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Forward to *The C-SPAN Archives: An
Interdisciplinary Resource for Discovery, Learning, and
Engagement*

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FOREWORD

I am pleased to have been given the opportunity to write the Foreword for this important volume exploring the rich resources of the C-SPAN Archives. As a former president of the National Communication Association (NCA), I am particularly pleased that the NCA provided the venue for the conference that was the impetus for this book. I believe both the conference and the book offer a compelling window into the valuable archive held by C-SPAN. And, as you read this volume, I think you will see how rich the C-SPAN Archives is, and how much promise it holds for future research and pedagogy.

This book clarifies how what's been communicated via C-SPAN shapes further communication among people. It is extremely useful to read a volume that spans research endeavors and pedagogy as well as political issues, and, in addition, projects into people's everyday lives. While any event, such

as a presidential speech, for instance, has implications for all these arenas, this book is one of the few in my experience that focus on all these dimensions, explicitly showing how research, teaching, and practical application naturally intertwine. Further, the well-defined multidisciplinary focus of this book is an invaluable contribution. Universities currently focus on the importance of bringing a variety of disciplines together to think through seemingly intractable problems. This volume illustrates how different disciplines can illuminate the texts provided by the C-SPAN Archives. Engaged scholarship and partnerships between community and university personnel are often-invoked buzzwords in education today. But this volume makes these phrases come alive and embodies them with purpose, showing how the communication of political ideas permeates our experience and offers possibilities for edification and change.

This book features chapter topics as widely disparate as a rhetorical analysis of black political agency in the age of Barack Obama's presidency, and an essay illustrating ways to use the C-SPAN Archives to teach mass communication theory. Through this diversity, the book illustrates the richness and depth of the C-SPAN Archives for scholars, teachers, and citizens. To have access to the raw data of nearly 30 years of the political history of the United States allows for research and teaching uses limited only by our imaginations. The variety of scholarship demonstrated within this volume is exciting and thought provoking. It provides a window into the C-SPAN Archives and a window into our political and mediated lives. It allows us to focus on the big picture and to drill down to specifics. It provides us with a beginning, and a promise that there is much more to follow. I, for one, am thrilled with this book, and the prospect of more to follow. I invite you to enjoy the range and depth of what is contained in this volume. It will be an exciting read, inspiring you to think about politics, communication, and life in our contemporary world in many different ways. I cannot think of a better use of our time and energy.

Lynn H. Turner, Past-President, National Communication Association