EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH JOHN A. FARRELL

July 13, 2006
Washington, D.C.

Interviewers

Stephen F. Knott
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TRANSCRIPT

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Knott: Do you have any questions about how this works?

Farrell: No. I think I've read enough of them on the other end. I guess the only question I have is how soon will it be available for researchers?

Knott: We've probably got another four or five years to go before any of this material is open. That would be the absolute soonest, and I'd be amazed if that takes place at that point. So, you're looking at at least four or five years.

Farrell: I was actually hoping the sooner the better.

Knott: Generally we try to release all the material at once, so it's unlikely it would be before that.

Farrell: OK. No problem. Again, I'm speaking from the perspective of a researcher. I'm researching a book right now that involves a court case that took place in 1931, and the files will be opened in 2011. That's the kind of frustrating thing that we run across.

Knott: Why don't we start? Thanks again for agreeing to do this. I think the best place to start would be if you could just tell us a little bit about yourself and your career in journalism and as a writer.

Farrell: I'm John Aloysius Farrell, IV, which should indicate that I have a strong Irish-American background. I don't remember opposing pictures of the Sacred Heart and John F. Kennedy on our walls at home, but one of the strongest political memories I have was of my mother's passion and support for John F. Kennedy in 1960. In my own book I put a footnote about how, in 1960 when I was growing up on Long Island in New York, you would get what were called "Kennedy quarters." People would take quarters and on George Washington they would use red nail polish to give him a cardinal's hat and cloak to intimate that this is what was going to happen to the American currency if a Roman Catholic was elected.

Even though I never, as far as I know, have faced any kind of prejudice for being an Irish American or a Catholic, I went into my relationship with Senator Kennedy having very warm

feelings for John F. Kennedy. I remember the inaugural when I would have been eight. That was a big deal in our house. When I was 15 and was beginning to think very much about the war and the civil rights era, it was 1968 and that was when Bobby [Robert Francis Kennedy] ran for President. At the beginning of that campaign, I had thought that he was too ruthless and that he was stealing something that Eugene McCarthy had won. But by the time that he was killed in Los Angeles, he had totally won me over, and I think that that campaign and the suffering he showed in his face, in particular, was very inspirational, not just to tail-end baby boomers like myself, but even to those who came afterwards. I remember talking to George Stephanopoulos about this and saying that the great divide in the Democratic Party was, were you a McCarthy kid or were you a Bobby kid, and him sort of smiling and saying, "I know exactly what you're talking about, and I was a Bobby kid."

I got into newspapers after graduating from the University of Virginia in 1975. I started out in Montgomery County, Maryland, selling ads and covering high school sports at night, and got my first job in Anne Arundel County, which is the county that surrounds Annapolis, Maryland, for a weekly paper and then a daily paper. Then I went to Baltimore and I was, for a while, the national political correspondent for the *Baltimore News-American*, which was a Hearst afternoon paper and is no longer with us.

The first time I met Senator Kennedy was when he was running for President in 1980. The first time I met him, frankly, I was very disappointed because he came in and it was one event in a long schedule. By the time the Maryland primary came along—it probably would have been in April or May, late in the year—the handwriting was on the wall. He had a slim chance, but it still looked like [Jimmy] Carter was going to hold on. He was distracted and inarticulate.

The next time I met him, which was in 1991, I also didn't have a great impression. I introduced myself in the halls outside of a committee hearing as the new Massachusetts delegation reporter for the *Boston Globe*. He sort of dismissed me and waved me away and said that his staff would get me the quote, meaning that he didn't have time to talk to me, that they would turn out a canned quote and send it over to the bureau. I never really had a deep, passionate hatred for him like a lot of people developed after Chappaquiddick, but entering into our relationship when I covered the delegation for the *Globe*, I was certainly skeptical and not at all in awe of him.

I had gone from Baltimore to Denver and came to the *Globe* in 1987 and worked in New Hampshire; in Boston on the investigative team; and came down to the bureau in Washington in August, 1990. For about a year, I was a general assignment reporter in the bureau and didn't have a constant contact with him, but then I became the delegation reporter. When you're the delegation reporter for the *Boston Globe*, you have a lot of contact with Kennedy and his staff, and that's probably where your questions should begin. I later went on to write a book about Tip O'Neill and did a lot of research about the relationship between O'Neill and Kennedy, but as far as my personal experience, it sort of begins in 1991.

Knott: Would you mind starting off talking a little bit about that relationship between O'Neill and Kennedy?

Farrell: One of the great pleasures of writing the book on Tip O'Neill was seeing both the

Kennedy camps and the O'Neill camps squirm when you asked them questions about each other, because it was obviously one of the great under-the-surface—rivalry is probably too strong a word because they never actually ran against each other, but it was a strong dynamic throughout all of Tip's life. When the Kennedys showed up on the scene after World War II, Jack ran in Tip's Cambridge district and always overshadowed him. Tip had a chance to be the next generation's Irish-American political leader in Massachusetts, except that the Kennedys leapfrogged him.

Tip was college-educated, which was unusual for somebody from his working-class background, at Boston College. He fit very well into a new generation of Irish-American leaders in the 1930s and 1940s in Massachusetts, whom you couldn't call reformers and you couldn't call stylistic. You could call them liberal but you'd have to call them lunch-bucket liberals rather than foreign policy liberals. These were guys who either came home from war or worked their way up through the system like Tip and would have changed the direction of Massachusetts politics slowly if Joe Kennedy's sons had not come back to Massachusetts and decided that they were going to tremendously accelerate that process and had found that the electorate was ready for them.

Tip wasn't from the [James Michael] Curley gang; he wasn't a real old-fashioned guy. He had the tint of a reformer to him. He was college-educated. He had taken brave stands as early as the late 1920s against the Communist red scare. When the Kennedys came in, particularly when Jack Kennedy came into that Cambridge district and announced that he was going to run for Congress against one of Tip's close allies, he and his pals felt that the Kennedys were rich, spoiled, and hadn't waited their turn. On the other hand, as the Kennedys proved successful over the years at both wholesale and retail politics, Tip and others like him grew to very much admire them, and by the time JFK became elected President, Tip was a 100 percent convert and in fact, his great complaint during the New Frontier was that he couldn't get in to see Kennedy enough. Here he had taken Jack Kennedy's seat with Jack Kennedy's help and was the Congressman from the President's district. The younger group of aides, Kenny O'Donnell and others, still saw Tip as too old-fashioned, too fuddy-duddy, and he didn't fit in with the New Frontier scene and they sort of kept him away.

Of the three Kennedys, Tip's relationship with Bobby was the worst because Bobby was the enforcer. Even as late as the McCarthy campaign, I think that Tip resented Bobby for exploiting McCarthy's near-win in New Hampshire. Teddy was always somebody who, having the greatest small "p" political skills in the family, Tip could understand the most and get along with the best. They had, of course, certain lifestyle differences in that Ted was wildly rich and Tip was middle class. Tip was Boston College and Ted was Harvard, but there was a good connection there and I think that over the years, the two of them grew closer and got along better, and a lot of that earlier resentment fell away. When Tip grew into his own stature as Majority Leader and then Speaker of the House, I don't know that the Kennedy staff and clan and Massachusetts circle ever acknowledged that to Tip's satisfaction. But I would say, based on my conversations with Tip's family and aides and Teddy, that that relationship grew warmer, as you can expect it would, each one of them needing an ally in the other House.

The Carter–Kennedy race in 1979 and '80 really put Tip on the spot because by that time he was

a national leader of the party. He was Speaker of the House. He had a Democratic President whom he had worked with. Probably his personal relationships with Teddy and Jimmy Carter were about the same in terms of warmth and feelings of disappointment. I think that Tip saw Chappaquiddick through the eyes of working and middle-class Massachusetts Catholics, who were probably much more disgusted with it than Beacon Hill or Brookline Democrats.

Knott: Did O'Neill indicate this to you? Did he talk to you about it?

Farrell: No. Tip was dead when I began the book. He had died about five months before, and it was the fact that his papers had gone to Boston College and were now opened to researchers that prompted me to do the book. But his aides certainly did, particularly Kirk O'Donnell and to a lesser extent Chris Matthews. Somewhere—I couldn't tell you exactly where, maybe at Boston College—there are transcripts of oral histories, maybe at the Kennedy Library, where Tip actually says this, where he told Teddy that he shouldn't run because he would never get past Chappaquiddick.

Nineteen seventy-nine and '80 presented a big dilemma to Tip, and Carter very shrewdly gave Tip a way out of it by asking him to be the chair of the National Convention, thus giving Tip two fig leaves, because he was Speaker of the House and chairman, and had to remain neutral. There was no way that if Tip O'Neill was really a close, lifelong ally with good feelings about the Kennedys that he would have stayed neutral in that race. To a certain extent it was practical; it got Tip out of a rough spot. But it was also payback.

Knott: Have you heard at all whether Kennedy resented this? Any comments on his part about O'Neill's neutrality?

Farrell: I'm going by memory. I think in my interviews with Teddy for the book, he said that he didn't resent it, that he understood Tip's position. Everybody else that I ever spoke to said that that was to cover up a wound that still hurt, I mean, not a wound that hurt in that Teddy went to bed thinking he'd been stabbed in the back, but an irritation and a recognition that this is somebody who, for both political reasons and philosophical reasons, should have been in his camp and wasn't.

Knott: So the bad blood really dates back to John F. Kennedy's running for Congress and pushing aside this ally of O'Neill's in '46?

Farrell: Yes.

Knott: Who was the ally of O'Neill's?

Farrell: Mike Neville. Tip said that Jack Kennedy and Dave Powers came to him and said, "Be with us *sub rosa*." Tip loved to drop those Latin phrases in every once in a while. He said, "I can't even be with you *sub rosa*, guys. You don't understand." Tip would go out doing his door-to-door for his own campaign and he would knock on the door and Mrs. McGillicutty would be there and say, "Oh Tip, you're not running against that handsome Jack Kennedy are you, the war hero who's come back and he's dashing, and Joe Kennedy's son?" Tip would say, "No, I'm not."

Before the campaign was over, he went to Neville and said, "Look, I understand you're going to mortgage your house. Don't do it. You've lost." But I never got any indication that, despite the pressure and despite that recognition, that he was working on a losing cause, Tip ever went over to the other side. There were a series of guys who, like Dave Powers, were friendly with both camps.

Some of the stories of Jack Kennedy's early entry into Massachusetts politics and of him meeting some of the characters who hung out in the political clubhouses in those days are very rich. They're mostly in the oral histories at the JFK Library. Here was this Harvard-educated, Choate, millionaire, Hollywood starlet-dating guy hanging out with Billy Sutton and these other boyos from the streets of Boston. Tip was more on that side, but the Kennedys needed the party and eventually they came to realize, practically, that Tip was among the more philosophical liberals, the smarter guys, the less tainted with corruption, and they sort of saw him as, of that crowd, one of the better guys that they could bring along.

In 1952 when JFK ran for the Senate, as both sides tell it, JFK gave Tip an early warning that he was going to run for the Senate. It wasn't that big a deal, because when you have a Congressman from Cambridge who is going out to Worcester and Springfield and giving speeches, you sort of figure he's going to run statewide. Yet it was an early enough warning that the seat was going to be open and, "If you want it, Tip, you can go after it." Tip always appreciated that.

Now, on the other side of that, there was an Italian-American candidate who ran for the seat as well, Michael LoPresti, a state senator. Joe Kennedy, the father, was very concerned, knowing that they had the Irish vote wrapped up, that there not be an ethnic split in the Democratic Party, and quietly, in the party primary, threw money and support for LoPresti, who was running against Tip in one of the great ethnic wars of Massachusetts politics.

So even though he had been told by Jack, "Tip, run for the seat," this news got back to Tip and gave him another reason to be an antagonist with the Kennedys. Tip won in a nail-biter, with charges of corruption on both sides. To this day, if you go to certain places in Cambridge and East Boston and sit down with people, they will give you chapter and verse about how the other side was crooked and tried to steal that election. I probably had more fun researching that campaign than almost anything else in the book because it was very rich material.

At some point in the 1960s there were rumors that either Bobby—it must have been Bobby and not Teddy, because Teddy was in the Senate as early as '62, but there were rumors that the Kennedys saw this as the Kennedy seat and that one of the other brothers needed an entrée into politics, and that they were going to come back to Massachusetts, and Tip should step aside. The story, which may be apocryphal, is that Tip went to the Kennedys and said, "If you do this, I will not step aside. I will fight as hard as I can. I'll embarrass Jack when he's running for President," if it was before 1960. Or if it was after the assassination, "I will embarrass the family by revealing everything I know about how you guys have been dealing in Massachusetts politics, which very much clashes with the New Frontier image." They backed off.

That's perhaps an apocryphal story from the O'Neill side, but again, it was something else. The

idea that the Kennedys always saw this as their seat was a great irritation to him. Then finally, when Tip was retiring, the Kennedys came over and said, "We see this as our seat and now the next generation wants it." Tip at first wanted to go with State Senator George Bachrach, and Kirk O'Donnell told me that he sat him down and said, "You just can't do this. The last thing you need to do, as you're retiring with a wave of great warmth and sentiment, is get into one last alley fight with the Kennedys. Just stay out of it." Joe [Kennedy II] came hat-in-hand and said nice things, and Tip ended up endorsing Joe. George Bachrach was always very bitter about that.

Knott: Bitter towards O'Neill?

Farrell: Bitter towards O'Neill for what he saw as a caving in. The two questions that I got after writing the book were: "Tell me about O'Neill and the Kennedys;" and, "Tell me about O'Neill and [Ronald] Reagan." In both cases there was affection and warmth on both sides, and also anger and resentment and competition on both sides.

Knott: In both cases a kind of class clash as well. Did he view Reagan as a— Well, I guess Reagan wasn't a child of privilege. I mean, he made it in Hollywood.

Farrell: Tip's line on Reagan was that here was a guy that should have known better because he came from lower-middle-class working origins. Then he went out to Hollywood, and because he was a handsome guy with a great head of hair, he had allowed Hollywood to get the better of him. And with all the money he made, he couldn't stand paying the taxes. The great sin for Tip was if you forgot whence you came—and he thought Reagan had forgotten whence he came. That was never a source of irritation for the relationship with Jack and Teddy.

Knott: Why don't we bring you up to the time in 1990 when you were given the responsibility for covering the Massachusetts—

Farrell: In 1990 I arrived at Washington in the *Globe* bureau. It was some time in 1991 that I took over as the delegation reporter.

Knott: OK. Could you give us some sense of the rest of the Massachusetts Congressional delegation and their attitude towards Senator Edward Kennedy?

Farrell: In the House there was universal admiration. He was the big kahuna. It was a mixture of awe and affection, you know, none of the resentment you saw in Tip's case. Joe [John Joseph] Moakley was probably the next guy. He wasn't of Tip's generation but he was a close friend of Tip's, and he was the older guy who sort of was the senior member of the House delegation. He might have had a tiny sliver of that working class-versus-Hyannis feeling that Tip had, but in the House it was almost universal admiration.

In the Senate, when I got down there [John Forbes] Kerry was already in. Kerry has a quite healthy ego and I think he was able to surpass some of the traps that Kennedy's other seatmates had fallen into. Anecdotally, I know that Kennedy had rough times with [Paul E.] Tsongas, but Kerry was John Forbes Kerry and remarkably self-assured and had worked with Teddy since 1962. He famously went on the boat ride with the President in 1961 and probably saw that Teddy

had weaknesses, and brilliantly saw that he could not play in Teddy's ballpark as a legislator. There was just not going to be any oxygen in the room for another Massachusetts Senator. By inclination, and realizing this, Kerry focused much more on the old Richard Nixon model of using the Senate as a platform for committee inquisitions and investigations, which Teddy has never been either fond of or cared to do. Kerry was wonderfully astute to do this.

Talking about John Kerry's personal ego, he told me a story that—it might have been at Moakley's funeral; it might have been somebody else's funeral. Up in Massachusetts he was driving in the car with Teddy—this is much more recently. I guess it was since 2000, because Teddy had this new dog, Splash, who just loved to chase balls. Teddy asked that they pull the car over next to a field and he said, "Look, the dog's got to go. He'll chase the ball a few times and then he'll go. Would you mind throwing the ball for him, because my back is killing me?" And so John Kerry gets out of the limousine with the ball and starts exercising Ted Kennedy's dog so that the dog could go in the field.

What was interesting to me about this story, aside from just how funny it was, was that Kerry told it. I always thought this was a great sign of—this was never anything that Tip O'Neill would ever tell or that any member of the House delegation would ever have the sort of personal ego and security to tell on themselves. Kerry always had something inside him that got past the rivalry. The two staffs, however, maybe in part because Kerry felt this way, irritated each other. Kerry's staff picked up on what Kerry was saying, and they went off and did their thing, and Kennedy's staff picked up on the fact that Kerry's staff was not properly submissive to their guy and so there was always friction. The two sides would tattletale on each other with the *Globe* reporters and *Herald* reporters.

Knott: Did that spill over to 2004, do you know?

Farrell: I don't think so.

Knott: Because we've heard there was a pretty close relationship.

Farrell: Yes. Here's an example. I was the Washington editor for the *Globe* at the time, and we were putting together this big series that ended up being a book on John Kerry's career. My chunk of that was to examine the legislative career. Kerry had been in a tough reelection fight in 1996 and as it was explained to me by the Kennedy people and pretty much accepted and confirmed by the Kerry people, the Kennedy–[Orrin] Hatch bill for child healthcare, if I remember correctly, was given to John Kerry because he needed an issue that would inspire liberal Massachusetts Democrats to turn out and vote for him, and give him a good image as a legislator, which he never really was, or a lawmaker. The Kennedy–Hatch Bill became the Kerry–Hatch Bill and Kerry took it all the way through the campaign, and dropped it as soon as he got back to Washington. He gave the issue back to the Kennedy staff, which then went on and did the work that they were so good at doing, at getting it passed.

That, I think, is a great example of the fact that—it explained a lot about the relationship, in that the Kennedy people were willing to do this to help John out because they wanted the seat to stay Democratic, and because there was an allegiance between Kerry and Kennedy. Kerry had the

audacity and the lack of shame to take a Kennedy issue that had been prepackaged and handed to him, and call it his own through the campaign. On election night he gives this speech saying, "We're going to go back to Washington and pass the Kerry–Hatch Bill," without mentioning Kennedy at all, and then went back to Washington and did nothing with it because Kerry's talents were never as a legislator.

It says a lot about Kennedy and his staff—that they were willing enough to do this for all the right political reasons, to take it back while rolling their eyes at what a legislative lightweight John Kerry was. And then when a *Globe* reporter came around looking for a story on the eve of John Kerry running for President and eclipsing Teddy Kennedy, they tell that story to undermine a guy from their own state, who was likely to be the party standard bearer, knowing full well exactly what they were doing. There was always this sort of—to use Tip's term—*sub rosa* friction going on, and sort of bickering and backstabbing.

Knott: Do you know if there was resentment in the Kerry circle when Kerry tapped Mary Beth Cahill, who was Kennedy's chief of staff, to run his campaign? We're kind of straying here, but this is interesting.

Farrell: Not that he tapped a Kennedy person. I mean, I'm sure that there would have been resentment because, you know, "They didn't pick *me*." By the time Kerry ran for President, his circle was not the circle it was of his Senate staff days. Even in that time, he changed campaign managers three times, if at the end you sort of recognize that [Robert] Shrum was the campaign manager and not Mary Beth. I don't remember anybody saying, "Oh, Kennedy is muscling in and putting his person in," or, "Kerry is showing no backbone, caving in to the Kennedy liberals."

Knott: You mentioned Paul Tsongas earlier and you said you'd heard anecdotally that there was some friction there, and perhaps worse. Can you tell us a little bit about this?

Farrell: The only thing I can tell you is from talking to other folks as a reporter for the *Globe* over the years. Paul was one of the first New Democrats and he went out of his way to be a New Democrat, and said, "Look, if American business doesn't make the jobs, we don't have voters and taxpayers to do all these wonderful liberal programs." Then when he ran for President, he ran as a deficit hawk, if you remember. His healthy ego showed in that he was publicly more willing to take stands that diverged from Kennedy's liberalism.

Kerry's ego showed in that he was oblivious to the fact that he was taking a stand that was different from Kennedy. Tsongas, from what I heard, would fully know that he was doing this and part of the element of calculation was that this was going to mark him as different from Teddy—more conservative, a new Democrat type.

Knott: We started down this path of asking you about the other members of the Massachusetts Congressional delegation. Is there anybody else you want to mention? Is there a good relationship, for instance, between Barney Frank and Ted Kennedy?

Farrell: Yes. I think that in any relationship between any human being and the Kennedys, the

first thing you have to do is examine your own ego because they're not going to worry about it. F. Scott Fitzgerald said that, "The very rich are different from you and me." I don't think it's because they're very rich, but the Kennedys are certainly very different. I've always felt a great sadness the more I meet members of the family, because they are so swamped by being a Kennedy that you feel that they never get a chance to be whoever it was. It comes right down to silly things. The [Robert Sargent] Shriver kids seem to have done better because their last name was Shriver instead of Kennedy. That's a real oversimplification but it's an amazing phenomenon.

Ted, at least, was grounded in his childhood and in his 40s before it took over. After the assassination it was just an overwhelming force. Able veteran legislators like Ed Markey could just sort of accept the fact that whatever Teddy said, he's the gorilla. "Oh, the gorilla spoke. I'm going to go ahead and do whatever it is that they ask, and in return if I need something in the Senate, I know I can go to that staff and ask for it." But the more that you had ambition or confidence in yourself or were cocky, like Barney, probably the more you were able to mouth off in public, be critical, take different positions. I would put Tsongas and Kerry in that category. In all the time that I covered the delegation, Barney never criticized Ted and always defended him on any kind of character issue or character question, but I don't think that Barney was ever particularly afraid of the Kennedys, as some of the other Congressional members were.

Knott: Can we talk a little bit about Kennedy as a legislator? We've heard mostly positive things about how effective he is, particularly behind the scenes. In some ways, that's perhaps at odds in a lot of people's minds—somebody reading this transcript 20, 30, 40 years from now. I mean, the Kennedy they may see on TV as perhaps delivering a somewhat bombastic speech about Robert Bork—some of his rhetoric on the Senate floor can tend to be pretty harsh.

Farrell: That's one reason why I wanted to start out by saying that my first two impressions of Teddy were negative, because when we get into this part of the interview, I'm going to be effusive. Really making it simplistic, I've always thought that whatever the genetic gifts of Honey Fitz [John Fitzgerald] were, they passed down to Teddy, and the sort of arrogance and lone wolf, go-it-alone genes of Joe Kennedy went to Jack and Bobby. You can almost see that if you look at the pictures of Honey Fitz and Teddy in their old age, and you can hear it when Teddy sings "Sweet Adeline," or whatever the song was that his grandfather used to sing. It is without question, and JFK may have been the one who said it very early that, "Teddy is the politician in the family," the small "p" politician. And he is.

He certainly stumbled in his Senate career before my time, losing the Whip position to [Robert] Byrd. So you can't say that he was always a genius. You can't look back at the passage of the great civil rights legislation in the '60s and say that it was Teddy doing the behind-the-scenes maneuvering. He wasn't. It was Lyndon Johnson or it was Hubert Humphrey. But, particularly as he gave up the Presidential dream/obligation, by that time he had been in the Senate for a couple of decades and he had learned its ways.

He's always been just a people person with a very shrewd sense of character, very willing to embrace a new, young Republican who shows up in the Senate and is sort of doe-eyed. Kennedy comes over like this big shark and puts his arm around him and says nice things to him, and the

guy goes home at night and says, "You know who said nice things to me today on the floor? Ted Kennedy said I did a nice job with that amendment." Then the guy's mother gets a signed book of Rose Kennedy's memoir, or Jack Farrell gets an inscribed lithograph of one of Kennedy's paintings or the roll call on an Irish-American–Northern Ireland issue with a little inscription on the back from Ted Kennedy. The thousand little personal touches that are old-time politics, Ted turned out to be very good at.

This is an old truism that, if you do the work and share the credit, you can almost do whatever you want in Congress unless you run into a big ideological movement like the [Newt] Gingrich Republicans or Reaganism. Even then, if you do the work and you're willing to share the credit—Teddy, the great Massachusetts liberal titan—nobody was better at finding somebody like Orrin Hatch or Ted Stevens on an appropriations bill, or Alan Simpson on immigration.

Then as a Massachusetts reporter you would rub your hands together and say, "Oh, great, I've got to do a profile of Teddy. Well, who's he worked with? Simpson's got an acid tongue. He'll say some wonderful, horrible things about Teddy." You sit down with Alan Simpson and Alan Simpson says, "I'll tell you one story about my friend, Ted Kennedy." You'd say, "What?" He'd say, "I was on the Senate subway one day and this woman came up to him, hatred and bile dripping from her lips and she said, 'I can't stand you, what you did to that young girl. I don't know how you can go on in your life so thoughtlessly.'" And—this is Simpson telling this story—"I saw Ted Kennedy say, 'I think about that every day of my life, ma'am.'" Alan Simpson, who at that time may have been the Republican Whip, is telling me this story about Ted Kennedy, and it didn't come because Alan Simpson liked Jack Farrell. It came because Alan Simpson *loved* Ted Kennedy.

Anybody who understands the law-making process will tell you that Ted Kennedy was a master of the intricacies of getting legislation passed and of seeing his opportunities and of having a brilliant staff that had not just thoroughly analyzed the political situation but knew the policy stuff, which so many people in Washington ignore. They would give Teddy a briefing book and he would take it home in the bag at night and he would read it and he would come back the next day and he would know the policy stuff and he would know the stuff about that Senator's state. He had this little pile of personal IOUs that he had built up and he would know what Senator wanted this, and if he could couple what that Senator wanted for his state with what Ted wanted for either Massachusetts or for the liberal cause, that they could put that together and that, therefore, even if the Senate was in the majority of the Republicans at that time, that Senator would go to the Majority Leader and say, "I need this. We're going to let this go," and it would get done.

On the flip side, you may say, "OK, then he must have been a sellout. He couldn't have had any strong personal rudder all this time." And yet, look at what he did to Bob Dole in 1996, which I thought was pure genius. Somebody 40 years from now won't understand it. Here was the presumed Republican nominee, Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole of Kansas, trying to run for the Presidency from the Senate, and Ted Kennedy, almost by himself, set a series of these little legislative traps for Dole that continually embarrassed Dole and kept him bogged down in the Senate, until Bob Dole finally had to say, "I'm going to resign my seat in the Senate," which is probably something that he loved more than anything else in his life, "and just concentrate on the

Presidential race." In part, that was because Ted Kennedy was doing things like slapping amendments for the minimum wage on unrelated bills and catching a distracted Dole off guard.

The next thing to know, on top of everything that I've already said about him, the endurance of the man is astonishing, and the patience. A year later he would get the minimum wage bill signed into law after making a whole series of these other legislative deals and pulling these legislative tricks like I described. So, not only did he embarrass the Republican candidate, force him out of the Senate, cause a big stink, but he also actually got the damn law done as well. Working-class constituents, people all over the country, got a raise because Ted Kennedy was so good at his job. He's done that time and time and time again. I hope that somewhere somebody was keeping a diary, not just in the Kennedy camp but elsewhere, that sort of recognizes how these little—there's a lot of it in Adam Clymer's book, these little tricks and judo moves were done.

Having said all that, to somebody 40 years from now looking back, Kennedy failed at passing his number-one legislative agenda. Of course, he may have one more term to try, but he never got national healthcare. The Democrats never did. The great New Deal wave peaked and crested at the idea of—it sort of fell over and broke apart on the American Medical Association. The doctors just were not going to allow it. The insurance companies were not going to allow it. And so the Democrats and Ted have never been able to get national health insurance.

I think if you ask him he would say that the best opportunity they had was during the Nixon Administration, when Nixon had a plan that any Democrat would leap at now, and they didn't take it because they wanted more. That probably is the great counterweight in Kennedy's career, in that there's a limit to what you can do in the Senate with all your tricks if the national mood isn't ready for you.

Martin: Healthcare might be a nice segue to talk a little bit more about Kennedy's relationship with other Democratic Senators. So much of his success seems to be tied to finding that perfect Republican counterpart. There's not a lot of discussion about Kennedy's cooperation or rivalry within the Senate with the other Democrats.

Farrell: Early in his career he showed the great willingness and the submergence of ego—I keep coming back to that—of working with people like Russell Long and John Stennis, guys who ideologically were 180 degrees apart from where Teddy was, and he was respectful in ways that Bobby and Jack never were. Jack's legislative record is laughable. If you read Robert Caro on Lyndon Johnson, you realize what Johnson was doing at the same time that Jack Kennedy was doing nothing. And for Bobby the Senate was a place to make speeches. It was a safe base for a while to do something else.

But Teddy always, from the start, went to the old bulls and ingratiated himself with them. He then recognized that the Senate was changing and he took advantage of all the changes that happened in Congress after the new, young liberal Democrats came in, with the anti-war feelings in the early '70s. It's remarkable to note that when Teddy entered the Congress in 1962 he had a small staff. Most of the guys went out at four o'clock, or went to each other's offices and drank with each other and were never worried about reelection because they had been sent from their southern states year after year after year. The South was Democratic. Teddy was able to begin to

master that Senate and then to master and exploit the transition to a point where Congressional staffs exploded, and lobbyists exploded in number, and the impact of the press mushroomed. The press corps went from 1,000 to 10,000 over 30 years.

Teddy, through his own instinct and by hiring bright people, was able to take advantage of that all along the way. I think that most Democrats saw him as a huge resource; as somebody who had to be respected because in most of that time he was a viable Presidential candidate, and as leader of the liberal wing of the party who could command great allegiance at fundraisers, and with the rank and file, who would love to have him come to their district. At the same time, though they realized that, OK, if we're going to make this tiptoeing towards the center, the Republicans and the conservatives in the country have no better figure to demonize in their fundraising letters than Ted Kennedy, until maybe Hillary Clinton came along. The Democrats always had to be wary of him in that regard.

The fact that he never was the Senate Majority Leader is a good example of the fact that they wanted somebody who, in some ways, could be a balance to this juggernaut or who would look after their interests as much as his own interests. Turning the party over to Teddy probably would have been a disaster because it would have been the Whip experience all over again in that he probably would have tried to do too much and put people's noses out of joint. They would have resented him.

Whether he was forced into this role or not, he found a niche that other Senate Democrats were pretty comfortable with. They needed somebody like that and were happy to rely on that amazing staff and fundraising operation, and were glad to sort of have the gorilla in a place where he actually helped them rather than threatened them. But they always had to worry that this is the party of amnesty, abortion, acid, and Chappaquiddick. He carried a lot of freight as well. He certainly learned in 1980 the downside of that when he considered running for President and pulled back in future years. Each time, it was that sort of recognition. I don't know him well enough that he would ever say this to me but as somebody who's watched him I would say that having the Presidential thing off his back has been in many ways a relief.

Does that answer your question?

Martin: Yes. One of the things that we've heard back and forth to a certain degree is that Kennedy seems to have some appearance of elbowing other Democratic Senators out of the way on issues that he cares about and, perhaps, even stealing issues. Sort of not playing nicely with other Democrats is one of the impressions that at least I've gotten from some of the interviews we've had.

Farrell: Yes. Definitely a gorilla. The Hillary healthcare plan was probably a good example of that. In that case, he ran up against John Breaux and Pat [Daniel Patrick] Moynihan and a Majority Leader in George Mitchell, who was committed to the idea but had to balance all the different factions in the Senate. Somebody like Moynihan could get in a turf fight with him, Finance versus the Labor Committee, and demand certain things. So yes, that probably is true.

To a certain extent you see it now, still, with stars from the Senate. If you're on a bill with

Hillary or you're doing a press conference with [Barack] Obama, nobody wants to hear what you have to say. They want to hear what the new star or the new party frontrunner or whoever the gorilla is. You go back to your office and they say, "How did it go?" "Well, nobody asked me any questions. All they wanted hear was Barack talk about yada, yada, yada," and, "All they wanted to do was see what Hillary thought." There's always that in the Senate. It's a place of amazing egos.

The first time I met John Kerry, as the delegation reporter, we sat down in his office and he pulled out a yellow legal pad and began to read to me sort of a statement of philosophy of his that clearly was a precursor to a Presidential run. I left the office and I said, "What kind of ego is that, that you don't even attempt to reach out and make friends with the *Globe* delegation reporter? You just immediately try to dazzle them with the fact that you should be in the White House and everybody else is wrong." The Senate is a place of amazing egos, so any time that Teddy lurched at something, yes, I'm sure that he could ruffle people's feathers.

Martin: What about his relationship with House members in terms of campaigning or working with them on policy? Did he find them useful legislatively or were they just folks he wanted to keep in office?

Farrell: It's a huge gulf and it's kind of amazing. Tip said it best. Tip called the Senate—at that time it was a Democratic Senate—"the house of the idiot sons of the rich." There are two houses in Congress. They don't mix. I mean, Teddy could give Tip advice. He could say stuff like, "Carter really needs this energy bill, Tip. I hope that you'll do everything that you can to get it through," or to attach windfall profits to it or something like that, but he knew that Tip didn't care what any Senator said. Tip had to care what John Dingell and Dan Rostenkowski said. Your job as a House Leader or as a House Member is daunting. The Republican 1994 revolution showed that. You saw all those pictures of Newt standing at the podium saying, "We're going to do *this*, we're going to do *this*, we're going to do *this*," and Bob Dole standing next to him with this frozen grin on his face saying, "Yes, we're going to do this, we sure are," knowing in his heart that there just weren't the votes in the Senate and it wasn't going to get done.

It's too big. It's a huge gulf. I'd be fascinated if you found any evidence that he had worked with members of the delegation and actually had strategies for getting stuff through the House. If he had a big bill that he knew was going to go through Ways and Means—I can't remember what the bill was, but the thing I said before about the inscribed copy of Rose's memoir comes from Adam's book. There was some bill that was going through Ways and Means under Republican control. Teddy would take whatever steps were necessary to sort of neutralize the bad feelings, but it wasn't as if he could dispatch two or three lieutenants to walk over to the Ways and Means room and pull their ears and Democrats on the committee would all say aye or nay depending on that. The health insurance lobby can do that, but not Teddy.

Knott: You referred to '91 as the point where you began to cover the delegation. That is about the same time that Senator Kennedy gets into some trouble in Palm Beach.

Farrell: I didn't know the guy that well and my impression of him was rather poor. When I was working at the *Globe*, I once said to my friend Adam Clymer that the *Globe* and the Kennedys

had an interesting relationship in that each one of them thought the other one didn't pay enough deference to them. Adam's response was, "Yes, and they probably both were wrong."

Working for the *Globe* and covering the Kennedys was a unique experience. I was at the very tail end of the Tom Winship *Globe*. I never actually worked for Tom but I worked for the Taylors. [William Davis Taylor, publisher 1955-77, and son William O. Taylor, publisher 1977-99] I was hired by Winship folks on the recommendation of Winship guys and so I was maybe the youngest old *Globe* guy, as opposed to the new wave who came afterwards who were much more analytical than emotional, and much more of a wide ethnic disparity rather than Irish-American.

That being said, as a reporter at the *Globe*, one of the things that you get instilled in you is that, "We're not going to take any shit from the Kennedys." This is a matter of personal respect and journalistic imperative. And then you get down to Washington and the bureau chief gives you a story and you say, "Well, how do I get this?" and he says, "Call Kennedy's staff because they know everything." So no matter how hard you struggle with the idea that, "We're the *Globe* and he's the Senator and, damn it, if I need to get the Senator on the phone, I'm going to get the Senator on the phone because the voters read my paper and the Senator needs to talk to me," you find inevitably that you end up going to the Senator's office and saying, "What's the story on health insurance?" Or, "What's the story on welfare reform?" And they know. I mean, they just knew everything.

There are priceless moments of standing outside a committee room or walking into the hallway and Teddy comes along and says, "What are you working on?" And you say, "Well, I'm working on the confirmation hearings of so-and-so," and he stops and he says, "Well, here's what's going to happen. It's going to go down by one vote because [Joseph] Biden has not done his homework on such-and-such, and the liberal groups are saying so-and-so, and so probably we're not going to be able to win this one but the next one we probably will win." He gives you gold in the hall or they set you up with Nick [Bancroft, Jr.] Littlefield, who tells you everything that's happening in the Labor Committee, or Ranny Cooper pulls you aside and tells you the latest bit of gossip on a court appointee. You find inevitably that the relationship becomes much deeper. It's dependent on both sides, as any relationship is between a reporter and a source, because they're telling you stuff that they want you to know. But you wake up real fast in the Washington bureau that without the Kennedy staff and the Senator as your great listening post, you're not going to be as good a reporter and the *Globe* is not going to have that national reputation. You just learn that very quickly, that there's this symbiotic relationship that you have to respect. That, more than any Irish-American—"We love Jack"—much more than any of that is the symbiotic relationship that you develop with the Kennedy staff as a *Globe* reporter that sort of pulls you into their camp. Your job is to get down here and know the stuff that's going on, and here you have somebody who is willing to talk to you, return your phone calls, and tell you what's going on, and that's crucial.

So on an Easter weekend, I get a phone call saying, "There's been a sexual assault on the Kennedy compound. You need to get down there right away." I called Paul Donovan, who was then the Press Secretary, and I believe that the only thing I got out of him that night was that it wasn't the Senator. For the first week, Teddy's role was very much an issue. I got down there

and found that the New York City papers had just come off a three-month strike and the American Society of Newspaper Editors was meeting in Boston. So I was down there by myself, covering a rape story about something that happened in the Kennedy compound. The *New York Post*, the *New York Daily News*, *Newsday*, which at that time was trying to make inroads in the city, and the *New York Times* came maybe a day later. The *Washington Post* and the networks were all there and every editor in America was going to read what I wrote every day in the *Globe* because they were all in Boston.

All of a sudden, what I went down expecting to be another Kennedy nephew story turned into a major examination of Teddy's life and career. It was an amazing scene because Palm Beach is, by itself, just an amazing town where somebody comes in at three o'clock every morning and takes every piece of chewing gum off the beautiful sidewalks so that they're immaculate the next morning. The rich people who live there with all their neuroses and money—it's just a strange, weird town. Then you have the Kennedys' Spanish mansion on the ocean where Jack went to write the inaugural address with Ted [Theodore] Sorensen.

I mean, with all these ghosts walking around, there's this sordid tale of Patrick [Kennedy] and Willie [William Kennedy Smith] and Teddy going out to this sleazy place called Au Bar, and ending up taking girls back to the mansion and having this accusation of date rape. And then these amazing hangers on: Michelle Cassone, who was Patrick's date that night and saw Teddy in his nightshirt and Fred Gwynne's daughter was there—Herman Munster's daughter was there and she was living on a trust fund, and she was wrapped up in it. Then you had the little pilot fish who swam around the money, like Patricia Bowman. She came from a well-to-do family. It wasn't as if she was a striver or anything but she was not a big, Palm Beach multi-millionaire like the [Donald] Trumps.

It was just a zoo and that was the first time I'd ever seen this: The *New York Times* came down and hired sherpas. There was this little society sheet that knew all the intrigue and gossip. The *Times* hired reporters off of that and put them as freelancers on their staff because those people knew all the contacts in town. Those people would take the *Times* reporters around and I'm sitting there saying, "Boy, I'm so out of my element."

It was a good lesson for me as a reporter, parenthetically, because the reporter who cracked the case was a little old lady from *Newsday* named Shirley [Perlman], who came down and used just classic reporter patter. "Oh my, sheriff, I'm really so lost here. I don't know what I'm doing. Would you help me on this story?" The Palm Beach police ended up giving everything to her. I forget what the big break on the story was, but she ended up getting it.

I went down with sort of a naïve feeling that—not knowing what I was getting into—my job was to determine whether or not the U.S. Senator from Massachusetts had done anything criminally wrong, and so my energies were devoted to that for the first three or four days, and I was constantly going back to the Chief of Police and saying, "Is the Senator involved in this?" And probably missing the idea that, whether Teddy had done anything criminally or not, this has become this big, social debate and the whole Kennedy thing was coming up again—you know, another tragedy in the family. Every bad thought that anybody ever had about the Kennedys was revived that night, over how they spent the night going to Au Bar.

Parenthetically again, there was a guy at Au Bar and from the waist up he was dressed with a double-breasted blue blazer and a beautiful white shirt and a gorgeous tie, and he had this gray hair swept back. From the waist down, he was in a black skirt and stockings and high heels, and he was dancing on the dance floor in Au Bar. That's the kind of place this was, and nobody paid any attention to this at all. It was just such a weird scene and for Kennedy to even have gotten anywhere near that scene was just awful and he deserved everything that he got.

But anyway, we worked very hard. Everybody believed that the Kennedys and the *Globe* were so close that they would constantly be telling me everything, and in fact, I was working the phone to the Senator's staff all the time and they were telling me absolutely nothing. At the end of the week, I finally managed to spirit away the nightshirt gal, Michelle, to another bar to get my great scoop. I sat down at the bar with her, and who walks in but the *Boston Herald* and *USA Today* reporter, who had been looking for her as well. They see her and they come right over and sit down next to us and so my big scoop turned into a joint interview.

It was huge; it was the first time that I had ever been in one of those tabloid feeding frenzies. The reporters who worked for the *Daily News* and the *New York Post* were much better armed and knew what they were getting into better than I did, and we ended up flying down more troops. We did an excellent job. One of the best things about it was, through personal inclination or just because we realized that we weren't going to—no, it was a matter of personal principle. We knew the rape victim's name and I remember calling the national editor. There was a lot of pressure on us to produce these kinds of juicy tidbits, and I said, "All right, I've got her name and I've got allegations of previous drug use, and if you want, I can write a profile that says that she's not the innocent that everybody said." Christine Chinlund was the national editor, and to her everlasting credit, she saved both of our careers probably by saying, "No, we're not going to do that." The *New York Times* ended up doing it and it caused a huge flap. They had a staff meeting with Maureen Dowd and some of the other women on the staff saying, "You've dropped your standards horribly in doing this." So my one claim to fame is that we were blessedly stodgy at that time.

We got back to Washington and in the *Globe* there was a feeling that all the old guys, all the Winship guys, had been covering up for Teddy all these years and now, "We're not going to do that. We're going to put it to this guy." I was assigned the story of interviewing Teddy and putting all the hard questions to him, and I got unsolicited advice from everybody in the paper: the editor, the national editor, and some of the old Winship guys. Marty Nolan's advice was most valuable to me. He said, "When you go in there, don't pull your punches. This guy is tough. He can take any question you throw at him. Don't feel you have to hold back." That was good advice.

I called Paul Donovan and I asked for an interview. I believe that, by this time, Michael Kelly's story had already run in *Vanity Fair* or *GQ*, talking about Teddy's drinking too much and womanizing. So it wasn't as if I was the first reporter ever to ask this question, but I believe I was the first *Globe* reporter ever to ask Teddy on the record, "Do you drink too much?" I had used my reporting patter to tell Paul that I wanted to do a story about—I think it was Teddy's upcoming 60th birthday and how his health was, what the impact of Palm Beach was and what

about the stories of his drinking.

They got me in there and we sat in his office. We were around a little table like this. As far as I saw, he ate two things for lunch. When he was on his diet, he ate a salad and when he wasn't on his diet, he ate a club sandwich. We had club sandwiches in his office and he sort of made a joke. He said, "So, Jack, you've come up to ask me what makes Ted Kennedy tick." And then I started asking these questions and all of a sudden his eyes shot over to Paul, you know, *This is not going to be a fun interview*. I said, "What about the scars on your nose? Is that skin cancer?" "Oh yes, it's just a basal cell," or whatever. "Can I see the medical records?" This was not at all what he had expected, and he called Paul aside, and they had a whispered conversation. I heard later that Paul got pretty chewed up, either by Teddy or from the chief of staff, for not discerning what I was going to do.

It was remarkable to me that, going back to the Alaska trip, with the Indian power thing in the 1960s, nobody from the *Globe* had ever taken it upon themselves to say, "Do you think you're drinking too much?" He said something that was—he said, "I think I learned from Palm Beach that I need to be more attentive." It was sort of a step towards the speech he later gave at Harvard. So that was my experience with that side of it.

Knott: Was he uncomfortable throughout that interview?

Farrell: Yes. Well, he was politically uncomfortable. I don't think he was personally uncomfortable. I think he went into it thinking, *This is a joke*. He and I did not have any kind of relationship and I was asking questions that I had written down ahead of time to make sure I asked every one of them. At one point, all of a sudden, the eyes shot over to Paul like, *This is different.* His answers became briefer and it sort of wrapped up very uncomfortably. The story I wrote had a lead that, based on the material from the interview, they would have been very happy I wrote. I think I wrote, "Ted Kennedy says he will be more attentive to...." But the idea that the *Globe* would have a front page story saying in the lead that Teddy was going to clean up his drinking problem itself was a shock. It's interesting that this was in 1991. It took that long, 30 years.

Knott: Did you think the *Globe* had historically been too close, too soft? You said you were sort of between these two counts.

Farrell: The *Globe* was a big institution. The Bob Healy, Marty Nolan, Tom Oliphant, Dave Nyhan, Curtis Wilkie class of reporters had always been my heroes. They were the guys who sort of lifted the flap in the tent and let me in to join them. It was a very clannish, Irish thing. I remember sitting there the night before election night one night in 1988. We all went out to, I think it was Doyle's Bar, and Marty Nolan recited the Henry V speech from Agincourt, "We few, we precious few." I was just in heaven. Here I was with these guys listening to somebody recite [William] Shakespeare to me and we went into battle on election night. It was like, wow, I've achieved my dreams. [Michael] Barnicle was another one.

There was a whole class of guys who were very close to Tip, very close to Teddy, who had a lot of swagger and had made a reputation for the paper by exploiting that information, even going

back to the cheating episode. Bob Healy would never have kept that out of the paper. He might have gone to Teddy, or gone to Jack, and said, "How do we do this?" and they'd cut whatever deal it was to put it below the fold or whatever. But it was still on the front page of the *Globe*. The *Globe* won a Pulitzer for going after Frank Morrissey, so it was never in the tank, but there was an affection.

And everything that's ever been said about the *Globe* being liberal is true. It's an unconscious liberalness. Succeeding generations have changed it a little bit, but you can't change the environment you live in, and Massachusetts is a liberal Democratic state with an entire Democratic delegation who just see things a certain way. Because he was the liberal lion, I think there was a tendency to protect him as well.

Finally, a generation of reporters—who famously once took their own wedding rings off when they left Washington, and went out to party as "boys on the bus"—was slowly changing into this very competitive, 24-hour news cycle where the tabloid stuff became important, and drove Gary Hart and Joe Biden out of the race a couple years later. Bill Clinton was ballsy enough to see it through and show its limits, but it was a transition. The gentleman's agreement was over.

What's interesting about Palm Beach was that when Teddy went back to the Senate, the issue of personal behavior and political behavior became tied very strongly for the first time. I don't remember that, before Palm Beach, feminists had criticized Teddy for applying a double standard between what he represented on the floor of the Senate and how he treated women, personally, as playthings. After Palm Beach, it was there.

Then, the Clarence Thomas hearings—if there was any doubt that it was there, the Clarence Thomas hearings fully exposed that. When the Anita Hill story broke, five or six Democratic women members of the House of Representatives marched across—talk about the difference between the House and the Senate—marched across the Capitol Plaza and up the steps to the Senate, insisting that Joe Biden reopen the hearings and examine this issue, and said stuff like, "There's a connection between the personal and the political." For those hearings, Kennedy was a non-entity. None of them enjoyed it, but I just remember him sort of sitting there hunkered down and not playing any role whatsoever. He had been silenced. His own behavior had kept him from playing whatever role he could have.

Then one day I got a phone call from Paul Donovan, maybe on a Saturday, saying that, "Teddy's going to get married." I've never been more grateful to any press secretary in my life, because if that had broken somewhere else, as the delegation reporter for the *Boston Globe*, given the expectation that you're in the Senator's pocket all the time, I would have been an object of ridicule throughout the journalistic community had somebody else broken the story that Ted Kennedy was getting married. It was not quite a firing offense but it certainly would have been, you know, "You're being transferred to the night cops."

What had happened, Paul said, was that Vicki's [Victoria Reggie Kennedy] kids had talked about it at the playground and one of the playmates had gone home and told their mother, and their mother knew somebody who worked at the *Washington Post*, and so the *Washington Post* had the story and, thank God, Kennedy's people told everybody at once. The point of that story

is that, however uncomfortable and tense that earlier meeting had been or however mad Paul had been at me for using my reportorial skills to set that lunch up, if all was not forgiven, at least all was back in a working relationship, however many months later that was.

I wrote several analysis pieces where I went around and talked to people like Hatch. Hatch told me the Mormon missionary story, which somebody has probably told you, that Teddy went to him and said, "I need somebody to vouch for me." And Hatch said, "Well, Ted, I'm going to send the Mormon missionaries over to visit you first." Teddy said something like, "Well, I probably could use them at this point."

It was certainly viewed as a cynical marriage of convenience by many. "Teddy's in trouble and so—" You know. On the other hand, you couldn't watch Ted and Vicki without realizing—and I always had this feeling watching Bill and Hillary Clinton as well—that "the very rich are different from you and me," and that marriages at that level still owe a little bit of something back to the 16th century, when kings married their daughters off to rivals to get another province and stop the war, that there could be elements of both—that Hillary Clinton could be both madly in love with Bill Clinton, furious at him for his weaknesses, devoted to the political causes they both share and devoted to maintaining the investment of 20 years of politics. I always looked at Vicki and Ted and sort of felt the same thing.

It's not my place to speculate, but I will. I always felt that she was lucky in that, hopefully, by the time he was 61 or 62, he had gotten his wild oats sown and was happy enough to stay home, and he lucked out on this incredibly vivacious gal who was willing to put up with him. I was convinced by watching them over the next couple years that it was not a cynical thing. In some cases, it was like stuff like being on the shuttle going back from Washington to Boston and them not seeing me two rows back, and spending the entire hour on the plane watching how they interacted with each other when they didn't think anybody was watching, and watching them both cuddle and spat in that hour on the plane, and then having them both stand up from their seat and see me and all of a sudden shift into political mode. So I knew that they hadn't known I was there. But there certainly was a cynical view he had married her to get himself off a tough spot. He did the Harvard speech, which really was not that much of a confession, and remarkably, I thought, the people of Massachusetts said OK, as they had in '62.

Knott: I want to ask you about that. Again, 40 to 50 years from now, how would you explain to somebody this intense loyalty where the voters of Massachusetts were willing to excuse—for lack of a better word—both things like Chappaquiddick and this incident in Palm Beach? How do you explain that?

Farrell: The Kennedys formed their allegiance to the Massachusetts electorate on such a deep, emotional level. The first generation formed it on the whole issue of the Brahmins versus the Irish Americans. You can't underestimate for that generation of Irish Americans, what that meant when JFK was elected and what the Kennedys meant. Even going back to Jack Kennedy's first race for Congress, they put on a tea at the Commodore Hotel in Cambridge, and the Kennedy girls were there with Joe, Rose, and Jack. If you were an Irish-American woman or maybe even an Italian-American woman in the district, you were there that day. The line stretched out of the ballroom, out into Cambridge, down the sidewalk. Everybody was dressed

up. They had their white gloves on and all they wanted to do was touch the Irish-American royalty, because that's what they were. So the Kennedys formed the first connection with the Massachusetts electorate on that.

The second connection, which was just as important in Teddy's political longevity, was over the war. Massachusetts, on Vietnam and on Nixon, was ahead of everybody. There's no accident that they were the state that voted for [George] McGovern in '72. It started in 1966 or '67 and it wasn't just the kids at Harvard and Tufts and Brandeis and MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology] and BC [Boston College] and BU [Boston University] who were part of it, but it was also the elder generation, too, and the working-class generation whose kids were doing the fighting.

Massachusetts turned early. Tip O'Neill's great success in national politics came because he saw it and turned ahead of Johnson, ahead of Humphrey, ahead of the other national leaders, and that's a great example of being in tune with your constituents. Again, it wasn't just the kids, because they didn't vote. It was their parents. In Massachusetts, Teddy was ahead on the war. Bobby was against the war. And Massachusetts hated Nixon. Bobby would have ended up running against Nixon if he had lived and Teddy was a behind-the-scenes mover on Watergate.

The emotion of the war and the '60s experience forged the second big connection, and that was with the ideological liberals, the intellectual liberals, the [John Kenneth] Galbraiths and [Arthur M.] Schlesingers and Harvard. All of them who had come out of the New Frontier identified with Teddy as the guy who was not Nixon, not everything evil that was happening to the country. That was the connection that the Kennedys formed with the baby boom generation in Massachusetts and that will last as long as the baby boomers live and vote. Massachusetts is liberal. Just the idea of tossing out the great, liberal lion—they almost did.

Knott: That's where I was going to go next—'94 and [Mitt] Romney. Was he in trouble?

Farrell: Absolutely. I'll tell you, when he sat there in the debate and said he never used cocaine, I suspected he was lying. It was a skin-of-the-teeth thing.

They were duplicitous, too, on the Romney Mormon thing. I had worked on the *Denver Post* before coming to Boston. Early in that year I remember calling up Teddy's office and saying, "Do we think that Romney's Mormonism is an issue?" and getting this beautiful statement back, saying, "My brother settled that before the Baptist convention in Texas in 1960, that no man's religion should—" yada, yada, yada. I wrote a story for the *Globe*, saying, "This is what they say now, but it's going to be a test." Sure enough, it got tough. Nephew Joe was the designated hit man, and he started talking about Romney's religion. They didn't come out and say it's this weird cult, but they certainly said, "Oh, we don't care about his religion; it's the fact that it would require him to vote anti-woman, anti-black." They were desperate. They were worried that it could slip away.

Knott: Was it primarily Palm Beach? What was it? Why was he in trouble that year?

Farrell: The whole saga was getting old and tiresome and burdensome. I think that he probably

turned it around in the debates by not doing the broken wing, my brother's thing, but by just saying to the people of Massachusetts, "I believe in healthcare. I believe in the minimum wage. I believe in civil rights law. I did this, I did that." In the end, the electorate was just so liberal that—that was the campaign where there was a referendum on all the Kennedy trash versus all the liberal causes, and the Massachusetts voters entered into the devil's deal with the Kennedy trash side of the story that what you did publicly—that what you did in the Senate was worth putting up with the sleaze.

I think that once he got over that hump, he really never was or would be challenged again. Maybe if he keeps running, when he's 92 and is as frail as Bob Byrd is right now, Massachusetts might say OK. England dumped Winston Churchill, so it's not inconceivable that he could lose an election, but if it was going to happen, that would have been the one.

Knott: This election is probably a good point to segue and talk a little bit about the difference between Kennedy as a national political figure versus Kennedy as a Massachusetts politician. I was wondering if you could give us some insight on how he straddles those two roles, whether it's one-and-the same, or—

Farrell: Tip used to tell this great story about how members of Congress in the delegation and elsewhere were always happy, lazy, and glad to be in Washington, and all of a sudden they'd run into some political difficulty and the next thing you'd know they'd be flying home every other weekend to be in the parade in Barnstable. In that campaign there was certainly some of that. It struck me that Kerry did an awful lot more throwing the baseball out at the Little League games, the 4th of July parades, the town hall meetings in Worcester, than Teddy ever had to.

Actually, when it got closer to the election, he did more of that, and the office was always this grant and earmark generating machine for Massachusetts, you know, drinking at the federal trough. Everybody calls it "the Big Dig," "Tip's Tunnel," because Tip did all the heavy lifting in the House. They ignore the fact that somebody had to have been doing the heavy lifting in the Senate, and that was Teddy, because Kerry was not that kind of guy.

Kennedy was amazing. To me, the sublime trick in Washington is to not do anything in the Appropriations Subcommittee, not do anything in the Appropriations Committee, not do anything when the bill is on the floor but somehow, either because you're in the Conference Committee or somebody else is on the Conference Committee who owes you a favor, out of nowhere the bill comes out to be voted on in three hours at the end of a session—bing, bang—and the next day you wake up and find out that there has been $20 million inserted in there for Boston University, and you sort of say, "Where the hell did that come from?" It was Teddy pulling a favor in at the last minute.

He didn't have to do the parades and the Little League games to the extent that other Senators did because he had this great reservoir of affection, but also because nobody would ever say that he was out of touch with the home state, because every Democratic legislator, Congressman and Governor or their staff, when you pressure them, would say, "Don't even ask me about that." You go back and look at the Republican Governors and none of them ever went after Teddy. I mean, Bill Weld was of the same social class and personal style as Teddy but none of those

Republican Governors ever said, "Oh, he's out of touch. I'm going to run against him." They all knew that after 20 or 30 years in the Senate he had just compiled a way of knowing where the levers are.

Martin: Did they push the pork barrel stories to you? You just don't hear about that story.

Farrell: Again, the House Members had to because it was more important for them. The only time that Kennedy's staff would ever—Kennedy's staff likes to sort of shrug this off. It's like, "Oh yes, we got $50 million for the Harvard Clinic, yes." The only time they would get irritated would be when Kerry would issue a press release saying that he got money for the fisheries through his Commerce Committee seat. You'd put that in the paper and the next day you might get a phone call from whoever the Kennedy press secretary was at the time, saying, "You know, the Senator saw that, and I don't know if it was true or not, and I just wanted to make sure that you pointed out that he was a part of that too, and we're going to fax over a sheet, five pages long, of things that the Senator got this year. We didn't send it over yesterday because it's not something that we like to toot our horn about, but just to correct the record so you know that Kerry's not the only one doing this." Or that we helped Kerry on this, or whatever.

It wasn't something they ever really pushed like they needed to. It was something that was an accepted given. Again, you could look at the stories I did after Palm Beach. You couldn't get anybody to say that his work had been affected by his personal weaknesses. Part of it is just Senatorial courtesy, but they all said, over and over again, no. He takes the bag home at night and he goes through the stuff, and he was never doing anything embarrassing in committee. He was chairing committees and he wasn't calling on the wrong guy or making mistakes on votes and stuff like that. His head was always there.

So, the pork barrel stuff was always—well, of course it was the Fitzgerald Expressway already, but this whole thing of what they were going to name it was classic Kennedy. Nobody from the Kennedys ever said, "It can't be the Ted Williams tunnel; it should be the Ted Kennedy tunnel because Teddy got the money in the Senate." No, you never heard that. It was always, you can get a lot more done by giving somebody else the credit.

Knott: Could you talk a little bit about his relationship with Bill Clinton, President Clinton?

Farrell: By that time, I had moved on to cover the Clinton White House. In general, the relationship was very good because Teddy realized that this was a golden opportunity. There was going to be a Democratic President and a Democratic Congress, and he was just going to make it good. He basically threw open the doors to his office and said, "Whatever you guys need, you have," and it was done very quickly. Two or three months into the session, I used to go up and talk to Stephanopoulos and I would say, "Well, how are things going?" He'd sort of roll his eyes about, "Well, Moynihan's doing this, and Mitchell's not pushing this." And then he'd say, "What about Kennedy?" and he'd say, "Oh, whatever the President wants, whatever we want, they're there for us." Of course, right from the beginning, they came in on the healthcare issue, which was what Teddy wanted to do, and so there was that.

The second part of that was that Bill Clinton had this great love of Kennedys, Kennedy mania,

going back from the Rose Garden handshake with President Kennedy when Bill Clinton was a kid. He was from a broken home and poor family in Arkansas and even when you're President of the United States, it's nice to get that validation when Jackie [Jacqueline] Kennedy [Onassis] welcomes you on the Kennedy yacht and you go sailing off of Martha's Vineyard, and that was part of the seduction. Even when you're President of the United States, that's important.

Having said all that, the Clintons were their own team and they were New Democrats. There were struggles within the White House, especially after gays in the military. They asked themselves, "How liberal do we want to be?" Stephanopoulos lost his job as Communications Director and [David] Gergen was brought in. After the disaster of '94, Dick Morris was brought in and so they pulled back a little bit. But in the first two years, that relationship was cemented.

But to tell a story about Teddy, one of the smartest things I ever saw in politics was when the first Supreme Court vacancy came open and, immediately, [Stephen] Breyer was being pushed by Kennedy's staff, because he had been the chairman of Judiciary and had so many ties with the liberal groups: People for the American Way, the Alliance of Justice, and others. The staff was incredibly plugged in on any judicial nomination fight and so it was not surprising at all to find that Kennedy had a former staffer who was now a Federal Judge that he might want on the Supreme Court, and that was Breyer.

These things were nightmares for us because so much of that stuff is done behind the scenes. Nobody, no staffer from the White House or from Kennedy's office, wants to be the one who tells something to a reporter that torpedoes the nomination inadvertently. (If they wanted to do it they'd do it.) So, everything was going along well in the Breyer. Teddy was pushing him.

Then Breyer got in this bicycle accident and he showed up at the White House, I guess on painkillers or groggy from the ride down, and was a disaster in the interview. Anyway, Moynihan grabbed Clinton and sold Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Everybody who was watching Teddy at the time was saying, "Whoa, what's his reaction going to be?" He came out, stood in the driveway of the White House and did a standup there with the microphones outside the entrance to the West Wing at the stakeout position and he was just unbelievably effusive about what a great nomination it was and how wonderful a trailblazing woman this had been, and that the President hit a home run with this. And, "Yes, we were a little disappointed that Steve didn't get it, but there will be other vacancies." I grabbed him as he walked back to his car and I said, "Come on, you've got to be a little bit pissed." He said, "No, we didn't get it this time." A really masterful politician always has the long game.

I went back to the office thinking, OK, there's no way that having been turned down once, coming that close and having been rejected by the White House, that the next nominee is going to be Breyer. But I had to do a reaction story and I got on the phone and the Chief of Staff, Mack [Thomas] McLarty, said to me—I don't know if this was a day later or a week later—"Your Senator piled up an amazing amount of goodwill with the way he took that." And he didn't mean with the White House staff, he meant with the President of the United States.

A year later, or two years later, the next vacancy comes up. I would truly say that there is no Senator in the country who could have pulled that off, have gotten one guy up there, had that guy

fail in a personal meeting with the President of the United States and realized that this is not the end, we have a long game to play here, and put the pieces together again the second time and gotten it through the second time. I would love to read—if you ever talk to Clinton or Breyer—about how that happened, about what Breyer must have thought. *Oh, you're asking me to do this again? I've already been publicly rejected once.* Teddy must have been on the phone with him saying, "Don't worry, Steve."

The great thing that Breyer had, because Teddy had these years of relationships, was Orrin Hatch saying, "I will get Breyer through." It was horribly wrong; Breyer has probably voted 'no' on every position that Orrin Hatch would have wanted a 'yes' vote, but he basically said, "This is not another [William, Jr.] Brennan. We can take this guy." Teddy was smart enough to exploit that and say to the White House, "Look, you're going to get one of my staff attorneys, and you know his record, and you know the Republicans will say, 'Sure, let him in.'" There were other names. George Mitchell's name was quoted for a while. But that, to me, was masterful.

I began the interview by talking about how I entered into this relationship with Teddy, basically suspicious and unimpressed, and it was these kinds of things that, over the years, you'd just go back and you'd sit in your office and you'd say, "Boy, this guy knows how to play the game." He pulls these things off. And these are just the ones you hear of. Adam's book had probably 15 more and there's probably 15 more that probably never have been spoken about.

Knott: Do you know anything about his relationship with Hillary Clinton?

Farrell: That was pretty much what both of them say publicly, which is that it was a love affair right from the start. She is this liberal do-gooder Methodist from the Midwest, who for her own reasons wanted to get this healthcare thing through. He respected her brains and he respected the fact that she was committed. Probably one of the more intense frustrations of his life was that year trying to get healthcare through, because all the bad baggage of the Clintons came with it, and the Clinton Administration screwed up in putting together the plan.

The Whitewater stuff began to perk and they got distracted on NAFTA [North American Free Trade Agreement], and Al Gore was pushing for an energy tax, and they did gays in the military. In retrospect, if they had done what Jimmy Carter had done and said, "We ran on healthcare. Mr. [Thomas] Foley and Mr. Mitchell, we want a Joint Special Committee and we have to have a vote this summer," the first summer, they would have had a lot better chance than, "Oh well, we're going to do healthcare the second year of the first term. First we have to do NAFTA and we have to listen to the deficit hawks and get that done, and by the way, on the first day in office we're going to set off this huge contretemps about gays in the military."

In retrospect, I'm sure Kennedy would have given them different advice, but he was probably part of that too, in that the Democrats continually bungle this issue every time they get a chance at it. It's a really tough one. The forces against it are really tough, and even if everything had clicked perfectly, I'm not sure that they could have gotten it done because of the opposition forces. Having said all that, the personal relationship with Hillary, I think, was good. I'm sure that there was frustration with [Ira] Magaziner and the complexity of the plan.

And then there was the whole Moynihan thing. Every time Kennedy would say something good, Moynihan would go off on sort of an intellectual—Moynihan was one of those guys who had his own claim to fame. He was his own historic figure. He had, obviously, a much more conservative committee than the Labor Committee that he had to listen to, but he was playing games with that too. I can remember them just talking over and over again about what a big, wasteful liberal program the healthcare plan was. Then, when Clinton switched into welfare reform, Moynihan flopped over to the liberal side and said, "Oh my God, you're cutting out FDR's [Franklin Delano Roosevelt] 1933 guarantee of social welfare to all. How can you do this?" Right at the start, there was some sort of remark that somebody at the White House had made about how, "We're going to roll Pat Moynihan on healthcare," and that was incredibly stupid because from that point on, Moynihan was just hard to get and everybody else was cooperating.

Now as a Senator, when Mrs. Clinton first arrived in the Senate, I was still at the *Globe* and we did stories that said that, yes, he had been welcoming, had helped her, and that she was grateful and that they were kindred spirits. In the last couple of years, I don't know. I just assume that she's good at this too. She has built her own team as she prepares for a possible Presidential run, many of whom are old Kennedy people, like Harold Ickes. I assume that he's been on board with her and that they still get along pretty well.

Knott: We've heard reports that Kennedy was quite active behind the scenes when the Clinton impeachment thing was brewing. Do you have any thoughts?

Farrell: I was off on my book leave doing Tip at that time, although it would not surprise me, but I can't talk about it.

Knott: Paul, do you have anything else?

Martin: I'm trying to think of other things to cover, but I think we've done quite a bit.

Knott: Are we missing anything?

Farrell: What struck me—this is just a personal anecdote. I come out of nowhere and he gives me the back of the hand on the first couple of days. My first big interrelationship with him is Palm Beach and the aftermath, in which I'm writing stories that say—I remember one I wrote for the *Globe Magazine* that basically said, "Is Ted Kennedy a dinosaur?" It had a whole bunch of Republicans saying that the New Deal philosophy was dead and that Ted had been so weakened by his personal life that he couldn't push this stuff through any more, and feeling trepidation the next time I ran into him, but instead getting the big grin, saying, "Farrell, here I am. Here's the big dinosaur."

All of a sudden you begin to get—as you begin this relationship, whether something personally clicks or he just looks at you and decides that, OK, you're not out to make a name by standing on his body—that leads you to believe, anyway, that he respects your integrity as a reporter, and you start getting the treatment. The treatment is like what he gives fellow legislators. You get little signed notes, "Thanks, Ted." And you get invited to an Inauguration Day party at the house

in McLean.

You work with his office very closely on something that you're very interested in, like the Northern Ireland issue. There was a vote on that. I forget what the exact roll call was, but there was a roll call on the Senate floor, and you get a copy of the official Senate roll call with Ted's signature on the bottom, and it said, "Jack, thanks so much for what you did to make this happen." I mean, they swamp you with these little tiny things that make you feel good. In the bag at night, he gets sent a hundred of these little notes, memos. "This is a note to Jack Farrell. Jack's written extensively on the Northern Ireland issue. We're going to send him a copy of the roll call."

I was telling you earlier, I put myself in contest for a big promotion at the *Globe*, which was to be the *Globe* Washington Bureau, and I didn't get it. I didn't get it and my star was obviously eclipsed at the *Globe*. So there was no reason in the short-term for him to reach out to me. He should have been reaching out to the guy who got it, except that there's a long game to be played, too, and maybe the long game is that, "Some day, Jack Farrell is going to sit down with the Miller Center and say nice things about me for history." That afternoon while I was walking my dog, my cell phone rings and there's Ted Kennedy on the phone saying, "You know, it was a setback. I've had setbacks in my life and you just have to soldier on."

I've had setbacks, but this is like, you know, compared to your life and what you've been through—brothers killed, plane crashes—and you're calling me to buck me up? That's what I mean about the long game, because there was no immediate payback there, but there is a chance that some day, Jack's going to be in play again in Washington and we may need him again. To me, that is the sign of a master lawmaker, all those little, tiny things. If somebody is reading this in 50 years and the Senate has reached a point where none of that works any more, my advice to them would be reinvent it and start it over again, because I really think that's a turn-on. That's what makes the great legislators in Washington who they are.

Martin: Do you have a sense that it's he personally who keeps track of all these little things, or does he have an army of assistants?

Farrell: I think it's both. For example, he gets clips of what people write about. For some reason, out of sentiment no doubt, and because he's always been interested in the issue, he follows the Northern Ireland issue closely. Once a year I get called by the *Irish Echo* or maybe the *Irish Times* or something, and they'll ask me, "We're doing a story on Teddy," and I'll say much of what I've said to you, and they'll put that in the story. In some cases it's the staff but when I get a note from him after I've said something nice to a really obscure Irish publication, then I figure that it's him and not just the staff, that he's been given the clips, that he's gone through them and seen this and said, "Let's send a note to Jack, thanking him for those nice comments."

Again, it's the long game. There's not necessarily an and/or; it's like the Clinton marriage or the Kennedy marriage; it can be both a personal affection and fondness at the same time that it can be a recognition that, politically, this is the shrewd thing to do. With Teddy, it won't stop him to be friends with somebody that he doesn't have the particular personal affection for. He'll still go

ahead and do all that stuff and maybe grind his teeth, and for all I know, after he writes a note to me, he grinds his teeth and says, "That little piss-ant." There are others where it's just easier because they do work in a relationship.

With the exception of the Romney Mormon thing in that race, I don't think that he's ever done anything in public life that I've personally witnessed and thought was dishonorable. One of the things that he has going for him is that he has a reputation as somebody who keeps his word and that if he enters into a deal with another Senator, they can go back and tell their caucus, their committee, "I got Teddy's word on this," and that's gold. That's something else that people need to know. In politics there's more elbows thrown and the Kennedys have never been shy about throwing elbows, but when it actually comes down to cutting a deal and making a commitment, if you make a commitment with him and you honor it, I've always felt that he respects you for that and vice-versa, that if he gives you a commitment that he'll keep it.

Knott: Do you have any sense of why he's stayed at this for so long?

Farrell: I once compared him in print to a shark that just has to keep moving because—Al Pacino once said that, "There is no happiness; there's only concentration." I think for Ted Kennedy, there is no happiness; there's only concentration. Maybe I'm just projecting, but there's so much pain there, so many things have happened, so many disappointments—Mary Jo Kopechne, two assassinations, whatever treatment he was given by his parents growing up—that if he doesn't keep moving, if he ever had to actually sit somewhere and reflect, it would be too hard to take. So, his way of dealing with it all is, "What's next? What's next?" That's why I think, given the chance, that he won't retire.

Knott: Well thanks, this was great.

Farrell: A dinosaur and a shark.

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