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Embassy, Saturday, July 16 at 1.30 p.m. & Wednesday, July 20 at 6.00 p.m.



The War Room

U.S.A., 1993

Directors/Writers: D.A. Pennebaker, Chris Hegedus

Producers: R.J. Cutler, Wendy Ettinger, Frazer Pennebaker

Photography: Nick Doob, D.A. Pennebaker, Kevin Rafferty (colour)

Editors: Chris Hegedus, Erez Laufer, D.A. Pennebaker

Assistant editor/Research: Rebecca Baron

Sound: Charles Arnot, David Dawkins, Chris Hegedus, Judy Karp

With: James Carville, George Stephanopoulos, Heather Beckel, Paul Begala, Bob Boorstin, Michael C. Donilon, Jeff Eller, Stan Greenberg, Mandy Grunwald, Harold Ickes, Mickey Kantor, Mary Matalin, Mitchell Schwartz and the entire War Room crew

92 minutes/stereo/35mm

Festivals: Toronto, New York, 1993. Berlin (Forum), 1994.

Buoyed by the charisma of its subjects – saturnine Southerner James Carville and cherubic preppie George Stephanopoulos – *The War Room* hops, skips, and jumpcuts along the 1992 Clinton campaign trail. Veteran vérité filmmakers D.A. Pennebaker and Chris Hegedus parlayed their minimal access – the candidate himself was off-limits – into a totally charming, smart, behind-the-scenes roller coaster of a movie. Less a place than a process, 'the war room', Clinton's mobile, electronically outfitted campaign headquarters, was notable for its college-dorm informality, its combative improvisatory style, and its savvy staff. As Carville boasted, gulping back tears during his election-eve, farewell-to-the-troops speech, 'We changed the way political campaigns are run'... Pennebaker, who was a key member of the filmmaking team for those docs [*Primary*, *Crisis*], holds to basic vérité principles (handheld camera, no explanatory voice-over, focus on detail) while playing fast and loose with others. Purists will be horrified by the filmmakers' casual reliance on news service footage to move the story forward. Quibbles aside, *The War Room* keys into the exhilaration, anxiety, and high-wire media manipulation of the campaign. (Serious arm-twisting is notable for its absence, which doesn't mean it didn't go on.) And it has a seductive screen presence in the irreverent but dedicated Carville, who may look like Malkovich with a twist of Nicholson but shows himself to be utterly and eccentrically his own man. In an age when irony is a necessary condition of truth, Carville, in his single black glove and 'Speed Killed Bush' T-shirt, is the real thing. – Amy Taubin, *Village Voice*, 9/11/93

Short

Bob's Birthday. It's Bob's fortieth birthday and his wife has no idea how much this depresses him. Animated by Alison Snowden and David Fine/UK/Canada/1993/35mm/11 mins.

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