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Who Makes the News? Cabinet Visibility from 1897 to 2006

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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When Barack Obama selected Hillary Clinton to be Secretary of State, he not only chose an individual with "star" status, he placed her in *the* preeminent cabinet post. The Secretary of State is a veritable press magnet and this very fact sparked a surge of speculation that tensions and rivalries would likely follow.[1] But early in her tenure, one close observer of the Washington political scene opined: "She has about as low a news-making profile as is possible for someone who is arguably the most famous woman on the planet."[2]

Underlying that judgment are certain assumptions, e.g., that someone who had already achieved celebrity status before joining the cabinet would naturally continue to receive extensive coverage, and that, irrespective of his or her previous renown, the occupant of such a high-profile position would command greater coverage than the holder of a less prominent office. For the most part, though, presidents have little to fear in terms of being upstaged. A Midwestern farmer may know that Tom Vilsack is the Secretary of Agriculture, but precious few other Americans will even have heard of him.

What determines the amount of press coverage that cabinet officers receive? Do they labor in obscurity? Does a particular cabinet position affect the coverage they receive? Do cataclysmic events shine a brighter light on some positions? This paper examines the extent to which the visibility of cabinet members reflects an array of such influences by analyzing *New York Times* coverage of 357 cabinet officers from 1897 to 2006. The analysis shows that news coverage has been

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sharply differentiated between members of the Inner and Outer Cabinets; that political circumstances, personal attributes, and service characteristics matter; and that today's cabinet members are far less likely to dominate the coverage they do receive.

Cabinet Members as Potential Newsmakers

Presidents take their most visible step from campaigning to governing when they name the heads of the major departments of the federal government. Subsequently, some appointees become or remain prominent public figures. Others do not. One obvious reason for this is that cabinet positions are of unequal status.

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In the early days of the republic, State and War but not Treasury or Post Office were styled as "executive" departments under the direction of the president, and the Attorney General had no departmental affiliation whatsoever.[3] In 1873 the heads of the main federal agencies were placed on equal legal footing but some departments have continued to outrank others in fact if not in law. The heads of the departments long considered first among equals – State, Defense, Treasury, and Justice – have come to be collectively referred to as the "Inner Cabinet,"[4] with the heads of the remaining departments seen as on the outside, looking in.[5] So, for example, from 1933 through 2004 Secretaries of Commerce were mentioned by name in the *New York Times* only half as often as their counterparts in Agriculture; and secretaries of Agriculture received less than one-fifth as much coverage as their counterparts at State.

But the differential visibility of various cabinet members is not solely attributable to their position, as media coverage of the same cabinet post varies. For example, Herbert Hoover, Secretary of Commerce under presidents Harding and Coolidge, was mentioned by name in nearly 1,900 articles in the *Times* during his eight-year cabinet stint. By contrast, H. Malcolm Baldridge, Ronald Reagan's Commerce secretary, was mentioned in just 45 *Times* stories during his six-and-a-half-years in office.

It is widely held that the heads of the lesser departments – Agriculture, Veterans, Commerce, Housing, Labor, and so forth – become increasingly beholden to clientele groups.[6] The result, as David Truman put it, is that "expediencies…turn department heads in varying degrees into political opponents" of the president.[7] They may be torn in their roles as agents to important principals. Are they supposed to be political operatives or competent bureaucrats, slavish ciphers of the groups that they serve or policy entrepreneurs for whom the media limelight can be an invaluable tool? Or some odd, and potentially unstable, combination?

Another notion is that press coverage may provide a reasonably reliable gauge of a cabinet member's "face time" with the president, or his or her influence on a wide array of political and policy issues. For example, over the years Postmasters General commanded little press attention. Notably, though,

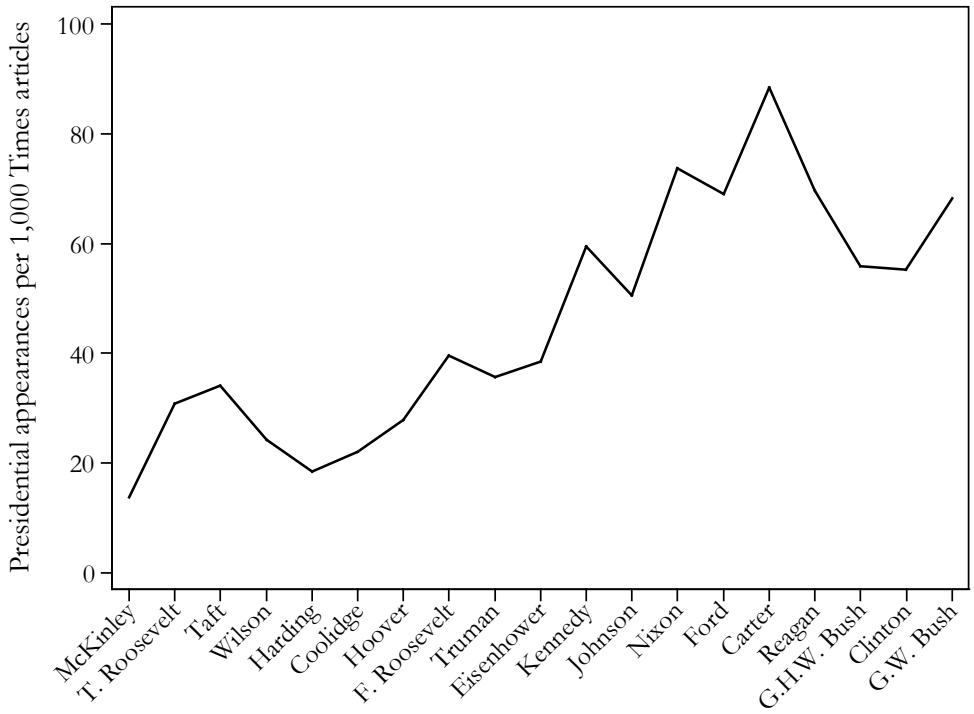
James Farley, Franklin Roosevelt's appointee to the post after Farley had managed his successful 1928 gubernatorial and 1932 presidential campaigns and one of Roosevelt's closest political advisers for several years thereafter, was accorded more coverage by the *New York Times* than any other member of Roosevelt's original cabinet, save Secretary of State Cordell Hull and Treasury Secretary William Woodin.[8]

Expanding Press Coverage in Washington

For most of the nineteenth century, a press presence in the nation's capital was close to nonexistent.

For most of the nineteenth century, a press presence in the nation's capital was close to nonexistent. Outside of election periods, Congress was the focus of the sparse press coverage of the national government.[9] The days of the activist "legislative presidency" had not yet arrived, policy-making initiative still rested largely with Congress, and media attention naturally zeroed in on where the action was perceived to be occurring. Moreover, legislators delighted in chatting up the expanding 14th Street press corps while presidents were loath to grant interviews, deeming it unfitting for their high office. Later, as the presidency waxed in scope and influence and as the norms governing appropriate presidential behavior toward press coverage began to loosen, the press became increasingly president-centric.[10]

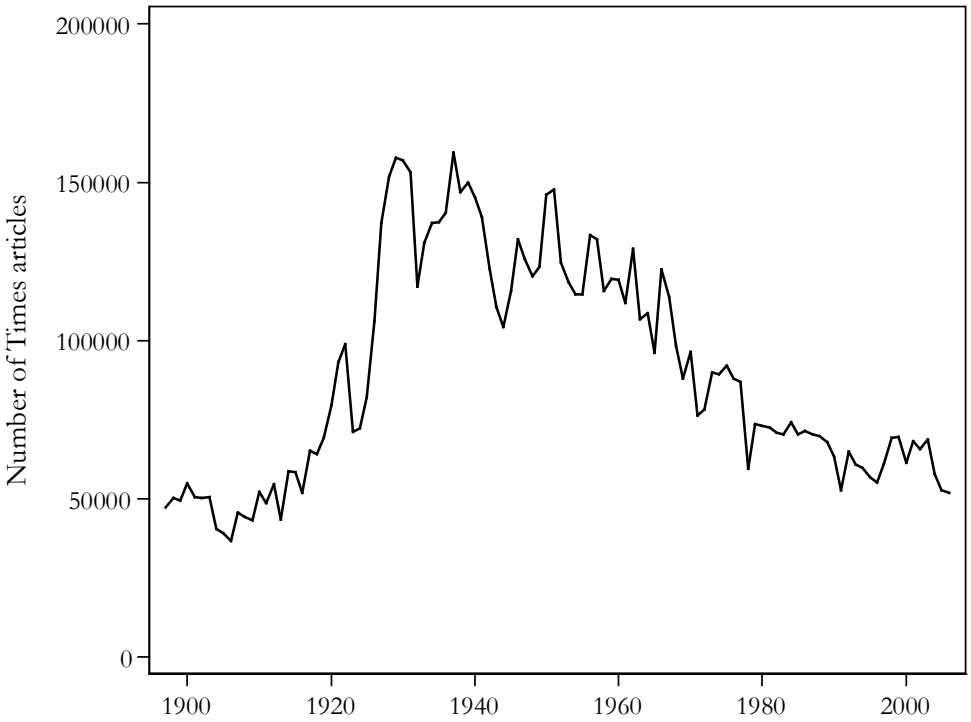
Figure 1. Presidents' Appearances in the *New York Times*, Per 1,000 Times Articles



By most lights, Theodore Roosevelt's administration marks the advent of the modern presidency as bully pulpit and press magnet.[11] And, as can be seen in Figure 1, the proportion of *Times* articles in which the incumbent president was mentioned grew steadily before leveling off in the last quarter of the twentieth century. With a lone exception (to be discussed below), coverage of the president far outweighed that of any of his cabinet officers or all his cabinet officers combined as well as coverage of Congress.

As for cabinet members, coverage neither rose nor declined over time. That is, relative to all the other articles that the *Times* published, over time it neither homed in on nor shied away from covering cabinet members. This does not mean, however, that the gross volume of *Times* coverage of cabinet members remained constant. The key to understanding this distinction is that during the post-World War II era, there was a precipitous decrease in the total number of articles in the *Times*. As Figure 2 reveals, in the late 1930s and early 1940s, that number hovered around 150,000 articles per year. By the turn of the twenty-first century, though, it had fallen all the way to the 50,000-60,000 range. Thus, in recent decades cabinet members have received the same proportional coverage share as usual, but of an ever-smaller pie.

Figure 2. The Number of *New York Times* Articles per Year, 1897-2006



Measuring Visibility

As intimated above, the measure of visibility employed here is the number of articles in which the head of a formal cabinet department was mentioned in the *New York Times* from the first through the last day of that member's tenure, divided by the total number of *Times* articles published during that same period.[12] As both the semi-encyclopedic "newspaper of record" and "the most influential and prestigious news organization in the United States for a very long time"[13], the *Times* has frequently served as the data source in research on the visibility or salience of various national issues and institutions.[14]

More than half of all the cabinet members (187 of the 357, or 52 percent) appeared in fewer than two articles per 1,000.

Of the 357 cabinet officers, 70 were mentioned in less than one out of every 1,000 articles that the *Times* printed while they were in office, and another 110 appeared in fewer than two per 1,000. Together, then, more than half of all the cabinet members (187 of the 357, or 52 percent) appeared in fewer than two articles per 1,000.[15] At first blush, these numbers suggest that most members of the cabinet maintain a very low profile in the nation's leading newspaper. Viewed from a different perspective, though, the amount of *Times* coverage may seem more impressive. The median of the 357 members' total number of appearances in the *Times* is 436, and the median number of days these members served was 1,052. Thus, on average, a given cabinet member was mentioned in the *Times* almost every other day – which, given the typically routine business that most cabinet members conduct day in and day out, is surprisingly comprehensive coverage.

Of course, not all cabinet members labored in obscurity. Eleven were mentioned in ten or more articles per 1,000, and the coverage distribution stretched from near zero appearances per 1,000 articles to 45.7. The identity of the cabinet officer who received the most extensive coverage, William R. Day, may occasion surprise. But the five-month period of 1898 during which Day served as Secretary of State extended from just a week after the start to a month after the end of the Spanish-American War. Thus, Day spent nearly his entire term in a key foreign policy position while the nation was at war. During his brief time in office, he was mentioned at a rate approximately three times higher than William McKinley, the president who had appointed him.

The 24 cabinet members who trailed most closely behind Day appear in Table 1. Every one of the top 25 headed an Inner Cabinet department and 19 of them (76 percent) occupied a single post, Secretary of State. Of all the Outer Cabinet department heads, only one, Thomas L. James (a Garfield appointee who served as Postmaster General for just ten months), even came close to top 25 status, with 7.1 appearances per 1,000 *Times* articles.[16] By contrast, the lower reaches of the 357-member list are dominated by members of the Outer Cabinet, bottoming out in the case of Secretary of Veterans Affairs Togo West, who in his 26-month tenure in office was mentioned in just six *Times* articles in all – one out of every 25,000 articles that the *Times* printed during that period. Also worthy of mention: only three of the 25 most extensively covered cabinet members (Day, William Jennings Bryan, and Charles Evans Hughes) served prior to the presidency of

Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Table 1. The 25 Most Heavily Covered Cabinet Members, 1897-2006

Cabinet member	Department	*Times* articles about member per 1000 *Times* articles	Total *Times* articles about member
William Day	State	45.7	945
Henry Kissinger	State	24.1	7363
Alexander Haig	State	22.4	2363
George Marshall	State	15.3	3782
James Baker	State	15.0	3472
George Shultz	State	14.9	6890
William Jennings Bryan	State	14.8	1907
Cyrus Vance	State	14.2	3437
John Foster Dulles	State	13.5	10418
James Byrnes	State	11.8	2355
Edmund Muskie	State	10.3	533
Dean Acheson	State	9.7	5335
Warren Christopher	State	9.3	2161
Edwin Meese	Justice	8.8	2150
Caspar Weinberger	Defense	8.2	4031
Christian Herter	State	8.4	1775
William Rogers	State	8.0	3273
Colin Powell	State	8.0	2134
Dean Rusk	State	7.9	7126
Lawrence Eagleburger	State	7.7	54
Charles Evans Hughes	State	7.7	2570
Donald Rumsfeld	Defense	7.6	2776
John Connally	Treasury	7.4	762
Robert Kennedy	Justice	7.4	3115
Les Aspin	Defense	7.3	463

Explaining Cabinet Visibility

To date, little beyond anecdotes and offhand observations have been offered about the volume, character, or effects of press coverage of cabinet officers. Taking a cue from Cook's study of House members as newsmakers, this study looks at three sets of factors – structural characteristics, political circumstances, and personal and service characteristics – as potential determinants of varying cabinet visibility.[17] The analysis, which is supported by a statistical model,

permits an assessment of the relative contributions and significance of these various factors.

Structural Characteristics: Like congressional committees, the attention that cabinet departments and those who head them receive should be expected to depend on the breadth and salience of the issues with which they deal.[18] Heading a clientele-oriented department is thought to place a fairly low ceiling over a cabinet officer's visibility. [19] Presidents confer most extensively with department heads whose portfolios cover the most pressing issues of the day; for example, three-fourths of Lyndon Johnson's interactions with cabinet members were with the secretaries of State, Treasury, or Defense, or the Attorney General — the Inner Cabinet.[20] So, controlling for periods of war and depression, Inner Cabinet members were mentioned in 1.4 more *Times* stories per thousand than their Outer Cabinet counterparts. Translated into total mentions in the *Times* over the course of cabinet members' median time in office, this means that Inner Cabinet members are expected to have been mentioned in approximately 311 more *Times* articles than Outer Cabinet members.

American involvement in armed conflict abroad did not significantly widen the coverage gap between Inner and Outer Cabinet members.

Political Circumstances: Boom and bust, war and peace might reasonably be expected to enhance media coverage of the cabinet because government agencies are involved in a larger portion than usual of the day's news and because the president and those closest to him dominate center stage during crisis periods. As Fenno put it, "The conditions of the time may dictate that certain Cabinet positions are going to be the most important and most publicly prominent."[21] In wartime, media coverage of the heads of Inner Cabinet departments may expand even further, with Outer Cabinet department heads being viewed as too peripheral to the real action to warrant more attention. But during severe economic crises the coverage edge that Inner Cabinet status normally produces may dissipate, so that Outer Cabinet members find themselves on a more level playing field with their Inner Cabinet colleagues.

As it turns out, however, American involvement in armed conflict abroad did not significantly widen the coverage gap between Inner and Outer Cabinet members. Whether in wartime or peacetime, the former were mentioned more frequently in the *Times* than were the latter. As expected, though, the Inner-Outer gap did narrow significantly during hard economic times, when the onus of combating the major challenge facing the nation shifted away from the departments that normally dominated the news. This is not to say that coverage of Outer Cabinet members rose during such periods. Rather, a significant decline in coverage of Inner Cabinet members produced something more closely approximating equal coverage of the heads of Inner and Outer Cabinet departments.

Personal and Service Characteristics: Cabinet officers bring distinguishing personal characteristics – in fact, increasingly varied personal characteristics – to their offices, including celebrity status prior to appointment, gender, race and ethnicity, and age. While rather few cabinet members are well known nationally prior to appointment some – Hillary Clinton, for example – are luminaries at the

time of their appointment. The expectation, of course, is that any such star-status should carry over into the coverage they receive as cabinet members. This expectation was borne out, with cabinet members receiving a coverage boost of just more than a third of an article per 1,000 for every one-article per thousand increment in the coverage they had been accorded in the year before they joined the cabinet.

Some cabinet appointees whose names are not household words at the beginning may stand out for other reasons. In 1933, Frances Perkins became Secretary of Labor. In 1966, Robert C. Weaver became the first Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. Both of these events were newsworthy, as Perkins was the first woman and Weaver the first African-American to hold a cabinet post. Standing out from other cabinet members in these ways may be either a plus or a minus in terms of media attention. As for age, a somewhat older cabinet secretary may have had time to build a public reputation – à la Elliot Richardson. But because youth is frequently associated with "progressive ambition" it may promote a tendency toward engaging in show-horse activity.[22]

But as it turns out those who entered the cabinet at a younger age did not receive significantly greater coverage. Nor did coverage of women cabinet members differ significantly from that accorded to men. Although racial and ethnic minorities eventually began to appear in cabinet meetings, their presence was noted significantly less often in the *Times* than that of "Anglos." Though most minority appointees were relegated to less visible Outer Cabinet departments, even those who occupied high-prestige positions – most notably, Colin Powell as Secretary of State – did not rank high among recent holders of their office in terms of visibility.

How cabinet members came into office and how they behaved in office also must be taken into account. In the first respect, a key consideration is whether the cabinet member was a "fresh" appointee, i.e., an incoming president's initial appointee. Fresh appointees derive a visibility boost from the close attention paid to the cabinet formation process and the increasingly politicized nature of that process.[23] By contrast, when mid-term and late-term appointees have fewer incentives to engage in attention-getting activities and are often filled with relatively little fanfare by careerists, party regulars, or other lesser-knowns. Consistent with these expectations, "fresh" cabinet enjoyed a significant coverage advantage, amounting to .30 articles per 1,000.

What cabinet members do while in office also is likely to matter. If a cabinet member is accused of corruption or other inappropriate actions or if he or she clashes publicly with the president, the media generally are quick to pick up the scent. Elliot Richardson was famously fired as Richard Nixon's Attorney General when he refused to dismiss Archibald Cox, the Watergate Special Prosecutor. As to scandals, the Teapot Dome scandal helped make Albert B. Fall, Harding's Interior secretary, a household name, and the first former cabinet secretary to be imprisoned. And Earl Butz, the holdover Agriculture secretary from the Nixon Administration, resigned from Gerald Ford's cabinet in 1976 after reports

circulated about his vulgar and racist joke-telling. Controversies and alleged or actual scandals also made cabinet members significantly more visible in the *Times*, and by an appreciable margin (approximately three-quarters of an article per 1,000 *Times* articles); this finding bears out indications from earlier research on members of Congress about the profile-raising tendencies of actual or asserted improprieties.[24]

Content and Competition

Whereas "focal" coverage of cabinet members had been common 50 or 100 years earlier, by 2003 a cabinet member played a focal role in just 15 percent of the articles.

Although the focus here is primarily on *how much* coverage cabinet members received over the years, the articles in which a cabinet member's name appears are not necessarily created equal. In one article, she may get only fleeting mention, in another, she may be the main source, and in still another be the subject of a lengthy profile. To take the depth of coverage into account, six separate random samples of the *Times* articles were drawn in which a cabinet member was mentioned. Given the importance of the Inner versus Outer Cabinet distinction, three of these samples, each consisting of 100 articles, were confined to articles that mentioned an Inner Cabinet member and three that mentioned an Outer Cabinet member. To gauge change over time, pairs of samples were drawn from 1903, from 1951, and from 2003.[25] These 600 articles were then classified according to whether the official received passing coverage, minor coverage, extensive coverage, or focal coverage.

The main pattern, see Table 2, is clear. In sharp contrast to the prevailing practice of a century ago and the common practice of half a century ago, in more than half the articles in which a cabinet member was mentioned in the two 2003 samples, that mention consisted of no more than – and often less than – a single sentence; and in at least three out of every four of the articles from 2003, the *Times* provided no more than "minor" coverage of the cabinet member. Whereas "focal" coverage of cabinet members had been common 50 or 100 years earlier, by 2003 a cabinet member played a focal role in just 15 percent of the articles.

Table 2. The Role of Cabinet Members in Articles in Which They Were Mentioned (in percentages)

Role in article	Inner Cabinet			Outer Cabinet		
	1903	1951	2003	1903	1951	2003
Passing Reference	34	51	53	32	38	56
Minor Reference	16	9	23	17	8	24
Extensive Coverage	2	5	7	4	4	7
Focal Coverage	48	35	17	47	50	13
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Finally, it is worth considering whether the cabinet has lost ground to competing centers of power within the executive branch. The emergence of the Executive Office of the President, and its increasing centrality within the presidential advisory system, has relocated much of the policy-making initiative. In the process, those occupying the positions of National Security Advisor and Director of the National Economic Council in particular have come to play crucial policy-determining roles, in some instances challenging or even surpassing the Secretaries of State and Treasury. That trend peaked during the Nixon administration, when it was National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger, not Secretary of State William P. Rogers, who played the leading role in working with the president to design and carry out major U.S. foreign policy initiatives. During his stint as National Security Advisor, Kissinger's name appeared in 13.4 *Times* articles per thousand; Rogers's rate during his years as Secretary of State was 8.0 – among the lowest recorded during the modern era by anyone in his position. But it is important to note that as Secretary of State Kissinger was even more visible, ranked second in the top 25 with 24.1 mentions per thousand and 7,363 overall.

Although more recent National Security Advisors like Anthony Lake, Samuel "Sandy" Berger, and Condoleezza Rice have not climbed to Kissinger's levels of power and renown, they have to some extent served as counterweights on their cabinet counterparts, and they have attracted considerable media attention in the process. The *Times* appearance rates for Lake, Berger, and Rice were 1.2, 1.2, and 2.4, respectively. Those figures do not place them in the company of the Secretaries of State with whom they served, but are nonetheless impressive relative to the rates for their contemporaries who held several other Inner Cabinet posts, and to those who held every other Outer Cabinet post. That said the platform does matter. Just as Kissinger's mentions ballooned, Rice's mentions went from 2.4 as National Security Advisor to 9.2 as Secretary of State. Had she been included in the main analysis (from which she was excluded with others who had not completed their cabinet service by the end of 2006), she would have placed in the middle of the top 25.

Where You Stand Depends (Mostly) on Where You Sit

The results reported above support three main conclusions. First, since the end of the nineteenth century, *news coverage of cabinet officers has been sharply differentiated*, with the primary cleavage being between the members of the Inner and Outer Cabinets. Much of what Inner Cabinet members say and do is ipso facto news, but not so for their Outer Cabinet colleagues. Second, above and beyond the Inner versus Outer Cabinet distinction, *political circumstances, personal attributes, and service characteristics also matter*. National economic reversals have erased the coverage gap between Inner and Outer Cabinet members; "fresh" members have been covered more heavily than others; those who enter the cabinet already established as celebrities have continued to be favorite coverage

targets; those embroiled in controversies of various sorts have gotten an unwanted "bonus" in coverage; and minority appointees have been less visible than others. Third, today's *cabinet members are far less likely to dominate the coverage they do receive* than was the case a century or even half a century ago. Although their names are mentioned, on average, about as often as ever, these days they are far less likely to serve as focal points in the stories in which they appear.

Cast in a broader light, these results speak to both enduring and still-evolving issues involving executive branch politics, media coverage of politics, and the complex interplay between the two. For one thing, some well established characteristics of executive branch politics long have shaped media coverage of the cabinet and presumably will continue to do so. The cabinet is not a collective advice-giving or policymaking body. Cabinet meetings are irregularly held and largely perfunctory — more typically ceremonial "photo opps" than true working sessions. Cabinet members are introduced as integral components of the president's "team" but in reality they are an agglomeration of scattered individuals pursuing disparate portions of the president's agenda while also trying to advance other interests. In this highly individualized, differentiated operating culture, some departments and some department heads will stand out while others will be relegated to virtual oblivion. In the language of Hollywood, the cabinet is likely to contain a few "stars" and a "character actor" or two, with the rest of the cast consisting of "bit players" or even "extras."

[T]hese results speak to both enduring and still-evolving issues involving executive branch politics, media coverage of politics, and the complex interplay between the two.

Times also have changed for the media themselves — changes that are fundamentally altering the way they cover the national political scene in general and promise to shape their coverage of the cabinet in particular. Newspapers, including the *Times*, prospered and grew larger and more Washington-oriented well into the twentieth century. More recently they have been financially imperiled, causing them to shrink in size, to pare their reporting staffs, and to offer an ever diminishing "news hole" and less hard-news coverage. (Again, see Figure 2.) Consequently, the already-pronounced coverage gap between Inner and Outer Cabinet members should be expected to widen even farther in the years to come, as should the gaps occasioned by "star" status prior to cabinet service and involvement in scandal. If those expectations prove accurate, then the coverage patterns we have glimpsed here will become even sharper in the future than they were over the past century.

Tell us what you think of this *Issues in Governance Studies*.

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Endnotes

[1] During the 2008 transition, it became widely known that President-elect Obama was impressed by Doris Kearns Goodwin's (2005) *Team of Rivals.* Thus, keeping Republican Robert Gates on as Secretary of Defense and nominating Hillary Clinton to be Secretary of State provided ample fodder for pundits and beat reporters alike.

[2] Ben Smith, "Hillary Clinton Toils in the Shadows," *Politico*. June 23, 2009.

[3] John A. Fairlie, "The President's Cabinet," *American Political Science Review* 7 (February 1913): 33-34.

[4] The inner cabinet (also called the efficient or secret cabinet) emerged in England early in the 18th century. Historians debate whether it was during the reign of Queen Anne or George I, but the term describes a subset of the larger cabinet that included the prime minister, first lord of the treasury, the secretaries of state, the president of the Privy Council, the chancellor, and the first lord of the admiralty.

[5] For a quantitative approach to describing the cabinet pecking order, see Herbert F. Weisberg, "Cabinet Transfers and Departmental Prestige: Someone Old, Someone New, Someone Borrowed..." *American Politics Quarterly* 15 (April 1987): 238-253.Weisberg.

[6] For a useful exposition of this idea and a partial demurrer from it, see Graham K. Wilson, "Are Department Secretaries Really a President's Natural Enemies?" *British Journal of Political Science* 7 (July 1977): 273-299 and also Richard F. Fenno, *The President's Cabinet*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958.

[7] David B. Truman, *The Governmental Process: Political Interests and Public Opinion.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951, p. 406.

[8] This statement and several others in the early portions of this paper are based on data and measures that will be described below.

[9] See Timothy E. Cook, *Making Laws and Making News: Media Strategies in the U.S. House of Representatives.* Washington: Brookings, 1989; Elmer E. Cornwell, Jr. Presidential news: The expanding public image. *Journalism Quarterly*. 36 (Summer 1959): 275-83; and Samuel Kernell, and Gary C. Jacobson. "Congress and the Presidency in the News in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Politics* 49 (November 1987): 1016-1035.

[10] Again, see Cook, 1989, and Kernell and Jacobson, 1987.

[11] George Juergens, *News from the White House: The Presidential-Press Relationship in the Progressive Era.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981.

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[12] For ease of presentation, that number is then multiplied by 1,000 to produce the number of *Times* articles per thousand featuring a given cabinet member.

[13] Jeffrey E. Cohen. *The Presidency in the Era of 24-Hour News*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008, 70.

[14] See, for example, Sarah A. Binder. *Stalemate: Causes and Consequences of Legislative Gridlock.* Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 2003; Cohen, 2008; and Timothy E. Cook. "House Members as Newsmakers: The Effects of Televising Congress." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 11 (May 1986): 203-226. Although the online ProQuest *New York Times* (Historical) archive begins with the first day the *Times* was published (September 18, 1851), we did not consider data from early years of the *Times*'s operation to be appropriate for our purposes. For all its bravado about being the nation's "newspaper of record," the *Times* was on thin ice in 1896 when it was purchased by Adolph S. Ochs. With a circulation of only 9,000, it trailed no fewer than a dozen other papers in New York City alone, and six of those papers had circulations exceeding 100,000. The modern *Times*, with its new "All the News" logo, began with Ochs's takeover. Accordingly, we took 1897 as the starting year for our analysis, as explained below.

[15] The median number of appearances per 1,000 articles was 1.9, with a mean of 3.0.

[16] Upon entering office, James instituted a series of high-profile reforms that eliminated the deficit under which the department had been operating, reduced postal rates, and exposed widespread corruption within the postal service. He soon left office in the cabinet shuffle initiated by Chester Arthur following Garfield's assassination.

[17] Cook, "House Makers as Newsmakers," 1986.

[18] Christopher J. Deering and Steven S. Smith. *Committees in Congress.* Washington: CQ Press, 1997, 86-96.

[19] On one well-known occasion, President Reagan failed even to recognize a member of his own cabinet, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Samuel Pierce, whom he publicly greeted as "Mister Mayor." See Bill McAllister, "HUD's 'Stealth Secretary:' Pierce has Reputation as Least Effective Member of Cabinet. *Washington Post,* January 24, 1987.

[20] James J. Best, "Who Talked to the President When? A Study of Lyndon Johnson." *Political Science Quarterly* 103 (Autumn 1988): 538.

[21] Fenno, 1958, 62.

[22] On "progressive ambition" see Joseph Schlesinger. *Ambition and Politics.* Chicago: Rand McNally, 1966.

[23] G. Calvin Mackenzie. *Innocent Until Nominated: The Breakdown of the Presidential Nominating Process*. Washington: Brookings, 2001.

[24] James H. Kuklinski and Lee Sigelman. "When Objectivity is Not Objective: Network Television News Coverage of U.S. Senators and the 'Paradox of Objectivity.' *Journal of Politics* 54 (August 1992): 820.

[25] We selected these years in order to maximize the time span of these comparisons while avoiding election years, a new president's first year in office, or the first year of a re-elected president's second term, because in this part of the analysis we wanted, insofar as possible, to keep the focus on cabinet members *qua* cabinet members rather than campaigners or fresh appointees. Of course, 1951 was not quite midway between 1903 and 2003, but it was as close as we could come, given these criteria.