

# Contents

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	IX
<i>Preface and Acknowledgments</i>	XI

## **1 Introduction: Under the President's Clothes** 1

---

How We Respond to the Message	6
Where We Get the Message	9
How We Feel About the Political World Of Politics and Governance	11
Conclusion	13
	21

## **2 Two Hundred Years of Politics and Reporting** 25

---

From Party Press to Penny Press	29
News Managers: Press or Political Figures?	32
Congress—Live	52
Harry and Louise	53
Conclusion	55

## **3 A War of Words: Coverage of Politics and the Politics of Coverage** 59

---

Political Parties: Missing in Action	65
Campaign Advisers: Soldiers of Fortune	80
Reporters: The Pen as Sword	86
The Public: Prisoners of War?	90
Conclusion	94

<b>4</b>	<b>Presidential Governance and Other Fantasies</b>	95
.....		
	The President: Impotence Despite Omnipotence	100
	Congress: Gridlock Amid Posturing	115
	Interest Groups: Bargaining for Self-Gain	120
	Conclusion	123
<b>5</b>	<b>What About Us?</b>	127
.....		
	Real Variety or More of the Same?	130
	Incentive to Change?	137
	Conclusion	142
	<i>Discussion Questions</i>	145
	<i>Glossary</i>	149
	<i>Notes</i>	153
	<i>References</i>	157
	<i>About the Book and Author</i>	163
	<i>Index</i>	165

## *Illustrations*

### *Boxes*

- 5.1 Themes and guests featured on major network and cable news programs, October 15–16, 1992 135

### *Figures*

- 1.1 Trustworthiness of television and newspapers compared, 1959–1992 12  
1.2 Decline in public trust in government, 1958–1992 14  
1.3 Perceived honesty and ethical standards of media and government officials, 1992 15
- 3.1 Distribution of CBS news coverage by type of contest, 1980 64  
3.2 Newspaper presidential election stories about campaign politics, 1968–1980 70  
3.3 Length of television sound bites of presidential candidates, 1968 and 1988 87  
3.4 Comparison of “bad news” and “good news” coverage of presidential candidates in magazines, 1960–1992 91

### *Photos*

- FDR’s strategic use of radio gave millions of listeners an unprecedented sense of access to the presidency 34  
Through the camera lens, the somber Richard M. Nixon seems a drab alternative to the vigorous John F. Kennedy 43  
Television emerges as a powerful force in international policymaking when it personalizes the Vietnam War for the U.S. audience 46  
President Clinton acts as “Donahue-in-chief” as he assumes the role of talk-show host during a nationally televised town meeting on health care 110  
Contemporary legislative leaders like Newt Gingrich aggressively play to cameras and reporters 117