

A390_2018AbstractBusseAbby

Abstract

This thesis examines the impact of Edward Kennedy's wreck at Chappaquiddick on the rest of his political career. This wreck proved to be extremely controversial, as Kennedy could not provide a coherent story as to how the wreck occurred or why Mary Jo Kopechne was in the car with him and not rescued as the car sank into the water. By examining Chappaquiddick's impact on Kennedy's presidential hopes, I consider the importance of perceived morality in a presidential candidate. This paper includes the presidential elections from 1968 to 1980, including an examination of Chappaquiddick's impact on Watergate. Information has been found in primary and secondary sources, including books, newspapers, memoirs, and Internet archives. This paper argues that even the most popular political figures are not above moral reproach from the American public. Edward Kennedy's wreck at Chappaquiddick was the true end of Camelot and ruined any chance that he had of following in his brother's footsteps as President of the United States.

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