

Adventures in rhetorical seismology:
Using shifting speech drafts to detect
institutional differences within the White House

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Abstract

The stoic exterior of the White House conceals a variety of political, personal, and institutional cleavages. While these internal divisions usually cannot be observed, one way of uncovering them is through an examination of changes between the various drafts of presidential speeches.

This study uses DICTION software produce a quantitative analysis of changes in presidential speeches as they move through the drafting and vetting process. Drafts of presidential addresses from Franklin Roosevelt to George H.W. Bush are analyzed to illustrate the impact of the White House staffing process on the presidential rhetoric that publicly defined these presidencies. Combined with a detailed analysis of the speechwriting process, the quantitative results illustrate how political and institutional forces within the Executive branch struggle to advance their goals through the presidents' choice of words and demonstrate a new method of tracking and reconsidering power within the White House.

Adventures in Rhetorical Seismology*

Big presidential speeches are constructed in the way the Romans built their temples: The major components are carved in workshops all over the site and then hoisted into place according to the architect's plans.¹

George W. Bush speechwriter David Frum

While the serene exterior of the White House has become one of the world's most reassuring political symbols, its inner workings involve a messy set of clashes that we seldom see. Like movements of the giant tectonic plates underneath the surface of the earth, we are generally aware of the powerful political forces at work inside the White House and can even name them and their place on organizational charts. Despite this, political scientists continue to struggle to predict their movement and their consequences.

Scholars often talk about the presidency as a single institution, occasionally acknowledging conflict within the ranks while regarding these battles as aberrations caused by unchecked personal ambitions or political ideologies. The study of writing and reviewing presidential speeches presents an avenue for looking more systematically at the inner workings of the presidency as an institution and bringing into focus some of the differences between the offices within. While much of the deliberation in the White House is never recorded, the nature of the speechwriting leaves the remnants of conflict in written drafts as a proposed speech moves from office to office.

Speechwriting is a unique opportunity for study for several reasons. First, it is a waypoint for every kind of policy debated in the White House. Jeff Tulis has described the speechwriting office as “an institutional locus of policy making in the White House, not merely an annex to policymaking.”² Reagan speechwriter Peggy Noonan confirmed this view, saying, “speechwriting in the Reagan White House was where the philosophical, ideological, and political tensions of the administration got worked out.”³ Most speechwriters are not involved in deciding public policy (with notable exceptions like Ted Sorensen and Mike Gerson) or political strategy, but they work closely with political and policy advisors through the process. The speech clearance process brings together the full range of political and institutional interests

that roam the White House to the editing table much like a watering hole draws many exotic species to one location.

In addition, the paper trail the speechwriting process opens the door for both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The policy debates and political strategy sessions in the White House are most often meetings in which little may be written down, the speech writing and drafting process requires that ideas be put to paper at different points in time. This trail of drafts traces the intellectual and political evolution of the administration's deliberations and allows us to see differences between individuals and offices otherwise not recorded.

This paper is part of a larger study of presidential speechwriting from FDR to the present that uses changes to speech drafts from the archives of presidents from Roosevelt to George H.W. Bush to construct a kind of crude rhetorical seismograph designed to detect institutional conflict within the White House by measuring the shifts in rhetoric in speech drafts. The results presented here demonstrate that speeches change dramatically over the course of the process in the White House and that the presidency is not of one mind, supporting Terry Moe's description of the institution as "a maze of supporting expectations and relations."⁴ It appears that the modern presidency is composed of many offices with similar, but not identical perspectives and goals. In fact, while the different perspectives within the White House walls are often relatively subtle, there are often major differences in speech drafts that suggest that there are major differences to be resolved before the president goes public with a policy idea.

Why study speechwriting and clearance

What most people fail to realize is that making a major Presidential address is something akin to enacting a public law.⁵

Ford Speechwriter Robert Hartmann

Presidential communication has become the central focus of media coverage and scholarly treatments of the presidency. Whether about the "bully pulpit" or "going public" citizens, reporters, and scholars increasingly evaluate presidents based on their public performances and presidential speech has been the focus of some of the most influential books on the presidency. Jeff Tulis argues in [The Rhetorical](#)

Presidency that presidential appeals for public support have fundamentally transformed the presidency and undone the intention of the authors of the Constitution.⁶ In Going Public, Sam Kernell makes a similar claim that presidential appeals to the public for support have undermined the compromise and bargaining needed to make representative democracy work well.⁷ Lawrence Jacobs and Robert Shapiro have argued that presidents have increasingly engaged in a strategy that they label “crafted speech” that has subtly undermined representation.⁸ George Edwards’ recent book arguing that the impact of presidential speech is often overstated⁹ has done little to diminish interest in those speeches.

While presidential speeches are one of the most visible elements of president power, surprisingly little study has been dedicated to the process behind the president’s words. Even the White House press corps that hangs on every presidential phrase usually shows little interest in writers who helped draft those phrases and the coverage of speechwriters focuses more on the personalities involved than on the dynamics of the process.

While the connection between presidential rhetoric and presidential power makes the crafting of presidential speech significant on its own, we can also examine the speechwriting process as a window studying power in the modern White House. As William Muir, a speechwriter for Vice President Bush noted, “Within the quiet and the unity of the presidency, the circulation of a draft speech aroused strong-willed individuals. Those who knew what mattered in government converged on speeches.”¹⁰

Speechwriting presents a unique opportunity to the White House for several reasons. As Karen Hult and Charles Walcott point out, “presidential speeches can be catalysts for the formulation of public policy and political strategy, compelling presidents and their advisers to make policy decisions in order to be able to articulate them.”¹¹ Often there is nothing to fight over until a speech is produced. Drafts of presidential addresses are often the first time specific positions are committed to paper and circulated throughout the administration. George W. Bush’s communications director Karen Hughes noted that speechwriting “forces the policy decisions to be finalized.”¹² Ideas may be tossed around by individuals and offices within the White House, but they do not become the position of the White House until spoken

by the president. This often makes speechwriters witnesses to the differences within the administration because of their role in reconciling different versions of proposed speeches.

In addition, the speechwriting process itself can generate policy ideas as the need for inspiring language alters policy. Franklin Roosevelt once took a pencil and raised the number of planes that he was calling for in a speech draft. When Harry Hopkins questioned why the President was now calling for production beyond what military and production advisors had given, Roosevelt remarked: “Oh, the production people can do it if they really try.”¹³ The significance of presidential phrasing goes beyond the response of the public because presidential speech plays an important role in the policy process as offices throughout the government pour over presidential comments searching for an endorsement of their office’s priorities. As Bradley Patterson eloquently puts it, “A slight verbal nuance could set hundreds of thousands applauding but may commit hundreds of millions in resources.”¹⁴

The battles over lines in presidential speech in the White House may be the best place to study White House politics because they reveal the full array of distinct personal, bureaucratic, interest group, and even geographic perspectives. While they need to present a unified front to the outside world, these forces feel free to debate among themselves inside the walls of the White House. While generally out of sight, these battles can be unearthed in the changes to drafts of presidential speeches stored in the archives.

The Speechwriting Process in the Modern White House

The evolution of the speechwriting process has been driven by the pressures on the presidency to avoid missteps even while producing more speeches. Calvin Coolidge noted that: “Everything that the President does potentially at least is of such great importance that he must be constantly on guard.”¹⁵ One presidential speechwriter recoiled at the objections to the scripting of presidents: “Why can’t he just wing it? The answer is that everything the president says is engraved eternally in stone.”¹⁶ By the time Franklin Roosevelt took office the worry over the choice of presidential words led to a process designed

to both maximize their impact while minimizing mistakes and the Nixon administration would see an office dedicated specifically to speechwriting.

The speechwriting process in the White House today involves seven steps: (1) scheduling, (2) assignment, (3) drafting and editing, (4) circulation and comment, (5) staff revisions, (6) presidential revision, and (7) presidential ad-libbing.¹⁷ While the system has evolved in some regards, some elements of the process remain the same from Franklin Roosevelt to the present. While each of these steps deserves some consideration, the steps four and five are the primary focus here since they best inform us about the functioning of the White House in general.

Circulation and comment

While some elements of presidential speechwriting have been relatively consistent over time, the circulation of speech drafts throughout the executive branch, a process often labeled “staffing,” has become more expansive and standardized since the 1970s. For example, during the Kennedy Administration, the circulation speech drafts would vary from speech to speech with Kennedy deliberately avoiding departments where he expected to encounter resistance. In a draft of his remarks for the annual Gridiron Club Dinner, Kennedy pointedly joked, “This speech has not been submitted to the State Department for clearance... so I have been asked to announce that these views are not necessarily theirs - - which is all right, since their views are not always mine.”¹⁸

While there was a legitimate need for a systematic process to vet speeches, staffing would grow, according to Hult and Walcott, “out of control.”¹⁹ When a reporter asked how many speechwriters worked in the Ford White House, Robert Orben turned to another speechwriter and said, “I don’t know Milt [Freeman], how many are there now? Is it five or six hundred?”²⁰

The modern speech review process should not be dismissed as a routine clerical matter left to minor administration officials. While cabinet secretaries often leave the initial review of most speech drafts to assistants, the process often involves many of the top people in the administration. Major speeches often involved significant disagreements. Ronald Reagan’s famous June 1987 speech at the Brandenburg Gate

generated a great deal of debate within the administration with both Deputy National Security Advisor Colin Powell and Secretary of State George Shultz strongly objecting to versions of the draft in part because of the language behind urging “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!” Reagan would eventually approve the strong language telling his speechwriters with a smile, “The boys at State are going to kill me but it’s the right thing to do.”²¹

In addition, we should not assume that the process only involves a few speeches. An excellent example is the seemingly innocuous process of finding the right words to light the National Christmas Tree. After drafting the remarks for George H.W. Bush’s 1989 tree lighting ceremony, the speechwriters circulated their draft to 17 key officials in and around the White House. The memorandum asked for “action” by eight individuals including Brent Scowcroft (National Security Council), Boyden Gray (White House Counsel), Fred McClure (head of Congressional Relations), and Roger Porter (Director of Policy Development). Nine others were given copies “FYI.” Those who were informed without their advice being sought included Chief of Staff John Sununu, Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater, presidential image-maker Sig Rogich, Deputy Assistant to the President for Communications Chriss Winston, and Vice President Dan Quayle.²² The feedback was substantial. National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft suggested deleting the phrase “From the Atlantic to the Urals” from the speech’s claim of a “far better Christmas than Europe has ever known.” As Scowcroft noted in the margins, the phrase “Echoes Soviet contention regarding a ‘Common European house.’” Scowcroft also circled a reference to “Unconquerable people” and noted, “In fact, the Czechs have a history of yielding without a fight.”²³

The debate in the staffing process can rise from many different types of concerns. A good example of geographic concerns is a memo from a member of Gerald Ford’s NSC staff who complained “the fact remains that if we do not break the continued absence of any reference to Africa in the President’s speeches, the adverse impact this creates in Africa will only increase.” Horan, as a representative of the National Security Council, was not simply representing the specific interests of the agency. He was instead trying to find presidential language that would dissuade the perception on that continent that

Africa is unimportant to the United States.²⁴ The language of George W. Bush's speech to a joint session of Congress after the September 11 attacks was edited due to similar concerns. In the original draft Islamic extremists were compared to the Nazis and Communists who had disappeared "History's graveyard of discarded lies." However, the word "communist" was changed to "totalitarianism" to avoid offending China whose vote would be needed in the U. N. Security Council.²⁵ International constituencies even found their way into Reagan's famous address at Pointe du Hoc on the anniversary of the Normandy invasion. After being lobbied by the State department, Peggy Noonan added a reference to the Soviet Union's role in defeating the Germans to the speech that honored the Rangers from U.S. forces. As she complained at the time, the added reference interfered with the flow of the speech: "It sounds like we stopped the speech dead to throw a fish to the bear."²⁶

The president's annual "state of the union" speech is the premier battleground for presidential rhetoric as every department and agency angle for a place in the speech that will give them a foothold in policy and budget battles to come. As Aram Bakshian, a veteran of three administrations, pointed out, everyone wants to get into this speech: "Every little crappy agency wants their stuff, their agenda, included."²⁷ Clark Clifford suggested that, "Every department, of course, would want the State of the Union message devoted practically exclusively to their problems."²⁸

Some of the battles are more ideological than institutional. The Reagan speechwriters generally considered themselves the ideological heart of the White House. John Ehrlichman complained that in the writing of one of Nixon's speech on Vietnam as "all the ideological factions of the White House staff—came creeping out of the bushes."²⁹ Sometimes the disagreements are over words that may not carry formal policy implications. Still, the fight over words is often seen as a battle for the heart and soul of the administration and how the policies are framed can become almost as important as the policies themselves.

Interest groups also come into play during the review process. During the Reagan administration, Elizabeth Dole, who as head of the Office of Public Liaison, asked to see a draft of the 1982 State of the

Union address so that she could see how well the draft reached key constituencies. Dole wrote head speechwriter Aram Bakshian: “Since you are well aware of our mandate, I am sure you can appreciate my interest in having the opportunity to see one of our SOTUA drafts. From a constituency standpoint, it is critical that we have a solid acknowledgement of the importance of women, Hispanics, Blacks, and ethnics.”³⁰

Rounding out the conflict in the White House is personal ambition. As one veteran of the White House observed, personal conflicts overlay the complex politics of the executive branch: “Amidst the vortex of controversy, personal ambitions would swirl.”³¹ Putting it more colorfully, Reagan speechwriter Peggy Noonan complained about “cheap jockeying” and “sleazy backstabbing in the White house.”³²

Staff revisions

By the end of the review process, speeches have been reviewed by many officials, all with their own motives. The task of reassembling the speech falls to the speechwriters whose desks are covered by marked-up speech drafts from all over the executive branch. Incorporating the feedback that comes from around the White House is a unique combination of literary art and diplomacy as speechwriters try to incorporate conflicting advice from a large number of administration officials—most of whom outrank them. Michael Gerson, who was head speechwriter during George W. Bush’s first term, commented, “I tell new writers that I hire that the job is half-writing and half-diplomacy.”³³

The position of the speechwriters in the process and the conflicting advice of others in the White House allow speechwriters to maintain some control over the prose. As one Carter speechwriter noted, if they used all the input the speech would become “hodgepodge.”³⁴ Speechwriters in some administrations sometimes find themselves unable to reject enough suggestions to put together a cohesive speech. In these cases the fate of the speech ultimately goes to the president, allowing them the opportunity to regain control over the content and put the speech back together. However, this might be difficult if the speechwriters have not laid a solid foundation. In his attempt to placate both sides of the battle over the 1976 State of the Union, Ford took bits and pieces of the competing drafts and, according to head

speechwriter Robert Hartmann, “strung them together like a string of beads. He thought that was pretty dandy. Nobody was willing to tell him how terrible it was.”³⁵

By the end of this process, any claim of authorship is greatly clouded. As the writers and the analysts square off, all sides jealously guard their turf--with good cause. The speechwriters produce better speeches, but the policy makers know the policy. While the President serves as editor in chief, it is generally hard for them to find time to do more than choose from among competing drafts. Presidents will occasionally completely redraft speeches. However, this kind of effort is rare given the pressing time demands of the office.

Data and Measures

To compliment the use of traditional case studies, speech drafts from the ten administrations from Franklin Roosevelt through George H. W. Bush were examined.³⁶ Speeches from each administration were selected for detailed analysis and a complete list of speeches included in the study is included in Appendix A.

The cases do not reflect a random sample of speeches for several reasons. First, while having a random sample of all speeches from each administration might be desirable for the study of some hypotheses, such a sampling is not possible. The production and retention of written drafts was inconsistent and drafts of some speeches are not available. Some drafts were not saved while other drafts would be physically sacrificed to the process, their pages cut and pasted into a new version of the speech. The speeches that received more staff attention were more likely to be chosen for in study since the White House produced and retained the multiple speech drafts required for comparison. Secondly, even if a random sample was possible, the time and expense required gathering, copy, and coding multiple drafts of enough speeches to provide a reliable sample is not practical for a multi-administration study.

Finally, a representative sample is not necessary here because my argument is not that significant conflict will appear on all speeches, only that differences will emerge within White House. The presence

of clashing perspectives on routine speeches like the National Christmas Tree lighting statement is not the standard sought here, even though an earlier study has found an active editing process and some lively debate on that speech as well.³⁷ Instead, this study identified and studied especially significant presidential speeches because those cases were more likely to produce evidence of the internal tensions. Even then, the presidential libraries did not always yield enough drafts for analysis. For example, drafts of Lyndon Johnson's speech calling for the Voting Rights Act, considered by some his best speech, seem to be missing from the archives.

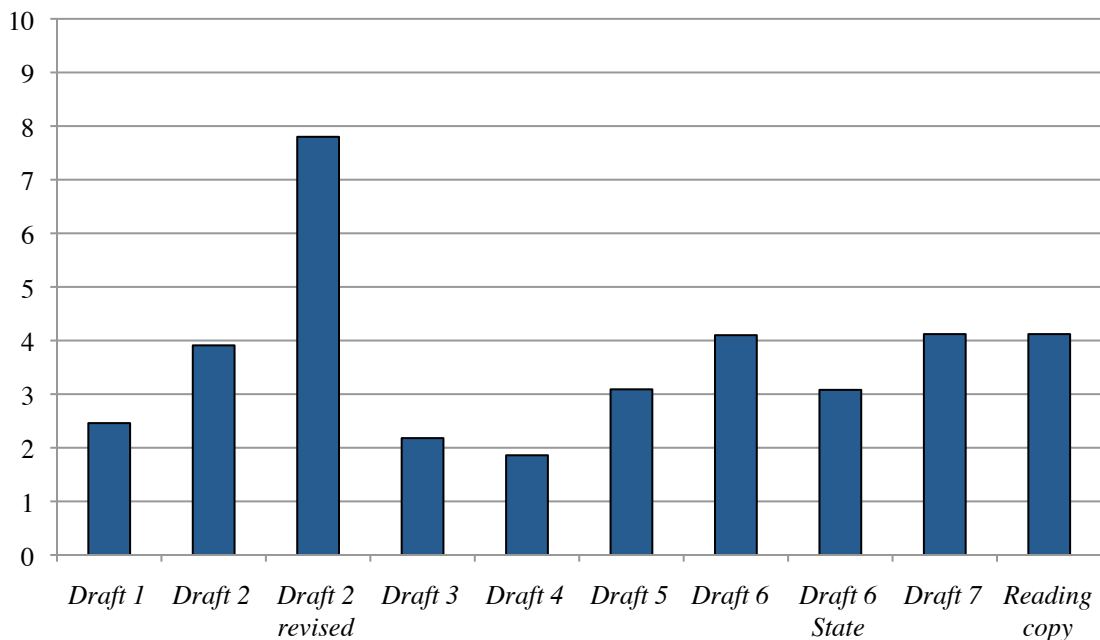
Drafts of the inaugural addresses for every president studied were sought because these were important addresses. The initial inaugural address can serve as a case of presidential speech constructed before the formal White House staff structure was in place.³⁸ In addition, at least one State of the Union address was utilized as well because it represented the only other major policy address common to all presidents. Campaign speeches were deliberately excluded because they often used different sets of speechwriters and reviewers.

Multiple drafts of each of speech were either photocopied or digitally photographed from the respective presidential libraries, or in the case of Nixon speeches, from Nixon Project in the National Archives. The drafts were then put into machine-readable form for analysis using content analysis software. Because the drafts were often hand-written or included hand-written revisions, automated scanning was not possible and most passages had to be manually typed. In some cases a single paper draft could yield two distinct drafts, in one form to reflect the original typed version created by the speechwriter with a second version that includes handwritten revisions and additions by the president or others in the White House.

To date, 451 speech drafts including over 1.2 million words have survived this process and can be analyzed using the DICTION software initially developed by Rod Hart for his 1984 book, Verbal Style and the Presidency,³⁹ and has been refined in the almost 30 years since its creation. Currently in version 6.15, DICTION software evaluates the use of language by looking for the frequency of words from thirty-

one different sets of words or “dictionaries.” Each dictionary (described in Appendix B) yields a semantic score based on the frequency of words from that dictionary.⁴⁰ DICTION’s broad examination of language and the prominence of Hart’s study makes DICTION a logical choice because his measures will be familiar to some scholars in the field and comparable to other studies in political communication. While other software might be used in future studies, the precise nature of variables is not a central issue here because *change* is the primary concern. Further, we can not precisely predict what kinds of rhetorical shifts will occur because political debates are dynamic and nuanced. No software or human coder will be able to fully grasp all the implications of political rhetoric across the many events and issues addressed here.⁴¹

Figure 1:
Centrality Score in FDR's Arsenal of Democracy speech



To illustrate the data and the need to refine its measurement, Figure 1 charts the levels of *centrality* (the DICTION variable reflecting substantive agreement on core values) on different drafts of Franklin Roosevelt’s famous “Arsenal of Democracy” speech. The figure shows that *centrality* changes over the course of the drafting and revision process, with a large spike in such language in the revisions suggested

on draft two. The results paint an interesting picture of the speech's development and looks like what we might expect. The chart reveals some early experimentation with language before the speechwriters settled into the more moderate or cautious language that we would expect from the refinements of a staffing process.

While the picture is interesting, we need some help making sense of these changes since it is unclear what such a shift means. While the jump from 4 to 8 on centrality tells us that words associated with centrality doubled in the revisions to the second draft, it is hard to place that shift in the context of presidential speeches and judge how significant a change of this magnitude. DICTION is especially useful because it allows users to compare the results from their data with Hart's results from a menu of different speech types. Most relevant to this study, the software offers results from the "public policy speeches" profile based on 615 policy speeches delivered by presidents from Harry Truman to Bill Clinton. This profile was chosen as a baseline for this study since it closely matches the kind of presidential addresses studied here. For each profile, DICTION reports a "normal range" that spans scores ± 1 standard deviation of the mean of the scores from these 615 presidential speeches. Although Hart originally used this range to evaluate whether the rhetoric in texts fall into what might be considered typical for a type of speech, the normal range can also be used to provide a standard for evaluating changes across drafts of the same speech. For example, based upon the 615 presidential speeches in Hart's database, the normal range for the *centrality* variable in presidential addresses ranges 2.27 to 6.97⁴². The difference between these two (4.7) can be interpreted as the amount of variation in *centrality* normally found across different presidential speeches. This difference, labeled "*normal variation*," is used as a standard of the degree of change in rhetoric to more easily summarize the data so that changes across drafts and rhetorical characteristics can be more easily compared.

This use of the *normal variation* measure creates something similar to ANOVA (analysis of variance) technique that compares variation across different groups to variation within groups. The decision to measure change between drafts of the same speech against differences between speeches from different

presidents sets a high standard and the finding that the different versions of a speech would vary more than speeches on a variety of policies promoted by different presidents speaking to different generations offers a strong test.

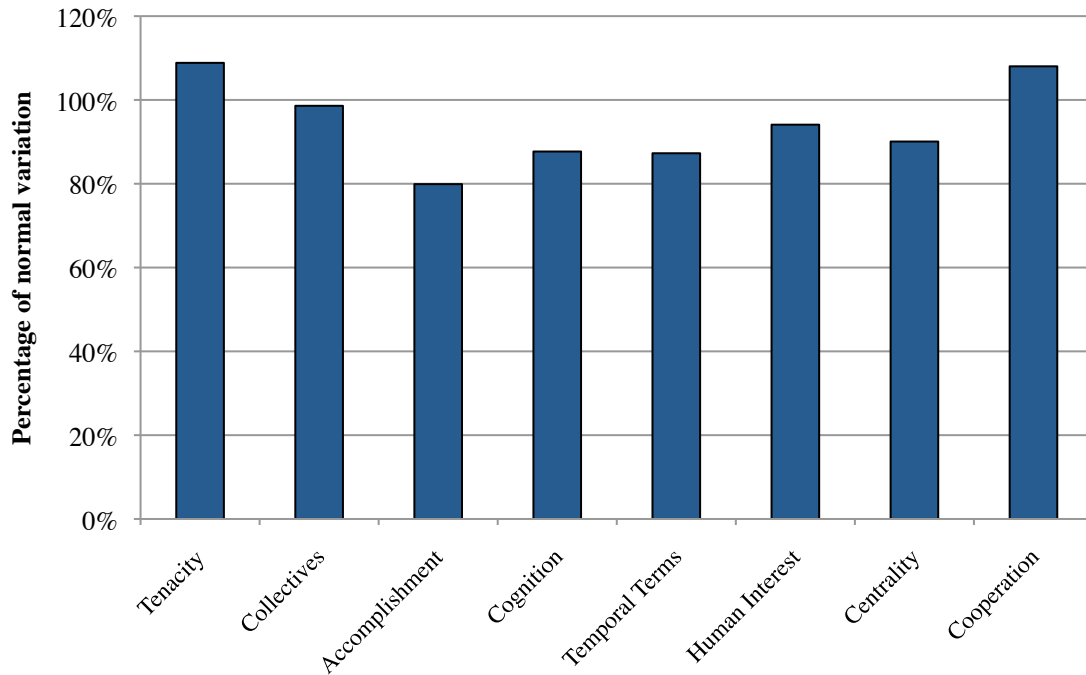
This study does not use the results from all 31 variables based on DICTION's dictionaries for two reasons. First, presenting the results from 31 variables would be cumbersome. Second, in order to insure that the case selection behind DICTION's normal variation was not driving results, I created a second measure of normal variation based only on the presidential speeches included in the study of drafts in this paper and used only those variables that performed consistently across both measures of *normal variation*. This narrowed the analysis to eight variables: *Accomplishment*, *Centrality*, *Cognition*, *Collectives*, *Cooperation*, *Human Interest*, *Temporal Terms*, and *Tenacity*.

Because DICTION's variables have different ranges, the range of variation between drafts for each variable on each speech was divided by the *normal variation* for that variable. This created the *percentage of normal variation* measure that facilitates comparison of the changes across variables and speeches. On this scale, a score of 100% indicates that the drafts of a speech varied as much as different presidential speeches.

Results

Before looking at differences across speeches and presidents, we should first look at what kind changes to rhetoric occur during the speechwriting process to better understand the variables themselves and kinds of changes in rhetoric that occur. The average change in percentage of normal variation by variable is reported in Figure 2.⁴³ While there may not be dramatic differences between the performance of these variables *accomplishment* is clearly the most stable (80%) while *tenacity* and *cooperation* are the most likely see change (108% and 109%).⁴⁴

Figure 2:
Average draft variation by rhetorical score



Finding the largest shifts in *tenacity* and *cooperation* seem the natural outcome of the White House fine-tuning its message on how flexible they will be as they stake out their position in a speech.

Cooperation may be more sensitive to political strategies since that responds to changes in words related to getting along and working together as well as terms related to include more neutral interactions (like consolidate, mediate, alignment) and personal involvement (teamwork, sharing, contribute). *Tenacity* is designed to detect confidence and totality by analyzing all uses of the verb “to be” (is, am, will, shall) as well as variants of three definitive verb forms (has, must, do).

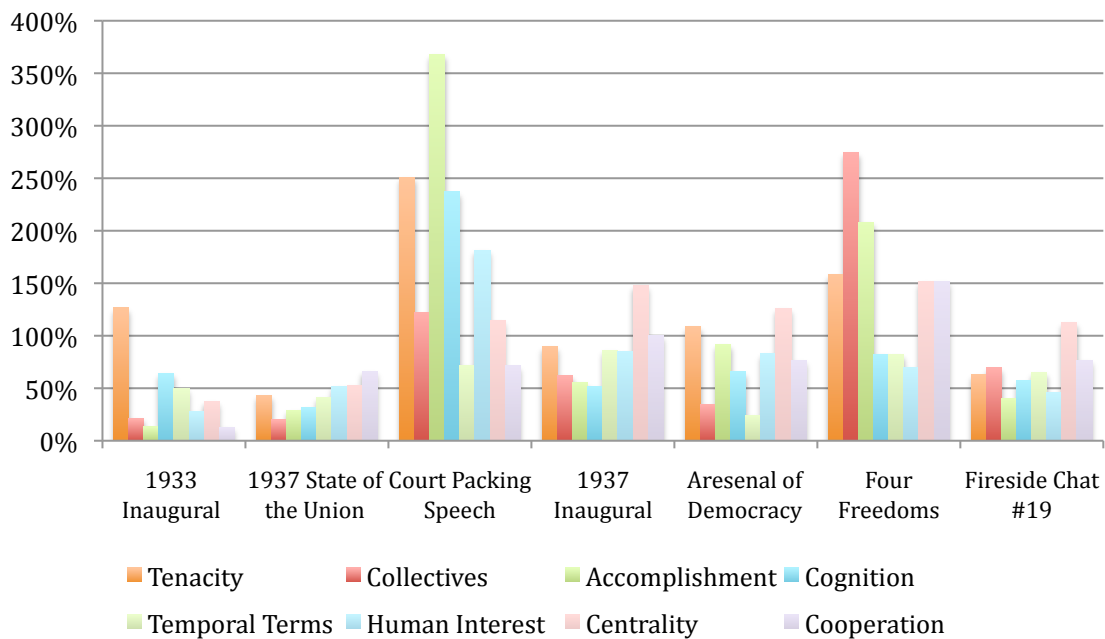
The stability of *accomplishment* might be expected since it involves language related to the success and the completion of tasks and organizing and motivating human behavior. Similarly, the frequency of *temporal terms* (languages places the subject a specific time-interval) changes relatively little over the course of a speech unless the broad framing of the message changes. *Cognition* (terms related to

questioning, learning, calculating and analyzing) and *centrality* (language relating to agreement on core values)

The results for *human interest* and *collectives* fall in between. The human interest dictionary looks for personal pronouns as well as those that describe family members and relations (cousin, wife, grandchild, uncle), as well generic terms (friend, baby, human, persons) because concentrating on people and their activities gives rhetoric a life-like quality. Collectives focuses on language associated with social groupings crowd, choir, team, humanity), “task groups” (army, congress, legislature, staff) and geographical entities (county, world, kingdom, republic).

As the first presidency studied, the Roosevelt administration makes an obvious starting point for comparisons across speeches. As Figure 3 shows, the amount of change in speech drafts vary tremendously over the seven speeches analyzed.

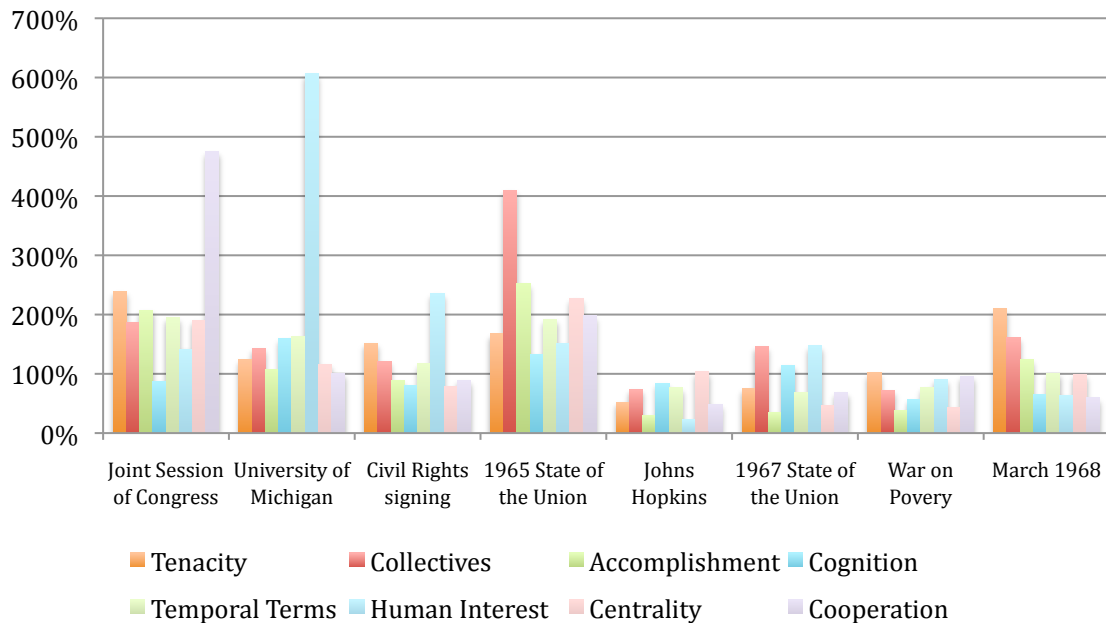
Figure 4:
Shifts in Rhetorical Variables as a Percentage of Normal Variation
Franklin D. Roosevelt



While FDR’s speechwriting process usually produces relatively stable rhetoric, FDR’s address

defending his “court packing” plan reveals more instability than the other address. For example, language related to DICTION’s *accomplishment* variable (usually the most stable variable) shifted 368% of the normal range over the course of the drafting process. The *accomplishment* dictionary looks for words related to expansion (grow, increase, generate, construction) and general functionality (handling, strengthen, succeed) as well as programmatic language (agenda, enacted, working, leadership). Roosevelt’s court packing plan generated considerable debate in the White House and this is reflected in an amount of change from draft to draft over 3.5 times greater than the normal range of all presidential speeches. This result suggests that the measures employed here successfully discriminate between stable cases and those cases that generate more divisions within the White House.

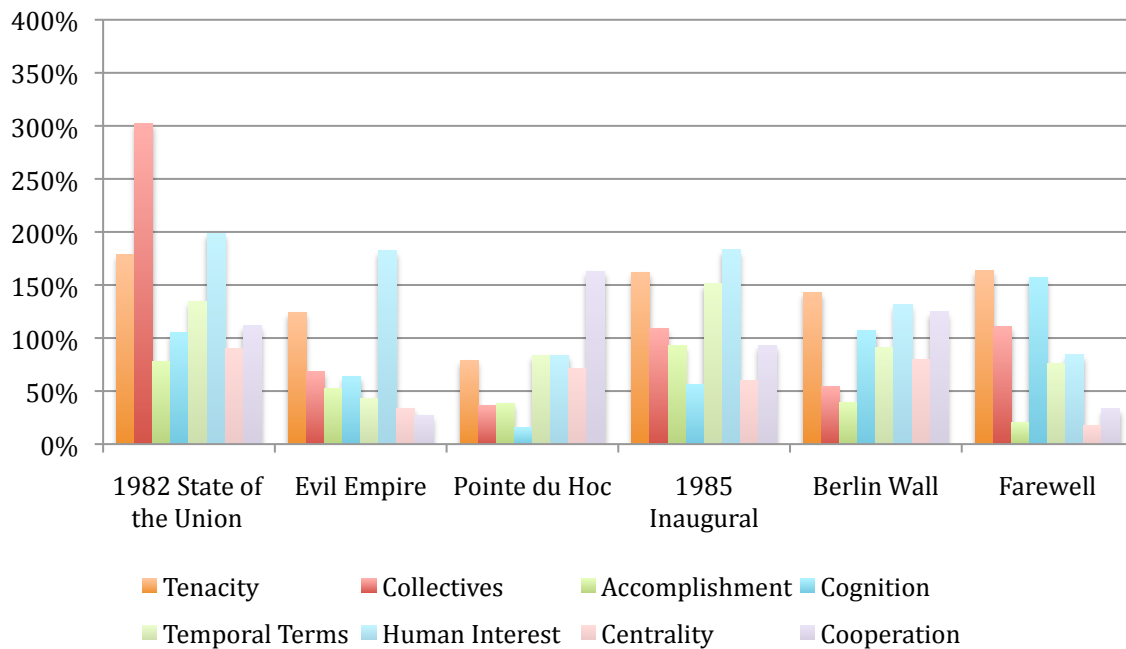
Figure 4:
Shifts in Rhetorical Variables as a Percentage of Normal Variation
Lyndon Johnson



Results from the Reagan administration suggest that his administration saw more conflict in the annual state of the union message than in other addresses. As Figure 5 shows, Reagan’s speechwriting process reveals very little conflict, with the most change showing up in the 1982 State of the Union

Address. The State of the Union Address represented a case where the Reagan speechwriters had to answer to the policy and political advisors throughout the administration.

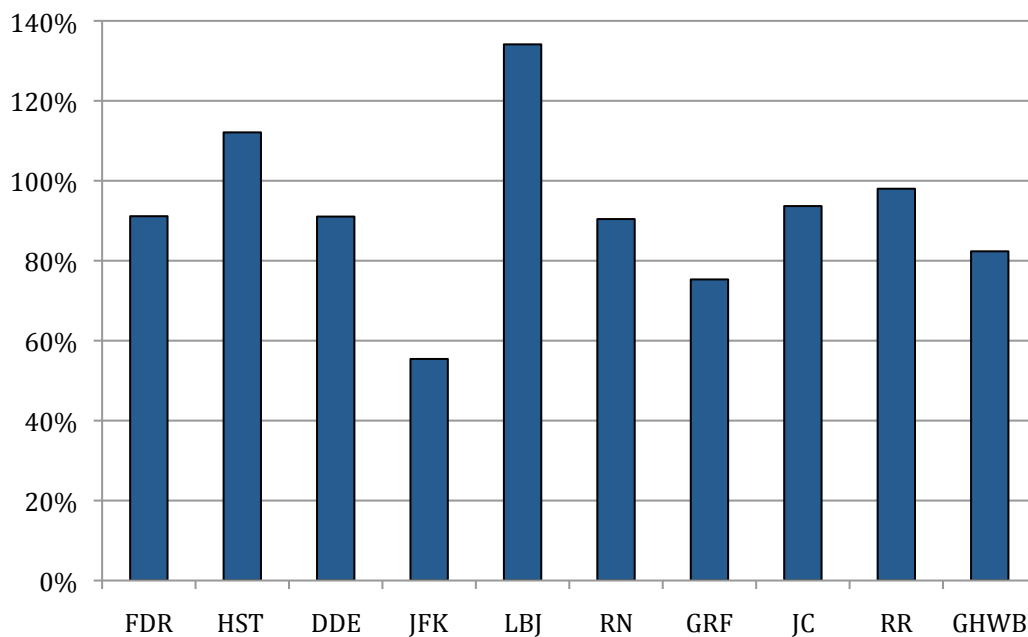
Figure 5:
Shifts in Rhetorical Variables as a Percentage of Normal Variation
Ronald Reagan



The Reagan data reflects one shortcoming of this type of analysis in that it reports a minimal amount of change behind Reagan's speech urging: "General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if you seek liberalization: Come here to this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!" While a major conflict pitted the speechwriters and others against those in the State and Defense Department who wanted less confrontational language, there is little evidence of this in the data here because the conflict hinged on only those few sentences that came to define the speech later. Thus, any analysis looking at the entire speech may overlook the impact of key phrases or sound bites.

Several questions emerge from looking at results from the individual administrations. Perhaps the most obvious question is how these shifts differ between administrations. Figure 6 charts the average percent of normal variation across the eight selected variables for all speeches for each president. Comparisons across presidencies are perilous because of problems resulting from the selection of cases. However, the data does suggest a few differences worth considering.

Figure 6:
Percentage of Normal Variation by President



The Johnson administration has the highest level of change in speech drafts. One explanation for this difference is the drafts analyzed here come from many different sources, reflecting Johnson's habit of encouraging competing speech drafts from around the White House. In some cases, two or three people were working on speech drafts—often unaware of the role of others. Johnson's obsession with secrecy often resulted in speechwriters working on drafts that would never be considered. The best example of Johnson's secrecy is the drafting of the March 1968 address in which, after discussing the Vietnam War, Johnson announced at the end of the speech that he would not be seeking reelection. Most of the speechwriters were not aware of Johnson's surprise announcement until the day before the announcement

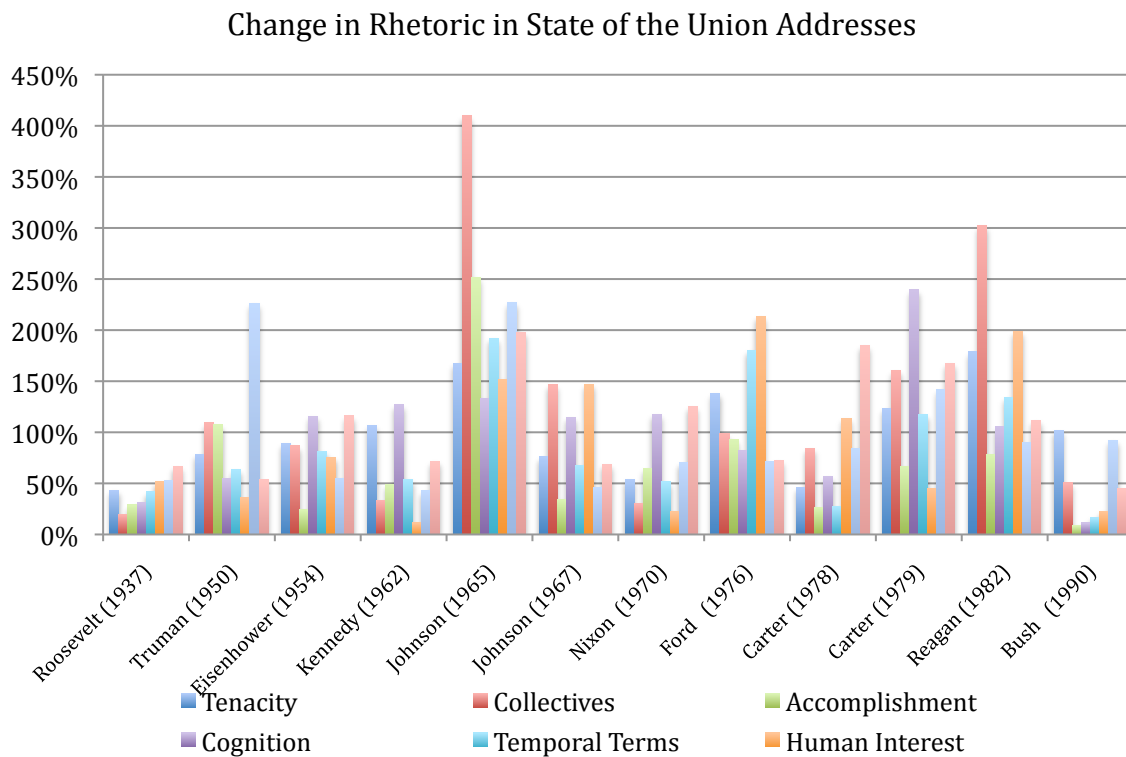
and some received only a few hours notice. With speechwriters unaware of an important element of the speech, it is hard to say that they were really in the speechwriting process. The Johnson results may also be the product of the transitional nature of the early days of the administration and the lingering philosophical battles within the administration.

The high scores for Truman may reflect the personality of the President more directly. One of the functions of Truman's staff was to temper the President's fiery rhetoric. Clark Clifford's rise to prominence began with his ability to gracefully tame Truman's more excited speech drafts. For example, when Truman became frustrated with the railroad strike, he drafted a speech to Congress calling them "weak-kneed" and urging them to take dramatic action: "Let's give the country back to the people. Let's... hang a few traitors and make our country safe for democracy. Come on, boys, let's do the job."⁴⁵

For some presidents my selection of cases likely over represents the amount of conflict in a usually quiet process. The cases from the Nixon administration include Nixon's resignation address as well as his August 1973 address on Watergate. The address on Watergate was the only Nixon case I encountered where speechwriters Ray Price and Pat Buchanan submitted competing drafts.

One way of making comparisons across administrations is to look only at the state of the union address since that is the only speech where good data is available for all presidents. Figure 7 charts the changes in the State of the Union Addresses included in this analysis.

As expected, the Johnson speeches showed a high level of change, although there are dramatic differences between the levels of change in the 1965 and 1967 address. The high levels of change in the 1965 address probably reflect differences in direction as the Johnson White House decided how to turn the President's 1964 landslide into the agenda for the coming year. The lower levels of conflict in 1967 reflect the realization that further expansion of the domestic agenda was unlikely given the losses in the 1966 election and the growing demands of the war in Vietnam.



The changes in Ford’s address reflect the tendencies of another former legislative leader to use the speechwriting process to resolve conflict over policy. Given the infighting surrounding Ford’s state of the union addresses, it’s surprising that these change scores are not higher.

The relatively high scores for Reagan’s address might surprise some. However, Reagan’s speechwriters frequently pressed for more dramatic language—a habit that might be a healthy source of change in speech drafts. Thus, the Reagan data hints that evidence of change in speech texts may reflect a creative dynamic that is healthier than internal fighting and more productive than turbulence.

Conclusion

The data analyzed so far demonstrates that a great deal happens to speech drafts as they work their way through the White House drafting and clearance process. While this use of content analysis is new to the discipline, the results presented here demonstrate that the DICTION software is sensitive enough to pick up variations between drafts of the same speech.

Generally, presidential speech has been studied as power wielded against other political forces. What we can see in presidential speech can be used to learn about political forces that are seldom, if ever, visible to the scholar. However, the quantitative results presented here provide evidence to back the historical accounts of battles in the White House and suggest that the view of the presidency as a monolithic institution with one motive and view of the political world is too simplistic and in need of revision. While the results here do not point to any clear trend inside the process, it does indicate that there are multiple sources of change within the process and that the dynamic within the White House that might be uncovered with further study.

Appendix A Speeches

[speeches in brackets have not been analyzed]

Franklin Roosevelt

Inaugural Address, March 3, 1933
 Inaugural Address, January 20, 1937
 1937 State of the Union Address, January 6, 1937
 Fireside Chat #14, September 3, 1937
 Court Packing Radio, March 9, 1937
 Arsenal of Democracy, December 29, 1940
 The Four Freedoms, January 6, 1941
 Fireside Chat 19, February 23, 1947

Harry Truman

Baylor University, March 6, 1947
[Truman Doctrine, March 12, 1947]
 Princeton University, June 17, 1947
 Inaugural Address, January 20, 1949
 1950 State of the Union, January 4, 1950
 Address to Special Session, July 27, 1948
[Farewell Address, January 15, 1953]

Dwight Eisenhower

Inaugural address, January 20, 1953
 Atoms for Peace, December 8, 1953
 State of the Union Address, January 7, 1954
 Columbia University Commencement, May 31, 1954
 Address to the UN, June 20, 1965
 Inaugural address, January 20, 1957
 Farewell Address, January 17, 1961

John F. Kennedy

Inaugural address, January 20, 1961
 National Association of Manufacturers,
 December 6, 1961
 State of the Union Address, January 11, 1962
 Commencement address at Yale, June 11, 1962
[Independence Hall, July 4, 1962]
 Rice University, September 12, 1962
*[National Address on Desegregation of the
 University of Mississippi, September 30, 1962]*

Lyndon Johnson

Address to Joint Session, November 27 1963
 University of Michigan, May 22 1964
 Civil Rights Act Signing, July 2, 1964
 State of the Union, January 4 1965
 Johns Hopkins University, April 7 1965
 War on Poverty, May 8 1967
 Address to the Nation, March 31, 1968

Richard Nixon

Silent Majority, November 3, 1969
 State of the Union Address, January 22, 1970
 University of Nebraska, January 14 1971
[State of the Union Address, January 22, 1971]
[Second Inaugural, January 20, 1973]
 Watergate Address to the Nation, August 15 1973
 Resignation, August 8, 1974

Gerald Ford

[Swearing in, August 9, 1974]
 Address to Congress, August 12, 1974
 Nixon pardon, September 8, 1974
[University of Pennsylvania, May 18, 1975]
 Energy address, May 27, 1975
 State of the Union, January 12, 1976
 Independence Hall, July 4, 1976

Jimmy Carter

Inaugural address, January 20, 1977
[Fireside Chat 1, February 1977]
 State of the Union Address, January 19, 1978
 State of the Union Address, January 25, 1979
 Malaise speech, July 17, 1979
 Dedication of the John F. Kennedy Library,
 October 20, 1979
 Farewell address, January 14, 1981

Ronald Reagan

[Joint Session of Congress April 28, 1981]
 State of the Union Address, January 26, 1982
 National Association of Evangelicals, March 8,
 1983
 Pointe du Hoc, June 6, 1984
 Second Inaugural Address, January 21, 1985
 Berlin Wall, June 12, 1987
 Farewell Address, January 11, 1989

George H. W. Bush

Texas A&M, May 12, 1989
[Boston University, May 21, 1989]
 National Drug Policy, September 15, 1989
 State of the Union Address, January 31, 1990
 Joint Session of Congress, September 11, 1990
 Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1991
 Los Angeles Riots, May 8, 1992

Appendix B

DICTION Dictionary and Score Descriptions⁴⁶

- *ACCOMPLISHMENT:** Words that express completion of tasks (establish, finish, influence, proceed) and organized human behavior (motivated, influence, leader, manage). Includes capitalistic terms (buy, produce, sell), words related to expansion (grow, increase, generate, construction) and general functionality (handling, strengthen, succeed) and programmatic language (agenda, enacted, working, leadership).
- AGGRESSION:** Words that highlight competition and forceful action. This includes physical energy (blast, crash, collide), domination (conquest, attacking, dictatorships, violation), words associated with personal triumph (mastered, rambunctious, pushy), excess human energy (prod, poke, pound, shove), disassembly (dismantle, demolish, overturn, veto) and resistance (prevent, reduce, defend, curbed) are included.
- AMBIVALENCE:** Words expressing hesitation or uncertainty, implying a speaker's inability or unwillingness to commit to the verbalization being made. Included are hedges (allegedly, perhaps, might), statements of inexactness (almost, approximate, vague, somewhere) and confusion (baffled, puzzling, hesitate). Also included are words of restrained possibility (could, would) and mystery (dilemma, guess, suppose, seems).
- BLAME:** Terms designating social inappropriateness (mean, naive, sloppy, stupid) as well as downright evil (fascist, blood-thirsty, repugnant, malicious) compose this dictionary. In addition, adjectives describing unfortunate circumstances (bankrupt, rash, morbid, embarrassing) or unplanned vicissitudes (weary, nervous, painful, detrimental) are included. The dictionary also contains outright denigrations: cruel, illegitimate, offensive, and miserly.
- *CENTRALITY:** Terms denoting institutional regularities and/or substantive agreement on core values. Included are indigenous terms (native, basic, innate) and designations of legitimacy (orthodox, decorum, constitutional, ratified), systematicity (paradigm, bureaucratic, ritualistic), and typicality (standardized, matter-of-fact, regularity). Also included are terms of congruence (conformity, mandate, unanimous), predictability (expected, continuity, reliable), and universality (womankind, perennial, landmarks).
- *COGNITIVE TERMS:** Words referring to cerebral processes, both functional and imaginative. Included are modes of discovery (learn, deliberate, consider, compare) and domains of study (biology, psychology, logic, economics). The dictionary includes mental challenges (question, forget, re-examine, paradoxes), institutional learning practices (graduation, teaching, classrooms), as well as three forms of intellection: intuitional (invent, perceive, speculate, interpret), rationalistic (estimate, examine, reasonable, strategies), and calculative (diagnose, analyze, software, fact-finding).
- *COLLECTIVES:** Singular nouns connoting plurality that function to decrease specificity. These words reflect a dependence on categorical modes of thought. Included are social groupings (crowd, choir, team, humanity), task groups (army, congress, legislature, staff) and geographical entities (county, world, kingdom, republic).
- COMMUNICATION:** Terms referring to social interaction, both face-to-face (listen, interview, read, speak) and mediated (film, videotape, telephone, e-mail). The dictionary includes both modes of intercourse (translate, quote, scripts, broadcast) and moods of intercourse (chat, declare, flatter, demand). Other terms refer to social actors (reporter, spokesperson, advocates, preacher) and a variety of social purposes (hint, rebuke, respond, persuade).
- COMPLEXITY:** A simple measure of the average number of characters-per-word in a given input file. Based on the idea that convoluted phrasings can make ideas abstract and implications unclear.
- CONCRETENESS:** A large dictionary possessing no thematic unity other than tangibility and materiality. Included are sociological units (peasants, African-Americans, Catholics), occupational groups (carpenter, manufacturer, policewoman), and political alignments (Communists, congressman, Europeans). Also incorporated are physical structures (courthouse, temple, store), forms of diversion (television, football, cd-rom), terms of accountancy (mortgage, wages, finances), and modes of transportation (airplane, ship, bicycle). In addition, the dictionary includes body parts (stomach, eyes, lips), articles of clothing (slacks, pants, shirt), household animals (cat, insects, horse) and foodstuffs (wine, grain, sugar), and general elements of nature (oil, silk, sand).
- *COOPERATION:** Terms designating behavioral interactions among people that often result in a group product. Included are designations of formal work relations (unions, schoolmates, caucus) and informal associations (chum, partner, cronies) to more intimate interactions (sisterhood, friendship, comrade). Also included are neutral interactions (consolidate, mediate, alignment), job-related tasks (network, detente, exchange), personal involvement (teamwork, sharing, contribute), and self-denial (public-spirited, care-taking, self-sacrifice).
- DENIAL:** A dictionary consisting of standard negative contractions (aren't, shouldn't, don't), negative function words (nor, not, nay), and terms designating null sets (nothing, nobody, none).

DIVERSITY: Words describing individuals or groups of individuals differing from the norm. Such distinctiveness may be comparatively neutral (inconsistent, contrasting, non-conformist) but it can also be positive (exceptional, unique, individualistic) and negative (illegitimate, rabble-rouser, extremist). Functionally, heterogeneity may be an asset (far-flung, dispersed, diffuse) or a liability (factionalism, deviancy, quirky) as can its characterizations: rare vs. queer, variety vs. jumble, distinctive vs. disobedient.

EMBELLISHMENT: A selective ratio of adjectives to verbs. Embellishment is calculated according to the following formula:

$$[\text{Praise} + \text{Blame} + 1] \div [\text{Present Concern} + \text{Past Concern} + 1]$$

EXCLUSION: A dictionary describing the sources and effects of social isolation. Such seclusion can be phrased passively (displaced, sequestered) as well as positively (self-contained, self-sufficient) and negatively (outlaws, repudiated). Moreover, it can result from voluntary forces (secede, privacy) and involuntary forces (ostracize, forsake, discriminate) and from both personality factors (small-mindedness, loneliness) and political factors (right-wingers, nihilism). Exclusion is often a dialectical concept: hermit vs. derelict, refugee vs. pariah, discard vs. spurn.

FAMILIARITY: Consists of a selected number of words that are the most common words in the English language. Included are common prepositions (across, over, through), demonstrative pronouns (this, that) and interrogative pronouns (who, what), and a variety of particles, conjunctions and connectives (a, for, so).

HARDSHIP: This dictionary contains natural disasters (earthquake, starvation, tornado, pollution), hostile actions (killers, bankruptcy, enemies, vices) and censurable human behavior (infidelity, despots, betrayal). It also includes unsavory political outcomes (injustice, slavery, exploitation, rebellion) as well as normal human fears (grief, unemployment, died, apprehension) and incapacities (error, cop-outs, weakness).

***HUMAN INTEREST:** Includes standard personal pronouns (he, his, ourselves, them), family members and relations (cousin, wife, grandchild, uncle), and generic terms (friend, baby, human, persons) because concentrating on people and their activities gives rhetoric a life-like quality.

INSISTENCE: A measure of the repetition of key terms that may indicate a preference for presented a limited or ordered view. All words occurring three or more times that function as nouns or noun-derived adjectives are identified and the following calculation performed: $[\text{Number of Eligible Words} \times \text{Sum of their Occurrences}] \div 10$.

INSPIRATION: Abstract virtues deserving of universal respect. Most of the terms in this dictionary are nouns isolating desirable moral qualities (faith, honesty, self-sacrifice, virtue) as well as attractive personal qualities (courage, dedication, wisdom, mercy). Social and political ideals are also included: patriotism, success, education, and justice.

LEVELING: A dictionary of words that build a sense of completeness and assurance used by ignoring individual differences. Included are totalizing terms (everybody, anyone, each, fully), adverbs of permanence (always, completely, inevitably, consistently), and resolute adjectives (unconditional, consummate, absolute, open-and-shut).

LIBERATION: Terms describing the maximizing of individual choice (autonomous, open-minded, options) and the rejection of social conventions (unencumbered, radical, released). Liberation is motivated by both personality factors (eccentric, impetuous, flighty) and political forces (suffrage, liberty, freedom, emancipation) and may produce dramatic outcomes (exodus, riotous, deliverance) or subdued effects (loosen, disentangle, outpouring). Liberatory terms also admit to rival characterizations: exemption vs. loophole, elope vs. abscond, uninhibited vs. outlandish.

MOTION: Terms connoting human movement (bustle, job, lurch, leap), physical processes (circulate, momentum, revolve, twist), journeys (barnstorm, jaunt, wandering, travels), speed (nimble, zip), and modes of transit (ride, fly, glide, swim).

NUMERICAL TERMS: Any sum, date, or product specifying the facts in a given case. The presumption is that these terms hyper-specify a claim and detracting from its universality.

PASSIVITY: Words ranging from neutrality to inactivity. Includes terms of compliance (allow, tame), docility (submit, contented), and cessation (arrested, refrain, yielding). This dictionary also contains references to inertness (backward, immobile, inhibit), disinterest (unconcerned, nonchalant, stoic), and tranquility (quietly, sleepy).

PAST CONCERN: The past-tense forms of the verbs contained in the Present Concern dictionary.

PRAISE: Affirmations of some person, group, or abstract entity. Included are adjectives describing important social qualities (dear, delightful, witty), physical qualities (mighty, handsome, beautiful), intellectual qualities (shrewd, bright, reasonable), entrepreneurial qualities (successful, conscientious, renowned), and moral qualities (faithful, good, noble).

PRESENT CONCERN: This dictionary includes a selective list of present-tense verbs and is not topic-specific. This score points to general physical activity (cough, taste, sing, take), social operations (canvass, touch, govern, meet), and task-performance (make, cook, print, paint).

RAPPORT: This dictionary describes attitudinal similarities among groups of people. Included are terms of affinity (congenial, camaraderie, companion), assent (approve, vouched, warrants), deference (tolerant, willing, permission), and identity (equivalent, resemble, consensus).

SATISFACTION: Terms associated with positive affective states (cheerful, passionate, happiness), with moments of undiminished joy (thanks, smile, welcome) and pleasurable diversion (excited, fun, lucky), or with moments of triumph (celebrating, pride, auspicious).

SELF-REFERENCE: All first-person references. This dictionary track how often the locus of action appears to be the speaker and not in the world at large.

SPATIAL AWARENESS: Terms referring to geographical entities and physical distances. Included are general geographical terms (abroad, elbow-room, local, outdoors) as well as references to specific locations such as nations. Also included are politically defined locations (county, fatherland, municipality, ward), points on the compass (east, southwest), terms of scale (kilometer, map, spacious), and other references to geographic terms (latitude, coastal, border, snowbelt). This dictionary also measure as well as quality (vacant, out-of-the-way, disoriented) and change (pilgrimage, migrated, frontier) in geography.

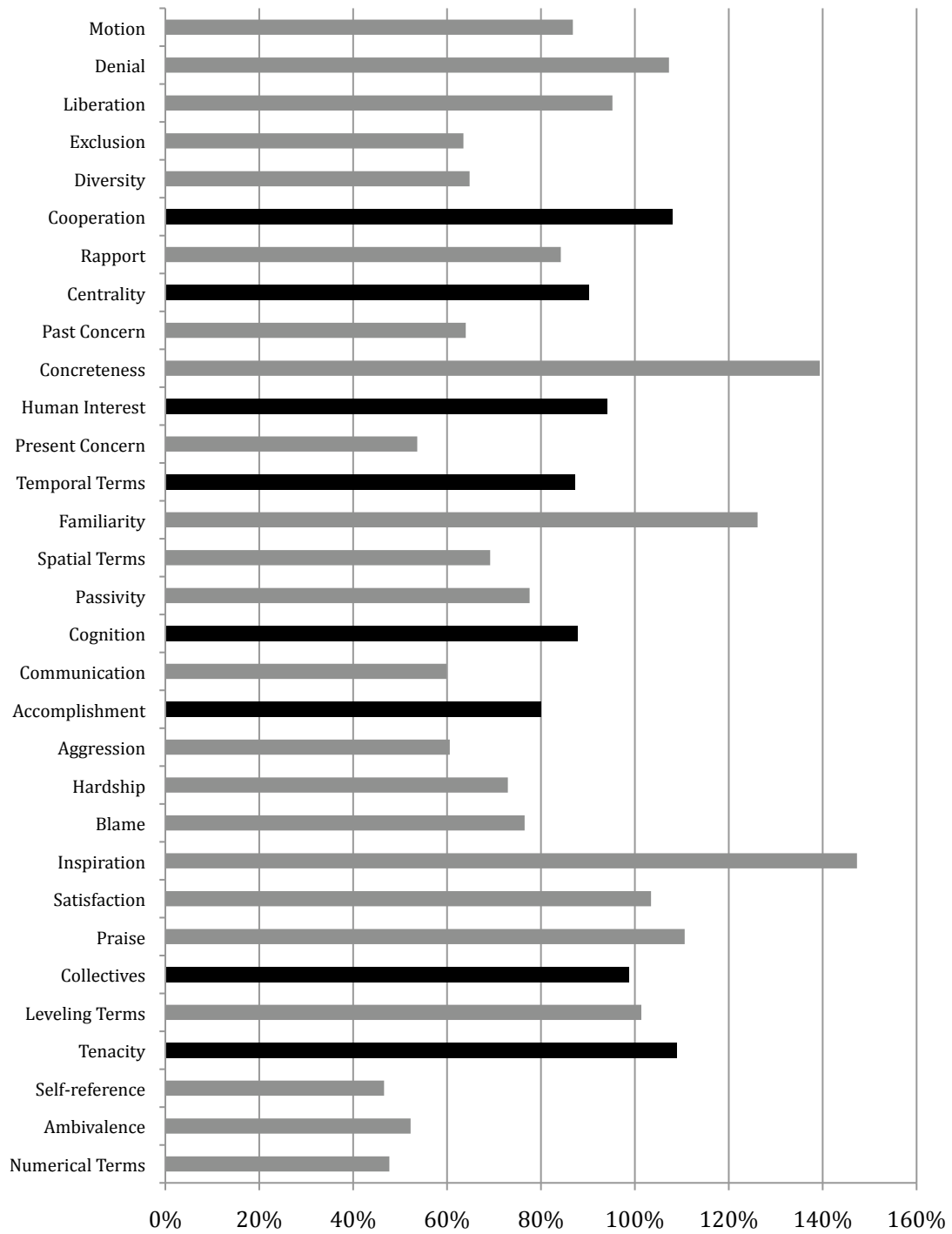
***TEMPORAL AWARENESS:** Terms that fix a person, idea, or event within a specific time-interval, thereby signaling a concern for concrete and practical matters. The dictionary designates literal time (century, instant, mid-morning) as well as metaphorical designations (lingering, seniority, nowadays), calendrical terms (autumn, year-round, weekend), elliptical terms (spontaneously, postpone, transitional), and judgmental terms (premature, obsolete, punctual).

***TENACITY:** These verbs that connote confidence and totality. This dictionary analyzes all uses of the verb “to be” (is, am, will, shall), three definitive verb forms (has, must, do) and their variants, as well as all associated contraction.

VARIETY: This measure divides the number of different words in a passage by the passage’s total words. A high score reflects an avoidance of overstatement and a preference for precise statements.

Appendix C

Average draft variation by rhetorical score



Endnotes

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² Jeffrey K. Tulis, The Rhetorical Presidency (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987) 185.

³ Peggy Noonan, What I Saw at the Revolution 67.

⁴ Terry M. Moe, "The Politicized Presidency," in The New Directions in American Politics ed. John E. Chubb and Paul E. Peterson (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1985) 241.

⁵ Robert T. Hartmann, Palace Politics: An Inside Account of the Ford Years, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1980, 384.

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⁷ Samuel Kernell, Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership, Third Edition Washington: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1997

⁸ Jacobs, Lawrence R. and Robert Y. Shapiro, Politicians Don't Pander: Political Manipulation and the Loss of Democratic Responsiveness, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000

⁹ Edwards, George III, On Deaf Ears: The Limits of the Bully Pulpit, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.

¹⁰ William K. Muir, Jr., The Bully Pulpit: The Presidential Leadership of Ronald Reagan (San Francisco; ICS Press, 1992) 34.

¹¹ Karen M. Hult and Charles E. Walcott, Empowering the White House: Governance under Nixon, Ford, and Carter, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004, 154.

¹² D.T. Max, "The Making of the Speech," New York Times, October 7, 2001, A32.

¹³ Samuel I. Rosenman, Working with Roosevelt, New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1952, 325.

¹⁴ Bradley H. Patterson, Jr., The Ring of Power: The White House Staff and Its Expanding Role in Government, New York: Basic Books Inc., Publishers, 1988, 196.

¹⁵ Calvin Coolidge, The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge, New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, 1929, 216-217.

¹⁶ James C. Humes, Confessions of a White House Ghostwriter: Five Presidents and Other Political Adventures, Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc. 1997, 5.

¹⁷ These steps are adapted from the six steps described by former speechwriter William Muir. William K. Muir, Jr., "Ronald Reagan's Bully Pulpit: Creating a Rhetoric of Values," Presidential Speechwriting: From the New Deal to the Reagan Revolution and Beyond, edited by Kurt Ritter and Martin J. Medhurst, College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2003, 198.

¹⁸ "TCS 1st Draft," 3/15/62 folder: "Gridiron Club Dinner, 3/17/62, Speech Materials, 3/15/62 – 3/17/62 + undated," Personal Papers of Theodore Sorensen, Speech File Series, Box 68, John F. Kennedy Library, 2.

Endnotes

- ¹⁹ Karen M. Hult and Charles E. Walcott, Empowering the White House: Governance under Nixon, Ford, and Carter, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004, 160.
- ²⁰ Robert Orben, "Speeches, Humor and the Public," The Ford Presidency: Twenty Two Intimate Perspectives of Gerald Ford, Kenneth W. Thompson, editor, New York: University Press of America, 1988, 242.
- ²¹ Peter Robinson 103.
- ²² White House Staffing Memorandum, 12/12/89, "National Christmas Tree Lighting 12/14/89 [OA 8309], Office of Speechwriting, Speech Files, Backup, Chron Files 1989-93: Box 45, George H.W. Bush Presidential Library.
- ²³ White House Staffing Memorandum 10002, 12/12/89, "National Christmas Tree Lighting 12/14/89 [OA 8309], Office of Speechwriting, Speech Files, Backup, Chron Files 1989-93: Box 45, George H.W. Bush Presidential Library.
- ²⁴ Memo from Hal Horan to Jeanne Davis, April 2, 1975, Folder: "SP 2-3-6, Address by the President to the Joint Session of Congress, 4/10/75," White House Central Files, Box 11, Gerald R. Ford Library, 1.
- ²⁵ David Frum, The Right Man: the Surprise Presidency of George W. Bush, New York: Random House, 2003, 147.
- ²⁶ Douglas Brinkley, The Boys of Pointe du Hoc: Ronald Reagan, D-Day, and the U.S. Army 2nd Ranger Battalion, New York: Harper Collins, 2005, 156.
- ²⁷ Aram Bakshian Interview, Miller Center, University of Virginia, Ronald Reagan Oral History Project, January 14, 2002, 45.
- ²⁸ Clark Clifford, Oral History, Truman Library.
- ²⁹ John Ehrlichman, Witness to Power: The Nixon Years, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982, 21.
- ³⁰ Memorandum from Elizabeth Dole to Aram Bakshian, January 15, 1982, folder: "State of the Union Address (21), January 28, 1982, Anthony Dolan Files, Drafts, Box 7.
- ³¹ William K. Muir, Jr., The Bully Pulpit: The Presidential Leadership of Ronald Reagan, San Francisco: ICS Press, 1992, 35.
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- ³³ Transcript, Nightline: Up Close,
- ³⁴ Gerald Rafshoon, Exit Interview, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library, 13.
- ³⁵ Chase Haddix interview with Robert Hartmann, April 5, 1991, Gerald R. Ford Library, 6.
- ³⁶ Because the George W. Bush Library is under construction and materials from the Clinton Library have not been fully opened, speech drafts from those administrations are not available to researchers.
- ³⁷ "Lighting the National Christmas Tree: The Case for Studying 'Rose Garden Rubbish'" presented at the *Southwest Political Science Association* (San Antonio, Texas, April 2003).
- ³⁸ Unfortunately, the absence of a formal staffing system was paralleled by the absence of a standard filing system making the retention of inaugural drafts much more uncertain than other speech drafts.
- ³⁹ Roderick P. Hart, Verbal Style and the Presidency: A Computer-Based Analysis, Orlando: Academic Press, Inc., 1984. For a detailed description of the function of the DICTION software see pages 14-24 and Appendices A-D.

Endnotes

⁴⁰ While DICTION also calculates “master variables (Activity, Optimism, Certainty, Realism, and Commonality) these may overestimate differences in texts as individual scores are multiplied by each other. While the five “master variables” that summarize the tone of speeches in more general terms might be desirable because individually they are broader, using the narrower dictionary scores are less likely to produce differences that are purely an artifact of the software’s algorithms

⁴¹ For example, the Clinton White House spent its years after the Monica Lewinsky scandal trying to insure that no sexual innuendo found its way into presidential speeches.

⁴² The normal variation for other kinds of communication is somewhat different. For example, “cooperation” score ranges from 3.09 to 8.46.

⁴³ Results from all 31 DICTION variables are included in Appendix C.

⁴⁴ The eight variables have very consistent variation—except for differences in variance caused by very high scores in collectives (164%) and human interest (183%) from the Johnson administration.

⁴⁵ Douglas Frantz and David McKean, Friends in High Places: The Rise and Fall of Clark Clifford, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1995, 48.

⁴⁶ Roderick T. Hart, DICTION 6.0 Users Manual, Austin: Digitex, Inc., 2010.