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Influential American Speakers Examined in New Book Co-Edited by Cal Poly Professor

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Fifty-eight significant American speakers, from John Ashcroft to Malcolm X, are examined in a reference book co-edited by Cal Poly Communication Studies Professor Bernard Duffy.

The 512-page book, "American Voices: An Encyclopedia of Contemporary Orators," Studies speakers from 1960 to the present and includes many figures who have not been discussed in previous works, Duffy said.

Essays on American presidents John F. Kennedy, Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush are included, as well as essays on such influential women as Gloria Steinem, Sandra Day O'Connor, Elizabeth Dole and Anita Hill.

Additional chapters include essays on Native American orators Russell Means and Winona LaDuke, civil rights activists Jesse Jackson, Stokeley Carmichael and Al Sharpton, religious leaders Billy Graham, Louis Farrakhan and Jerry Falwell, and jurists Alan Dershowitz and Antonin Scalia, plus a variety of political figures such as Robert Byrd, Janet Reno, and Colin Powell.

In addition to co-editing the book, Duffy wrote the introduction and, with colleague and Assistant Professor Marilyn DeLaure, co-authored the chapters on Martin Luther King Jr. and John Kerry.

The book, intended mainly as a reference work, was recently released by Greenwood Press. It is available through all of the online bookstores, including Amazon.com and Barnes and Noble.

This is Professor Duffy's sixth book. Other works include "Douglas MacArthur: Warrior as Wordsmith," "American Orators of the 20th Century," and "American Orators Before 1900."

Duffy has been teaching at Cal Poly since 1988 and received the university's Distinguished Teaching Award in 2002-2003. He lives in San Luis Obispo.

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