

P E T E R L A N G

Reading the Presidency

ADVANCES IN PRESIDENTIAL RHETORIC

EDITED BY STEPHEN J. HEIDT
AND MARY E. STUCKEY

This edited collection explores ways to better understand the rhetorical workings of political executives, especially the United States president. Scholars of the presidency, rhetorical theorists and critics, and various authors examine the ways in which presidents use the institution, the media, and popular culture to instantiate, expand, and wield executive power.

Stephen J. Heidt earned his PhD at Georgia State University in Rhetoric and Politics. His work focuses on the intersections between the presidency and American foreign policy. He has published in *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, *Southern Communication Journal*, and several edited volumes.

Mary E. Stuckey is Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences at Penn State University. She is the recipient of the National Communication Association's Distinguished Scholar Award. Her books have won the Roderick P. Hart Outstanding Book Award, the Marie Hochmuth Nichols Award, and the Bruce E. Gronbeck Political Communication Award.



Reading the Presidency



Mitchell S. McKinney and Mary E. Stuckey
General Editors

Vol. 43

The Frontiers in Political Communication series
is part of the Peter Lang Media and Communication list.

Every volume is peer reviewed and meets
the highest quality standards for content and production.



PETER LANG
New York • Bern • Berlin
Brussels • Vienna • Oxford • Warsaw

Reading the Presidency

Advances in Presidential Rhetoric

Edited by Stephen J. Heidt
and Mary E. Stuckey



PETER LANG
New York • Bern • Berlin
Brussels • Vienna • Oxford • Warsaw

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Heidt, Stephen J., editor. | Stuckey, Mary E., editor.
Title: Reading the presidency: advances in presidential rhetoric /
edited by Stephen J. Heidt and Mary E. Stuckey.
Description: New York: Peter Lang, 2019.
Series: Frontiers in political communication; vol. 43 | ISSN 1525-9730
Includes bibliographical references.
Identifiers: LCCN 2018032137 | ISBN 978-1-4331-3542-2 (hardback: alk. paper)
ISBN 978-1-4331-6606-8 (paperback: alk. paper)
ISBN 978-1-4331-6053-0 (ebook pdf)
ISBN 978-1-4331-6054-7 (epub) | ISBN 978-1-4331-6055-4 (mobi)
Subjects: LCSH: Communication in politics—United States. |
Presidents—United States—Language. | Political oratory—United States. |
Rhetoric—Political aspects—United States. |
Executive power—United States.
Classification: LCC JA85.2.U6 R42 | DDC 352.2301/4—dc23
LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018032137>
DOI 10.3726/b14831

Bibliographic information published by **Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek**.
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the “Deutsche
Nationalbibliografie”; detailed bibliographic data are available
on the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de/>.

© 2019 Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., New York
29 Broadway, 18th floor, New York, NY 10006
www.peterlang.com

All rights reserved.

Reprint or reproduction, even partially, in all forms such as microfilm,
xerography, microfiche, microcard, and offset strictly prohibited.



Contents

Acknowledgments	vii
Introduction: The Study of Presidential Rhetoric in Uncertain Times: Thoughts on Theory and Praxis Stephen J. Heidt	1
Section One: Reading the President through Institutions	21
Chapter One: Cartographer-in-Chief: Maps in Televisual Addresses and the Cold War President as Geographic Educator Timothy Barney	23
Chapter Two: Reading the Presidency <i>In Situ</i> : Obama in Cuba and the Significance of Place in U.S. Presidential Public Address Allison M. Prasch	44
Chapter Three: The Other Presidential Rhetoric: Rhetorical Mobilization within the White House Milene Ortega and Mary E. Stuckey	65
Chapter Four: Genre-Busting: Campaign Speech Genres and the Rhetoric of Political Outsiders Ryan Neville-Shepard	86

Chapter Five: The Rise of Comforter-in-Chief: Presidential Responses to Violence Since Reagan	106
Jay P. Childers and Cassandra C. Bird	
Section Two: Reading the Presidency through Interactions	127
Chapter Six: Obama's Command: Chemical Weapons in Syria and the Global Duties of a Rhetorical Presidency	129
Ronald Walter Greene and Jay Alexander Frank	
Chapter Seven: Unpresided: Articulating the Presidency in the Age of Trump	150
Blake Abbott	
Chapter Eight: Trump, Twitter, and the Microdiatribe: The Short Circuits of Networked Presidential Public Address	171
Stephen J. Heidt and Damien Smith Pfister	
Chapter Nine: Pioneers, Prophets, and Profligates: George W. Bush's Presidential Interaction with Science	195
Leah Ceccarelli	
Chapter Ten: Negotiating the Limits of a Multiparty Democracy: Michelle Bachelet's Rhetoric of Commitment	213
Belinda A. Stillion Southard	
Section Three: Reading the Presidency through Interruptions	233
Chapter Eleven: The Debt Ceiling Debacle: Presidentialism as Cruel Optimism	235
Paul Johnson	
Chapter Twelve: The Discursive Antecedents to Richard Nixon's War on Drugs	257
Joel M. Lemuel	
Chapter Thirteen: Home-Making, Nation-Making: American Womanhood in Progressive Era Presidential Rhetoric	281
Leslie J. Harris	
Chapter Fourteen: White "Honky" Liberals, Rhetorical Disidentification, and Black Power during the Johnson Administration	300
Lisa Corrigan	
Afterword: Reflections on Rhetoric and the Presidency	326
David Zarefsky	
About the Contributors	341