Fostering a positive brand name is the chief benefit that parties provide for their members. They do this by coordinating their activities in the legislative process and by communicating with voters. Although political scientists generally focus on the former, dismissing partisan communication as “cheap talk,” this book argues that a party’s ability to coordinate its communication has important implications for the study of politics. The macrolevel institutional setting of a party’s communication heavily influences that party’s prospects for cohesive communication. Paradoxically, unified government presents the greatest challenge to unified communication within the president’s party. As this book contends, the challenge stems primarily from two sources: the constitutional separation of powers and the intervening role of the news media. In this setting, internal disputes with the president or within the congressional majority are more likely to arise. These disputes are disproportionately likely to be featured by the news media, and stories of intraparty strife become the most credible and damaging type of partisan story.

Tim Groeling is Associate Professor of Communication Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. With Matthew A. Baum, he is the coauthor of War Stories: The Causes and Consequences of Public Views of War. His articles have appeared in the Journal of Politics, International Organization, Political Communication, Political Behavior, and Presidential Studies Quarterly, among other publications.
To Judy Groeling –

I wish you could have seen it.
Politics and relations among individuals in societies across the world are being transformed by new technologies for targeting individuals and sophisticated methods for shaping personalized messages. The new technologies challenge boundaries of many kinds – among news, information, entertainment, and advertising; among media, with the arrival of the World Wide Web; and even among nations. *Communication, Society and Politics* probes the political and social impacts of these new communication systems in national, comparative, and global perspective.
When Politicians Attack

Party Cohesion in the Media

TIM GROELING
University of California, Los Angeles
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## Chapter 1: “McParty”: Cohesion and the Party “Brand Name” 

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