

Documenting the Bush Presidency

The Hofstra University Conference on the George W. Bush Presidency will take place March 24-26, 2015. Hofstra has a long and distinguished tradition of hosting conferences on the administrations of all the Presidents of the United States who have served during the University's lifetime, from Franklin Delano Roosevelt forward. During each conference, Hofstra brings together scholars, policy makers, and journalists for a series of panels and roundtables to discuss a president's campaign, political leadership, policy agenda, and legacy. The University has published volumes of selected articles and commentary from every conference, which have become standard scholarly volumes and early oral histories of each presidency.

This document package is based on key speeches delivered by President Bush prior to and during his Presidency. They are presented in chronological order. Most of the speeches are available in their entirety at the website <http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com>. This package was developed for the Bush Presidential Conference by students, teachers, and faculty in the Hofstra University Social Studies Education Program including **Brian Governanti, Rocco Graziosi, Eric Mace, Amanda Nardo, James Oakes, Alan Singer, and Corinne Spaeth.**

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1. George W. Bush – “Compassionate Conservative” (August 3, 2000)

Background: In this speech delivered at the 2000 Republican Party National Convention, George W. Bush addressed the nation as the candidate of his party for President of the United States. A major theme that would define the campaign and the Bush presidency was his description of himself as a “compassionate conservative.” Bush emphasized the importance of effective leadership and told the American people that a Bush presidency would address the “hard issues” including national security, threats to the health care system and retirement security, and ensuring opportunity for all Americans. However, a critic, writing in the *New York Times*, dismissed the speech as “side bites defeat substance.”

Questions to Consider:

1. Who is Bush’s audience in this speech? What was the purpose of this speech?
2. Why was Bush critical of the Clinton Administration?
3. What was Bush’s vision for the future of the United States?
4. Why did Bush describe himself as a “compassionate conservative”?

George W. Bush’s Address to the Republican Party National Convention, August 3, 2000

This is a remarkable moment in the life of our nation. Never has the promise of prosperity been so vivid. But times of plenty, like times of crisis, are tests of American character. Prosperity can be a tool in our hands -- used to build and better our country. Or it can be a drug in our system -- dulling our sense of urgency, of empathy, of duty. Our opportunities are too great, our lives too short, to waste this moment . . . We will confront the hard issues -- threats to our national security, threats to our health and retirement security -- before the challenges of our time become crises for our children. And we will extend the promise of prosperity to every forgotten corner of this country. To every man and woman, a chance to succeed. To every child, a chance to learn. To every family, a chance to live with dignity and hope.

For eight years, the Clinton/Gore administration has coasted through prosperity. And the path of least resistance is always downhill. But America's way is the rising road. This nation is daring and decent and ready for change But instead of seizing this moment, the Clinton/Gore administration has squandered it. We have seen a steady erosion of American power and an unsteady exercise of American influence. Our military is low on parts, pay and morale . . . This administration had its moment. They've had their chance. They have not led. We will.

We know the tests of leadership . . . We will strengthen Social Security and Medicare for the greatest generation, and for generations to come. Medicare does more than meet the needs of our elderly, it reflects the values of our society. We will set it on firm financial ground, and make prescription drugs available and affordable for every senior who needs them. Social Security has been called the "third rail of American politics" -- the one you're not supposed to touch because it shocks you. But, if you don't touch it, you can't fix it. And I intend to fix it . . . Now is the time to give American workers security and independence that no politician can ever take away.

Too many American children are segregated into schools without standards, shuffled from grade-to-grade because of their age, regardless of their knowledge. This is discrimination, pure and simple -- the soft bigotry of low expectations. And our nation should treat it like other forms of discrimination . . . When a school district receives federal funds to teach poor children, we expect them to learn. And if they don't, parents should get the money to make a different choice.

Big government is not the answer. But the alternative to bureaucracy is not indifference. It is to put conservative values and conservative ideas into the thick of the fight for justice and opportunity. This is what I mean by compassionate conservatism. And on this ground we will govern our nation.

2. President George W. Bush's First Inaugural Address (January 20, 2001)

Background: George W. Bush was elected as the United States 43rd President of the United States in a closely contested election that was ultimately decided by the United States Supreme Court. In his first inaugural address President Bush outlined an ambitious domestic agenda, specifically focused on immigration and education. *The New York Times* reported that President Bush “spoke with the firmness of a man determined to step past the complications of the election and validate his hold on the office with pledges of high purpose.”

Questions to Consider:

1. Who is Bush's audience in this speech? What was the purpose of this speech?
2. What does President Bush present as the biggest challenge facing the United States?
3. According to President Bush, what is the great strength of the country?

George W. Bush First Inaugural Address, January 20, 2001

While many of our citizens prosper, others doubt the promise, even the justice of our own country. The ambitions of some Americans are limited by failing schools and hidden prejudice and the circumstances of their birth. And sometimes our differences run so deep, it seems we share a continent but not a country. We do not accept this, and we will not allow it.

Our unity, our Union, is a serious work of leaders and citizens and every generation. And this is my solemn pledge: I will work to build a single nation of justice and opportunity. I know this is in our reach because we are guided by a power larger than ourselves, who creates us equal, in His image, and we are confident in principles that unite and lead us onward.

America has never been united by blood or birth or soil. We are bound by ideals that move us beyond our backgrounds, lift us above our interests, and teach us what it means to be citizens. Every child must be taught these principles. Every citizen must uphold them. And every immigrant, by embracing these ideals, makes our country more, not less,

Government has great responsibilities for public safety and public health, for civil rights and common schools. Yet, compassion is the work of a nation, not just a government. And some needs and hurts are so deep they will only respond to a mentor's touch or a pastor's prayer. Church and charity, synagogue and mosque lend our communities their humanity, and they will have an honored place in our plans and in our laws.

America at its best is a place where personal responsibility is valued and expected. Encouraging responsibility is not a search for scapegoats; it is a call to conscience. And though it requires sacrifice, it brings a deeper fulfillment. We find the fullness of life not only in options but in commitments. And we find that children and community are the commitments that set us free.

3. President Bush Responds to the Events of September 11, 2001 (September 20, 2001)

Background: On September 11, 2001, 19 terrorists associated with the group al-Qaeda hijacked four airplanes and carried out suicide attacks against targets in the United States. Two of the planes were flown into the towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, a third plane hit the Pentagon just outside of Washington, D.C., and the fourth plane crashed in a field in Pennsylvania. Often referred to as 9/11, the attacks resulted in extensive death and destruction, triggering major U.S. initiatives to combat terrorism. Approximately 3,000 people were killed during the attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C., including more than 400 police officers and firefighters. In many ways the response to these attacks defined the presidency of George W. Bush. According to the *New York Times*, "In a firm and forceful address, Mr. Bush rose to the challenge of making what may be the most critical speech of his life."

Questions to Consider:

1. Who is Bush's audience in this speech? What was the purpose of this speech?
2. Why was this attack different from other acts of war committed against the United States?
3. In your opinion, why did President Bush single out Islamic extremists and speak directly to our "Muslim friends throughout the world"?

George W. Bush, Address to the Nation, Washington, D.C., September 20, 2001

On September the 11th, enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country. Americans have known wars -- but for the past 136 years, they have been wars on foreign soil, except for one Sunday in 1941. Americans have known the casualties of war -- but not at the center of a great city on a peaceful morning. Americans have known surprise attacks -- but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day -- and night fell on a different world, a world where freedom itself is under attack. Americans have many questions tonight. Americans are asking: Who attacked our country? The evidence we have gathered all points to a collection of loosely affiliated terrorist organizations known as al Qaeda . . . Al Qaeda is to terror what the mafia is to crime. But its goal is not making money; its goal is remaking the world -- and imposing its radical beliefs on people everywhere.

[T]he United States of America makes the following demands on the Taliban: Deliver to United States authorities all the leaders of al Qaeda who hide in your land. Release all foreign nationals, including American citizens, you have unjustly imprisoned. Protect foreign journalists, diplomats and aid workers in your country. Close immediately and permanently every terrorist training camp in Afghanistan, and hand over every terrorist, and every person in their support structure, to appropriate authorities. Give the United States full access to terrorist training camps, so we can make sure they are no longer operating. These demands are not open to negotiation or discussion. The Taliban must act, and act immediately. They will hand over the terrorists, or they will share in their fate.

I also want to speak tonight directly to Muslims throughout the world. We respect your faith. It's practiced freely by many millions of Americans, and by millions more in countries that America counts as friends. Its teachings are good and peaceful, and those who commit evil in the name of Allah blaspheme the name of Allah. The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself. The enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends; it is not our many Arab friends. Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists, and every government that supports them.

I will not forget this wound to our country or those who inflicted it. I will not yield; I will not rest; I will not relent in waging this struggle for freedom and security for the American people. The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them. Fellow citizens, we'll meet violence with patient justice -- assured of the rightness of our cause, and confident of the victories to come.

4. President Bush Discusses Homeland Security (November 25, 2002)

Background: The Homeland Security Act (HSA) of 2002 created a cabinet-level United States Department of Homeland Security. Its primary mission includes making the nation less vulnerable to terrorism attacks and minimizing damage and assisting in recovery from any attacks that may occur.

Questions to Consider:

1. Who is Bush's audience in this speech? What was the purpose of this speech?
2. What are some of the responsibilities of the new department as outlined by the HSA?
3. In your opinion, why did homeland security become a priority of the Bush administration?

George W. Bush, Homeland Security, November 25, 2002

The new department will analyze threats, will guard our borders and airports, protect our critical infrastructure, and coordinate the response of our nation for future emergencies. The Department of Homeland Security will focus the full resources of the American government on the safety of the American people. This essential reform was carefully considered by Congress and enacted with strong bipartisan majorities.

From the morning of September the 11th, 2001, to this hour, America has been engaged in an unprecedented effort to defend our freedom and our security. We're fighting a war against terror with all our resources, and we're determined to win. With the help of many nations, with the help of 90 nations, we're tracking terrorist activity, we're freezing terrorist finances, we're disrupting terrorist plots, we're shutting down terrorist camps, we're on the hunt one person at a time. Many terrorists are now being interrogated. Many terrorists have been killed. We've liberated a country. We recognize our greatest security is found in the relentless pursuit of these cold-blooded killers. Yet, because terrorists are targeting America, the front of the new war is here in America. Our life changed and changed in dramatic fashion on September the 11th, 2001.

In the last 14 months, every level of our government has taken steps to be better prepared against a terrorist attack. We understand the nature of the enemy. We understand they hate us because of what we love. We're doing everything we can to enhance security at our airports and power plants and border crossings. We've deployed detection equipment to look for weapons of mass destruction. We've given law enforcement better tools to detect and disrupt terrorist cells which might be hiding in our own country . . . Dozens of agencies charged with homeland security will now be located within one Cabinet department with the mandate and legal authority to protect our people. America will be better able to respond to any future attacks, to reduce our vulnerability and, most important, prevent the terrorists from taking innocent American lives.

First, this new department will analyze intelligence information on terror threats collected by the CIA, the FBI, the National Security Agency and others. The department will match this intelligence against the nation's vulnerabilities -- and work with other agencies, and the private sector, and state and local

governments to harden America's defenses against terror. Second, the department will gather and focus all our efforts to face the challenge of cyberterrorism, and the even worse danger of nuclear, chemical, and biological terrorism . . . Third, state and local governments will be able to turn for help and information to one federal domestic security agency, instead of more than 20 agencies that currently divide these responsibilities. This will help our local governments work in concert with the federal government for the sake of all the people of America. Fourth, the new department will bring together the agencies responsible for border, coastline, and transportation security . . . Fifth, the department will work with state and local officials to prepare our response to any future terrorist attack that may come.

5. President Bush on Education and No Child Left Behind (January 8, 2003)

Background: President George W. Bush gave this speech on the first anniversary of the No Child Left Behind Act. In this speech, Bush asserted that setting high standards and establishing measurable goals would improve schools and students' academic performance. At the time of the speech, five states had begun to implement the assessment skills required by NCLB. Under the law, all public schools that received federal funding were required to administer statewide tests annually to all students. If a school's results showed no signs of improvement, steps were mandated to improve instruction, offer parents alternatives, or to close schools. Senator Edward M. Kennedy (Democrat-Massachusetts) charged the Bush administration with trying to improve education on a "'tin cup budget'" while pushing for \$670 billion in tax cuts over the next decade. According to Kennedy, "The president's budget may provide the resources to test our children, but not enough to teach them."

Questions to Consider:

1. Who is Bush's audience in this speech? What was the purpose of this speech?
2. What does President Bush believe is a main problem in the educational system?
3. According to the President, how will the effectiveness of schools be measured and improved?

President Bush on Education and No Child Left Behind, January 8, 2003

Many schools in our country are places of hope and opportunity . . . Unfortunately, too many schools in America have failed in that mission. The harm has been greatest in the poor and minority communities. Those kids have been hurt the worst because people have failed to challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations. Over the years, parents across America have heard a lot of excuses -- that's a reality -- and oftentimes have seen little change . . . [T]he time for excuse-making has come to an end. With the No Child Left Behind Act, we have committed the nation to higher standards for every single public school. And we've committed the resources to help the students achieve those standards. We affirm the right of parents to have better information about the schools, and to make crucial decisions about their children's future. Accountability of results is no longer just a hope of parents. Accountability for results is now the law of the land.

Annual report cards are required to grade the schools, themselves, so parents can judge how the schools compare to others. Excellence will be recognized. It's so important for us to measure, so that we can praise the principals and teachers who are accomplishing the objectives we all hope for. And, at the same time, poor performance cannot be disguised or hidden. Schools that perform poorly will be noticeable and given time, and given incentives, and given resources to improve. Schools that don't improve will begin to face consequences, such as that parents can move their child to another public school, or hire a tutor, or any other academic help. We will not accept a school that does not teach and will not change.

Some have claimed that testing somehow distracts from learning. I've heard this excuse since I was the governor of Texas -- oh, you're teaching to test. Well, if a child can pass the reading test, the child has learned to read, as far as I'm concerned. Other critics worry that high standards and measurement invite poor results. In other words, don't measure; you might see poor results, I guess is what they're saying. That they fear that by imposing clear standards, we'll set some schools up for failure, and that we'll identify too many failing schools. Well, the reasoning is backwards as far as I'm concerned, and a lot of other good people are concerned, as well. You don't cause a problem by revealing the problem. Accountability doesn't cause failure; it identifies failure. And only by acknowledging poor performance can we ever help schools to achieve.

We're not going to spend money on curriculum that will not teach our children how to read. But we are willing to spend it, because we understand that if you can't read, the science programs don't matter, it's hard to excel in math. Reading is the gateway to knowledge. Reading is the true civil right of the 21st century.

6. President Bush on War in Iraq (March 19, 2003)

Background: In this speech President George W. Bush announced the start of the war in Iraq. He stressed that every effort would be made to spare the lives of innocent Iraqi citizens, but that America would be using force to combat terrorists in the region. Bush declared it was the duty of the United States to defend our freedom and that no outcome other than victory would be acceptable. In response to this speech, Senator Tom Daschle (Democrat-South Dakota) called President Bush's diplomatic efforts in the Iraq crisis a miserable failure. Senator Robert Byrd (Democrat-West Virginia) said on the floor of the Senate, "Today I weep for my country. I have watched the events of recent months with a heavy, heavy heart. No more is the image of America one of a strong yet benevolent peacekeeper."

Questions to consider:

1. Who is Bush's audience in this speech? What was the purpose of this speech?
2. According to President Bush, what is the goal of the United States?
3. Why does President Bush believe the United States is justified in taking these actions?

George W. Bush, War in Iraq, March 19, 2003

My fellow citizens, at this hour American and coalition forces are in the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger. On my orders, coalition forces have begun striking selected targets of military importance to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war. These are opening stages of what will be a broad and concerted campaign. More than 35 countries are giving crucial support, from the use of naval and air bases, to help with intelligence and logistics, to the deployment of combat units. Every nation in this coalition has chosen to bear the duty and share the honor of serving in our common defense.

To all of the men and women of the United States armed forces now in the Middle East, the peace of a troubled world and the hopes of an oppressed people now depend on you. That trust is well placed. The enemies you confront will come to know your skill and bravery. The people you liberate will witness the honorable and decent spirit of the American military.

In this conflict, America faces an enemy who has no regard for conventions of war or rules of morality. Saddam Hussein has placed Iraqi troops and equipment in civilian areas, attempting to use innocent men, women and children as shields for his own military; a final atrocity against his people. I want

Americans and all the world to know that coalition forces will make every effort to spare innocent civilians from harm.

We come to Iraq with respect for its citizens, for their great civilization and for the religious faiths they practice. We have no ambition in Iraq, except to remove a threat and restore control of that country to its own people. I know that the families of our military are praying that all those who serve will return safely and soon. Millions of Americans are praying with you for the safety of your loved ones and for the protection of the innocent. For your sacrifice, you have the gratitude and respect of the American people and you can know that our forces will be coming home as soon as their work is done.

Our nation enters this conflict reluctantly, yet our purpose is sure. The people of the United States and our friends and allies will not live at the mercy of an outlaw regime that threatens the peace with weapons of mass murder . . . I assure you, this will not be a campaign of half measures and we will accept no outcome but victory . . . My fellow citizens, the dangers to our country and the world will be overcome. We will pass through this time of peril and carry on the work of peace. We will defend our freedom. We will bring freedom to others. And we will prevail.

7. President Bush on Same Sex Marriage, February 24, 2004

Background: In this speech to Congress President Bush expressed support for what he saw as “protecting the sanctity of marriage.” The President Bush added new fuel to what has become a roiling cultural debate by calling for a constitutional amendment to outlaw same-sex marriage. In an editorial, The New York Times declared that Bush’s proposal would “inject *meanspiritedness* and exclusion” into the United States Constitution.

Questions to Consider:

1. Who is Bush’s audience in this speech? What was the purpose of this speech?
2. What was the purpose of the Defense of Marriage Act?
3. What does the President propose to protect the Defense of Marriage Act?
4. How has debate on same-sex marriage changed since the Bush presidency?

George W. Bush on Same–Sex Marriage, February 24, 2004

Eight years ago, Congress passed, and President Clinton signed, the Defense of Marriage Act, which defined marriage for purposes of federal law as the legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife. The act passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 342-67 and the Senate by a vote of 85-14. Those congressional votes, and the passage of similar defense of marriage laws in 38 states, express an overwhelming consensus in our country for protecting the institution of marriage.

In recent months, however, some activist judges and local officials have made an aggressive attempt to redefine marriage. In Massachusetts, four judges on the highest court have indicated they will order the issuance of marriage licenses to applicants of the same gender in May of this year. In San Francisco, city officials have issued thousands of marriage licenses to people of the same gender, contrary to the California Family Code.

After more than two centuries of American jurisprudence and millennia of human experience, a few judges and local authorities are presuming to change the most fundamental institution of civilization. Their actions have created confusion on an issue that requires clarity . . . If we’re to prevent the meaning

of marriage from being changed forever, our nation must enact a constitutional amendment to protect marriage in America. Decisive and democratic action is needed because attempts to redefine marriage in a single state or city could have serious consequences throughout the country.

The union of a man and woman is the most enduring human institution, honored and encouraged in all cultures and by every religious faith. Ages of experience have taught humanity that the commitment of a husband and wife to love and to serve one another promotes the welfare of children and the stability of society. Marriage cannot be severed from its cultural, religious and natural roots without weakening the good influence of society. Government, by recognizing and protecting marriage, serves the interests of all.

Today, I call upon the Congress to promptly pass and to send to the states for ratification an amendment to our Constitution defining and protecting marriage as a union of a man and woman as husband and wife. The amendment should fully protect marriage, while leaving the state legislatures free to make their own choices in defining legal arrangements other than marriage.

8. President Bush on Economic Policy and Social Security (December 15, 2004)

Background: On December 15, 2004, at the close of a two-day conference on the state of the national economy, President George W. Bush outlined a plan to decrease the growing national deficit and overhaul the tax system. He also called for an examination of the costs of Social Security and Medicare, including private savings accounts. The President announced plans to propose a “tough” budget to Congress. The AARP charged that Bush’s plan for private accounts would undermine Social Security and put future generations of retirees at great economic risk. Administration officials acknowledge that their plan would require unprecedented borrowing.

Questions to Consider:

1. Who is Bush’s audience in this speech? What was the purpose of this speech?
2. What does President Bush mean by a “tough” budget?
3. In your opinion, why did President Bush meet stiff resistance on some of these proposals?

President Bush Economic Policy and Social Security, December 16, 2004

We're talking about significant issues over the course of these couple of days. We'll talk about an important issue today, which is, how do we keep the economy growing; how do we deal with deficits. And I want to thank you all for sharing your wisdom about how to do so.

If the deficit is an issue -- which it is -- therefore, it's going to require some tough choices on the spending side. In other words, the strategy is going to be to grow the economy through reasonable tax policy, but to make sure the deficit is dealt with by being wise about how we spend money . . . I look forward to working with Congress on fiscal restraint. And it's not going to be easy.

Non-defense, non-homeland discretionary spending has declined from 15 percent in 2001 to less than 1 percent in the appropriations bill I just signed, which is good progress. What I'm saying is we're going to submit a tough budget, and I look forward to working with Congress on the tough budget.

First, on Social Security, it's very important for seniors to understand nothing will change. In other words, nobody is going to take away your check. You'll receive that which has been promised. Secondly, I do not believe we ought to be raising payroll taxes to achieve the objective of a sound Social Security system. Thirdly, I believe younger workers ought to be able to take some of their own payroll taxes and set them up in a personal savings account, which will earn a better rate of return, encourage ownership and savings, and provide a new way of -- let me just say, reforming -- modernizing the system to reflect what many workers are already experiencing in America, the capacity to manage your own asset base that government cannot take away.

9. President George W. Bush's 2nd Inaugural Address (January 20, 2005)

Background: In 2004 President Bush was soundly reelected, defeating Democratic opponent Senator John Kerry. Foreign policy was the dominant theme throughout the election campaign, particularly Bush's conduct of the War on Terrorism, the aftermath of the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan, and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. President Bush addressed these issues in his second inaugural address, outlining what he saw as the United States' role in world. Writing in the *New York Times*, columnist Orlando Patterson called "The administration's notion of freedom . . . especially convenient, and its promotion of it especially cynical."

Questions to Consider:

1. Who is Bush's audience in this speech? What was the purpose of this speech?
2. What was the "day of fire" that President Bush is referring to in this speech?
3. According to President Bush what can break the reign of tyrants throughout the world?
4. What is President Bush's foreign policy goal during his second term?

George W. Bush's 2nd Inaugural Address, January 20, 2005

At this second gathering, our duties are defined not by the words I use, but by the history we have seen together. For a half century, America defended our own freedom by standing watch on distant borders. After the shipwreck of communism came years of relative quiet, years of repose, years of sabbatical - and then there came a day of fire.

We have seen our vulnerability - and we have seen its deepest source. For as long as whole regions of the world simmer in resentment and tyranny - prone to ideologies that feed hatred and excuse murder - violence will gather, and multiply in destructive power, and cross the most defended borders, and raise a mortal threat. There is only one force of history that can break the reign of hatred and resentment, and expose the pretensions of tyrants, and reward the hopes of the decent and tolerant, and that is the force of human freedom.

We are led, by events and common sense, to one conclusion: The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world.

Freedom, by its nature, must be chosen and defended by citizens and sustained by the rule of law and the protection of minorities. And when the soul of a nation finally speaks, the institutions that arise may reflect customs and traditions very different from our own.

America will not impose our own style of government on the unwilling. Our goal, instead, is to help others find their own voice, attain their own freedom and make their own way. The great objective of ending tyranny is the concentrated work of generations. The difficulty of the task is no excuse for avoiding it.

America's influence is not unlimited, but fortunately for the oppressed, America's influence is considerable and we will use it confidently in freedom's cause. My most solemn duty is to protect this nation and its people from further attacks and emerging threats. Some have unwisely chosen to test America's resolve and have found it firm. We will persistently clarify the choice before every ruler and every nation: the moral choice between oppression, which is always wrong, and freedom, which is eternally right.

10. President Bush, The Future of Energy Policy (April 27, 2005)

Background: In this speech, President George W. Bush responded to criticisms that the United States was overly dependent on foreign oil. President Bush offered federal risk insurance to companies that build nuclear power plants and encouraged the construction of oil refineries on closed military bases in the United States. He focused on using technology to create new forms of energy that would lower energy and fuel costs for Americans. Public opinion polls showed that high fuel costs had cut into the President's popularity. Democrats criticized Mr. Bush's proposals as ineffective for average consumers.

Questions to Consider:

1. Who is Bush's audience in this speech? What was the purpose of this speech?
2. What does President Bush believe is the key to lowering energy cost in the United States?
3. In your opinion, was President Bush persuasive in this speech? Explain.

President George W. Bush, The Future of Energy Policy, April 27, 2005

From Thomas Edison's light bulb to Alexander Graham Bell's telephone, to Henry Ford's Model T, most of America's great inventions began with the innovative spirit of entrepreneurs. And today a new generation of entrepreneurs is leading a technological revolution that will transform our lives in credible ways. I'm going to spend a little time talking about how technology can help us.

By restraining federal spending, by keeping taxes low, we'll keep this economy growing and keep the innovative spirit strong. But in order to make sure our economy grows, in order to make sure people are still able to find opportunity, in order to encourage small business sector growth and vitality, we need to address a major problem facing our country – and that is our nation's growing dependence on foreign sources of energy. Technology is allowing us to better use our existing energy resources. And in the years ahead, technology will allow us to create entirely new sources of energy in ways earlier generations could never dream. Technology is the ticket, is this nation's ticket to greater energy independence.

Our country is on the doorstep of incredible technological advances that will make energy more abundant and more affordable for our citizens. By harnessing the power of technology, we're going to be able to grow our economy, protect our environment, and achieve greater energy independence. That's why I'm so optimistic about our future here in America.

The first essential step toward greater energy independence is to apply technology to increase domestic production from existing energy resources. And one of the most promising sources of energy is nuclear power. Today's technology has made nuclear power safer, cleaner, and more efficient than ever before. Nuclear power is one of the safest, cleanest sources of power in the world, and we need more of it here in America.

Technology has allowed us to better control emissions and improve the efficiency and environmental performance of our existing refineries. Yet there have been no new oil refineries built in the United States since 1976. And existing oil refineries are running at nearly full capacity. Our demand for gasoline grows, which means we're relying more on foreign imports of refined product.

We haven't had a national energy strategy in this country for a long period of time. I tried to get the Congress to pass it four years ago. Now is the time for them to act. For the sake of this country, for the sake of a growing economy, and for the sake of national security, we've got to do what it takes to expand our independence. We must become less dependent. And there's no doubt in my mind that technology is going to help us achieve that objective.

11. President Bush on Immigration and Border Security (November 28, 2005)

Background: President George W. Bush gave his speech at the Davis- Monthan Air Force Base in Tuscon Arizona. President Bush addressed the debate about whether the United States should better secure its border. He declared that by entering the country illegal, undocumented immigrants were violating U.S. law. President Bush proposed securing the border by returning illegal immigrants to their homes more quickly, stronger detainment plans, and larger law enforcement efforts along the border. According to Senator Harry Reid (Democrat-Nevada), "Democrats support immigration policies that will reunite families, provide for continued American economic growth, protect the rights of American workers, secure economic stability for our neighbors to the south and honor the values of the United States of America as a nation of immigrants."

Questions to Consider:

1. Who is Bush's audience in this speech? What was the purpose of this speech?
2. What is the President's position on undocumented or illegal immigrants?
3. In your opinion, why is the United States so divided over undocumented or illegal immigration?

George W. Bush on Immigration and Border Security, November 28, 2005

America has always been a compassionate nation that values the newcomer and takes great pride in our immigrant heritage; yet we're also a nation built on the rule of law, and those who enter the country illegally violate the law. The American people should not have to choose between a welcoming society and a lawful society. We can have both at the same time. And to keep the promise of America, we will enforce the laws of our country

As a former governor, I know that enforcing the law and the border is especially important to the communities along the border. Illegal immigration puts pressure on our schools and hospitals -- I understand that. I understand it strains the resources needed for law enforcement and emergency services. And the vicious human strugglers -- smugglers and gangs that bring illegal immigrants across the border also bring crime to our neighborhoods and danger to the highways. Illegal immigration is a serious challenge. And our responsibility is clear: We are going to protect the border.

Our strategy for comprehensive immigration reforms begins by securing the border . . . The first part of the plan is to promptly return every illegal entrant we catch at the border, with no exceptions. More than 85 percent of the illegal immigrants we catch are from Mexico, and most of them are escorted back across the border within 24 hours. To prevent them from trying to cross again, we've launched an interesting program, an innovative approach called interior repatriation. Under this program, many Mexicans caught at the border illegally are flown back to Mexico and then bused to their hometowns in the interior part of the country. By returning these illegal immigrants to their home towns far from the border, we make it more difficult for them to attempt to cross again. Interior repatriation is showing promise in breaking the cycle of illegal immigration.

The second part of our plan is to strengthen border -- to strengthen border enforcement is to correct weak and unnecessary provisions in our immigration laws. Under current law, the federal government is required to release people caught crossing our border illegally if their home countries do not take them back in a set period of time. That law doesn't work when it comes time to enforcing the border and it needs to be changed. Those we we're forced to release have included murderers, rapists, child molesters, and other violent criminals. This undermines our border security. It undermines the work these good folks are doing. And the United States Congress needs to pass legislation to end these senseless rules.

12. President Bush, Katrina One Year Later (August 28, 2006)

Background: A year after Hurricane Katrina, President George W. Bush returned to New Orleans to make a speech in which he took "full responsibility" for the slow federal response to the devastation of the city. President Bush sought to demonstrate the depth of his understanding of the emotional and physical toll of the hurricane. President Bush had been severely criticized when he praised the head of the federal relief team for doing "a heckuva job." This speech was seen as a turning point by White House advisers who recognized the political damage done by the flawed government reaction.

Questions to Consider:

1. Who is Bush's audience in this speech? What was the purpose of this speech?
2. How is President Bush trying to regain the trust of the people of New Orleans and the United States?
3. In your opinion, was President Bush persuasive? Explain.

George W. Bush, Katrina One Year Later, August 28, 2006

It's a sense of renewal here. It may be hard for those of you who have endured the last year to really have that sense of change, but for a fellow who was here and now a year later comes back, things are changing. And I congratulate you for your courage and your perseverance.

Since the days of heroism and bravery, the Gulf Coast has begun one of the largest rebuilding efforts in our nation's history. This is my 11th visit since the storm hit. You know, each visit you see progress . . . A year ago I committed our federal government to help you. I said we have a duty to help the local people recover and rebuild. And I meant what I said. Working with . . . members of the United States Congress, we have appropriated \$110 billion to help rebuild this area. It is a strong federal commitment that we will keep.

The first test of this partnership was to clear debris. You can't rebuild a community when the community is full of debris. We've now removed about 98 percent of the dry debris. I remember when we first came down here, the mayors weren't so happy with the debris removal. Well, we listened to them. We got the funding equations right. And we got after it, and the debris is basically gone -- which is step one of making sure our partnership works, and step two about making sure we can rebuild this area bigger and better than before.

We all have roles to play, but in every state hit by last year's storms it was the bravery of the local citizens that meant the difference between life and death. It was the bravery of the first responders on the scene. I'm here to thank you all for showing the country how to respond to natural disaster.

We've committed more than \$3 billion in housing grants, and that money is beginning to flow to the homeowners. I know there's some frustration, but I want to appreciate the state working hard to make sure that when that money is spent, it's spent well, and it goes to people that deserve it. That's what you expect, and that's what's going to happen. The checks have begun to roll; they're beginning to move, and the Governor and his staff are on top of it. It's a huge undertaking that's going to require cooperation with government agencies, insurance companies, volunteers, and community leaders.

Optimism is the only option. We want to help. We want to help that optimism succeed. And so I signed legislation that creates what's called the Gulf Opportunity Zones. That means if you invest in this part of the world, you get tax breaks. In other words, they're using the tax code to say, come and invest your capital here. It's very important for the Congress to extend this legislation. It's important for planners and job creators to know that the incentive we created will still be there.

13. President Bush, Fuel and Energy Initiatives (June 21, 2007)

Background: In this speech President George W. Bush looks to move the United States towards greater energy independence and security. His goals are to increase the production of clean renewable fuels, to protect consumers, to increase the efficiency of products, buildings, and vehicles, and to promote research on and deploy greenhouse gas capture and storage options. Senator Barack Obama (Democrat-Illinois) charged that the oil companies were allowed to craft energy policy with Vice-President Dick Cheney "in secret while every other voice was silenced."

Questions to Consider:

1. Who is Bush's audience in this speech? What was the purpose of this speech?
2. What forms of alternative energy does President Bush promote?
3. According to President Bush, how could the United States achieve energy independence?

George W. Bush, Fuel and Energy Initiatives, June 21, 2007

The world is seeing the promise and potential of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. I emphasize that word, peaceful use, because one of my predecessors, Dwight David Eisenhower, in 1953 called on the world's scientists and engineers to find a way to produce peaceful power from atomic energy that would serve the needs, rather than the fears, of mankind . . . Nuclear power is America's third leading source of electricity. It provides nearly 20 percent of our country's electricity. I don't know if a lot of our citizens understand that, but nuclear power is a key component of economic vitality, because it provides 20 percent of the electricity. Interestingly enough, nuclear power provides 78 percent of electricity for

France, provides 50 percent for Sweden, 30 percent for the entire European Union. China has nine nuclear reactors in operation and has ambitious plans to build many more over the next two decades.

Nuclear power is prevalent and it's recognized as a necessary power source, not only here in the United States, but around the world. Nuclear power is clean. It's clean, domestic energy. There is a lot of discussion about the environment, as there should be. We certainly want to leave the environment better for the next generation that comes along. There's a lot of discussion about greenhouse gases, which I believe is a serious problem. We're too dependent on oil. And you know, in 1985, about 27 percent of our oil came from other countries; today, about 60 percent does. And that's a dependency that creates economic and national security problems for us.

On the national security side, our dependence on oil leaves us more vulnerable to hostile regimes and terrorists. If you can blow up oil facilities overseas, it will affect the price of oil here at home. When you're dependent on something and somebody disrupts the supply on which you're dependent, it will affect you. It effects international politics, to a certain extent, to be dependent on oil.

But we believe we can come up with technologies that will enable us to use wood chips to make ethanol that you can put in your automobiles to help us become less dependent on oil, or switchgrasses. That would be nice for some of the people from my state. Switchgrass grows in a nice dry environment. By the way, as we talk about these new technologies, we're still going to need oil and gas. And we can explore for oil and gas in environmentally friendly ways. I strongly believe that we ought to open up more outer continental shelf area . . . You know, there's a big debate about whether or not you can drill and find oil and gas that's good for you without ruining the environment. I'm telling you we can. Technologies have changed.

14. President Bush on Climate Change (September 28, 2007)

Background: With this speech President George W. Bush concluded a two-day climate meeting, stating that the nations that contribute the most to global warming should all set goals for reducing greenhouse-gas emissions. President Bush also proposed an international fund to help developing nations benefit from clean energy technology. According to the *New York Times*, “much of the rest of the world is deeply unimpressed. The European Union, in particular, says mandatory measures to reduce emissions must remain the priority.”

Questions to Consider:

1. Who is Bush's audience in this speech? What was the purpose of this speech?
2. Why is climate change a major problem facing the United States and the world?
3. What solutions did President Bush propose in this speech?
4. In your opinion, did President Bush sufficiently address the problem of climate change?

George W. Bush, America and Climate Change, September 28, 2007

Energy security and climate change are two of the great challenges of our time. The United States takes these challenges seriously. The world's response will help shape the future of the global economy and the condition of our environment for future generations. The nations in this room have special responsibilities. We represent the world's major economies, we are major users of energy, and we have the resources and knowledge base to develop clean energy technologies.

Our guiding principle is clear: We must lead the world to produce fewer greenhouse gas emissions, and we must do it in a way that does not undermine economic growth or prevent nations from delivering greater prosperity for their people. We know this can be done. Last year America grew our economy while also reducing greenhouse gases. Several other nations have made similar strides.

Another challenge is climate change. Our understanding of climate change has come a long way. A report issued earlier this year by the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded both that global temperatures are rising and that this is caused largely by human activities. When we burn fossil fuels we release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, and the concentration of greenhouse gases has increased substantially.

For many years those who worried about climate change and those who worried about energy security were on opposite ends of the debate. It was said that we faced a choice between protecting the environment and producing enough energy. Today we know better. These challenges share a common solution: technology. By developing new low-emission technologies, we can meet the growing demand for energy and at the same time reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. As a result, our nations have an opportunity to leave the debates of the past behind, and reach a consensus on the way forward. And that's our purpose today.

Each nation must decide for itself the right mix of tools and technologies to achieve results that are measurable and environmentally effective. While our strategies may be differentiated, we share a common responsibility to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while keeping our economies growing.

There is a way forward that will enable us to grow our economies and protect the environment, and that's called technology. We'll meet our energy needs. We'll be good stewards of this environment. Achieving these goals will require a sustained effort over many decades. This problem isn't going to be solved overnight. Yet years from now our children are going to look back at the choices we make today, at this deciding moment: It will be a moment when we choose to expand prosperity instead of accepting stagnation; it will be a moment when we turn the tide against greenhouse gas emissions instead of allowing the problem to grow; it will be a moment when we rejected the predictions of despair and set a course of a more hopeful future.

15. President Bush on the Economy and Bailout (September 24, 2008)

Background: In his speech to the people on September 24, 2008, President George W. Bush presented his proposed bailout plan for the nation following the collapse of the stock market and threats to the banking system. By proposing a \$700 billion bailout plan he attempted to prevent a complete breakdown of the United States economy. The President believed that if the federal government could take some of the financial burden away from the public and financial institutions and that this would benefit the nation over time. *The New York Times* was very critical of the Bush speech, saying "Mr. Bush's appearance was just another reminder of something that has been worrying us throughout this crisis: the absence of any real national leadership."

Questions to Consider:

1. Who is Bush's audience in this speech? What was the purpose of this speech?
2. What problems were facing the country?
3. Why did President Bush propose an economic bailout?
4. President Bush generally believed in a reduced role for the national or federal government. In your opinion, was this proposal consistent with his governing philosophy? Explain.

President Bush on the Economy and Bailout, September 24, 2008

My administration is working with Congress to address the root cause behind much of the instability in our markets. Financial assets related to home mortgages have lost value during the housing decline. And the banks holding these assets have restricted credit. As a result, our entire economy is in danger. So I've proposed that the federal government reduce the risk posed by these troubled assets, and supply urgently-needed money so banks and other financial institutions can avoid collapse and resume lending.

The decline in the housing market set off a domino effect across our economy. When home values declined, borrowers defaulted on their mortgages, and investors holding mortgage-backed securities began to incur serious losses. Before long, these securities became so unreliable that they were not being bought or sold. Investment banks such as Bear Stearns and Lehman Brothers found themselves saddled with large amounts of assets they could not sell. They ran out of the money needed to meet their immediate obligations. And they faced imminent collapse. Other banks found themselves in severe financial trouble. These banks began holding on to their money, and lending dried up, and the gears of the American financial system began grinding to a halt.

After much discussion, there is now widespread agreement on the principles such a plan would include. It would remove the risk posed by the troubled assets -- including mortgage-backed securities -- now clogging the financial system. This would free banks to resume the flow of credit to American families and businesses. Any rescue plan should also be designed to ensure that taxpayers are protected. It should welcome the participation of financial institutions large and small. It should make certain that failed executives do not receive a windfall from your tax dollars. It should establish a bipartisan board to oversee the plan's implementation. And it should be enacted as soon as possible.

The primary steps -- purpose of the steps I have outlined tonight is to safeguard the financial security of American workers and families and small businesses. The federal government also continues to enforce laws and regulations protecting your money. The Treasury Department recently offered government insurance for money market mutual funds. And through the FDIC, every savings account, checking account, and certificate of deposit is insured by the federal government for up to \$100,000. The FDIC has been in existence for 75 years, and no one has ever lost a penny on an insured deposit -- and this will not change.

16. President Bush's Farewell Address (January 15, 2009)

Background: *The New York Times* described President Bush's farewell speech to the nation as "somber." President Bush told the nation "Like all who have held this office before me, I have experienced setbacks." He acknowledged, "There are things I would do differently if given the chance. Yet I have always acted with the best interests of our country in mind." He also asserted, "I have followed my conscience and done what I thought was right."

Questions to Consider:

1. Who is Bush's audience in this speech? What was the purpose of this speech?
2. What issues does President Bush emphasize in this final speech as President?
3. Based on this speech, how does Bush evaluate his performance as President?

President Bush's Farewell Address, January 15, 2009

As the years passed, most Americans were able to return to life much as it had been before 9/11. But I never did. Every morning, I received a briefing on the threats to our nation. I vowed to do everything in my power to keep us safe. Over the past seven years, a new Department of Homeland Security has been created. The military, the intelligence community, and the FBI have been transformed. Our nation is equipped with new tools to monitor the terrorists' movements, freeze their finances, and break up their plots. And with strong allies at our side, we have taken the fight to the terrorists and those who support them. Afghanistan has gone from a nation where the Taliban harbored al Qaeda and stoned women in the streets to a young democracy that is fighting terror and encouraging girls to go to school. Iraq has gone from a brutal dictatorship and a sworn enemy of America to an Arab democracy at the heart of the Middle East and a friend of the United States.

There is legitimate debate about many of these decisions. But there can be little debate about the results. America has gone more than seven years without another terrorist attack on our soil. This is a tribute to those who toil night and day to keep us safe -- law enforcement officers, intelligence analysts, homeland security and diplomatic personnel, and the men and women of the United States Armed Forces . . . The battles waged by our troops are part of a broader struggle between two dramatically different systems. Under one, a small band of fanatics demands total obedience to an oppressive ideology, condemns women to subservience, and marks unbelievers for murder. The other system is based on the conviction that freedom is the universal gift of Almighty God, and that liberty and justice light the path to peace.

This is the belief that gave birth to our nation. And in the long run, advancing this belief is the only practical way to protect our citizens. When people live in freedom, they do not willingly choose leaders who pursue campaigns of terror. When people have hope in the future, they will not cede their lives to violence and extremism. So around the world, America is promoting human liberty, human rights, and human dignity. We're standing with dissidents and young democracies, providing AIDS medicine to dying patients -- to bring dying patients back to life, and sparing mothers and babies from malaria. And this great republic born alone in liberty is leading the world toward a new age when freedom belongs to all nations.

For eight years, we've also strived to expand opportunity and hope here at home. Across our country, students are rising to meet higher standards in public schools. A new Medicare prescription drug benefit is bringing peace of mind to seniors and the disabled. Every taxpayer pays lower income taxes. The addicted and suffering are finding new hope through faith-based programs. Vulnerable human life is better protected. Funding for our veterans has nearly doubled. America's air and water and lands are measurably cleaner . . . When challenges to our prosperity emerged, we rose to meet them. Facing the prospect of a financial collapse, we took decisive measures to safeguard our economy. These are very tough times for hardworking families, but the toll would be far worse if we had not acted. All Americans are in this together. And together, with determination and hard work, we will restore our economy to the path of growth.