Campaign Apologia as Process: Dan Quayle's Defense of his National Guard Service

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CAMPAIGN APOLOGIA AS PROCESS:
DAN QUAYLE'S DEFENSE OF HIS NATIONAL GUARD SERVICE

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by
Paula L. Harrison
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CAMPAIGN APOLOGIA AS PROCESS:
DAN QUAYLE’S DEFENSE OF HIS NATIONAL GUARD SERVICE

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CAMPAIGN APOLOGIA AS PROCESS: 
DAN QUAYLE'S DEFENSE OF HIS NATIONAL GUARD SERVICE

Paula L. Harrison 
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This thesis contains an analysis of apologia from the 1988 national presidential campaign which resulted from Republican vice-presidential candidate Dan Quayle’s disclosure that he served in the National Guard during the Vietnam War. Quayle’s revelation created a “gaffe sequence” played out in the media over a period of approximately two weeks. The rhetorical situation dictated the use of an eclectic methodology to evaluate apologia generated in response to media questions about Quayle’s avoidance of active military service.

Quayle’s defense included minimalizing the issue through avoidance and denial during staged and spontaneous contact with the media, and also the rhetorical support of other Republicans. Ultimately, he overcame the issue by turning questions about his competence and character into questions about the media’s ethos. Notwithstanding, the media’s investigation of the relatively unknown Quayle pointed to the larger issue of his qualifications for national office. Although Quayle’s strategy was successful, the initial gaffe raised questions about Quayle’s ethos which persist to this day.

The study yielded three important insights about apologia: (1) apologia is not a single response, nor responses given in a single setting; (2) not only does apologia repair an ethos, it can also help construct an ethos in cases where the public knows little or nothing about a political figure; (3) apologia includes the rhetorical support of others. Additionally, critics must continue refining existing methodologies as they seek to understand rhetorical phenomena.
Look around me
I can see my life before me
Running rings around the way it
Used to be

I am older now
I have more than what I wanted
But I wish that I had started
Long before I did

And there’s so much time to make up
Everywhere you turn
Time we have wasted on the way

So much water moving
Underneath the bridge
Let the water come and carry us away

Graham Nash, *Wasted On The Way*
CHAPTER 1
THE RHETORIC OF APOLOGIA: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Soon to be the nominee of his party and eager to emerge from the shadow of President Ronald Reagan, Republican Vice-President George Bush anticipated choosing a running mate who would help define his candidacy. Bush considered a cross-section of individuals, the list reading like a "Who's Who" of the Republican Party: Senator Bob Dole, Representative Jack Kemp, Senator Alan Simpson, Senator Dan Quayle, former Secretary of Transportation Elizabeth Dole, and Governor John Sununu, to name just a few. Following the screening process, Bush delayed disclosure of his decision. Speculation increased. Had Bush chosen a running mate, and if so, what qualifications were important to him? Columnist David Broder speculated about the type of person Bush should consider.

Whatever he [Bush] needs in a running mate to help win the election is less important than what he needs in a vice-president if he and his party are to govern this fast-changing nation successfully . . . He needs someone a generation younger than himself, someone with kids in school who can translate the future to him in personal terms. And he needs someone who can understand the needs, the dreams and the anxieties of the millions of Americans to whom the Republican party still looks like a closed club.

On 16 August 1988, two days after this commentary appeared, George

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1 The list of candidates differs according to various media but these names appear in most accounts.

Bush announced the selection of Senator J. Danforth Quayle of Indiana as his vice-presidential running mate. Immediately following the announcement, questions arose regarding the little-known senator's qualifications for the position. The media reported responses ranging from surprise to dismay from both Republicans and Democrats. 

Editorials and syndicated columns suggested that Quayle lacked the experience and mettle required for the position.

The day after the announcement, Bush and Quayle held a joint press conference designed to introduce the team. Instead of being a smooth introduction to the public, the event generated interest in Quayle's National Guard service during the Vietnam War. Although Bush introduced him as "a man of the future," the media saw Quayle as a man with a past. From its inception, Quayle's nomination caused a media debate about his character and qualifications for the vice-presidency.

Although the specific debate over Quayle's National Guard service lasted a relatively short time (according to the campaign, until the press conference in Huntington, Indiana on 19 August), the issue dogged him through the first week of solo campaigning (24-27 August). The issue's appearance pointed to the subsequent larger issues of Quayle's

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3 The 17 August 1988 Washington Post reported that Democratic Presidential candidate Michael Dukakis was surprised by Bush's choice. The same article mentioned that some Republican delegates were concerned that Quayle was not well known and wondered if he had the experience to fill the role. Other newspapers echoed the same concern.

4 Editorials in the New York Times suggested Quayle's selection described a poor decision by Bush. Other newspapers commented on Quayle's inexperience at the national level.

5 Bush used this phrase in introducing Dan Quayle on the New Orleans riverfront on 16 August 1988. It appeared within the headline for the story in some of the newspapers.
competence and privilege. Did Quayle use family influence to avoid military service in Vietnam? Did Quayle’s lack of competence necessitate family intervention to make possible his education and various employment? The National Guard issue was a red flag to the media and public signaling something amiss with Bush’s selection. Dissatisfied with Quayle’s responses, the media pursued the issue by continued newspaper and television coverage.

**Rationale**

Repetition of allegations and the defense of them lends legitimacy to an issue. The success or failure of political campaigns may depend on how effectively the candidates defend themselves against attacks on their characters and restore their political facades. In the post-Watergate era, the media have been especially diligent in pursuing issues reflecting on candidates’ merits to hold public offices. Research literature contains critical analyses directed at how political figures should have managed their rhetorical strategies when defending themselves. Analysis of “defense rhetoric” indicates that campaigns

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"react" instead of "proact" by failing to anticipate possible public response to issues pertaining to a candidate's fitness for office. The reactive strategies employed by the Bush/Quayle campaign, when explaining his membership in the National Guard, included deliberate avoidance of responses utilized by previous vice-presidential candidates who defended their competence, character, and leadership ability.

Representative Vice-Presidential Campaigns and Their Significance

Because failure to respond effectively to the gaffes of a vice-presidential candidate may affect the results of an election, a study of apologia necessitates reviewing the role of vice-presidential candidates in recent elections. At best, vice-presidential candidates "balance" the party ticket by appealing to the other extreme of political sentiments held by various groups within the party. At worst, candidate selections alienate factions within the party either because of what they symbolize or because of personal history. Ideally, vice-presidential candidates remain in the background while campaigning for the presidential candidate and party platform. Recent presidential campaigns illustrate how vice-presidential candidates themselves become issues.

Patton argued that George McGovern's selection and subsequent rejection of Thomas Eagleton during the 1972 election created a dilemma for the electorate. McGovern campaigned on the value of integrity and selected a running mate accordingly. Following his selection, Eagleton disclosed his history of hospitalization and treatment for exhaustion. McGovern supported his running mate "one thousand percent," but later dropped him from the ticket when it appeared that Eagleton's history
could prevent McGovern's election. Patton concluded that McGovern's actions weakened the public's perception of his integrity, the value for which he had campaigned.\footnote{John H. Patton, "The Eagleton Phenomenon in the 1972 Presidential Campaign: A Case Study in the Rhetoric of Paradox," Central States Speech Journal (1973): 278-287.} McGovern's mishandling of the situation, which developed into a gaffe, might have cost him the election.

In 1984, Democrat Geraldine Ferraro became the first woman from a major party to be nominated as vice-president. As the campaign commenced, she promised disclosure of her husband's tax returns. Later, Ferraro's spouse refused to release the information. His lack of cooperation and Ferraro's inability to influence his decision created credibility problems for the ticket, problems demanding speedy resolution and limited damage. Winn's analysis concluded Ferraro successfully differentiated the roles of spouse and vice-presidential candidate in explaining why there was a problem with her husband's financial disclosure.\footnote{Larry James Winn, "From the Ferraro Factor to the Ferraro Furor: Apologia in the 1984 Campaign," Speech Communication Association Convention, 1985.} The short controversy concluded with a candid news conference that diffused the controversy. Eagleton's and Ferraro's difficulties support the theory that candidates' gaffes require immediate attention to prevent them from becoming problems and overshadowing the real issues.

Bennett's analysis of the 1976 campaign supported further the theory that candidates' gaffes develop histories of their own. Bennett cited Ford's perceived ineptitude related to remarks about Poland, Carter's statement that he lusted in his heart, and Reagan's defense of
the war in Vietnam. Bennett argued that "particular formulations of gaffes lend themselves to particular kinds of rhetorical responses." Patton, Winn, and Bennett proved that an inability to maintain expected political facades lowered source credibility for each of the candidates.

Gaffes generated by political figures result in ongoing public suspicion of politicians. Gold argued that public distrust altered the way the media approached candidates after the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixongate eras. She believed that damage to credibility resulted from repeated questioning, suggesting guilt and creating a dialogue between the media and politician or candidate. Both the apologist and the critic, then, need to view apologia as part of an ongoing dialogue rather than as a single speech.

Resignation addresses share characteristics with apologia. Martin argued that the "resigner" and the "survivor" defend the resignation with supportive statements mutually denying any guilt and offering praise. The resignation caused both parties to assume a defensive posture explaining the action (gaffe). Gaffes require an apologetic response adapted to the occasion, audience, and politician's agenda.

Winn, Bennett, Gold, and Martin studied issues ultimately directed at candidate credibility. Political campaigns utilized a variety of rhetorical strategies to limit damage and repair the characters of the politicians. Despite those efforts, successful

11 Bennett, 317.


apologetic response may result from the media's cessation of questioning because issues resolve satisfactorily (according to the media's definition). When questions persist, the media pursues issues causing politicians' explanations to change from single speech events to interactive processes until all aspects of a gaffe or issue resolve.

Media Influence on Presidential Campaigns

Rhetorical theorists fail to account for the media's role in post-Watergate apologia. Gold indicated the need to reformulate the definition of apologia by noting the change in the mechanics of apologia from single speech events to an ongoing dialogue with the media. 14 Unfortunately, other critics typically ignored or overlooked this insight, thus excluding media influence as a significant variable in analyses of post-Watergate apologia.

The media influence the political process by tending to focus on the nonroutine during an election, directing attention away from issues and toward gaffes. As gaffes evolve into their own issues, they create the opportunity for a dialogue with the press. Thus, repeated scrutiny by the press will create a cycle of questions and answers between the politician (the apologist) and the media (the accuser). 15 Understanding


15 Ryan stated that "by identifying and assessing the issues in the accusation, the critic will gain insights into the accuser's motivation to accuse, his selection of the issues, and the nature of the supporting materials for his accusation. As a response to the accusation, the apology should be discussed in terms of the apologist's motivation to respond to the accusation, his selection of the issues--for they might differ from the accuser's issues--and the nature of the supporting materials for the apology." Halford Ross Ryan, "Kategoria and Apologia: On Their Rhetorical Criticism as a Speech Set," Quarterly Journal of Speech 68 (1982): 254.
and anticipating such a rhetorical cycle seems critical to any politician, but especially to one at the national level. Because Republican strategists failed to formulate a crisis plan that identified and resolved potential gaffes, Dan Quayle was a media accident waiting to happen.

The Significance of Vice-Presidential Nominee Quayle

The Bush/Quayle campaign has unique characteristics that help to illuminate how apologia works. Quayle supplied interest to an otherwise dull political convention and campaign. He lacked a national identity. His relative anonymity both helped and hurt Bush's candidacy and perceived leadership ability. Quayle also symbolized the next political generation and was thought to help Bush with Midwestern and women voters. His lack of experience at the national level made him a primary target for the media. Clearly, the 1988 presidential election provided a fresh opportunity to study apologia, specifically campaign apologia.

Quayle's selection as a vice-presidential running mate provided the only interest during an otherwise routine convention. The media viewed the unknown Senator as fresh prey for a news-hungry public, and they obligated themselves to uncover whatever information they could
about a candidate unknown and untested on the national political level.  

The selection of a vice-presidential running mate caused the only suspense prior to the convention.

Because Quayle lacked a national identity, the media raised questions about his National Guard service and perceived inability to execute the responsibilities of the vice-presidential office. Three issues recurred during the campaign: (1) Did Quayle obtain a position in the National Guard, his education, and various employment due to privilege? (2) Did he possess the qualities of a vice-president? (3) Could he assume competently the office of President in the event of Bush’s inability to serve? Questions with regard to Quayle’s competence originated because he had maintained a low personal and professional profile prior to the Republican convention. Later, such questions continued as the result of media investigation.

Although Quayle’s lack of notoriety may have affected the press and the public’s perception of his abilities, it gave George Bush the opportunity to develop further an identity separate from Ronald Reagan. The obscure Senator Quayle had networked with George Bush during Bush’s

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16 The ABC Evening News Broadcast on 24 August 1988 ran a segment called "Senator Quayle and the Press" recapping events following Quayle’s introduction to the public. At one point a video clip of Quayle’s leaving the podium from rehearsal of his acceptance speech and being followed by reporters is shown during which a reporter asked whether or not Quayle was being picked on. The reporter answers his question yes and says that it is because he’s unknown and had "evaded a question about his military background," at which point the tape cuts to a scene of the joint press conference on 17 August. Later in the same segment, a reporter said this is "not the first time in presidential politics the press has pounced on a candidate this way" and recalled Ted Kennedy, Thomas Eagleton, Geraldine Ferraro, Gary Hart. The reporter continued by saying such action is "necessary" and asked "if the press doesn’t find out about Dan Quayle, who will?"
vice presidency, stopping in his office on occasion. Bush’s aides, Robert Kimmitt and Roger Ailes, familiar with Quayle, his voting record, and his support of President Ronald Reagan, suggested Quayle as a vice-presidential running mate. He could not hurt the ticket, they reasoned, because he was found to be inoffensive. Quayle joined the ticket "with no negatives and no baggage," according to Bush consultant Charlie Black. Bush must have found Quayle’s record and personal qualities appealing and compatible with his personal style, not to mention that Quayle’s political obscurity would prevent him from overshadowing Bush as he developed an identity separate from Ronald Reagan.

Bush looked ahead to consider the political legacy he would leave. In choosing Quayle, he affirmed symbolically the next political generation. Bush claimed that Quayle’s selection signaled confidence in the baby-boom generation. However, as a member of that group, the senator carried the baggage of his generation. Quayle’s burden centered on the issue of privilege: rich boys from prominent families


19 Ibid. The "no baggage" quality was also mentioned in an editorial in the Nashville Tennessean on 18 August 1988.


21 Another "baby-boomer" who came of age in the Sixties, Allen Ginsberg’s nomination to the Supreme Court was rejected on the basis of his having smoked marijuana as a student and a professor. Shortly after, Senator Al Gore of Tennessee and others admitted to the public that they had smoked marijuana in their younger years, thereby deflecting further inquiry into their backgrounds.
avoided combat service in Vietnam. Regardless of the issue, the real question when determining competency is deciding how to weight the behavior of those who came of age in the 60's. Decisions made in early adulthood do affect later life. One wonders if Bush considered the entire legacy of the Vietnam generation.

In addition to selecting Quayle for his symbolism, Bush and his aides believed Quayle would help the party in the Midwest and capture votes from women. Bush fared poorly in the primaries among women voters. Apparently, the strategists never realized that Quaye's physical appearance furthered his image as a light-weight political figure as did his seeming inability to converse comfortably on foreign and domestic issues. His inarticulate manner lent credence to allegations that he had been a mediocre student and had made his way in life through privilege.

Critical Studies Pertaining to Senator Dan Quayle's Vice-Presidential Campaign

The dearth of research on the Quayle National Guard controversy provides another rationale for this study. No one presented papers on him at the 1988 SCA convention due, no doubt, to the fact that not enough time had elapsed to begin research. In April, 1989 Michael

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23 Senator John S. McCain III (R-Ariz.) said, "I can't believe that a guy who is that handsome won't have some effect." Quoted from Douglas Harbrecht, et al., "Why Bush Picked a Green Apple," 28. Syndicated columnists such as Ellen Goodman commented on the sexist implications of such thinking.
Bruner presented a paper, "The Candidate as Image: The Destruction and Reconstruction of Dan Quayle," at the 1989 SSCA convention. Bruner's paper examined Quayle as the embodiment of the New Republican Party and its rhetorical strategies. The research described events leading to Quayle's nomination, mentioned issues raised by the media, and then recounted the Quayle/Bentsen debate. Bruner's research focused on the requirements of the New Republican Party and how Dan Quayle symbolically fulfilled them. His paper briefly addressed aspects of Quayle's past and personal characteristics but did not focus on the National Guard issue. The National Guard issue raised questions about the ethos necessary for Presidents of the United States and Bruner did not address that issue.

Synthesis of Apologia Theory

In addition to analyzing these unique elements of the campaign, the Quayle National Guard issue provides an opportunity to develop further methodology on apologia. Post-Watergate methodologies rely almost exclusively on Ware and Linkugel, or combine their model with personal insight. While Ware and Linkugel aid our understanding, the research of others is overlooked. As Winn noted, critics need to build on previous research, not worship it.24 Examining the Quayle National Guard controversy from a more eclectic perspective will enhance our understanding of apologia. Accordingly, it will be argued in this thesis that the definition of political apologia should be expanded to include dimensions of interpersonal interaction and the rhetorical

Within this thesis, Senator Dan Quayle's bid for the Republican vice-presidency in 1988 will be examined. The thesis focuses on his responses to allegations regarding his admission to and service in the Indiana National Guard during the Vietnam War, but within the larger framework of the Republican rhetorical strategy. The uniqueness of this thesis derives from studying a relatively unknown senator thrust into a national campaign as, among other things, a symbol of the next political generation. Quayle found quickly that he represented a generation divided by an unpopular war. He joined the National Guard legally, but the process by which he gained admittance raised questions regarding the use of privilege to avoid active military service. The issue of privilege directed attention to the larger issue of Quayle's competence. Did he obtain his education, various employment, and a position in the National Guard due to privilege? Did he possess the qualities of a vice-president? Could he assume competently the office of President in the event of Bush's inability to serve? How Quayle responded to the questions about his character further determined public perception of his ability to be Vice-president, or President in the event of Bush's inability to serve.

Review of Literature

The research literature provides a theoretical basis for this thesis. This review (1) summarizes theory on rhetorical genres; (2) addresses the genre of apologia, apologia theory, and case studies; (3) includes essays relevant to American values; (4) covers materials regarding the influence of the media on campaigns; and (5) examines
popular materials/critical studies pertaining to Dan Quayle's vice-presidential campaign.

Rhetorical Genres

Classification of public address into genres provides a framework for comparison and analysis in determining similarities across communication events. Scholars debate what constitutes a genre of speech events. Drawing upon Edwin Black's *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method*, Ware and Linkugel observed that "although most critics assent to the existence of genres, few engage in anything which even resembles what might appropriately be called generic criticism." They argued in favor of generic analysis, specifically contending that apologia constitutes a genre apart from the argumentative. In a later study Harrell and Linkugel conceptualized further what defined genres and suggested that "rhetorical genres stem from organizing principles found in recurring situations that generate discourse characterized by a family of common factors." These authors based their organizational classification on common situational elements. They argued that critics must be able to identify genre uniformly to prevent "conceptual slippage."

Other theorists asserted the existence of genres. Kruse argued that rhetorical genres are recognized by theorists and critics, specifically that "apologiae are discourses in which individuals defend

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their characters. However, no detailed definition exists that allows specification of which materials should be identified as apologiae and which materials should not." 27 Ryan acknowledged Kruse's complaint regarding the lack of a constitutional definition of apologia. 28 He observed that classical genres included accusation, and that accusation and apologia are interdependent and therefore should be critiqued together.

Ware and Linkugel, Harrell and Linkugel, Kruse, and Ryan all argued for the need to study genres, but for different reasons. Each argued for a different definition of what comprises genres. They have the same objective but differ on how best to meet it.

Bitzer characterized the rhetorical situation as containing several elements: a single "controlling exigence," an audience, and "constraints." He argued that rhetoric results from the perception of the rhetor who believes that a "fitting" response is necessary. 29 In a later essay, Bitzer elaborated on his concept of the situational nature of communication by describing four developmental stages of an exigence: (1) origin and development of constituents, (2) maturity, (3)

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deterioration, and (4) disintegration. Bitzer believed that intervention by rhetors hastened or delayed the evolutionary sequence by communicating a "fitting response." Such responses modify an audience's perception of the situation.

Bitzer's essays enhance our understanding of the situational nature of apologia by defining the rhetorical situation as the primary determinant of a suitable response. Apologia results from a rhetor's responding defensively to a rhetorical situation. The apologist discerns the existence and components of the situation and those perceptions result in a defense of his or her ethos and actions. Only Bitzer identifies the situation as the primary impetus for rhetoric.

The Genre of Apologia

Although theorists agree generally that apologia constitutes a distinct genre, disagreement exists about its parameters. Thus, an examination of definitions of apologia should illuminate how critics shaped definitions according to the rhetorical situation studied.

Definitions of Apologia

Any study of apologia must include the research of Ware and Linkugel. Their work influenced other scholars whose contributions receive review later in this section. Ware and Linkugel defined apologia as "the speech of self-defense" and stated "that apologetic discourses constitute a distinct form of public address, a family of

speeches with sufficient elements in common so as to warrant legitimately
generic status. 31 Their classification schema provides a broad
generalization of what may or may not be considered apologia.

Kruse's definition refined Ware and Linkugel by adding an emphasis
on ethos: "public discourse produced whenever a prominent person
attempts to repair his character if it has been directly or indirectly
damaged by overt charges, or rumors and allegations, which negatively
value his behavior and/or his judgment." 32 Kruse described apologia as
an individual's moral or ethical self-defense response to the rhetor's
external environment. She stressed that "one cannot produce apologetic
discourse for another person, even though one might defend another's
character." Kruse argued that "no rhetorical item can be considered
apologetic unless it is produced by an individual responding in a
particular way to a specific kind of situation with discourse that
exhibits a certain structure." Kruse's definition of apologia
encompassed not only speeches but any format used by the apologist.

Winn extended further the parameters of apologia by stressing
ethos. 33 He defined apologia "as any rhetorical defense against ethos-
centered attacks" and argued that organizations as well as individuals
have an ethos which must be defended against attacks. Winn suggested
that further studies should not be bound to past methodologies but
should build toward a more comprehensive understanding of how apologia

31 Ware and Linkugel, 273.


33 Larry James Winn, "From the Ferraro Factor to the Ferraro Furor:
should work.\textsuperscript{34} Ware and Linkugel, Kruse, and Winn argued that apologia resulted from individuals' defending their ethos.

Gold broadened further the scope of apologia when writing that "the unflagging presence of media representatives reshapes campaign apologias from a single speech into a process of interaction."\textsuperscript{35} She recognized that the form and substance of apologia included ongoing dialogue, particularly where the media were concerned. The more classical approach to the study of apologia included solely speeches and not dialogue with the accuser.

Rhetorical critics evolved definitions simultaneously with theory to provide frameworks descriptive of their methodology. According to Ware and Linkugel, Kruse, Winn, and Gold, individuals generate apologia to defend their characters or policies. Winn's definition of "any self defense against ethos-centered attacks" includes any defensive communication. His broad definition would include speeches written by someone else and delivered by the accused. If such communication is truly apologia, then might not rhetoric from individuals attempting to repair the ethos of another also be considered apologia? Although Kruse insisted that apologetic discourse cannot originate from other than the accused she did include any format the apologist chose to use. Together, Winn's and Kruse's definitions allow rhetoric from others to be considered apologia.

Quayle's defense of his National Guard service included rhetoric

\textsuperscript{34}Larry James Winn, "Directions in the Study of Apologia: A Response to the Papers of Hardy-Short, Hoover and Short." Southern Speech Communication Association, 1986.

generated by others. He relied on Bush, campaign officials, other Republicans, and his wife to repair his image when controversy damaged his ethos. He did not respond with a single self-prepared text, but defended himself with a prepared speech, a "spontaneous" press conference, other prepared speeches that made reference to his service, and ongoing dialogue with the persistent media. Quayle's interactions with the media, his speeches, and the rhetoric of those who defended and explained his service in the National Guard, must be considered apologia if we are to understand what occurred and the strategies utilized to manage the issue.

Apologia Theory and Case Studies of Political Apologia

The development of apologia theory is understood best when examined in chronological order. For the purposes of this thesis, the review of apologia theory will begin with contemporary research rooted in the research of earlier scholars. Rosenfield used analog analysis to compare two apologetic addresses. He found that Nixon's "Checker's" speech and Truman's response regarding alleged communist Harry Dexter White's employment in his administration shared five situational

36 It was impossible to determine how much influence Quayle exercised over the writing of his speeches. According to several newspaper articles, speechwriter Kenneth Khachigian was assigned to Quayle's campaign staff. However, numerous calls placed to Quayle's staff about obtaining copies of speeches produced no results. The writer spoke with various individuals all of whom denied the existence of any extant speeches prior to the election. Staff members directed the writer to the media as the appropriate source for obtaining the necessary materials.

similarities: (1) audience (the speeches were delivered a year apart), (2) audience expectation (both speakers were well known), (3) a forensic rhetorical posture, (4) the use of radio and television in taking the case directly to the people, and (5) the brief resolution of the controversies. Rhetorical characteristics shared by the addresses included attacking accusers and arguing from motives of honesty. Rhetorical differences included Truman’s use of syllogism and Nixon’s use of dialogue, Truman’s use of direct accusation and Nixon’s strategy of not identifying his accusers, and Truman’s "tone of the public man doing public business" as opposed to Nixon’s disclosure of the private man. Rosenfield concluded that analog analysis served as a tool of "factorial" analysis and allowed comparative artistic assessment of the speeches.  

Another rhetorical approach utilized Burke’s "Dramatistic Pentad." Ling analyzed Senator Edward Kennedy’s apologetic address to the people of Massachusetts following his involvement in the death of Mary Jo Kopechne. Ling used the pentad (act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose) based on the assumption that history is a series of recurring dramas with a limited number of scenes. One component of the pentad could determine the motive for apologia and explain the situation. Ling argued that the pentad revealed how the apologist acted as persuader by seeking to change the audience’s perception of the situation. In his

38 Rosenfield, 447.

39 Ibid., 435.

analysis, Ling concluded that Kennedy's strategy of portraying himself as a victim of circumstances saved his state political career, but diminished his source credibility on the national level by revealing him to be someone unable to make decisions under duress.

Bormann incorporated small group theory to analyze apologia. He argued that small group fantasy chaining parallels audience attitude/belief adjustment in public speaking. Values and attitudes legitimized by the small group become a shared culture as does the validation process. In the context of a public speaking audience, the shared experience is a rhetorical reality. The group's symbolic reality replicates itself (chaining) as the originating group communicates the fantasy to others who further reinforce it by continued assent. Fantasy chaining explains how zero-history groups develop a history/common culture to execute their purposes.

In a later essay, Bormann used fantasy theme analysis to explore the role of the television media in the 1972 McGovern presidential campaign. Bormann believed that the media set a fantasy into motion following Eagleton's disclosure of his history of treatment for nervous exhaustion. The media broadcast interviews and a press conference during which McGovern reiterated his support of Eagleton. Bormann argued that because the media continued to ask McGovern if he still supported Eagleton, that a fantasy began and chained through the media, resulting ultimately in Eagleton's resignation. Bormann's analysis


relied heavily on a negative view of media coverage and did not attempt to balance that view by addressing how campaign strategists failed to manage the issue.

Ware and Linkugel related apologia to balance theory, specifically to Abelson’s theory of resolving belief dilemmas. They identified four strategies of self-defense in the speeches that they studied: (1) denial—"simple disavowal by the speaker of any participation in, relationship to, or positive sentiment toward whatever it is that repels the audience;" (2) bolstering—"any rhetorical strategy which reinforces the existence of a fact, sentiment, object, or relationship;" (3) differentiation—"separating some fact, sentiment, object, or relationship from some larger context within which the audience presently views that attribute;" and (4)

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43 B.L. Ware and Wil A. Linkugel, "They Spoke in Defense of Themselves: On The Generic Criticism of Apologia," Quarterly Journal of Speech 59 (1973): 273-283. Although not originating in the speech communication discipline, Abelson’s "Modes of Resolution of Belief Dilemmas" is the foundation for the Ware-Linkugel system of generic criticism. One of several balance theories Abelson explains the resolution of belief dilemmas based on the "imbalance" that occurs when two attitude objects have a dissociative relationship. His model describes four modes of restoring cognitive balance (denial, bolstering, differentiation, and transcendence) using a hierarchy of resolution attempts to predict the progression of strategies. Robert P. Abelson, "Modes of Resolution of Belief Dilemmas," Journal of Conflict Resolution 3 (1950): 343-352.

44 Ware and Linkugel tested their classification design by examining an array of speeches, ranging from Socrates "Apology" to Marcus Garvey’s "Address to the Jury" to Senator Edward Kennedy’s "Chappaquiddick" address.


46 Ibid., 277.

47 Ibid., 278.
transcendence—"which cognitively joins some fact, sentiment, object, or relationship with some larger context within which the audience does not presently view that attribute." These strategies may combine to form larger strategies of transformation or reformation resulting in absolution, vindication, explanation, or justification. Ware and Linkugel described strategies of apologia that assist critics with classification prior to rhetorical criticism.

Harrell, Ware, and Linkugel were the first critics to apply the concept of genre to analyze political apologia. Their analyses of Watergate apologia combined Ware and Linkugel's earlier insights with Easton's theory defining the foundations of political authority. They concluded that Nixon failed to project a strong leadership image of one who controls rather than being controlled by events. His public reactions to political events eroded his perceived personal and presidential authority.

Katula used the Ware-Linkugel schema to identify Nixon's strategy in his resignation/farewell speech. Katula contended that Nixon's objective to resign and bid farewell in a single speech resulted in psychological dissatisfaction because the speech was neither vindicative nor transformative. Consequently, the audience did not experience "closure," "the sense of completeness which communicators feel when they

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48 Ibid., 280.
49 Ibid., 281-282.
sense that some reality has been shared."51

Brummett also analyzed Richard Nixon's resignation speech but used a Burkean methodology. He defined "substance" as what a person is and the process of "identification" as two parties being consubstantial, to explain Nixon's motives.52 His behaviorist frame used language to discover motives. Brummett identified further motivators which referred to the boundaries defining a person's substance, the groups with which one is affiliated, and the essential nature of one's personality. He defined "mystery" as the unknown area between speaker and audience and stated that reduction of mystery increases identification between the two parties. Brummett concluded that Nixon's inability to establish consubstantiality and reduce the mystery of Nixon the man and Nixon the president was inevitable and without solution: Nixon used an inappropriate strategy.

In contrast with Katula and Brummett, Martin argued that resignation addresses comprise a separate rhetorical genre because of three shared elements: The "occasion" for apologetic address created an "audience" and dictated the "speaker-role."53 His case study showed that resignation addresses contained two paradoxical joint claims: denial of guilt/wrong-doing by "resigner" and "survivor," and assertion that departure was of the resigner's own free will. The purpose of this


"staged withdrawal" was to "transcend the private and divergent interests of the parties in a believable synthesis." As with Ling, the dramatistic situation determined the motive for the address. An application of Ware's and Linkugel's theories would show that the purpose of the mutually exonerative statements transcended and justified the resignation, in essence saying, "yes, there was a resignation, but no one is guilty of wrong-doing and both involved did a great job." (If that was true, why did a resignation occur and the parties involved go to such lengths to explain it?) Martin makes a contribution by examining apologia produced simultaneously by two individuals defending a single action and their joint credibility. His study demonstrates that apologia includes not only self-defense but mutually defensive statements when joint credibility is at stake.

Additionally, Kruse explained apologia in terms of ethos. She defined apologia as "public discourse produced whenever a prominent person attempts to repair his character if it has been directly or indirectly damaged by overt charges, or rumors and allegations, which negatively value his behavior and/or his judgment". Using Maslow's hierarchy, she further characterized apologia by "denial" or "non-denial" responses. Non-denial responses are defined as "survival," responding to physical, emotional, environmental, or situational well-being; "social," responding to threats of social well-being; and

54Ibid., 249.


56Ibid., 19.
"self-actualized," transcendental justification for behavior. Kruse's psycho-social model contains elements in common with that of Ware-Linkugel, i.e., non-denial responses acknowledge perceived threats to the ethos from external sources while using reformative or transformative strategies for the defensive posture. Both Kruse and Ware and Linkugel argued that motivation determined the posture of defense, but Gold argued that media exchanges with political candidates altered more traditional rhetorical strategies.

Gold asserted that media interaction altered traditional rhetorical strategies during the 1976 presidential campaign. She contended that repetitious questioning of candidates on a single issue transformed "questions" of ethos into "facts" of guilt in the minds of the electorate. She posited further that candidates need to realize how repeated denial affects credibility. Continued questioning "shapes campaign apologias from a single speech into a process of interaction." Gold's insights are critical to understanding Dan Quayle's and the Republican campaign's strategies in defending his National Guard service because, as Gold noted, in the post-Watergate era, the media persists in its quest for "the truth." Bennett also wrote about source credibility over the course of a campaign in the post-Watergate era.

Brummett argued that silence, a form of nonverbal communication, should be considered a rhetorical strategy. He cited President Jimmy Carter's silence following cancellation of a major speech at the

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57 Ibid., 14.

58 Gold, 311.
conclusion of a critical summit meeting in July, 1979. Brummett concluded that Carter’s seclusion and lack of an explanation for his actions reinforced commonly held views of the president as a "cloudy persona" and that his strategy was "not consistent with good presidential leadership."  

Although Brummett’s essay does not concern apologia, it does contain insight applicable to political apologia. Brummett demonstrated that during a time when the public expected rhetoric, deliberate silence negatively affected source credibility by increasing the public’s speculation as to the meaning of the silence. Brummett admitted that his concept of silence as a political strategy required further investigation.

Bennett studied the rhetorical process occurring during political campaigns. He described this process as a series of "degradation rituals" and argued that gaffes direct the course of the election by themselves becoming campaign issues and influencing public perception of candidate leadership capability. Bennett believed that violation of audience expectations affected candidate credibility. Bennett contended that "the evolution of a gaffe sequence generates information about the specific incident which becomes the basis for practical


60 Ibid., 298, 302.

61 Winn referred to this strategy as "avoidance" and added it to Bennett’s strategies.

judgments about the candidate.⁶³ In the Ling schema, gaffes constitute the "act" and the controlling element as a speaker seeks to order his interpretation of events. Both Bennett and Ling identify an exigency as the impetus for apologia.

Most of the essays reviewed thus far concern themselves primarily with analysis of single speeches. Because this thesis analyzes an issue occurring during a political campaign, it is helpful to include research related to campaign communication.

Although not specifically concerned with apologia, Devlin studied Edward Kennedy’s communication during the 1980 campaign for the presidency.⁶⁴ He described Kennedy’s problems as an inconsistent communicator and argued that his difficulties resulted from insisting on directing his campaign personally and from listening to conflicting advice offered by campaign advisors. In addition, the Kennedy campaign devalued the role of the media in the election process and consequently Kennedy was not coached to modify his rhetorical style for television and smaller audiences. Those problems exacerbated his inconsistent speech delivery and inarticulate responses to questions from the media.

To summarize, Kennedy lacked a repertoire of reliable material suitable to use with the media and for providing a tested foundation to begin the campaign. Devlin argued that the absence of preparation affected Kennedy’s credibility.⁶⁵ Devlin’s perceptive analysis provides an

⁶³Ibid., 312.


⁶⁵Ibid., 401. From an interview with Charles Guggenheim, a media producer who worked with the Kennedy brothers.
inside look into a major candidate’s campaign. His use of interviews with Kennedy staff, personal observation and viewing of television news coverage exceeded traditional rhetorical methods of examining only single speeches or speech events. While this essay is not specifically an analysis of apologia, it provides insight into the behind-the-scenes operation of political campaigns and their rhetorical tactics.

Ryan examined apologia as analog. He based his methodology on the generic positions of Plato, Aristotle, and Isocrates, arguing that accusatory and apologetic speeches interrelate and should be examined as a set. He sought to prove his theory using the speech set of Leo X’s Kategoría and Martin Luther’s apologia. Ryan concluded that one can fully determine motive and explanation only by analyzing speech sets. Ryan’s theory included additional material for analysis in understanding the rhetorical situation, specifically the accusatory address that resulted in the apologetic defense.

Kahl also used analog but studied other artifacts. She compared the written apologia employed by John Dean in Blind Ambition and later Lost Honor, his memoirs of Watergate. Although Kahl compared the two volumes, she relied on Ware and Linkugel to determine if Dean utilized the same strategies in both books. She concluded that Dean used denial in the first book and differentiation and transcendence in the second, but that his overall strategy was absolution. Kahl argued that use of

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multiple strategies such as Dean's demonstrated that Ware and Linkugel's delineation of postures was not as absolute as theorized. Kahl's inclusion of written material other than single apologetic speeches redefined the parameters of what materials are considered apologia.

Blair also researched autobiographical apologia resulting from the Watergate scandal. Using Ware and Linkugel, she found extensive use of all four defensive postures, but argued that none of the twelve narratives consistently employed a single strategy of defense. Unlike Kahl, who contended that the Ware and Linkugel strategies resulted in absolution, Blair argued that because Watergate ended prior to the writing of the books, there was no rhetorical situation to which to respond and no reason to write. She did allow that "one cannot judge the actual or potential effectiveness or ineffectiveness of generic rhetoric by analyzing only the particular elements of messages. Rather, all of the interactive factors that comprise the rhetorical situation must be considered." Both Blair and Kahl included written autobiographies in their descriptions of apologetic materials.

King used an historical-literary methodology to analyze Watergate rhetoric and Edward Kennedy's speech after the Chappaquiddick tragedy. King, as a professor of English argued that the popular definition and use of tragedy, particularly in the political arena, differed from the literary meaning of this term and created a fiction devoid of any moral

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69 Ibid., 259.
or ethical catharsis. He contended that politicians and the media used the term "tragedy" to describe the scandalous events of Watergate and Chappaquiddick even though the politicians portrayed themselves as victims of circumstances. His use of Burke's Pentad served as a partial basis for his methodology and demonstrated that Kennedy and Nixon ascribed responsibility to the scene and not themselves. His observation of Nixon's and Kennedy's pseudo-catharsis (I'm not the same man now as I was then) resembles Blair's critique of John Dean's assessment of himself in Lost Honor. Blair termed this about-face (King's pseudo-catharsis) a secular rebirth. King's emphasis on the literary definition of terms used to explain Watergate and Chappaquiddick, focused attention to their misuse by persons avoiding responsibility for their actions.

Winn applied Ware and Linkugel's and Bennett's theories to examine Democratic candidates Geraldine Ferraro's and Walter Mondale's public communication regarding disclosure of her husband's finances during the 1984 presidential campaign. Winn's analysis concluded Ferraro successfully differentiated the roles of spouse and vice-presidential candidate in explaining why there was a problem with her husband's financial disclosure. Winn's use of Ware and Linkugel and Bennett resulted in the addition of avoidance to the four Ware and Linkugel defense strategies. He went beyond the misapplication of Ware and

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71 Blair, 245.
72 Winn, "From the Ferraro Factor to the Ferraro Furor: Apologia in the 1984 Campaign."
Linkugel as a means of criticism and used their model as a means of classification prior to criticism.

From the review of theory we observe several methodological insights which will be addressed later; the significance of the research at this point is that scholars recognize apologia as a rhetorical genre and that they have broadened the definition and scope of materials considered apologia. Definitions and methodology remain "fluid" to allow critics flexibility in rhetorical analysis.

American Values

Rhetorical criticism must account for audience values because they influence persuasive outcomes. Effective persuaders familiarize themselves with the value systems of their audiences and use that knowledge to increase the probability of persuasion occurring. A study of apologia is incomplete without mentioning the significance of values research.

Steele described the relationship between audience values and speaker persuasiveness. He argued that audience beliefs created the substance of enthymemes from which normal group behavior derived syllogistically. Although Aristotle originated the concept of the enthymeme by trying to answer the question "What is good?" Steele asserted that modern value systems of "What is good?" differed from those of the Greeks. He argued that value systems exist situationally,


inherently sensitive to and based upon shared events and culture. Steele contended that speakers choose among three persuasive alternatives based on audience values: (1) to demonstrate that the persuasive objective is consistent with audience values, (2) to demonstrate the inappropriateness of those values, or (3) to rely upon deception, a choice he termed unethical.

Steele stated further that familiarity with audience values provided a basis for emotional appeal. He also believed the choice of persuasive alternatives furnished deductive information about the speaker's ethos and motivation. Steele concluded that identification of audience value premises should precede rhetorical criticism.

Steele and Redding first approached the issue of values from divergent perspectives and methodologies, each unaware of the other's research. Surprisingly, they reached similar conclusions with regard to shared American values. Their mutual discoveries resulted in an essay describing the scope of American values from 1940 to 1952. Steele and Redding identified and classified values based on the Puritan work ethic and the premise of the Age of Enlightenment. They grouped values into sixteen categories and stressed that the divisions served as "clusters" of values which overlapped and contained paradoxical beliefs. While agreeing that the values contained abstract principles, they argued that analogies and deductions could be made about human behavior, a premise critical to the validity of their work and its effect on persuasive speakers. Steele's and Redding's research pioneered, at least in the

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field of communication, the concept of shared American values.

Brummett wrote about values in terms of ethical evaluations made by the critic. He argued that groups make value judgments relative to their own norms. He believed those norms resulted from legitimization of values by the group or culture. Brummett termed the process of argument by which this occurred "rhetorically grounded ethical relativism."\(^{76}\) The import of his essay lies in its application of criticism across cultures. Brummett argued that although applying the system caused it to become absolutist, it described behavior without judging according to absolute standards. Brummett believed the ethical relativist critiqued from a rhetorical, and therefore tolerant, perspective. His arguments for rhetorical relativism appear plausible but fail to address the real motive for most human behavior. Individuals and groups execute decisions based on expediency. Specifically, Americans rationalize their actions; and they fail to make rational decisions. Brummett dismissed the issue without a thorough analysis.

The research on values demonstrates the rhetorical significance of values in analysis. In an election year politicians rarely hesitate to parade symbols of fundamental American values before the public. Quayle relied heavily on audience values as a method of persuasion. A reliance on the fundamental American values of patriotism and fair play enabled Quayle to overcome cognitive discrepancies about his National Guard service.

The Influence of the Media on Campaign Apologia

This section addresses the influence of the media on campaign apologia. As Gold argued, media influence in the 1976 presidential campaign altered traditional rhetorical strategies. She wrote that relentless questioning of candidates on a single issue "shapes campaign apologias from a single speech into a process of interaction."77 Media involvement in the campaign process persists because the media is a self-appointed "watch-dog" of the political process. Clearly the critic of apologia needs to understand the role of the media in campaigns. The first portion of this review examines selected essays from a 1976 symposium on government and media. The second and final portion examines other research from the mass communications and speech communication disciplines with respect to the influence of the media on political campaigns.

Symposium on "Government by Media?"78

The first series of articles from the symposium highlights empirical studies designed to analyze the role of the media in setting agendas. McCombs and Shaw investigated the role of print and television media in influencing what stories are considered news and how much coverage they received by summarizing previous research. Their review indicated that "readers respond more directly to the newspaper news

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77 Gold, 311.

agenda than viewers do to the television news agenda.\textsuperscript{79} Another study revealed that newspaper reporters followed the lead of larger papers in deciding what the story "really" was.\textsuperscript{80} McCombs and Shaw admitted that further studies are necessary to describe more fully how the media sets agendas for the public but said that "audiences ... learn how much importance to attach to an issue or topic from the emphasis the media places upon it"--"agenda setting."\textsuperscript{81} Their research indicates that the media do play a role in how the public perceives the relative importance of "news."

McClure and Patterson used interviews and content analysis in their survey of the 1972 presidential campaign. They concluded that "on some, but not all issues, level of exposure to the mass media showed a direct agenda-setting influence. Usually, however, the direct effect was related to exposure to local newspapers and not to television network news. But perhaps more importantly, and at least over the short run of a political campaign, agenda setting was likely to be an indirect effect mediated by prior dispositions of the voters receiving the messages."\textsuperscript{82} Their conclusions indicate that the media served to reinforce the existing private views of the survey respondents and that local newspaper coverage was more influential than television coverage.

Other researchers using the empirical method tested candidate


\textsuperscript{80}Ibid., 20.

\textsuperscript{81}Ibid., 18.

source credibility. Friedman and Friedman sampled 59 undergraduate students enrolled in marketing and asked them to rate seven attributes (awareness, trust, likableness, similarity, life style, personal attraction, expertise) for fifteen political figures using a ten-point scale. The results showed "likableness is most highly correlated with trust". This study cited research on source credibility in the rationale, but obviously cannot be viewed as valid or reliable due to the small, unrepresentative sampling.

The role of agenda setting by the media is a recent concern of communications scholars. Westley's essay described a model to illustrate agenda-setting. This model resembles balance theory models and shows that similarity of orderings between two agendas implied a closer relationship between the two. Either the public or the media set the agenda (identified the issue) causing the level of interest to rise, converge, and then decline according to different rates. Westley argued that when the audience (public) and the media focus attention on an issue targeted by a subculture within society, "the tendency is to make a sub-culture's concerns those of everyone." Westley's piece of the theoretical puzzle regarding subcultures influencing group (national) agendas reminds one of Bormann's theory of fantasy chaining and how the fantasy becomes a larger group reality.

Carey conducted a topic analysis of congressional elections in

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84 Ibid., 49.

1974, using data from national news broadcasts by three networks, three national news magazines, and three national newspapers. He discovered that "campaign coverage for TV, newspapers, and magazines in the sample was remarkably similar (both across and within each media)." He noted also that "treatment of these topics was analogous to the color commentary in a professional football contest" through use of sports rhetoric to describe what was happening in the campaign. He defined "meta-campaigning" as the candidates' attempts to "demonstrate competence as campaign organizers and strategists." Carey concluded that the "implicit message underlying much information about a campaign ... is: It's a game, and good players make good public officials." Although conducted from a mass communications perspective, Carey's research corresponds with Bennett's insights regarding candidate image and how it relates to candidate credibility. The public observes candidates through the filter of the media and makes inferences and judgments about candidate fitness based on those glimpses of what the media deems "coverage."

Other Research on Media

Mowlana argued that in the 1976 presidential campaign "the communication media no longer simply report political events--they are integrally bound in the very nature of the political process." He

87 Ibid., 52.
88 Ibid., 56.
89 Ibid., 57.
explained the phenomenon by citing the frequency with which political incidents are redefined or distorted beyond proportion to achieve greater appeal, and then presented in entertainment form for consumption by specialized publics, "the decline of involvement in political parties," the "'charisma' of television news personalities and the magazine formats of network news programs."\(^{90}\) He further argued that media set the agenda by determining campaign issues/coverage of greatest interest [ratings?] to the public. Mowlana concluded that because of the media exposure candidates' primary concerns centered on appearance and not substance.

Clark and Hankins conducted a content analysis of print and television media coverage of the 1988 presidential campaign.\(^{91}\) Six graduate students and a professor researched headlines of AP articles in The Memphis Commercial Appeal and front page articles of The New York Times. The television data reviewed included NBC evening newscasts, CNN news broadcasts, and political advertisements. The researchers concluded that, generally speaking, the media covered the campaign and not campaign issues and that the media was biased in favor of Bush. This exploratory project contained some interesting information, but should have analyzed a broader range and number of newspapers and network news broadcasts to demonstrate reliability and validity.

The articles on media provide a theoretical perspective for understanding how the media function in "agenda-setting." Due in part


to media influence apolo gia changed from a single speech of defense to a continuing dialogue. The media also define the issues for the public, focusing on gaffes, as Bennett argued. Finally, the critic must realize that information gathered from newspapers and news broadcasts only interpret actual events.

Popular Materials/Critical Studies Pertaining to Dan Quayle’s Vice-President ial Campaign

At this juncture, only one academic paper has focused on Dan Quayle. Bruner’s paper, "The Candidate as Image: The Destruction and Reconstruction of Dan Quayle" examined Quayle as the embodiment of the New Republican Party and its rhetorical strategies. Bruner did not specifically study the National Guard issue.

Methodology

Critical analysis of apolo gia traditionally examined a single speech delivered in response to allegations about the speaker’s competence and character. In more recent studies, a variety of defensive communication underwent analysis by rhetorical critics seeking a broader understanding of apolo gia, but each study relied on a particular methodology.

Summary of Methodologies

Analog analysis compared speech sets. Rosenfield used analog analysis when studying two apologetic addresses. He argued that comparison provided objectivity, a generic basis for examination, and a

reference to view unique attributes of each address. Ryan also utilized the analog approach to compare an accuser's address with the apologist's address. He argued that apologia is best understood in relation to the charges brought against the accused. So, the methodology of comparison reveals insight through the use of contrast, but remains somewhat limited because only two artifacts may be compared at any one time.

Ware and Linkugel's methodology of generic criticism involved a larger number of individual speeches composing a set. The sheer volume of their work eclipsed Rosenfield's. They devised a methodology of classification based on balance theory. In other words, this methodology identified "factors" or "strategies" as a prelude to criticism. So, in reviewing the studies utilizing this methodology, it would appear that many critics use it as the end of criticism instead of as a means toward an end. Ware and Linkugel's insights are helpful as a scheme of categorization.

Ling used the "dramatistic pentad" of Kenneth Burke to analyze content and describe appropriate rhetorical responses. The pentad views history as a series of recurring dramas with a limited number of themes. Thematic repetition makes categorization of events possible,

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each event containing the five elements of act, what happened; scene, where and when
the act occurred; agent, who caused the act; agency, how
the act occurred, and purpose, why the act occurred. One element
dominates as the rhetor explains an event, the element "reflecting his
perception of reality and indicates what choices of action are available
to him". Burke’s methodology indicates primary and secondary
influences on events. The pentad provides a framework for critics to
understand apologist’s actions in assigning blame or excusing personal
action.

Bormann used small group fantasy chaining as a model for
understanding persuasion in the public speaking situation. Small
groups develop an independent culture apart from the larger group from
which they originated. When small groups return to the parent group
they bring their unique culture. The small group culture integrates
with the existing larger group culture and the resulting experience
becomes a rhetorical reality. When applied to rhetorical criticism, the
theory could explain how a persuasive speaker’s reality transfers to and
becomes the audience’s reality following a public speaking event.
Bormann believed that a speaker’s motive could be determined by tracking
the rhetorical vision through the chaining process, a more empirical
method, he believed, than relying on a subjective psychological
approach.

King evaluated the use of tragedy in Watergate to explain the

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96 Ibid., 82.

97 Ernest G. Bormann, "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The
Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality," Quarterly Journal of Speech
events surrounding Mary Jo Kopechne's death at Chappaquiddick. King examined the use of the word "tragedy" in a popular context. He argued that tragedy has a "fictional, cultural meaning" that differed from the classical use and definition. He concluded that insight into motive results from an understanding of how rhetors use language to explain and excuse behavior.

Each of the methodologies reviewed above provide a unique framework for understanding communication events. Each perspective yields rich insights, but fails to disclose the entire picture. It should be clear that apologia examined by more than a single methodology yields richer results. A synoptic view of those case studies provides greater insight into the rhetorical situation than otherwise possible. The writer believes that the strengths and weaknesses of the various apologia methodologies balance one another when viewed synoptically and synthetically.

Because of the writer's belief that the methodologies, as a whole, offer a balanced framework, an eclectic methodology is used in this thesis. Ware and Linkugel used Abelson's insights into human psychology and persuasion to identify the responses of apologia. Bennett went a step further by demonstrating how gaffes became a determinant of candidate credibility when they developed into separate issues. Winn used both methodologies to examine the ethos of a campaign affected by a gaffe sequence and added avoidance as another possible apologia strategy. Bitzer contended that the rhetorical situation dictated the appropriate rhetorical response. Each theorist offers unique insight to

understand the strategies of apologia used by Dan Quayle to explain his service in the National Guard.

This thesis answers the research question: To what extent did the Bush/Quayle campaign use the available means of persuasion in diffusing the National Guard issue? It uses a modified definition of apologia combining the specific insights of Kruse, Gold, and Winn: campaign apologia is a process of interaction whereby prominent persons defend themselves or others rhetorically against ethos-centered attacks or attempt to repair their characters, which have been directly or indirectly damaged by overt charges, or rumors and allegations, which negatively value their behavior and/or judgment, through self-disclosure or the affirmation of others. Three synthesized terms define the elements of apologia: "Role"-- the persona assumed by the apologist when communicating a defense or by the accuser when making allegations, "Scene"--the occasion or location for allegation or disclosure, and "Audience"--the person or persons receiving the apologetic or accusatory message. The definition and elements of apologia provide a broad foundation for constructing an answer to the research question.

Analysis of Quayle's public responses focuses on his verbal and nonverbal communication, source credibility, communication channels and format, and audience values. The writer also explores the role the media played in directing and perpetuating the issue of Quayle's service in the National Guard.

Data Collection

Data consist of printed newspaper reports and general circulation periodicals containing relevant articles/editorials, national evening
news broadcasts, and videotaped Quayle speeches. Data collection covered the time period of 13 August (just prior to the Republican National Convention) through 31 August 1988 (just after Quayle’s first week of solo campaigning and end of the controversy). Newspaper reports and editorials were collected from a cross-section of national and regional newspapers including The Wall Street Journal, New York Times, Washington Post, Indianapolis Star, Chicago Tribune, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Nashville Tennessean, Atlanta Constitution, and Los Angeles Times. The Readers Guide to Periodical Literature served as the source for general circulation periodicals containing relevant materials. The writer viewed all national network evening news broadcasts pertaining to the beginning of the Republican convention, Quayle’s selection, and the National Guard controversy. Additionally, the writer studied videotapes of two Quayle campaign speeches. The variety of data sources supplied information viewed or read by the general public.

Problems in Acquiring the Data

An exhaustive search revealed the unavailability of a complete video, audio, or transcript copy of the 19 August 1988 press conference. Several individuals in the Vice-President’s office denied to this writer

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99 The writer viewed sixty-eight segments of newscasts from the three major networks. The Vanderbilt Television News Archive provided the videotapes and viewing facilities to watch all evening news broadcasts between 13 August and 31 August 1988. The writer transcribed some of the broadcasts and made notes from the remainder.

100 Purdue University Public Affairs Video Archives provided videotapes of two speeches recorded on C-SPAN. Quayle presented both speeches on 24 August 1988, his first day of campaigning without Bush. The first tape recorded Quayle’s address to the Southern Legislative Conference in Lexington, Kentucky. The second videotape showed Quayle’s speech before the Enlisted Association of the National Guard which met in St. Louis.
the existence of such a copy or transcripts of any of his campaign speeches. They seemed reluctant to discuss the campaign. Numerous calls to television stations and newspapers failed to produce any complete transcript or video copy of the Huntington press conference or campaign speeches. The writer did obtain a copy of the Sunday, 21 August 1988, Huntington Herald-Press which contained pictures and articles about the press conference from the previous day.\textsuperscript{101} Data from the other newspapers provided balance to this biased source.

Limitations of the Data

Although the print and broadcast materials will approximately reconstruct the events surrounding the National Guard issue, they are limited by their nature as secondary sources. The only primary sources used are video copies of Quayle campaign speeches, a copy of Quayle’s acceptance speech, and a transcript of the 17 August press conference. However, the variety of sources may minimize the biases and paint a complete picture of the issue and its rhetoric.

\textsuperscript{101}The paper is published by Quayle’s father.
CHAPTER 2
THE REAGAN POLITICAL LEGACY: BUSH AND THE NEXT GENERATION

In 1988, George Herbert Walker Bush had a long and distinguished history of service to his country: war hero, Congressman, former ambassador, former Director of the CIA, two term Vice-President. A moderate Republican and former political rival to Ronald Reagan, Bush seemingly traded his middle of the road ideology for Reagan’s populist conservatism in order to serve as Vice-President. During those years his sole reason for existence, so the joke goes, was to attend state funerals of foreign dignitaries.

Eight years of inconspicuous labor in the Reagan administration left him with a public identity crisis. Bush struggled to emerge from his shadowy position behind the President and establish a strong identity apart from Ronald Reagan. The task was not an easy one owing to Reagan’s powerful imprint on the consciousness of the American public. At the Democratic convention in July, 1988, the cry of "Where was George?" dramatized the invisible nature of the vice-presidency and Bush’s image problem in particular. A seasoned politician and public servant, George Bush needed to develop a political image that bolstered the credibility he derived from Reagan while simultaneously establishing
himself as a competent leader in his own right.  

**Convention Objectives**

When the Republican National Convention started in August, 1988, Bush faced three major tasks: to differentiate himself from Reagan and develop a strong political personality, to use the convention to launch an aggressive campaign against the Democrats, and to select a vice-president. The initial task of separating himself from Reagan’s image challenged him and his staff. For eight years, he had sublimated his political persona in order to represent the president. The Republican National Convention provided a stage and platform for a renewed, forceful George Bush; the vice president needed to project the image of a strong leader in the tradition of Ronald Reagan and also of a champion of "forgotten" concerns such as energy, the environment, and drugs. In addition, Bush wanted to demonstrate independence and further define his own image by his choice of a running mate; his choice, Bush said, would indicate the type of president he would be.

As part of the carefully orchestrated events of the Republican National Convention, Reagan began the process of establishing Bush as the new leader of the party. Anticipating the transition of power from himself to Bush at the convention, Reagan publicly endorsed him in his weekly radio address on Sunday, 14 August 1988, a week prior to the

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1 It is interesting to note that during the 1980 Republican primaries Bush touted his credentials as "A president you won’t have to train" when he campaigned against Ronald Reagan. It seems ironic that a man with a distinguished career in public service needed to tell the public who he was.
convention. After arriving in New Orleans Reagan delivered a pre-convention speech that contrasted "liberal" Democrats and their policies with George Bush whom he referred as a John Wayne figure. Rhetoric depicting Bush and the party as "good guys in white hats" set the tone for the convention.

If the convention was a Western drama, the hero-in-waiting heightened suspense by refusing to announce his sidekick. Concern for secrecy and a desire that the decision be his own kept Bush mute. To describe Bush's reticence to announce his selection the NBC evening news on 13 August quoted Bush aides who said that, "Bush, a former CIA director, knows how to keep a secret."

While Bush prepared for his part in the convention, the President's address and farewell dominated Monday evening, the first night of the Republican National Convention. Reagan's speech shifted leadership from himself to Bush as he reviewed the accomplishments of his administration. His remarks responded to the Democrats' question of "Where was George?" by highlighting Bush's unseen yet critical role in executing policy. His speech acted as a transition from one political era to another. The Los Angeles Times quoted Reagan speechwriter Kenneth Khachigian who described the speech as an opportunity for Reagan to signal to the public his confidence in Bush. That speech and a video tribute to the Reagan years completed the President's expected obligations to his party and Vice-President. The remainder of the

2 Don Irwin, "Reagan, In 'George and I' Broadcast, Promises to Stump For Bush, Los Angeles Times, 14 August 1988, sec. 1, p. 35.

3 James Gerstenzang, "Reagan Is Hailed As He Tells Bush to Win For Gipper," Los Angeles Times, 16 August 1988, sec. 1, p. 11.
convention focused on George Bush and his selection of a Vice-
Presidential running mate.

Selecting A Vice-Presidential Running Mate

Bush and his aides actively researched possible candidates in the
weeks prior to the convention. The Republican campaign compared the
relative strengths and weaknesses of potential candidates, resulting in
a critical discovery: none of them made the ticket significantly more
attractive to potential voters. Regardless of who ran with Bush, the
vice-presidential candidate would not draw strategic voting segments to
the ticket.4 Because empirical data failed to indicate the best
candidate for the job, Bush relied on personal advice from his staff as
well as his own judgment. It seemed best for Bush to select a "wild
card" candidate who would translate into a "bold surprise choice."5

Only after Bush announced Quayle's selection did details of the
screening and interviewing process become known. Bush contacted Quayle
with Quayle personally to begin a background check that included
ferreting out potentially embarrassing financial and personal
information.6 Bush delegated the task to Kimmitt acknowledging, but
disliking, the necessity of a screening process to assist in selecting
a running mate.

Still undecided a week prior to the convention, Bush solicited

5 Ibid.
6 Cathleen Decker and James Gerstenzang, "'What kind of a guy is
Dan Quayle?' Question Planted Seeds of Selection," Los Angeles Times,
17 August 1988, sec. 1, p. 4.
separate lists from seven of his advisors suggesting three choices each. Media consultant Roger Ailes and pollster Robert Teeter both advocated Quayle for the position. Perhaps as a result of their influence, Bush perceived Quayle as the least offensive and potentially most pliable person on the lists. Later, Bush gave his reasons for selecting Quayle. He belonged to the "baby-boomer" generation, had strong ties to the Midwest, and, so the reasoning went, could help Bush's image with women voters.

On Monday afternoon before the convention, the completed background investigation of Quayle indicated nothing damaging. Kimmitt had used a form containing seventy-seven questions covering financial and personal matters. One of the questions asked if there were anything potentially embarrassing in his background. At that point, the only anticipated skeleton concerned Quayle's relationship to Paula Parkinson. Kimmitt broached the matter during two separate interviews with Quayle and concluded nothing happened between Parkinson and Quayle.

In addition to probing about Parkinson, Kimmitt asked bluntly if Quayle "pulled strings" to enter the National Guard. Quayle replied that he had not and that seems to have ended any questioning into the matter. Bush did not interview Quayle personally and appeared satisfied

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7 This information and much that follows in the paragraph is from an article by Walter Shapiro, "The Quayle Quagmire," Time, 29 August 1988, 16-22.

8 Lobbyist Paula Parkinson claimed to have had a seven month affair with Representative Thomas Evans, R-Delaware. In January, 1980, Evans, Quayle, and Tom Railsback, R-Illinois, shared a house during a golfing weekend in Florida. Quayle denied any involvement with her although she said she'd had sexual relationships with other congressmen. During an investigation in 1981 Quayle was cleared of any involvement.
with the results of his aides’ inquiries into Quayle’s past.  

Tuesday morning, before leaving for the convention Bush announced to his advisors that he had decided but chose not to disclose the decision to them, a tactic consistent with Bush’s penchant for secrecy and his insistence that the decision indicated the type of president he would be. Later in the day Bush’s staff learned of Quayle’s selection while at the Belle Chase Naval Air Station in Louisiana following Bush and Reagan’s brief encounter. (Bush whispered his decision to Reagan as he boarded the airplane.) The Vice-President’s delay in disclosing his decision set into motion a chain of events that affected the remainder of the campaign.

Bush’s insistence on secrecy and on making his own decision created last minute problems. Bush needed to notify those not chosen and announce his selection. To preserve good relations with those not selected, Bush called ten of them personally, and word of their elimination leaked out. Finally, he placed a call to Quayle telling him, “You are my choice. You are my first choice. You are my only choice. We are going to look to the future. And we are going to win by looking to the future.”

Shortly thereafter, Bush and his staff boarded a riverboat to travel to a rally on the New Orleans waterfront where Quayle’s selection would be announced.

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10 Cathleen Decker and James Gerstenzang, "‘What Kind of a Guy Is Dan Quayle?’ Question Planted Seeds of Selection," Los Angeles Times, 17 August 1988, sec. I, p. 4. The Washington Post reported that Quayle was called first and then the other contenders.

Introducing "The Man Of The Future"

While the Secret Service searched for Quayle in the crowd, Bush addressed the rally and in mid-speech introduced Quayle, calling him a leader, an innovator and a "man of the future." An exuberant Quayle joined Bush on the platform, excitedly grabbing Bush's shoulders and then gesturing and shouting unrestrainedly. Quayle's undignified behavior indicated that he did not quite know what to do with himself. This initial enthusiasm contrasted sharply with Bush's reserved calm.

Quayle's amateurish remarks also revealed a boyish eagerness.

Actually, I was just in the area and decided to stop by. I just want to thank you first for the confidence that you placed in me. And as I was standing in that audience out there a young man turned to me... and I sort of whispered to him that I was perhaps going to be the next Vice-Presidential nominee. And you know what he told me? He says, "Well, when you get up there," he says, "You tell George Bush one thing: Go get 'em." Let's go get 'em. 12

It would appear that due to short notice Quayle lacked a prepared speech for such an auspicious occasion. His seemingly inept response to a crucial rhetorical event typified his perceived communication style throughout the campaign.

Media Response

After weeks of suspense and speculation the media seemed surprised that Bush selected Quayle. Quayle's designation as Bush's running mate seemed anti-climactic and incredible. Bush made the announcement earlier than he planned because Baker advised him that a delay would

detract from his speech objectives on Thursday night. Bush concurred. However, the swift disclosure created credibility problems for Quayle.

Bush remained concerned about leaks and premature disclosure of the decision. He insisted that his advisors travel with him to the rally and avoid the press. Secrecy and haste resulted in an unavailability of campaign public relations people to respond to immediate media questions about Quayle and his qualifications.13 The delay proved critical because the media interviewed convention delegates for their reactions. Because the campaign failed to convey information via fact sheets or by prior notice, delegates responded inappropriately to media inquiries. Opinions ranged from whole-hearted support to those who said they knew nothing about Quayle.14 Quayle’s credibility suffered more than it might have otherwise because of this lack of foresight.

Media coverage of the event included broadcast news reports of the announcement and also commentary on Bush’s choice. Evening news broadcasts showed Quayle’s introduction and also biographical clips describing the unknown senator as “bright, articulate,”15 and as someone young and well-liked with no particular negatives.16

In contrast, the CBS Evening News included a Dan Rather interview with James Baker. Rather posed aggressive questions: “Surely you’re


14For example, The Washington Post quoted conservative Republican congressmen supportive of the decision. Others, such as convention delegates unfamiliar with Washington, worried about his lack of notoriety outside his home state.


not going to argue that Dan Quayle is the best qualified Republican to be just a, uh, heart-stop away from the American presidency?" Baker replied that, "The issue is not if he is the best qualified Republican, the issue is whether or not he is an extremely well-qualified Republican" In response to a similar question, Baker replied again about Quayle's qualifications saying that he was "someone who was clearly competent and well-qualified to be president." Rather's insistence that Quayle lacked competence became a recurring theme throughout the remainder of the campaign. Indeed, to this day the question of Quayle's competence remains.

The newspapers and newsmagazines reported the day's events and background stories detailing Quayle's political career and accomplishments. These reports mirrored the newscasts' mixed reactions of Republicans. Republicans familiar with Quayle and his record believed him to be an appropriate choice.¹⁷ The Washington Post reported that some people indicated off the record, that Bush had made an inappropriate decision. Others mentioned Quayle's "millionaire" status [a liability exclusive to Republican candidates]. Descriptions of Quayle included "scrappy," "combative," "competitive," and "telegenic."¹⁸ The Wall Street Journal described Quayle as "a telegenic

¹⁷ The 17 August The New York Times summarized the views of Hoosier politicians describing Quayle as "popular" and "suffering from no 'gender gap.'"

but relatively obscure senator from Indiana," noting his appeal to
 evangelical Christians for his opposition to abortion.\(^19\) The Washington
 Post quoted John Brademas (D-IN) who described Bush and Quayle as "two
 peas in a pod separated by a couple of decades." An analysis appearing
 in the Atlanta Constitution quoted an anonymous Congressman: "'You
cannot dislike him,' a House member said shortly after Mr. Quayle left
that body to begin his Senate career in 1981. 'He’s personable, he’s
handsome, he’s fun to be around and he’s about a quarter of an inch
deep.'"\(^20\) Overall, initial newspaper coverage of the announcement and
preliminary reactions varied from positive to negative. The attitude
changed following Bush and Quayle’s initial press conference the
following day on 17 August.

To summarize, Quayle faced a difficult rhetorical situation as he
accepted the position of vice-presidential running mate. His problem
originated in Bush’s image problems. Bush had selected him on a
moment’s notice after weeks of consideration.

Bush’s reasons for favoring Quayle seemed mysterious even if one
understood Bush’s desire to "reach across the generations" to select
someone different from himself and yet someone with whom he could
identify. Bush looked for a team player who would not upstage him and
yet possessed characteristics to balance his own perceived political

\(^{19}\) The same article mentioned his "hyperkinetic" behavior at the
rally, and mentioned as a potential negative how well he would withstand
the scrutiny of the media. James M. Perry, "Bush Names Senator Quayle
40.

\(^{20}\) Andrew J. Glass, "Quayle to Offer Aggressiveness, Media Appeal
17.
weaknesses with conservatives, women, and Midwest voters. Quayle lacked a national identity and remained untested on the national political scene despite Bush's confidence in him. His inexperience at this level caused him to be a natural target of media scrutiny. Bush's last minute decision left Quayle unprepared for what followed.

Unsuspecting, Quayle faced the scrutiny of a persistent media. The press waited, ready to probe into his past. Having selected a running mate, Bush prepared for the remainder of the convention and the fall campaign. No one knew that the big bang of the convention would be the detonation of Dan Quayle in front of the nation.
CHAPTER 3
THE QUAYLE CONTROVERSY: PRIVILEGED PARROT OR CHICKEN HAWK

Bush ended the major suspense of the convention with his announcement of Quayle's selection. His long awaited disclosure terminated speculation but created a new question: Who was Dan Quayle? Bush responded to media and public curiosity by scheduling a formal press conference. However, Bush and a seasoned staff of political and media advisors failed to anticipate the degree of scrutiny Quayle faced. The press conference turned into a hunt for the "real" Quayle.

Bush/Quayle Press Conference

Quayle and Bush answered a variety of questions about themselves and the ticket throughout the thirty minute morning press conference on Wednesday, 17 August. Both candidates presented opening statements followed by questions from the press.1 Bush convened the session by expressing regret for the deaths of Pakistan's President Zia and American Ambassador Arnie Raphel in a plane crash. He offered condolences and then introduced and bolstered Quayle. He referred to Quayle as a rising star in the Republican Party and presented three reasons for his selection: Quayle's qualifications, their agreement on national political goals, and Quayle's appeal to all voters.

The Quayle of the press conference differed greatly from the Quayle of the waterfront rally the previous day. Dressed in a dark suit, white shirt, and "power" tie, Quayle spoke with force and deliberation; his reserve contrasted with the frantic demeanor displayed the day before. He appeared composed and controlled, almost a different person from the previous day.

After his introduction, Quayle thanked Bush for selecting him and briefly summarized his qualifications. He mentioned his years of service in Congress and his authorship of the Job Partnership Training Act. Quayle also noted his concerns about education, labor, and national defense. He remarked that he and Bush had similar values and would work to preserve American freedoms and opportunities. Quayle's statement ended when he thanked the vice-president.

Questions from the press conference concerned the Republican

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2 What exactly did Quayle wear? The answer depends on the newspaper you read. Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "It's Over, It's Over," Washington Post, 19 August 1988, sec. A, p. 23, reported that "Bush and Quayle wore identical blue pinstripe suits as they faced the press in the Marriott." Lawrence M. O'Rourke, "GOP Team Will Campaign Like 'Pit Bulls,' Bush Says," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 18 August 1988, sec. A, p. 16, reported that "Each wore a white shirt, a red necktie known in Washington political circles as a 'power tie,' and a black suit." Both articles contain a dateline for New Orleans, causing one to assume that all three journalists attended the press conference. If that is true, why does a discrepancy exist about a simple matter such as describing someone's attire?
campaign strategy, candidate policy, Bush's perceived problems with voters, Quayle's ethos, and the National Guard issue. The majority of questions revolved around Quayle's competence and character; a study of apologia necessitates a close examination of these questions.

The issue of Quayle's ethos dominated the press conference. The first question, directed to Bush, portrayed Quayle as unqualified for the position: "Can you really say to the nation today that Senator Quayle, young and so relatively inexperienced, especially compared to you sir, is prepared to be a heartbeat away from the President?" Bush

3Question fourteen asked both candidates to describe their campaign against the Democrats. In question twenty-two Bush addressed the matter of debating Dukakis. Questions twenty-five and twenty-six asked about campaign strategy. Bush replied that he and Quayle would campaign other than on a regional basis and that their tactics would consist of addressing "the issues."

4Questions twelve and thirteen queried Quayle about tax increases and suggested his vote for a compromise budget implied support of tax increases although Bush opposed them. The questions implied possible inconsistencies in his historic positions on tax increases. Eleven centered on Bush's strategies to combat poverty. Question nineteen dealt with Quayle's position on the INF Treaty and twenty with Bush's position on the UN.

5Questions about the ticket's campaign strategy began in question four which asked Bush about his plans to "narrow this tremendous gender gap which confronts you." Bush said he would address the issues of child care and education. The remainder of his answer included mention of Quayle's "strong appeal to young people and to women voters." Bush appeared anxious to justify his selection of Quayle saying that Quayle helped him narrow the gender gap. A leading question, twenty-four asked about Bush's strategy for capturing the "young vote." Bush denied having a problem with that age group. He noted that Quayle's presence on the ticket could only help him. Question thirty asked Bush to explain his remark from the previous day about the "three little brown children"--a reference to his Hispanic grandchildren. Bush's response took the media to task for their insensitivity to his family. He referred to the statement as a "comment of pride." He seemed to have had his fill of questions at this point and said the next question would be the last. The media's question implied Bush possessed a racist mentality--a trait inappropriate for a president.
responded: "I've listened to his peers and the accolades from the senators with whom he serves speak eloquently of Dan Quayle's standing to be one heartbeat away from the Presidency." The press asked Bush to compare unfavorably Quayle with himself. They attempted to create a cognitive rift in the minds of the public by implying Quayle lacked competence.

The second question asked Quayle to describe his qualifications: "Senator, what makes you think you are qualified to become President in the event something unfortunate should happen to Mr. Bush? What is it that you have that would make you qualified?" The phrasing of the question suggested that Quayle lacked the background and expertise for the presidency in the event of Bush's death. Quayle's response cited his experience in the Senate, especially on the Armed Services Committee and in national security. He completed his response, "I'd be prepared."

Quayle's answers to the line of questioning appeared inadequate and the media pressed for more evidence of Quayle's competency. The third question asked Quayle to focus specifically on his "executive experience." Quayle referred to his experience as an administrative assistant in the Indiana Governor's office, experience in the Indiana attorney general's office, and experience in the Indiana Inheritance Tax Division. Quayle injected humor when he described himself as "the chief grave robber of Indiana" collecting inheritance taxes. He also noted that he "met a payroll" as associate editor of The Huntington Herald Press. Although his resume did not compare to Bush's, the media ended competency questions for the moment.

The fifth question queried Bush about Quayle's appeal to voters other than conservatives or "Reagan Democrats." Bush advocated Quayle's
attractiveness based on "the Governor [of Indiana] telling me [sic] that Dan Quayle has a higher standing with the voters--Democrat and Republican--than any other public figure in the state of Indiana." It is important to note that Bush relied on peer testimony as evidence of Quayle's competence just as he had in the first question. Bush had not interviewed Quayle and was unable to share personal observations.

The sixth question asked Bush to justify his selection of Quayle: "Mr. Vice President, there are some people who say you should have done more to try to balance the ticket, either have someone who's somewhat different from you or who come [sic], who offer something that you don't, sir. Did you take that into consideration?" Bush emphasized the age difference and then reiterated his introductory statement about Quayle's three candidate strengths. He concluded with an enthymematic remark: "So if we can convey nationally what he has demonstrated in one state, it'll be of enormous help to this ticket." Bush reasoned that because Quayle maintained popularity with a cross-section of Indiana voters that he would appeal to the American electorate as well.

The seventh question suggested that Bush should have chosen Dole. Bush responded briefly that "it was a tough call." He repeated he had already stated his reasons for Quayle's selection and that Quayle "is the best choice."

Question fifteen inquired about Bush's acquaintance with Quayle. He responded he knew Quayle in the 70's, had helped him campaign for reelection, and had acted as a campaign advisor on national security matters prior to the vice-presidential selection process. Whereas Bush had relied earlier on peer testimony as evidence of Quayle's competency, Bush's response to question fifteen contained the only reference to a
personal knowledge of Quayle.

Question eighteen asked Bush if his choice of Quayle signaled his willingness to take risks. Bush replied that the country would see that Quayle was a "natural choice" and the "best possible choice." Again, Bush deflected criticism and supported Quayle.

Question twenty-three took a slightly different approach to ask Bush why he had selected Quayle. The reporter queried Bush about the importance of selecting a loyal, compatible vice-president. Bush responded that he and Quayle shared the same philosophy, but that he welcomed Quayle to discuss differences at any time, much as he did then with Reagan. He spoke of the unity of the Republican ticket and contrasted it with the philosophical differences between Dukakis and Bentsen.

Question twenty-nine asked Bush if he regretted introducing Quayle ahead of schedule. Bush responded he did not and that the decision "captured the imagination of this convention." Again he cited peer testimony, delegates and others, who were "enthusiastic" over his decision.

The issue of Quayle's competency consumed a significant portion of the press conference. The media appeared determined to trap Bush and Quayle into an admission that Quayle's selection lacked vision and logic. The leading wording of questions indicated the media's desire to ambush the candidates.

Questions about Quayle's character dominated another portion of the press conference beginning with question eight which asked Quayle about his involvement in the Iran-Contra Affair. Quayle responded that he and Bush had no contact about it. He called the question "off-base,"
and ended further inquiry.

The next question probed Quayle’s involvement in the Paula Parkinson affair: 6 "Senator Quayle, since this is a family value campaign I’m sure you’re eager to clear up questions about your relationship with Paula Parkinson, the former lobbyist and Playboy model. I have a two-part question..." Quayle answered tersely that the matter "has been covered" and that he had no further contact with Parkinson. Quayle thus defended himself by avoidance of the issue.

Having plumbed the depths of Quayle’s past the media changed bait and fished in question ten for self-incriminatory revelations about personal wealth. The press asked if Quayle would pledge full financial disclosure. Quayle offered positive assurance of this; Bush added that he and Quayle agreed on the matter.

The twenty-first question returned to the matter of Quayle’s purported wealth: "Senator Quayle--I’d like to ask both of you this question--but Senator Quayle, it has been quoted that your net worth is $200 million. Is this correct? And if so, isn’t this going to put off the blue-collar--" Bush interrupted the reporter, "Why do you think I chose him?" The reporter continued, "--put off the blue-collar vote and the low-income vote." Quayle answered with humor: "That figure is not correct. And believe me you have caused me a lot of problems at home, because my wife is asking about that." He repeated that his tax returns would be released for public review. Quayle’s use of humor deflected the question.

The matter of wealth surfaced again in the final question which

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6 See note number eight in Chapter 2.
addressed the ethos of the Republican ticket as opposed to the Democratic ticket.

Mr. Vice President, since you don't want the Republican Party to seem like a party of the rich, for the rich, once again a question about personal finance. Why pick another millionaire for a running mate?

Bush: I picked the best man to be Vice President of the United States. It isn't a question of personal wealth, it's personal [sic] how you keep this country going so more people can benefit by this, the longest recovery in history. It's those who care about others in his leadership and his Job Training Partnership Act—really something sensational. And so I don't think it's a question of personal wealth. If it were, the Democratic ticket would be deep trouble too.

Thank you all very much.

The media probed Bush's rationale for selecting Quayle. The candidates' smooth responses hindered the media's quest for scandalous, and therefore newsworthy, revelations. Quayle appeared in command of the situation; he even used humor to deflect media probing. Appropriate responses to the press's questions bolstered his credibility. The media persisted and their search for a negative story about Quayle's ethos continued with question sixteen.

This question explored the matter of Quayle's National Guard service during the Vietnam War. "Senator Quayle, I'm listening to the Democrats trying to knock you down very quickly and this morning they were attacking you as someone who says he's tough on defense but from your era you didn't fight in the Vietnam War. I'm wondering if you think that's a low blow from them, or if you'd like to respond to them going on the attack on you on that matter." The reporter worded the question as if concerned about Quayle's ethos and posed it under the guise of "Democratic allegations." Quayle swallowed the bait: "Yes, I do perceive that as being a cheap shot. I have a deep affection for those men and women who have sacrificed their lives in Vietnam. And
anybody to imply anything differently is just simple nonsense."

Dissatisfied with Quayle’s response, the questioner probed further. Significantly, the follow-up question signaled a change in Quayle’s defense from a single response to a process of interaction with the media: "Well my point is that Mr. Bush has fought, you know, in World War II. You’re tough on defense. Do you think it’s going to be a handicap in the campaign because you didn’t fight in Vietnam?” Quayle responded, "No, I do not." The question explored the ramifications of differences between Quayle’s and Bush’s military records. The reporter acknowledged Quayle’s National Guard service but insinuated it lacked substance because it excluded active duty. These two questions and Quayle’s responses charted a course in the campaign different from that which Bush had mapped.

Quayle needed to address the negative assumptions about his character because of patriotic values rooted in American culture. Every president since George Washington had served in the military. Americans have a long tradition of military service, especially during war time. Because of this shared value of service to country (Steele and Redding identified patriotism as an American value) the questioner implied that it seemed unprecedented for a male candidate—a leader, a "hawk,"—to have avoided active service.

The reporter implied a lack of consistency between Quayle’s tough pro-military stance and his failure to fight in Vietnam. The reporter

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8 Steele and Redding, 90.
wanted to know how Quayle could claim to be in favor of a strong military when he had failed to defend actively his country in war as George Bush had done. Quayle countered by asserting his support of Vietnam veterans and denied the validity of such allegations by calling them a "cheap shot." He concluded his answer by stating that his lack of a combat record would not affect the campaign.

The media must have deemed Quayle's responses unsatisfactory because they broached the issue again later in the press conference. Questions twenty-seven and twenty-eight directed attention back to Quayle's military record. Because the media perceived Quayle's earlier responses as evasive, the "Quayle hunt" began in earnest and continues to this day.

Senator Quayle, there's been so much made of the fact that you're a baby-boomer. Maybe you can give us a little picture of yourself. Graduating in 1969, the Vietnam era, you chose to go in the National Guard rather than to serve in Vietnam. Can you give us a little bit of what you were thinking during that time?

Quayle: Well it's, growing up in Huntington, Ind., the first thing you think about is education. You think about what any small town person would think about, eventually growing up, raising a family. I was fortunate enough to be able to go on to law school, meet my wife. We have, I'm blessed with my three beautiful children. We're very happy, very content and looking forward to a very exciting campaign. I did not know in 1969 that I would be in this room today, I'll confess.

Why the National Guard rather than serving in the Army, Marines the Navy before going to Vietnam?

Quayle: My brother and I, two years younger, both went into the service at the same time, about the same time. He went into the Marine Corps and I went into the National Guard. I went into the National Guard and I served six years there from 1969 through 1975.

Bush: We gotta go to this side of the room.

Quayle's aside enables us to glimpse the mentality of a small town boy
twenty years ago: "I did not know in 1969 that I would be in this room today, I’ll confess." He pictured the ideal life of the average American of that time, one who had no aspirations of greatness. The media chose to believe that Quayle’s observation expressed regret for a decision twenty years before. Bob Schiefer reported on the CBS news that evening that Quayle "seemed to concede that it wasn’t the wisest course for a future politician."

The media's leading questions attempted to elicit negative and damaging disclosures from either Bush or Quayle. Bush and Quayle defended themselves. Unable to force incriminatory information about other aspects of Quayle’s life, the media focused on Quayle’s perceived fumbled response to the National Guard questions.9

Media Reaction to the Press Conference

The evening news on the three networks reprised the day’s political events and focused on the press conference. Each newscast included biographical clips and reactions from Republicans and Democrats. Reports on the press conference showed Quayle’s describing his qualifications, the Paula Parkinson matter, and his remark that he did not know in 1969 where he would be today. Biographical information recounted Quayle’s record and clips of previous speeches as well as pictures of his family’s arrival. Reporters told of reactions from Republicans who supported him publicly, but not privately.

9In writing about the press conference Walter Shapiro explained that "Blindsided by a question on why he joined the National Guard, Quayle fell back on the advice that Bush Media Guru Roger Ailes gave the Indiana Senator during his 1986 re-election campaign. ‘If there is no advantage to you in a subject, don’t talk about it.’ So instead of a full answer, Quayle spoke in fractured sound bites." "The Quayle Quagmire," Time, 29 August 1988, p. 22.
CBS reported on the Democrats' reaction and showed a clip of vice-presidential candidate Lloyd Bentsen's saying, "It's not the number of miles on ya' that counts. It's the depth of the tread you have." Presidential candidate Michael Dukakis commented, "Nobody asked ever any questions about whether or not Lloyd Bentsen was qualified to be President of the United States." The news broadcasts incorporated a mixture of positive and negative coverage about the press conference and Quayle's competence.¹⁰

The next day's Washington Post contained excerpts from Quayle television interviews Wednesday evening. Tom Brokaw of NBC asked Quayle if he'd had "special help of any kind" to enter the National Guard. CBS anchorman Dan Rather at CBS asked Quayle how he entered "the National Guard when a lot of other people were not able to do so." Quayle replied to both networks that his enlistment occurred twenty years prior and he didn't recall the "specifics." He remembered letting his desire to enlist be known but denied Rather's insistence that the governor or lieutenant governor intervened on his behalf.

Newspaper articles concentrated on the press conference, specifically on how Quayle responded to particular issues. The Washington Post reported Quayle's behavior as "uneasy when questioned about his wealth and about an old sex scandal."¹¹ A related article

¹⁰The ABC evening news showed a clip of Quayle’s addressing California delegates. "The question is whether we’re gonna go forward to tomorrow or we’re gonna go past to the back. Past the back, that’s a Hoosierism." Quayle appeared energetic in his delivery and didn’t seem bothered by the verbal slip.

described Quayle’s performance as one in "which Quayle stumbled over questions on his personal affairs." Later in the same article, an advisor to Ronald Reagan was quoted as saying, "Quayle’s inexperience 'can presage a real major gaffe, and that's the last thing we need.'". 12

The Nashville Tennessean described Bush and Quayle as "aggressive in their answers" during the press conference. 13 The Wall Street Journal said "Sen. Quayle stumbled in trying to explain his decision to enter the National Guard in 1969 during the Vietnam War." 14 Different newspapers emphasized different issues from the press conference.

Initially, coverage of Quayle’s selection on the riverfront had ranged from positive to negative before the media researched his background. After the press conference, newspapers carried color stories on Quayle which described his personal and political histories.

"Hometown Remembers No Hint of Great Things" headlined The New York Times on 18 August. The short article quoted Huntington residents and a college professor who described Quayle as "fairly undistinguished" with regard to academic achievement. Other newspaper articles reported on his Congressional voting record and conservative ideology.

On Wednesday night, 17 August, George Bush received the nomination of his party for President. But the growing controversy focused media attention on Dan Quayle. The convention no longer


belonged to George Bush.

The Campaign Reacts: Damage Control Begins

The media pursuit of the Quayle National Guard matter created a rhetorical exigence. In a meeting convened later at midnight Wednesday, 17 August, James Baker ordered public silence on the National Guard issue while his staff investigated the process by which Quayle entered the Guard. 15 Had Quayle lied or misled Kimmitt during the campaign background check? What had Quayle said to the media about how he entered the National Guard? Republican strategists sifted through the available information to find an answer. Quayle's father gave them his recollections, Quayle recorded what he remembered of the time, aides contacted politicians and National Guard officials who might have knowledge. 16

Quayle spent Thursday, 18 August, away from the media supposedly at work on his acceptance speech for that evening. Baker "canceled most of Quayle’s planned schedule for the day, including two morning television shows and sessions before the critical Ohio and Texas delegations." 17 Baker appeared on television in his stead. "When [Quayle] made his only daytime appearance at a GOP fund raising lunch, the applause was lukewarm." Quayle made no mention of the Guard issue at the luncheon.


17 Hoffman, "A Day of Damage Control," p. 29. All material in the paragraph is from the Post unless noted otherwise.
As the search for information continued, another question emerged. Would Quayle be dropped from the ticket? During a scheduled briefing at 5:30 p.m., Bush spokesperson Sheila Tate denied that possibility. Tate left when television cameras recorded her remarks. Avoidance of the media continued as the primary strategy while the tacticians gathered information and attempted to determine an appropriate course of action. Bush aides also talked with the media and convention delegates to downplay the seriousness of the gaffe. Time was running out before the evening session began at which Bush and Quayle would deliver their acceptance speeches.

While the Bush campaign investigated how Quayle entered the National Guard the media conducted its own inquiry. Dan Rather headlined the CBS evening news with "J. Danforth Quayle in the spotlight and under fire and still the center of controversy on the last day of George Bush's convention." Later he said "The Bush campaign today quoted Quayle as saying he now remembers asking his influential parents for help getting into the state national guard at the height of the Vietnam War."

The same broadcast contained an interview with retired Major General Wendell Phillippi. Phillippi worked for Quayle's father's newspaper in 1969 after he retired from the National Guard. He acknowledged that Quayle talked to him about enlistment in the Guard. Phillippi said he called the adjutant general's office to recommend

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19 The Indianapolis News (owned by Quayle's uncle) published the first story regarding who Quayle contacted about entering the National Guard. Other newspapers and television networks quickly picked it up.
Quayle. To his knowledge, that ended the matter.

The NBC evening news broadcast an interview with James Polk, retired commanding general of the Indiana National Guard. He said Quayle asked him about enlistment and that he recommended Quayle do so. Polk denied pulling any strings: "I didn’t have any strings to pull." ABC’s Jeff Greenfield summarized, the "issue is influence." The question of how Quayle entered the National Guard had to be resolved. Quayle’s ethos was at stake.

In addition to recounting the sequence of convention events, the newspapers published stories about Quayle’s background and the Vietnam era. The Los Angeles Times described Quayle’s unit’s activities in the article "Quayle drew PR Duty in Guard." The story included information about the work (a nationally recognized quarterly magazine) and play (partying) routine of the unit. Former members of Quayle’s unit remembered him but could not identify his specific activities. A picture which accompanied the story showed Quayle’s leaning against a Guard automobile while another Guardsman stood beside him at attention. Other publications cropped the picture to exclude the other Guardsman.

An editorial in the Los Angeles Times, "Service in Vietnam War Emerges As Political Issue," emphasized the historical importance of


21 The 29 August/5 September issue of U.S. News & World Report shows Quayle’s face only. Newsweek’s 29 August edition shows Quayle’s body only. Time shows Quayle’s upper torso. Evaluating the ethics and ethical outcome of cropping the picture is a matter beyond the scope of the thesis.
military service for politicians. It concluded with a comment from William Broyles, a former Newsweek editor: "I don't think that Vietnam service should be used to judge a man of that age. But how he responded to the need to serve obviously says something about his character." The process by which Quayle entered the National Guard during an unpopular war raised questions about his strong views on the military and national defense. Some viewed the two actions as inconsistent and hypocritical.

Another editorial, "A Conflicting Legacy For the Generation That Fought the War," described in more detail those who fought and those who avoided the war. Myra McPherson listed several examples of politicians who avoided active military service and now advocate a strong military. She included Quayle among that group. McPherson wrote of her concern about Quayle's perceived hypocrisy because he opposed veterans issues in Congress. Her article and the preceding one expressed views held by many in the public: that Quayle used the influence of his parents to avoid an unpleasant situation and that he did not have the right to be a "hawk" twenty years later.

Newspaper editorials addressed possible inconsistencies of Quayle the "hawk" who may have used family influence to avoid combat. One satirized his service, another commented on it as representative of


the Vietnam generation, and still another rehashed Quayle’s performance at the press conference and predicted the ticket’s success. Meg Greenfield’s observations seemed to capture the true spirit of Dan Quayle. She described him as "bewildered" by the questions posed by the media during the press conference and noted how unprepared he appeared in the national spotlight. Greenfield defined accurately some of the problems faced by a nationally inexperienced politician. She alone sympathized among the newspaper and editorial writers.

Quayle’s Acceptance Speech

As the controversy swirled in the media, the Bush campaign attempted to maintain some degree of normalcy. Quayle rehearsed his acceptance speech earlier in the day but reporters dogged him as he left the platform. He avoided response to questions about the National Guard issue saying only, "there’s nothing to discuss." The evening news broadcasts showed clips of Quayle as he walked away from reporters.

On Thursday evening Bush and Quayle delivered their acceptance speeches as planned. Attributed to speech writer Peggy Noonan, Bush’s speech achieved its goal to energize the convention. He seemed natural and conversational and yet admitted, "I’m not the most


compelling speaker." He coined new buzz phrases when he spoke of his vision for America. Bush called for a "kindler, gentler America" characterized by "a thousand points of light," and where "Read my lips: no new taxes" would be imposed.

Quayle's speech met three objectives: to thank the party and Bush for his nomination, to tell the audience about himself, and to wave the Republican flag. Quayle thanked Bush for the opportunity to run as vice-president and continued with a brief biographical outline of his accomplishments, mentioning his National Guard service in passing, "I served six years in the National Guard. And, like the millions of Americans who have served in the Guard and who serve today--I am proud of it."29 His conclusion referred to the common American value of freedom and thanked Bush's generation for having preserved the American way of life.

The convention ended exuberantly with Bush's speech. Despite the National Guard controversy, campaign members determined to move ahead. The focus changed from the convention to campaigning. Bush and Quayle journeyed to Huntington, Indiana, to begin the official campaign.

**Press Conference in Huntington**

Bush strategists must have breathed a sigh of relief when the pair left New Orleans. One Bush aide expressed his concern to the *Los

29According to John Balzar, "As Quayle spoke Thursday night, campaign whips at the Superdome distributed sheets of quotes from Indiana newspapers and wire services to the effect that helping people get into the National Guard was commonplace and acceptable." Those efforts to distribute material favorable to Quayle seemed too little, too late, too inappropriate. "Quayle Defends Guard Service to Cheers, Chants," *Los Angeles Times*, 19 August 1988, sec. I, p. 13,
Angeles Times: "We're trying to get through this week. I think that outside of New Orleans, we can get away with it." Did the worker mean away "with it" or "from it?" The campaign achieved neither although the impromptu press conference in Huntington was designed to lay the National Guard issue to rest.

Quayle and Bush arrived in Huntington to rally the troops. The army of 12,000 to 20,000 supporters carried signs and placards such as "Hoosiers Against Press Hypocrisy" and "Quayle Country: media poachers beware. No hunting or trapping." Pia Zadora and Sandi Patti sang. The master of ceremonies "incited the crowd to boo the media--in particular, CBS anchor Dan Rather--and encouraged them to turn around and tell the rest of the country what they thought about Quayle." Bush and Quayle spoke against a backdrop of flags and red, white, and blue banners. Following his speech, Quayle removed his jacket and moved toward the crowd to shake hands. While surrounded by supporters Quayle answered questions from the media. The public address system broadcast the interchange between Quayle and the media.

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Questions centered on Quayle’s National Guard Service and rehashed speculation and opinion that had appeared previously in the media. Quayle responded to queries about "efforts made on your behalf" to secure a place in the National Guard and whether or not he had alerted the campaign to those details. He stated, "We went through why I joined the Indiana National Guard and I gave them essentially the same answer I gave you"--that the details of his enlistment were not included during his interview with the Bush campaign. Quayle’s replies lacked directness and the media probed further: "But in the National Guard, sir, the reports are that you spent your time in the National Guard writing news releases, magazine articles and learning to be a welder. Is that true?" Quayle: "I was--in the--in the National Guard I served--I served--I served for six years."

The reporter continued: "What did you do?" Quayle: "I served a week--weekend and two weeks during the summer. I was attached to the 120th public information detachment." The reporter persisted: "Well, write press releases and magazine articles and learn to be a welder, is that basically what you did?" Quayle: "The welding, the welding was part of the basic training. I didn’t do welding when I came back. I was--" The reporter interrupted: "But you did write press releases?" Quayle: "...and I also served in the kitchen patrol and peeled a lot of potatoes and things that other specialists do." Quayle’s lack of direct responses indicated he did not think quickly on his feet.

When questioned about the use of "connections" to enter the Guard

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Quayle answered, "I got into the National Guard fairly. I did not ask anybody to break the rules. And as far as I know, nobody did break the rules. I got in fairly." He also denied that service in the National Guard guaranteed avoidance of Vietnam. He stated that his objectives consisted of attending law school and serving his country rather than committing exclusively to military service for two years. The press pursued this issue and posed at least four questions and additional follow-up questions. Quayle reiterated his reasons and pointed out the patriotic nature of his tenure: "Because by joining the Indiana National Guard, my unit could have been called up and I would have gone to Vietnam had my unit been called up."35 His answer insisted that he was not the draft-dodger that some implied him to be.

Throughout the twenty minute press conference, Quayle answered questions amidst a crowd that cheered him and booed the press. The media perceived a "set-up" by the Bush campaign, while the public thought the media went too far.36

The NBC evening news coverage of the press conference included a reporter's comment that the damage control strategy was to "make Quayle look like the victim of a hungry press corps. And the first stop, the hometown press corps, loved the show." CBS characterized the rally as a "supportive Greek chorus to their hero under trial by media." The

35 According to the Indianapolis Star 19 August 1988 issue, Indiana Guard units did serve in Vietnam prior to Quayle's enlistment but six months after Quayle joined, President Nixon ended any further National Guard participation in Vietnam.

36 A poll released on 27 August indicated this.
Indianapolis Star described the event as a "sideshow." The New York Times reported the event as "a surly scene" and the press as "combative." Despite the press's complaints about the event's conduct the Bush campaign denied any ulterior motives in the impromptu staging. Realistically, campaign officials must have been pleased to see the media placed on the defensive by a crowd that championed the ticket.

Other coverage included clips of the press conference and an interview with former Pennsylvania congressman Don Bailey, who recalled a conversation he had had with Quayle. Bailey said, "He made a comment that, uh, uh, [sic] 'well I [sic], I [sic], I rode it out in the National Guard.' And uh, you know that at the time it [sic], it was said [sic], it was not said in a, a confrontational or hostile way by him but it offended me because of the [sic], uh, because everyone knew that, uh, during the Vietnam War, uh, the waiting lists and the attempts to get into the National Guard were quite competitive because it was a safer place to be." That the network located someone obscure to the general public with a negative view of Quayle's remarks about his military service demonstrates the lengths to which the media will go to present their own point of view under the guise of "the public's right to know."

Both NBC and CBS showed clips of Quayle's appearance at the Republican National Committee earlier in the day where he joked about the issue. The clips showed Quayle in a jocular mood saying, "I think I know how I'm to introduce myself. I stand at attention. Name, Dan Quayle. Rank, Sergeant. Serial number, 303504096. Indiana National

37 O'Neill and Traub, "Hometown Crowd Reaction Catches Media Off Guard."
Guard. Six years and proud of it." Quayle's attempt to satirize the furor seemed to demonstrate his efforts to relieve personal tension and maintain some perspective on the issue. However, he appeared foolish and amateurish during the delivery.

The Washington Post explained the critical nature of the issue and the possible use of influence in the story "Quayle Was in Line to Be Drafted." The article stated that Quayle passed his pre-induction physical in April, 1969 and therefore could have been drafted after he graduated 25 May. He entered the National Guard on 19 May after Wendell Phillippi contacted the Guard on his behalf. According to Robert Moorehead, former commanding general of the Indiana National Guard, 38th Infantry division, the unit Quayle entered was four positions below strength at the time of Quayle's enlistment. Other former Guard officials disagreed. Although Quayle entered the Guard he did not enter law school until the next year in fall, 1970, due to low grades. The ABC evening news told of the release of records by Brigadier General James Barney which showed that, statewide, the Indiana National Guard was 160 below authorized strength at the time of Quayle's enlistment. It would seem that influence played a part to enable Quayle to enlist but it remains questionable as to whether "undue" use of influence was used.

Had the press created an issue in which the public had no sustained interest and believed unfair? Public response indicated waning interest. Tom Brokaw reported on the NBC evening news that "all

three networks report that they have had an unusually large number of calls from viewers who protested network coverage of the Quayle National Guard story." While the number of calls may not reflect those who wanted to see coverage, it seems significant that NBC reported viewer opinion. In a *Newsweek* poll conducted 18 and 19 August 1988 and released on 20 August 1988 seventy-four percent of the respondents said that they did not "have a less favorable opinion of Dan Quayle because he chose to serve in the National Guard during the Vietnam War."39 The *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* 20 August 1988 edition mentioned in its entertainment section the large volume of negative calls received by four networks (ABC, CBS, NBC, and CNN). It would seem that the public wearied of the issue long before the media ended their coverage.

CHAPTER 4

THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL: WHERE WAS DAN?

The controversy over how and when Quayle entered the National Guard overshadowed Bush’s ascension to the Republican throne. Campaign strategists had failed to anticipate the degree of media scrutiny that Quayle faced. Officials maintained silence and avoided leaking any information to the press until they had researched and obtained records, seemingly oblivious to the media’s independent investigation. Deliberately, they avoided any response similar to that of McGovern-Eagleton or Mondale-Ferraro but failed to formulate a positive strategy. The lack of a proactive strategy focused attention on Quayle.

The press conference in Huntington, Indiana, had achieved two objectives. It answered the media’s questions about how and when Quayle entered the National Guard and it provided an opportunity to turn the tide of public opinion firmly against the media’s inquisition. Strategists believed that the press conference would signal an end to the controversy.\(^1\) They also thought the issue would develop from a liability into an asset by focusing on two basic American values, patriotism and fair play. Such a simple strategy seemed a great coup but again strategists underestimated the tenacity of the media. Far

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\(^1\)Craig L. Fuller, Mr. Bush’s chief of staff, insisted that the controversy... was on a ‘down-hill slide,’ according to an article by Gerald M. Boyd, “Defending Quayle, Bush Says His National Guard Service Will Cease to Be an Issue,” New York Times, 21 August 1988, p. 24.
from ending the inquiry into Quayle's past, the ensuing week would uncover additional damaging information about the candidate.

**Joint Campaigning in Ohio**

Bush and Quayle traveled to Ohio for campaigning on the day following the press conference, 20 August 1988. The ABC evening news showed clips of a parade in Dayton and of Bush and Quayle as they pitched horseshoes at the Ohio state fairgrounds in Columbus. In clips of a press conference held at the fair, Bush, standing with Quayle, compared the furor surrounding Quayle's service in the National Guard to a "starving school of blue fish" on a "feeding frenzy." Bush termed the controversy "a tempest in a teapot" and said he expected it to die down quickly. Quayle defended his military record saying that "nothing improper, nothing to embarrass them" occurred. NBC showed his saying, "I had a number of communications with the draft board that any American boy at that age and that particular time [would have had]. But I can't stand here without [sic], until I get all the military records and tell you time, date, and what everything was [sic]. But we're going to do that." The reporter concluded by saying that advisors now believe the issue is past and that it could develop favorably as a patriotism issue. In another part of its report, ABC showed Bush's saying, "Americans are [for] fair play."

In addition to Bush's defense of Quayle, Ronald Reagan bolstered the Bush-Quayle ticket during his weekly radio address. Reagan spoke of Bush's "experience, credentials, savvy, and grit." He made no mention

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of the National Guard issue but did make general statements supportive of Quayle's promotion of Republican/Reagan administration ideals.

The media reported negative reactions to Quayle while campaigning in Ohio. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch recounted taunts directed at Quayle while at the Ohio State Fair: "'Go see the chickens, Danny,' a man yelled over and over. Others chanted: 'Chicken in the '60's, hawk in the '80's'--a reference to Quayle's staunch pro-military views in Congress. Quayle appeared to avoid looking at placards that read: 'Who Went in Your Place, Danny?,' 'Draft Dodgers for Bush-Quayle;' and 'Armchair Hawks for Quayle.'"3 ABC clips showed signs labeled "Draft Dodger."

Print coverage appearing about this time included "Greetings, You Have Been Selected." A Time magazine article recounted the impact of the draft on American young men who came of age during the war.4 An editorial, "The Political Specter of Vietnam," posed rhetorical questions to politicians who avoided the war. Coverage about the Vietnam era seemed directed at those with scant knowledge of the times.

After the press conference in Huntington, Indiana, editorials, commentary, and perspective pieces expressed largely negative views of Quayle. Conservative columnist George Will stated in the 29 August 1988 issue of Newsweek that "by the weekend everywhere Quayle went there was a five-word neon sign blinking over him: NOT READY FOR PRIME TIME." Will identified the basic issue as Quayle's "character, his persona."

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4 Jacob V. Lamar, "Greetings, You Have Been Selected," Time 29 August 1988, p. 23.
Michael Kinsley echoed this concern in the 29 August 1988 issue of *Time*:

"The choice a person makes "does say something important about a person's character if he hasn't lived his life in accordance with his professed values."

In "A Media 'Feeding Frenzy'?" the writer asked if the media had gone too far in covering the National Guard question. It noted the feeling among some conservatives that the media deliberately go after them and not after liberals. The negative reaction to Quayle in media reports broadened the focus from his National Guard service to the larger issue of his ethos, and in turn Bush's credibility for selecting a seemingly unprepared, unqualified individual.

An early poll indicated that Quayle and the National Guard furor had no negative impact on Bush. A *Newsweek* poll conducted 18 and 19 August 1988 and released on 20 August 1988 indicated that Bush had a nine percentage point lead over Dukakis. Seventy-four percent of the respondents said that they did not "have a less favorable opinion of Dan Quayle because he chose to serve in the National Guard during the Vietnam War." Statistics would seem to indicate that Quayle's National Guard service was not a concern held by the public.

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Quayle's father provided the ammunition for the next volley of questions about his son's ethos. In an interview with the Cleveland Plain Dealer (later picked up by other newspapers), he disclosed that his son failed to enter law school due to low grades immediately following college graduation. (This seemingly contrasted with Quayle's account of wanting to continue his education and serve his country simultaneously.) The elder Quayle said that his son persuaded the dean of the law school to enroll him because he had attended a more "rigorous" undergraduate institution than others who had been admitted. Quayle's father's attempt to bolster his son's ethos only exacerbated matters.

Even church offered no sanctuary for the beleaguered Quayle. Prior to his departure for Washington, on Sunday, 21 August 1988, the Bush and Quayle families attended Mass at a Catholic church in a Polish neighborhood in Cleveland. As communicants passed by him on the front line.

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7 According to Maureen Dowd, "The comments by the senior Mr. Quayle were meant to offer a picture of his son as enterprising and, as he put it, 'a pretty good salesman,' someone so motivated to get into law school that he convinced school officials to admit him despite low grades. But instead, his comments in a phone interview today confirmed reports this weekend from several news organizations that had been spurred by questions about Mr. Quayle's less-than-stellar academic qualifications." "Dole Says Quayle Is Damaging Bush," New York Times, 22 August 1988, sec. B, p. 6.

8 U.S. News & World Report included information about Quayle's academics. The portion dealing with Quayle's record began, "By his own admission, 'Skippy' Quayle was a 'very average' student at DePauw." On the same page is a group picture which had been cropped to focus on a much younger Quayle holding two [sports] trophies. The caption below stated, "Hoosier: Skippy wins one." Evidently, "Skippy" was a nickname for Quayle but using the nickname without explanation makes a forty-one year old "Skippy" Quayle seem ridiculous and not at all a vice-presidential running mate. Andy Plattner, Gloria Border, et al., "Quayle Under Glass," 29 August/5 September 1988, p. 32-33.
pew after receiving communion, one man "called out 'draft dodger' to the Senator. Mr. Quayle looked at his wife in apparent astonishment that such a scene would occur at a religious service." The ever alert Washington Post published an interview with Samuel Scaffidi, the man who made the comment to Quayle. Moreover, before and after the service, reporters attempted to question Quayle about his father's remarks concerning his academic record.

The Sunday editions of newspapers continued to carry negative information about Quayle. Writing in the editorial section of the Chicago Tribune, Clarence Page focused on the hypocrisy of Quayle's "patriotic" defense. He referred to Quayle's discomfort with the media as perhaps "the sudden realization that he, the great baby boomer hope, had probably outdone Jane Fonda for ripping a scab off the great unhealed wound of his generation." Commentary in the Nashville Tennessean compared the flap over Quayle to problems in previous presidential campaigns. The commentator noted the difficulties experienced by McGovern/Eagleton, Mondale/Ferraro, Nixon/Agnew, and Eisenhower/Nixon. Those examples supported his belief that politicians never learn to choose vice-presidential running mates who will not hurt the party's chances of winning.


Editorial opinion also continued to criticize Bush's selection of Quayle. Journalists expressed disappointment with Bush for his selection of Quayle after having had months to make a decision.

The media relentlessly pursued its way into Quayle's past. A lengthy article in the Sunday Los Angeles Times portrayed Quayle as someone whose father smoothed the way for him. The story detailed how Quayle's father facilitated employment, solved academic problems, and eased his entry into the National Guard. This particular article probably damaged Quayle's ethos significantly because it gave numerous examples of him as a rich "ne'er-do-well."

A report in the New York Times stated that Quayle entered the Guard and trained as a welder, not a journalist. According to one retired officer quoted in the article, "'unit shopping' was relatively common in the Guard at the time when waiting lists were large." Another former National Guard officer said that "training a recruit in one specialty and then moving him to a different job was not 'normal.'" Again, the question arose, did Quayle need influence to enter the Guard?

The network evening news broadcasts continued to report on the controversial Quayle. ABC showed Bush's defending Quayle's low grades as well as Democratic pollster Peter Hart who said that "Quayle was "in trouble." CBS reported that Quayle ignored reporters during the day,


and showed Sheila Tate’s saying, "Once again, no rules were broken," in response to how Quayle entered the National Guard. NBC clips of Craig Fuller, Bush’s chief of staff, pictured his defending Quayle: "He played fairly" [to enter the National Guard]. NBC also mentioned the Newsweek poll which indicated that Bush led Dukakis fifty-one percent to forty-two percent at the conclusion of the Republican National Convention.

Candidate School

On Sunday, Quayle returned to Washington, D.C. for several days of off-the-job training while Bush campaigned in Illinois. Strategists believed it prudent for Quayle to work with his team of political experts at that juncture of the campaign. Bush told reporters that because of the National Guard controversy Quayle had not had the opportunity to "get squared away." He explained that "I don’t know if he has to learn anything. He has to get his act together, get his schedule going." Bush claimed that Quayle’s half-day early departure was not a punishment.

A headline in the Monday edition of the Atlanta Constitution interpreted events in a slightly different fashion: "Quayle sent to ‘Get His Act Together.’" The article contained various remarks Bush made in defending Quayle. Bush’s defense focused on patriotism and the nature of the Vietnam era: "'The National Guard is honorable service."

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14 Prior to selecting Quayle, Bush assembled a vice-presidential team. Among the strategists was Stuart Spencer, a veteran of Gerald Ford’s 1976 presidential campaign. The 29 August 1988 issue of Newsweek described him as an "expert at damage control."

Some went to Canada...Do we condemn an entire generation? I don’t think so.”

Bush’s press secretary, Sheila Tate, also defended Quayle: “I think it’s important to point out once again no rules were broken.”

The newspaper headline demonstrates the ability of the press to interpret and filter events.

Regardless of the reason, Quayle left the media spotlight for the time being and Bush continued defending him in his absence. The character issue changed focus from the National Guard to Quayle’s academic past. While responding to questions at the Illinois State Fair in Springfield, Bush termed the issue “not fair” citing the fact that he did not “sense an enormous demand from the public to know what this guy’s high school record is.” Bush also referred to himself as an average student: “I refuse to release my high school transcripts because I failed chemistry, and I don’t want anyone to know that. I want to be a president that chemists can look up to.” When visiting the National Guard exhibit at the fair, Bush sent a personal non-verbal message to the media. Throughout the day, Bush maintained a sense of


17 Ibid., sec. A, p. 5.

18 Unless noted otherwise, all material in the paragraph is from an article by Bill Lambrecht, "Bush Deflects New Quayle Questions," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 22 August 1988, sec. A, p. 5.

19 "The crowd cheered when the smiling vice president aimed the unloaded [missile] launcher at a truck carrying news photographers and television camera operators." Scott Shepard, "Quayle Sent to 'Get His Act Together,'" Atlanta Constitution, 22 August 1988, sec. A, p. 5. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch also described the incident: "Bush swung an unarmed 105mm missile launcher at reporters Sunday when he was asked if the weapon worked on bluefish—a reference to Bush’s comparison Saturday of reporters dogging Quayle to bluefish "in a feeding frenzy."
humor and used humor as an avoidance tactic when answering questions from reporters.

While Bush defended Quayle, a grumpy Republican Senator Bob Dole complained about Quayle on NBC's "Meet the Press." Dole stated that "you could find better qualified people," and he added that Mr. Quayle 'is a quick study' whose youth and knowledge of military issues would be an asset to the ticket." Some of his ill-feeling toward Quayle could be attributed to the fact that Bush rejected Dole as a running mate in favor of Quayle.

On Monday, 22 August, Bush spoke to the Veterans of Foreign War convention in Chicago. The occasion provided an ideal setting to defend Quayle's service in the National Guard. Bush told the audience that Quayle "did not go to Canada, he did not burn his draft card and he damn sure didn't burn the American flag and I am proud to have him at my side." Bush also stated that "Dan Quayle served in the National Guard, signing up in a unit that had vacancies at the time, and now he is under shrill, partisan attack." Speaking to the VFW provided Bush an ideal opportunity to defend Quayle to a sympathetic audience. Again, Bush avoided the issue but through an ad hominem attack on the accusers.

Because of Bush's warm reception, and at the suggestion of

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20 Maureen Dowd, "Dole Says Quayle Is Damaging Bush."


22 Scott Shepard, "Passion Shows As Bush Backs Running Mate," Atlanta Constitution, 23 August 1988, sec. A, p. 6. Quayle was not "under shrill, partisan attack." Dukakis and Bentsen let the issue run its course.
Illinois Governor Jim Thompson, Quayle received an invitation to address the veterans later in the day. Quayle’s appearance was not without problems. The Vice-Commander of the VFW, Larry W. Rivers introduced Quayle and indicated the organization’s support of him. Rivers also reminded Quayle that they needed to discuss veterans’ legislative concerns (because Quayle had voted against establishing the Veterans Administration as a Cabinet level post). Quayle replied that "As one who is still young, I know as I grow older, that I will learn my youthful indiscretions of failing to vote for the Veterans Administration." 23 This apparent attempt at humor made no sense and Quayle later denied making the remark at all: "When reporters insisted that Quayle had made the statement, he said he actually had told the VFW that 20 years from now, 'we may look back, and if I’m wrong, we could consider it a youthful indiscretion,'" 24 So, not only did Quayle make an inappropriate remark, he denied having made it, and then explained it. Honesty seems a rarely used strategy of apologia.

Although Quayle mentioned the controversy about his National Guard service he did not dwell on the issue. 25 Quayle also attempted to

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redirect attention away from himself and toward Bush’s agenda. Bush’s and Quayle’s speeches sent a strong signal that they considered the issue of Quayle’s National Guard service ended.

The campaign released a statement from former Adjutant General John N. Owens, and former Commander of the 38th Division Robert G. Moorehead about Guard strength at the time of Quayle’s enlistment. Coincidentally, the release was made available to reporters prior to Quayle’s speech. According to the New York Times report, “Quayle’s unit ‘had vacancies the month before, the month of, and the month after the Senator’s enlistment. This has been verified by the unit’s official morning report.’ They also disputed the existence of a ‘waiting list.’” To the best of our knowledge, no influence was exerted to enlist Senator Quayle.”

The Owens and Moorehead release conflicted with information in the 23 August 1988 Cleveland Plain Dealer. The Indianapolis Star referenced the story and said “National Guard records obtained from the Indiana state archives show the Guard was under a virtual freeze on recruitment, imposed 49 days before Quayle enlisted. ‘Due to some overstrength, recruiting has been authorized on a limited basis since 1 April,’ according to the official report, which was filed by John N. Owens, then adjutant general of the Indiana National Guard.”

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26 Quayle said, “With that behind us, it is time to focus attention on the real issues of this campaign. Not what Dan Quayle did 20 years in the past, but what President Bush or President Dukakis will do in the future to secure world peace.” Schmidt, “Quayle Receives Standing Ovation.”

27 Schmidt, “Quayle Receives Standing Ovation.”

the conflicting figures, "I don’t know anything about that. I went back to the official report in Washington, which showed 136 authorized spaces in his unit in April, May and June, and they never had over 132 people."

The media reported events at the VFW convention. The ABC Evening News showed clips of Bush’s speech including his defense of Quayle. NBC previewed Quayle’s brief address. CBS included a clip of Quayle from a morning television show: "I think the critical question is, were any rules broken? No. Were [sic], Did we ask any rules to be bent? No. Was there anything other than getting in to the military or in to law school fair? The answer if yes, it was all fair." Also, CBS released its post-convention poll which showed Bush ahead of Dukakis forty-six percent to forty percent. Prior to the convention Dukakis had led fifty percent to Bush’s thirty-three percent. Details of the survey revealed that fifty percent of the respondents said that Quayle was not qualified to take over as President, and fifty percent thought that he joined the National Guard to avoid the draft. Nevertheless, the poll showed that despite the electorate’s reservations about Quayle, Bush had gained significant ground.

Thus, notwithstanding the largely negative editorial comments and the damage to Quayle’s image, the Bush/Quayle ticket retained substantial support. Benjamin Hart of the Indianapolis Star supported the Republican ticket despite the National Guard and law school questions.29 An editorial in the Chicago Tribune summarized the dilemma of those seeking a perfect candidate from the turbulent Sixties: "Would

all seven of you line up outside the White House and fill out the applications?" Some commentators were willing to recognize the ambiguities of the Vietnam era from a more neutral perspective.

Following his address to the VFW convention, Quayle returned to Washington for additional briefings from his campaign staff. While there on Tuesday, 23 August, another story about his past became "news." The Los Angeles Daily News reported that former lobbyist and Playboy model Paula Parkinson claimed that Quayle propositioned her during a Florida golfing weekend in 1980. When the media questioned Quayle about her as he took out his trash on Tuesday, Quayle said, "This is getting a little bit outrageous, and I'm getting a little bit indignant about just one bum rap after another. That is just an absolute, flat-out falsehood. I had nothing to do with her down there. I had nothing to do with her before, and I had nothing to do with her afterwards." He continued, "I think you're all going to have to be a little bit bit


31 Parkinson claimed previously to have had a seven month affair with Representative Thomas Evans. In January, 1980, Evans, Quayle, and Tom Railsback, shared a house during a golfing weekend in Florida. Quayle had denied any involvement with her although she said she'd had sexual relationships with other congressmen. During an investigation in 1981 Quayle was cleared of any involvement. Quayle had confronted this issue twice, first in his initial interview with Kimmitt, and second, at his first press conference with Bush. Kimmitt did not have a problem with the matter; Quayle ducked the question about her at the press conference by saying that the matter "has been covered" and that he had no further contact with Parkinson.

32 Scott Shepard and Bill Dedman, "Quayle Denies Making Pass at Lobbyist," Atlanta Constitution, 24 August 1988, sec. A, p. 1. The ABC evening news clip of this showed Quayle looking distressed as he pleaded with the media. ABC also showed a clip of a lawyer's notes from an interview with Parkinson. Viewers could read the notes: "Quayle made a pass. Said would like to sleep with you. Said no--I'm [with] Tom. Quayles [sic] only one. No other passes."
careful about this because it's totally untrue. I've got a wife and three children and I hope that there's some respect and dignity." 33

Quayle's only recourse at this point was to deny Parkinson's claims and reason with the media about how the matter could affect his family.

More details about Quayle's enlistment became available on Tuesday. Retired Major General Alfred Ahner revealed that Wendell Phillippi had contacted him. As a result of the phone call, Ahner requested that the personnel department hold open a vacancy for Quayle. Quayle's Washington office released additional records which showed that he had scored below average on the military journalism test. 34

The final news of Tuesday appeared in the Wall Street Journal. A former chairman of Quayle's undergraduate department disclosed that Quayle failed to pass the required departmental comprehensive exam the first time he took it. 35 Although the revelation lent credence to allegations about Quayle's mediocre academic performance, it seemed unethical for a professor to disclose information about grades without obtaining consent from the student involved.

While Quayle defended his military and academic records, Bush indicated that their focus had changed. In Portland, Oregon, Bush stated "that he thought he and Quayle, by appearances Monday before the


Veterans of Foreign Wars convention in Chicago, had put behind them the issue of Quayle's use of influence to join the National Guard during the Vietnam War. 36 Clearly, both men wanted the media to abandon questions about Quayle's character and focus on the "substantive" issues of the campaign.

Quayle's First Day of Solo Campaigning

Quayle began campaigning without Bush on Wednesday, 24 August, in Ohio, Kentucky, and Missouri. The writer obtained videotapes of two speeches presented during the day. These tapes provided primary material and an opportunity to use analog analysis.

The first tape recorded Quayle's address to the Southern Legislative Conference in Lexington, Kentucky. 37 The audience greeted Quayle with a standing ovation; he appeared energetic and relaxed during his introductory remarks. The speech commenced with several personal


37 The tape began with a brief voice-over preview and graphics introducing Quayle's speech. The title presented him as "Sen. Daniel Quayle" [sic].
anecdotes, one of which referred to the media. His extemporaneous delivery, deliberate use of gestures, and "power" attire (a dark suit, white shirt, and red tie) probably strengthened his source credibility as he described intelligently the Job Partnership Training Act that he had authored. Although Quayle chose not to make any direct references to the National Guard issue, he did say that he and Bush believed in public service and that "We believe that we're willing to put our lives out there for public discussion of the issues." The videotape showed a competent, knowledgeable Quayle who had a sense of humor.

The second videotape showed Quayle's speech before the Enlisted Association of the National Guard which met in St. Louis. The program began with a lengthy introduction of Quayle by Sgt. Maj. Nate Monastra. His remarks bolstered Quayle by mentioning the honorable

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38 He related a conversation with his wife about the number of "great Americans." The writer liked the anecdote because it conveyed a comfortable relationship between him and his wife. That is, the writer liked the story until discovering it wasn't really his. John Glenn originated it according to Michael Kramer, "The Search For Quayle Produces New Questions," U.S. News & World Report, 12 September 1988, 18.

39 Quayle told the legislators that his day had begun at 5:30 a.m. when he and his wife, Marilyn, boarded an airplane. He mentioned that those in attendance included "all my cheering section from the news media--they were there, too." His introductory remarks also mentioned that as a vice-presidential candidate "taking out your trash is a 'photo op'"--a reference to reporters' insistent questions about Paula Parkinson while he placed trash cans in front of his house the previous morning.

40 At one point during the protracted introduction, the camera moved from the speaker and panned to the left, focusing on Dan and Marilyn Quayle. Marilyn appeared to be drifting off to sleep. She caught herself, blinked a few times, and focused back on the speaker. Her day had begun at 5:30 when she and her husband boarded a plane and she evidently was exhausted by evening. The media took unfair advantage of the situation and chose to show the incident to the public.
nature of National Guard service. At the conclusion of the introduction, Quayle walked over to the lectern accompanied by a standing ovation.

The occasion dictated the nature of the rhetoric. The content of Quayle’s speech focused on the patriotic nature of the National Guard but was not without its lighter moments. Quayle began the introduction speaking slowly and seriously in measured, deliberate sentences, obviously reading from a manuscript. Following a few opening remarks he stated that:

It is very important that I set the record straight tonight and tell you about events of my past. Indeed, these matters are of such critical importance that I did not even include them in the advance text of my speech. Therefore, I want you to listen very carefully because you are going to be the first to know these very intimate and personal things of Dan Quayle.

Having captured the audience’s attention, he continued:

First, I did in fact eat graham crackers, drink milk, and took [sic] naps in kindergarten. [The audience applauded and cheered.] I was very partial to Superman and Dennis the Menace comic books. I admit that I once had a coonskin cap and that I knew all the words to "The Ballad of Davy Crockett." [More applause] And finally, I must confess, Marilyn, that I traded Valentine cards with a beautiful second grader, Penney, who lived across the street from me. [The audience again applauded Quayle’s use of humor.]

The introduction included the anecdote about how the Quayle’s day had begun; he also referred to his "new cheering section, the news media." Quayle continued his remarks by referring to the National Guard controversy: "It’s not fun, but, I know what I was getting into and I

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41 Monastra stated the purpose of the association to "promote and maintain adequate national security and to promote and advance the status, welfare, and professionalism of the enlisted members of the National Guard of the United States." He also read resolution 88-24 passed earlier in the day. The topic was "Guard Membership as Being Honorable Service."
can take the heat." He identified the root of the controversy as the National Guard (not his service in it) and said the record needed to be corrected.

The body of the speech recounted the history of the National Guard, Dan Quayle's entry into the Guard, and the politics surrounding the issue. Quayle relied heavily on patriotism when addressing each of those points. Ironically, every example of National Guard heroism and sacrifice included stories of combat, an experience he lacked during his tenure. He successfully justified the existence and nature of the Guard but failed to explain his own actions as heroic. Instead, he referred to family values (he referred to his parents as his "best friends") and the value of fair play: "I was not seeking special treatment. I wasn't looking for favors. No rules were broken."

In addition to relying upon patriotism, Quayle used a secondary diversion by claiming that the issue of his National Guard service "distracts from real issues" which he summarized as an "anti-defense attitude" held by Dukakis. He attacked the Democrat's position on defense and contrasted it with the strong preventative posture of the Reagan administration. His remarks at this point contrasted Republican and Democratic policies. The brief conclusion reiterated that it was "time to talk about the issues," a clear signal that the National Guard furor was now considered a non-issue.

Quayle's delivery of this speech lacked the drive and extemporaneous quality of the earlier speech in Lexington. He obviously read from a manuscript and occasionally paused inappropriately in mid-sentence when losing his place. Quayle grinned frequently as if satisfied with his attacks on the media and Dukakis. He also used the
Jimmy Carter pronunciation of "nuculer" for "nuclear." The Quayle who spoke in St. Louis seemed shallow and somewhat insincere compared to the Quayle who spoke earlier in the day in Lexington.

Following Quayle’s speech, he accepted the Concord Minuteman Award, a recognition of outstanding contribution towards the objectives of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard. The presentation capped the end of a neatly orchestrated appearance now made complete with a symbol. The entire evening had emphasized pride and honor in the National Guard. Quayle had used the occasion to enhance his character and now could continue the campaign with material proof of his patriotism.

While Quayle campaigned, Reagan and Bush continued to praise him at a joint appearance before Republicans in California. Reagan praised Quayle as someone who "stands for the same principles that George Bush and I stand for." 42

The print media remained unimpressed with Quayle. George Will wrote that Quayle needed to make a "Checkers Speech." Will believed that such a speech would exonerate Quayle and also provide a sorely needed "stature transfusion." 43 Clarence Page argued that the problem with Quayle was "hypocrisy." 44 Quayle’s tenure in the National Guard during a war and later "hawkish" support of the military deemed him an


inappropriate choice, according to Page. Carl Cannon reviewed Quayle's voting history on veterans issues.\textsuperscript{45} His analysis presented Quayle as someone strongly opposed to the concerns of veterans. The \textit{New York Times} argued that "it is now time to shift the focus from these [the National Guard issue and the use of influence] and other personal charges to Mr. Quayle's legislative record, and to what his presence on the ticket says about Bush's own judgment, strategy and views of the Vice Presidency."\textsuperscript{46} The print media continued to portray Quayle as an unfit candidate due to continuing image problems rooted in past behavior.

The 24 August evening news broadcasts rehashed the National Guard controversy. ABC showed an interview with Phillippi who told of Quayle's interest in the Guard and his response. CBS broadcast a clip of Ahner on "CBS News This Morning" who recounted going to the personnel department to see if spaces were available; there were and he asked department staff to hold an opening until Quayle arrived. CBS also showed Quayle at the VFW the previous Sunday evening when he made his "youthful indiscretions" remark. ABC clips included the crowd's booing the media's question at the press conference in Huntington, Indiana, and part of an interview with Quayle's parents during a biographical portion of the newscast. NBC released the results of an NBC News/Wall Street poll which showed that out of 17,000 registered voters, forty-three percent approved of Quayle as a nominee, twenty-seven percent

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disapproved, and thirty percent were not sure. Sixty-four percent answered that his military service was not a campaign issue; twenty-seven percent said it was. Because the media were now reviewing past events as "news" it would seem that the issue was losing momentum. The NBC poll appeared to confirm that.

If indeed the issue was losing public interest, it would seem prudent for the media to abandon it in favor of something else. The media did the next best thing and began reporting news stories about the coverage of Dan Quayle and whether or not he received fair treatment. Several of the newspapers reviewed for the thesis included such articles.

The news broadcasts also reported on Quayle's first day of solo campaigning. Both CBS and ABC showed Quayle and Bentsen as they crossed paths at the Lexington airport. CBS also showed clips of Quayle at the airport in Cincinnati and from one of his speeches earlier in the day.

47 Analysis of media rhetoric defending their treatment of political figures defending themselves could result in a subgenre of apologia.


49 As Bentsen departed and Quayle arrived they exchanged brief remarks. Bentsen: "I warmed them up for you." Quayle: "I hope you said good things about me." Bentsen: "I don't want to wish you that much good luck."
The Beginning of the End

Quayle campaigned in Missouri and South Dakota on Thursday. His strategy now was to ignore the National Guard issue. On Wednesday, Stuart Spencer, Quayle's campaign manager had informed the media that "This is the last time we will address it. If you ask us about it, we will talk about kids or something." An aide to Quayle stated that "As long as all anyone wants to talk about is that stuff [the National Guard and Paula Parkinson], I don't see it changing [Quayle's limited contact with the media]."

The day had remained uneventful. As he traveled across Missouri he accepted reporters' questions during brief press conferences. At his third stop, in Boonville, none of the ten questions were addressed to the National Guard issue, a victory of sorts. He also express his feelings about the media on at least two occasions. While "in Sedalia, Quayle also quoted Democratic President Harry S. Truman's line that, 'I'm not giving them (the media and the Democrats) hell. I just tell the truth. And it seems like hell.' After leaving Missouri, Quayle flew to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and awarded a trophy for horse riding: "He jokingly put the microphone in front of the winning horse, asking if he had anything to say. The horse just snorted. Quayle said, "Robin Hood has no comment. I may try and practice that myself." That


52 Unless noted otherwise, all material in this paragraph is from Patrick J. Traub, "Quayle Staff Claims Guard Storm Quelled," Indianapolis Star, 26 August 1988, sec. A, p. 1, 6.
seemed to be good advice from someone who had not yet learned how to do so.

At about this point, Thursday, 25 August, newspapers contained editorials supportive of Quayle but for varying reasons. Henry Allen identified with Quayle’s behavior.\textsuperscript{53} He stated that although he had served in Vietnam he understood the contradictions involved in Quayle’s position twenty years ago and now. Lawrence Lichty wrote that Quayle’s desire to enter the Guard did not differ significantly from other’s of his era who wished to avoid military service.\textsuperscript{54} It appeared that following the initial outcry about Quayle’s entry into the Guard, some journalists were able to analyze his actions in light of different perspectives.

Additionally, a radio station in Indianapolis discontinued playing a song parodying the National Guard issue. Titled "I Spent the War in Indiana," the record drew "negative, and pretty emotional" responses from listeners. The station manager withdrew it from air play.\textsuperscript{55}

The evening news broadcasts covered Quayle’s second day of campaigning. ABC and CBS clips showed his saying, "So I just want to thank you for coming. I’m going to open it up now to take questions,


\textsuperscript{55} "Radio Station Pulls Lampoon of Quayle," \textit{St. Louis Post-Dispatch}, 24 August 1988, p. 6. The controversy over Quayle’s National Guard service generated philanthropic benefits. The following week the song was released "on a cassette benefiting a group that sends Vietnam veterans to their memorial in Washington, D.C." according to Steve Hall, "Quayle Spoof Banned By WFBQ Will Be Released On Cassette Tape," \textit{Indianapolis Star}, 28 August 1988, sec. A, p. 11.
but I won’t take any questions about the Indiana National Guard.” CBS also showed him as he spoke in St. Louis the previous night: "I had no reason to be ashamed of my service. And you know what? I’m sure as hell not ashamed of it now." NBC did not have a report about Quayle. Perhaps it no longer considered him newsworthy.

Quayle campaigned in South Dakota, Montana, and Utah on Friday, 26 August. While in Sioux City, a speaker’s attempt to repair Quayle’s credibility backfired. Former Republican Senator James Abdnor tried to downplay allegations about Parkinson and Quayle while introducing him to an audience. Abdnor’s inept remarks only resulted in drawing additional attention to the issue. Quayle’s speeches attacked Dukakis’ policies on gun control and the military.

New questions caused Quayle some discomfort about his grades and resume inflation. He still refused to release his college transcript, and he defended his official resume. Perhaps as a result of such questions, Quayle was unavailable to the press throughout the day. Avoidance seemed the preferred strategy for Quayle whenever he encountered situations he could not manage.

Quayle’s wife, Marilyn, used an appearance on the television show "20/20" to discuss her husband’s increasing problems. She said that the issue of his National Guard service is "a total creation of the

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56 A report in the Cleveland Plain Dealer stated that Quayle’s official resume said that “he was chief investigator for the consumer protection division of the Indiana Attorney General’s office from 1970 to 1971.” But the newspaper article said state records showed Mr. Quayle was a research assistant, an entry-level job in the Attorney General’s office for most of that time, and held the chief investigator’s post for about two months.” Maureen Dowd, "Quayle Struggles to Put Confident Face on Drive," New York Times, 27 August 1988, sec. A, p. 6.
Taped on Wednesday and broadcast Friday night, she defended her husband while he avoided reporters.

Despite Quayle's insistence that "there is no further discussion" of the National Guard issue, the print media contended that questions remained unanswered. A story in the Washington Post asserted that the sequence of events enabling Quayle's enlistment implied "high level involvement" by National Guard authorities.

Evening news broadcasts focused on Quayle's alleged resume inflation. Both CBS and NBC covered the topic in their broadcasts. However, NBC showed a clip of an enthusiastic Quayle saying, "I won't take any questions about the Indiana National Guard" while the crowd cheered. His press secretary, David Prosperi stated, "I think if the same questions come up again, I think you'll hear the senator say, 'I've answered all those questions, let's talk about the real issues.'"

Quayle campaigned in California on Saturday and Sunday, 27 and 28 August, prior to returning to Washington later on Sunday. According to the Washington Post, "Quayle declared today that the 'innuendoes' over his service in the National Guard and other controversies are over--'the facts are now in and there is no further discussion.' Now, however, he faces the question of whether any permanent damage will be left by his use of family connection to get into the National Guard, his poor academic record, his family's power and wealth, and disputed allegations.


that he propositioned a female lobbyist."\(^{59}\) The Post also described how strategists managed Quayle:

"There was a period when we really thought he might crack," one aide said. "This trip has done wonders to get him over the hump." To make sure that he was well taken care of, Bush aides assigned such top aides as Stuart Spencer, who held President Reagan's hand through the 1980 contest, issues specialist James Cicconi, and speech writing specialist Ken Khachigian to ensure that Quayle was well prepared. These strategists, in addition, kept the news media at bay throughout most of the week, carefully weaning Quayle back to the give-and-take question-and-answer sessions.

Quayle's assessment of his performance during the week differed slightly from that of the Post: "It has been a good week for me, a very good week. There is a tremendous level of enthusiasm out there."\(^{60}\) Quayle explained further, "I believe this week was a very critical week, ... probably the most critical week in my political life thus far. I've always had a lot of confidence in myself, but I'm beginning to sense that the American people are slowly but surely beginning to identify with Dan Quayle."\(^{61}\) The Tribune also recorded his concerns about the effects of the campaign on his family: "I am more concerned about things that will hurt my children and my wife. It's not going to bother me what they [the media] say about me. I've been there before. But it will bother me if there is an ill effect on my children." When commenting on his grades Quayle said they would not be released because


\(^{61}\) Unless noted otherwise, Quayle's remarks are from George E. Curry, "Quayle Is Confident After "Critical Week,"" Chicago Tribune, 29 August 1988, sec. I, p. 4.
even during a political campaign, "There are some things that are private."

In California, Bush continued to defend Quayle: "He is going to be a tremendous asset to the ticket. I am proud to have placed my bet and the convention placed its bet on the future. We have a new generation represented, a new generation of American leaders." Bush continued supporting Quayle the next day in Missouri: "I don’t know if one can say that [whether or not Quayle is an asset to the ticket] when he had this horrendous pounding going on of outrageous rumor and innuendo against him. I’m not sure that it’s a time when he can prove if he’s an asset or liability. But I think he’s going to be."63

Newspaper articles on Saturday and Sunday reviewed the ten day controversy and its effects on Quayle and Bush. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch recounted the events of the Quayle National Guard issue.64 The Los Angeles Times conceded that "undue influence" did not secure a place in the Guard for Quayle. It cited National Guard research showing that Quayle "did not circumvent any official application process, because there was none. The Indiana Guard at the time apparently did not have a


recruitment office; recruitment was done informally.\textsuperscript{65} The \textit{Indianapolis Star} printed a topical "scorecard" to inform readers of the "facts" about Dan Quayle.\textsuperscript{66} The \textit{Atlanta Constitution} began its summary on the front page headlined "Privilege Paved Way For Quayle's Rise To The Top."\textsuperscript{67}

Editorials and commentaries on Saturday and Sunday indicated support of Quayle. William Buckley wrote in terms of "undue influence." He stated that Quayle should have relied on his law school education and approached the question in terms of having used an "ethical approach" to enter the Guard.\textsuperscript{68} Charles Paul Freund, a columnist for the \textit{New Republic} wrote in the \textit{Washington Post} that Quayle's difficulties regarding his National Guard serviced stemmed from cultural guilt over Vietnam that "turned from a private feeling a man might have about his own actions, to an accusatory club that men are wielding against one

\textsuperscript{65}Robert L. Jackson and James Risen, "Influence of Quayles Unneeded, Data Shows: Guard Had Openings and No Waiting List; Furor Seems Likely To Subside But Damage Is Uncertain," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 27 August 1988, p. 1.


\textsuperscript{68}Buckley wrote that Quayle "might have said: Any time you wish to get into an institution access to which is difficult, it is the American way to use whatever ethical means are at your disposal. In my case I had a perfect opportunity, because the retired head of the Indiana National Guard turned out to be the senior editor of the newspaper owned by my grandfather, and I had known the gentleman since I was a boy. What better place to go for a recommendation?" "'Undue Influence' Won't Undo Quayle," \textit{St. Louis Post-Dispatch}, 27 August 1988, sec. B, p. 3.
Ronald Glasser, a physician who served in Vietnam, argued that "no one should have gone to Vietnam" and that Quayle "made the absolutely correct decision back at the beginning of 1969." Other analyses of Quayle examined not only the National Guard issue but the larger question of his ethos and expressed reservations about his qualifications. Martin E. Marty wrote that

The Quayle controversy has to do with the most profound questions of the human spirit. Shall I risk death or seek ease? How shall I rank my loyalty to my country on the one hand, and to myself and my interests on the other? How shall I present myself through my life? How consistent do my present words have to be with my past actions?

Marty said that four options exist [for Quayle] to explain past behavior: 1) bluffing, 2) repentance, 3) revenge, and 4) restitution. An editorial in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch said that the only legitimate question regarding Quayle's qualifications was whether or not he was qualified to be President.

Newspapers also examined Bush's behavior under pressure. The Washington Post reported that Bush "has rarely performed better during a


70 Glasser's comments about wounded and dying soldiers are deeply moving. He still anguishes over the results of the war on America's Vietnam veterans. Ronald J. Glasser, "Dan Quayle's Parents Were Right," Washington Post, 28 August 1988, sec. B, p. 2.


72 These suggested strategies approximate Ware and Linkugel's, Bennet's, and Winn's theories of apologia strategies. In addition to being an editor, Marty is a professor at the University of Chicago School of Divinity.

73 Anthony Lewis, "Is Sen. Dan Quayle At All Presidential?," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, sec. B, p. 3.
quarter century in politics, according to those who have watched him over the years." Newspapers also began detailing how Bush had selected Quayle. Among those were The Washington Post, and New York Times. The controversy seemed to grind slowly to a halt.

The results of two polls became available on 27 August. A poll in the New York Times showed that eighty-two percent of those surveyed did not have a low opinion of Quayle for having served in the Guard. Interestingly, fifty percent "said they believed news organizations' reports were often 'inaccurate,' while forty percent said they 'get the facts straight.'" On 27 August the CBS News reported the results of the Gallup poll and also a poll it had commissioned. The CBS poll indicated that one out of six cared about whether or not Quayle served in the National Guard; one out of three cared about influence. It would seem that the public's concerned centered on "fair play" and not "patriotism." The NBC Evening News did not mention the National Guard in its report of Quayle campaign activities.

The End

The media had finally exhausted the issue over the weekend. Only a few newspapers printed anything about Quayle and the National Guard issue on Monday. The CBS Evening News showed briefly Bush's defense of Quayle at a press conference in St. Louis.

Ironically, the man whom some apologia theorists credit with altering the role the media play in political campaigns, Richard Nixon, closed out Quayle's defense. Writing in the Wall Street Journal, he claimed that "Patriotism and privilege are not the issue" and that "We should not make service in combat a litmus test for serving as commander-in-chief." Nixon's defense of a fellow Republican under fire seemed a fitting conclusion to the controversy.
Campaign apologia was an ongoing process of interaction and competition between the Bush/Quayle campaign and the media. Quayle's surprise selection ignited the curiosity of fifteen thousand journalists covering an otherwise routine convention. Their initial inquiry about Quayle uncovered conflicting reactions regarding his competence. Questions about his National Guard service provided an opening for the media to justify a serious investigation of his character. As the media's probing continued, the sheer volume of unfavorable news reports and editorials indicated that Quayle himself constituted a campaign issue. Bennett recognized that "the attention of the press and public seems to shift from the monotony of the campaign to any activity that represents a departure from the routine." Quayle's selection signaled the unexpected and pushed the ill-prepared senator into the media spotlight.

Bush and Quayle wrestled with the media to shift attention away from Quayle. Strategists realized that the media would continue focusing on Quayle until he gave a timely, fitting response to questions about his National Guard service. Bush and Quayle had to manage the issue and avoid a response similar to McGovern-Eagleton (dumping him

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1Bennett, 310.
from the ticket) or Mondale-Ferraro (staging a press conference).

The media searched for a story or stories to kindle a blaze. Bush and Quayle sought to avoid controversy at all costs. The conflict of agendas resulted in a media firestorm.

**The Process of Interaction**

The media sparked the controversy, fanned it, and fed it. During the first formal press conference, the media probed Bush and Quayle about Quayle's qualifications. They repeated questions hoping to elicit damaging information about him. Quayle's response to question sixteen about his National Guard service provided an ambiguous statement about his past: "I did not know in 1969 that I would be in this room today, I'll confess." Two interpretations exist for the remark: (1) Quayle admitted honestly that he never anticipated being a nominee for vice-president, or (2) Quayle admitted that serving in the National Guard had been an unwise decision. The media chose the second interpretation, thereby beginning the gaffe sequence that continued past the phase of public interest.

When a gaffe occurs, the seriousness of the charges and probability of guilt determine the optimal strategies of apologia. Quayle's perceived gaffe, entering the National Guard during a war, represented an ambiguous charge against his character. Bennett's model, based on Ware and Linkugel and refined by Winn, indicated that denial and avoidance would have been the most appropriate responses to the National Guard issue.

The initial strategy used avoidance during the first formal press conference. Quayle gave non-elaborated answers in response to National
Guard questions. He lacked adept responses and the media pressed for additional information. His refusal to confront the issue directly fueled the media's interest, thus avoidance was not an optimal response.2

Avoidance continued when television interviewers broached the matter with Quayle later in the day. When campaign strategists realized that a gaffe had occurred, Quayle gave no more interviews. Campaign officials began investigating the process enabling Quayle's enlistment. Avoidance continued for a day and a half while aides gathered information. Upon completion of the inquiry, Bush's staff determined that Quayle had done nothing illegal or unethical to enter the Guard. Quayle then gave a public defense of his actions.

Quayle's defense during the press conference in Huntington, Indiana, depended upon denial, the values of patriotism and fair play, and questioning the ethos of the media. Quayle used the strategy of denial against a backdrop of patriotic banners and signs that nonverbally bolstered Quayle's claims of patriotism. Before a crowd of cheering supporters, Quayle defended himself by denying the use of undue influence, a later release of records supported his claim. He also relied on the value of fair play, claiming that "no rules were broken" to enable his enlistment. Quayle's playing out the role of hero in a scene composed of sympathetic supporters and a hostile media resulted in the public's questioning of the media's ethos. Shifting the public's

2 Quayle's use of avoidance paralleled Ferraro's use of the strategy. She promised full financial disclosure and after learning that her husband would not cooperate, avoided the media's questions through the use of humor and refusal to discuss the issue. Ferraro's tactics also fed a media fire.
attention away from the issue of Quayle’s National Guard service and toward the media’s tactics enabled Quayle to minimize the seriousness of the charge. Thus, campaign strategists believed that the press conference ended questioning into how Quayle entered the National Guard.

Quayle’s use of avoidance and denial to answer charges about his behavior twenty years earlier resolved possible cognitive discrepancies held by the public. The media tried to imply inconsistencies between his behavior of serving in the National Guard and his "hawkish" stand on the military twenty years later. The public recognized the ambiguities inherent in Quayle’s decision to serve in the Guard rather than enlist for active duty. Because Quayle had not fled to Canada to avoid the military completely, he could argue plausibly that his enlistment resulted from patriotic motives. He had acted neither illegally nor unethically, as evidence revealed. Quayle’s minimization of the charge by directing attention towards the media also diverted the public’s attention. Polls conducted after the press conference indicated the public’s waning interest in the issue.

Apologia Continued Throughout the Campaign

Following the press conference in Huntington, Bush and Quayle wanted to focus on substantive issues, but the media wanted to continue the probe into Quayle’s history. At that point, the optimal strategy changed from strict avoidance and denial to diversion. Bush stood physically beside Quayle in Ohio and termed the controversy a "starving school of blue fish" on a "feeding frenzy," essentially blaming the media for Quayle’s difficulties. Unlike Mondale, who depended on others to express his support of Ferraro, Bush never sought to differentiate himself from Quayle.
After Quayle departed for Washington to receive additional campaign briefings, Bush continued defending Quayle verbally, avoiding the National Guard issue through the use of humor. He also looked for rhetorical settings that would nonverbally bolster Quayle's ethos.

Bush's appearance before the VFW provided another opportunity to attack Quayle's accusers. Speaking to an audience of veterans, Bush said that Quayle "did not go to Canada, he did not burn his draft card and he damn sure didn't burn the American flag and I am proud to have him at my side." Quayle's unscheduled appearance before the same group skirted the National Guard issue, sending a signal that he and Bush considered the matter past.

Quayle's appearance before the Enlisted Association of the National Guard in St. Louis paraded and validated Quayle's staged patriotism. His speech contained examples of heroic actions by Guardsmen, but failed to justify his tenure as heroic. He used humor to avoid a direct response to the issue but also rested his defense on the values of family and fair play. His appearance concluded with his receiving an award, a symbol validating his claims of past patriotic behavior.

Throughout the rest of Quayle's first week of solo campaigning, he depended on avoidance, bolstering, and the rhetorical support of others to minimize the gaffe. When asked about the issue, Quayle or the campaign staff indicated there would be "no further discussion" of the National Guard with the media. He continued to present his National Guard service as a patriotic duty, thereby relying on a fundamental American value viewed favorably by the public. Finally, he allowed Bush, Reagan, Sheila Tate (Bush's press secretary), David Prosperi
Quayle maintained a low personal profile, Bush had chosen him as a reflection of the ethos he wanted to project. Thus, Quayle entered the campaign without a national identity and Bush with a perceived liability.

The writer believes that strategists reacted to Bush's surprise selection by planning to construct a national political ethos for Quayle at the first formal press conference. During the press conference, Bush relied on peer testimony, Quayle's resume, and ideology. However, when Quayle's National Guard service developed into a gaffe sequence, Republican strategists had to simultaneously create and repair Quayle's ethos. The task grew exponentially as further damaging information about Quayle's competence became news. Bush and his political team realized that the success of the ticket could be affected by how they and the media controlled the National Guard issue and subsequent larger issue of Quayle's competence.

Quayle's appearance before the VFW also highlighted his unpreparedness for the role he was to assume. Reference to his negative vote on a critical veterans' issue as a "youthful indiscretion" accentuated his lack of sophistication and finesse. Unaccustomed to guarding his words, he did not think about what he said. He used inappropriate, informal language when the situation dictated deliberate, precise responses. His accent furthered perceptions of him as a caricature.

Quayle's nonverbal communication also clued observers to his lack
of preparation for a national campaign. His overexcited initial appearance on the New Orleans waterfront contrasted strongly with the reserve he exhibited at the first press conference. His boisterous method of delivery worked well in extemporaneous speaking, but did not adapt well to television cameras and the more formal national campaign in which he engaged. The media showed him as an amateur comedian when he attempted to satirize the controversy by introducing himself by name, rank, and serial number. Quayle stuttered and had difficulty answering a straightforward question about his activities in the Guard. The television media showed him smirking or mispronouncing words like "nuclear." Bush’s eleventh hour selection prevented Quayle from receiving coaching preceding the fall campaign. Thus, his nonverbal behavior remained inconsistent and unpolished.

The Ethos of the Campaign

Political campaigns develop lives and ethos of their own. Prior to the Republican National Convention, Bush had low source credibility and struggled to separate himself from Reagan. The controversy surrounding Quayle increased Bush’s stature because he was perceived as being older and more mature. Quayle’s ethos developed rapidly but in a largely negative fashion. The media highlighted his inconsistent verbal and non-verbal behaviors. Frequently, Quayle appeared inept or ignorant when dealing with the media. He never earned their respect and questions about his competency and character persist. At this point, the media is constrained to prove the accuracy of its original assessment of Quayle as someone lacking depth and maturity.
CORRECTION

PRECEDING IMAGE HAS BEEN REFILMED TO ASSURE LEGIBILITY OR TO CORRECT A POSSIBLE ERROR
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(Quayle's press secretary), various Republican strategists and officials, Quayle's parents, and his wife, Marilyn to speak in his defense. Their remarks to the media attempted to downplay the issue and focus attention on the media's taking advantage of a little-known candidate. Had Quayle given direct, appropriate responses, the issue might never have broadened from the National Guard to his academic preparation and use of influence to achieve life goals.

The Impact of Quayle's Ethos

Although Quayle's strategy of avoidance, denial, and reliance on American values nullified the issue for the public, Bush and his team of political experts failed to anticipate fully the impact of Quayle's ethos on the campaign. Bush deliberately selected Quayle as someone who would not diminish his candidacy. However, because Bush chose Quayle at the last possible moment, Quayle faced significant problems, which, had he been prepared, might not have overshadowed the campaign.  

3 Prior to the campaign, Quayle recognized the inherent stresses and weighed the consequences of a national political campaign. The Indianapolis Star printed two articles which showed that Quayle cared about his family and did not have grand aspirations at that point in his political career. Doug McDaniel reported that "three weeks ago, Quayle was not even planning to attend the convention because he didn't want to fill a delegate slot that a party worker could use." Quayle was also described as one "who shuns the Washington social circuit to spend time at home." "He understood that overnight he would rocket from being the relatively unknown junior senator from Indiana to a national celebrity, that the media would dig into his past, interrogate his friends and family, get personal about topics most people discuss in private, and that Secret Service agents would descend on him, his wife, Marilyn, and their three children." "Quayle Still Winner Even If Unchosen," Indianapolis Star 14 August 1988, sec. A, p. 1, 12. Two days later, Doug McDaniel reported more on Quayle's feelings about running: "From a personal viewpoint, I'll be honest with you, if I had a time in my life to choose to be vice-president, I wouldn't choose this time. I'm young and have a few years ahead of me, I have a very young family with three children at very important ages." "Blistering Quayle Talk Rouses Ohio Delegates," Indianapolis Star 16 August 1988, sec. A, p. 1, 5.
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The Democrats' Strategy

Throughout much of the National Guard controversy, Dukakis and Bentsen said little about the issue. Initially, Democratic strategists believed that the issue would take care of itself and would ultimately boost the Democratic ticket. Bentsen and Dukakis also may have had private reasons for not involving themselves in the controversy. Bentsen's son had served in the Guard during the Vietnam war and Dukakis obtained an educational deferment during the Korean War, but enlisted later. Bentsen denied as "absolutely untrue" that he had used influence to assist his son's entry into the Texas Air National Guard in 1968. Instead of attacking Quayle on the National Guard issue, Bentsen and Dukakis contrasted the differences between Bentsen's maturity and experience with Quayle's relative youth and inexperience.

Overall Assessment of the Strategy

The combined strategies of avoidance and reliance on values minimized the results of continued probing into Quayle's past. Bush and Quayle both lessened the significance of the issue by ignoring it. The strategy was easily executed because the public tired of the issue. Sociologically, Quayle had not violated a norm. Just as he claimed, he did what others of his generation did: he contacted his parents and tried to avoid active duty. Because the public could reconcile Quayle's behavior in a psychologically satisfying way, the media attack on Quayle was discredited. Quayle's reliance on fair play extinguished the media blaze. The strategy of minimization through avoidance and bolstering appeared to work because Quayle's remaining on the ticket did not

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prevent Bush's election.

Significance of Quayle to Apologia

The analysis of the controversy surrounding Dan Quayle's service in the National Guard illustrates the new direction of post-Watergate political apologia. Apologia is not a single response, nor responses given in a single setting. When the media persists in questioning candidates, their dissatisfaction with responses results in further probing for damaging or incriminating information. The ongoing nature of the media's inquiry redefined the form of apologia.

Not only does apologia repair an ethos, it can also construct an ethos. Quayle's lack of national exposure prior to his selection dictated the construction of a national image. Campaign strategists recognized his lack of experience, but failed to take control early enough in the campaign to prevent his presence from becoming an issue.

Apologia includes the rhetorical support of others. An apologist reacts or proacts to the rhetorical situation by choosing consciously or selecting by default strategies that enhance ethos. To effect a successful apologetic response one may find it necessary to enlist others as communication channels. An integral part of Quayle's defense included others' speaking on his behalf. Without the rhetorical support of other Republicans, Quayle's apologia would have failed.

Critics must continue refining existing methodologies. An eclectic perspective was used in this thesis because it provided the widest latitude to analyze Quayle's apologia. An eclectic approach affords the critic the benefit of a synoptic view of rhetorical phenomena. The critic then becomes a craftsman choosing the most
suitable tools to create a unique and complete analysis of a case study in apologia.
SOURCES CONSULTED

STUDIES CITED


NEWSPAPERS

The writer read all newspaper articles and editorials from 13 August through 31 August 1988. Citations from these sources occur within the text when highlighting unique incidents or serving as examples of general coverage.

The *Atlanta Constitution*

The *Chicago Tribune*

The *Indianapolis Star*

The *Los Angeles Times*

The *Nashville Tennessean*

The *New York Times*

The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*

The *Wall Street Journal*

The *Washington Post*
PERIODICALS

The writer searched the Reader’s Guide To Periodical Literature for articles related to Quayle’s selection and the National Guard controversy. The dates fall outside the actual data collection dates of 13 August through 31 August because either the magazines are published prior to the publishing date or contained relevant information.

**Business Week.** 29 August 1988

The New Republic. 12 September/19 September 1988

**Newsweek.** 29 August 1988

**Time.** 29 August, 12 September 1988

**U.S. News & World Report.** 29 August/5 September, 12 September 1988

**SIGNED EDITORIALS, ANALYSIS, AND COMMENTARY**


Page, Clarence. "Questions on Quayle Turn On Hypocrisy." St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 24 August 1988


TELEVISION EVENING NEWS BROADCASTS

The writer viewed all national network evening news broadcasts from 13 August through 31 August 1988 that pertained to the beginning of the Republican convention, Quayle's selection, and the National Guard controversy. The Vanderbilt Television News Archive provided the videotapes and viewing facilities.

VIDEOTAPED SPEECHES

The writer viewed two Quayle campaign speeches videotaped from C-SPAN through the auspices of the Purdue University Public Affairs Video Archives which houses C-SPAN materials. Both speeches were presented on 24 August 1988.

SPEECH AND PRESS CONFERENCE TRANSCRIPTS

The writer obtained a partial transcript of remarks at the riverfront rally in New Orleans where Bush announced Quayle's selection, transcript of the first formal Bush/Quayle press conference, a transcript of Quayle's acceptance speech, and a partial transcript of the press conference in Huntington, Indiana. Combined with the print and broadcast media, the transcripts aided analysis of the issue.

