporters might be for selfish motive. This may actually at times cause coverage to be falsely positive. Crouse reported that many in the media traveling with a candidate might hold back damaging stories about the candidate they are covering in order to be able to cover a potential winner or frontrunner. As a result, their stories will get better placement in the paper, the campaign stays more exciting to cover, and the possibility will continue that the journalist can write a book about a winner of the primary or general election (1973, 53-56). Reporters were slow in 1972 to report the negative sides of McGovern's and Muskie's personalities (1973, 66).

Often a change in fortune can change the coverage for a candidate, even though nothing substantive has changed in his rhetoric, strategy, or policy proposals. The media produces negative stories if the candidate struggled in the latest primary or in the latest poll; then the tone of the coverage can swing positive very quickly with the appearance of the slightest change of fortune, as journalists don't want to be wrong in their forecast of the race. This "bandwagon" narrative can work in the opposite direction as well (Patterson 1994, 107-19). During the primary season, the winner of a state primary can count on receiving three to four times more coverage than his opponents in the following week's reporting. The amount of media coverage causes viewers to think that the one receiving the coverage is important. Sociologists Paul Lazarsfield and Robert Merton stated, "If you really matter, you will be the focus of mass attention, and if you are at the focus of mass attention, then you must really matter" (1994, 183-87).

David Broder of the *Washington Post* helped change campaign coverage by spending more of the paper's resources on collecting the attitudes of the public rather

than on following the candidates on the campaign trail (Crouse 1973, 124). The press also became more resentful of candidates traveling out of their way to get the right photo-op for television. Crouse reported the annoyance of the media: "McGovern would spend a whole morning hauling the press corps to some farm in the Midwest just so that he could appear against the background of grain silos when he made a statement about a wheat scandal" (1973, 140). This is the new reality of the television era.

The primary season in particular can be very volatile, and here is where the press influence might be strongest. One story can tip the election to another candidate since in a competitive primary there are often so many candidates of similar ideology and background from which voters can choose. The amount of candidates can add to the confusion. In 1976, in polling done in New Hampshire, Carter came out behind in one-on-one contests against most of the major rivals, but because multiple candidates split the liberal vote, the centrist Carter was able to win the primary with 28 percent of the vote. Carter benefited from favorable press coverage of his victory; and the press, engaging in horserace coverage, elevated him to front-runner status. Often it is difficult for voters during a primary season to keep up with the rapidly changing and idiosyncratic news and analysis. The press helps categorize serious candidates from also-rans, often before a single vote is cast (Patterson 1994, 35-45).

When government authorities started investigating the Watergate scandal, Woodward and Bernstein were vindicated for their professionally risky reporting. As a result, a new era of "investigative journalism" replaced "objective journalism." The media is the new era, as Thomas Patterson pointed out, is "drawn irresistibly to controversy." In 1980, the media produced seven times as many stories on Jimmy

Carter's problematic brother Billy than it produced on SALT II (1994, 137-40). One blunder by a candidate can create a feeding frenzy that causes the campaign to lose control of the message and it becomes difficult to regain the control from the media (1994, 155). According to Theodore White, "Excitement is the great unwritten imperative of television, an imperative that cannot be changed by any man or repealed by any law…television dare not be dull" (1968, 246).

A serious concern with objective journalism, or at least the way that the press exercised it in the 1960s, was that it treated both sides of an issue or event as equal. While this practice isn't negative in its own right, it can be problematic when the reporter simply repeats what both parties state, instead of investigating the rights and wrongs of the dispute (Crouse 1973, 306). Objective journalism replaced the muckraking journalism that developed during the Progressive Era. Of this transition from muckraking to objective journalism Patterson said, "If journalists still harbored the belief that politicians were scoundrels, they nevertheless stopped saying so in news reports."

Since Watergate, however, the press has become more negative. In 1980, all the major candidates—Reagan, Carter, Edward Kennedy, and John Anderson—received more negative coverage than positive. In 1992, Bush (69 percent), Clinton (63) and Ross Perot (54) also received mostly negative coverage. Researcher Michael Robinson of Georgetown University said of the press's approach to coverage, "If you don't have anything bad to say about someone, don't say anything at all" (Patterson 1994, 6-7). One rationale that the media use to justify negative reporting is that politicians don't tell the truth; as a result the negativity is simply compensating for the lack of trustworthiness. But four separate studies have shown that politicians do keep their campaign promises.

On the occasions that they don't, it is often due to a change in circumstance or the balance of powers with the legislature or the courts. At times, there are high-profile breakings of campaign promises, such as George H. W. Bush's "read my lips, no new taxes" pledge made in 1988. But these are exception (Patterson 1994, 11). In 1968, positive coverage outpaced negative coverage by a rate of two to one (1994, 20). Not only is campaign news more negative today than in the past, but it also becomes increasingly negative as the campaign moves toward general election day (1994, 210-11). Vietnam and Watergate also caused the press to be more negative. The Johnson and Nixon administrations lied, and as a result, all politicians were tainted with untrustworthiness by professional association (1994, 19).

Viewing news though a negative lens contributes to the public's sour view of candidates. When the electorate has the chance to see candidates unfiltered in a debate format, their favorable views of the candidates usually increase. In most presidential debates since 1960, both (or all) debate participants gained in public opinion after the performance (Patterson 1994, 24-25).

Structural, political, cultural, and legal changes have led to the weakening of political parties, but the media also contributed to this change as their coverage of political parties has become incessantly negative (Patterson 1994, 227). In criticizing the shift if media style after Watergate, Patterson said,

> The press was too willing to take candidates at their word, it has since become too eager to undermine their every statement. Some of the members of the press justify the change by claiming that public interest is better served by an overly critical perspective than by uncritical acceptance. This argument is disingenuous. The press's responsibility is to tell it as it is. (1994, 239-40)

Identity Politics and Diversity Balance

Ethnicity, race, and sex are other areas of consideration when balancing the ticket. Concerning Mondale's pick of Ferraro, a woman: polling indicated that there was more approval for the choice at the activist level than at the grassroots (Church and Magnuson 1984). This choice was promulgated by promises Mondale made in the primary in reaction to rival Gary Hart's guarantee to pick a minority candidate (Baumgartner 2006, 74). The electorate was largely unmoved by the choice because it appeared too calculating, and she was too inexperienced (Church and Magnuson 1984). Had Ferraro been a US senator or state governor rather than a representative this might not have been the case. Mondale appeared to go overboard to select a diversity candidate as blacks, Hispanics, and women were interviewed in what critics dubbed "the running mate 'Gong Show'" (Sigelman and Wahlbeck 1997, 855). Ferraro was likely chosen because she rallied the liberal base, was hard-hitting yet amiable, had the ability to draw Catholic and blue-collar voters, and closed the gender gap (Ferraro and Francke 1985). Others considered were minority mayors Wilson Goode of Philadelphia, Tom Bradley of Los Angeles, Henry Cisneros of San Antonio, and Diane Feinstein of San Francisco (Sigelman and Wahlbeck 1997, 858). Initial polling about a female candidate may have been falsely positive because men may not have felt free to express a critical viewpoint without appearing sexist (Church and Magnuson 1984); this may be viewed as a precursor to the *Wilder effect*—the tendency for poll respondents to feel inhibited to answer honestly for concern of appearing racist, causing skewed results in favor of the minority candidate.

With diversity being a common thread in modern politics, Baumgartner predicts that balances based on religion and ethnicity balance will be more common in the future, while balances based on region and ideology will be something of the past (2006, 153). Since the Kennedy-Johnson ticket in 1960, there have been numerous Catholic-Protestant balances, particularly among Democrats (2006, 72). In 2000, Lieberman became the first Jewish American to gain a major party vice-presidential bid. In 1968, Muskie became the first Polish American to do the same, while Agnew became the first Greek American vice president. Both of McGovern's picks—Thomas Eagleton and Shriver—in 1972 were Catholic (Goldstein 1982, 76). Dole considered John Engler and Connie Mack in 1996 in strong part because both men were Roman Catholic (Sigelman and Wahlbeck 1997, 586).

Age is another characteristic of concern when selecting a running mate. In 1988, age was a factor in Bush selecting the 41-year-old Quayle, and in reverse, Dukakis naming the 67-year-old Bentsen (Sigelman and Wahlbeck 1997, 586). A politically safe age for a vice-presidential selection is in the fifties. In the modern era the average age of the choice is 54 years (Baumgartner 2006, 52). When Bush picked Quayle, he assumed that Quayle's career left "too light an imprint to arouse enemies" according to Walter Shapiro (1988). Age and experience were selection factors in both parties in the 2008 veepstakes as some suggested that McCain was too old, or that Obama was too young.

The Timing of the Selection

In the last few decades, due to the increased time between the moment in the primary process when a presidential candidate secures enough delegates to win the nomination, and the time of the actual nomination, candidates are able to devote more

time and resources to the vice-presidential selection process, resulting in better selections (Baumgartner 2006, 63). In 1976, Carter started the selection process in mid-April. Reagan actually chose a running mate before, and without ever winning, the 1976 nomination (Adkison 1982, 330). He did this to try to pry away Ford delegates and to pressure Ford to name his veep candidate as well. The ploy didn't work as Reagan neither won the nomination, or forced Ford to name his choice early (Nelson 1988, 867).

The selection process has started even earlier in recent elections due to frontloaded primaries,[1] and the high stakes of the veep selection—resulting in the necessity to get it right. In the same election year, Ford tried to placate conservatives by dumping liberal Republican Rockefeller in favor eventually of Dole; but the move backfired on two fronts as the Reagan faction on the right was emboldened, and the general electorate Ford faced in the fall thought that the move was a sign of weakness (Sirgiovanni 1994). Even as Carter's search was very public in comparison to the vetting processes of the past, Dukakis' was even more so, to the point of being offensive. Conversely, Bush's was so private that many of his closest advisors were out of the loop; the failure to keep others, including the media, in network may have led to a sub-par choice (Nelson 1988, 862-64).

Although it hasn't happened yet, it has been suggested at various points in history that a vice president could also serve simultaneously as the head of a cabinet-level department. Sam Nunn was thought to also serve as secretary of state and vice president if he had been selected (Nelson 1988, 867). This idea wasn't new; as a presidential candidate again in 1908, Bryan said that he would have his nominee for vice president,

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[1] In 2008, the parties punished some states for moving up their primary dates.

John W. Kern, serve in the cabinet (Learned 1912, 164). It was expected that if Colin Powell became the running mate for Dole in 1996 or Bush in 2000, that he also would be secretary of state. But in a scenario as listed above, a quandary of competency could arise if the veep would fail in his additional cabinet task (Schlesinger 1974, 476).

A Signal of Change in the Selection Model

There are hints that the characteristics used to balance the ticket are evolving: moral character and personality might now be more prominent in the selection process; geography and ideology might be less so. When Clinton tapped Gore in 1992, it was looked upon as a "risky" deviation from the traditional balance principle. Not only were both men Southerners, but were baby boomers as well (Dowd 1992). Over the century preceding 1984, only five of fifty-two major tickets hadn't been balanced regionally. Four of these five tickets lost (Dudley and Rapoport 1989, 537). According to former Clinton advisor George Stephanopoulos, Gore covered for Clinton's reputation of having dodged the draft, cheated on his wife, and lied about drug use. Stephanopoulos called the Clinton choice of Gore, "the single best decision of the campaign" (82-83, 1999). But today's balance is predicated upon characteristics of the presidential nominee (Sigelman and Wahlbeck 1997, 856). In 1992, even the potential first lady needed to be balanced: Hillary Clinton was a serious liability to her husband's elect-ability because of her abrasive personality. When the good-natured Tipper Gore entered the campaign picture as a second-lady possibility, the concern was largely alleviated (Ingwerson 1992). In comparison to the past, there was very little ideological difference in the 1992

Democratic ticket mates. Ideological purity and homogeneous thinking have since become the norm; this caused a better governing relationship once the team took office.

The act of picking the running mate is the most substantive and powerful way for a presidential candidate to define himself. Today running mates might not be picked as much to balance the ticket, as to shape the campaign's image nationally (Greenberg 2004). On occasion the political climate at the point of making a selection is such that, it is almost certain who will win in November; thus it is a pick, in essence, free of electoral concern. The presumptive nominee is free to pick the person that might govern best. This was the case in 1964 when Johnson seemed poised for a landslide. In this case, he picked Humphrey because he would be a good subordinate. While Carter in 1976 was not in as comfortable a position as Johnson, he did appear to select Mondale based on the governing motive of working compatibility (Sirgiovanni 1994). Governing also seemed of greater concern to Eisenhower in 1952 as he preferred the role of statesman but needed a political hit man, which he found in Nixon. In 1968, the now statesman-like Nixon may have taken a similar track by making his veep selection of Agnew (Sirgiovanni 1988, 66). Observing this tendency, Eugene McCarthy once referred to Agnew as "Nixon's Nixon" (Schlesinger 1974, 481).

If changes have indeed occurred in the characteristics of balance, the media might have played a key role in this evolution. In other findings indirectly related to the media, Thomas M. Holbrook (1994) found that vice-presidential debates influence public opinion, but this change is often of short duration and easily vanquished by other campaign events (1994, 481). Goldstein (1982) found that in modern times a vice-

presidential candidate is more likely to make the news for negative reasons, and that a poor vice-presidential candidate can have a negative electoral effect (1982, 123-32).

Many of the ways, such as ideology and geography, that tickets have been balanced in decades past may not apply to the present and future. In fact, Baumgartner thinks that many characteristics of balancing such as ideology can be ignored. The Bush-Cheney ticket was the most unbalanced in history—it was only balanced on the grounds of experience as Cheney brought *gravitas* to the ticket. The most balanced tickets won through 1984, but lost from 1988 to present. When making selections today, "media considerations" likely factor greater on the choice (2006, 78-80). Edwards was likely selected for charisma—a characteristic more necessary in the modern media age—to help Kerry, who lacked this attribute. The broadcast video age has caused campaigns to become even more candidate-centered. The vice-presidential candidate's campaign skills are more essential now than ever. One reason given for the failure of Michael Dukakis' candidacy in 1988 was that a stronger looking running mate Lloyd Bentsen upstaged him (2006, 82-103).

Similarly, in 1988, the Bush campaign considered selecting Kemp, but feared that Kemp would overshadow Bush; but Leslie H. Southwick points out that Kemp's "gregariousness" would have been a good balance. Kemp described himself as a "bleeding heart conservative," and he went to places and courted constituencies that do not vote Republican. He was a friend of labor dating back to his football-playing days as founder of the AFLPA, who favored the ERA, and had good relations with minority groups. Kemp's status as the "first supply-side politician" would have soothed the apprehension of fiscal Republicans over Bush's economic philosophy exposed in his

"voodoo economics" comments from the primary campaign of 1980 versus their icon Reagan (1998, 784-88).

Before 1974, fundraising ability was a strong factor when evaluating veep prospects; but after passage of the Federal Campaign Act of 1974 this has become less of a factor. Agnew was able to fund raise well in the Greek-American community; Eagleton was dropped from the ticket as his psychiatric past started to affect fundraising. He was replaced with Shriver who had close ties to business (Goldstein 1982, 93-94). Also, with the rise of the primaries, the convention delegations are now more loyal to the winning presidential candidate than to the party. As a result, they are more likely to accept the nominee's choice for vice president (1982, 48).

One might expect the media—acting independently of campaign concerns and with the public interest in mind—to analyze and report on the potential vice-presidential candidates' governing prospects; but they report more on the political calculations of the choice as it relates to the horserace (*Presidential Elections* 1991, 82). Overall, the compromising nature of the vice-presidential selection process could lead to relatively moderate vice-presidential nominees (Cannon 1980).

There is little research about balancing the ticket against the other ticket, although this is an interesting concept. Goldstein said that the pick might be made to exploit a weakness or write off a strength of the other side (1982, 72). Barry Goldwater said that he picked William Miller in part because "he drives Johnson nuts" (1982, 81).

The Effects of Reform on Presidential and Vice-presidential Nominations

New campaign finance laws in 1972 allowed journalist to follow the money trail from corporations and lobbyists to candidates and office holders (Crouse 1973, 304).

Unlike today, the party nominations in 1968 and before were determined mostly by party leaders, not by rank-and-file primary voters. For example in 1952, Estes Kefauver defeated incumbent president Harry Truman in the New Hampshire primary, and won eleven of the first twelve primaries. But at the Democratic convention, the party leaders and delegates chose Stevenson as the presidential nominee. In 1968, the Democrats selected then-vice president Humphrey over Eugene McCarthy and others as the nominee, even though Humphrey didn't compete in a single primary. While this scenario was not a deviation from the past, it was particularly controversial in 1968 due to Humphrey's ties to the Johnson administration's unpopular war in Vietnam. As a result of the problems of 1968, reform came to the party by way of the McGovern-Fraser Commission (*Mandate for Reform*).

The main purpose of the McGovern-Fraser reforms was to put more power over the nomination in the hands of the primary voters. Before the reforms, the primary voters controlled one-third of the delegates; after the reforms, the voters controlled three-fourths. Similar reforms were forced on the Republicans by Democratic-controlled state legislatures. As a result, there was a shift of control from party leadership to the media, which had direct influence on voters. Now the system favors those who actively seek the nomination through the primary process. And candidates actively seek the media's support in this endeavor. Patterson noted that Carter could have never won the 1976 Democratic nomination without the McGovern-Fraser reforms (Patterson 1994, 30-32).

Harvard media scholar Marvin Kalb and former television correspondent said, "The press has moved into a commanding position as arbitrator of American presidential politics—a position for which it is not prepared, emotionally, professionally, or constitutionally" (1994, 26). Patterson argued that the interests and make-up of political parties and the press are entirely different. Parties are accountable to the public and stabilized through "tradition and constituent interests" while the media is concerned with "the new, the unusual, and the sensational" (1994, 36-37).

Those wanting change after the 1968 election failed to take into account the influence and character of the media (Patterson 1994, 33). Political parties have the incentives to construct a winning electoral coalition for governing (1994, 37). The continuity once provided for the voters by parties is no longer present; Patterson pointed out that there is now little connection within the parties from one presidential campaign to another. Not only do issues, events, and public opinion change, but there is little connection from, say, the Mondale campaign in 1984, to the Dukakis campaign in 1988, to the Clinton campaign in 1992 (1994, 44). The intention of the McGovern-Fraser reforms was to establish the democratic principle of one person, one vote; but the current system puts an excessively large amount of power in the media, and in the voters in states that have early primaries (1994, 187). While not being an advocate of the old system, Patterson found it preferable to the new system. He said,

> It balanced peer review by party leaders with the popular opinion as expressed through primary elections. Candidates had the opportunity in primaries to demonstrate their popular appeal, but the final judgment was made in the deliberative setting of a national convention….(Now) they are able to secure the nomination without ever having to undergo peer review. The extreme case was Jimmy Carter, who at the end of the campaign claimed he was beholden to "no one" (1994, 212-16).

Patterson observed the reporting style in the late 1960s: "The news was a forum for the candidates' ideas. Looking back at the election coverage of the 1960s, one is struck by the straightforward reporting of the candidates' arguments" (1994, 69).

<p style="text-align:center;">1968</p>

White described the difficulty in uncovering the news of the vice-presidential selection process in 1968: "It is difficult to trace the process of the choice of Vice-President. The decision is as intimate, and forever thereafter as private, as the decision of marriage" (1968, 310). But White did uncover names that the Nixon campaign considered: John Lindsay, Charles Percy, George Romney, John Tower, Ford, and Baker; Robert Finch of California was Nixon's favorite for the position, but Finch refused his offer. Nixon also considered a non-traditional choice of an academic, Franklin Murphy, former chancellor of UCLA. Those close to Nixon thought Reagan would also reject the offer. Nixon commissioned polling to be done on various ticket possibilities, but no one added or detracted much from the ticket, so he settled on Agnew, who was not even tested in the internal polls. White said Agnew was selected because Nixon thought he was "solid," "had authority," and was "a man he could trust, who could work with him for four years, and who understood the cities" (1968, 311-13).

The Humphrey people approached Rockefeller about the possibility of a coalition government. But the choice apparently boiled down to five possibilities: Joseph Alioto, Fred Harris, Richard Hughes, Muskie, and Shriver (White 1968, 363-65). The top three of these in Humphrey's mind were Oklahoma senator Harris, New Jersey governor Hughes and Maine senator Muskie. Southern Democrats opposition at the convention

caused the elimination of Hughes. After this, the name of Ambassador Cyrus Vance rose

as a possibility, but it came down to a choice between Harris and Muskie. Harris was

liked and respected by many, but was just 37 years old. Humphrey settled on Muskie for

issues related to style. Humphrey said, "I went for the quiet man. I know I talk too much,

and I wanted someone who makes a contrast in styles. Two Hubert Humphreys might be

one too many." (1968, 378-79).

Soon the two vice-presidential candidates went in opposite directions in terms of

effectiveness. Agnew made frequent and sometimes insensitive gaffes, while Muskie,

with his calm New England style, gained the trust of the electorate. He became an asset to

Humphrey's cause, while Agnew became a liability to Nixon's (White 1968, 460).

Agnew was kept out of the spotlight late in the campaign. But after the Republicans won,

Nixon reaffirmed his choice stating that Agnew had many strong qualities. Someone

within the campaign joked, "Well, we sure concealed that from the American people

during the campaign" (490**).**

2000

Both presidential candidates in 2000 had weaknesses that they tried to alleviate by

their selection of a running mate. Gore had some problems with the liberal wing of the

party that he largely ignored with his selection of Lieberman, a centrist senator from

Connecticut. Gore may have viewed his own connection to the scandals of the Clinton

administration as a more immediate problem. So he selected Lieberman—a major critic

of Bill Clinton's behavior in office—in part to escape such criticism. Clinton scandal was

not a major issue in the Democratic primary, but it would likely become one with the

broader electorate, including independents and moderate Republicans in the general election. The selection of a centrist veep and a record of being more pro-business than the left-wing voters would have liked, exposed Gore to a third-party challenge from the far left with the Green Party's Ralph Nader.

Many considered Bush's main weakness to be a lack of experience. This is not entirely accurate. Being governor of the second largest state would normally be a good proving ground for the White House. But the problems for Bush laid in his background and personality. Some questioned if he hadn't been the privileged son of a president, would he have become governor of Texas and a serious presidential contender? Bush also had an image of lacking a seriousness of purpose. All governors without national experience suffer from the charge of not having any foreign policy experience, just as senators suffer from the charge that they have no executive experience. But because of his privileged background and cavalier, frat-boy mentality, the charges of lack of foreign policy experience seemed more profound. To address the problem, Bush selected his father's defense secretary Dick Cheney as his running mate. Attitudinally, Cheney was the anti-Bush—stoic and serious. His performance during the 1991 Persian Gulf War was widely regarded as exemplary.

Gaps in the Research

There is a disconnect in the way researchers predominantly view the balance-the-ticket strategy—that it doesn't help the person at the top of the ticket; and the way campaigns and the media view the strategy—that it is essential to winning the election. An aim of this study is not to determine if the strategy is effective in winning elections,

but to ascertain how the strategy is viewed and implemented by campaigns via the reports of the news media.

The manner in which the presidential candidates choose their running mates has continued to change over the last four decades. Many motives and strategies have remained, but the criteria used by campaigns to make this choice have been transformed. The characteristics such as ideology and region are now deemphasized in favor of characteristics such a compatibility, character, and personality.

The review of the literature shows that vice-presidential candidates can, but rarely, make a difference in presidential elections. It also shows that the strategy of balancing the ticket is still used, even though the way that it is used has evolved over the last two centuries. Beyond passing observation, there is little substantive research to show how the strategy has changed during the modern era, and as a result of a new video age.

Researchers have yet to precisely chronicle how campaigns have changed their strategies in selecting a running mate. Scholars have alluded to changes, but no quantitative evidence has been produced to date. Admittedly, the evidence on this topic is difficult to obtain from campaign inner circles, even years after the election in question.

One way to circumvent the problem of limited access to insider information from campaign organizations is to consult press reports. This method will uncover how journalists observe the vice-presidential selection strategy and how the media and the balancing-the-ticket strategy have changed over time. The central question in this thesis is this: how is the implementation of the vice-presidential selection strategy changing according to the perceptions, and based on the influence, of the media? Ultimately, the

answer to this question will offer insight to future campaigns to guide them in the

significant decision of picking the person a heartbeat away from the presidency.

Chapter 3; Methods and Limitations

Methods

The purpose of this study is to uncover changes in the vice-presidential selection thinking by viewing changes in the campaign reporting of the news media in 1968 and in 2000. This thesis project analyzes press campaign coverage in two ways. In Chapter 4 is a qualitative study that takes quotes about parallel themes from the 1968 and 2000 campaign coverage and juxtaposes them for interpretive analysis to reveal if changes have occurred in the way the media elites view the selection of the vice-presidential running mate. Chapter 5 is a quantitative analysis that will reveal if the criteria, as viewed by the media, to select a running mate changed between 1968 and 2000. While some researchers and journalists hint that a change may have occurred in the characteristics of balancing the ticket in the last forty years, no in-depth analysis and research is evident. Getting the data is difficult; according to Goldstein, one of the leading vice-presidential scholars, there is a lack of official information on the topic of running-mate selection (1982, 322). Sigelman and Wahlbeck reveal one of the limitations with researching this subject: most of the pertinent information is "private and…subject to differing accounts" (1997, 863). Goldstein described the process of getting information about present and past selections by using the analogy of an iceberg: "The part exposed to the public constitutes a small fraction of the entity" (1982, 58).

This thesis will compare the media coverage of presidential elections in 1968 and 2000 in the realm of selecting a vice-presidential running mate with the premise that the media act as a reflection and a spring of ideas inside the campaigns; the purpose is to

observe if the general views and purposes of balancing the ticket have changed between 1968 and 2000 with the theoretical expectation that transformation has occurred. If they have, the changes will have led, and will continue to lead to a change in the public's view of the position of vice president. As a result, this affects, and will continue to affect, the role and the particular choice of vice president.

By analyzing the news stories and opinion-editorial pieces in lieu of campaign communiqués, this project will evaluate the change in thought and strategy, as reflected by media portrayals, relating to balancing the ticket. The elections of 1968 and 2000 were chosen for observation because they represent the "before" and "after" the Vietnam-Watergate era. At this point it must be acknowledged that changes that may have occurred from 1968 to 2000 cannot solely be attributed to Vietnam and Watergate. These events changed practically everything in politics and in the national consciousness. There are also factors seemingly unrelated to Vietnam and Watergate, such as educational, technological, and cultural factors that may also contribute to change. The elections of 1968 and 2000 also involved two non-incumbents Humphrey and Nixon, and Gore and Bush; this means that both major-party candidates were picking their running mates in the same election season. A ProQuest search of the news from 1968 and a LexisNexis search of the news from 2000 were executed; and data were collected and similar quotes from each year were placed side-by-side and analyzed for changes in the balance-the-ticket strategy. The same articles were used for the quantitative study in Chapter 5 to determine which characteristics were emphasized by the press in reporting on the vice-presidential selection process.

Newspapers used in this study were the *New York Times, Los Angeles Times*, and *Chicago Tribune*. This collection of newspapers was selected because they represent various regions of the country, and have a sound reputation for covering national politics. These newspapers were also among the leading newspapers in circulation in 2000 that were also being publishing in 1968. This selection of papers may also provide a variety of ideological viewpoints; however, this issue is not necessarily one that will provide different coverage based on a conservative or liberal persuasion.

The scope of the data collection was as follows: the study includes all pertinent articles and editorials about the choice of major-party vice-presidential running mates from the abovementioned news sources. The time frame is limited to March 1 through December 31 of 1968 and 2000. This time period is broad enough to cover the news before any candidate had secured the party nomination, as well as post-general election analysis. All articles were reviewed that contain one or more of the following key terms or key phrases: *balance the ticket, balancing the ticket, running mate, veep, veepstakes, and vice-presidential selection*.

The main questions that this thesis attempts to explore are this: what categories (i.e., age/health, character, compatibility, ethnicity, experience-length, experience-type, ideology, military, personality, race, region/section, religion, sex/gender, state, and voting block/faction/issue expertise) are mentioned most when offering advice and analysis in each election year? And how have the numbers changed in each of these categories between the two elections? This project hypothesizes that a change has occurred in standards used to select running mates. While the notion of balancing the ticket still exists, the assessment, criteria, and components have changed. We are moving away from

the ideological and regional balances of the past, and moving to new balances—race, sex, expertise, character, personality, age, and compatibility.

The reason for using press reports rather than information from inside the campaign is twofold. First, information from the press is more accessible, candid, objective, and extensive. Second, there are probably few inside-the-campaign ideas that won't be thought of by the hoards of media analysts, some of whom were former campaign officials. Moreover, campaign officials for trial-balloon intentions often leak information to the media in order to gain the collective reaction of the chattering class and further, the electorate. In essence, some of the information the press is reporting might be undisclosed information from a candidate's campaign. The media provide the service of facilitating an indirect discourse between the people and the campaign.

Information that will be excluded from the study are the vice-presidential selection news about third party candidates (i.e., Wallace in 1968 and Buchanan and Nader in 2000) and background and general biographical information about the candidates: in order to have registered as a "data hit" the information must relate to the decision of selecting a running mate.

Following are the fifteen characteristics of balance—accompanied by a definition/criteria and example for inclusion in the data collection—that will be measured in the quantitative study in Chapter 5. (All of the quotes in the following section are taken from the 2000 campaign coverage.)

Fifteen Characteristics of Balance

1. AGE/HEALTH—Key words and phrases include age, generation, health, medical information/history. An example of this characteristic is: "(Dick Cheney has)

sterling credentials and an impressive resume, but a bad heart makes the health questions an issue" (Barabak 2000).

2. CHARACTER—Key words and phrases include character, morality, scandal, background check, business connections, financial records, life story, or biography. Example: "Gore aides said Mr. Lieberman brought a sense of moral rectitude to the ticket…" (Seelye 2000).

3. COMPATIBILITY—Key words and phrases include loyalty, issue similarity, won't upstage, reinforce image, good friends, compatible, or work well together. Example: "'I'm going to pick the person who I believe can become president on a moment's notice if necessary, who also has a good working relationship with me, or the prospect of one. And who shares my values, someone who is willing to fight for people and not the powerful,' Gore said" (Finnegan 2000)

4. ETHNICITY—Key words and phrases include or relate to diversity pick, or any ethnicity group. Example: "If Gore decides to make a splash by naming a trailblazer…he could choose Energy Secretary Bill Richardson, a Hispanic" (Bendavid 2000).

5. EXPERIENCE (LENGHTH)—Key words and phrases related to time, maturity, gravitas, seasoned, seniority, or statesman. Example: "Though only five years apart in age, the youthful Bush and the experienced Cheney offered up a Republican presidential ticket that conveyed a sense of the future and a bridge to the past, of energy reigned in by stability" (Tacket 2000).

6. EXPERIENCE (TYPE)—Key words or phrases related to legislative or executive experience, insider, or outsider. Example: "Cheney would also give Bush a

strong grounding in the operations of the White House from his tenure as chief of staff to President Gerald Ford" (Pearson 2000).

7. IDEOLOGY—Key words or phrases relating to ideology, political philosophy, moderates, centrists, liberal, conservative, the base, big tent, party unity, or broad appeal. Example: "With the conservative vote locked up, young Bush is supposed to reach out to moderate swing voters. Can Cheney do that?" (Schneider 2000).

8. MILITARY—Key words and phrases include military service, veteran, combat, decorated, or war hero. Example: "(Kerry's) war experiences—along with Gore's own service in Vietnam as an Army journalist—would highlight the lack of active military experience among the GOP candidates. Bush was in the Texas National Guard; Cheney never served"[2] (Chen 2000).

9. PERSONALITY—Key words and phrases relating to charisma, glamour, congenial, attractive, or any personality trait. Example: "'It's part and parcel of an overall strategy to convey a personal side of Gore,' said John Geer, an expert on presidential politics at Vanderbilt University. 'Lieberman helps because he's charming and charismatic, and so it is credible for someone like that to say that Gore is likeable.'" (Gold 2000).

10. RACE—Key words and phrases related to race, black, African American, or any other racial group. Example: "Excuse me, but don't the movers and shakers of the Democratic Party know any non-Caucasians? Is there not a single distinguished individual with a complexion darker that Dick Gephardt's who could be deemed worthy

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[2] This quote is also an example of how a campaign might make a selection to balance the *other* ticket, in other words, to exploit a weakness or react to a strength in the opponents.

of a little public speculation? Was there no way for the short list to be slightly longer?"
(Downey 2000).

11. REGION/SECTION—Key words or phrases related to geography, region, sectional, South, Deep South, Plains States, Midwest, Northeast, New England, Rocky Mountain States, West, East, Southwest, North, Rust Belt, or Mid-Atlantic States. Example: "Gephardt, 59, could help a ticket with his key support…from the Midwest" (Bendavid and Davey 2000).

12. RELIGION—Key words and phrases related to religion, faith, beliefs, Catholic, Protestant, Christian, Religious Right, Jewish, or Mormon. Example: "Lieberman did not shy away from his role as the first Jew on a major ticket….(He said), 'Choosing me as his running mate says the same thing about the courage and character and fairness of Al Gore. You know, there are some people out there who might actually call Al's selection an act of chutzpah'" (Bendavid 2000).

13. SEX—Key words and phrases relating to sex, gender, or women. Example: "(Gore) may also need extra time to determine whether he wants to counter the Republican choice in terms of gender…"[3] (Dao 2000).

14. STATE—Key words and phrases relating to any specific state, or electoral votes. Example: "Bush says that along with philosophical considerations, there are (other factors), such as a candidate who can bring along a state with a significant number of electoral votes" (Pearson 2000).

15. VOTING BLOCK/FACTION/ISSUE EXERTISE—key words and phrases relate to voting blocks, factions, specific issue expertise, and policy entrepreneur.

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[3] This quote is yet another example of how a campaign might make a selection to balance the *other* ticket, in other words, to exploit a weakness or react to a strength in the opponents.

Example: "Mr. Gephardt has a deep command of the issues and is popular with many constituencies like labor, where Mr. Gore still has to do some fence mending" (Berke 2000).

A general discussion about the topics: some of the categories could be described as "new" or "old." Some of the old categories are based on how tickets were balanced in the past. These categories might include ideology, region/section, and state. Other categories might be described as new because these characteristics are much more prevalent in American politics today than in the past; these categories might include character, ethnicity, personality, race, religion, and sex. The other remaining categories are a bit more difficult to consider new or old. "Old" doesn't mean that it isn't used today; it means it is less emphasized in the present. Likewise, "new" doesn't mean it wasn't considered in the past, just that it is more emphasized at present.

Limitations

While the names on the presumptive presidential nominee's short list for the veep position might be leaked to the press, it is rather difficult to get the real scoop of what precisely went on behind the scenes—why one prospect was selected and another rejected. In the name of decency, not to mention good politics, it would be imprudent for presidential candidates to make public the details of why prospects were rejected. Consequently, those outside the campaign are left to speculate on the behind-the-scene happenings of the selection process. And if the campaign staff makes public the reasoning behind their choice, the released info is likely to focus on the governing side, not the electoral, as the candidate or the campaign wants the public to think that the

decision was made purely with a governing motive, rather than reveal something that would come across as politically calculating.

It also must be taken into consideration that this important decision can be a holistic one that transcends the campaigning-governing divide and other political phenomena. Rather than a calculated, cost-benefit-analysis decision model, the vice-presidential choice might boil down to a "gut feeling" on the part of the presidential nominee that transcends the separating or overlapping of electoral and governing concerns.

While there are many constants and long-term trends in politics, it must be noted that each election is unique. The time period, current issues, society, and candidates are different every election year. Therefore, it is likely that the data comparing the 1968 and 2000 elections could be considerably different from the data found in a similar comparison of, say, the elections of 1964 and 1996. The eight candidates involved in the 1968 and 2000 elections—Nixon, Agnew, Humphrey, Muskie, Bush, Cheney, Gore and Lieberman—each have their own strengths, weaknesses, experiences, and contributions to public service. Since these were the newsmakers of these election cycles, it is expected that the findings in some categories could be skewed upward because of an individual's presence on the ticket. For example, age and health might be reported more heavily since Cheney, with his health issues, was the choice of Bush; religion might be discussed more regularly in the media that same year due to Lieberman, the first Jew to be on a major-party ticket, being the choice of Gore. Specific issues of the day will also be the context of news reporting. In 1968 for instance, law and order in the streets and military affairs

due to Vietnam were key issues; as a result both the reporting about the vice-presidential

selection and the selection itself could have been related to these events.

Chapter 4; 1968 and 2000: A Qualitative Study: Side-by-Side Quotes

The purpose of this chapter is to offer analysis of the similarities and differences in the reporting of the vice-presidential selection process in the 1968 and 2000 elections. The following is a side-by side comparison of selected quotes from the 1968 and 2000 elections taken from the *Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times,* and *New York Times.* There are some noticeable differences in the coverage from the two election years.

The first noticeable difference is in the amount of coverage. The total amount of articles found and reviewed for 1968 was 76, compared to 190 articles found in 2000. This difference might be explained by the growing importance of the vice presidency. It also could be the result of the desire of the public to gain more insight into politics and the desire of the free-market media to produce such news.

Second, not only is there more news on the subject of vice-presidential selection in 2000, but the interpretation and analysis of this topic in the news is much greater in the present than in 1968. Many of the articles from 1968 simply reported the facts; there was very little speculation or analysis. In comparison, in the 2000 reporting, there was much speculation and analyzing even months before the selection. Also in 2000, there were more specific names of veep possibilities mentioned as a result of campaign leaks or media conjecture.

As late as the 1960s, the media reporting was "superficial, formulaic, and dull," Timothy Crouse explained. "Newspapers approached campaign coverage as a civic duty, like reporting sermons and testimonials to retiring fire chiefs" (1973, 31). However, not

all scholars think that the changes since the 1960s are wholly constructive (Patterson 1994, 61).

Theodore White is credited with causing some of the change in the way that the media covers campaigns. His books in the 1960s included many inside stories about the decade's presidential campaigns. As a result, by the 1970s, newspaper editors pressed their reporters to cover the campaigns in such a way that readers can gain this type of information in their daily newspapers rather than to have to wait for White's book to be published after the election (Crouse 1973, 34). Having many reporters from different media outlets competing to get the behind-the-scene story has caused great strain on the candidates and their campaigns. By the 1970s White confessed, "It's appalling what we have done to these guys. McGovern was like a fish in a bowl." The public's desire for knowledge and the candidate's request for privacy are often at odds (1973, 35). White's work also caused the media to start covering the campaign two years in advance, leading to the press supplanting political parties as the main force in screening candidates in the pre-primary phase of the election cycle (1973, 36-37). By the early 1970s, the usually unadventurous wire services were allowing some of their top writers to engage in news analysis (1973, 309).

By the late 1970s, just simply covering candidates was no longer the norm (Crouse 1973, 304). In this new era of coverage, according to Patterson, policy issues "lack the novelty that journalists seek" (1994, 61). Patterson defined two categories of coverage: *game schema* and *governing schema*. Game schema involves strategy, politics, and the horserace; or as Alexis de Tocqueville described: "The spectacle and sport of politics." Governing schema involves governance and policy. In the history of political

coverage, there have been some of both categories; but in the past few decades, Patterson thinks that the media focus too much on game schema (1994, 66-69). In 1968, game schema made up just over 50 percent of the news coverage; in 1992, it made up over 80 percent of the coverage. Looking at TV coverage in 1968, the average sound bite was 42 seconds; while by 1992 it was less than 10 seconds. In 1988 and 1992, for every minute a candidate spoke on newscasts, the journalist covering him spoke six minutes (1994, 74-75). Patterson said of the new media with its audacity to speak for the candidates, "They were getting accustomed not only to asking the questions, but to answering them as well" (1994, 79). By the early 1990s, more space was granted to polling data than to campaign speeches. During a three-week period in 1988, polling data appeared in 53 percent of the campaign stories in the *Washington Post* (1994, 81). Not that polling is wholly bad, but Patterson pointed out, "A poll story is completely manufactured. It is pseudo-news created by the news media to report on the game" (1994, 83).

Coverage is also more interpretive today than it was in 1968. In comparing descriptive stories—those that report on the "what"—to interpretive stories—those that report on the "why"—one-fourth of the stories in the 1968 were interpretive. In 1992, interpretive stories made up four-fifth of the news (Patterson 1994, 82).

The details of balancing the ticket were much more prevalent in the 2000 articles than in the 1968 articles. But there are many similarities in the reporting. What follows are groupings of similar quotes from the two election years.

Comparing and Contrasting the Press Coverage in 1968 and 2000

The following section compares and contrasts the vice-presidential selection thinking in 1968 and 2000 by using the media's own words. Quotes of similar topics were chosen to give the reader a side-by-side view of coverage from these two election years. In some of the below quote groupings, the press clippings provide a noticeable difference in strategic perspective. Other groupings provide relatively unchanged viewpoints. This section provides a microcosm of political thinking regarding balancing the ticket: many of the characteristics of balance that were in effect in 1968, still existed in 2000; however, as we will see in the quantitative study in Chapter 5, some characteristics have increased in importance and others have decreased.

Quotes in this chapter were selected while reading the 266 articles for the quantitative study in Chapter 5. The 1968 articles served as the basis for the pairing of quotes since there were fewer articles and less analysis published in 1968 than in 2000. Quotes from 1968 were highlighted and set aside if they were closely related to one of the fifteen characteristics of balance, or perceived to be of interest to the reader. Articles from 1968 were then paired with a similar quote from the more ubiquitous coverage from 2000.

On Ideological Balance

The first quote below was taken from an August 1968 article in the *Los Angeles Times*. The second quote was taken from a 2000 commentary written by former vice president Dan Quayle also appearing in the *Los Angeles Times* in June 2000. This pairing

of quotes was chosen because these reveal the perspective of two vice presidents after both had left the office on the topic of ideological balance.

> Nixon writes, "I believe we can no longer afford to choose our Vice Presidents simply to balance the ticket ideologically or geographically." He goes on to oppose the selection of a Rockefeller/Goldwater or Goldwater/Rockefeller combination in 1964 because their differences would make it difficult for them "to build a successful administration." (Hess 1968)

> Ideological balance or "reaching out"—may be the most overrated motive for putting together a ticket. Loyalty and the committed pursuit of a common agenda are much more to be prized. (Quayle 2000)

Both Nixon's 1968 viewpoint and Quayle's 2000 viewpoint show that both men were unconvinced of the merits of an ideological balance. While consideration of an ideological balance might have been more common in 1968, it wasn't then universally accepted that this type of balance should be a priority. In 1968, some reporters and party officials still considered ideological balance important; but even by this time, it was not as important as it was in the nineteenth century and early-twentieth century. By 2000, Quayle revealed that ideological balance is not important, and even counter-productive.

More on Ideological Balance

The first quote below was taken from an October 1968 article in the *Los Angeles Times*; the second was taken from an August 2000 piece appearing in the *Chicago Tribune*. The quotes were selected to show the subtle changes and challenges with balancing the ticket ideologically. In the first quote, Max Learner revealed that ideological balance was not as important even in 1968, than it was previously. The second quote is of a Bush campaign reference to Gore's selection of Lieberman.

> In the past a vice presidential candidate was assessed for what he could do in "balancing the ticket" sectionally or between the liberal-conservative wings of the party. Today, the assessment must be how well he can run the country and take over the management crises in the event of the death of the chief. (Lerner 1968)

> "We don't expect the vice presidential nominee to be a clone," (Bush Spokesman Ari) Fleisher said. "It just makes you wonder if Al Gore believes in the things he attacks. It just undermines Al Gore's credibility." (Swanson 2000)

Many observers think that ideological balance is still used, but is less emphasized than in the past. Even in 1968, it was viewed as a balance that was more common in the past. The use of the word "clone" by Fleisher is interesting: one might think that if the president were to die, that he would actually want someone just like himself to take over.

On Glamour and Gravitas

The first quote is from an August 1968 editorial from the *Washington Post* (also appearing in the *Los Angeles Times*). The second is from a news analysis in the *Los Angeles Times* in July 2000. This pair of quotes was selected to reveal how intangibles can affect thinking about the vice-presidential choice.

> But as a vice presidential choice, Agnew lacks the glamour, the reputation, the experience, and the demonstrable qualifications for national leadership the delegates were hoping to find in Nixon's running mate. (Broder 1968)

> The political benefits Cheney offers are more intangible: a sense of gravitas that could dispel questions about whether Bush is ready to be president, particularly in foreign policy, and a link to a less confrontational era in Washington that dovetails with the Texas governor's promise to set a more civil tone in the capital. (Brownstein 2000)

Here we see the use of the word "glamour" in 1968 and "gravitas" in 2000. In a way, the words are used in a similar context, even though their meanings are different. In 1968 as in 2000, qualifications and experience mattered, particularly in the area of

foreign policy. It was vital in 2000, because Bush, a governor, lacked foreign policy

experience specifically, and had his seriousness questioned in general.

Making Others Feel Included in the Decision

The first quote was taken from an August 1968 article in the *New York Times*. The

second quote was taken from a March 2000 article also appearing in the *New York Times*.

The quotes were chosen to show the challenges presidential candidates face in

maintaining a winning coalition when selecting a running mate.

> James G. Fulton of Pittsburgh, co-chairman of Pennsylvanians for Nixon said, "Obviously the consultation was with the Deep South….The selection ignores the youth movement. Though he (Agnew) is not antagonistic, he can hardly be considered sympathetic to the poor people's movement. He is not experienced. He has no definite philosophy on civil rights, housing or such." (Herberess 1968)

> In one of the (Republican) debates, Mr. Bauer even challenged Mr. Bush to assure Republican voters that he would not choose Mrs. (Christine Todd) Whitman as a running mate. Bush dodged the question. (Kocieniewski 2000)

One of the reasons that names get leaked to the press today is to make all possible

factions feel included. Of course only one can be chosen, but the party faithful and

potential general election voters might find more comfort in knowing that one of his or

her types was at least considered. This isn't the only reason names are leaked. Hearing

how the media and the public react to various veep possibilities is helpful to the

campaign officials in the vetting process. In the first quote, it is evident that some of the

party faithful in 1968 were not enthused about the pick of Agnew; and furthermore, they

were not feeling consulted in the matter. Also, we can see sectional distrust in 1968 that

was less evident in 2000. Coverage in 2000 focuses more on national groups—in this

case, women. In the second quote, Bush failed to rule out picking a pro-choice moderate, who also is a woman.

On the Concerns About Third Parties

The first quote appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* in November 1968; the second appeared in August 2000 in the *New York Times*. These quotes were selected to reveal the challenge of keeping the base of the party secure while simultaneously reaching out to independent, moderate, and non-ideological voters.

> But the choice of Agnew nonetheless signified Nixon's choice of the "southern strategy," which was advocated from the first to last by his tough and able campaign manager John Mitchell. Furthermore, that choice paid off in the form of around 75 southern and border state electoral votes, many of which Nixon might otherwise have lost to George C. Wallace. (Alsop 1968)

> But that could also unsettle some faithful Democrats who cringe at Mr. Lieberman's breaks with the Democratic Party—and Mr. Gore—on issues including school vouchers and capital gains tax. Some of these voters could even end up defecting to Ralph Nader, the Green Party nominee, Democratic strategist fear. (Berke 2000)

In both of these elections, a third party was a factor with Wallace in 1968 and Nader in 2000. One concern in making a VP selection is if the choice—in an effort to placate independent and moderate voters—is too close to the political center, the fringe of the party might defect to third parties. Did the pick of the moderate Lieberman cause enough left-wing voters in Florida to switch to Nader to swing the state and the election to Bush? But if the Lieberman selection did cause Gore to lose votes to Nader, we must also consider how many moderate Jews in Florida went to the Democratic ticket because of Lieberman who might have otherwise voted for Bush. The selection process can be a bit of a shell game. It is hard to cover all one's constituencies.

On the Importance of Compatibility

The first quote below was taken from the *Chicago Tribune* from August 1968, the

second from the *Los Angeles Times* in April 1968, the third from an Associated Press

story printed in the *Chicago Tribune* in July 2000, and the last from the *Los Angeles*

Times in October 2000. These quotes were selected because they show the four

presidential candidate's views on the value of a compatible relationship with their

running mates during the campaign and during a potential administration.

> When asked what qualities a Vice Presidential candidate would have to have, Nixon said, "There are three. First, the man must be qualified to be President. Second, he must be an effective campaigner. And thirdly, a man who can work with me." (*Chicago Tribune* 1968)

> (Humphrey) indicated the important ingredients in qualifying a vice presidential candidate are experience, capability, the ability to take over as President if necessary, and that he be "within the spectrum of the philosophy" of the presidential standard-bearer. (Greenburg 1968)

> Bush said, "I'm going to pick somebody who can be president of the United States and somebody with whom I can get along…I'm going to take a lot of factors into consideration. Obviously issues matter, a person's voting record matters, where they're from matters, their gender matters." (Associated Press 2000)

> Gore privately told Lieberman—as well as the five others he seriously considered as a running mate—that he intends to forge with his understudy "a full partnership…and have the kind of approach that Clinton and I had…and then build upon that and take it even further." ….As Gore and Clinton set out during their transition period to build their administration, the president-elect made Gore virtually a full partner. He even gave Gore a say—including veto power, which Gore wielded—in top presidential appointments. (Chen and Gold 2000)

The above four quotes reveal what the presidential candidates were looking for in

a running mate. While compatibility is a characteristic more commonly associated with

the new way of thinking about the vice presidency, one can see that it was something that

Nixon and Humphrey were also thinking about in 1968. Since the Clinton-Gore

administration, the presidency is viewed more as a co-presidency, and the power of the

vice presidency has increased with each successive administration since the death of

FDR. The four candidates, regardless of party, all viewed the selection strategy similarly.

On the Purpose of the Choice

The first quote was taken from the *New York Times* in August 1968. The second

quote was published in the *Los Angeles Times* in July 2000. The quote comparison

reveals two different appeals in picking a running mate: regional and national.

> Assuming harmony in his party and the nationwide strength that brought him within an eyelash of defeating John F. Kennedy in 1960, Nixon could have reasoned that just a little more strength in the big Northern cities would turn the trick. This would have pointed toward a liberal luminary like John Lindsay or a conspicuous dove like Senator Hatfield as a candidate for Vice President, and to a major effort to woo the votes of Negroes and other urban power blocks. (Frankel 1968)

> In both parties, political professionals now sort potential veeps into two basic categories. In one group are geographical picks meant to help carry a particular state. In the others are "message" picks meant to send a political signal across the country….Gore reinforced Bill Clinton's message of a centrist generational change and also helped nudge Tennessee into the Democratic column. (Brownstein 2000)

In this pairing of quotes, we can see a change, to some extent, the view of the

strategy of picking a running mate. In 1968, the choice is viewed to attract new voters

who might not otherwise vote the man at the top of the ticket. In 2000, the writer views

the pick as reinforcing or complementary, rather than balancing or adding to the appeal.

This is an indication that election strategies have become more nationalized; the 2000

strategy seems more appropriate for today. Presidential campaigns attempt to convey one

consistent theme, and the veep choice must fit this construct.

On Diversity Picks

Quote number one was taken from the *New York Times* in August 1968, number two from the *Los Angeles Times* in August 2000, number three from the *Chicago Tribune* in August 2000, and number four from a July 2000 *Los Angeles Times* article. This assortment of quotes was selected to disclose that diversity was also a concern of the press in 1968 as well as 2000. However, the breadth of the definition might now be broader in 2000 and at present.

> The fact that Senator Muskie is a Roman Catholic and of Polish ancestry doubtless figured into his selection. (*New York Times* 1968)

> Aides said Lieberman's faith was a key reason for Gore's decision…(Chen and Barabak 2000)

> There were signs that Lieberman's place on the ticket was energizing Jewish voters, as a cluster of men wearing yarmulke crowded the stage. One held a copy of a Newsweek magazine with Lieberman on the cover for him to sign, while others in the audience hoisted signs reading "Kosher Ticket" and "Shalom Hadassah," a greeting to Lieberman's wife. (Bendavid 2000)

> In choosing a running mate, Bush certainly could have broadened the appeal of his campaign by selecting a woman, such as Elizabeth Dole, a minority member, such as Powell, or a supporter of choice on abortion, such as Gov. George Pataki. He might have sought a running mate who promised to bring along a hefty bunch of electoral votes, perhaps Pennsylvania Gov. Thomas J. Ridge. (*Los Angeles Times* 2000)

While diversity, religious or otherwise, is more fashionable today, it was an issue of relevance in the press in 1968 as well. The latter quote throws in positions on issues (such as abortion) and state balance in a diversity discussion.

On "Dream Tickets" that were Too Good to be True

The two *New York Times* quotes below are from August 1968 and July 2000. These quotes were selected to show that speculation and dreaming were not off limits in reporting in both election years.

> Senator Edward Kennedy would have added glamour and popular enthusiasm to the Democratic ticket, but he was unavailable. (*New York Times* 1968)

> The presidential nominee's brother Jeb Bush, who is governor of Florida, said he was dreaming of a ticket with Gen. Colin Powell, who is pro-choice. Such is General Powell's popularity that his selection would silence all but the most militant pro-lifers. (*New York Times* 2000)

In both election years, there were yearnings for a "dream ticket." Here two sources dream of having vice-presidential running mates that didn't make themselves available. Often, a prospect won't be formally asked unless that presidential candidate knows the person is sure to accept the invitation to join the ticket. Regularly, media speculation falls on those not willing to accept the post.

Additional Quotes from 2000

The 1968 coverage of the vice-presidential selection process was very limited in comparison to 2000 and the successive elections. While 76 articles from 1968 fell under the category of having one or more key terms, many of these articles were not exclusively about the choice of running mate. Many of these articles were about the presidential campaign or the party conventions, but had just a small segment about the vice-presidential choice. In 2000, many articles were exclusively about the veep choice. As a result, such articles would attempt to cover all the bases and discuss many of the balance characteristics, even if such characteristics were not valued by those making the decision.

Some were written in a manner of giving advice to the selection committee. One single

article from 2000 contained 14 of the 15 balance characteristics; two others contained 11

of 15.

Many of the 1968 quotes chronicled above could have easily been stated in 2000,

and vice versa. Where the difference lies in the coverage of the two election years is in

what characteristics overall were emphasized. For example, just because

regional/geographical balance was less of a factor in 2000, doesn't mean it wasn't

discussed or is no longer important. To the degree that balancing characteristics are

reported and emphasized in a given year will be the focus of the next chapter. The

amount of coverage is quite different in the two comparative years; in 2000 there are

more articles, more space devoted to the veep choice in these article, and more analysis in

these articles. The following are quotes from the 2000 coverage; there were no

corresponding quotes from 1968 here because there is no similar or contrasting coverage

in 1968 to act as a valid comparison.

On Making Various Factions Feel Included in the Decision

The following quotes are from *New York Times* during the 2000 campaign; both

reveal that a wide range of candidates and perspectives are being considered in the vice-

presidential selection process.

> Such was the sophistication of Mr. Gore's selection stagecraft that even leaks
> were orchestrated for maximum effect. Eager to win over women, Mr. Gore
> emphasized that several women were under consideration. Last week, as interest
> was peaking over Mr. Gore's progress, his campaign let it be know that one of his
> finalists was a woman, Gov. Jeanne Sheehan of New Hampshire, even though she
> would turn down the job and even though one person involved in Mr. Gore's
> screening process said that she had not been under serious consideration for some
> time. (Barstow and Seelye 2000)

> Gov. George W. Bush of Texas sent letters to 450 Republicans yesterday seeking advice on a running mate…the governor said: "My primary concern is to select someone who is capable of serving as president of the United States. I am interested in your thoughts as to the individuals whom I should consider as well as any particular issues you believe I should take into account." (*New York Times* 2000)

This is a practice that seems commonplace in the modern selection process: to make various and sometimes competing factions think that one of their own is being considered for the post. Both parties engage in such practice, but the Democrats seem to have more factions to please, while Republicans might be more concerned with ideological balance or ideological purity. Women are one the factions Democrats claim as their own. Here the Gore campaign is making known that a woman is being considered even though she is not in fact being strongly considered.

On the Detailed Vetting Process

This *New York Times* quote from August 2000 was selected to show the details that are considered by campaigns and published by the press during the veep selection process.

> Senator Bob Graham of Florida was hurt by his habit of filling diaries with mundane aspects of his day, a practice some in the Gore campaign worried would be viewed as eccentric. (Barstow and Seelye 2000)

Critics say that modern journalism pries too deeply into the personal lives of candidates and office holders. Here might be an example of such a concern. Those in the Gore campaign might not think Senator Graham's detailed diary about what he had for breakfast is a concern to Al Gore, but they clearly think that the media and the public might find it bizarre. As a result the selection committee shied away from Graham.

Earlier research showed that a vice-presidential candidate can't automatically be counted on to deliver his or her home state, but based on the closeness of the Florida vote in 2000, one must wonder if Graham of Florida could have gotten a few hundred more votes there to swing the state and the entire election to Gore.

On the Veep Choice Outshining the Top of the Ticket

The first quote from an August 2000 *New York Times* piece is in reference to Gore's pick of Lieberman. The second quote is from the *Los Angeles Times* in June 2000. The quotes were selected because of the proposal of the novel idea that the selection can be too good.

> In could be, of course, that after being Mr. Clinton's understudy, Mr. Gore did not want someone who would outshine him. (Berke 2000)

> You can't be too eager, or too coy. You can't be too dull, or so electric you overshadow the top of the ticket. You don't want to be too visible, or too easily overlooked. (Barabak 2000)

This is an argument put out by pundits on occasion: that the veep might just be so good that he or she makes that top of the ticket look bad. Some have said that this was the case with Dukakis and Bentsen. Others have said that Bush picked Quayle because he didn't want to be outshined by a stronger running mate. This seems absurd; both parties have made overtures to Colin Powell over the last decade to run as veep on a their ticket. Powell would have upstaged any of the presidential candidates of the last 20 years, and would probably have been the difference in a close race. Making too good of a veep choice isn't why presidential candidates lose elections.

Also, in the modern era of earlier-starting campaigns and primaries, and media overexposure of the presidential campaign, it is a reality that the electorate might grow

tired of the candidates, even those emerging victorious in the primaries. As a result, it is

entirely understandable that if a campaign makes a good and exciting veep choice that

this individual might appear to upstage the presumptive nominee after the selection is

announced: the better the choice, the greater the risk of being overshadowed. There have

been many tickets in recent times where the base or swing voters were more excited

about the number two than the man atop the ticket. Just because Nixon survived Agnew

and Bush survived Quayle doesn't mean the choice never matters. Having people excited

about the veep pick is a good problem to have.

On "Matching Up" Against the Opposing Ticket

        The first quote is from the *Chicago Tribune* in July 2000; the second is from the

New York Times also in July 2000. The quotes were selected to show the analysis that

goes so far as to consider the matching up of the veep choice with the individuals on the

other ticket.

> Gore has a slight strategic advantage in this game because the Republican
> convention is two weeks before the Democratic gathering, so Gore can react to
> whatever Bush does. If Bush names a woman, for example, Gore could dampen
> the impact by doing the same. (Bendavid 2000)

> Another consideration is when it comes time for Gore to announce his choice—
> probably just before the Democratic convention in mid-August—Bush will have
> already made his pick at the Republican convention. So if Bush picks a woman,
> for example, Gore may feel compelled to do the same. The nightmare scenario in
> the vice president's camp is that Bush will pick such an attention-grabber as his
> No. 2 that Gore will be especially hard pressed to come up with someone
> dynamic. (Berke 2000)

> The strategy mentioned in the first quote—that Gore has an advantage because he

gets to pick last—is not a complete advantage. If Gore had selected a woman after Bush

would have selected one, he would have run the risk of appearing calculating and reactive

for making his choice based on what Bush decided.

More on "Matching Up" Against the Opposing Ticket

The following quotes are from the *New York Times* in July 2000 and from the

Chicago Tribune also in July 2000. This continues the discussion of the match-up theme

above.

> Advisors for (Gore) said the selection of Mr. Cheney…gave Mr. Gore a freer
> hand in picking a running mate. Democrats could hardly believe their luck.
> (Seelye 2000)

> There's also a quieter, more private celebration going on at Gore's camp in
> Nashville, where the selection of Cheney brings a level of freedom to Gore's own
> high-pressure search for a running mate. (Davey 2000)

Here it is reported that the Gore campaign was relieved by the choice of Cheney,

because the Republican didn't add much to the ticket. It would seem odd that any

presidential candidate might be so calculating as to base such an important decision off of

the choice of their opponents. But this appeared to be the case, at least in the media's

view, in 2000.

On if the Best Choice is Needed Elsewhere

The following quotes are from the *Los Angeles Times* in August 2000 and the

New York Times in July 2000. On occasion, a highly qualified veep candidate will reject

the offer for the position, or be rejected for the position because he or she might be

needed in another position.

Selecting one of the senators—Lieberman or Kerry—could hamper the Democrats' chances of winning control of the Senate, in which the Republicans hold a 54-46 edge. Connecticut and Massachusetts have Republican governors, one of who would appoint a Senate successor should the Democratic ticket win. (Chen 2000)

For all his appeal as a seasoned respected politician from the hotly contested state of Missouri, many Democrats said Mr. Gephardt was far from electrifying. And his advisers said he would rather stay where he is, poised to become speaker if the Democrats win back the House. (Berke 2000)

While it might be every national politician's ambition to become president, being in the number two position might be the best opportunity of getting to the top spot. However, some take themselves out of consideration, or the vetting committee rejects them because these individuals might be more valuable in other positions should the ticket emerge victorious and need to govern. Party control of the Senate is important to the legislative agenda of any administration.

On the Politics of Abortion

The first quote below is from the *Chicago Tribune*, the second, fourth, and fifth are from the *New York Times*, and the third is from the *Los Angeles Times*. All quotes are from the 2000 campaign. The abortion issue was nonexistent in the 1968 campaign. If fact, no single issue was discussed in reference to the vice-presidential choice more in 1968 than abortion was discussed in 2000.

A leading voice for conservatives on Friday warned Texas Gov. George W. Bush not to abandon the abortion issue or to consider selection of a running mate who supports abortion rights. (Tackett 2000)

Even if Bush did name a running mate who backs abortion rights, many social conservatives went as far as to say they would stand behind him—albeit less enthusiastically. (Berke 2000)

(If) the Texas governor chooses a running mate who supports abortion rights, he would dramatically break from the party's social conservatives and indelibly stamp himself a different, more tolerant sort of Republican. (Barabak 2000)

Mr. Bush's opponents assert that his overtures to the middle are mere symbolic gestures…. "We think this flirting with moderation is very cynical, and we hope American women will see it for what it is," said Alice Germond…of the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League. (Toner 2000)

Of criticism from abortion-rights groups that Mr. Bayh was not committed enough to abortion rights, Mr. Daley said that Mr. Bayh's record as a former governor of Indiana showed his leadership, and his position on abortion wouldn't disqualify him from consideration. (Seelye 2000)

Like no other issue, abortion was paramount in the media dialogue of the veepstakes of 2000. It is a polarizing issue that is extremely important to the base of both parties. It would be difficult for a Democratic presidential candidate to select a pro-life running mate, and perhaps even more difficult for a Republican to select a pro-choice candidate. According to a *New York Times*/CBS News poll, of voters who are pro-choice, 26 percent said it was "very important" that their presidential candidate share their view on abortion; but 70 percent of pro-life voters said it was "very important" (Toner 2000). While the Bush campaign floated several pro-choice names—Christine Todd Whitman, George Pataki and Tom Ridge—he eventually settled on pro-life Cheney. It can't be proven, but Alice Germond's suggestion above seemed accurate that this consideration by Bush of a pro-choice running mate was a ploy. In that last quote, Evan Bayh is essentially criticized for not being pro-choice enough.

On the Dubious Efforts to Read into a Candidate's Motivation

This commentary appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* in July 2000. It shows the veepstakes fashion of reading the motives of those making the vice-presidential choice.

> The conventional wisdom is that Bush's choice was about governing, not about politics. He's so confident about winning he picked someone who doesn't fit any political strategy. What a cocky guy! But doing that is itself a political strategy. (Schneider 2000)

The new, investigative, and game-scheme media not only engage in more analysis, some in its ranks attempt to read into the motivations of the candidates. Is there such a thing as a strictly governing decision, without regard to politics?

On the New Maxim in the Selection of the VP

The following pieces appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* in April 2000 and the *New York Times* in August 2000. These quotes were selected to show the incline of emphasis on a nationalized strategy.

> In this highly mobile society in which everything from television to fast food has been nationalized, where a candidate comes from is a debased currency. (Baker 2000)

> Bill Clinton dominates the race he is not in. In '92 he chose Mr. Gore as his running mate because he needed the Tennessee senator's Dudley Do-Right image. Having a Vietnam vet and a family man beside him allowed Mr. Clinton to seem less slippery. Only eight years later, Mr. Clean has found himself in need of Mr. Clean. Al Gore has come away from the White House sex scandals with a patina of grime. (Dowd 2000)

The above quotes reveal how some journalists view the changes in the vice-presidential selection process. National campaigns are now the *en vogue*, while making picks based on geography are no longer the norm. The picks of 2000 illustrate this as Cheney's Wyoming and the Mountain West were safely in the Bush column, and Lieberman's Connecticut and New England (save New Hampshire) were comfortably Democratic. Character is also a key characteristic in 2000 that was virtually non-existent in 1968.

On Privacy and Background Checks

The first quote below is taken from the *Los Angeles Times*, the second from the *New York Times*, and the third, fourth and fifth from the *Chicago Tribune*. This combination of quotes was selected to show the investigative work completed by campaigns and the press in 2000 that was a rarity in 1968.

> Thus, serious candidates will be asked to supply the Bush and Gore camps with voluminous amounts of personal information. Besides the obvious—health records, tax returns—possible running mates probably will be asked to provide legal documentation for any household worker they've ever hired, to describe every investment they've ever made, to name every charitable cause they've supported and to recount every group they've ever spoken to. (Barabak 2000)

> On Friday, for example, President (George H.W.) Bush called a cardiac surgeon in Houston who is a family friend to enlist his help in determining whether Mr. Cheney, who had suffered minor heart attacks more than a decade ago, was up to the rigors of a presidential campaign. (Bruni and Schmitt 2000)

> The questions covered family background, political policy views, past employment and personal tax information… (*Chicago Tribune* 2000)

> For that matter, what lies behind Cheney's gaining 40 pounds since last we knew him nationally? Is he unhappy? Scared about his heart troubles—or oblivious to them? And what's the difference between a weight problem and an eating disorder? (Overholser 2000)

> While Gore reduced the list of possible running mates to a handful of men, a senior Democratic source in Washington tells…that details of the divorce of one of the hopefuls, Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts got very special scrutiny from the veep vetting team. (Warren and Armour 2000)

When picking a running mate, a presidential campaign might not expect the individual to be a saint; but they don't want any surprises. They don't want the media to find out damning information about the veep candidate that they are ill-prepared to defend. This was particularly the case after the Eagleton debacle in 1972 (Barabak 2000). The Mondale campaign got into trouble with the selection of Ferraro as the result of her financial background, so modern campaign are certain to check deeply into a prospect's

finances. In the era of investigative journalism, if the campaign doesn't uncover unflattering information and inoculate the public, or at least be prepared for the media's charges, the campaign will look unprepared and foolish.

In addition to seeing the differences and similarities in the news coverage in 1968 and 2000 by viewing side-by-side quotes, this study also takes a quantitative approach in the next chapter. The two chapters are best viewed as part of the same study rather than two different studies. Both chapters seek to uncover the changes in the vice-presidential selection strategy from 1968 to 2000.

Chapter 5; Quantitative Analysis of the Characteristics of Balance

The news media of 1968 were quite different from the news media in 2000. Some of these differences—the amount of articles devoted to the selection of running mates, and the amount of coverage within these article—were easily observed in this study. Some of the other differences, however, require more careful analysis to detect.

There were substantial differences not only in the amount of coverage, but the type of coverage as well. The amount of coverage was greater in 2000 than in 1968. There were 190 articles in the three newspapers (*Chicago Tribune*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *New York Times*) about the vice-presidential selection in 2000, compared to just 76 articles in 1968. The selection of articles for this study included all articles from March 1 to December 31 in each of the two election years that included one or more of the following terms: balance the ticket, balancing the ticket, running mate, veep, veepstakes, and vice-presidential selection.

The substance of the coverage was more interpretive in the 2000 election. Many articles that were analyzed from the 1968 coverage had no analysis of the selection process. The coverage was typically factual and biographical; the coverage from 2000 was quite different. Of the items found in the articles that registered as a data hit— something fitting into one of the fifteen categories as a reason for choosing a running mate—the coverage from 2000 was far more intensive.

Of the 76 articles of 1968, there were 57 different category data hits. A category data hit is when one of the fifteen categories (see *Fifteen Characteristics of Balance* in Chapter 3) appears in an article. For instance, one article might mention ideology, race,

and character as areas that should be or were being considered when making a choice; this example would be recorded as three category data hits for this one article. Some articles contained zero category data hits. In sum, on 57 occasions one of the fifteen characteristics of balance appeared in one of the 76 articles. In the 2000 articles: of the 190 articles reviewed, there were 353 different category hits. Comparing the two years, there was an average of .75 different category hits per article in 1968, and 1.85 in 2000. Put simply, there was more analysis on running-mate selection in 2000 than in 1968. The latter grouping of numbers measures the amount of depth in the articles.

Changes in Balance Emphasis by the Press

In comparing the emphasis of the articles, in other words, how the media view the balancing-the-ticket strategy and the vice-presidential selection process, there are evident changes from 1968 to 2000. In 1968, ideological balance was the top characteristic reported. In 2000, compatibility was the number one characteristic reported. **Table 5.1** shows the entire list of rankings of characteristics of balance in 1968 and 2000, with the raw total of articles found in parentheses.

Today, clearly the media, and a large part of the electorate, see the president/vice-presidential ticket as a potential governing team. Therefore, it is important that they be viewed as being able to work well together. This could also be viewed as not a balance at all, but a complement. This is not to say that ideology was not important in 2000. In fact ideology still ranked tie for second (with voting block/faction/issue expertise) in 2000. Strategists, the media, and voters are still concerned with using the pick to "secure the base" or to "attract independent, centrists and swing voters."

Table 5.1. Rankings of characteristics of balancing the ticket from 1968 and 2000

	1968 (76 Articles)				2000 (190 Articles)		
Rank	Characteristic	No. of articles appearing	% of articles appearing	Rank	Characteristic	No. of articles appearing	% of articles appearing
1	ideology	12	15.8	1	compatibility	59	31.1
2	region/geography	11	14.5	2t	ideology	40	21.1
3	voting block/faction	9	11.8	2t	voting block/faction	40	21.1
4	experience (length)	7	9.2	4	character	34	17.9
5	personality	5	6.6	5	experience (length)	29	15.3
6t	state	3	3.9	6	experience (type)	25	13.2
6t	compatibility	3	3.9	7	age	24	12.6
8t	age	2	2.6	8t	state	21	11.1
8t	experience (type)	2	2.6	8t	religion	21	11.1
10t	character	1	1.3	10	gender/sex	18	9.5
10t	religion	1	1.3	11	personality	15	7.9
10t	ethnicity	1	1.3	12	region/geography	11	5.8
13t	military	0	0.0	13	military	10	5.3
13t	race	0	0.0	14	ethnicity	4	2.1
13t	gender/sex	0	0.0	15	race	2	1.1

Source: Data taken from author's own research from articles in the *Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times,* and *New York Times* from March 1 – December 31, 1968 and 2000.

Note: The column labeled "% of articles appearing" does not add up to 100% because some articles registered multiple characteristics of balance, while other articles registered zero characteristics of balance. What is being measured is the percentage of articles in which each of the fifteen characteristics of balance appears.

As expected, character was of greater emphasis in 2000 than in 1968. The start of this change can be attributed to the Vietnam and Watergate era. The elevation of Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward to legendary status helped lead to a rise in investigative journalisms. Simply echoing the statements of government officials is now a reporting style of the past. Modern reporting now reflects the media and public distrust that grew out of the government's handing of Vietnam. In 1968, there was also a comfortable distance between press reporting and candidates'/officials' private lives. This is no longer the case; one might wonder if Gary Hart, Bill Clinton and others would have been exposed the way they were had they been seeking office fifty years prior. Character was tied for tenth (with religion) in 1968; it ranked fourth in 2000. Vietnam, Watergate, and

Clinton impeachment are used by the press for the framing of the discussion of vice-presidential selection, particularly in relation to character.

Of the fifteen categories in this study, some were not even mentioned in 1968. The military, race, and sex were not mentioned as reasons for balancing the ticket in the 76 articles reviewed from 1968. This is not to say that something like military service was not mentioned in any article or a concern to the electorate, but it was just not mentioned as a reason for a potential or particular selection. Something else that needs to be considered at this point is that while there is a good bit of continuity across time in the dynamics of elections, each election is different. Each election has its own set of characteristics based on the performance of those in office the four previous years, the qualities and weaknesses of the candidates, the issues of the day, and the collective mood of the electorate. For example, if we were to look at the 2008 election, because the Democratic nominee is African American, this might cause the media to talk about race as a balance factor for both tickets. Also, even though the military, ethnicity and race were mentioned in the reporting from 2000, they were scantily so. These categories were the three least mentioned balancing characteristics, ranking thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth respectively.

Other balancing characteristics that were less emphasized (by rank) in 2000 are related to geography—both state and regional balance. In 1968, regional balance was ranked second and state balance was ranked sixth; in 2000 both categories were tied for eighth. There are several reasons for this. First, is the growing acceptance that a veep candidate can't simply be counted on to deliver his or her home state. Second, is the success of the Clinton-Gore ticket in 1992 that ignored regional balance by forging a

victorious ticket of candidates from neighboring states. This caused future campaigns to downplay the value of this characteristic in their decision making. A third reason is that campaigns are now largely national media efforts that require a veep candidate who can stump successfully for the ticket nationwide.

One set of data that on the surface appears to be a surprise is the characteristic of personality. One might suspect that the increase in the academic study of personality and the rise of television would cause this characteristic to be more important in 2000 than it was in 1968. But personality ranks sixth in 1968, but only eleventh in 2000. However, the ranking in this particular category might not give us a complete picture. If we look at how often personality registered as a characteristic balance in an article, we find that it is cited in 5 of the 76 articles in 1968, and in 15 of the 190 articles in 2000, or in 6.6 percent of the articles in 1968, and 7.9 percent of the articles in 2000. Personality is actually discussed more in 2000 than in 1968, but relative to the other characteristics in the same year, it is written about slightly more in 1968. In fact because of the difference in the volume of coverage in the two election years, all of the categories except region/geography are written about more in 2000 than in 1968. In fact, ideology, the top category in 1968, was actually mentioned more often in 2000. **Table 5.2** shows the percentage points difference in all fifteen categories. **Figure 5.1** charts the seven balance characteristics with the most positive change in percentage points difference from 1968 to 2000. **Figure 5.2** charts the seven balance characteristics with the least positive change in percentage points difference from 1968 to 2000. In mentions per article, ideology is discussed in 12 of the 76 articles in 1968, and in 40 of the 190 articles in 2000, or 15.8 percent of the articles in 1968 and 21.1 percent in 2000.

Table 5.2. Percentage of articles mentioning characteristics of balancing the ticket from 1968 and 2000.

Characteristic	% in 1968	% in 2000	% Points Difference (2000 – 1968)
compatibility	3.9	31.1	27.2
character	1.3	17.9	16.6
experience/type	2.6	13.2	10.6
age/health	2.6	12.6	10
religion	1.3	11.1	9.8
sex/gender	0	9.5	9.5
voting block/faction	11.8	21.1	9.3
state	3.9	11.1	7.2
experience/length	9.2	15.3	6.1
ideology	15.8	21.1	5.3
military	0	5.3	5.3
personality	6.6	7.9	1.3
race	0	1.1	1.1
ethnicity	1.3	2.1	0.8
region/geography	14.5	5.8	-8.7

Source: Data taken from author's own research from articles in the *Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times,* and *New York Times* from March 1 – December 31, 1968 and 2000.

Note: The column labeled "% of articles appearing" does not add up to 100% because some articles registered multiple characteristics of balance, while other articles registered zero characteristics of balance. What is being measured is the percentage of articles in which each of the fifteen characteristics of balance appears.
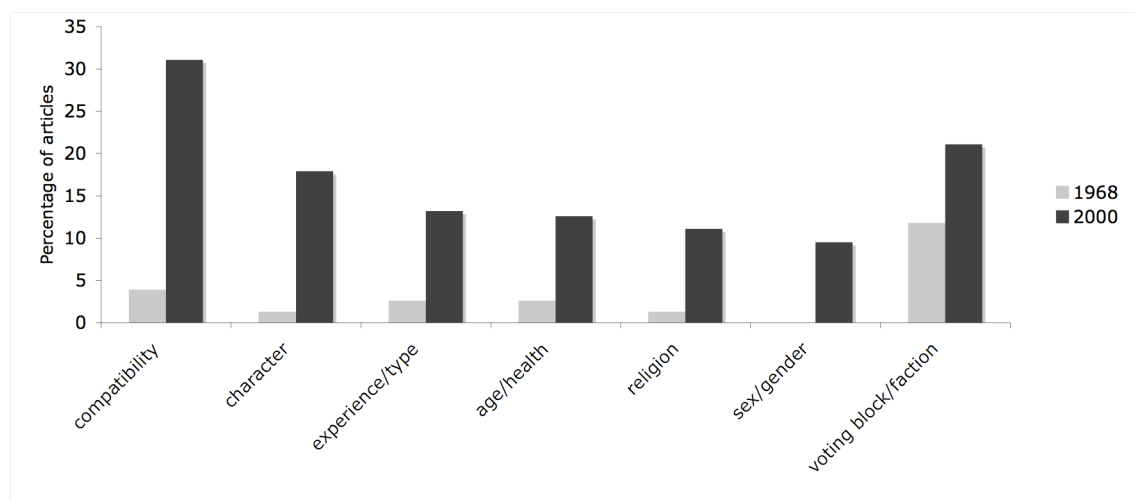

Figure 5.1. Percentage of articles mentioning characteristics of balancing the ticket from 1968 and 2000.

Source: Data taken from author's own research from articles in the *Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times,* and *New York Times* from March 1 – December 31, 1968 and 2000.

Figure 5.2. Percentage of articles mentioning characteristics of balancing the ticket from 1968 and 2000.

Source: Data taken from author's own research from articles in the *Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times,* and *New York Times* from March 1 – December 31, 1968 and 2000.
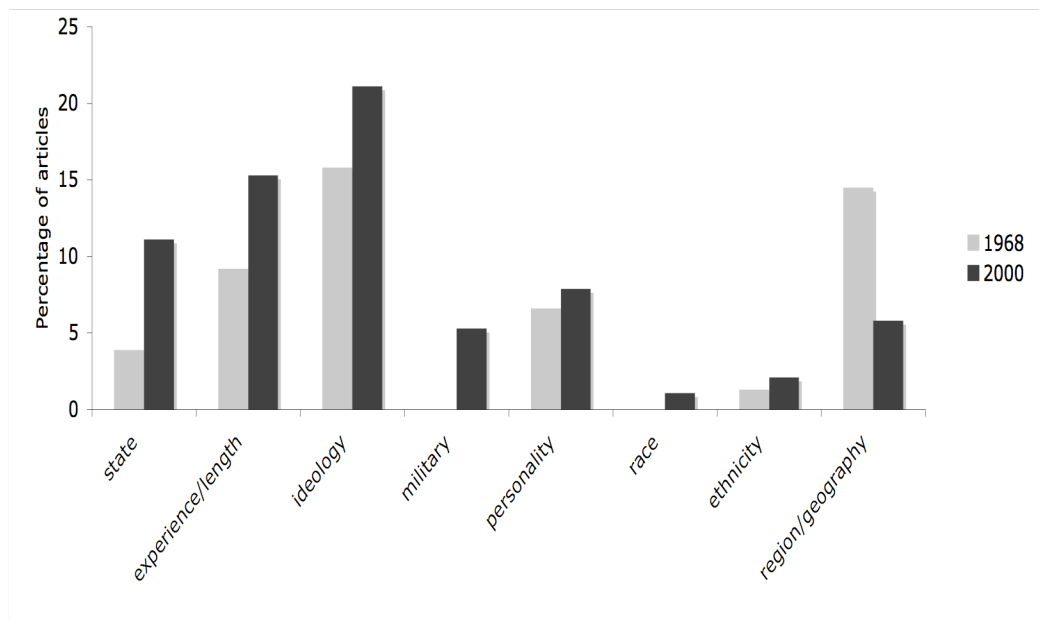
There are three characteristics of balance that are most substantial. On the positive end—an increase from 1968 to 2000—are the characteristics of character and compatibility. The percentage points difference for character is 16.6 and the difference for compatibility is 27.2. On the statistically substantial negative end—posting a decrease from 1968 to 2000—is the balance characteristic of region/geography, with a percentage points difference of -8.7.

Breakdown of News and Editorials

Another difference in the coverage is the labeling of the coverage as "news" versus "editorial." "Editorials" includes all newspaper editorials and syndicated columns, but does not include letters to the editor. Of the 76 articles from 1968, 32 were labeled as editorials; of the 190 articles from 2000, 39 articles were labeled as editorials. **Figure 5.3**

shows the amount of editorials published over the ten-month periods of the study in 1968

and 2000. **Figure 5.4** shows the amount of news articles over the same period, and

Figure 5.5 shows the combination of news and editorials. The 1968 coverage consisted

of 42.1 percent editorials, the 2000 coverage consisted of 20.5 percent editorials. One

explanation for this relatively low amount of editorials in 2000 vis-à-vis 1968 is the rise

of "news analysis" in the post-1968 media. Another explanation is that the more modern

news might contain more unlabeled editorializing. A third possibility is that news

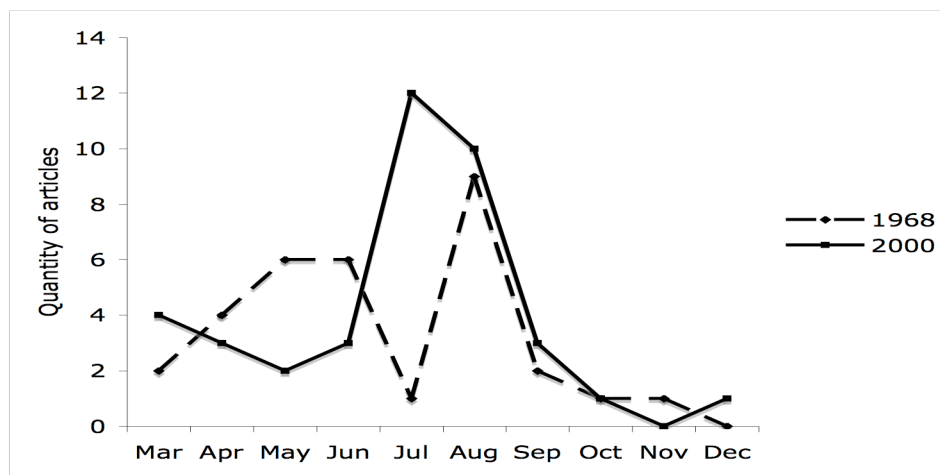coverage itself is more interpretive of political strategy today than in the past.

Figure 5.3. Editorials appearing in *Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times,* and *New York Times* during the 1968 and 2000 election cycles (March-December)

Note: The data includes all pieces containing one or more of the following terms: balance the ticket, balancing the ticket, running mate, veep, veepstakes, or vice-presidential selection.

Chapter Summary

This chapter quantitatively analyzed the media coverage of the vice-presidential

selection process. The study examined 266 articles to determine the degree of change in

the characteristics of balancing the ticket in 1968 and 2000. The most substantial findings

were in the areas of character and compatibility, which increase in coverage, and
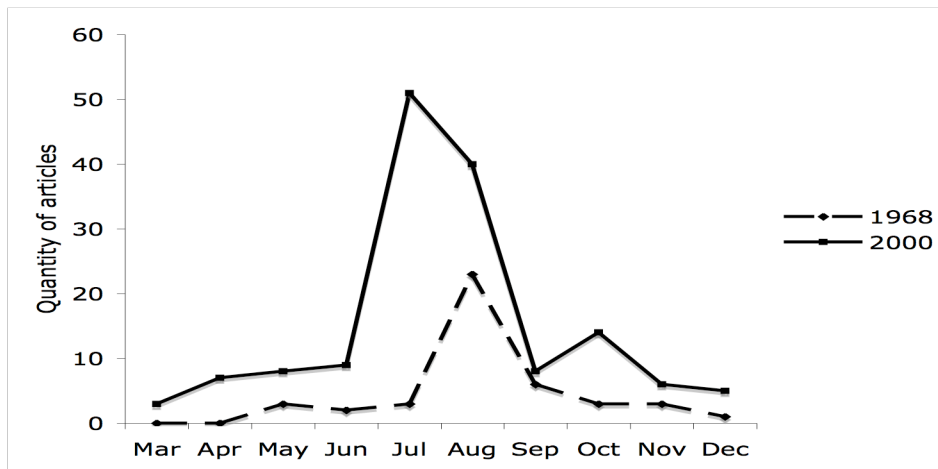
Figure 5.4. News articles appearing in *Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times,* and *New York Times* during the 1968 and 2000 election cycles (March-December)

Note: The data includes all pieces containing one or more of the following terms: balance the ticket, balancing the ticket, running mate, veep, veepstakes, or vice-presidential selection.

Figure 5.5. Combination of editorials and news articles appearing in *Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times,* and *New York Times* during the 1968 and 2000 election cycles (March-December)

Note: The data includes all pieces containing one or more of the following terms: balance the ticket, balancing the ticket, running mate, veep, veepstakes, or vice-presidential selection.
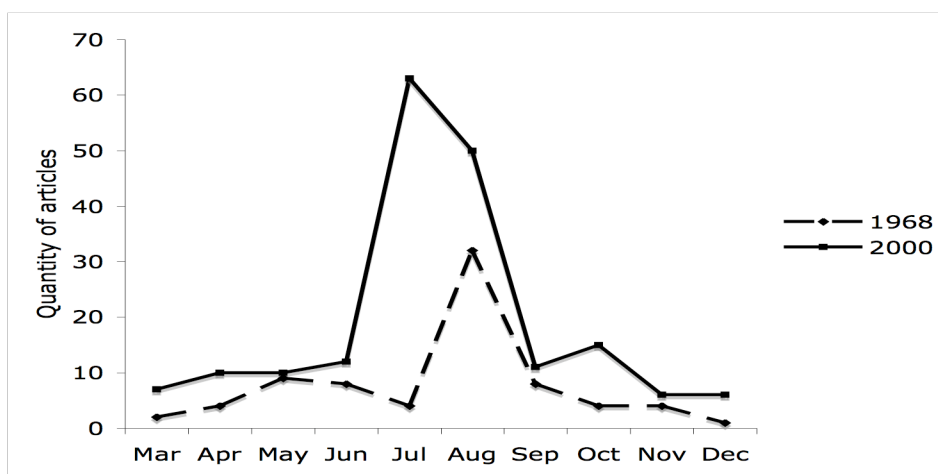
region/geography, which decreased in coverage. This chapter also chronicled the type of

articles found in 1968 and 2000: it was clear that editorials were more distinctive in 1968

than in 2000.

Chapter 6; Conclusion: Implications for 2008

Just before their respective party conventions, presumptive Democratic nominee Barack Obama chose as his running mate Senator Joe Biden from Delaware; Republican John McCain chose Governor Sarah Palin from Alaska. Each election season presidential candidates have four additional years of academic and political research, and the precedent of an additional pair of veep selections at their disposal in order to help make the single most visible decision of the campaign.

Obama's selection of Biden was conventional. It was reminiscent of the Bush-Cheney ticket. Obama lacked experience both in time and significance, and he balanced this weakness with the selection of a distinguished senator. It also followed the trend of selecting a running mate from the US Senate. Recall that presidential candidates, both insiders and outsiders, prefer to select insiders as running mates. The Senate is the preeminent place to find such insiders who have won a state-wide election. Biden had his weaknesses, ranging from being seen as too liberal, to being gaffe-prone. A lack of balance in the ticket in ideology could have been problematic, as the *National Journal* ranked Obama and Biden as the number one and number three most liberal members of the Senate for 2007. But regardless of scale of his ideology, Biden was liked and not viewed as a strong ideologue by the media and the opposition in the Senate. His experience as chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee brought valuable international experience to the ticket.

McCain's selection of Palin was quite unconventional. Palin became the first woman to receive the nomination for vice president from the Republican Party. She had

just two years of experience as governor and was just 44 years old. She was also the first

vice-presidential nominee from either party from outside the continental United States.

But it was her style that probably made the pick most unconventional. Among other

distinctive characteristics, she was a moose hunter and the mother of five, including an

infant son with Down syndrome. While some critics pointed to her lack of experience as

diluting one of McCain's biggest strength, she was more likely selected because she

reinforced McCain's reputation as a reformer—neither being afraid to take on their own

party. In a bad Republican year, this was perhaps McCain's biggest strength. McCain

also realized that even though the polls were relatively tight at the time, the Obama

message of "change" was resonating with voters with a greater intensity than the need for

McCain's "experience."

Characteristics that Measured Substantial Change from 1968 to 2000: Character,

Compatibility, and Region/Geography

Of the characteristics compared in this study, only one—region/geography—was

mentioned in a higher percentage of articles in 1968 than in 2000. There are numerous

possible explanations for this. One is the success of the Clinton-Gore ticket, that ignored

region as a balance; second, is the societal evolution and technological advancements of

the country that have made regional difference less distinct. This has occurred over

decades due to the nationalization of the media, greater opportunities for personal travel,

and a greater understanding and tolerance among sub-groups in America. In the 2008

election, both candidates seemed to ignore regional and state concerns. Biden is from a

solidly blue state that borders other states that lean Democratic and were won by Clinton,

Gore and Kerry. Palin was not selected because McCain was fearful of losing Alaska, which is also a region onto itself.

There are two areas of balance that were discussed in the media at considerably greater lengths in 2000 than in 1968: character and compatibility. Because of the mistrust of government that arose from the events of Vietnam and Watergate, the public and the media started to look to evaluate the character of the candidates in a deeper way than before. Market forces can partially explain this change. The electorate is interested in knowing about the character of the candidates; as a result, the commercial-driven media delivers the information. The media have also changed its approach to one of investigative journalism, particularly after the success of Woodward and Bernstein. In the 2008 election, neither of the two presidential candidates appeared to have serious character flaws that needed balancing. Furthermore, both vice-presidential candidates seemed like upstanding people.

The media is also concerned about compatibility. The influence of the vice presidency has increased for many decades. Some experts say that it started with the vice presidency of Theodore Roosevelt; others say that it started with the first modern vice president, Richard Nixon. Either way, the power and influence of the vice presidency is larger today than at any point in American history. There is a question of whether the vice presidency has grown at the cost of the presidency, or if it has simply grown with the power of the executive branch at the cost of other branches—most notable, the legislative branch. Either way, the media and the public look at the tandem as more of, but not completely like, a co-presidency.

While compatibility is important in the modern times, the two tickets in 2008 didn't appear as compatible as some tickets in the recent past. McCain, at Palin's introduction, seemed awkward on stage with her, but seemed to grow more comfortable with her as the campaign moved forward. Politically, she was able to reinforce his image as a reformer and a maverick. While Biden added seniority to the ticket without violating the platform positions on any major issue, it is clear that the victorious Democratic ticket was carried by the star power of Obama rather than the compatibility of the team.

Other Characteristics of Balance as Related to the 2008 Election

One area where there is little difference in the amount of coverage in the two election years is the characteristic of ideology. It is discussed in a greater percentage of articles in 2000 than in 1968, but by a lesser degree than other characteristics. One reason might be because ideological balance can be counter to compatibility. If the press and the electorate are looking for a team, the teammates shouldn't be starkly different on the issues. Gore received much criticism from the Republicans and others for the selection of Lieberman because Lieberman held many views on issues such as school choice, capital gains tax, the influence of Hollywood in society, and the use of the military in the world, that were closer to Bush's positions than Gore's. Ultimately, the campaign needs to help the voters feel comfortable with the ideology of the person at the top of the ticket; this is not necessarily accomplished by picking a running mate with noticeably different views.

In 2008, the Republican ticket seemed balanced in terms of ideology as McCain was characterized by the media as moderate, and Palin, conservative. The Democratic team was more reinforced rather than balanced as both candidates leaned left. But both

tickets deemphasized ideology; the candidates were able to do this largely through the power of personality.

Diversity (race, ethnicity, and sex) was a greater concern in 2008 than in previous elections, partly because diversity is more on the national consciousness today than in the past. Another reason is the appearance of front-running diversity presidential candidates Obama and Hillary Clinton, followed by the selection of Palin for vice president. The Republicans, if they wanted to name an African American running mate, would have been hard pressed to do so. Other than Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice, no other Republican could have been named without drawing the charge of "affirmative-action pick" to counter Obama. Powell has rejected the VP offer in the past, and Rice was too closely tied to the policies of the unpopular Bush administration to be considered in 2008. No black Republicans are in the US Senate or state governorships. A pick such as former representative J.C. Watts of Oklahoma or Michael Steele, a former lieutenant governor from Maryland would be criticized for a lack of experience.

With the Democratic primary candidacy of Hillary Clinton and the Republican nomination of Sarah Palin, sex and gender were a major source of national debate and discussion in 2008. In her introduction to the nation, Palin hinted at trying to capture some of the female vote from the Democratic primary. Even the most optimistic Republican strategist would not have expected Clinton primary supporters to migrate to the Republican ticket *en masse*, but the Republicans were probably hoping for at least a larger segment of the female vote than it might have otherwise received. Ultimately, voters generally vote according to issues and ideology, rather than one's sex or race.

Research indicates that party labels matter less than in the past. The labels may matter less, but they still matter. This was the case in 2008. The election was effectively a referendum on the last eight years of the Bush presidency. It is hard to imagine the Republicans nominating a presidential candidate who is the anti-Bush—and who can credibly run on the spirit of change that Obama inspired during the Democratic primary—more than McCain. It is hard to see McCain selecting a running mate who was more of a symbol of change than Palin, but it wasn't nearly enough to defeat the Democratic ticket that effectively seized that message of change earlier in the campaign.

One area that was not discussed in much detail in either 1968 or 2000 was military service. The media doesn't focus on this characteristic for a number of reasons. The electorate, perhaps as a result of the media's lack of attention to the characteristic, seemed to ignore the issue as well. In all of the presidential elections since the end of the Cold War, the candidate (Bush, Dole, Gore, Kerry, and McCain) with the most substantive military record lost the election. Obama seemed unconcerned with balancing his own lack of military service when selecting Biden who also lacks military service.

Both tickets balanced the age and experience characteristics. The youthful Obama deflected early media concerns of his experience by selecting Biden. But the media seemed fixated on the inexperience of Palin; they wondered aloud "what if the aging McCain dies?" It is as if she would be left to run the nation all by her lonesome. In practice, she would have inherited the McCain cabinet to help run the nation and have called on an experienced statesman such as Colin Powell as a vice president who would have been confirmed by the House and Senate instantaneously. A reason for this seemingly double standard is that the press knew who the vice president was going to be

for an inexperienced Obama, but it didn't know who the vice president would be if Palin would become an accidental president.

It was surprising that personality didn't stand out more in the research. Personality is probably a more important factor in electoral politics today than in the past, but it might be a characteristic that is overlooked by the press. The four players in the 2008 election didn't seem to have personality deficiencies like some candidates in the recent past. Obama, McCain, Biden, and Palin all seemed amiable.

The balance characteristic of voting block/faction/issue expertise probably affected McCain more than Obama. McCain, after securing the nomination, had problems securing the support of religious and economic conservatives. His choice of Palin, a religious conservative with a strong background on the critical campaign issue of energy independence, seemed to mollify concerns of various factions on the right. Obama, as mentioned above, had problems with women voters after defeating Hillary Clinton in the primary and failing to seriously consider her or as a running mate (Kranish 2008). Not giving in to this faction didn't cost him the general election.

Closing Thoughts

Over the past half-dozen elections, there seems to be a trend that the electorate, or at least the base, takes a particular liking to the vice-presidential candidate. This liking goes as far as to cause supporters to yearn for the ticket to be flipped. This is not always the case; but it is the case more often than not. It appeared to be the case for Dukakis-Bentsen, Clinton-Gore, Dole-Kemp, Bush-Cheney, Gore-Lieberman, Kerry-Edwards and McCain-Palin. It seems like this phenomenon bodes poorly for the person at the top of

ticket, but not necessarily. It can be the ultimate compliment—that the campaign got its most important decision correct. If fact, sometimes this desire to flip the ticket is so obvious that the adversaries of the ticket pick up on it and use it as a point of ridicule. Rush Limbaugh referred to the 1992 Democratic ticket as "Gore-Clinton" while some Democratic pundits viewed the 2000 Republicans as the "Cheney-Bush" ticket. In fact this criticism continued into the Bush administration, when critics viewed Cheney as the *de facto* president. This Gore-Clinton/Cheney-Bush phenomenon isn't always present. It was not the case for Bush-Quayle and Obama-Biden, the prior due to the unpopularity of the veep candidate, the latter because of the magnetism of the presidential candidate.

The particular veep choices in 2008 were quite different in another way that can be seen by considering the future. As revealed in the introduction, even the losing vice-presidential candidate is set up to be a front-runner for the following election. This appears to be the case with Palin. If she wants the Republican nomination in 2012, it is probably hers to lose. With Biden, it is unlikely that he will make a future bid for the presidency. He, like Cheney, seemed to be chosen for governing purposes and to give an inexperienced presidential candidate some needed credibility in terms of foreign relations and tenure. Assuming that Obama will run for reelection in 2012 and Biden will stay on as his running mate, Biden would likely be too old to run for president in 2016.

An area that I didn't contemplate before this study, but was evident in reading the coverage from 2000 was the idea of candidates taking into consideration the individual strengths and weaknesses of the two individuals on the opposite ticket when making the veep selection. On the surface, when making the veep choice, one would reason that this gives the advantage to the party that is holding its convention last, as they get to see

whom the other side selects before making their choice. But making the choice first can prevent the criticism of making a reactive selection based on what the other campaign decided. For example, if Obama would have selected Hillary Clinton or another woman, McCain's choice of Sarah Palin may have been criticized as a reaction to the forward-thinking Obama for picking a woman. But when Obama selected Joe Biden, the pick of Palin came across as bold.

Some in the press dubbed the McCain selection of Palin a "Hail Mary." This is not an accurate analogy. A Hail Mary is a last-minute attempt to pull out a game when there is no other possible path to victory. This was not the case when Palin was selected. Yes, McCain was trailing in the polls, but the lead was not insurmountable; and it was still early in the campaign cycle as the Republicans had yet to hold their convention where a bounce could be expected. In 1988, Dukakis had a substantial lead in the polls over Bush in the summer at the time of the conventions; at that point Dukakis made what was widely regarded as a great pick. And Bush made a questionable pick; but the campaign changed course and in spite of the Dukakis lead and the inverse choices of running mates, Bush-Quayle won handily. The choice of Palin was not a Hail Mary; it was more like a double reverse in the middle of the second quarter. It was against the norm and a surprise to many people, but it wasn't a last-minute desperation move. A Hail Mary is not really a surprise, everyone in the arena knows when it is time to execute such a desperation play. But the Palin choice was a surprise. She was not mentioned as a short-list candidate by the press. Some in the media even admitted that they hadn't done their homework on her and knew little about her. In order to disguise the pick for maximum effect, McCain and his selection team had to keep the news from the rest of his

staff. As a result, the pick even caught the McCain staff by surprise. The McCain spokesman the morning of the selection didn't even know how to pronounce Palin's last name.

The pick went against the norm in several ways. As mentioned earlier, the press doesn't like it when someone is chosen with whom they are not familiar. It also seems that in recent years, a campaign will leak two or three names to the press several days before the announcement, and one of those names is usually selected. For example in 2000, it came down to Cheney and John Danforth for Bush. For Obama it came down to Evan Bayh and Biden. The media was speculating that McCain was going to pick Mitt Romney or Tim Pawlenty; when the pick wasn't one of these, the media seemed to be put on the defensive.

It was also unconventional to pick a woman. The only women chosen by a major ticket in the past was Geraldine Ferraro in 1984. The Mondale-Ferraro ticket lost 49 of 50 states; while the electoral loss can't be blamed on Ferraro, there might be a hesitation among presidential candidates to pick a woman because of the poor performance of the Mondale-Ferraro ticket.

Also, Palin didn't come to political prominence in a conventional manner. There is no Ivy League law degree, or any advanced degrees of any sort. She was a frontier woman and a beauty queen born in Idaho and residing in Alaska. Her life story alone caused the press and the citizenry to take an interest in a way that they wouldn't have otherwise for, say, Mitt Romney.

While the Palin pick added intrigue to the McCain ticket—more people actually watched McCain's acceptance speech than the historic acceptance speech of Obama—the

Biden choice added experience to the Obama ticket. Earlier research was supported in 2008 that media coverage of the vice-presidential candidates decreases as the campaign moved deeper into the fall toward the general election. By and large, citizens do vote the top of the ticket. It is difficult to tell at present if Biden or Palin helped or hurt their respective tickets.

Last, we should understand the direction the vice-presidential selection process is moving. Balancing itself is less of a factor; a running mate who complements and reinforces the ticket is more important and evident as well. Depending on the candidates and political climate, some characteristics need balanced, and others need reinforced. When selecting a running mate, a wise presidential candidate will discern the difference.

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