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Political Leadership in a Divided Electorate: Assessing Character Issues in the 2000 Presidential Campaign

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Traditionally, candidates' stands on public issues have been the focus of making choices in presidential selection. In recent decades, however, an important change has taken place. Now, rather than ask candidates where they stand, the public wants to know who they are.

Reflecting an awareness that integrity, vision, judgment and skills are important measures by which to judge those who would lead us, the public has increasingly focused on the personal qualities of presidential candidates. These concerns are not new.¹ Yet, the question remains: By what standards might these elements be judged? One answer to this question has been the rise of "character issues."

As the term implies, "character issues" lie at the intersection of psychological and political theory. Yet they are also firmly situated in the arena of partisan politics. Although character questions are often raised as a form of accusation, they purport to tell us something important about those who would lead us. The question is: Do they?

The answer to that question would appear to be: Yes.² Honesty, integrity and trustworthiness may well be virtues in themselves, but they are important for the nation's political life. This is primarily so because they are a key resource of leadership capital.³ That, in turn, affects the president's capacity to govern and lead. Leadership involves the mobilization, orchestration and consolidation of public mindedness for common purposes. A dishonest president forfeits the assumption of public trust that underlies social capital. A president whose positions do not reflect his convictions, leaves us wondering which, if either, we should credit. And a president whose political self-interest can be counted on to supersede his public mindedness raises the question of whether we are being enlisted for his, or our, purposes.

These large issues are critical, yet the public also finds itself trying to address a host of other, perhaps surrogate issues. Is an idealist with lofty policies (Bradley) necessarily a better candidate than a practical politician armed with a policy for every problem (Gore)? Are "gentleman C's at Yale (Bush) necessarily inferior, from the standpoint of a successful presidency, to a degree from Harvard as Al Gore has suggested (even if his overall records shows signs of under achievement)⁴? Is the public looking for heroic leadership, as their attraction to the McCain candidacy, seemed to suggest? And if so, is heroic leadership what the times require?

These, and other questions, speak to the broader issue of psychological suitability. The major questions raised by this term are not only regarding a candidate's specific character traits, but the

fit, or lack thereof, between them, the responsibilities of presidential leadership, and the public's expectations and preferences. No formula exists to answer these questions. A heroic biography may well require us to expect the same kind of leadership, or it may be an outstanding element of an otherwise complex and not wholly suitable presidential psychology. A public preference for heroic leadership may coexist with an equally strong preference for moderation.

In this paper, using publicly accessible data,⁵ I examine these questions in the context of the 2000 presidential campaign. I first ask "does character still matter?" and examine a range of data which suggests that it does. More specifically, I examine the impact of the Clinton presidency in helping to set the frame within which character issues are being considered. I then turn to the question of the broader cultural and political contexts in which the search for leadership takes place. I argue that the public's experiences and leadership preferences have a important effect on the kinds of leadership that develop and are supported in a society. I then distinguish between two models of leadership in contemporary American society. One, the *heroic* has become traditional, the other, reflective leadership is emerging in response to structure and psychological changes in the American public. I close by suggesting how each of these two models of leadership affected the 2000 presidential campaign.

Does Character Still Matter?

Asking whether character still matters is really two questions. First, does it still matter to the public. And, second does character matter in some empirically and substantively grounded way, regardless of the public's view? We can answer both questions, and the question posed in the title, with one word: Yes.

True as this may be, it does not explain *why* character issues have continued to play an important role in the presidential selection process. Nor does it tell us in what ways they have done so.

Questions about character in this presidential election are framed by three circumstances. They reflect larger public yearnings stimulated by its recent historical presidential experience.⁶ They are framed by the state of the country and the public's view of it. And, they are responsive to the public's acceptance of the form and content of such information.

Character Issues as a Legacy of the Clinton Presidency

Any discussion of the role of character issues in the 2000 presidential campaign must begin with the presidency of William J. Clinton. The Clinton presidency is virtually unique in having at its helm a man whose performance evaluations were strong and whose personal standing was dismal. As they did throughout his impeachment trial, Americans consistently rated his performance in the 60% range, while saying in a variety of ways that they disapproved of his morals and ethics.

A January 27, 2000 ABC poll found that 58% of the public approved of Clinton's performance as president, but 61% percent disapproved of him as a person.⁷ Seven in ten Americans said they were tired of the problems associated with the administration, and fewer than one-third of Americans wished that Clinton could run for a third term.⁸ Fifty- four percent said they would be "glad to see him go," and only 39% said they would be "sorry to see him go."⁹

One of President Clinton's immediate legacies to the public's view of the presidency is to reframe the "moral" and "rhetorical" dimensions of the presidency in the 2000 election campaign. There are several strands of evidence to support this view. One could take note of the covers of major news magazines like the one in *Newsweek* entitled "Straightshooters: How Bradley and McCain are scoring with the Politics of Authenticity" (November 15, 1999). You could read the story headings of major news articles like the Washington Post article that was subtitled, "Americans yearn for a president with character and leadership."¹⁰ Or, one could read one of the many columnists from all sides of the political spectrum who proclaimed its importance.¹¹ You could also listen to the explanations for unsuccessful campaigns from high officials like Dan Cal, campaign spokesman for Steve Forbes who said,

"While a lot of people may have liked our message, it didn't translate into votes. You have a healthy economy and not the anger you had in 1992 and 1996. With the Clinton White House, issues of morality and character were important. This became more of a race about biography and character, and Steve's strength is as an issue candidate."¹²

Or, you could look at some survey data. In a 1995 Pew survey, 54% thought the president could/should deal with low moral standards, and by 1999, that number had risen to sixty percent. How? In 1995, twenty- five percent of the national sample said the president "can best deal with low morals/ethics by "serving as a role model." By 1999, that figure had risen to thirty-eight percent. Correspondingly, in that same period, the number of citizens who though the president could accomplish this task by proposing policies dropped from eighteen to eleven percent, and

the number who thought the president could accomplish this task by using the “bully pulpit” to draw attention to moral issues dropped from ten to nine percent.¹³

Given these findings it is not surprising that during the campaign the issues that topped voters’ concerns were those having to do with a candidate’s ethics and morality.¹⁴ A poll taken by the Tarrance Group for Voter.Com found that when asked which was *the* most important issue for the next president to deal with, moral values topped the list (18%). That was followed by education (13%), social security (11%), health care (10%), taxes and crime tied (at 6%) and on down the list into single digit items.¹⁵ A Gallup Poll taken in January 2000 found that Americans were more interested in the style and leadership capabilities of the candidates than their positions on the issues. Fifty-one percent of likely voters interviewed in the January 7-10 poll chose “leadership skills and vision” as being more important than “where the candidates stand on issues that matter to you” -- chosen by just 36%. This was true for both “likely voters” and for a national sample of adults.¹⁶ It was true for Republicans, Independents, and Democrats alike.¹⁷

Another way in which Mr. Clinton’s presidency shaped the 2000 presidential campaign was through public exhaustion and weariness with the Clinton administration and its effects on the candidacies of both Republicans and Democrats alike. From the start of the Lewinsky scandal and the president’s impeachment there has been much discussion of the effect of these events on Al Gore’s presidential campaign. Some have dismissed the idea of any Clinton fatigue as a “fraud”¹⁸ or a “cliche”.¹⁹ At one point there was even talk of Clinton nostalgia, but not much evidence to support its existence.²⁰

Clinton fatigue, however, was real enough. A February, 2000 ABC news poll found that 51% were tired of President Clinton, 49% thought Mr. Gore too close to him and 48% felt the country needed a new direction. Combining these items as an index and using multiple regression analysis, the strongest predictors of the likely vote were the candidates’ favorability ratings. However, after controlling for favorability and party identification, Clinton fatigue again emerged as a key predictor of the vote. Its impact went significantly above and beyond political predisposition and views of the candidates.²¹ A further indication of its significance is found in a special analysis of Gallup poll results among likely voters in January, and again in February-March. That analysis suggested that the “Clinton fatigue factor” might indeed be significantly hurting Gore's campaign, and that the net effect might be about 8 percentage points in the difference between Gore's and Bush's support.²² And finally, Ted Koppel in a *Nightline*

interview with George W. Bush reported that fifty-percent of those polled by ABC said that Mr. Gore was too close to President Clinton to provide the country with the fresh start that it needs.²³

Clinton fatigue, like the importance of character issues, did not affect all voting groups equally. Indeed, it appeared to effect swing voters of both parties and moderate and conservative Republican voters more than traditional Democratic voters. In a series of studies leading to the development of new categories of stable public opinion group placement, The Pew Research Center identified nine separable groups: Staunch Conservative (95%) , Moderate Conservatives (86%), Populist Republicans (86%) New Prosperity Independents (73%), The Disaffected (68%), Liberal Democrats (58%), Socially Conservative Democrats (59%), New Democrats (58%), and the Partisan Poor (59%).²⁴ The percentage of each group that felt “Clinton fatigue” is in parenthesis.

Not surprisingly, the groups differed with regard to the qualities they thought important in presidential candidates. Good judgment was supported to a substantial degree by all nine groups, but when it came to the importance of high moral standards, the groups differed dramatically. The percentage agreeing that such high standards were necessary are as follows: Stanch Conservative (84%), Moderate Conservatives (81%), Populist Republicans (75%) New Prosperity Independents (61%), Disaffected (67%), Liberal Democrats (46%), Socially Conservative Democrats (58%), New Democrats (56%), and the Partisan Poor (53%).

The same holds true for views about the importance of different elements of presidential psychology and character. The Pew survey noted above found that in both 1995 and 1999, high ethical standards were seen as the second most important quality to have in a president, after sound judgment. Yet seven out of ten voters who preferred Mr. Bush said that personal integrity was very important, and fifty percent of Gore supporters believed it was important. Sixty percent of Bush supporters thought it essential for a candidate to say what he believes, while fifty percent of Gore supporters thought this essential. On the other hand more Gore than Bush supporters thought it essential for a candidate to have compassion for others (67% vs. 59%) and be willing to compromise (37% vs. 29%).

In 1996 Bob Dole plaintively asked, “Where’s the outrage?” It is now possible to provide one possible answer: Among Democratic loyalists, Clinton’s behavior elicited either a yawn, a wink or an averted gaze. Among Republican loyalists, it was transmuted into personal distaste.

Among “independents” Clinton, and by implication his chosen successor, Al Gore, were in some trouble.

Just how this might unfold in the general election obviously became an important matter. One set of clues could be gleaned from the primaries. In the nonpartisan California primary vote, sixty-one percent held a low personal opinion of the president, while 58% of them approved of his performance. These figures paralleled nation opinion samples.

Yet, among the committed (primary) voters a different story emerged. Democratic voters in Ohio rated the president’s performance as far superior (77%) to their concerns with him as a person (42%). Among Missouri Democrats the figures are 80%(performance) and 45% (morals) respectively, and among New York Democrats 85% and 35%.

Some sense of the Republican view of Mr. Clinton is found in the nonpartisan California exit poll. Of course, large percentages of the Bush and McCain supporters did not rate Mr. Clinton’s presidential performance highly. But their ratings of him as a person were much lower, especially for supporters of Mr. Bush. As R.W. Apple put it,²⁵

” No doubt Mr. Bush’s strategists took considerable comfort from the fact that McCain voters, like Mr. Bush’s supporters expressed strong disapproval of Mr. Clinton as a person, as contrasted to their favorable opinion of his performance as president. The governor clearly intends to accuse Mr. Gore of faulty moral leadership, saying ‘I will repair the broken bonds of trust between American and their government.’ Lest anyone think he was only talking about Mr. Clinton, he appropriated an unfortunate phrase of Mr. Gore’s and turned it against him. ‘I will remind Al Gore,’ he said, ‘that Americans do not want a White House where there is no controlling legal authority...’”

Yet, less expected and more interesting than either the views of the Democratic or Republican party faithful toward Mr. Clinton, were the voters who backed the insurgent campaigns in either party, Mr. Bradley and Mr. McCain. In a complicated way, these candidates certainly attracted “swing” voters and appeared to represent some portion of the larger swing vote in the general election. Since the exit polls for Republican primaries did not ask for a rating of either Mr. Clinton’s performance or character, we have to look to other polls.

In the non-partisan California poll, Bradley voters were much more likely than Gore voters to hold an unfavorable view of the president personally. Among McCain voters who made personal evaluations, many more viewed Clinton unfavorably than favorably. In the Ohio democratic poll,

Bradley supporters were much more likely to rate Clinton personally in an unfavorable way than Gore supporters. The same was true in Democratic primaries in Missouri, New York and New Hampshire.

Certainly in the Republican primaries, and to some extent in the Democratic primaries as well, the personal qualities of the candidates played a major choice in voter preferences.²⁶ Of course, primary voters are more ideologically informed and engaged than the generate electorate,²⁷ so these numbers may have tended to *underestimate* the importance of personal issues and overestimate the weight given to policy positions. Yet, even so the numbers present a convincing picture that to voters, character counts.

The Ohio Republican primary exit polls showed that 55% of the voters said that a candidate's leadership and personal qualities were more important to them than a candidate's stand on the issues. In Missouri that number was 52%, and in New York 54%. In California's nonpartisan election exit polls, the relative weight of personal qualities and policy stands were approximately even.

Among Democrats, the relative weight of policy stands and personal qualities in candidate preference was somewhat more heavily weighted to the former, but personal qualities still played a substantial role. In Ohio, Democrats weighted policy more heavily, as did Democratic primary voters in Missouri and New York.

Yet, even among Democrats, the importance of personal qualities in relationship to policy issues can be seen in another set of exit poll questions. Asked to select a policy issue or issues that affected their choice and then to select a personal quality or qualities that "mattered most in deciding how you voted for president," personal qualities and specific policy issues were equally strong. In Ohio, Democrats said that standing up for what you believe was more important (30%) than the highest ranking policy issue, race relations (28%). The importance of having the right experience (27%) and of the economy (27%) were similarly weighted. Similar results were reported in other democratic primaries.²⁸ Among Republican primary voters, comparable data show a similarly pronounced weighing of personal qualities over specific policy issues.²⁹

And how did Clinton fatigue affect the actual presidential vote? Morin and Deane³⁰ (emphasis mine) poll directors for The Washington Post writing about Clinton fatigue found,

"The majority of voters – about seven in 10 – said their vote had nothing to do with the First Bubba. But among those who were trying to send a message to 1600 Pennsylvania

Ave., the edge went to those who didn't have anything nice to say. In all, about two in 10 said their vote was meant to express opposition to Clinton, and about one in 10 said their vote was meant to express support. We were watching those voters who like Clinton's work but not his persona. As predicted, one in three of these voters defected to Bush. *Moreover, "honest" ranked as the single most important trait voters this year were seeking in the next president – and eight in 10 of these voters supported Bush.*"

An analysis of exit polling data reported by the New York Times, Robin Toner and Janet Elder³¹ found,

“Voters were generally in a contented mood as they cast their ballots, but there were also signs of Clinton fatigue: in their negative judgment of the president's character and in the priority many put on straight talk and honesty. When given a choice, a plurality of voters — about a fourth — rated honesty a more important consideration than experience or an understanding of the complex issues of the day, according to the voter polls. And those people tended to vote for Mr. Bush, who also had an edge among those who considered strong leadership most important...two-thirds of respondents said the country, enjoying a record economic boom, was going in the right direction over all. But 6 in 10 said it was on the wrong track morally. Mr. Clinton's job approval rating stayed fairly high, but his personal unfavorability rating was equally high in the surveys... Most voters said they would remember Mr. Clinton more for the scandals of his presidency than for any leadership he provided.”

In his examination of the Lewinsky scandal, Zaller³² argued that, “the public is, within broad limits, functionally indifferent to presidential character.” The data presented herein suggests he is wrong. Yet, the actual contours of public concern with character issues, must be examined in the context of the changing nature of political leadership in American society, and it is to that issue that we now turn.

Political Leadership for a New Age?: Heroic or Reflective

Every presidential race brings with it candidates whose psychologies reflect different assemblies of experience and qualities. Strong ambition has become the modern standard, but the link between personal and political ambitions becomes fused at different ages, around different skills, and with different implications for leadership style. Al Gore's father remarked when his son had become the Vice-President that "we raised him for it."³³ In a family dispute about whether

young Al Gore should be made to plow a steep slope on the family farm, his mother acquiesced to his father, Senator Gore, with the comment, ““Yes, a boy could never be president if he couldn’t plow with that dammed hillside plow.”³⁴ George W. Bush on the other hand, made his first official foray for himself into politics in 1978 at the age of thirty-two.³⁵ And John McCain did so in 1982 at the age of forty-six, although there are indications he had political office on his mind well before that.

Yet, the analysis of candidates’ psychologies and their relationship to the responsibilities of public leadership mask an important question. Has the nature of leadership itself, and the public expectations surrounding, changed? I want to suggest here, that it has, and draw some implications for the 2000 presidential campaign and beyond.

Leadership is a notoriously vague concept.³⁶ Some associate it with charisma-- that vaguely defined term which includes the ability to generate political excitement. Others view it as a personal quality akin to gravitas, which allows the leader to command respect and, above all, compliance. Still others see leadership as the act of faithfully representing constituent views and goals. Political leadership may involve all of these elements to some degree.

Political leadership in a democracy is essentially found in the capacity to direct and exercise power for public purpose. However, what it entails and how it is accomplished, when it is, are key questions. Elsewhere,³⁷ I have proposed three distinct aspects of political leadership: mobilization, orchestration and consolidation. Mobilization, refers to the president's ability to arouse the public. Orchestration, refers to channelling of public arousal, understanding and support in the effective application of policy achievement. Lastly, consolidation refers to the skills and tasks necessary to preserving a set of supportive relationships and institutionalizing the results of one's policy judgments.³⁸

These three elements suggest what leadership is, but they don’t address the question of *how* they are enacted. Consider mobilization. Any leader who aspires to exercise their power for public purpose must engage the public. That means they must get the public’s attention, translate their policy intentions to acceptable public purpose, and secure the legitimacy derived from the honest enactment of this process.

Sometimes, this is easily done. External crisis like severe economic downturns or major involvement in foreign conflict make leadership purpose and public need almost synonymous. At other times, mismatches between leaders’ knowledge or ambitions may lead to a form of indirect

or masked leadership. Eisenhower's indirect, behind the screens "hidden-hand" presidency³⁹ and Bill Clinton's use of the "New Democrat" slogan to mask "Old Democrat" ambitions⁴⁰ are two illustrations of this point.

The state of the public and its degree of consensus also makes an enormous difference to the how of leadership enactment. "Hidden-hand" leadership may be more acceptable in times of cultural and political consensus, and masked leadership more necessary in times of sharp political or cultural descensus. As both the external circumstances and the public's psychology change, it is not surprising that the meaning and means of "successful" leadership also changes. These changes have important implications for how we select and judge our leaders. And, they also hold important implications for the best fit between assemblies of experience and qualities that define leaders' interior psychology and the circumstances in which they govern.

I want to frame my argument here by articulating two very different understandings of political leadership in this country, one traditional and well-known, the other emerging and not yet well articulated. These models of leadership are, respectively: the *heroic* and the *reflective*.

Heroic leadership in American society is the traditional. Its archetype is Franklin Roosevelt, its metaphor the hierarchy, and its motto: decide and command. The task of the heroic leader is to convince the public of what it is that he already thinks they *must* do. It envisions the leader as struggling against, and overcoming through determination, courage or otherwise heroic efforts, the circumstances he must surmount. It is this model which is the basis of James Burns' lament:

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"One of the universal cravings of our time is a hunger for compelling and creative leadership. Many of us spent our early years in the era of the titans-...Mao and Gandhi, Churchill and Roosevelt, Stalin and Hitler and Mussolini...These giants strode across our cultural and intellectual and political horizons. We-followers everywhere-loved or loathed them. We marched for them and fought against them. We died for them and we killed some of them. We could not ignore them."

Reflective leadership, on the other hand, is diffuse. Its prototype, but not its archetype, is Bill Clinton. Its metaphor is the prism, and its motto is: select and reflect. It is not introspective, but externalized. The task of reflective leadership is to gather the disparate elements of frayed or fractured political and cultural consensus and mirror them so that publics can see the basis for their common purposes. The reflective leader diffuses conflict, not sharpens it. It is leadership

whose purpose is not to choose and impose, but to engage and connect. It is in a basic sense, restorative,-although this need not make it conventional.

And, it is profoundly interpersonal in nature. Freud believed that when crowds (publics) were beset by anxiety they turned to leaders, but that in the process group members became disconnected from each other. In these circumstances, Freud argued, group members were only indirectly allied to each other and then, only through their joint connection to the leader.⁴² This is one drawback of heroic leadership.

Reflective leadership, unlike heroic leadership, seeks to develop common horizontal ties, not direct and hierarchical ones. The reflective leader does not bend the public to his will, but rather leads by serving as an expression of a more common one. He does not so much command as explain. He does not so much tell, as listen. And, he is not so much the author of the publics' common interests, as its reflection.

Reflective leadership is not passive, nor is such a leader essentially a "clerk."⁴³ His agenda is common purpose and in the circumstances that give rise to this kind of leadership will no doubt require him or her to fight vigorously for it. What kind of circumstances give rise to such leadership?

Several seem immediately clear. Countries in which there are no great mobilizing crises, but which are none the less deeply divided seem ripe for reflective leadership. Add to these two factors, citizens who feel separated from their major institutions and each other, and who technologically and socially have a decreased need to be so connected. The result is a political culture and system in which the issues that divide the country are less responsive to traditional heroic leadership.

Cultural Conflict and the Question of American National Identity

Isn't American at peace abroad and prosperous? Yes. Yet, the country still faces major unresolved issues. Why? Because in recent decades the very fabric of American political and national identity has been challenged by an assertive expansion of individual and group rights, acerbic debates regarding the legitimacy and limits of these claims, and a preference on the part of national political leaders to finesse rather than engage these controversies. Freed by the end of the cold war from a need to focus on external enemies, the country appears at a cross-roads.

Race relations have in many ways improved, yet paradoxically worsened. The past decade has brought unprecedented levels of immigration and with it rising levels of public concern, coupled with some very profound questions about what it means to be, or become an American. Is assimilation still possible? Is it desirable? Immigrants are idealized by some, even as high levels of immigration are greeted with concern by many others. Definitions of the family and relations between men and women, at home and in the work place, have dramatically changed, but a question remains as to whether they have improved. There are real differences and practical consequences involved in such divisive policy issues such as affirmative action, abortion rights, immigration and assimilation, English as the primary language, and homosexual marriage, to name a few.

Behind these questions lies a deeper cultural and political conflict, “a struggle to define America.”⁴⁴ What’s fair? How are we to define opportunity, and how much should merit count? What does and should it mean to be an American? Where, exactly, is the “political center” in these issues?

These questions have provoked substantial, but paradoxical political conflict. The paradox is simply this: In many major polls, there is clear, decisive and reliable political center on each of the many contentious issues American face, bi-lingual education, affirmative action, abortion, and so on.⁴⁵ One might almost say that the more political agreement there is among ordinary Americans the more savage the battles become. Why? The answer lies in the mismatch between heroic leadership and the public consensus or sense of crises needed to sustain it.

The Rise of Disconnectedness

In 1958, at the end of the Eisenhower administration, almost 75% of the American public thought you could trust the government in Washington to do what is right “just about always,” or “most of the time.”⁴⁶ By 1998, those figures had been exactly reversed with 75% of the public believing you could not trust Washington to do what is right “just about always,” or “most of the time.” The number of people who thought the government looked out for the interests of the common person rather than themselves took a parallel nosedive from 70% in 1958 to 20% in 1994.

A Pew Center analysis of the causes of the decline of trust in government concluded, “Discontent with political leaders and lack of faith in the political system are principal factors that stand behind public distrust of government. Much of that criticism involves the honesty and

ethics of government leaders.”⁴⁷ In other words, it is the action of leaders themselves, their integrity and morality, which affect the degree of the public’s trust.

Another piece of evidence is found in the answers to another set of questions that are ordinarily asked as part of a package of questions about trust in government. This one asks respondents to agree or disagree to the proposition that “public officials care (or don’t care) about what people like me think.” A September, 1956 ANES poll found that 53% of the public thought they did care, and only 37% thought they did not. However, by August 1976, a CBS/NYT poll found that only 26% of the public now thought they did, while 71% though they did not. Finally, a March 1994 ABC/Washington Post poll found that 32% thought they did, and 67% thought not.

Finally, there is the issue of attention in relation to connection. In 1997, The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press reported in 1996 that “25 % of those they surveyed said they learned about the presidential campaign from the likes of [Jay] Leno and David Letterman, a figure rising to 40 percent among those under 30.”⁴⁸ That center also reported that among its twenty most closely watched stories in 1997 only three were concerned with politics, and none ranked higher than thirteenth. The story that headed the list was Prince Diana’s death. Or, as The Wall Street Journal put it in a major headline story, “Among Factors that Influence People’s Lives, Politics Ranks Toward the Bottom.”⁴⁹

American’s declining interest in politics can be seen in other numbers as well. In the 1992 presidential election, ordinarily a high point of the public’s political interest and participation, only 55.2% of those eligible to vote, registered and did so. Four years later, that number had declined to 48.8% in spite of new laws that made registering to vote easier than at any time in this country’s history. In 1970 the first year that census forms were sent by mail, eighty-three percent of households responded. In 1990 that percentage had dropped to sixty-five. Disappointing results from the 2000 census left its director to doubt that he would be able to meet one of his central goals sparking a new wave of American civic engagement.⁵⁰

The political trends which encourage political disassociation appear to be reinforced by economic, technological, psychological and sociology ones. Bennett sees economic dislocation and anxiety as the cause of the publics’ disconnection from traditional means of civic engagement.⁵¹ Geographical, occupational and other forms of mobility also add to the loosening of traditional ties. Robert Lane, in his prescient early paper referred to this as “sociological release” the freeing of people from formerly restricting, but also connecting categories. He also worried that the “colder” market of exchange had increasingly supplanted the

domain of community.⁵² Communications, mirroring politics, have become decomposed into niches.⁵³ And of course, the rise of the internet certainly allows and may facilitate social disconnection from common purpose.⁵⁴

As a result of these factors, Americans are more likely to rent movies than attend them. We are more likely to search for our roots on the internet than establish them in our communities. And, we are more likely to complain about our national politics than take part. Small wonder Putnam continues to worry that we are “bowling alone.”⁵⁵

Conclusion: The “Cold Society” and the 2000 Presidential Campaign.

As leadership theorists never tire of pointing out, there is a close connection between the leader and her times. Dire circumstances call for heroic leadership. Yet, one thesis of this paper that our times may call for a different form of leadership, one that is less based on command and more on the articulation of common concerns.

Americans have flirted with heroic leadership in the 1992 and 1996 presidential campaigns with Ross Perot and Pat Buchanan. Both articulated, encouraged and tried to make use of grievance, coupling it with their own strong claims for heroic leadership status. Pat Buchanan in 1992, like Alan Keyes in this campaign, ran on the premise of his own strong consistency. Whether leading a “pitchfork revolt,” (Buchanan) or finding dignity in a mosh pit jump (Keyes) neither candidate could promise Americans more that uncompromising conflict in a society already weary of it. In 1992 and 1996, Ross Perot emphasized “straight,” but not particularly insightful, talk coupled with a promise to open up the hood of government and get in there and fix it,- period! Having come from the quintessential command and control experience (his own company), he was ill prepared, ill-suited, and in the end mismatched for the position to which he aspired. Americans may have been responsive to his apparent, but limited candor, but not at the price of his temperament and control.

Bill Clinton was successful in both elections because he represented a new, less sharp -edged leadership. Promising to “put people first,” he seemed to care and connect with many Americans, and they in turn connected with him. He did not promise to command, but to respond. He reassured us that as a leader he would not aspire to grand plans, but rather sensible policies. His political stance as a “New Democrat” promised to heal the cleavages that permeate our society and do so in a way that would bring left and right, Democrat and Republican together in new common efforts. In short, he was the prototype, yet until he was forced to work with a

Republican Congress, ultimately a flawed exemplar, of a new leadership style that had been building in this country for several decades.

It is now clear in retrospect that Mr. Clinton had adapted a reflective style to mask some very basic heroic tendencies. And, as a result, far from diminishing conflict, he has escalated it. Far from bringing people together, he has divided them. The country may be prosperous and not at war, but it is not at peace.

That was part of his legacy as Al Gore and George W. Bush campaigned to take his place. If this analysis is correct, a number of Americans are not looking for fighting leader, but a leader who can, if necessary, fight. They prefer someone who reconciles rather than divides, and they prefer someone with common plans, not large ones.

If this analysis is correct, Al Gore's psychology and campaign may well have represented a mismatch between him and the new, emerging climate of American leadership. Gore is very programmatic, a reflection of his interest and experience in government. His strong support of government programs reflects a very robust view of their role. Although he is most often viewed as coming out of the Clinton small-bore program mold, and was criticized by Mr. Bradley for lacking "big ideas," Gore put forward many, potentially large-scale program initiatives during the primaries. He proposed 115 new billions for education⁵⁶, 7.1 new billions for a "Democracy Endowment" that would have the federal government fund all elections⁵⁷, 2 new billions more on parks,⁵⁸ and so on.

During a campaign debate with his rival Bill Bradley, the Vice President said he believed the next president can and should seek to do many things;

"I have different models for the presidency--leaders like Franklin Roosevelt, John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson,' Gore said. "They knew that we had to proceed on all the great unfinished business of our society."⁵⁹

This is heroic leadership with a decidedly large "H." For all the moderation that is a key element of Mr. Gore's personal and political persona, it is still basically, a command and control model. If Mr. Gore had been elected president, he would have spent his time convincing us of the correctness of his views and why each of the many initiatives was essential.

Mr. Gore's relentless pursuit of traditional democratic constituencies and his inability, or disinclination to even symbolically distance himself from his core constituencies raised the issue

of how fairly Mr. Gore would represent groups across the board and not only the constituent pillars of the Democratic party.⁶⁰ Mr. Clinton had Sister Soulja, Mr. Bush warned the Republican Congress against balancing the budget on the backs of the poor. There was not much space between Mr. Gore and his traditional Democratic party supporters.

Mr. Gore is an aggressive, ferocious sometimes savage political street fighter. As he demonstrated with Bill Bradley, he will mislead and sometimes demonize his opponents. His campaign theme “fighting for you”⁶¹ represents a good fit between his psychology and leadership style, but it was sometimes done in a harsh way.

George W. Bush, on the other hand represents a different kind of leadership. He is certainly not as programmatic as Al Gore, and assuredly not as well versed on the details of myriad policy complexities. Perhaps as a result of having entered politics later in life, his record in Texas indicates he is not a man of large agendas. That is a decided drawback to those who look to government to solve the host of problems we confront, but keep in mind that such a view basically represents a heroic view of leadership. Bush’s commitment to facilitating institutions in the “civil society” to stimulate horizontal public connections is certainly novel in this era, but that should not necessarily be held against it. So too, it also appears to be more consistent with reflective rather than heroic leadership.

Governor Bush is scrappy and can bristle when challenged on something he feels he is being inappropriately asked. Appearing before 700 students at Newberry College, Bush got angry when asked if he is attempting to co-opt McCain's agenda with such talk of being a reformer. Bush told the student to "sit down," words he often uses when faced with questions he doesn't like. Bush went on to say that most GOP senators had rejected McCain's push for campaign finance.⁶²

He can also be tough, as his ads on John McCain’s votes against pork, which included money for cancer research showed. ⁶³ Yet, as one reporter noted, surprisingly Mr. Bush appears squeamish and uncomfortable with the politics of insult -- and not very good at it. He notes that when Mr. McCain used the slur "gooks" to refer to his North Vietnamese guards when he was a prisoner of war (Mr. McCain later apologized),⁶⁴ Mr. Bush had a perfect opportunity to criticize his opponent. But when the issue arose at Mr. Bush's daily press conference, this was the exchange:⁶⁵

Q. "Is that appropriate language for someone running for president?"

A. "That is going to have to be up to the people. You know, it's amazing. I haven't seen that in the press yet. I appreciate you bringing that up."

Q. (inaudible)

A. "I better not say anything about it, lest I be accused of negative campaigning."

Q. "Do you have an obligation as a leader to take a stand on that kind of language?"

A. "He has an obligation as a potential leader to explain what he meant."

At base, Mr. Bush is a person who moves toward people, not against them. Generally, the evidence is that he is more a conciliator than a divider. After watching him over time on the campaign trail, one New York Times reporter wrote,

“Mr. Bush is a natural politician -- far more so than the vice president -- with a down-home, one-of-the-guys charm that puts people at ease. He loves the crowds, relishes the limelight and invariably comes across to audiences as likable, funny, sincere and decent.”⁶⁶

Vice President Gore is a very smart man. He is deeply versed in policy issues. There is no doubt that on grounds of experience, he was well qualified for the presidency. However, he was a candidate whose determination and earnestness could easily shade off into insistence.⁶⁷ He is a man who *very* much wanted to be president and gave the impression of being willing to do almost anything to get it.⁶⁸ In one article Mr. Gore is quoted as saying “you have to rip your opponent’s lungs out and then move on.” He is also very easily drawn to harsh demagoguery. This is apparently an update of early political advice given to him by his mother.⁶⁹ In a relatively peaceful period in which the public says it is tired of intense conflict, this might well be a drawback. And, there may well have been a mismatch between the heroic leadership his candidacy espouses and his personal qualities and biography.

Mr. Bush, on the other hand, is adequately intelligent, but nowhere near as versed or as immersed in policy as his opponent. He is as interested in building relationships as policy monuments. On domestic policy, he cares deeply about education and as one observer noted “running against the sixties.” However, no one can reasonably argue that he sees himself proposing, much less providing a solution to the many problems that one could address. Mr. Bush envisions a government of limits and that reflects something about his ambitions for accomplishment in office. They are certainly not grand, but it remains to be seen whether they might prove to be, as they were in the case of Ronald Reagan, more important than profound.

Endnotes

1. Peter G. Petterson recalls doing polling and interviewing for a group called Citizens for Eisenhower. The interviews showed, he recalled that people would say of Ike, “here’s someone I can really like” “someone I’d trust,” “someone who would do the right thing.” He then wrote Eisenhower a memo that, “talked about the transcendent importance of character and trust and how it was a far better strategy for Eisenhower to build on that rather than get into overly gritty nuances of his positions and Taft’s positions, because he was seen as a transcendent figure.” Quoted in Howell Raines, “When Personal Appeals Trump Party Labels,” New York Times, February 9, 2000, A22.

2. This view is not universally shared. Some argue that concerns with “character” have drawn attention away from more important policy issues and should be down played. See Thomas E. Patterson, Out of Order (New York: Knopf, 1993). Others have argued such concerns are irrelevant/ Consider the following syllogistic *non sequitur* by someone writing on Gary Hart’s withdrawal from his candidacy because of his lies, poor judgment and womanizing with Donna Rice,

“Gary Hart’s sex life was thought by many to indicate a lack of respect for women; yet *Ms.*

Magazine gave him a 94% rating on civil rights and women’s issues. Personality traits should be irrelevant to our judgment of the person qua politician.”

In other words, if you agree with a candidate’s political views, his psychology ought not matter.

See Judith Lichtenberg, “The Politics of Character and the Character of Journalism,” Discussion Paper D-2, The Joan Shorenstien Center, Harvard University, October 1989, p. 6.

3. Stanley A. Renshon, “Political Leadership as Social Capital: Governing in a Divided National Culture,” Political Psychology, 2000, 21:1, pp. 199-226.

4. David Maraniss and Ellen Nakashima, “Gore’s Grades Belie Image of Studiousness,” Washington Post, March 19, 2000; A01; see also Bill Turque, Inventing Al Gore (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2000), pp. 44, 93-94, 111.

5. The analysis developed herein is guided by theories of presidential leadership, political psychology and comparative psychoanalytic theory. However, the raw information used to support these analyses are all “public data.” That term, and its implications, deserves brief explication.

Public data is simply information is available to any interested person and which resides in the public domain. Included are multiple, cross-checked news accounts of events, multiple and cross-checked biographical accounts, the words of the candidates themselves, and of others about them. Each kind of public data is used in a specific way for a limited purpose with recognition of each method's advantages and limitations.

Newspaper and other journalistic accounts are primarily used as documentation of the major facts concerning a particular event, eg., a presidential candidate made a particular pledge, a particular event took place within a certain sequence of events, and so on. The accounts themselves are, for the most part, concerned with describing events and the circumstances surrounding them. This material is an important part of the attempt to use

specific "contexts" and "circumstances" in a theoretically useful way. In attempting to answer the question of what happened (as a prelude of trying to answer, why), a presidential researcher might depend on many types of data including presidential news conferences and interviews with major actors, documentary evidence, and so on.

None of these are without flaws. Each can be viewed as a form of commentary designed to influence the framing and understanding of particular narrative lines or incidents. Thus, a presidential press conference can be viewed as the president's narrative of his behavior, and the reasons for it. Likewise, interviews with other actors, provide their own narrative perspective. Even the release of what seems to be less subjective data like a report released by the White House (or its opponents) on the number of welfare mothers helped to find employment is part of a narrative based on a particular sample with a particular program operating with a particular definition of work and of success.

A detailed analysis of the major sources, along with the advantages and limitations of their use, can be found in Stanley A. Renshon, The Psychological Assessment of Presidential Candidates (New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 401-408 and Stanley A. Renshon, High Hopes: The Clinton Presidency and the Politics of Ambition. New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 307-318.

⁶. Donald Kinder and his colleagues found that presidential candidates are mostly judged on the strengths and weakness of the incumbent. See Donald R. Kinder, M. D. Peters, Robert P. Abelson, and Susan Fiske, "Presidential Prototypes," Political Behavior, 2, 1980, pp. 314-337.

⁷. Gary Langer, "Analysis: Public to Clinton: Nice Job. See Ya," January 27, 2000. See www.abcnews.com (March 15, 2000).

⁸. The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, "Retro-Politics, The Political Typology: Version 3.0, Section V: The Clinton Legacy and the Next President, November 11, 1999. See www.people-press.org/typo99sec5.htm (March 12, 2000).

⁹. Gary Langer, "Analysis: Public to Clinton: Nice Job. See Ya," January 27, 2000. See www.abcnews.com (March 15, 2000).

¹⁰. David S. Broder, "The Satisfied but Skeptical Voter," Washington Post, November 15, 1999, p.6.

¹¹. See Paul A. Gigot, "A Vote for Character," The Wall Street Journal, February 3, 2000, A26 or Matthew Cooper, "The Search for Authenticity," Time, November 1, 1999, p. 48.

¹². Quoted in Leslie Wayne, "Forbes Spent millions, but for Little Gain," New York Times, February 10, 2000, A. 26.

¹³. The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, "Retro-Politics, The Political Typology: Version 3.0, Section V: The Clinton Legacy and the Next President, November 11, 1999. See www.people-press.org/typo99sec5.htm (March 12, 2000).

¹⁴. For an exception to this general trend see Dalia Sussman, "Issues Trump Character in New Poll," ABCNEWS, March 2, 2000. See http://www.abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/DailyNews/poll000301_1.html (March 15, 2000).

15. The Terrance Group and Lake/Snell/Perry Associates, "Battleground 2000: A Survey of Voters Attitudes for Voter.Com, March 12-13, 2000. See <http://www.voter.com> (May 18, 2000).

16. The Gallup Poll Editorial Staff, "Setting the Stage: Election 2000 Part I: Mood of America," January 22, 2000. See <http://www.gallup.com/poll/releases/pr000122.asp> (March 12, 2000)

The question reads: Which of the following do you think will be most important to you when you decide who to vote for -- [ROTATE: Where the candidates stand on issues that matter to you (or) the leadership skills and vision you think the candidates would have as president]?

	Stance on issues/	Leadership skills and	vision/	Both equally (vol.)/	Neither (vol.)/	No opinion
<u>Likely Voters</u>	36%	51	12	1	*	
(LV)						
Jan 7-10						
2000						

<u>National Adults</u>	37%	49	10	1	3	
(NA)						
Jan 7-10						
2000						

17. The Gallup Poll Editorial Staff, "Setting the Stage: Election 2000 Part I: Mood of America," January 22, 2000. See <http://www.gallup.com/poll/releases/pr000122.asp> (March 12, 2000)

	Republicans	Independents	Democrats
Leadership and Vision	51%	54%	44%
Stance on Issues	33	33	42
Both Equally	13	12	11

18. Sean Wilentz, for example, characterizes the term as a "fraud." See Sean Wilentz, "Yawn," The New Republic, February 28, 2000, p. 6 and Sean Wilentz, The New Republic, March 6, 2000, p. 8.

19. E. J. Dionne Jr., "A Return to Political Civility?," Washington Post, April 28, 2000; A31.

20. See for example, John F. Harris, "As Term Wanes, 'Clinton Fatigue' Yields to Nostalgia," Washington Post, May 1, 2000, A01. Harris' anecdotal information was not supported by more representative data. The Pew survey reported,

"Despite talk that the public is longing for an extended Clinton era, the president's favorability ratings have dropped significantly since last year. Less than half of the public (48%) now rates Clinton very or mostly favorable compared to 55% in March, 1999. These are among the lowest ratings the president has received since he took office in 1992. Clinton has lost some ground among most major demographic groups. Most notable, perhaps, is Clinton's loss among core Democrats. One year ago, 85% of Democrats said their overall opinion of Clinton was very favorable or mostly favorable. Today, that number is 73%. Young men and African-Americans view Clinton more favorably than members of other demographic groups. Almost six-in-ten men age 18-29 (59%) give Clinton a favorable rating, compared to only 46% of men over age 50. A strong majority of blacks (84%) also continue to view Clinton in a positive light."

See The Pew Center for the Press and the Public, "Voter Preferences Vacillate," May 11, 2000 <http://www.people-press.org/may00rpt2.htm> (December 8, 2000).

21. Daniel Merkle, "Clinton Fatigue Is Still a Drag for Gore," AbcNews, March 1, 2000. See <http://www.abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/DailyNews/poll000301.html> (March 16, 2000)

Significant Factors Predicting Gore/Bush Vote (Beta Weights)

	2/27/00	9/2/99
Candidate favorability		
Bush	.36	.29
Gore	.26	.29
Party identification	.22	.24
Clinton fatigue	.18	.20

22. David W. Moore, "Clinton Factor" May Be Hurting Gore in Presidential Race," The Gallup Organization, March 16, 2000. See <http://www.gallup.com/poll/releases/pr000316.asp> (March 17, 2000).

23. Transcript, "interview with George W. Bush," Nightline, March 14, 2000. See www.abcnews.go.com/onair/nightline/transcripts/n100314_trans.html (March 15, 2000).

24. Using factor and cluster analysis to place individuals, respondents were asked a series of questions in eight areas: environmentalism, religion and morality, social tolerance, social justice, business sentiment, financial security, anti-government sentiment, and patriotism/militarism. More specific descriptions of the methodology and of the groups may be found at: www.people-press.org/typo99sec.1.htm (March 1, 2000)

²⁵25. R.W. Apple, Jr., "Bush Needs McCain Backers, but Winning Their Votes Won't Be Easy," New York Times, March 9, 2000, A.20.

²⁶26. Data reported in the paragraphs that follow are drawn from exit polls conducted by a consortium of news organizations and reported on ABC news. These data may be found at <http://abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/2000vote> (March 8, 2000)

²⁷27. Stephan J. Wayne, The Road to the White House 2000: The Politics of Presidential Elections. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000)

²⁸28. In Missouri, Democrats said that social security and medicare issues weighted relatively heavily (30%), but personal qualities like standing up for what you believe (25%), having the right experience (22%), being a strong and decisive leader (19%) and not being a typical politician (10%) carried a great overall weight than the remaining policy issues that voters selected as important.

In New York the same pattern emerged among Democrats. Personal qualities like having the right experience (25%), standing up for beliefs (23%) being a strong and decisive leader (13%) generally carried more cumulative weight than the most important issues (social security/medicare (21%), education (16%), and health care (12%).

²⁹29. Ohio Republicans thought that standing up for what you believe (33%), being a strong and decisive leaders (24%) carried more weight than the top to policy issues, reflecting moral values (33%) tax reform (15%). In Missouri, standing up for what you believe (34%) and being a strong and decisive leader (18%) outweighed the two top policy issues, moral values (34%) and tax reform (12%). While in New York, standing up for what you believe (36%) and being a strong and decisive leader (19%), out weighed the top two policy issues, moral values (26%) and social security/medicare (17%).

³⁰30. Richard Morin and Claudia Deane, "Why the Fla. Exit Polls Were Wrong" Washington Post, November 8, 2000.

³¹31. Robin Tonner and Janet Elder, "An Electorate Largely Split Reflects a Race So Very Tight," New York Times, November 14, 2000.

³²32. John Zaller, "Monica Lewinsky's Contribution to Political Science," PS: Political Science and Politics, 31:2 (1998), p. 188.

³³33. Quoted in Frank Bruni, From the Ruling Class, Meet the Next President, New York Times, March 12, 2000, wk.1. See also David Maraniss and Ellen Nakashima, "Lessons From the Father," Washington Post, October 18, 1999, A6; and Bob Zelnick, Gore: A Political Life (Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 1999).

³⁴34. Quoted in Bob Zelnick, Gore: A Political Life (Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 1999), p. 30.

³⁵35. Bill Minutaglio, First Son: George W. Bush and the Bush Family Dynasty (New York: Times Books, 1999).

³⁶36. Representative works on political leadership include: James M. Burns. Leadership (New York: Harper and Row,1978); Alexander L George, "The 'operational code': A neglected approach to the study of political leadership and decision making" International Studies Quarterly. 1969, 13, 190-222; Fred I. Greenstein. The Hidden Hand Presidency (New York: Basic, 1984); Fred I. Greenstein (ed). Leadership in the Modern Presidency (Cambridge,

Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998); Ronald Heifetz. Leadership without Easy Answers (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994); Irving Janis. Crucial decisions: Leadership in Policy making and-crisis Management (New York: Free Press, 1989); Richard Neustadt. Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The politics of leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan (New York: Free Press, 1990[1960]); Glenn D. Paige. The Scientific Study of Political Leadership (New York: Free Press, 1977); Stephen Skowronek. The Politics that Presidents Make (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1993); Robert C. Tucker. Politics as Leadership (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1981), and Jeffrey Tulis. The Rhetoric Presidency (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).

³⁷37. Stanley A. Renshon. The Psychological Assessment of Presidential Candidates (New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 226-228.

³⁸38. Consolidation also involves setting up and into motion policy structures or procedural regimes which solidify the results of the president's policy judgments. They may involve the creation of new agencies, working groups or other institutional forms. Or, it might combine these with refocusing the functions or direction of existing policy structures. These methods of consolidation also represent a way in which a president's policy decisions can have an enduring effect. They are, in essence, a legacy of a president's judgment and leadership.

³⁹39. Fred I. Greenstein. The Hidden Hand Presidency. New York Basic Books, 1984.

⁴⁰40. Stanley A. Renshon. High Hopes: The Clinton Presidency and the Politics of Ambition. New York: New York University Press, 1996, 74-75.

⁴¹41. James M. Burns. Leadership (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), p. 1. Given this apparent nostalgia for “titans” of whatever political stripe, it is small wonder that he found Bill Clinton sadly lacking in the heroic aspirations that were, in Burns’ view, the real failure of his presidency. See James MacGregor Burns and Georgia J. Sorenson, Dead Center: Clinton-Gore Leadership and the Perils and Moderation (New York: Scribner, 2000).

⁴²42. Sigmund Freud, Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego (1920) in Standard Edition, Vol. 18, (London: Hogarth Press, 1974).

⁴³43. See Neustadt’s classic distinction between presidents as leaders or clerks, Richard Neustadt. Presidential Power (New York: Wiley, 1960).

⁴⁴44. James Davidson Hunter. Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America (New York: Basic Books, 1993).

⁴⁵45. Paul DiMaggio, et. al. 1996. “Have American Attitudes Become More Polarized?”, American Journal of Sociology, 102:3, pp. 690-755. See also Alan Wolfe. 1996. Marginalized in the Middle (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), and more recently, Alan Wolfe. 1996. One Nation After All (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

⁴⁶46. Charles Murray, “Americans Remain Wary of Washington,” The Wall Steet Journal, December 23, 1997, A14; Stephen Wayne, et al. The Politics of American Government, Second Edition. (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997), p. 216.

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47. Pew Center for People and the Press, "Deconstructing Distrust: How Americans View Government," March 10, 1998; for other views of the cause of the decline of public trust see Joseph S. Nye, Jr. et al. (Eds), Why People Don't Trust Government (Cambridge, Ma: Harvard University Press, 1997).
48. Cited in Howard Kurtz, "Americans Wait for the Punch Line on Impeachment as the Senate Trial Proceeds, Comedians Deliver the News," The Washington Post, January 26, 1999, A01.
49. Christina Duff, "Among Factors that Influence People's Lives, Politics Ranks at the Bottom," The Wall Street Journal, September 17, 1998, A9.
50. Steven A. Holmes, "Down About the Count," New York Times, April 9, 2000, wk. 1. Subsequently, after intensive efforts, the census return rate was able to stem the decline evidence in past decades, but still did not reach the director's stated goal. See Paul Zielbauer, "Cities Failing To Heed Call Of the Census," New York Times, April 21, 2000, A1.
51. W. Lance Bennett, "The UnCivic Culture: Communication, Identity, and the Rise of Lifestyle Politics," PS: Political Science and Politics, December, 1988, pp. 741-761.
52. Robert E. Lane, "Interpersonal Relationships and Leadership in a 'Cold' Society," Comparative Politics, July, 1978, pp. 443-460.
53. Jay G. Blumer and Dennis Kavanaugh, "A Third Age of Political Communications: Where is it Heading?," Paper Presented to the Roundtable on Seeking Responsibilities for Political Communication, London, 1988. In George Bush's campaign against John McCain in New York State, specific attacks were targeted to specific regions where they might be most effective. So, Mr. McCain's vote against money to support a hospital specializing in breast cancer treatment was targeted to Long Island, cite of the hospital. Another piece of mail was sent to Republican voters in districts with a heavy concentration of farmers, noting that Mr. McCain had opposed letting New York enter the Northeast Dairy Compact, which would have provided higher payments for milk. Still another was sent to the northern reaches of New York, cited Mr. McCain's votes against aid to help people paying fuel costs. See Adam Nagourney and Richard Perez-Pena, "In New York, a Sharp Attack Awaits McCain," New York Times, March 2, 2000, A1.
54. See for example, Andrew L. Shapiro .The Control Revolution: How the Internet is Putting Individuals in Charge and Changing the World We know (New York: BBS, 1999), pp.118-120.
55. Robert Putnam. Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community (New York: Scribners, 2000).
56. Katherine Q. Seelye, "Gore Proposal Would Create \$115 Billion Education Fund," New York Times, December 16, 1999, A1.
57. Ceci Connolly, "Analysis: Finance Plan May Reform Gore's Image," Washington Post, March 28, 2000; A06.
58. Associated Press, "Gore Urges \$2 Billion Park Efforts," Washington Post, November 15, 1999; A02.
59. Quoted in John F. Harris and Mike Allen, "Democrats Sketch Shapes Of Prospective Presidencies Bradley Envisions a Cleansing, Gore a Big Agenda," Washington Post, January 4, 2000; A01.

⁶⁰. Mr. Gore notes his support of free trade as an example of his capacity to distance himself from labor unions that support him. Asked about reverberations among unions, he replied: "Some of them have not yet endorsed me because of the fact that I'm in favor of this legislation. Others have endorsed me in spite of our disagreement on this legislation because I agree with them on 90 percent of the issues. And George Bush disagrees with them on 100 percent of the issues. I think it's the right thing." Quoted in Richard L. Berke and Katherine Q. Seelye, "With a Convert's Passion, Gore Pledges Campaign Finance Reform," The New York Times, March 12, 2000.

Yet, the reporters point out in the same article that on the campaign trail, Mr. Gore hardly mentions the trade agreement. And in an appearance before seeking their endorsement, Mr. Gore never brought up his position, but instead spoke of their essential agreement on all other issues important to them.

⁶¹. Mr. Gore's campaign bus has a banner on its side proclaiming: "AL GORE FIGHTING FOR US" in three-foot-high letters. At a campaign speech in Albany New York, Mr. Gore who used the word "fight" 12 times in 10 minutes. See Mike Allen, "Road Trips in Northeast Put Contrasts Into Focus Gore's Full Force Makes Bradley Seem Subtle," Washington Post, February 21, 2000; A09.

⁶². Howard Kurtz and Ben White, "Forbes Signals He Will Withdraw Delaware Defeat Was Key, Aides Say," The Washington Post, February 10, 2000; A06.

⁶³. Clifford J. Levy, "The Ad Campaign: Making Breast Cancer a Political Issue Against McCain," New York Times, March 4, 2000.

⁶⁴. Actually, Mr. McCain used the term "gook" repeatedly to reporters on the "straight talk express." At first, he justified the use of the term because of the behavior of his captors toward him and the other prisoners, but later before the California primary, he apologized. The story was not widely reported. See Anthony Ramerzez, "McCain's Ethnic Slur Gone but not Forgotten," Associated Press story reported in the New York Times, March 5, 2000, A23.

⁶⁵. Nicholas D. Kristof, "Political Memo: Rival Makes Bush Better Campaigner," New York Times, March 3, 2000, A23. When Mr. Bush was repeatedly pressed to respond to published reports that Mr. McCain whose signature issue was campaign finance reform, had intervened repeatedly for large contributors and had received substantial contributions from them, resisted invitations to use the word "hypocrite." See Jim Yardley with Fran Bruni, "Bush Takes tougher Line and Emphasizes Reform," New York Times, February 8, 2000, A20.

⁶⁶. Nicholas D. Kristof, "Political Memo: Rival Makes Bush Better Campaigner," New York Times, March 3, 2000, A23.

⁶⁷. One reporter covering Mr. Gore noted the connection as follows:

"Gore doesn't so much ask for a vote as insist on it. He starts every town meeting by promising to answer every voter's question, no matter how long it takes. It is a shtick--wherever he goes, he says, "If necessary, I'll stay here till March 7"--but he follows through with earnestness...he took questions at a gymnasium in Springfield, Mass., for more than three hours. By that time, all but a dozen of the 300 audience members had filtered out."Would you like to add comments about anything I might have overlooked in my

treatment of this?" he asked a woman who had just heard an exhaustive account of his views on homeless people. Later, he asked, "Did that sound like a good agenda to you? I'm trying to convince you all to vote for me."

See Mike Allen, "Road Trips in Northeast Put Contrasts Into Focus Gore's Full Force Makes Bradley Seem Subtle," Washington Post, February 21, 2000; A09.

⁶⁸. One New York Times reporter captured this element in comparing the motivations of Mr. Gore and Mr. Bush. He quotes the latter as saying,

"the most difficult part of that endeavor[the campaign] was being on the road." It all made for an interesting contrast. Vice President Al Gore comes off as one of the most ardent, ambitious aspirants to the Oval Office in quite some time, a man who would crawl across broken glass to get there. Mr. Bush comes off as a man who wants it, but not at any price, and sometimes not as much as he wants to wake up in his own bed at the Governor's Mansion in Austin, Tex., wander downstairs to make a pot of coffee, let out the pets and fetch the newspaper."

Quoted in Frank Bruni, "Campaign Notebook: A Wistful Bush Reflects on Hearth and Home," New York Times, January 28, 2000, A23.

⁶⁹. Ceci Connolly noted that, "The first time Al Gore ran for president, his mother slipped him a note as he prepared for an Iowa debate: 'Smile, Relax, Attack.' Twelve years later, the dutiful son is still following her advice." Quoted in Ceci Connolly, "'New' Gore Bears Striking Resemblance to '88's," Washington Post, December 11, 1999; A08.