

The Presidents vs. the Press: A Behind-the-Scenes Look at the Clash Between Two American Institutions



The Presidents vs. the Press: The Endless Battle between the White House and the Media--from the Founding Fathers to Fake News by Harold Holzer

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The relationship between the presidents of the United States and the press has always been a complex one. The press has the power to hold the president accountable for his actions, but it can also be used to attack the president or to spread misinformation. The president, in turn, has the power to grant or deny access to the press, and he can also use the bully pulpit to try to control the media narrative.

In recent years, the relationship between the presidents and the press has become increasingly adversarial. President Donald Trump has repeatedly

attacked the media as "fake news" and has accused the press of being biased against him. This has led to a decline in trust in the media, and it has made it more difficult for the press to hold the president accountable.

In his new book, *The Presidents vs. the Press*, author Michael Beschloss takes a behind-the-scenes look at the complex relationship between the two American institutions. Beschloss draws on his extensive research to reveal the ways in which the press has both helped and hindered the presidency, and how the presidents have tried to control or manipulate the media. This book is an essential read for anyone interested in American politics, history, or journalism.

The Early Years: George Washington to Andrew Jackson

The relationship between the presidents and the press was relatively cooperative in the early years of the republic. George Washington and Thomas Jefferson both recognized the importance of a free press, and they generally allowed the press to operate without interference. However, there were some exceptions to this rule. For example, Washington deported a French journalist who was critical of his administration, and Jefferson prosecuted several newspapers for seditious libel.

The relationship between the presidents and the press became more adversarial during the presidency of Andrew Jackson. Jackson was a populist who distrusted the elite, and he often blamed the press for his political problems. Jackson also used the bully pulpit to attack the press, and he even threatened to hang one newspaper editor.

The Civil War and Reconstruction

The Civil War and Reconstruction were a time of great tension between the presidents and the press. President Abraham Lincoln was often critical of the press, and he sometimes used the military to suppress newspapers that were critical of his administration. However, Lincoln also recognized the importance of a free press, and he generally allowed the press to operate without interference.

The relationship between the presidents and the press became even more adversarial during the Reconstruction era. President Andrew Johnson was impeached in part because of his attacks on the press, and President Ulysses S. Grant was often criticized by the press for his corruption and incompetence.

The 20th Century

The relationship between the presidents and the press continued to be adversarial in the 20th century. President Theodore Roosevelt was a master of public relations, and he used the press to promote his agenda. However, Roosevelt also had a thin skin, and he often lashed out at the press when he was criticized.

The relationship between the presidents and the press became even more adversarial during the Cold War. President Harry Truman was often critical of the press, and he accused the press of being too soft on communism. President Dwight Eisenhower was also critical of the press, and he sometimes used the bully pulpit to try to control the media narrative.

The relationship between the presidents and the press reached a low point during the presidency of Richard Nixon. Nixon was a paranoid and secretive man, and he distrusted the press. Nixon also tried to use the

power of the presidency to control the media narrative, and he even created a special unit within the White House to target the press.

The 21st Century

The relationship between the presidents and the press has continued to be adversarial in the 21st century. President George W. Bush was often critical of the press, and he accused the press of being biased against him.

President Barack Obama also had a difficult relationship with the press, and he was often criticized by the press for his policies and his personality.

President Donald Trump has taken the adversarial relationship between the presidents and the press to a new level. Trump has repeatedly attacked the media as "fake news" and has accused the press of being biased against him. This has led to a decline in trust in the media, and it has made it more difficult for the press to hold the president accountable.

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The book *The Presidents vs. the Press* provides a fascinating look at the complex relationship between the two American institutions. This book is an essential read for anyone interested in American politics, history, or journalism.



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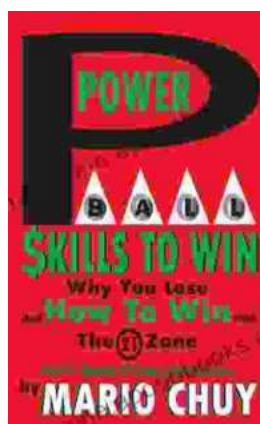
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