Political Rhetoric and the Media

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CONCLUSION

Through the 10 essays in this volume, we have seen scholars advance our understanding of politics, communication, and history by using the C-SPAN Video Library. Each has used a slightly different approach to address a different question. What unifies these essays is the use of the records originally created by C-SPAN to document the public affairs events of our day. Some have recounted history. Others examined gender in campaigns and in the newsroom. We have learned about agriculture policy and the spectacle of congressional hearings. Finally, we saw a proposal for a new data co-op to advance the study of elections through a repository of video coding and results.

Where do we go from here? With each volume—this is the eighth—we see scholars approaching new topics with new techniques. The Center for C-SPAN Scholarship & Engagement (CCSE), which sponsors the research conference where these essays are first presented, also holds a series of workshops through the academic year. These workshops are designed to introduce faculty and students to software and techniques that can be used to analyze the videos and text from the C-SPAN Video Library. Video recordings of these workshops are available at the CCSE website at Purdue University. In the past year, we held workshops on video and audio processing as tools become more readily available to analyze the video directly.

This year we saw three historians use the collection to analyze conventions, campaigns, and the history of cable news coverage. Additionally, another scholar analyzed the evolution of Senator Kennedy’s views on health care. Each year, there is more history being archived and the collection reaches further back in time, making it more valuable as a look at our history.

Impeachments, wars, Supreme Court justice nominations, political campaigns, congressional debates, hearings, presidential addresses to the nation, and speeches by Supreme Court justices all are recorded, indexed, and made available
for research. We invite you to think of the questions that these videos can answer, the techniques used to tease out those answers, and the possibility of participating in future conferences and volumes. The C-SPAN Video Library is there for your access and research.