



Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History

William Safire (Editor)

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History

William Safire (Editor)

Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History William Safire (Editor)

The third edition of an internationally best-selling collection of classic and modern oratory, *Lend Me Your Ears* offers numerous examples of the greatest speeches ever delivered—from the ancient world to the modern. Speeches in this edition span a broad stretch of history, from General George Patton inspiring Allied troops on the eve of D-Day to Pericles' impassioned eulogy for fallen Greek soldiers during the Peloponnesian War; and from Jesus of Nazareth's greatest sermons to Ruth Bader Ginsburg's fiery speech in response to the *Bush vs. Gore* decision that changed the landscape of American politics in our time.

Editor William Safire has collected a diverse range of speeches from both ancient and modern times, from people of many different backgrounds and political affiliations, and from people on both sides of history's greatest battles and events. This book provides a wealth of valuable examples of great oratory for writers, speakers, and history aficionados.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Author, journalist, and Presidential speechwriter William Safire (1929-2009) is believed by many to be America's most influential political writer and columnist. The author of a well-known syndicated political column for the *New York Times*, he was also known as a speechwriter for President Nixon. He was a frequent guest on NBC's "Meet the Press;" and won the Pulitzer Prize for his commentary regarding corruption charges leveled against Bert Lance, Director of the Office of Management and the Budget, during the Carter Administration in 1978. He was a member of the Pulitzer Board starting in 1995, and Chief Executive and Chairman of the Dana Foundation. In 2006, President George W. Bush awarded Safire the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History Details

Date : Published April 21st 2014 by RosettaBooks (first published 1992)

ISBN :

Author : William Safire (Editor)

Format : Kindle Edition 1214 pages

Genre : History, Nonfiction, Reference, Language, Writing, Politics, Philosophy, Classics, Historical, Unfinished, Essays

 [Download Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History William Safire (Editor)

From Reader Review Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History for online ebook

Liza says

This is a fantastic collection of speeches, and Safire provides just the right amount of context to allow them to be read with the same gravitas as they had when they were first given. He also points the reader towards what he believes are things to be noted about each speech, which is very helpful for the aspiring speechwriter or even the interested layman, without getting in the way of the original writing. I would definitely recommend this collection to anyone with an interest in rhetoric, history, or law(I found the court arguments, in particular, very intriguing).

Gideon Burton says

This is a solid anthology of speeches, but is organized by theme, rather than chronologically, and many of the selections seem to be very spotty (not all that representative either of their historical period or of that genre of speaking). Still, for an inexpensive anthology (I bought the ebook for under \$5), it is a useful book (especially for class purposes, as I used it).

Matthew Klippenstein says

Good book, but somewhat Eurocentric -- which may reflect the editor's greater familiarity with Western history and historical figures.

Also, a surprising amount of recent (late 20th century) material. This was disappointing. While the modern population is much larger than in earlier times -- and there might therefore be more momentous speeches nowadays than in earlier ages -- one gets the impression that this has been a Golden Age of Oratory.

I'd be curious whether the next edition of the book includes, say, George Galloway's blistering testimony before the US Senate in in 2005, or Steve Jobs' unveiling of the iPhone.

While neither might have geopolitical importance, the former is an astonishing display of rhetorical prowess, and the latter is probably considered the crowning achievement of Steve Jobs' career -- both as a tech CEO and as a marketer.

RJ Corby says

William Safire has given readers a remarkable gift with this collection. Lend Me Your Ears is very similar to a book of poetry - it is to be treasured, read and referenced over a lifetime; never to be "finished" or forgotten.

This book has broad appeal - especially to fans of history and politics. But, anyone looking for inspiration or uplifting can find an appropriate speech or passage in its pages. And, most importantly, the book cuts both

ways across the political divide - one can find speeches from John F. and Robert Kennedy, FDR, Clinton, Lincoln, Churchill, Martin Luther King, and least surprisingly, Nixon, since Safire served as one of his speechwriters. Safire knows the language as well as anyone, probably better than your favorite English teacher, and his marvelous talents as a speechwriter give this book even more credibility. A good speechwriter knows a great speech when he hears it and/or reads it, as Safire shows with his selections in this book. (Point of fact - I'm a proud liberal Democrat, and I have these feelings about Safire!)

Safire offers introductions and sage commentary before each speech, which I found both enlightening and entertaining. I cannot recommend this book highly enough for anyone interested in great speeches through history. I'm hoping for a revised edition or perhaps a volume II from Safire. (Update: there is now an updated version available.)

One final note: some criticize the author for speeches omitted in this volume, but a line has to be drawn, or a book on this subject could span thousands of pages. Keep in mind, this book contains great speeches in Safire's opinion; it's not an end-all-be-all list of great historic speeches. (Orig. Review - Nov. '04)

HBalikov says

I will try to keep this book close at hand. It is full of surprises and delights ranging from a reelection on what a dog could mean to a man, to Richard Nixon's eulogy for Everett Dirksen that captures what we desperately need in today's politicians

Amanda says

Here's what I do with this book...I like to read the speeches out loud. I think it is a great way to become more relaxed and comfortable if/when we speak in front of others and what better material is there to practice with?

Doug says

Reading the speeches really is fascinating. It puts an entirely new perspective on U.S and world history. Reading the speeches from Abe Lincoln, General MacArthur, Judge Learned Hand, Queen Elizabeth and many more giving a renewed interest in history and what it means to our future. This book is really not a book that needs to be read in order as each speech is different. However the book does categorize the speeches. Very good book.

Lucy says

This book is really fun to pick up and put down--so many great and influential speeches, just little snippets of history. It's quite a pretty book, too, which all books should try to be if they possibly can.

Scyller says

This anthology of speeches is wonderful! Not as many women speakers as I would like, but the quality and contextual notes more than compensate. Just about any major speech you can think of is in this book (and even some you never knew about!)

Paula says

It took me over a year to read this book, one speech at a time with many other books in between. That is mostly because I used this as my fall back when I didn't have anything more intriguing waiting to be read. The book lends itself to this scattershot approach. You can read one speech through, and then set the book down and pick it up a month later to read the next speech. Part of the reason it took so long is because the speeches themselves are hit-and-miss. There are some great speeches and some that are merely good. As a writer, I can appreciate most of Safire's choices. He is enamored with the style as much as the substance (generally these speeches were of historical significance). Where both are present, the choice was undoubtedly easy. Yet, not many speeches have both. That means that you have to slog through some speeches that have historic significance, but are not so beautifully executed. You also have to suffer through some that are skillfully presented, but in which the message is commonplace. Perhaps there were just too many speeches in the book. It is certainly a thick volume, and would not have been harmed by being slimmer. However, the book had enough style and substance throughout to keep me reading, and I came away with a richer sense of history as well.

Tanner says

Like any anthology, the quality of this book is scattershot. My favorite speeches are listed below, but even the best of the best speeches can be dry when read instead of listened too. I most appreciated this book when it argues for the best of mankind. It's a good jolt to remind yourself of duty, self-sacrifice, compassion, humility and hard work.

I also appreciated the organization of the book, which I've seen others object to. The speeches are split by topic, and then organized chronologically. This cyclical style reproduces a cozy sense of progress that I haven't felt since my high school history classes. Especially in the Tributes, Sermons and Speeches of Social progress, the book says "See? Humanity is getting better. We are imperfect, and we suffer setbacks, but we are slowly opening our eyes, expanding who we consider human and becoming more perfect reflections of our ideals." I know that's likely not the case, but it's a pretty, inspirational fiction to be reminded of.

Finally, this book is mostly Western, you've just got to deal with it. It's mostly about Europeans and Americans, and mostly about white men, except for a few token expansions, mostly in the social responsibility section. I would appreciate a complementary edition that focuses only on marginal voices, but I understand that isn't Safire's background or his goal.

Unfortunately, my copy was all out of order after page 870, so I can't speak to the quality of the political or commencement speeches.

Memorials and War: Webster Bunker Hill; Learned Hand 4th of July, Macarthur, Duty Honor Country; Washington Insurrection; Davis takes his leave; Churchill Braces britons to their task; Montgomery draws the line at El Alamein;

Eulogies and Tributes: Emerson Burns; Frederick Douglass on Lincoln; Ingersoll speaks at his brother's grave; Jane Addams praises George Washington; Rabbi Wise on Lincoln; Stanley Baldwin Toasts a Lexicographer; Kennedy, Arts in America; Robert Kennedy on MLK;

Trials: Haile Selassie League of Nations; Robert Emmet, Prosperity be the judge; Gandhi Defends his Beliefs; Darrow answers supporter of Capital Punishment;

Farewells: George Washington farewell; Edward VIII abdicates; Lou Gehrig bids farewell to baseball; Macarthur, Old Soldiers never die; Lyndon Johnson Farewell;

Sermons: John Wesley Free Grace; Red Jacket rejects change of religion; Lincoln Second Inaugural;

Inspirational Speeches: Theodore Roosevelt, Ignoble Ease; William Faulkner Charges Writers to Help Mankind Prevail; William Lyon Phelps Praises the Owing of Books; Alistair Cooke State of the English Language;

Speeches of Social Responsibility: Pitt the Younger urges abolition of slave Trade; Chief Seattle cautions Americans; Walter Lippmann, the easy way; Kissin' Jim Folson; Benazhir Bhutto Islamic feminism;

Angus McDonald says

This book has one simple premise, to take great speeches from history and present them to us in English, along with a simple introduction as to why the author (a presidential speech writer himself) finds them worthy of inclusion.

The speeches are broadly categorized by type, religion, politics, military, etc. and have a broad appeal.

Unlike some writers this book does not focus particularly on multiple speeches from the same speaker. Rather each is taken separately and included for its particular significance.

The shortest is roughly one page in length and the longest goes over several pages. As befits a good speech they are all quite readable, and I've had a lot of fun taking turns with friends reading them to each other.

Benjamin Alexander says

I read Karl Barth's small Christmas sermon in the book. He stressed Jesus' being right beside us in this lonely and dark world. Some of my comments on this notion:

To the degree that God is One He is beside His saints. But technically Jesus is reigning at the Right Hand of God the Father and it is the person of the Holy Spirit that is with us. There is another sense in which God is "next" to all people in the world for He is omnipresent. But Barth was a little off I think.

Fiona Rawsontile says

Writing a review of this book takes some courage, for this is a book coauthored by hundreds of remarkable characters throughout the human history.

I first borrowed this book from one of NYU's libraries because I needed to write political speeches for a science fiction. It soon became clear that this is not a book that can be skimmed through in a few days. Not a beach read or a diversion you bring to an airplane. It deserves a slot on my bookshelf and is well worth the \$35 I spent on Amazon. There are more than 200 speeches presented in 14 categories, ranging from Napoleon's exhortation to his soldiers to Clinton's memorial of Martin Luther King. My favorite is the category of War and Revolution, as "The better work men do is always done under stress and at great personal cost" (William Carlos Williams), although I do learn a lot in any of the other categories, about economy, democracy, religion, etc.

But this is more than a collection. Preceding every speech, the author, William Safire, gives a brief background of the speech and the speaker. For historical events, you may argue that anyone could easily "google" something out, but the intros written by Safire are not mere facts; they are the distillate of abundant knowledge combined with personal insights. I've tried reading some of the speeches without first resorting to Safire's intros. Always ended up clueless. Some of the events awoke my old memories. When I learned those events in high school, they were numbers and names and exam questions. Now reading the actual speech, I become face to face with the speaker, fearing his fear and smiling at his smile. There is no force stronger than the mind of a remarkable human being. And that's how people achieve eternity --- "Either write something worth reading or do something worth writing about." (Benjamin Franklin)

Rahul Khanna says

I am in no hurry to finish this book. In fact, it is not a book to read but to study. William Safire is a erudite and I wonder how he wrote introduction of this book! It is amazing. I marked this quote from introduction "Tell them what you're going to tell them; then tell them; then tell them what you told them".

LATOYA JOVENA says

This is a doorstep of a book but I have to say it taught me a lot. There truly is an art to giving speeches but the subject matter of the speeches included were basically a history lesson. It doesn't seem like such a giant book if you think of it as two separate books.

James Nance says

A great book of great speeches. I use this as the primary source document for speeches in my rhetoric class.

Rivka D. says

I think everyone should read this book. Seeing the written form of famously spoken words has shed a lot of light on what the speakers were actually saying.

That said, I hated reading this book. One of those necessary evils of education that will come in handy later in life.

Heather Denigan says

The editor seems to have made his selections with an eye towards political correctness than their actual significance or influence. I don't think even Reagan's "tear down this wall" speech made it in--what!!!!

Dan W says

This is a magnificent collection of speeches from pivotal moments in ancient and modern history. It is one thing to hear snips of these speeches on sound clips or in history books, quite another to read them in full context. This book serves as solid reference material, motivation, and an anthology of eloquence.

In the modern age of sound bite, the real art of stirring passion via soulful words is all but lost. This book serves as a window into the souls and minds of brilliant men and women.
