



2009-05

**THE PRESIDENT ON THE ROAD:
INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC TRAVEL, 1977-2005**

WhiteHouseTransitionProject.org

A non-partisan consortium of public and private universities and other research organizations, the White House Transition Project focuses on smoothing the transition of power in the American Presidency. Its “Reports” series applies scholarship to specific problems identified by those who have borne the responsibilities for governing. Its “Briefing” series uses extensive interviews with practitioners from the past seven White Houses to produce institutional memories for most of the primary offices in the West Wing operation of the presidency.

Find the two publication series of the White House Transition Project, *WHTP Reports* and *Institutional Memory Series Briefing Books* on its website: WhiteHouseTransitionProject.org.

THE WHITE HOUSE TRANSITION PROJECT



2009-05

THE PRESIDENT ON THE ROAD: INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC TRAVEL, 1977-2005

Brendan J. Doherty

United States Naval Academy

Abstract As a president's time is perhaps his scarcest resource, the strategic choices that determine its allocation are some of the most significant that a president and his aides will make. When and where a president chooses to travel, and what he does while he is there, can reveal a great deal about his priorities. This essay analyzes patterns of both international and domestic travel over the past five presidential administrations in order to provide the incoming president and his aides with information that will assist them as they decide when, where, and for what the next president should travel.

Presidents have forged some of the most enduring images of their administration while traveling around the country or across the world. One need look no further than Abraham Lincoln dedicating a cemetery to fallen Union soldiers in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in November 1863, or John F. Kennedy in Berlin almost a hundred years later declaring his solidarity with the people of that embattled city, or George W. Bush speaking to rescue workers through a megaphone in New York City following the attacks of September 11, 2001 to see clearly the importance of travel in shaping the public's perception of a president. Many presidents have been at their best when speaking directly to the people and drawing on the energy of the crowds they addressed in moments that would become emblematic of their leadership.

A tremendous amount of effort goes into preparing for a presidential journey. An advance team lays the groundwork for each presidential trip, coordinating details that range from security to public relations. At least three helicopters – one bearing the president, and two providing security and serving as decoys – usually ferry the president from the White House to Andrews Air Force Base, where he, and someday she, boards Air Force One. A large entourage accompanies the president, including support planes carrying personnel and military and communications equipment, and cargo planes bearing armored vehicles, the president's limousine, and at times his helicopter, Marine One. On occasion, in the case of travel to dangerous overseas destinations, a decoy plane decorated to look like Air Force One makes the journey as well. In short, moving the president and what has been called his mobile White House around the country and the world requires no small amount of investment of time, money, and political effort (Allen 2002; Allen 2004; Babcock 1991; Babcock 1992; Milbank 2002; Nakashima 2000; Walsh 1977).

As a president's time is perhaps his scarcest resource, the strategic choices that determine its allocation are some of the most significant that a president and his aides will make. When and where a president chooses to travel, and what he does while he is there, can reveal a great deal about his

priorities. This essay analyzes patterns of both international and domestic travel over the past five presidential administrations in order to provide the incoming president and his aides with information that will assist them as they decide when, where, and for what the next president should travel.

RESEARCHING PRESIDENTIAL TRAVEL

This study covers a twenty-eight year period from January 20, 1977 through January 20, 2005, encompassing five presidencies—those of Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and the first term of George W. Bush. The analysis is drawn primarily from a dataset of presidential events that was compiled by the author through examination of the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*,¹ which is the official record of the a president's public activities while in office. The author is also grateful to Mark Knoller of CBS News, and the Jimmy Carter, George H.W. Bush, and William J. Clinton Presidential Libraries for generously providing information on the time that these presidents spent in their hometown or at a second home, on vacation, and at Camp David.

The data on international travel reflect the length of a presidential trip from the first to the last event abroad. As presidents sometimes but not always make remarks or hold a public event upon departing for or returning from an international trip, it is often impossible to determine from the *Public Papers* exactly when the president left from and returned to the White House. As a result, the data presented here might understate the total length of some of these international journeys. This is not always the case, however, as presidents flying to and from the western hemisphere and Europe often hold their first public event abroad on the same day that they depart from the White House, and frequently arrive home on the same day that they hold their last public event abroad. When presidents travel to Asia, however, their departure from the White House is often two calendar days before their first event abroad, due both to the length of the journey and the crossing of the International Date Line. Due to these dynamics, the data in this article reflect time on the ground abroad, and not the total length of each trip from the departure from to the return to Washington, DC.

Data on domestic presidential travel focus on both the number of full or partial days the president was on the road and the number of public events² he held while traveling, as reflected in

¹ The *Public Papers of the Presidents* are available from a number of sources, including in hard copy in printed volumes and online through the Government Printing Office, the American Presidency Project at the University of California, Santa Barbara, various presidential libraries, and the White House web site. Most of the coding of data was done through the web site of the American Presidency Project at the University of California, Santa Barbara. For each president except Carter, whose presidential library web site does not include his *Public Papers*, two of the busiest months of each presidency were checked to see how well the records at the American Presidency Project web site matched up to those at the presidential library, and the data were found to be quite reliable through June of 2000. The records of the last six months of 2000 at the American Presidency Project site were incomplete, so coding of presidential events during this period was done based on the version of the *Public Papers* available the Clinton Library's website. Similarly, the records of George W. Bush's term from January 2001 through January 2005 were not yet up to date at the American Presidency Project, so initial coding was done based on the American Presidency Project web site, and was supplemented by review of records of presidential events at the White House web site.

² Not every entry in the *Public Papers* was treated as an individual event. The goal was to code presidential activity in a way that reflected the actual number of events that took place, not merely to record the number of entries in the *Public Papers*. For example, brief exchanges with reporters that immediately preceded or followed an event, such as an exchange on the front steps of a school just after a speech to students inside, were not coded as separate events, even though they often received their own entry in the *Public Papers*. Additionally, if a president attended an event for an entire morning and made several separate comments throughout the event, all in the same room to the same audience, that each garnered an individual entry in the *Public Papers*, those were not treated as separate events.

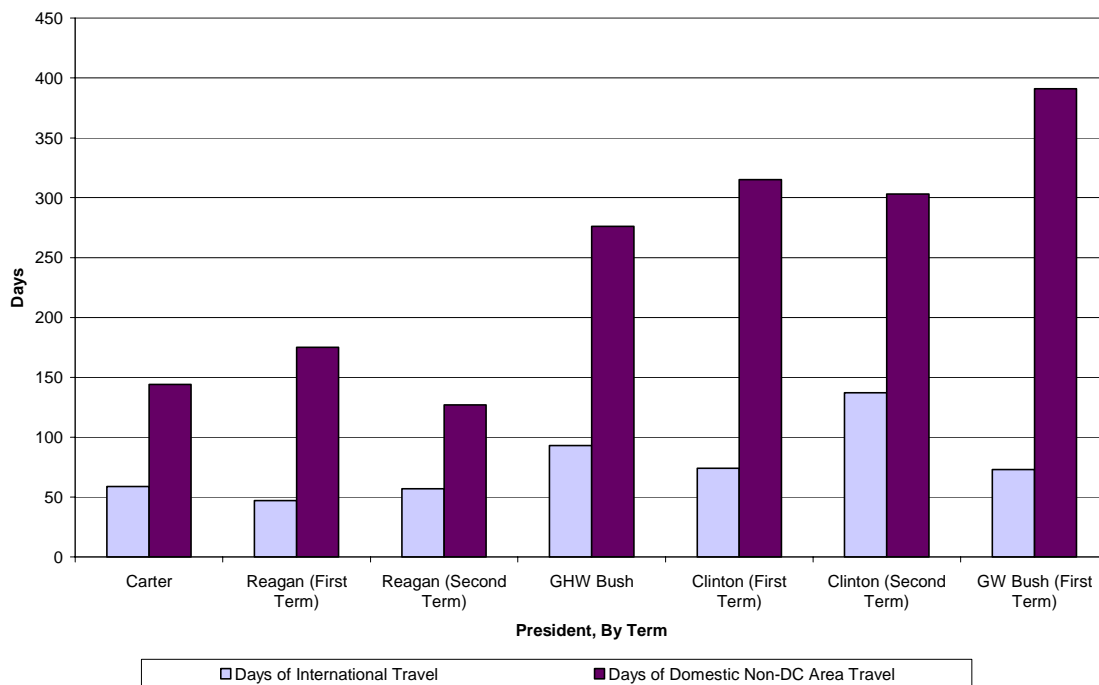
For other exchanges with reporters, in which presidents engage frequently, anything over 150 words was coded. This relatively inclusive threshold was set to get a full picture of what constitutes presidential activity in the states. Exchanges with reporters under 150 words were only recorded if they served as the only record of the president's visit

the *Public Papers*. Because a large number of public presidential events occur in the Washington, DC metropolitan area only a few miles from the White House as part of the president’s regular activities and are not comparable to other types of presidential travel, events in Maryland and Virginia are not included. A presidential event held at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland or at the Pentagon in Virginia is not a representative example of a president traveling to the states. Events at a presidential home that served as a second White House are also not included in the dataset of public events, but are represented in this study by the information provided by Mark Knoller and the presidential libraries.

THE CONTOURS OF INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC TRAVEL

Figure 1 depicts the number of days that presidents held domestic non-DC area events and days of international presidential travel by term from January 20, 1997 through January 20, 2005. Several trends are immediately evident. Days of domestic presidential travel rose substantially and fairly steadily over the 28 years of this study, with the exception of Reagan’s second term, when our nation’s oldest president spent fewer days traveling than any other president in this study. Clinton in each term and George W. Bush in his first term each had more than double the days on the road domestically than did Carter in the late 1970s, illustrating the increase in presidential travel over the past quarter century. George W. Bush’s 391 days when he held domestic non-DC area public events constitute more than a year of his first four years in office.

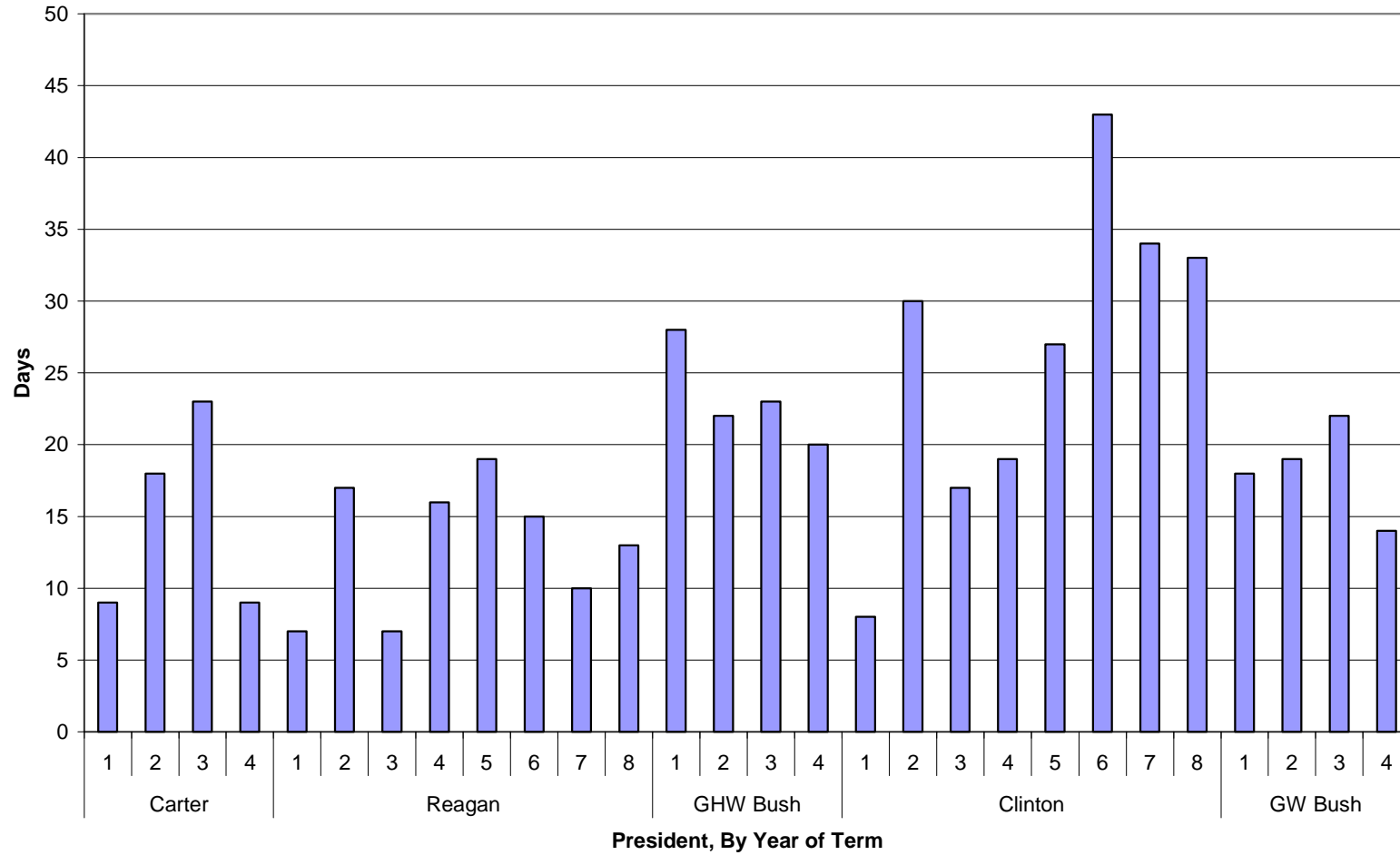
Figure 1: Days of Presidential International and Domestic Travel, 1977-2005



Source: Data compiled by the author from the Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States

to that city that day. For example, on April 4, 1994, President Clinton threw out the first pitch at an Indians game in Cleveland. He did not make a speech, and a brief exchange with reporters is the only record in the *Public Papers* of his trip to Cleveland, which surely was widely reported by the local news media. Such an event ought to be included in the dataset of presidential travel.

Figure 2: Days of International Presidential Travel, 1977-2005



Source: Data compiled by the author from the Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States

International travel grew between 1977 and 2005 as well, though less dramatically than did domestic travel, as the three most recent presidents all spent more days holding events out of the country than did the first two presidents in this study. Clinton's 137 days of international travel during his second term are far more than any other president examined, and are more than double the amount of international travel by Carter or by Reagan during either of his terms. To better understand the dynamics of when, where, and for what presidents travel, we will first conduct a detailed examination of international travel before turning to an analysis of domestic travel.

INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENTIAL TRAVEL

WHEN

While the volume of international travel has increased over the 28 years of this study, examination of when within terms presidents travel reveals commonalities across these five administrations. Figure 2 illustrates that four of the five presidents spent the fewest days abroad in their first year in office. The exception is George H.W. Bush, whose background as a former vice president and ambassador gave him both an international orientation and a wide range of personal contacts and friends among leaders around the world. As such, it is understandable that he began his administration with relatively high levels of international travel.

Several other general patterns emerge from examination of this figure. The three presidents, Carter, George H.W. Bush, and George W. Bush, who traveled least internationally during their reelection year faced the most challenging bids for reelection, while for Reagan and Clinton, their second highest numbers of days of international travel in their first term came during the year of their reelection. Four of the five presidents spent the most days abroad during either their second or third years in office. International travel peaked during the second year of each term for Reagan and Clinton, during the third year of each term for Carter and George W. Bush, and during the first year for George H.W. Bush. The general increase over time revealed in Figure 1 is evident within administrations in Figure 2 as well, as the latter three presidents traveled more in most years than did the first two presidents in the study.

The second terms of the two presidents who served two terms within the years covered by this study contrast dramatically. While Reagan's second term international travel is roughly comparable to his first term, Clinton's second term saw a dramatic rise in the number of days he spent abroad. In fact, Clinton's international travel during each of his last three years in office exceeds that during any other year in this 28-year period, including 43 days holding events abroad in 1998, in the midst of the impeachment scandal. These trips gave Clinton the opportunity to speak in front of adoring crowds, while at the same time providing images of him performing his job as president in spite of the scandal. The differing patterns of Reagan and Clinton can in part be attributed to age, as Reagan, our oldest president, left office within a month of his 78th birthday, while Clinton left office as our second-youngest former president at the age of 54.³

Table 1 reveals that as the total number of days of international presidential travel has increased over time, the amount of international trips that presidents take has grown as well, while the average length of a presidential trip abroad has decreased. Both Bushes and Clinton went on approximately two to three times the number of trips to other countries that their predecessors did. With the rise in frequency came a decrease in duration, as the average length of a trip abroad decreased from 4.9 days for Carter to 3.2 days for George W. Bush. Every president except Carter made at least one journey that consisted of events abroad on just one day, often to nearby destinations like Canada or Mexico. Each president besides George W. Bush embarked on an international tour with over a week of

³ Only Theodore Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy were younger than Clinton when they assumed the presidency, and of the two, only Roosevelt survived to enjoy a post-presidential period.

events abroad. Carter went on three such journeys and George H.W. Bush five in their single terms in office, while Reagan took six such trips and Clinton ten during their eight years as president.

Table 1: Number and Length of International Presidential Trips, 1977-2005

President	Number of Trips	Average Length of Trip (Days)	Shortest Trip (Days)	Longest Trip (Days)
Carter	12	4.9	2	9
Reagan (First Term)	11	4.3	1	10
Reagan (Second Term)	13	4.4	1	11
GHW Bush	26	3.6	1	10
Clinton (First Term)	20	3.7	1	8
Clinton (Second Term)	35	3.9	1	11
GW Bush (First Term)	23	3.2	1	6

Source: Data compiled by the author from the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*

Month-by-month patterns of international presidential travel in the first year in office are depicted in Figure 3. Carter began his international travel the latest, waiting until May. Both Bushes took their first trip abroad in February, while Reagan did so in March and Clinton in April. Carter and Clinton each took only two trips abroad during their first year in office, while Reagan embarked on three. George W. Bush took five trips abroad in his first year, while his father, George H.W. Bush, embarked on seven journeys overseas, including two separate trips in December.

For three of the five presidents in this study – Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and Clinton – Canada was their first international destination, an indication of that nation’s close relationship with the United States. Carter’s first trip abroad was to England, while George W. Bush, a former governor of Texas, signaled his intent to forge a closer relationship with our neighbor to the south when he chose Mexico for his first international destination as president.

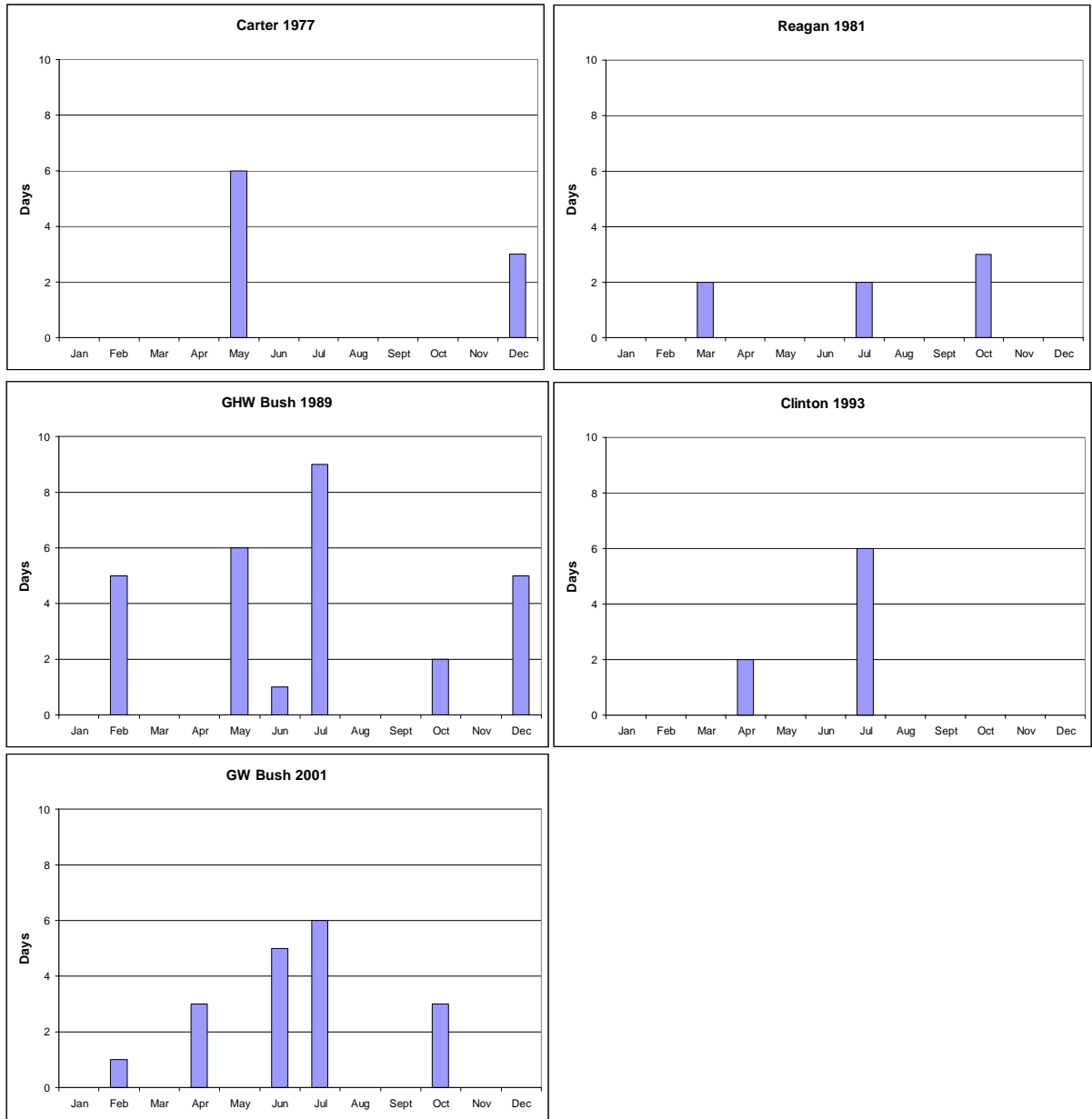
A brief review of each president’s first year of international travel helps to illustrate the nature of the various journeys presidents take abroad. While in England in May 1977, Carter attended a NATO meeting and a G-7 economic summit, before moving on to Geneva, Switzerland, where he met on neutral ground with the president of Syria. He did not travel abroad again until December 29, 1977, when he began a nine-day journey in Poland, after which he would visit Iran, India, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, France, Belgium.

Reagan’s three journeys abroad in his first year took him to destinations that were closer to home. In March, he spent two days in the Canadian capital of Ottawa meeting with that country’s leaders. After spending much of the next few months recovering from being shot by a would-be assassin, Reagan returned to Ottawa for another two days in July for a G-7 economic summit. He completed his international travel during his first year in office when he spent three days in October in Cancun, Mexico attending the International Meeting on Cooperation and Development.

George H.W. Bush spent more days abroad in his first term than did his two predecessors combined. In early February, he made a one-day visit to Ottawa before embarking for four days of events in Japan, China, and South Korea. At the end of May and the beginning of June, he headed to Europe for seven days of events, including bilateral visits⁴ in Italy, Vatican City, Germany, and England, as well as a NATO meeting in Belgium. After just over a month back in the United States, he returned to Europe in July for a nine-day journey composed of bilateral visits in Poland, Hungary, and the Netherlands, as well as a G-7 economic summit in France. Three months later, Bush headed to Costa Rica for two days in late October for a bilateral visit, and in early December he met with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev on the island of Malta, off the coast of Italy, before attending a NATO event in Brussels. To round out a busy first year of international travel, Bush met with French President Francois Mitterrand in the French West Indies in mid-December.

⁴ In this study, a bilateral visit refers to a presidential visit to a country the does not involve the leaders of a third country. Such visits are often but not always state visits.

Figure 3: Days of International Presidential Travel, First Year in Office



Source: Data compiled by the author from the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*

Table 2: Numbers of Countries Presidents Visited and Total International Visits, 1977-2005

	Carter	Reagan	GHW Bush	Clinton	GW Bush
Number of Countries Visited	26	27	37	75	40
Total International Visits (Includes Multiple Visits to Countries)	28	46	57	129	54

Source: Data compiled by the author from the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*

Clinton's first-year travel was far more limited than that of the man he succeeded in the White House. In April he spent two days in Vancouver, Canada, where he met with Russian President Boris Yeltsin. In July of that year he flew west to Asia for six days of events. He first attended a G-7 economic summit in Japan before continuing on to South Korea, where he met with that country's leaders and visited American troops stationed on the Korean peninsula.

George W. Bush made his first journey abroad in February 2001 to the ranch of Mexican President Vicente Fox for one day of meetings. In April, his second international trip took him to Quebec, Canada for three days for the Summit of the Americas. Two months later he flew to Europe for five days of events, including bilateral visits in Spain and Poland, a NATO meeting in Belgium, a European Union event in Sweden, and a summit in Slovenia with President Vladimir Putin of Russia. In July, Bush returned to Europe for a bilateral visit to England, a G-8 summit in Italy,⁵ and a visit to U.S. troops stationed in Kosovo. Bush rounded out a full first year abroad with an October journey to China for an APEC summit.

WHERE

Where do presidents travel abroad? Table 2 illustrates that the breadth and amount of international presidential travel have increased over the 28 years from Carter's inauguration through the end of George W. Bush's first term. With the exception of Clinton, who journeyed to 75 different countries, the rise has been steady from Carter's 26 countries to the 40 that George W. Bush visited. Reagan and Clinton each served as president for eight years, giving them more time to travel more broadly than the other three presidents, though Clinton did so to a much greater extent than did his fellow two-term president. The number of total international visits each president made, including multiple visits to the same country, displays a pattern that is quite similar, with a steady rise over time with the exception of Clinton's substantially higher total. These two measures taken together indicate that Carter rarely visited the same country more than once, as he made 28 visits abroad to 26 different countries, while the other presidents made repeated visits to certain countries much more frequently.

Which regions of the world have presidents traveled to most frequently? Table 3 indicates that collectively, 154 of the 314 visits to other countries, or 49 percent, of the international visits that these presidents made were to countries in Europe. Individually, each of the five presidents made over twice as many stops in European countries than they did in any other region, with Clinton leading the way with 65 visits. As these data reflect the total number of visits abroad, including multiple visits to the same country, Reagan's four journeys to Germany are counted four times in this table. Europe's place atop this list is an indication of the close political, economic, and military ties between the United States and many of the countries on the continent. It is also partly a function of the great number of countries on that continent; while the United States also has close ties to its neighbors in North America, there are only two large countries, Canada and Mexico, in the immediate vicinity.⁶

⁵ The addition of Russia in 1997 transformed the G-7 into the G-8.

⁶ Regional groupings were determined in large part according to categories established by the United Nations Statistics Division (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm>). The countries of eastern Europe, including Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and more, were included as part of Europe. While Russia spans both Europe and Asia, presidents uniformly visited cities in western Russia such as Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Table 3: Presidential Visits to Countries By Region, 1977-2005

Region	Carter	Reagan	GHW Bush	Clinton	GW Bush	Total
Europe	12	22	29	65	26	154
Asia	4	5	6	18	8	41
North America	1	10	7	7	7	32
Africa	4	0	1	13	5	23
Central America and the Caribbean	2	5	4	7	1	19
Middle East	3	0	2	11	3	19
South America	2	2	7	5	3	19
Pacific	0	2	1	3	1	7
Total	28	46	57	129	54	314

Source: Data compiled by the author from the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*

Asia ranks as the second-most visited region, even though this count excludes the countries in southwestern Asia that are grouped separately as being in the Middle East. Over time, the number of visits presidents have made to Asia has grown, with Clinton making over twice as many stops there as any of these other presidents. North America⁷ is the third most visited region. Clinton's seven visits to countries in North America during eight years in office show that he devoted substantially more attention to the rest of the world than he did to his immediate neighbors to the north and south.

In the aggregate, the five presidents made about the same number of visits to Africa, Central America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, and South America. Clinton made the most country visits in each of these regions with the exception of South America, where George H.W. Bush led with seven visits. The Pacific, which consists of Australia, New Zealand, and Guam, was the least visited region, with only seven total presidential stops. Some presidents never visited certain regions. Reagan did not journey to Africa and George H.W. Bush made only one stop there, a 1990 visit to Egypt. Reagan never visited the Middle East, and Carter did not travel to the countries of the Pacific.

Analysis of presidential destinations by country reveals both continuity and variation in the objects of presidential attention. Table 4 shows that only ten countries were visited by all five presidents in this study, indicating their enduring importance to the United States: Belgium, England, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, South Korea, Spain, and Vatican City. An additional eight countries were visited by four of these five presidents: Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Egypt, Poland, Portugal, and Switzerland. Of these 18 countries, ten are in Europe, three in Asia, two in North America, two in South America, and one in Africa.

Carter visited only two countries twice; the other 24 countries he traveled to as president each only received one visit. This record stands in contrast to that of his successors, who traveled both more broadly and more frequently. Reagan and Clinton, the two presidents whose two full terms are included in this study, were the only presidents to visit any country more than four times. Reagan made five separate trips to both Canada and Mexico, while Clinton made five trips to Canada, France, Italy, Japan, and Russia, and visited England and Germany six times apiece. Clinton stands out yet again for his peripatetic ways. He visited more countries by far than any other president in this study and journeyed to certain countries more times than these other presidents. Indeed, Clinton visited seven countries five or six times; collectively, the other four presidents in this study only visited five countries more than three times. Clinton's travels also took him to countries in the developing world more frequently than any other president in this time period.

⁷ In accordance with the United Nations categories, North America includes Canada, Mexico, and Bermuda, where George H.W. Bush met twice with British prime ministers. The countries of Central America and the Caribbean are included in a separate category.

Table 4: Countries Presidents Visited, By Number of Visits, 1977-2005

	Carter	Reagan	GHW Bush	Clinton	GW Bush	
Countries Visited Six Times				England Germany		
Countries Visited Five Times		Canada Mexico		Canada France Italy Japan Russia		
Countries Visited Four Times		Germany	Canada	Egypt Israel Switzerland	Mexico	
Countries Visited Three Times		England France	England France Germany	Bosnia-Herzegovina Ireland South Korea Ukraine	Canada France Italy Russia	
Countries Visited Two Times	Egypt Japan	Guam Italy Japan Vatican City	Belgium Bermuda Brazil Finland French West Indies Italy Japan Poland South Korea Soviet Union Vatican City	Hungary Jordan Mexico Northern Ireland Philippines Poland Spain	China England Poland	
Countries Visited Once	Austria Belgium Brazil England France Germany Guadeloupe India Iran Israel Italy Liberia Mexico Nigeria Panama Poland Portugal Saudi Arabia South Korea Spain Switzerland Vatican City Venezuela Yugoslavia	Barbados Belgium Brazil China Colombia Costa Rica Finland Grenada Honduras Iceland Indonesia Ireland Jamaica Portugal South Korea Soviet Union Spain Switzerland	Argentina Australia Chile China Colombia Costa Rica Czechoslovakia Egypt Greece Hungary Malta Mexico Netherlands Panama Saudi Arabia Singapore Spain Switzerland The Netherlands Turkey Uruguay Venezuela	Argentina Australia Bangladesh Barbados Belarus Belgium Botswana Brazil Brunei Darussalam Bulgaria Chile China Colombia Costa Rica Croatia Czech Republic Denmark El Salvador Finland Gaza Ghana Greece Guam Guatemala Haiti Honduras India Indonesia Kosovo Kuwait Latvia Macedonia	Morocco Netherlands New Zealand Nicaragua Nigeria Norway Pakistan Portugal Romania Rwanda Saudi Arabia Senegal Slovenia South Africa Syria Tanzania Thailand Turkey Uganda Vatican City Venezuela Vietnam	Australia Belgium Botswana Chile Colombia Czech Republic Egypt El Salvador Germany Indonesia Iraq Ireland Japan Kosovo Lithuania Nigeria Northern Ireland Peru Phillipines Portugal Qatar Romania Senegal Singapore Slovenia South Korea Spain Sweden Thailand Turkey Uganda Vatican City

Source: Data compiled by the author from the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*

Table 5: Categories of International Presidential Travel, 1977-2005

Nature of Visit	Carter	Reagan	GHW Bush	Clinton	GW Bush	Total Visits	Percentage
Bilateral Visit	19	32	37	82	35	205	64.9%
Bilateral Summit in a Third Country	2	2	7	2	1	14	4.4%
NATO Meeting	2	1	4	3	4	14	4.4%
European Union Meeting	1	1	1	4	2	9	2.8%
G-7/G-8 Summit	4	7	3	8	3	25	7.9%
APEC Meeting	0	0	0	5	2	7	2.2%
Middle East Peace Conference	0	0	1	4	0	5	1.6%
United Nations Event	0	0	1	1	1	3	0.9%
Other Multilateral/Regional Summit	1	3	3	14	6	27	8.5%
Non-governmental Conference	0	0	0	2	0	2	0.6%
Funeral	1	0	0	4	0	5	1.6%
Total	30	46	57	129	54	316	100.0%

Source: Data compiled by the author from the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*

FOR WHAT

Presidents travel internationally primarily to attend a wide range of bilateral and multilateral summits with other heads of state. Table 5 reveals that the majority of presidential trips abroad have been bilateral visits, which almost always involve meetings with the host country's head of state, and are often official state visits. Collectively, 65.5% of the visits that presidents made over this 28 year period were bilateral visits.⁸ The percentages of bilateral visits were fairly consistent across presidencies, ranging from a low of 63.3% for Carter to 69.6% for Reagan.

In most years, recent presidents have attended G-7 and G-8 summits, NATO summits, European Union meetings, APEC summits, and various regional summits. All of these events rotate location from year to year, and all but the European Union meetings⁹ sometimes take place in the United States. Many presidential trips for such a multilateral summit often also include several one-on-one meetings with individual heads of state. In addition to their meetings with foreign leaders, presidents often visit American troops stationed abroad as part of their many trips around the world.

Presidents have conducted bilateral summits in a third country with relative frequency, with an average of one every other year. Eight of the 14 such meetings in this study were with the leader of the Soviet Union or Russia, beginning with Carter in 1979 in Vienna, Austria, followed by Reagan's 1985 summit in Geneva Switzerland, and his 1986 summit in Reykjavik, Iceland. George H.W. Bush met with the Soviets in Malta in 1989, and again in Helsinki, Finland in 1990. Clinton continued this practice, meeting with the Russian president in 1993 in Vancouver, Canada, and again in Helsinki in 1997. George W. Bush held a summit with the president of Russia in 2001 in Slovenia. Additionally, Carter and George H.W. Bush each met with the president of Syria in Geneva. George H.W. Bush held two summits with the president of France in the French West Indies, as well as two summits with the prime minister of Great Britain in Bermuda.

About one in every 12 presidential visits abroad has been for the purpose of attending a multilateral or regional summit that is not one of the specific meetings referenced in Table 5. These events have included three Summits of the Americas, three Conferences on Security and Cooperation in Europe, two Central American summit meetings, a World Trade Organization meeting, and other gatherings of regional leaders in places such as Africa, the Caribbean, the Baltics, and Asia. Only Clinton traveled to a country for the sole public purpose of attending a non-governmental conference there, journeying twice to Switzerland, first for a meeting of the International Labor Organization, and another time to the meeting of the World Economic Forum. Presidents have rarely traveled to funerals in other countries, often sending the vice president or other representatives

⁸ The total of 316 visits in Table 5 exceeds the total of 314 in previous tables and figures because Carter attended both a NATO meeting and a European Union meeting during one visit and both a NATO meeting and a G-7 Summit during another; thus these two visits were counted under two separate categories.

⁹ European Union meetings include meetings of related bodies such as the European Commission and the European Parliament.

in their stead to head the American delegation. Carter journeyed to Japan to pay tribute to a deceased head of state, and Clinton did so for funerals in Israel, Jordan, Morocco, and Japan.

Presidents have occasionally planned an international journey to coincide with the anniversary of a major historical event. Several recent presidents have chosen to undertake a trip to France to commemorate the D-Day invasion of Normandy during World War II and have given memorable speeches atop the cliffs that Allied troops scaled in June 1944 after landing on the beaches below. The sixty-fifth anniversary of the June 6, 1944 invasion will take place in 2009.

International presidential travel increased substantially over the 28 years of this study, and the distribution of international travel within a president's term has varied. Recent presidents have embarked on more international journeys of shorter duration, on average, although four of the five presidents have made several trips that consist of more than a week of events abroad. Patterns of international travel during a president's first term have varied a great deal, illustrating both the personal priorities of each president and the nature of events that presidents attend abroad. Recent presidents have traveled more broadly, though Europe is still the most visited region. While almost half of all presidential visits abroad have been for bilateral visits, a series of multilateral summits are an important and regular part of a president's international travel.

DOMESTIC PRESIDENTIAL TRAVEL

WHEN

Presidents travel domestically far more frequently than they journey abroad, as they take trips around the country they lead in order to meet and communicate with the people they represent. A president has a great deal of discretion in deciding when, where, and for what to travel, and his allocation of the scarce resource of his time can reveal a great deal about his strategic priorities.

Table 6 shows that presidents have held public events outside of Washington, DC, Maryland, and Virginia with increasing frequency over the 28 years from January 1977 through January 2005. In his first term in office, George W. Bush spent well over twice as many days traveling domestically than did Jimmy Carter a quarter of a century earlier. The increase in days of domestic travel, as with international travel, has been fairly steady, with the notable exception of Reagan's less active second term. The numbers of public events that presidents have held while traveling domestically have risen in a similar manner, from Jimmy Carter's 385 in his single term in office to George W. Bush's 729 during his first four years as president.¹⁰ The average number of events per day of travel has stayed relatively constant over the last four presidents in this study; as domestic travel has increased in volume, it has not resulted in more presidential public events per day, on average.

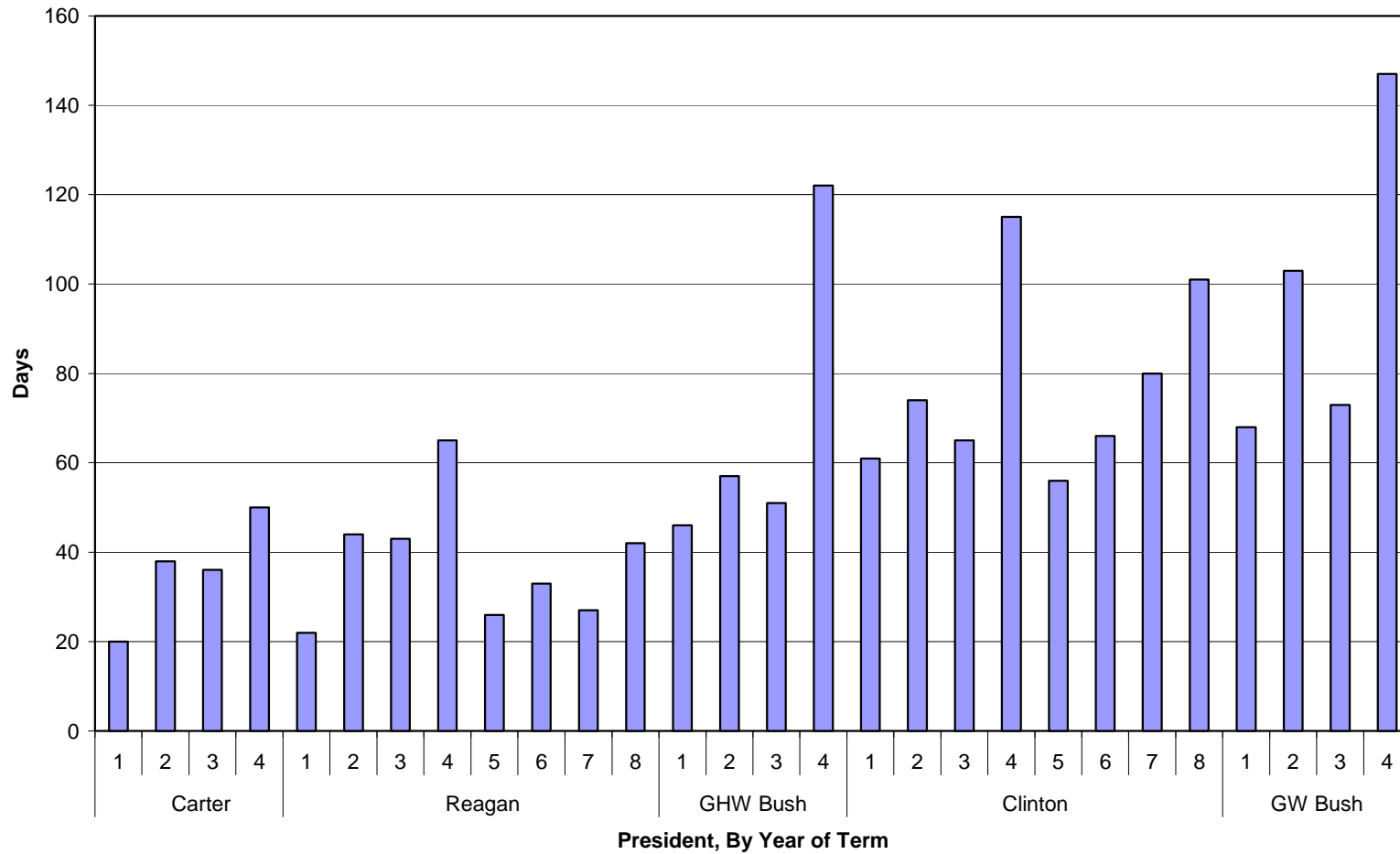
Table 6: Days Holding and Numbers of Presidential Domestic Non-DC Area Public Events, 1977-2005

	Carter	Reagan (First Term)	Reagan (Second Term)	GHW Bush	Clinton (First Term)	Clinton (Second Term)	GW Bush (First Term)	Total
Days Holding Non-DC Area Public Events	144	175	127	276	315	303	391	1731
Number of Non-DC Area Public Events	385	346	238	600	630	635	729	3563
Average Number of Events Per Day of Travel	2.7	2.0	1.9	2.2	2.0	2.1	1.9	2.1

Source: Data compiled by the author from the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*

¹⁰ The totals presented in Table 6 are slightly higher than those in previous publications by the author because those studies excluded the few events that these presidents held in the last 20 days of their term (January 1-20, 1981 for Carter, and so on). All domestic non-DC area public events in a president's term are included in this study.

Figure 4: Days Presidents Held Domestic Non-DC Area Public Events, 1977-2005



Source: Data compiled by the author from the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*

Analysis of domestic travel within a president's term reveals first term patterns that are consistent for each of the five presidents in this study. Figure 4 illustrates that the greatest numbers of presidential events in the states consistently take place in the reelection year, followed by the second year of a term, in which presidents frequently campaign and raise money for their co-partisans in the midterm elections, then the third year, and finally the first year in office. The figure also illustrates the dramatic increase in domestic travel over time, as Clinton and George W. Bush traveled more in their least active years than Carter did in his busiest year of travel.

As was the case for international travel, the second terms of the two presidents in the study who served two terms contrast dramatically. While Clinton maintained his high levels of events outside of the Washington area throughout his second term, Reagan's already lower levels declined, due in part, as noted above, to their contrasting ages. In the midst of the impeachment scandal, Clinton used domestic travel to help project images to the public of a president on the job, tending to the business of the American people. For both Reagan and Clinton, even in the second term when neither was seeking reelection, the final year in office saw the most domestic travel, when each president was working to elect his vice president to succeed him and Clinton was also striving to elect his wife to the U.S. Senate.

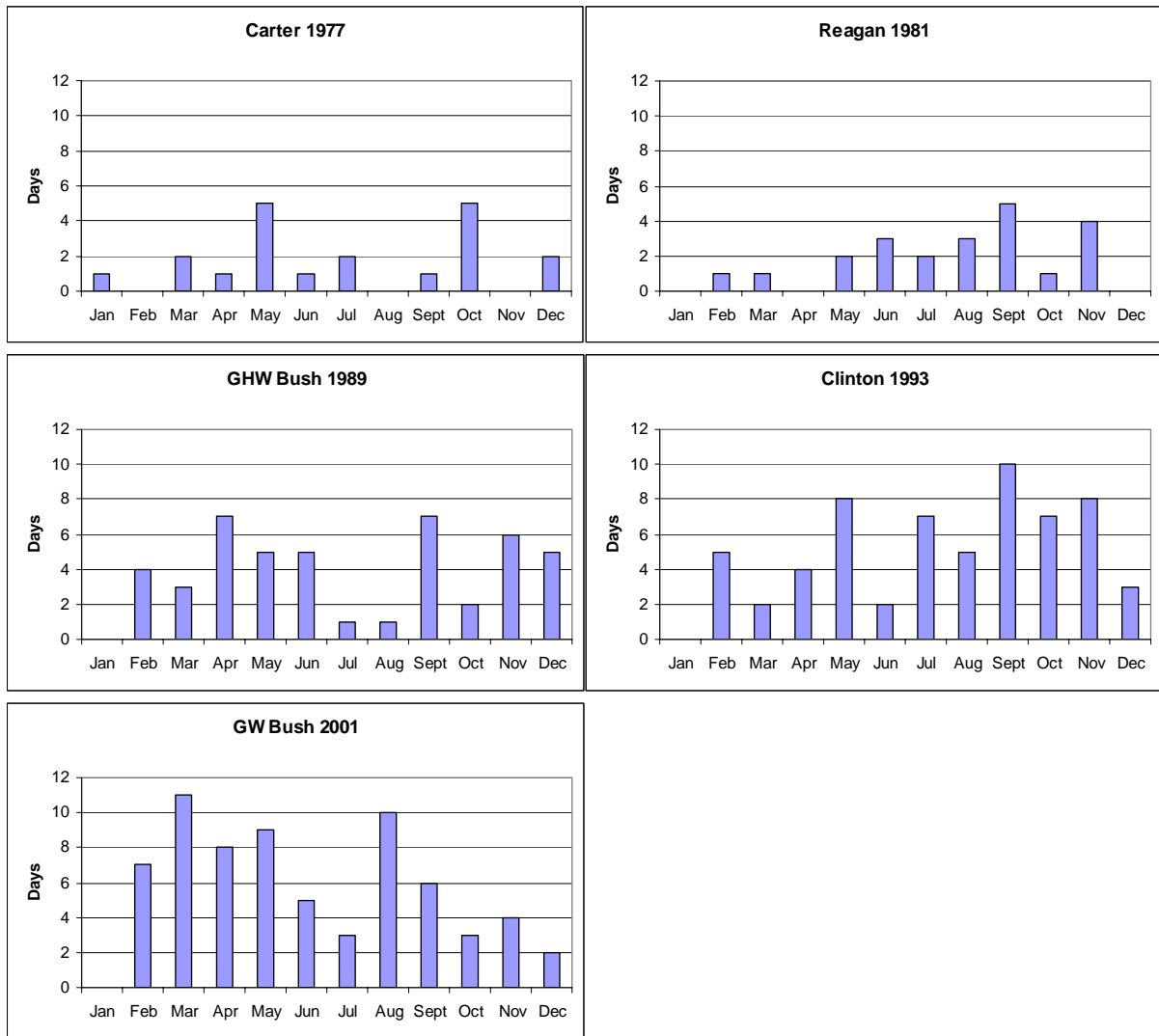
Examination of Figure 5, which depicts non-DC area domestic travel within the first year in office for each president, reveals much more activity than was the case for international travel. The three most recent presidents traveled more in their first year than the first two presidents in this study, and they undertook more expansive travel agendas earlier in the year. Carter did not have his first five-day travel month until May, and Reagan, who spend much of the spring and summer recovering from the attempt on his life, did not do so until September. George H.W. Bush, in contrast, held events on seven days in April, while Clinton and George W. Bush held events around the country on five and seven days, respectively, in February, their first full month as president. While Carter and Reagan each held non-DC area domestic events in nine of the 12 months of their first year in office, the three most recent presidents did so in every month of their first year except for January, when they were only in office for 12 days, beginning with their inauguration on January 20.

WHERE

How has domestic presidential travel been distributed geographically? Which states have presidents visited most and least? Figure 6 depicts the total number of days that presidents held domestic public events in each of the 48 states in this study between January 20, 1977 and January 20, 2005. The states are listed from left to right in order of their population in the 1990 Census, which fell at the midpoint of this study.

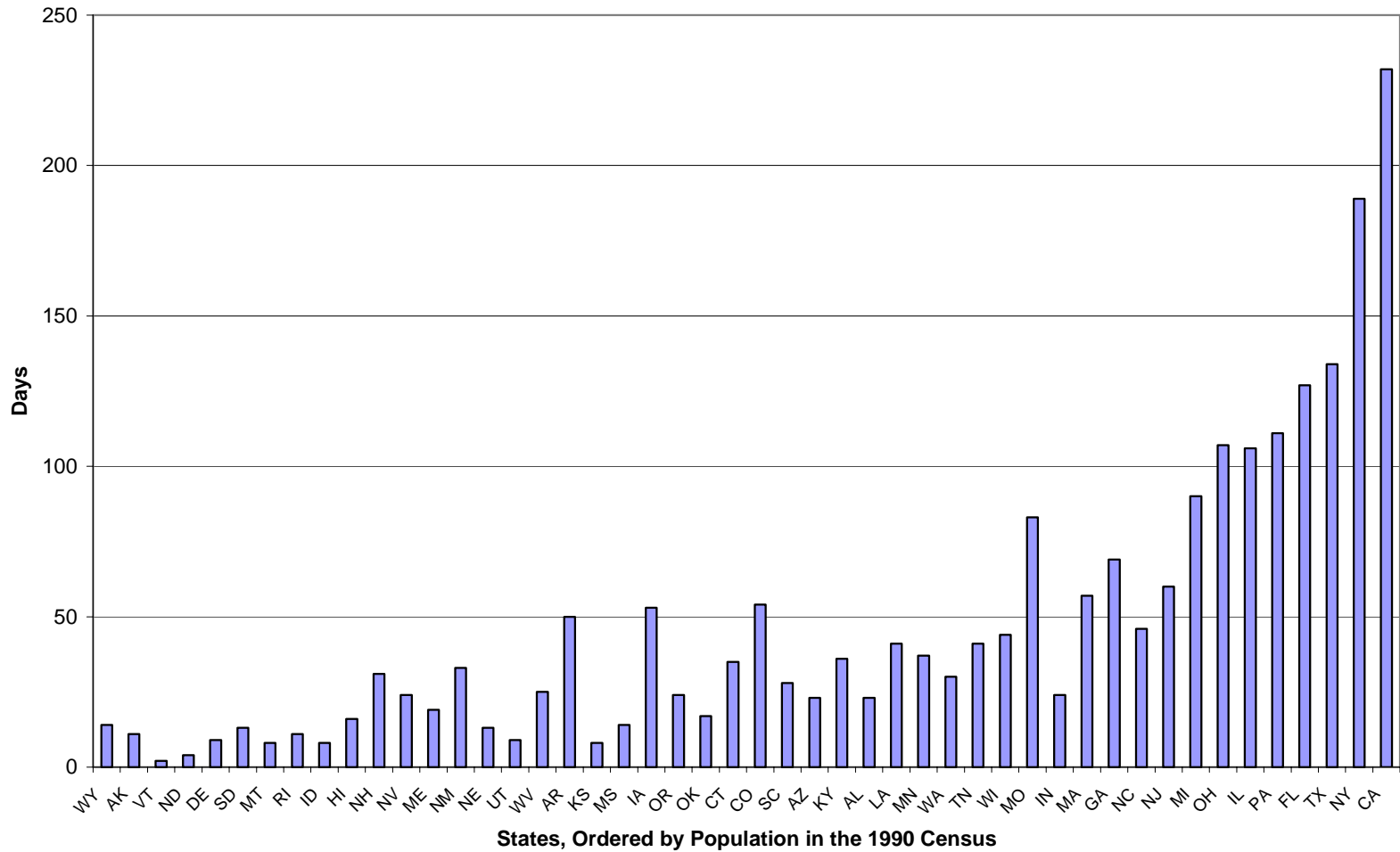
The clear trend is a relationship between the number of days holding events in a state and its population, as heavily populated states tend to get more attention from the president. Vermont, the third least populated state, is the least visited state, with presidential public events on just two days over 28 years, while California, the most populous state in the union, is the most visited, with events on 232 days. The eight most populated states – California, New York, Texas, Florida, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Ohio, and Michigan – are also the eight states that held the most days of presidential events. Unsurprisingly, presidents travel most often to states where greater numbers of people live.

Figure 5: Days Presidents Held Domestic Non-DC Area Public Events By Month, First Year in Office



Source: Data compiled by the author from the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*

Figure 6: Days Presidents Held Domestic Non-DC Area Public Events In Each State, 1977-2005



Source: Data compiled by the author from the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*, *United States Census (1990)*

Table 7: Non-DC Area Cities in Which Presidents Held the Most Public Events, 1977-2005

Carter		Reagan		GHW Bush		Clinton		GW Bush	
City	Public Events	City	Public Events	City	Public Events	City	Public Events	City	Public Events
New York	38	New York	41	Houston	30	New York	140	New York	28
Atlanta	12	Los Angeles	33	New York	28	Chicago	50	Milwaukee	12
Los Angeles	11	Chicago	24	Los Angeles	27	Los Angeles	44	St. Louis	12
Philadelphia	8	Atlanta	11	Chicago	19	Philadelphia	32	Atlanta	11
Boston	7	Dallas	10	Dallas	16	San Francisco	30	Columbus, OH	11
Cleveland	6	Houston	10	St. Louis	15	Houston	27	Little Rock	11
Portland, OR	5	Miami	10	Columbus, OH	13	Little Rock	25	Albuquerque	10
Chicago	5	New Orleans	10	Atlanta	10	Denver	24	Houston	10
Denver	5	Philadelphia	10	Philadelphia	9	Boston	23	Orlando	10
Detroit	5	Las Vegas	8	Miami	9	Atlanta	22	Chicago	9
Houston	5	St. Louis	8					Philadelphia	9
Kansas City	5							Pittsburgh	9
								Tampa	9

Source: Data compiled by the author from the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*

Which cities have presidents visited most? Table 7 reveals relative consistency among the top ten cities¹¹ in which the five presidents in this study held the most public events. New York was the leading city for four out of the five presidents, with the lone exception of George H.W. Bush, for whom New York was a close second. Five other cities were among the top ten for all five presidents: Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, New York, and Philadelphia. One other city, Los Angeles, was among the top ten for four of the five presidents. Across parties and over time, these five presidents tended to hold the most public events in many of the same places.

Individual priorities for presidents are reflected in this table as well. Atlanta ranked second for the Georgia native Carter, and Los Angeles was second for the Californian Reagan. George H.W. Bush held the most events in his home-state city of Houston, while Little Rock ranked seventh for Clinton and Houston was tied for seventh for the former Texas governor George W. Bush. Clinton's propensity to travel more than his predecessors can be seen in this table as well, as his 140 events in New York during his eight years in office ranked far above the top cities for the other four presidents, even when taking to account that the data for three of them represent only four years of travel. This high level of activity is in part explained by his purchase of a home in New York late in his term in advance of his wife's campaign to represent that state in the U.S. Senate.

While recent presidents have spent more time in the larger states and have consistently visited a similar group of cities most frequently, analysis of presidential attention to the most electorally competitive states reveals an interesting dynamic. Table 8 displays the percentage of first term presidential events held in states won or lost by five percent or less in the past election, and juxtaposes those values with the percentage of the U.S. population living in those states.¹²

¹¹ In case of a tie, more than ten cities are listed.

¹² As this analysis focuses on first term activity in electorally competitive states, events during the last 20 days of a president's term in a year when a successor takes over have been removed from the analysis for this table. As most presidents traveled little in their final 20 days in office, this does not result in the loss of much data. Thus, the title of Table 8 indicates that the period covered is 1977-2004, instead of 2005, as the first 20 days of January 2005 are excluded.

Table 8: Percentage of First Term Non-DC Area Presidential Public Events in States Won or Lost by 5% or less in the Prior Presidential Election, Compared to the Percentage of the U.S. Population in Those States, 1977-2004

President	Year of First Term				Percentage of U.S. Population* in These States
	1	2	3	4	
Carter	56.4%	39.6%	61.1%	65.4%	60.0%
Reagan	20.0%	19.8%	30.6%	22.4%	26.8%
GHW Bush	34.5%	34.6%	38.9%	29.0%	38.5%
Clinton	18.1%	27.3%	27.1%	33.0%	30.7%
GW Bush	38.0%	39.7%	35.2%	67.1%	27.0%

*Note: This refers to the population of the 48 states in this study.

Source: Data compiled by the author from the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*, *Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections*, United States Census (1970, 1980, 1990, 2000)

George W. Bush is the president who stands out in this analysis. Although only 27% of the population lived in states which he won or lost by five percent or less in the prior presidential election, he held 38.0%, 39.7%, 35.2%, and 67.1% of his events in those states in each year of his first term, respectively. In contrast, of the other four presidents, in 11 of these 16 years, they actually held a lower percentage of their public events in these states than the states' populations would have justified, and in no year was the difference between the percentage of events they held and the percentage of the population in those states greater than 5.4%. The disproportionate emphasis that George W. Bush placed on targeting states he narrowly won or lost in the 2000 presidential election throughout his first term in office stands in sharp contrast to the patterns of his predecessors.

While the most recent president in this study have devoted more effort to targeting key electoral states, the geographic breadth of presidential travel during a president's first term has increased substantially over the 28 year period covered by this study. Table 9 provides the number of states visited by each president in each year of his first term, and shows that later presidents have traveled much more broadly than earlier presidents. With increasing levels of travel over time has also come increased breadth of travel.

Carter, after a limited scope of travel in his first year, visited a close-to-equal number of states in each of the next three years. Reagan had a low total of states visited in the first year of his term, much of which he spent recovering from a March 1981 assassination attempt, then visited 25 states in both his second and third years, before traveling to 31 states in his reelection year. George H.W. Bush's scope of travel was relatively consistent over his four years in office, with slight increases in his second and fourth years. Bill Clinton visited 30 states in each of his first two years, dropped down to 25 states in his third year, and had the broadest range of travel of any of these presidents in his reelection year, when he visited 40 states. George W. Bush, like his father, traveled to a relatively consistent number of states throughout each year of his first term, ranging between 33 and 36. Over time, the breadth of domestic travel has grown, both in each corresponding year of a president's first term and on average, rising from 25.25 states for Jimmy Carter to 34.25 for George W. Bush. President Clinton and both Presidents Bush held public events in over 31 states per year, on average, with the current office holder leading the way.

Table 9: Number of States Hosting First Term Presidential Non-DC Area Public Events, 1977-2005

President	Year of First Term				Average Per Year
	1	2	3	4	
Carter	18	29	26	28	25.25
Reagan	12	25	25	31	23.25
GHW Bush	30	33	31	36	32.5
Clinton	30	30	25	40	31.25
GW Bush	34	36	33	34	34.25

Source: Data compiled by the author from the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*

Table 10: Days Presidents Spent at Camp David, at Second Homes, and on Vacation, 1977-2005

	Carter	Reagan	GHW Bush	Clinton	GW Bush
Days at Camp David	376	517	65	173	274
Days at a Second Home or on "Vacation"	97	335	174	174	323

Source: Data provided by Mark Knoller of CBS News, the Carter Presidential Library, the George H.W. Bush Presidential Library,¹³ and the Clinton Presidential Library¹⁴

While the analysis above explores some of the dynamics of when and where presidents hold public events around the country, the *Public Papers of the Presidents* do not fully capture time spent at the most common destinations for presidents when they leave Washington, as they hold relatively few public events at these places: the presidential retreat in northwest Maryland called Camp David and, for those presidents who have one, a second home. Drawing on data provided by Mark Knoller of CBS News, the Carter Presidential Library, the George H.W. Bush Presidential Library, and the Clinton Presidential Library, Table 10 presents the number of days that each of the presidents in this study spent at Camp David, at second homes, and on vacation at another location.

It is important to note that a president is never truly on vacation. No matter where he goes, a president must always be on the job, tending to critical affairs of state, whether he be at the White House, on Air Force One, at Camp David, at a second home, or in another location, taking a break from some but not all of the duties of the job. The press briefing room at the Crawford ranch includes a sign bearing the name "Western White House," likely at least in part to contest journalists' and comedians' assertions that the president's lengthy stays there are vacations. While presidents are at work no matter where they are, it is also worth noting that presidents cannot always accomplish the same goals remotely that they can while in Washington. In the midst of the crisis in the Republic of Georgia in August 2008, George W. Bush delayed a trip to his ranch in Crawford so that he could communicate face to face with key advisors in Washington (Perino 2008).

George H.W. Bush frequently held events at his home in Kennebunkport, Maine, just as George W. Bush did at his ranch in Crawford, Texas. Both Bushes used their private homes as an extension of the White House, often meeting with foreign leaders there or conducting other affairs of state. Ronald Reagan spent a great deal of time at Rancho del Cielo, his California home near Santa Barbara, California, but, unlike the Bushes, rarely held public events there. Carter and Clinton had no equivalent second home. Carter took vacation trips both to visit family in Plains, Georgia, and to locations around the country. Clinton embarked on a family trip each summer, journeying six times to the island of Martha's Vineyard and twice to Wyoming.

Reagan is the clear leader in days at Camp David, spending all or part of 517 days there during his eight years in office. Had Carter served a second term, his total numbers might have rivaled Reagan's, and George W. Bush's 274 days there in his first term put him on pace to exceed the time Reagan spent there by the time his full two terms are complete. Indeed, according to Mark Knoller, Bush had made 142 visits there, spending all or part of 450 days at the presidential retreat as of July 23, 2008. While presidents do go to Camp David to relax at times, it is often very much a working retreat where presidents can take the time to think about bigger-picture or longer-term issues, meet with staff, or even foreign leaders. To date, according to Knoller, George W. Bush has hosted foreign leaders there 17 occasions. Perhaps most famously, Camp David was the site of the peace negotiations between the Israelis and the Egyptians in the late 1970s.

While Reagan again leads in the number of days spent at a second home or otherwise on vacation with 335 days during his eight years in office, George W. Bush's 323 days spent either at his

¹³ The numbers provided by the George H.W. Bush Presidential Library are estimates, and not exact counts, of the days that President Bush spent at his home in Kennebunkport and at Camp David.

¹⁴ Mark Knoller of CBS News provided the data on Carter's days at Camp David, Reagan's days at Camp David and at his ranch or on vacation, Clinton's days on vacation, and George W. Bush's days at Camp David, at his ranch, and at his parent's home in Kennebunkport. The Carter Library provided the data on Carter's time in Plains, Georgia or otherwise on vacation. The George H.W. Bush Library provided estimates of the number of days Bush spent at Camp David and in Kennebunkport. The Clinton Library provided the data on the number of days Clinton spent at Camp David.

Crawford ranch or at his parents' house in Kennebunkport, Maine during his first four years in office put him on pace to be at the head of this category. As of July 23, 2008, again according to Mark Knoller, Bush had spent all or part of 466 days at his ranch, plus all or part of 39 days in Kennebunkport, demonstrating the frequency with which a modern president performs the duties of his office remotely.

FOR WHAT

Presidents travel domestically for a myriad of reasons – to advance their own reelection interests, to raise funds, to support their fellow party members, to exert pressure on recalcitrant legislators, to promote their policy agenda or achievements in a setting outside the nation's capital, to attend ceremonial events, to respond to natural disasters or other crises, to influence public opinion, to meet with key leaders or organized interests, to see the people they represent, or simply to get out of Washington.

While chronicling and exhaustively categorizing the many types of events a president holds around the country is beyond the scope of this study, there are a number of recurring patterns of events throughout a president's term in office. For example, after the president delivers the annual State of the Union address in January or February, he often embarks on a trip to highlight the themes and policy priorities he sounded in his speech to the Congress. For example, after giving his penultimate State of the Union address on January 19, 1999, Clinton made speeches to the communities in Norristown, Pennsylvania and Buffalo, New York the following day. On January 29, 2003, George W. Bush journeyed to Grand Rapids, Michigan, where he told a crowd of local citizens why presidents travel regularly after giving a State of the Union address. "I want to share some of my thoughts about that speech I gave last night. It's important for me to come to parts of our country and explain why I said what I said, so that you and others around our country clearly understand some things about the country and the problems we face" (*Public Papers of the Presidents* 2003).

Each spring, the president traditionally addresses at least three college commencement ceremonies, including one private college or university, one public civilian college or university, and one of the military service academies. Presidents, of course, have great discretion about which schools they address. In the spring of 1989, George H.W. Bush delivered commencement addresses at five schools: Texas A&M University, Alcorn State University, Mississippi State University, Boston University, and the United States Coast Guard Academy.

Each August, presidents traditionally leave Washington for a family vacation, which, as discussed above, is often a working vacation. In 1978, Carter spent a week during August in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The following year, he took a week-long cruise on the Mississippi River aboard the Delta Queen. Clinton made trips in 1993 and 1994 to Martha's Vineyard in August, before going to Jackson Hole, Wyoming and the nearby national parks in 1995 and 1996. During each year of his second term, he and his family spent time once again in Martha's Vineyard during August. Reagan and both Bushes each spent much of most Augusts during their presidencies at their homes in California, Maine, and Texas, respectively.

At any time of year, but especially during the summer and fall hurricane season, presidents travel around the country to respond to disasters, natural and human-made, including hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, wildfires, volcanoes and more. While any individual event is difficult to predict, patterns do seem to recur, as some disasters tend to be seasonal. For example, George H.W. Bush journeyed to South Carolina in September 1989 after Hurricane Hugo struck, and then to Florida in August 1992 in response to Hurricane Andrew. In September 1999, Clinton traveled to North Carolina following Hurricane Floyd, and in 2005, George W. Bush journeyed to Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Whether it is the eruption of Mount St. Helens, the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island, or the terrorist attacks in Oklahoma City, a good deal of presidential travel involves responding when disaster strikes.

Each September or October, presidents usually travel to New York to address the General Assembly of the United Nations. Additionally, presidents often travel around the country on the

patriotic national holidays of Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, and Veterans Day, as well as on the anniversaries of key events in American history, such as the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 and the attacks of September 11, 2001. Presidents frequently travel to varying locations to attend the national conferences of key groups or constituencies, including the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Baptist Convention, and the National Governors Association. While many states are presidential destinations in and of themselves, others are often merely way stations. Most presidential visits to Hawaii and Alaska are brief and occur during stopovers as presidents journey to and from Asia.

Presidents spend a great deal of time on the road campaigning for themselves and their co-partisans during even-numbered years when congressional and presidential elections take place. Previous research has found that the amount of presidential fundraising events has increased over time, and that between 1977 and 2004 approximately one in every five presidential events outside of Washington, DC, Maryland, and Virginia was a political fundraiser. Additionally, one in every three such presidential events was either a fundraiser or another event held within 30 miles of a fundraiser on the same, previous, or next day, demonstrating the frequency with which presidents dedicate themselves to raising funds while they travel (Doherty 2007).

Presidents often visit military installations around the country to meet with the men and women in uniform and thank them for their service, while at the same time projecting an image of the president as a strong and effective leader by emphasizing their role as commander-in-chief, and thus as the principal defender of our nation. From 1977 through 2004, an average of 5.5% of all presidential events outside the Washington, DC area took place in a military setting (Doherty 2008).

Domestic presidential travel has increased substantially over time, and is largely concentrated in major cities in the most populous states. With growing levels of travel over time has also come increased breadth of travel, as recent presidents travel to more states per year than their predecessors used to. The most recent president in this study paid particular attention to the states that he narrowly won or lost in the 2000 election, in contrast with his four predecessors. All five presidents spent substantial amounts of time at Camp David, at a second home, or on vacation. Presidents travel around the country for a wide range of purposes, ranging from meeting with the men and women in uniform to raising money for the next political campaign.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Presidents will always have many more demands on their time than they can possibly fulfill. Presidential journeys require a particularly substantial investment of time and energy on the part of the president himself and his staff, but can also yield great dividends as the president travels to countries around the world and different regions of the United States to meet with other leaders and key constituencies, promote his policy agenda, and much more. Doing so helps the president to achieve various concrete goals, while at the same time helping to shape his public image as president.

Over the past quarter century, recent presidents have traveled more than their predecessors did, both internationally and domestically, and have done so more frequently and journey to a wider range of destinations. Most often, their travel abroad takes them to Europe and their travel at home takes them to a relatively constant set of cities in the most populated states. They travel abroad for bilateral visits and to attend a relatively regular series of multilateral conferences around the world. At home, they traverse the fifty states for a plethora of reasons and a dizzying array of events.

The precedents set by the past five presidents of the United States will in part shape the choices made by the nation's next chief executive. While each president and his staff have a great deal of discretion when it comes to deciding how to allocate the president's time, heads of state around the world, leaders within the United States, and the American people expect to see the president in person for events ranging from G-8 summits to meetings of the National Governors Association and personal responses in the aftermath of natural disasters. It is up to each president to forge his own

path, using the experiences of previous presidents as points of reference as he sees fit, as he decides when, where, and for what to travel.

REFERENCES

- Allen, Mike. May 20, 2002. "On the Way to the Fundraiser; Stopovers Let Bush Charge Taxpayers for Political Trips." *The Washington Post*, p. A1.
- Allen, Mike. March 5, 2004. "Bush Capitalizes On Travel Bargain; President Uses Air Force One for Price of 1st Class." *The Washington Post*, p. A21.
- Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections*. [Http://www.uselectionatlas.org/](http://www.uselectionatlas.org/).
- Babcock, Charles R. December 31, 1991. "Campaigning via Air Force One: Public Foots Much of Bill." *The Washington Post*, p. A15.
- Babcock, Charles R. October 19, 1992. "Flying Political Class on Air Force One; Commercial Rates Make Every Trip an Incumbent Advantage." *The Washington Post*, p. A19.
- Doherty, Brendan J. 2007. "The Evolution of the Permanent Campaign: Presidential Travel, Fundraising, and the Electoral College," Presented at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting.
- Doherty, Brendan J. 2008. "Presidential Image and the Military," in Derek S. Reveron and Judith Stiehm, eds., *Inside Defense: Current Controversies in U.S. Civil Military Relations*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- George H.W. Bush Presidential Library. July 29- 31, 2008. Personal communication.
- Jimmy Carter Presidential Library. July 30, 2008. Personal communication.
- Knoller, Mark. July 23-30, 2008. Personal communication.
- Milbank, Dana. October 29, 2002. "The Cost of Presidential Travel is Anyone's Guess." *The Washington Post*, p. A19.
- Nakashima, Ellen. August 18, 2000. "White House Travel Bill: \$292 Million; Republican Senator Says Clinton's Air Transport Expenses Are 'Exorbitant.'" *The Washington Post*, p. A2.
- Perino, Dana. August 14, 2008. White House Press Briefing. Available online at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/08/20080814-4.html>
- Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*. 1997-2004. Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office. Available online at: www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws;
- United Nations Statistics Division. [Http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm).
- United States Census. 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000. www.census.gov.
- Walsh, Edward. November 9, 1977. "U.S. Spent Over \$100,000 on Trip Carter Postponed." *The Washington Post*, p. A2.
- William J. Clinton Presidential Library. July 31, 2008. Personal communication.

THE WHITE HOUSE TRANSITION PROJECT



WHERE TO GET HELP

At this time, few in the public and private policy apparatus have anything like the substantial information resources necessary to understand the appointments process, to balance the tension between nominees, those charged with governing, and those charged with protecting them. While many have opinions about reforming the process, few have taken into account all of the forces involved and few have the information resources at their command to find useful, finely tuned reforms.

In the academic community, some research has focused on the confirmation side of the appointments process but its data resources suffer from having only a partial view of the process and, hence, cannot easily assign the right weights to the various forces involved (see McCarty and Razaghian).

Those interested in reform can avail themselves of three useful resources, however. First, the White House Transition Project maintains an analytic capacity associated with its *Nomination Forms Online* software program. Intended to further the development of useful software to assist nominees, WHTP archives hold a detailed assessment of nominee inquiries. Its website, whitehousetransitionproject.org, contains many of these reports.

Second, the Department of Agriculture maintains a substantial resource in its programming unit, capable of bringing considerable expertise to bear on any project to assist nominees in filing out forms.

Finally, the collective experiences of White House Counsels and White House Directors of Presidential Personnel provide a useful compendium of observations on the demands of the personnel system. Many of these observations appear in the briefing books on these two offices developed in 2000 by the White House Transition Project and available through its website, whitehousetransitionproject.org and its publication *The White House World*.

THE WHITE HOUSE TRANSITION PROJECT



WHAT WHTP DOES

The White House Transition Project unites the efforts of academic institutions with those of the policy community and private philanthropy into a consortium dedicated to smoothing the transfer of governing essential to a functioning American republic. It manages two related programs, one on institutional memory and best practices and one on presidential appointments. In both programs, the White House Transition Project brings to bear the considerable analytic resources of the world-wide academic community interested in the viability of democratic institutions on those problems identified as critical by those experienced hands who have held the unique responsibilities for governing. As such, the White House Transition Project brings ideas to bear on action.

The White House Interview Program

A common problem of the democratic transfer of power, the White House has no mechanism for maintaining an “institutional memory” of best practices, of common mistakes, and needed background information. Partisanship and growing complexity of the selection process exacerbate the natural tendency to avoid passing from one administration to the next the vital experiences necessary to carry on governing from one administration to the next. The lack of an institutional memory, then, literally turns the hallmark of the American constitutional system, its peaceful transfer of power, into a breathe-taking gamble. The White House Interview Program bridges the gaps between partisanship and experience by providing a conduit for those who have borne the extraordinary responsibilities to pass on their judgments to those who will enter the American nerve center. Its briefing materials compile these lessons from the practitioners with the long-view of academics familiar with executive organizations and operational dynamics. Provided to the transition planners for the national presidential campaigns and then to the president-elect’s newly appointed management team, these materials provide a range of useful perspectives from those who have held the same positions and faced the same problems that they cannot get on their own or from government resources.

Nomination Forms Online Program

Detailing the complex problems involved in nominating and then confirming presidential appointments, the WHTP’s Nomination Forms Online program provides the best available expertise on the nomination and confirmation process. Its software, *NFO*, constitutes the only fully-functional, open-architecture, completely reusable software for making sense of the morass of government questions that assail presidential nominees. In one place, this software presents nominees with all of the some 6,000 questions they may confront. Provided free as a public service by WHTP, *NFO* prompts nominees for needed information and then distributes and customizes answers to all of the forms and into all the questions that the nominee must answer on a subject.

HOW TO HELP SMOOTH THE NEXT PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION

Originally funded by grants from the Pew Charitable Trusts, WHTP manages its operations with the help of private philanthropy. To assist in that effort, please contact WHTP at WHTP@unc.edu.