

# Presidential Speechwriting

NUMBER SEVEN

Presidential Rhetoric Series

*Martin J. Medhurst, General Editor*



# Presidential Speechwriting

FROM THE NEW DEAL TO THE  
REAGAN REVOLUTION AND BEYOND

Edited by Kurt Ritter and Martin J. Medhurst

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*In Memory of*

**Paul D. Erickson**

1954–1997



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Many hands helped to make the conference a success. We are particularly grateful to the former presidential and vice presidential speechwriters who participated in the conference: Jim McGrath, Sandy Muir, Curt Smith, Craig R. Smith, and Gordon Stewart. Another former speechwriter, Paul Erickson, never made it to the White House, but wrote for several presidential candidates. Paul participated in the 1996 conference as an academic. A Harvard-trained Ph.D. in American Studies, Paul had discovered the field of speech communication and was teaching in the Communication Department at Emerson College until his untimely death, in 1997, at age forty-three. He will be missed.

Much has changed in the six years since these essays were originally presented. In 1996, the Program in Presidential Rhetoric was part of the Center for Presidential Studies, under the direction of Professor George C. Edwards III. Today, we remain a part of the newly renamed Center for Policy and Governance, now under the able direction of Professor Kenneth J. Meier. In 1996, the George Bush Presidential Library Foundation, under executive director Don Wilson, was a strong supporter of our program. Today, the Bush Foundation, under the leadership of former ambassador Roman Popadiuk, is the major funding source for our annual conferences. In 1996, the Bush Presidential Library had yet to open its doors. Its first director-in-waiting, David Alsobrook, was an enthusiastic participant in the activities of the Program in Presidential Rhetoric. Today, Bush Library director Douglas Menarchik is exploring ways in which to partner with the Program in Presidential Rhetoric to deliver even better public programming. In 1996, the Department of Speech Communication was guided by Linda Putnam. Today, it is under the direction of Richard L. Street, Jr. To all of these individuals, both past and present, we owe a debt of thanks.

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