

FIFTEEN MINUTES PASS QUICKLY

Since 2004 *Time* magazine has each year recognized 100 people as the most influential in the world. As heady a thing as it would be to find your name on such a list, the recognition also highlights the fragility of life and power in this world.

In May 2008 *Time* recognized journalist Tim Russert as one of the 100 most influential people for the power he wielded over politics on the program *Meet the Press*. In June of 2008 the respected and beloved Russert suffered a heart attack at age 58 and died.

Also named among the most powerful in the world were the three candidates still in the race for president: Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, and John McCain. One month later, Hillary Clinton ended her campaign, and before the year is out Obama or McCain will have lost in the national election.

Follow the others on the top 100 list and you can depend on it: their influence will pass, some in fading glory like the leaves of autumn, others overnight like a towering tree felled by a lumberjack.

Even for the most tenacious, life and power are brief.