

I was always amazed in, in the Georgia race, the Senate race, Max Cleveland, that if you had sat around a room, and say "okay, we have a candidate who served his country, he left three limbs in Vietnam." Went on to state service and federal service. What was the charge you would bring against him? What was the case that you would make against him? Patriotism. It's, it's rather extraordinary, but successful. And, and I don't know all the details, but it's, and this is not necessarily a partisan issue because all parties have, I'm sure, ample evidence to throw at the other one in terms of negative campaigning. What is often said, of course, is the problem with negative campaigning is that it works. So ultimately it's up to us as citizens, as voters, to reflect on that. Because it's not just enough to blame a candidate or his or her staff. Citizens have a role, we need to read more, we need to look at broad evidence. And the good news for students, particularly today, there's not just one source. The great news about technology and access to information, you go to blogs, websites, different journals, different reports, so much information easily available to us, so we're not just locked into one source as we might have been thirty years ago. Of one major news organization that's set a tone. Varying viewpoints can, can be easily accessed, and knowledge is power, and we have the power, the greater access to information.

To the second, in terms of technology, you're absolutely right you can just chart it, every four years there was an advance. When I was on the Dukakis campaign there was a cell phone for the traveling party which was as big as a shoebox, and John Sasso would have it. So you'd borrow John's cell phone to call the headquarters of something relatively important. And it was this large, and then by '92 it had advanced and of course now we're all able to see the effects of it. So that the tracking of technology and what that means to knit together a campaign structure, particularly in the post-'88, rapid response mantra, particularly for Democrats. Access to information, knowledge, coordinating a message, getting the requisite clearances, is greatly advantaged from faxing. On the '92 campaign I could then see the rise of Internet sites and the political hotline that was a digest of the political news, a green wire which was a digest of the environmental news. But at every stop we made, on the Gore plane, four or five stops a day, it was printed out, put into a binder in a tab, for Senator Gore. The hotline, green wire, wire reports, paper copies, printed out. We had access to the notion of this, but now this of course would be handheld, and everyone immediate access to it. But I have a distinct recollection there was a staff member on our plane who was in charge of the binder because

it was freshened after every stop. What the wires said about that event, or Governor Clinton's events, the hotline, tabbed. This seems like I'm talking about Millard Fillmore's election, you know, and it was, yeah, it was 1992. So technology hugely important, and similarly then media. The rise of, of cable and its sophistication, and the good news is again, we were so advantaged I think by the multiplicity of news organizations now. Their particular health is another question in terms of the business model today that they're still working through but we have a great opportunity now because of many sources of information. That has just exploded, from cable to blog sites to postings that, now it has a challenge for any political figure to how to harness that. But I guess it was brought into very clear lens when I was on the White House staff and as Director of Communications my office in the West Wing was traditionally the Press Secretary's office. And in the corner of the office was a wet bar, with a refrigerator and a sink. And of course, in prior days, the press staff, the communications staff, would invite the press corps in, after the news cycle, for a drink. Now this is even in '93, '94, it'd be hard to figure out when is the "end" of the news cycle. Is it after the nightly news, before Larry King, before Nightline, after Nightline. Let alone the wide advance. In my office there were four TVs, for the three networks plus CNN. This is 1994, and now, you'd need a bank of, it would look like a spy to have all the TVs that you would need to do it. So the multiplicity of news organizations is both friend and foe, to elected officials and those seeking office.

I was on a conference call, they brought together the Vice Presidential campaign managers, right before Obama was going to announce his Vice President, to talk to us. So it was Kerry, Lieberman's, Gore's person, Edwards' person, and we were talking about, we didn't, at that point Senator Obama hadn't decided yet, or we weren't told. And we were talking about how to start it, some people were saying, "oh you can start on the Today show, do this," and David Plouffe goes "well we're thinking of texting it to our supporters." And I can remember sitting in my, in my house on this conference call thinking, this is a whole new day. This is not a traditional media strategy, they weren't going to do a press conference first, it wasn't going to be gloated on a morning show. This was not going to be time for a primetime network news coverage, it was texted first to their supporters. And, in many ways it was like we had all worked for a candidate a hundred years prior, because it was so irrelevant, some of the conversations.

But what we've seen with the press more broadly is, not only the 24/7 coverage, not only the growth of cable and other news organizations, but there is a growing need of reporters and news organizations to analyze the news. Rather than simply just first to report it. And so the coverage changes when it's immediately through the lens of news analysis and what this will mean, A. And secondarily there is a, I think we all want a skeptical press, and a press that is probing and making sure that there's an authentic presentation. All too frequently sometimes we move from skeptical to cynical, and that is concerning I think as a citizen, that, that if the daily diet of what we're receiving in messages is that those in elected office, in government, seeking office, if it's a very cynical presentation I have grave concerns, particularly for young people that what they're seeing was not what I saw on my bicycle when I was twelve or thirteen years old with, not what I've seen with Governor Dukakis. Who could have had many pathways of professional accomplishment, but he chose, he elected to slug it out in a Massachusetts legislature, in a Governor's office, a defeat. To come back to serve our country, it's not what I saw in Bill Clinton. A man of enormous talents and opportunities, but really saved his talent and focus for civic engagement. And so it's too bad more Americans can't see that, because they're a good, fine, decent, highly accomplished men and women serving in elected office and around them, as staff people. And you just hope that more young people could see that. And it's what I worry about with an often too cynical presentation, I want a skeptical view, I want an aggressive press corps to sort of ferret out concerning acts of government or political folks. But I also want it recognized that our civic engagement is important to all of us.

It's really hard to talk about politics without the importance of money and what that means. That is a reality, it fuels a plane, it buys TV ads, it secures staff and consultants, it is defining. And in primaries, it's the silent primary, it's the first effort, who has amassed resources. You see it at a Presidential level, you see it at a local level, Congressional level, Gubernatorial level. Who has raised the most money? It's the first toll gate of decision making, perceived anyway, for party leaders and political press as a proxy for their competence, for their political savvy, for organization and bringing the money together. And in some ways it's fair, because it shows a following, but in other ways it also shows the depth of their own pockets potentially, which is troubling in terms of citizen representatives that our founding fathers imagined. And what it means now. So from *Buckley v. Valeo* to *United*, there's been a history now, and a very intricate history frankly,

where constitutional reflections of the court, and then very creative political engineering by political parties and their surrogates. And an around to, if not circumvent then certainly to maximize the opportunities that they have to do it. The most recent, in this cycle of course, is the Super PACs. In the sheer nature of gifting, the relative anonymity that exists. And so it is our 2012 challenge. Every cycle has seemingly had it, and the level of cynicism that has brought to bear of this, of just thinking of ways around, through and some ways to negotiate this is significant.

Clearly, I think Americans are troubled by this, because again it fuels that sense of cynicism on the part of citizens. "I'm not going to become engaged because it's all about big money. My voice counts less than a billionaire from the West." That's a tragic outcome, that is not what the founding fathers imagined. Certainly not what de Tocqueville saw when he traveled the country of civic engagement and community spirit. That's not what you see in America. I mean the other side of this of course is that the level of service is going up, more and more Americans being engaged. I think particularly young people, I'm a college President, I was Director of the Peace Corps, I serve on the corporation of the National Service Board, so I've seen this generation. They're equally idealistic as other generations. They may not be exhibiting it in ways that their parents did in the 60's or 70's by protesting or taking over college Presidents' offices, but they're equally idealistic. It's pragmatic, it's what can they do in their part of the world. And that's why I think you see Americorps being so popular, Teach for America, Peace Corps applications up. So the future is bright, I'm very optimistic for what they care about. How to make a difference in their world. Their generations ahead of them may have failed them on the electorate part of this, that there's lots of ways to go at change, lots of ways to exhibit that, and they're finding that. In local communities, in cities, and in school districts, in mentoring across this country. And then, so that gives me hope that there will be the forces of change on the electoral level. If young people get involved, they make the kind of difference I see them making across this country in terms of community service, the electoral process can and will benefit from that.