

THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS CORPS

UNCOVERING SECRET SOCIETIES



STUDY GUIDE

JB MUN 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. Letter from the Executive Board**
- II. Introduction**
- III. History of Secret Societies**
- IV . Skull and Bones: A Case Study**
- V . Other Secret Societies: Interconnectedness**
- VI. The Role of the Press in Uncovering Secret Societies**
- VII. Case Study: The P2 Lodge Scandal in Italy**
- VIII. Case Study: The Freemasons and Media Exposure of Influence**
- IX. Contemporary Relevance of Secret Societies**
- X. Structure and Functioning of Secret Societies**
- XI. Media Bias**
- XII. Left and Right-biased News Agencies**
- XIII. Press Procedure**
- XIV . Types of Articles**
 - i) Procedurals**
 - ii) Op-Eds**
 - iii) Coloured Articles**
- XV . Questions to Consider**
- XVI. Suggested Readings & Media Sources**
- XVII. Position Paper Guidelines**
- XVIII. Bibliography**

Letter from the Directors

Dear Delegates,

I am extremely honoured and proud to be your Head of Press for the academic year 2025-26 and Director for the International Press Corps (IPC). The IPC is a committee in which I feel the most like myself. It is not merely a committee, but a place where one can be themselves through various means- be it writing extraordinarily engaging articles, taking part in compelling arguments and fiery but diplomatic debates, using pencils and colours to show a whole new perspective as an illustrator, or showing the world what you see through your own unique lens as a photographer.

I started my journey in the IPC as a seventh grader, absolutely petrified as I saw my seniors argue with statistics and graph sheets, or even with nothing but a chit of paper in their hands, which produced some of the most moving speeches I have ever heard. When it was my turn to speak, I made several grammatical errors and froze when many delegates stared at me as if I had personally insulted them. However, as time went by, and I attended more conferences, I realised that everyone in that room was nervous, maybe not as much as me, or much more than I was. That provided a sense of comfort and belonging to me and made me realise that the IPC was full of people just like me, and I hope that after your experience in the IPC, you will feel the same way.

Outside MUN, I have various interests. I play the piano, I enjoy watching the same Audrey Hepburn movies over and over again, I love baking and cooking. I enjoy reading classic literature and listening to old music. I also have an unhealthy obsession with making Pinterest boards about everything, as well as daydreaming about redecorating my room. In addition to these very basic hobbies, I also enjoy collecting unique keychains to add to my house keys.

Something I look forward to in every MUN is watching the delegates slowly take over the committee with their communiques.

Of course, the chairs always have something or the other planned, however, I feel that when the committee goes as per the delegates communiques, that fire within everyone which urges them to argue and debate and make sure everyone hears them is ignited, and makes committee an absolute wild ride.

My advice to delegates is, whether you are experienced or a first timer, you and everyone else will always be nervous about speaking in front of a room full of people. To ensure you have a good speech, you must first know how you are comfortable speaking. I myself, refuse to write down my speeches, and simply grab the mic and speak my mind. Some might be more comfortable writing their speeches down word for word as they think, while others simply crack a few jokes, but somehow get countless chocolates from the EB.

In conclusion, I hope you will have a wonderful time in the IPC and MUN in general. I am absolutely ecstatic that I get to be your Chair as well as Co-chair with Samaira, who is also my best friend, and has been with me in the IPC since the very beginning. I am also extremely honoured to have two very talented individuals as my assistant directors. If you ever have any doubts, please feel free to reach out to me. I look forward to seeing you all at JBMUN' 25 !

All the best !

Your Head of Press,
Myrah Goiporia

Dear Delegates,

It is with immense joy, pride, and excitement that I introduce myself as your Editor of Press for the academic year 2025–26, and as your Director for the International Press Corps at JBMUN this year.

My journey with the IPC began when I was a timid seventh grader, unfamiliar even with the word “crisis.” I was suddenly thrown into fiery debates, intense discussions, and the challenge of writing articles that demanded clarity, insight, and speed. Amid the pandemonium, I discovered a strange sense of calm and purpose, a feeling that this was exactly where I belonged. Over time, MUN and the IPC have helped me find my voice and build my confidence. Press, especially in a constantly evolving crisis committee, allows me to use my words to observe, expose, and communicate ideas in ways that truly resonate with me. This is why I have grown to love the IPC and why I eagerly look forward to every opportunity to engage with it.

Apart from MUN, I thrive on adrenaline and the thrill of adventure. I love anything to do with water, whether it's sailing through choppy seas, surfing waves, or racing against the clock while swimming. Roller coasters and leaving my assignments undone until the last minute give me the same rush. I also love performing under the spotlight, whether it's dancing or acting; being on stage fills me with energy and joy. These passions fuel my creativity and perspective, and I bring that same energy and excitement to everything I do in the IPC.

The Press Corps is both challenging and entertaining. The opportunity to write articles based on your news agency's perspective, to be dramatic and vocal during a crisis, and to think on your feet all make this committee unique. Delegates have the advantage of expressing their ideas both through writing and through their voice. Formal, serious articles and informal, colorful pieces alike are equally rewarding to create. The crisis situations you'll face in this committee will test your quick thinking, awareness of your own and others' biases, and ability to research effectively.

My advice would be to ALWAYS speak and be yourself authentically. Whether it is pointing out something in someone else's speech, asking questions, or using theatrics to emphasise a point, do not hesitate to contribute. Every voice matters, and the committee thrives on your originality and confidence. Be bold, be creative, and trust your instincts. This is how the best speeches and articles come to life.

In conclusion, I hope you have a wonderful time in the IPC. I hope you not only enjoy the committee but also find your voice, grow in confidence, and make meaningful connections with your peers. Take more than just a certificate back home. Take experiences, memories, and new skills that will stay with you. I am elated to be chairing alongside some extremely talented and dedicated individuals, especially my bestfriend, Myrah. I cannot wait to see all the energy and creativity you bring to the IPC this year. All the best!

Yours truly,
Editor of Press,
Samaira Chanda

Dear Delegates of the International Press Corps,

It's a pleasure to welcome you all to the IPC at this year's JBMUN. I'm an IB student in the twelfth grade. To give you a better idea of who I am: I live in a world of extremes. One moment you'll find me in my bedroom, blasting absolute bangers by Travis Scott and Drake, and then, out of nowhere, I'll switch to dramatically dancing ballet to the soft elegant music of Swan Lake. The range is insane. When I'm not flipping between my two personalities, I'm either deep into a book or, let's be honest, out partying. I love a good night out — dancing, laughing too loud, and pretending the IB doesn't exist for just a few hours.

Now, about the IPC. You are reporters— the ones who shape how history is remembered. Your work should reflect not only accuracy, but also insight. In this committee, you'll learn how to write under pressure, how to interview effectively, and how to communicate with clarity and impact. IPC is, at its core, a crisis committee. That means events can change rapidly, information is constantly evolving, and your ability to adapt and respond under pressure is just as important as your writing.

As your Assistant Director, I'm here to guide and support you. My biggest piece of advice to you would be to just have fun! Seriously, whether you're publishing a news article or roasting a delegate, enjoy every second of it. I understand how overwhelming a MUN conference can feel, especially for first-timers —but I also know how rewarding it can be, and if you ever need clarification or direction to start your preparation, the IPC EB is always here to help. I can't wait to meet all of you!

Love,
Your Assistant Director,
Aasshna Shah

Dear Delegates,

It is with immense pleasure that I welcome you to the International Press Corps(IPC) at JBMUN this year.

I'm currently studying in tenth grade at Aditya Birla World Academy, where my academic interests are History and Economics. I've participated in various MUN conferences over the last four years. Outside the echo chambers of MUN, my interests lie heavily in RPGs, F1, and design, from art to 3D work. Often one can find me slaving away at a piece long into the night.

Your words should be based in truth and facts, but they should also carry deeper meaning—your insights and understanding. Success demands quick reasoning, sharp communication, and the ability to extract insight from complex, fast-paced interviews. The press corps, much like real life, is a committee where circumstances shift without warning, facts evolve in real time, and only those who remain composed, adapt instantly, and respond with clarity will truly excel.

Whether you're reporting for the BBC, Al Jazeera, Fox News or The New York Times, your job is to accurately channel that publication's voice in your articles. I'm sure the conference will be nerve wracking, stressful and difficult, yet at the end of this conference, I'm certain that you will not only gain a new love for MUN but also meet new people and build connections you can depend on again and again.

All in all, I am sure that the IPC will be an unforgettable experience of crisis and resolution, joy and sorrow.

I look forward to seeing you all in committee, and if you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me or any of the EB members.

Regards,
Vihaan Seth

2. INTRODUCTION

Secret societies have long captured human fascination, combining hidden power with exclusive membership, hierarchical structures, and strict secrecy. Their significance lies not only in internal rituals but in their potential, real or perceived, to influence events beyond their walls. Secrecy naturally breeds suspicion. Oaths and initiation rites provoke questions about what is hidden and why.

Historically, secret societies have served diverse purposes. Some protected oppressed groups, such as resistance networks in China or revolutionary circles in Europe. Others acted as elitist fraternities, creating exclusive pipelines into politics, finance, or academia. Some became criminal organizations, coordinating illicit activities under the cover of secrecy. In all cases, secrecy functioned as both a practical tool and a symbolic marker of identity.

The implications for governance are profound. Democracies rely on transparency, yet secret societies thrive on opacity. When leaders or influential figures belong to such groups, public trust can erode, as seen in Italy's P2 Lodge scandal, while groups like Skull and Bones generate suspicion even without concrete proof.

The press plays a crucial role in mediating between secrecy and accountability, investigating hidden networks while navigating pressures from elite influence and the risk of sensationalism. In the digital age, leaks and online conspiracy movements, including QAnon, "Illuminati confirmed" memes, and viral TikTok exposés, have amplified public obsession with secrecy, blending real and imagined networks.

This study will explore both the historical trajectory of secret societies worldwide and Yale's Skull and Bones as a case of elite secrecy within democratic institutions. It will also examine the responsibilities of the international press in reporting on these groups, addressing key questions: How much influence do secret societies wield? How should the press balance skepticism and responsibility? Can democracy coexist with institutions that operate in the shadows?

3. History of Secret Societies

Secret societies have existed for as long as organized civilization itself. Wherever power, knowledge, or faith took institutional form, circles of individuals emerged to protect, conceal, or manipulate those forces. From ancient mystery cults and medieval guilds to modern fraternities and political cabals, secret societies adapted to the needs of their time

Origins in Antiquity: Ritual, Knowledge, and the Sacred

The earliest secret societies can be traced to the ancient world, where religious and philosophical rites often required secrecy to preserve sanctity and hierarchy. The Eleusinian Mysteries in Greece promised initiates divine insight and a hope for the afterlife, with oaths of silence that reinforced the spiritual authority of the ceremonies. Similarly, the Pythagorean Brotherhood, founded by Pythagoras, combined mathematics, mysticism, and communal living under strict secrecy, blending intellectual and spiritual discipline. Across civilizations, secrecy was treated as divine property, guarding knowledge that was otherwise inaccessible to the majority.

Medieval and Renaissance Europe: From Guilds to Esoteric Orders

During the Middle Ages, secret or semi-secret associations took on social and political forms. Craft guilds, particularly stonemasons, used secret symbols and rituals to distinguish members and protect professional knowledge. By the Renaissance, European intellectual life saw a new wave of secrecy. Scholars and nobles formed esoteric societies devoted to hidden wisdom. The Rosicrucians, emerging in the early seventeenth century, claimed secret knowledge of nature and the cosmos, influencing both science and mysticism, even if their actual organization remains debated.

The Freemasons and the Birth of the Modern Secret Society

The Freemasons, established in the early eighteenth century, represented the shift from practical guild secrecy to moral and intellectual fraternal organization. Masonic rituals emphasized moral discipline, and lodges spread across Europe and the Americas, promoting enlightenment ideals while maintaining closed membership. Freemasonry provided a discreet forum for liberal ideas, influencing events such as the American and French Revolutions. Though myths grew around the Bavarian Illuminati, their true historical role was minor; their enduring legacy lies in the perception of secret groups influencing world affairs.

Revolution, Power, and Secrecy in the Modern Era

In the nineteenth century, secret societies became vehicles for political activism. Groups like the Carbonari in Italy and the Decembrists in Russia operated clandestinely to challenge authoritarian regimes. The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn attracted intellectuals and mystics in the late 1800s, demonstrating the ongoing intersection of knowledge, ritual, and exclusivity. By the twentieth century, American universities developed secret fraternities, most famously Skull and Bones, combining elitism with networks of influence that mirrored old-world lodges.

The Age of Exposure: From Postwar Politics to the Digital Era

After World War II, secrecy shifted into intelligence agencies and multinational alliances. Public fascination expanded to elite networks, as journalists and historians began uncovering hidden connections between governments, corporations, and social elites. Modern secrecy now exists both offline and online: digital platforms, encrypted groups, and dark web communities continue traditions of initiation, coded language, and exclusivity, adapting ancient forms to the twenty-first century.

Conclusion: The Enduring Legacy of Secrecy

The history of secret societies reveals an unbroken link between ritual, knowledge, and power. Secrecy has protected ideas from persecution and shielded privilege from scrutiny. From temples to modern lodges and online forums, humanity's fascination with the hidden endures. Understanding this history is crucial to evaluating modern secrecy and the tension between transparency and control.



4.SKULL AND BONES : A CASE STUDY

The Skull and Bones Society, founded in 1832 at Yale University, is one of the most secretive and enduring elite fraternities in the modern Western world. Established by Yale student William Huntington Russell and future U.S. Secretary of War Alphonso Taft, the society emerged from a desire to create an exclusive circle of influence within an already elite institution. Over the decades, Skull and Bones has evolved from a collegiate secret society into a symbol of American elitism, privilege, and clandestine power, commanding fascination and suspicion in equal measure.

Origins and Founding Ideology

The early 19th century saw a proliferation of fraternal orders across American universities, modeled on European secret societies such as the Freemasons and the Illuminati. Yale's atmosphere at the time was steeped in rivalry, with competing literary societies and fraternities vying for prestige and access to power. Skull and Bones distinguished itself by its ritualized secrecy, strict hierarchy, and its mysterious symbolism; the skull and crossbones emblem, the number 322, and its ominously named headquarters, "The Tomb."

Historians believe the society's founders were influenced by German secret student societies that Russell encountered while studying abroad. This connection to European models of elitism and order may explain the Bones' near-obsessive dedication to hierarchy, discipline, and loyalty, traits that would later characterize its members' political and corporate careers.

The Tomb and Symbolism

The society's headquarters, known as The Tomb, is a windowless, sandstone structure on High Street in New Haven, Connecticut. Completed in 1856, its Egyptian-style architecture adds to its aura of mystique. Rumors abound about its contents: skulls and bones supposedly belonging to historical figures such as Geronimo; arcane relics; and walls lined with portraits of every Bonesman since its inception. The Tomb has long been a subject of speculation and protest, both for its eerie secrecy and for the alleged theft of sacred Native American remains, an accusation that has never been conclusively proven but continues to haunt the society's reputation.

Inside, initiates are said to undergo rituals meant to strip them of their individuality before being symbolically "reborn" into the Brotherhood. Accounts from former members and leaked stories describe confession ceremonies, mock funerals, and bizarre oaths of allegiance, creating a psychological bond among initiates that persists well into their adult lives. Whether apocryphal or not, these stories have reinforced the Bones' mythology as a training ground for loyalty and silence among the American elite.

Membership, Tapping, and the Network of Power

Every spring, fifteen juniors at Yale are “tapped” to join Skull and Bones. The selection process remains opaque, but traditionally, the chosen represent a cross-section of leadership across the university: student government heads, athletes, editors of the Yale Daily News, and emerging political or business talents. Membership is considered one of the highest honors on campus, not for public recognition but for the influence it guarantees later in life.

Members, referred to as Bonesmen, form an enduring network often described as an “old boys’ club” of American leadership. The society’s alumni list reads like a who’s who of U.S. political and economic power:

- William Howard Taft, the only person to have served as both President and Chief Justice of the United States.
- George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush, both U.S. Presidents and central figures in modern conservative politics.
- John Kerry, former Secretary of State and Democratic presidential nominee.
- Numerous CIA officials, senators, cabinet members, and media executives, including figures tied to Time, The New York Times, and major financial institutions.

The society’s motto, “Bulls and Bears,” alludes to its influence over Wall Street, while its internal hierarchy and mentorship system have fostered intergenerational ties of power and privilege. Critics argue that Skull and Bones’ influence extends far beyond Yale, into government appointments, corporate mergers, and media narratives, forming an informal but potent shadow network of American decision-making.

Rituals and Rumors

While many details of Skull and Bones’ ceremonies remain secret, fragments have been leaked through memoirs and investigations. Rituals reportedly involve elements of psychological initiation, mock-death experiences, and “rebirth” into the society. Initiates are said to share deep personal confessions meant to create unbreakable bonds of mutual vulnerability. One recurring rumor, that members lie in coffins and recount their life stories while surrounded by older members, has become emblematic of the society’s cult-like intensity.

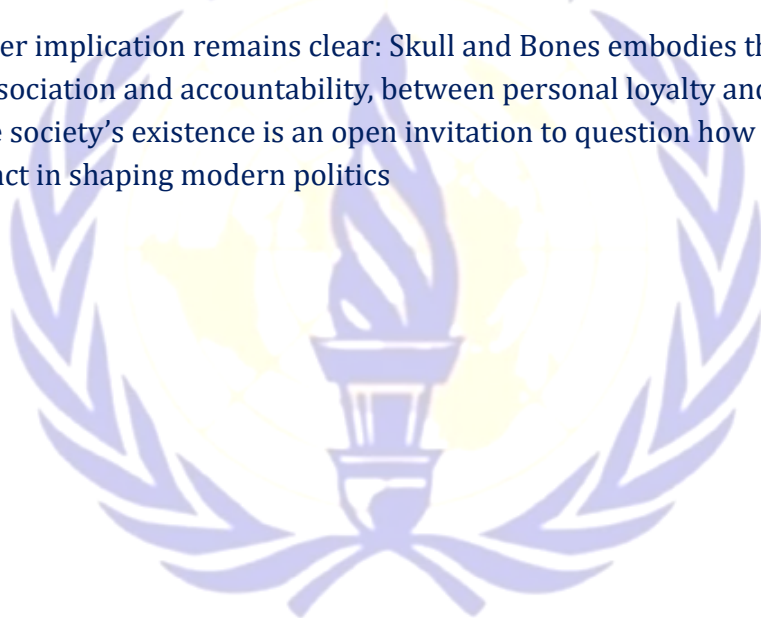
The society’s attachment to relics and esoteric symbols also fuels speculation about occult influence. Its prominent use of the skull and crossbones, its number “322,” and coded references to death and rebirth invite comparison to older secret societies such as the Freemasons or Rosicrucians.

Democracy, Elitism, and the Ethics of Secrecy

Critics argue that Skull and Bones undermines the principles of democratic transparency by fostering an elite subculture of privilege and insider loyalty. Its private rituals, lifelong connections, and discreet influence blur the boundaries between merit and inherited power. The society's continued prominence raises questions about who truly governs in a democracy: the elected representatives, or the invisible networks that guide them?

Defenders of the society, however, maintain that it is merely a tradition of mentorship and camaraderie, emphasizing personal development and service. To them, the secrecy is symbolic, a way to preserve mystique and continuity rather than conceal wrongdoing.

Nonetheless, the broader implication remains clear: Skull and Bones embodies the enduring tension between freedom of association and accountability, between personal loyalty and public duty. For the international press, the society's existence is an open invitation to question how power, secrecy, and media narratives interact in shaping modern politics



5. OTHER PROMINENT SECRET SOCIETIES & THEIR INTER-CONNECTION

Secret societies exist all over the world. They take different cultural forms but often share similar structures, such as rituals, hierarchy, oaths, and secrecy. Many societies are connected indirectly because they influenced each other's practices and organisation across time and regions.

In the United States, Skull and Bones at Yale is an example of how European secret lodges influenced modern elite networks. Its rituals, hierarchies, and selective membership were inspired by European Freemasonry. Other American fraternities, such as Scroll and Key, follow similar practices. These societies show how old-world traditions of loyalty, initiation, and influence were adapted to modern institutions.

The Freemasons began as medieval European guilds and eventually became an international fraternity. Their focus on ritual, secrecy, and moral discipline inspired revolutionary societies such as the Carbonari in Italy. The Carbonari then influenced Latin American societies like the Sociedad de la Lautaro, which helped organize independence movements. Even the Bavarian Illuminati, although short-lived, borrowed heavily from Masonic structures, promoting hierarchical secrecy and political influence. This illustrates a historical chain of influence: Freemasons influenced the Carbonari, who influenced the Sociedad de la Lautaro, which in turn influenced Skull and Bones.

In Asia, secret societies often developed independently but share similar structures. The Triads in China began as brotherhoods resisting foreign domination and later became criminal networks. They use initiation rituals, oaths, and coded symbols to ensure loyalty. Japan's Yakuza follow comparable hierarchies and rituals. Even though these societies developed separately from European groups, their methods of maintaining secrecy and loyalty resemble the structures of Masonic and revolutionary lodges. In Africa, the Poro in West Africa and the Leopard Societies in Sierra Leone and Liberia combined ritual and oaths with political authority. Members gained social prestige and real power, similar to the social control mechanisms found in European and Asian secret societies.

Europe also had societies that combined political, intellectual, and elite functions. The Hellfire Club in 18th-century Britain used ritual and exclusivity to consolidate elite influence. Revolutionary groups such as the Young Irelanders and the Sons of Liberty used secret organization to pursue political goals. Many of these groups were inspired by or interacted with Masonic or guild-like structures.

All of these societies together form a global network of secret organizations. European lodges influenced revolutionary and elite societies worldwide. American fraternities adapted these structures to modern institutions. Asian and African brotherhoods developed similar methods independently. Across centuries and continents, the use of initiation, coded communication, hierarchy, and selective knowledge creates a continuous line that connects different societies and shows how secrecy has shaped political movements, elite networks, and social hierarchies worldwide.

6. THE ROLE OF PRESS IN UNCOVERING SECRET SOCIETIES

The press has always occupied a precarious and paradoxical position when it comes to reporting on secret societies. Journalism, in its purest form, is tasked with exposing truths and holding power to account. Yet, when power hides itself behind layers of secrecy, ritual, and exclusivity, the press faces a unique dilemma; to reveal what is hidden without descending into speculation, and to inform the public without inflaming hysteria. Throughout history, this tension between revelation and restraint has shaped how societies understand secrecy, influence, and authority.

Historical Context: From the Illuminati to the Age of Information

The uneasy relationship between the press and secret societies dates back to the late eighteenth century, when pamphleteers in Europe and America published sensational tracts about the Bavarian Illuminati. In the wake of the French Revolution, these writings warned that clandestine groups were plotting to overthrow governments and corrupt religion. Newspapers, though far less regulated than today, amplified these fears; the line between political reporting and propaganda was thin, and secret societies provided fertile ground for paranoia.

By the nineteenth century, as literacy spread and newspapers became mass-circulation products, secret societies such as the Freemasons, the Rosicrucians, and the Carbonari were frequent subjects of both fascination and suspicion. The Masons, in particular, became a recurring target for press exposés that blended legitimate inquiry with moral panic. In the United States, the Anti-Masonic Party, the first third-party movement in American politics, was largely fueled by newspaper reports alleging corruption and elitism within the Masonic order.

These early episodes established a pattern that persists to this day; the press both shapes and reflects public fear of the unseen. Secret societies, precisely because they operate in silence, invite narrative projection. A lack of verifiable facts gives rise to speculation, and speculation gives rise to scandal.

The Modern Era: Between Investigative Reporting and Conspiracy Culture

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, journalism entered a new phase of tension with secret networks. The rise of investigative journalism, particularly after the Watergate scandal, encouraged a generation of reporters to dig into covert institutions, from intelligence agencies to elite clubs like the Bohemian Grove or the Bilderberg Group. Publications such as Time, The Guardian, Der Spiegel, and The New York Times began probing how exclusive gatherings and membership networks influenced economic policy, foreign relations, and corporate governance.

One of the most striking examples of this investigative courage came from Italy in the 1980s, when reporters and magistrates uncovered the Propaganda Due Lodge, a clandestine Masonic network implicated in political corruption, money laundering, and even the collapse of Banco Ambrosiano, one of Italy's largest banks. The revelations linked prominent businessmen, military officials, and even Vatican insiders to illegal operations. The scandal demonstrated how investigative journalism could pierce the veil of secrecy, but also how dangerous such work could be. Several reporters who pursued the Propaganda Due story faced censorship, intimidation, or mysterious deaths.

At the same time, the global media ecosystem began to fracture under the pressure of twenty-four-hour news cycles and digital platforms. As audiences demanded ever more dramatic stories, secret societies became easy subjects for sensationalist coverage. The press, in attempting to expose secrecy, often ended up commercializing it. Tabloids and conspiracy-driven websites blurred the boundaries between factual investigation and speculative fiction, leading to a modern crisis of credibility. The line between exposé and entertainment grew increasingly thin.

Ethical Dilemmas and Power Structures Within Journalism

The duty of the press to expose truth becomes far more complicated when the truth itself is hidden behind cultural taboos or institutional privilege. When journalists investigate secret societies, they confront three interlocking ethical challenges.

First, they must separate fact from rumor. Because secret societies deliberately obscure their inner workings, journalists must rely on leaks, anonymous sources, or former members. This creates fertile ground for misinformation, and the risk of amplifying myths or half-truths is ever present. The credibility of the press depends on restraint; yet restraint can make journalists appear complicit in protecting the powerful.

Second, the press must balance the public's right to know with the right to privacy. Membership in a private organization, even one as infamous as Skull and Bones, is not inherently illegal. Ethical journalism requires a careful distinction between legitimate public interest and intrusive curiosity. Exposing corruption or conflicts of interest serves democracy; exposing personal rituals or traditions for spectacle erodes journalistic integrity.

Third, and perhaps most dangerously, the press must navigate the influence of the very powers it seeks to expose. Many of the world's major media conglomerates are owned by individuals or corporations connected, directly or indirectly, to elite social networks. Editors may face pressure to downplay certain stories, advertisers may threaten to withdraw funding, and reporters may be blacklisted for probing too deeply into institutions tied to political or financial elites. In this way, secrecy becomes self-reinforcing, even in democratic societies.

Media as Both Watchdog and Weapon

The modern press faces an existential contradiction. It is expected to act as a watchdog of democracy, holding powerful groups accountable. Yet, the same structures of influence that secret societies thrive upon, exclusivity, wealth, and connection, also permeate the media industry itself. This creates an ironic symmetry; both the press and secret societies rely on selective access to information, loyalty networks, and control over narratives.

Moreover, in the digital age, disinformation campaigns can weaponize secrecy for political gain. Claims of deep states, globalist cabals, and shadow elites circulate through online media ecosystems, often amplified by partisan outlets seeking clicks rather than truth. State-controlled networks such as RT, Xinhua, and Fox News have each, in different contexts, leveraged the language of secret societies to advance ideological agendas, portraying Western elites as conspirators or globalists undermining national sovereignty.

Thus, the press's role is not merely to expose secrets, but to protect truth itself from distortion. In an era where viral rumors travel faster than verified facts, responsible journalism demands not just courage but discernment.

The Continuing Challenge

Ultimately, the relationship between the press and secret societies is a mirror reflecting the broader struggle between transparency and power. For every groundbreaking exposé that reveals corruption, there exists another story buried by influence or ignored due to fear of reprisal. For every responsible investigative report, there is a sensational headline that trivializes or distorts the issue.

The case of Skull and Bones exemplifies this duality. To some journalists, it represents a legitimate inquiry into the culture of American elitism; to others, it is a perennial curiosity that yields more myth than fact. Yet the fascination endures, precisely because secrecy never fully loses its power to attract attention.

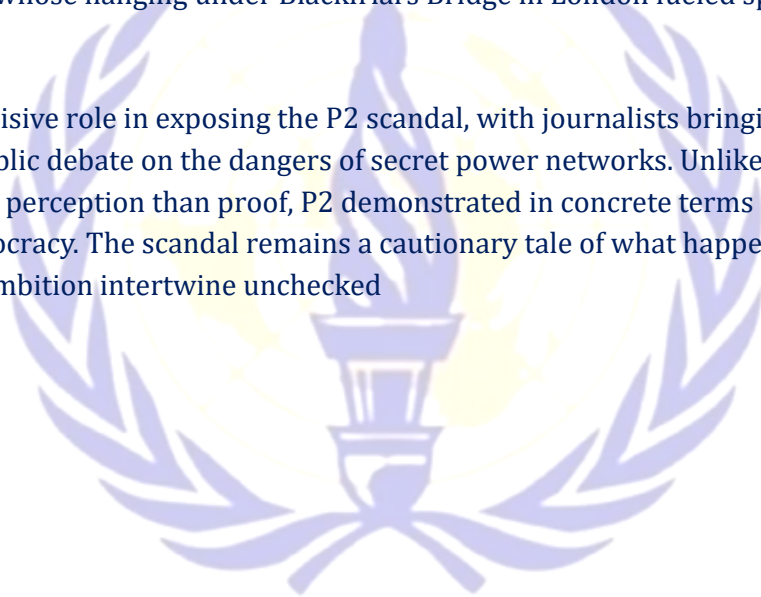
In the end, the press walks a narrow path; one that demands vigilance, skepticism, and self-awareness. Its mission is not simply to reveal what is hidden, but to understand why secrecy persists, and how it shapes the world behind the headlines. Only through this balance of curiosity and caution can journalism fulfill its democratic purpose while resisting the seductive chaos of conspiracy.

7. Case Study: The Propaganda Due (P2) Scandal in Italy

Perhaps the most striking modern example of secret societies intersecting with politics is the case of Propaganda Due (P2), a Masonic lodge in Italy that became a byword for corruption and conspiracy. Founded in the late 19th century as a legitimate Masonic lodge, P2 transformed under the leadership of Licio Gelli in the 1970s into a clandestine organization with enormous political ambitions. Its membership included politicians, military officers, business leaders, and intelligence officials.

When Italian authorities investigated P2 in 1981, they uncovered a membership list of nearly 1,000 influential figures, along with documents outlining plans to manipulate Italy's democratic institutions. P2 was linked to banking scandals, covert operations against leftist groups, and even the suspicious death of banker Roberto Calvi, whose hanging under Blackfriars Bridge in London fueled speculation about Masonic involvement.

The press played a decisive role in exposing the P2 scandal, with journalists bringing hidden documents to light and forcing public debate on the dangers of secret power networks. Unlike Skull and Bones, which thrives more on perception than proof, P2 demonstrated in concrete terms how a secret society could destabilize democracy. The scandal remains a cautionary tale of what happens when secrecy, elitism, and political ambition intertwine unchecked



8. Case Study: The Freemasons and Media Exposure of Influence

One of the most historically significant secret societies in Europe, the Freemasons, has long combined ritual, hierarchy, and selective membership with influence in politics, business, and society. Originally emerging from medieval craft guilds, the organization gradually evolved into a network of lodges whose members often included judges, politicians, and prominent industrialists. Over time, concerns grew that such secretive networks could exercise hidden power over public institutions.

Investigative journalists in the 20th century began uncovering evidence of this influence. In the United Kingdom, newspapers such as *The Times* reported on links between Freemasonry and judicial appointments, while in Italy, magazines like *L'Espresso* exposed connections between lodges and political decision-making, including government contracts and party affiliations. Reports highlighted how Freemasons cultivated loyalty and trust within their lodges, creating networks that could shape policy and influence public life without detection.

Unlike overtly illegal organizations, the Freemasons operated within legal boundaries, relying on secrecy and fraternity to extend influence. The press, however, revealed how membership and rituals were not merely ceremonial but formed a framework for networking, career advancement, and indirect political power. By bringing these connections to public attention, journalists emphasized the tension between the society's philanthropic ideals and the perception of covert influence.

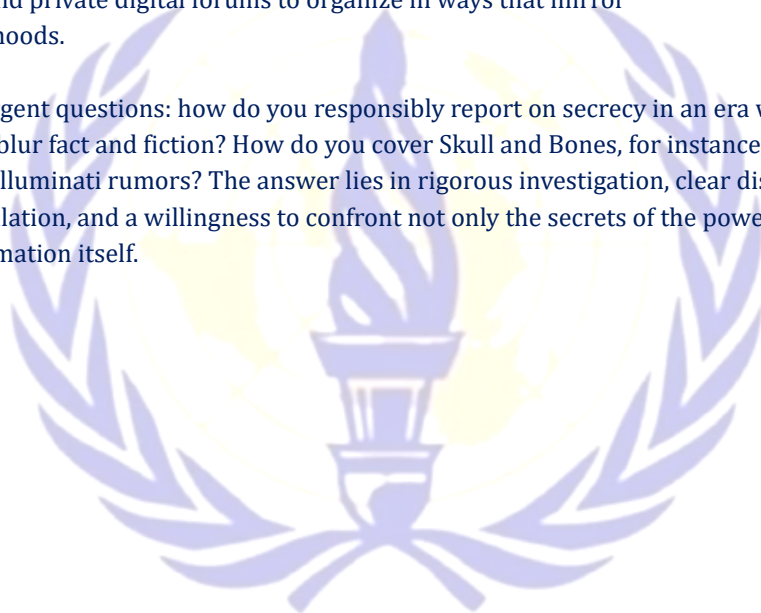
The media coverage of Freemasonry demonstrates how reporting can illuminate the operations of secret societies whose impact is subtle yet far-reaching. It serves as a historical example of the press uncovering hidden networks of power, showing that secrecy can be a tool for social influence as well as political manipulation.

9. Contemporary Relevance of Secret Societies

In today's world, secret societies continue to capture attention—not always because they wield direct power, but because they represent anxieties about hidden influence in an era of globalization and information overload. Organizations such as the Bilderberg Group or the Trilateral Commission, while not secret societies in the strictest sense, are often perceived as elite gatherings where global policies are shaped behind closed doors. Public suspicion thrives on opacity, and media coverage amplifies both legitimate concerns and conspiratorial exaggerations.

The digital age has added a new dimension. Conspiracy movements like QAnon rely heavily on the idea of shadowy elites orchestrating world events, borrowing imagery from older secret society myths like the Illuminati. Social media has democratized this paranoia, allowing viral rumors to travel faster than careful reporting. Meanwhile, actual secretive networks—whether criminal cartels, extremist groups, or exclusive political clubs—use encrypted communication and private digital forums to organize in ways that mirror the secrecy of older brotherhoods.

For journalists, this raises urgent questions: how do you responsibly report on secrecy in an era when conspiracy theories already blur fact and fiction? How do you cover *Skull and Bones*, for instance, without feeding unfounded Illuminati rumors? The answer lies in rigorous investigation, clear distinction between evidence and speculation, and a willingness to confront not only the secrets of the powerful but also the dangers of misinformation itself.



10. Structure and Functioning of a Secret Society

Secret societies, regardless of era or ideology, share a remarkably consistent internal structure. They rely on hierarchy, ritual, and symbolism to maintain cohesion and secrecy. Their strength lies not only in concealing information but in creating loyalty and a sense of belonging among members.

Hierarchical Organization

Most secret societies follow a strict hierarchy in which knowledge and authority are distributed unevenly. At the top sits the inner circle, often called Grand Masters, Elders, or High Council, who have full access to the society's archives, rituals, and decisions. Below them are successive tiers of initiates, each granted partial knowledge depending on rank or initiation level.

This structure protects sensitive information and reinforces authority. Advancement depends on loyalty, discretion, and service. In historical societies such as the Freemasons or Knights Templar, progression was often marked by initiation ceremonies symbolizing personal transformation or commitment.

Ritual and Initiation

Rituals are the lifeblood of secret societies. Conducted in hidden locations, they serve both symbolic and psychological purposes. Initiation binds members through shared experiences, oaths, and symbolic acts, creating irreversible commitment.

Initiates may undergo periods of silence, confessions, or other symbolic practices, as in the Pythagorean Brotherhood or Skull and Bones. Rituals also facilitate communication where open speech is impossible. Gestures, coded language, and secret symbols help members identify and understand one another while preserving secrecy.

Symbols, Codes, and Allegory

Symbols function as internal codes and barriers to outsiders. Every emblem, from Masonic tools to secret insignia in revolutionary societies, carries layered meanings. Allegory conveys moral, philosophical, or ideological lessons, while coded correspondence and insignia ensure operational security in politically sensitive organizations.

Membership and Recruitment

Membership is typically by invitation, enhancing exclusivity and ensuring recruits are loyal, discreet, and socially connected. The process often involves observation or probation, followed by initiation. Some societies, like the Freemasons, draw broadly from professions, while others, such as Skull and Bones, recruit only social elites. Oaths of secrecy and strict codes of conduct ensure that betrayal is both a moral and social offense.

Purpose and Function

Secret societies pursue four main functions:

1. **Preservation of Knowles:** Safeguarding sacred, forbidden or specialised knowledge.
2. **Mutual Protection:** Offering solid and support in times of political or social danger.
3. **Social Networking:** Creating bonds that translate into public influence and access to elite circle.
4. **Pursuit of Power:** Coordinating political or revolutionary activities while avoiding detention.

Discipline, Loyalty and Continuity

Internal discipline, reinforced through rituals, moral codes, and interdependence, sustains loyalty. Continuity is maintained through tradition, passing down rituals, symbols, and myths across generations. Members see themselves as custodians of an enduring legacy, ensuring the resilience of the society even as political and social landscapes change.

In essence, the structure and functioning of secret societies reveal the anatomy of controlled secrecy. Hierarchies, rituals, and symbols create unity through exclusion, and withholding knowledge is not merely concealment but a means of power. Membership grants trust in the unseen, which becomes the foundation of influence across time and society.

11. Media Bias

Media bias refers to perceived or actual bias and unfairness in the way news and information are presented. This bias can take many forms, such as selective reporting, emphasising certain facts over others, and framing the news. Media bias often stems from a variety of factors, including political affiliation, economic pressures, and cultural perspectives. For example, news stations may have owners or sponsors with particular political leanings, which can affect the content and tone of the news. This is evident in how conservative and liberal media in the United States often cover the same story with vastly different angles and interpretations

.Researching about your news agency's media bias is extremely vital and also the most important part of the IPC. Not only will it help you in committee and choosing your blocks but also the tone and content of your articles.

Websites to help you find your media bias:

<https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/>

<https://www.allsides.com/media-bias/media-bias-chart>



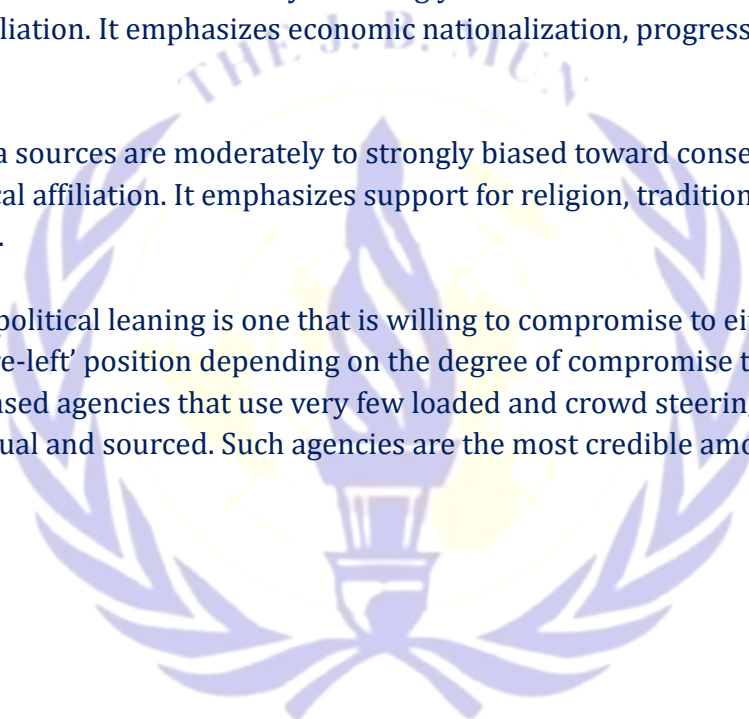
12. Left, Centre and Right- Biased News Agencies

The left-right political spectrum is a system of classifying political positions, ideologies and parties, with emphasis placed upon issues of social equality and social hierarchy. In addition to positions on the left and on the right, there are centrist and moderate positions, which are not strongly aligned with either end of the spectrum.

Left bias- These media sources are moderately to strongly biased toward liberal causes through story selection or political affiliation. It emphasizes economic nationalization, progressivism, more privileges for minorities, etc.

Right bias- These media sources are moderately to strongly biased toward conservative causes through story selection or political affiliation. It emphasizes support for religion, traditional moral order, defence of national interests, etc.

Centre bias- A 'Centre' political leaning is one that is willing to compromise to either side, resulting in a 'Centre-right' and 'Centre-left' position depending on the degree of compromise they engage in with each side. It includes least biased agencies that use very few loaded and crowd steering words. The information published is usually factual and sourced. Such agencies are the most credible among the media



13. Press Procedure

Press Conference: It is when a spokesperson of the Press enters the committee and begins to question delegates. The Directors of these committees are not allowed to directly criticize working papers, but you can. Be prepared to ask questions that can make the committee think, as well as change the course of debate and stir things up. You can only do this if you have (a) sufficient knowledge of the issue being discussed, and (b) been observant during committee sessions to understand what the delegates have been talking about. The point of a Press Conference is not to attack a particular delegate, but to help arrive at the resolution quicker or make debate more productive. Press Conferences must observe the dictates of diplomatic courtesy and must relate to matters of substance within the council only.

Press Crisis: It is an informal debate, which may be related to the topic of discussion in the committees. During the crisis, it is imperative that the Press Delegates are well researched about their country and its bias and on their stance on the topic at hand, basic facts about their nation.

Agenda: The topic that is to be discussed in committee.

Bloc: A group of allied nations having the same stance on a particular topic.

Chairs: The individuals who preside over committee and facilitate debate. They call on speakers, time speeches, and maintain the rules of procedure.

Challenge: It is essentially a semiformal argument between delegates with conflicting opinions and is extremely entertaining to watch. A delegate who wishes to 'challenge' another delegate must state the reason for the challenge and receive the approval of the Chair.

Chit: A note passed by a delegate to the Dais or to other delegates, regarding committee- related matters.

Communiqué: A communiqué is a short, official news update written by a delegate and sent to the Chair, much like a *breaking news alert*.

-It is factual and neutral, no opinions, just what happened.

-It is brief, usually 1–2 paragraphs.

-It is used to inform other committees about important developments, like passed resolutions, crisis updates, or major speeches. A communiqué can be in the form of a press release, a story, a leaked letter, or even a video or audio recording.

Crisis: An unforeseen situation or problem (example: extremist attack on a government building) that the committee must work quickly to solve. Despite their excitement, crises require skilled delegates who can think on their feet.

Dais: The table or podium at which the Chairs, Moderators or Directors sit. It is the seat of facilitation of the committee.

Decorum: Parliamentary/ formal behaviour (discipline).

Delegates: Representatives of various countries' governments in the UN.

Delegation: The team of delegates sent by a particular organization.

Foreign Policy: The strategies chosen by countries pertaining to their relations with other countries, to safeguard their own interests. (e.g.: India's foreign policy does not allow it to work with Pakistan, who is considered an 'enemy' State) Delegates are expected to adhere to their foreign policies at all times.

Lobbying: This is when delegates meet and discuss their policies with each other, form blocs and informally express their views.

Logistics: The team responsible for the smooth running of a MUN conference and the comfort of delegates and press members.

Placard: The piece of cardstock with a delegate's country name on it, to be raised when one wishes to be recognized by the Chair.

Presidential Statement: It is a speech or statement made by a delegate on behalf of the Head of State of the country that he/she is representing. The statement or speech must include the exact words of the Head of State.

Right to Reply: A delegate's right to reply to when their personal/ national integrity has been put to question. This may not interrupt any speaker, and if the right to reply is authenticated by the Chair, the offending delegate will be made to apologise in any way deemed fit by the offended delegate.

Secretariat: The body of people responsible for the administration and leadership of a MUN conference. They organize the entire conference.

Secretary-General: The highest in command of a Model UN conference, and the leader of the Secretariat. They oversee the entire conference.

Signatories: All those delegates wish to discuss a document in committee, irrespective of whether or not they agree with it.

Table: To scrap or declare a document null and void.

Yield: This is what a delegate chooses to do with their left-over time after their speech is over. They may yield their time to comments, questions, another delegate or to the Dais. Time cannot be yielded in moderated caucuses

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's work or ideas without proper attribution, presenting them as one's own. As writer Jonathan Bailey stated, "Plagiarism is more than an academic issue; it's a sign of dishonesty and disrespect."

In Model United Nations, plagiarism is particularly harmful. It discredits the individual, damaging their reputation and credibility. MUN conferences are designed to simulate real-world diplomacy and foster critical thinking, research skills, and original debate among participants.

When someone plagiarises, they undermine the educational purpose of these simulations. Instead of engaging in genuine research and analysis, plagiarists take shortcuts, which detracts from their learning experience.

Moreover, plagiarism disrespects the original creators of the content, denying them the recognition they deserve.

JBMUN '25 will have strict rules against plagiarism. Any delegate who plagiarises - whether it may be in the form of a position paper, a communique, an article or any form of paperwork; will no longer be considered for an award.

14. Types Of Articles

News articles in the IPC cover various points depending on the type of article that is being written. Articles are written about different committees or about a particular problem in the committee.

But a few key points that should be covered in all articles are:

- What issue is being covered?
- How or why did the issue start?
- Who are the main people involved and why are they involved?
- Your opinion, based on your news agency's media bias.

i) **Procedural**

A procedural article is a type of writing that provides a detailed, step-by-step explanation of how committee proceeded or what happened in the duration of the entire committee. These articles are formal and completely based on facts about what happened in committee. An example would be as follows:

DePRESSing Updates

The events that took place in the IPC last night took a shocking turn of events. Right from an editor being shot to a journalist getting kidnapped. This put the delegates of the IPC on the spot in which they had to come up with quick solutions to protect the lives of their journalists. The detailed crisis updates are as follows:

1. An editor of Al Arham was chased down by a French man holding a gun, and shrieking 'Viva la francais!', 'Viva la francais!' The French man proceeded to shoot the editor, and then kill himself as well. The identity and the motive of the French man have not been identified.

Some delegates found this action Islamophobic as their editor was a Muslim. One thing was unanimous in committee, everyone condemned the actions of the French man and agreed that something like this should never happen again. Numerous delegates proposed investigations to find out who the man was and what his motive was.

2. A journalist from Le Monde went to the Russian Embassy where she was kidnapped. She has been missing for the last five days and all French news agencies are conducting investigations to find her whereabouts. The motive of the kidnapping was that the journalist was threatening to write an expository piece on how Russia planned to attack Ukrainian residents. Since this incident, Russia Today and Xinhua have gone silent on the matter and have even deleted all their social media posts. The reason the journalist went to the embassy is unknown.

The committee was split after this update, with many condemning the silence of Russia Today and Xinhua and some justifying their silence.

- **Liberation, Samaira Chanda**

ii) Opinion Editorial (Op-Ed)

Op-Eds are informal articles where a person can write about their opinions according to their bias or stance. This article can be funny, along with factual information. To write an Op-Ed, you are expected to know your allocation's stance as well as being well researched on the topic you intend to write about. For example:

Homicidal Highschoolers

There have been multiple iconic duos in the past- Sonny and Cher, Simon and Garfunkel, Napoleon and Josephine and many more. But there is one duo which the world never paid much attention to, presumably for a good reason.

Al Qaeda and ISIS- A nerve-wracking duo that is the homicidal version of your typical high-school bullies.

Al Qaeda and ISIS are two of the most powerful extremist groups in the world, with polarising agendas. These two groups rarely cross paths until they get bored and decide to terrorise an ordinary country in West Africa. Mali is the eighth largest country in Africa, with a population of 2.19 crores. Mali has been undergoing an armed conflict since 2012 and our homicidal high schoolers are the root cause.

The supreme goal of Al Qaeda is to conquer the unscrupulous "apostate" authorities in the Middle East and supersede them with "genuine" Islamic Governments. Al Qaeda's preliminary opponent is the United States, which it sees as the very crux of the Middle East's hardships.

ISIS on the other hand does not follow Al Qaeda's "far enemy" approach, favouring the "near enemy" approach, albeit on a provincial status. As such, the preliminary target of ISIS has not been the United States, but rather the 'apostate' authorities in the Arab world.

However, these two extremist groups have turned a blind eye to their agendas and instead chose to be BFFs. They bond over the division of a country that is helpless. Northern Mali has become like the high school bully's squad of minions but based on religion. This has led to Southern Mali being the main character, the one being bullied, the one that everyone is rooting for to win and stand up for themselves against the bullies. Unfortunately for our main character, the bullies won't ever give up until they capture the entire country of Mali and drown everyone in the ideals of Islam. This is a classic but not so classic example of when people get restless and miss being the centre of attention, but instead, the aforementioned 'restless people' decide to capture and terrorise a country.

-The Guardian, Myrah Goiporia

iii) Coloured Articles

These are typically funny and are not meant to follow any bias. They are meant to cast an amusing light on the ongoings of a committee. These articles can be short stories or poems

(which can be sad or serious as well), or can be written in a way which compares delegates of a committee to characters from, shows, musicals, places, or even celebrities.

For example:

An Ode to The Incompetent

Oh, my dear Jim Jordan,

I'm afraid I'm dying of boredom.

I am aware of your love for the KKK,

But is that your only personality trait?

Oh, my Dear Donald Trump,

You got elected and now off a building, I will jump.

The delegates in this committee can see,

You certainly are not back, Donnie baby!

Oh, my dear Ron DeSantis,

all around the committee, he prances,

You say you are not to blame,

But you hit a woman, what a shame, what a shame....

Oh, my dear Ted Cruz,

all you do is gab about steak and booze

Love is not just between a woman and a man,

I suggest you get a brain scan.

Oh, my dear Marjorie Taylor Greene,

You say the LGBTQ Community is unclean

However it is you who might be a part of this community,

Why else would you focus so much on a transgender woman trying to feed her baby?

Oh, my dear Melania,

At first, your beauty made everyone go ooh and ah!

Unfortunately, you have been brainwashed by your useless husband

I hope you know it's been a while since his brain has last functioned.

Oh, my dear Incompetent Individuals in the Night Crises, a civil war broke out,

The way you all behaved just shows me what you all are really about.

All bark no bite and when it comes to a solution,

Your only solution is " IF YOU AIN'T WHITE, YOU AIN'T RIGHT"

- The Delegate representing Anderson Cooper, Myrah Goiporia.

The Delegates of the IPC as characters of How I Met Your Mother:

The Delegate of China Daily - Ted Mosby. Ted is compassionate, passionate, zealous, optimistic, and slightly dorky. Unlike Barney, Ted isn't a player and he isn't as adorable as Marshall. But what really characterises him is his quick wit and passion towards his career and friends. A staunch know-it-all, quick to catch his friends when they mispronounce a word. Still, Ted is accurately the glue binding the friend group together. This holds true for the delegate representing China Daily.

The Delegate of Fox News- Barney Stinson. Barney always swoops in and saves the day whenever any member of his group is in dire need. With the help of his unmatched connections and skills. Without his presence, his group of friends would either break up or be worse off in the end. For these reasons, he's the best, and most important character.

The Delegate of The New York Times- Robin Sherbatsky. Robin is full of self-confidence and assurance. Robin does not shy away from intimidation methods when it comes to getting what she wants. And she generally comes out on top of the arguments she has with others.

The Delegate of Reforma- Marshall Eriksen. At first glance, Marshall may leave a lasting impression of intimidation. However, when you get to know him or hear the way he talks, he's actually a soft spoken, vulnerable person and always has the other person captivated by his words and has a way of explaining them such that they want to agree with him. He is extremely polite and passionate about any task at hand.

The Delegate of BBC- Lily Aldrin. Lily may look small and insignificant at times but she is the definition of "chota packet, bada dhamaka" and always ensures she gets what she wants, even if that requires her to turn to manipulative tactics.

-Fox News, Samaria Chanda.

15. Questions to Consider

1. To what extent do secret societies truly influence politics and governance, and how much of their power is a product of public perception and press coverage?
2. Should journalists treat secret societies as legitimate subjects of investigative reporting, or does covering them risk amplifying conspiracy theories?
3. How can the press balance sensationalism with credibility when exposing the activities of secretive organizations?
4. If members of governments, corporations, or media outlets belong to secret societies, how should conflicts of interest be reported?
5. Are modern equivalents of secret societies (such as exclusive think tanks, lobbying groups, or digital communities) more dangerous because they operate in plain sight yet retain hidden influence?
6. Should journalists respect the private nature of rituals and traditions of groups like Skull and Bones, or is secrecy itself a public-interest concern?
7. How can international cooperation among journalists uncover cross-border elite networks, and what risks do reporters face in doing so?
8. What is the role of satire, scandal, and rumor in shaping public understanding of secret societies? Does scandal help expose hidden truths, or does it undermine serious journalism?

16. Suggested Readings & Media Sources

Books & Articles

- Robbins, Alexandra. *Secrets of the Tomb: Skull and Bones, the Ivy League, and the Hidden Paths of Power* (2002).
- Brown, Jessica. *The Illuminati: The Secret Society That Hijacked the World* (2009).
- Yoder, Don. *The Rosicrucians in the History of Secret Societies*.
- Goodman, Amy. *The Role of the Press in Exposing Power*.

Case Studies

- “Propaganda Due (P2) Lodge Scandal” – coverage from *The Guardian* archives and BBC.
- Yale Alumni Magazine archives on Skull and Bones.

Documentaries & Media

- *Skull and Bones: The Secret Society at Yale* (History Channel, 2006).
- *Secrets of the Freemasons* (National Geographic, 2007).
- *Inside the Bilderberg Group* (BBC, 2013).
- *The Family* (Netflix, 2019).

17. Position Paper Guidelines

This year, to ensure that every Press delegate is well informed, you will be required to write a position paper.

On the top right side of your paper, you are required to write your name, allocation and country.

Font- size 12, Time New Roman

Here are a few pointers to keep in mind while you write your position paper:

- Explain your news agency's or newspaper's political alignment and bias, along with any important information about it.
- Has your news agency faced any challenges related to secret societies? If so, how and why?
- Any solutions on how the IPC can help in uncovering secret societies, involving the safety of journalists, misinformation, credibility, political views and global impact.

Please include a bibliography at the end of your position paper.

Your position papers are due on: 4th November before 11:59 pm

Position papers must be submitted before midnight on the deadline day or the delegate will not be eligible for an award.

Notice: AI and Plagiarism Policy

Delegates must submit original position papers. The use of AI tools or plagiarism in any form is strictly prohibited. **Papers found in violation will result in the delegate not being eligible for an award.** (the use of quotes in position papers will not be counted as plagiarism)

Email your position paper to jbpetit.ipc@gmail.com

18. Bibliography

Books-

- Robbins, Alexandra. *Secrets of the Tomb: Skull and Bones, the Ivy League, and the Hidden Paths of Power*. Little, Brown and Company, 2002.
- Yoder, Don. *The Rosicrucians in the History of Secret Societies*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995.
- Brown, Jessica. *The Illuminati: The Secret Society That Hijacked the World*. HarperCollins,
- Ridley, Jasper. *The Freemasons: A History of the World's Most Powerful Secret Society*. Arcade Publishing, 1999.
- Kertzer, David. *The Pope and Mussolini: The Secret History of Pius XI and the Rise of Fascism in Europe*. Random House, 2014.

Journalism & Articles

- "Italy's Secret Lodge P2: Power, Corruption, and Scandal." *The Guardian*, Guardian News & Media, 1981–1990.
- Goodman, Amy. "The Role of the Press in Exposing Power." *Democracy Now!*, 15 Mar. 2017, www.democracynow.org/2017/3/15/the_role_of_the_press_in_exposing_power. Accessed 1 Sept. 2025.
- "Inside Yale's Secret Societies." *Yale Alumni Magazine*, Yale Alumni Publications, 2003.
- "Propaganda Due (P2) and the Italian Deep State." *BBC News*, BBC, 1981.

Documentaries & Media

- *Skull and Bones: The Secret Society at Yale*. Directed by Chris Mortensen, History Channel, 2006.
- *Secrets of the Freemasons*. National Geographic, 2007.
- *Inside the Bilderberg Group*. BBC, 2013.
- *The Family*. Directed by Jesse Moss, Netflix, 2019.

Web Sources

- History.com Editors. "Freemasons." *History.com*, A&E Television Networks, 9 Nov. 2018, www.history.com/topics/secret-societies/freemasons. Accessed Sept. 2025.
- "Illuminati." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 20 Oct. 2020, www.britannica.com/topic/Illuminati. Accessed Sept. 2025.
- OCCRP. "Investigations: Networks of Power and Influence." *Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project*, 2015–2022, www.occrp.org/en/investigations. Accessed Sept. 2025.