

# Media and Politics

Strange Bedfellows

# The First Amendment

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

# Social Responsibility

- Citizens in a democracy need to be informed to participate in politics
- Mass media provides citizens with this information

# Problems with Covering Politics

- Opinion as analysis or news
- Picking out what is relevant
  - Useful
  - Sufficient
  - Trustworthy
  - Target Audience
  - Transparency: Who is “speaking”
  - Pluralism: Different viewpoints
  - Verisimilitude: Does it seem truthful

# Election Stories

- More than a horserace?
- Issues v. strategy and tactics
- Attack politics v. policy

# Candidates

- Media is how people learn about candidates
  - Politically
  - Personally
- Candidates have a “script”
  - Message
  - Behind the message
- Character v. Privacy

# Character Issues

- Trust
- Candidates self-worth/self-esteem
- Authority
- Early influences
- Social skills
- Flexibility
- Historical Moment

# Guard Dog or Lap Dog

- Media Leaks
  - Acceptable way of doing business?
  - Can alter the outcome?
- Overemphasis on wrongdoing
- Overemphasis on events and conflicts



# Terrorism

- Terrorists and the media have a symbiotic relationship
- PATRIOT Act
  - Includes provision to block journalists from evaluating its effectiveness
  - Search and seizure without court approval
  - Incarceration without bail or public notice