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**Extra Credit: Identifying Political Spin**

Choose a political party with which you ***agree*** or one which holds ***similar*** political ideologies as you. Follow the extra paper credit instructions and answer the questions below using press release or address produced by a political party. The goal of this assignment is to learn how to identify political spin even within political statements with which you might agree. It will be helpful to review the political ideologies of your chosen political party (see Ch. 8 in 10th Ed.). Turn in a copy of the press release/address transcript you used for the paper. You can use the following political fact check websites to help corroborate information, too: <http://www.politifact.com/> and <http://www.factcheck.org/> . Choose from the following political parties and their corresponding document to use for your analysis:

Republican National Committee

* <http://www.gop.com/index.php/?can>
* Analyze one of their weekly Republican addresses usually found on the homepage.
* You can scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on Media Center to be taken to other addresses or transcripts of releases.

Democratic Party

[www.democrats.org/index.html](http://www.democrats.org/index.html)

* Presidential addresses usually found on the homepage.
* Democratic party press releases found under the *Press* icon.

Libertarian Party

[www.lp.org](http://www.lp.org)

* Analyze one press release; found under *Media* icon.

Green Party (USA)

[www.gp.org/index.php](http://www.gp.org/index.php)

* Analyze one press release; found on the *Press Release* icon on the left-hand side of page.

Questions to Help with Analysis

**Identify two points of spin within the document you are analyzing.**

Use <http://www.ehow.com/how_2063608_become-spin-doctor.html> AND

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spin\_(public\_relations)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spin_%28public_relations%29) to help aid in defining and finding spin.

1. What are the two points in the press release/address that might be spin and why might they be considered spin? What kind of spin techniques are being used?
2. How might these three points distort the facts or how might they be misinterpreted by citizens?
3. How else might these points be presented—either “unspunned” (i.e. facts) or from another point of view (i.e. another way to spin the information; another party’s spin)? What is another way to say the same information within each of the three points chosen?
4. Based upon the answers in #3, how might this different presentation of each of the two points give a citizen a different impression about the information? What is this new impression?
5. Identify aspects of the political party’s political ideology in how they choose to spin each point—does each point of spin further the political party’s ideological agenda or is the information spun for another reason (i.e. simply to discredit a competing political party or politician)? So, why did the party choose to say these two points in this way?
6. Does this analysis change how you think about these issues (in the three points analyzed)? Were you surprised to find spin in information/ideologies with which you agree?
7. Do you think political spin is bad or good for the quality of U.S. democracy? Why/why not?
8. What can citizens do to address political spin or develop more skills in identifying it?

NOTE: You can choose another political document to analyze BUT I must approve it first. It should be an original document from the direct source (not a news article from a paper). I just want to make sure the document is ok for this kind of analysis.