THE AMERICAN POLITICAL MEMOIR

A Symposium for the Group for the Interdisciplinary Study of Political Rhetoric, Media, and Public Opinion

Keynote Address by

John Zogby

(President and CEO of Zogby International)

Other featured speakers include:

- Craig Fehrman
- Stephanie Li
- John Michael
- Amit Ray
- Julie Sedivy
- Valeria Sinclair-Chapman
- Curt Smith
- Sidonie Smith

Full event schedule and much more at rochester.edu/college/humanities

April 1–2, 2010

Hawkins-Carlson Room in Rush Rhees Library

(no registration necessary)
Symposium on the Political Memoir: 

**Itinerary**

**DAY ONE: THURSDAY, APRIL 1**

10:30 am  Welcome: Tom Dipiero
10:45 am  Introduction: Curt Smith
11:00 am  John Zogby:
          “Words Do Matter and Why”
2:00 pm   Craig Fehrman:
          “Presidents and Their Books: A Brief History of American Political Memoir”
3:00 pm   Panel 1:
          “Personal Narrative and Political Fictions” Moderated by Gordon Hutner
          “Reagan and the Rise of the Blockbuster Memoir”: Craig Fehrman
          “The Boy's Own President: JFK and Cold War Latency”: John Michael
          “In Reality, Who Are You?’—*Dreams from My Father*, Authenticity and Right-Wing Conspiracy Theory”: Amit Ray
5:00 pm   Reception

**DAY TWO: FRIDAY, APRIL 2**

10:30 am  Panel 2:
          “The Identity Politics of Storytelling” Moderated by Sharon Willis
          “The Parallel Lives of Bill Clinton”: Stephanie Li
2:00 pm   “The Language of Identity in Political Discourse”: Julie Sedivy
3:30 pm   “Presidential Speechwriting and Speechgiving”: Curt Smith
4:30 pm   Closing Remarks: John Michael

*Special thanks to the Department of English and the Humanities Project.*

Our inaugural group examines the increasing prominence and influence of the political memoir and its impact on the 2008 presidential election. Throughout this prolonged election, candidates from both major parties sought to present themselves through books detailing their personal and political lives. Many of these texts have become bestsellers, influencing the electorate in as yet unexamined ways. Here we pose provocative questions about the relationship between the public and private self in American’s media-saturated environment.