



# **Framing the Debate: Famous Presidential Speeches and How Progressives Can Use Them to Change the Conversation (And Win Elections)**

*Jeffrey Feldman*

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“Frames are mental structures that shape the way we see the world. . . . When you hear a word, its frame is activated in your brain. . . . In politics our frames shape our social policies. . . . Because language activates frames, new language is required for new frames.”—George Lakoff

For decades, the powerful communications machine of the conservative movement has controlled our national political discourse. One of the biggest obstacles to progressive victory has been seeing what American political speech looks like when it is not “framed” by the Republican noise machine.

*Framing the Debate: Famous Presidential Speeches and How Progressives Can Use Them to Change the Conversation (and Win Elections)* is about unleashing the power of communication in contemporary progressive politics. The book presents fifteen key speeches by American presidents—George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, and George Bush—in order to define the big ideas and images—the “frames”—that each speech evokes to show how those framing techniques can be applied to today’s political debate in order to promote a progressive perspective.

An essential book in today’s political climate, *Framing the Debate* will be instrumental in helping to reshape progressive political language and rhetoric.

An expert on speeches and messaging, **Jeffrey Feldman** is the editor in chief of the influential political blog Frameshop ([www.frameshopisopen.com](http://www.frameshopisopen.com)). He also has a weekly segment on *The Thom Hartmann Show* on Air America, and travels the country offering seminars on language and progressive politics.

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