

NOVAK AND ROVE UN-BREAK UP

There's a fascinating detail in Novak's self-hagiography about his break-up with his BFF Karl Rove during the CIA Leak investigation. In the middle of a longish description of their relationship, Novak describes missing Rove's company—as well as his leaks—during the three years when he and Rove didn't talk.

Indeed, in forty-four years as a Washington reporter, I never had better access to a White House as I did to start the George W. Bush administration. Karl Rove was a grade A-plus source. While he did not dispense state secrets, confidential political plans, or salacious gossip, Rove always returned my phone calls. He knew everything, and while he did not tell me all that he knew, he never lied or misled me and often steered me away from a bad tip.

Geraldine and I were guests of the Roves at a small dinner party in his Washington home, and he came to breakfast at my apartment. He was a regular speaker at the Evans-Novak Political Forum, and always attended my annual dinner party at the Army and Navy Club the night before the spring Gridiron dinner. We shared an interest in American political history, agreeing on a preference for William McKinley over Theodore Roosevelt.

When our relationship ended abruptly and completely for three years because of the CIA leak case, I missed him as a fascinating conversationalist as well as my best Bush administration source.

At least according to Novak, this warm relationship ended one day, presumably after September 29, 2003, and Novak and Rove didn't

speaking for three years.

You'd think the reason would be legal—as two key witnesses to the case, it might be considered obstruction for the two to talk (putting their September 29, 2003 conversation aside). So, they put their relationship on a hiatus for the entire time Rove was under investigation. Right?

No.