

## THE LAST CAMPAIGN: LEGACY

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### Abstract

This essay addresses the forces that shape and define presidential legacies, with President Ronald Reagan as its focal point. Although Reagan seemed relatively unconcerned with history's opinion of him, the countless books published about his life and presidency attest to his own lack of interest being a minority viewpoint. Journalists, biographers, scholars and policymakers of all political persuasions perpetuate the Reagan legacy, even as they argue about its merits. Reeves examines how Reagan's supporters have attempted to burnish the president's reputation by focusing on his ideology and successes, even as detractors have striven to keep his administration's failures and controversies in the public consciousness. The essay compares the importance of Reagan's legacy with those of other significant presidents, including Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy, and examines the typical increase in popularity of presidents as their administrations recede into history. Also considered is Reagan's continuing importance to the Republican Party, the growth of "Reaganism" as an ideology, and whether or not he could live up to the idealized image many Republican leaders hold of him. This paper is accompanied by a bibliographic essay from Reeves' book *President Reagan: The Triumph of Imagination*. The bibliographic essay presents an annotated list of many of the most interesting books examining President Reagan, as well as prominent issues and figures associated with his legacy.

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For presidents there is always one last campaign: Legacy. How will they be remembered? The last campaign is manned by family, former cabinet members and assorted other assistants, biographers, political scientists, policy analysts, librarians and archivists, television talkers, bloggers and just about anyone else who can get their voices heard in America. A president may leave the White House in triumph or in disgrace, but the moment he leaves office, he and his followers begin the construction (or revision) of a legacy for the ages.

When President Reagan, the 40th president, left office in 1989, his legacy did not seem of Mount Rushmore quality. He left office with a good approval rating (63 percent). People always liked him. But there was limited enthusiasm for his record in office. Many of his ideological soulmates were disappointed with the Gipper, thinking he was a tired old man who was being manipulated by younger aides in such capers as the Iran- Contra scandal, but also outflanked by the more energetic and trickier Soviet leadership. Some of his men thought the old hard line anti-Communist was even losing the battle of the second half of the 20th century as he palled around the world with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. Howard Phillips, the founder and chairman of the Conservative Caucus, in 1987, called Reagan “a useful idiot for Soviet propaganda.” (1)

And then there were liberals in journalism and the academy who never had much use for him and enjoyed repeating Clark Clifford’s sarcastic description of him as “an amiable dunce.”

For true believers in the man’s greatness, the autobiography and biography that presidents traditionally rely on to try to explain, revise and improve their records seemed to be controlled by outsiders: Lou Cannon of the *Washington Post*, who had covered Reagan since his first California gubernatorial campaign in 1966, set the standard – a high one and a fair one – with *President Reagan: The Role of a Lifetime*, published in 1991. Men and women ready, willing and able to seriously argue greatness for their former boss were frozen in place because not only did the ex-president plan to write an autobiography, but the Reagans (really his wife, Nancy) had also selected an official biographer. Few were willing to publish until that biographer – the talented historian Edmund Morris, who had access to the Reagan White House, including multiple interviews with the president – finally published *Dutch* in 2000.

Despite the obvious fact that friendly biographies add to an ex-president’s legacy – David McCullough’s *Truman* was a recent example, Parson Mason Weems’ *The Life of Washington* an old one – Morris quickly learned the president did not share much of his wife’s enthusiasm for the project. Morris complained to anyone who would listen that Reagan was not “opening up” to him. Unlike many of his predecessors, among them Richard Nixon and John Kennedy, Reagan was not obsessed with his legacy or what history would say of him. Perhaps it was because he was so much older than they were. He already knew what he wanted to know; he was set in his ways, stubborn and generally uninterested in what journalists or the hired help thought of him. In 1985, when one of his political staff, Ed Rollins, brought up the subject of legacy, Reagan cut him off, saying: “First of all, history will probably get distorted when it is written. And I won’t be around to read it.” (2)

Morris’ book *Dutch*, though brilliantly written, turned out to be a mix of fact, fiction and frustration (about Reagan’s ability to avoid serious subjects and personal insight), and did little to burnish the subject’s works and reputation. And Reagan’s own autobiography, *An American Life*, was a rather bland story that might be characterized as “Tom Sawyer Meets the Presidency.” In his diary entry on December 8, 1987, the day he and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev signed the Intermediate

Nuclear Forces Reduction Treaty (INF) nuclear arms treaty, Reagan wrote without reflection or passion, "This is the big day."

That said, *An American Life* revealed something important in Reagan's leadership style. More than once he had read the short, uncelebrated autobiography of the 30th president, Calvin Coolidge. Among the lines he underlined were these: "In the discharge of the duties of the office there is one rule of action more important than all others. It consists of never doing anything someone else can do for you." So maybe Ronald Reagan was Tom Sawyer, a barefoot hustler in overalls sitting on a barrel in the shade, munching someone else's apple – a shrewd kid watching others whitewash his aunt's fence because he persuaded them it would be fun. (3)

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By the late 1990s, after Reagan announced he had Alzheimer's disease, his reputation seemed to be slowly riding into the sunset along with him. Hundreds of books on the man and his administration appeared in the 1990s and after 2000. That small mountain of books – some more valuable than others and many simply adorations – did little to change historians' view of President Reagan as an amiable ideologue who was "a great communicator" – a description with a negative underside. Some were a little more favorable, including my own, *President Reagan: The Triumph of Imagination*. Those writers, me among them, tended to conclude that Reagan was not a great president but was great at being president. Despite political differences, he was able to work with both Republicans and Democrats in Congress. He understood that words were often more important than deeds for the leader of a sprawling and diverse nation and, though many conservatives thought he was wrong, he understood the weaknesses of Communism in general and the Soviet Union in particular.

While participants and scholars of the Reagan years were still tapping away at their computers, *The New York Times* asked historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. to recreate the Presidential Greatness Index once pioneered by his father at Harvard. In voting by 719 historians and other scholars, Reagan finished 25th of the 40 presidents, behind Rutherford B. Hayes. (4)

Conservative scholars were furious. In July 1997, *Policy Review* – the magazine of the conservative Heritage Foundation – published an article titled: "Reagan Betrayed: Are Conservatives Fumbling His Legacy?"

Important conservatives themselves certainly thought so. Grover Norquist, the director of Americans for Tax Reform, responded to the *Times* survey by creating "The Ronald Reagan Legacy Project," announcing:

"The Reagan Legacy Project is an effort to memorialize the spirit and achievements of the nation's greatest president, Ronald Wilson Reagan. ... The Reagan Legacy Project aims to fulfill its mission

by naming significant public landmarks in the 50 states and 3,067 counties of the United States, as well as in formerly Communist countries across the world.” (5)

So far, according to the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, more than one hundred buildings and places have been renamed – from large sites, such as Ronald Reagan National Airport in Virginia and Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center in Los Angeles to smaller places, such as the section of Hennepin Road where the young Reagan used to walk to work as a lifeguard in Dixon, Illinois. Proposals still unresolved include the Pentagon and the International Space Station.

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Whatever the impact on the president’s legacy, the Reagan Legacy Project has been a useful tool in organizing lobbying groups in the 50 states, including a group in Nevada trying to rename a mountain for the 40th president. More important than mountains and buildings in revising the Reagan reputation has been the work of Martin and Annelise Anderson of the Hoover Institution on the Stanford University campus. (6)

With researcher Kiron Skinner, the Andersons – both of whom worked in the Reagan White House – spent years at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, California, where Martin Anderson’s top-secret clearance from his days as an assistant to the president was sometimes helpful in gaining access to documents. But their most important discoveries were not in the president’s official papers at all.\*<sup>1</sup>

Skinner, now an associate professor of international relations and political science at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, with the permission of Reagan’s office in Los Angeles, was working with Reagan’s closed pre-presidential papers when she came across four boxes of handwritten scripts Reagan had used for daily radio commentaries in the years between his governorship and his presidency. He recorded 14 or 15 at a time for a syndicate of 286 stations. (Edmund Morris was apparently the only other researcher allowed to see those particular pages, which were not government property, because they preceded the Reagan administration.) Skinner showed two of the scripts to Martin Anderson, who immediately suspected that a trove of such commentaries on the issues of the day in the 1970s could be used to disprove the perception by friend and foe alike

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<sup>1</sup> \*Presidential libraries are the physical symbols of “Legacy,” containing a president’s official papers – many of which are “classified” because of national security, personal privacy and other issues. However, particularly in the case of Reagan and Kennedy, members of the president’s family or their designees control many of the records in the archives attached to the museums. Those “trustees” have the power to grant chosen researchers access to papers closed to others. At the Kennedy Library, special access was granted to Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and Doris Kearns Goodwin. At the Reagan Library, the Andersons, Edmund Morris and certain former staff members were granted special access by Reagan’s office, presumably with the agreement of his wife, Nancy Reagan.

that Reagan was a charming, empty-headed actor skilled at projecting other people's words and ideas.

The scripts, 686 of them, were Reagan's ideas and thoughts – in his own hand! That was the point emphasized in the title *Reagan In His Own Hand: The Writings of Ronald Reagan That Reveal His Revolutionary Vision for America*.

“One of the things these commentaries do is blow apart the notion that Reagan was a flighty actor who floated through the presidency on the basis of charm and communication skills,” wrote David Brooks in *The New York Times Book Review*. The book was a bestseller, laying out a fairly comprehensive map of how Reagan thought, and was much quoted by both friends and adversaries of the 40th president. No one proclaimed him an intellectual, but his writings made clear that Reagan was a man of ideas with a sense of what he wanted to accomplish as a national leader. (7)

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The Andersons, with occasional help from Skinner, wrote six books on the Reagan presidency, the first, *Revolution*, published in 1988. Martin Anderson, a Reagan loyalist, began with a cool, somewhat academic tone but the books, always based on documents – letters, newspaper columns and even classified National Security Council minutes – show his passion for Reagan and the president's achievements escalated along with the conservative push to establish greatness.

In a forthcoming essay by Martin and Annelise Anderson, they analyze the Reagan years and policies and conclude that he was one of only four “great” presidents:

Our greatest presidents – four of 44 – took actions leading to dramatic change for the nation.

George Washington fought the war for independence from England – the Revolutionary War – and helped the new nation write its constitution.

Abraham Lincoln led the nation during the Civil War, preserving the Union and emancipating those held in the slavery of the Confederacy.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt prepared the nation for World War II and led the fight against Nazi Germany, preserving a democratic Europe and, ultimately, the United States.

The 20th century was the century when the democratic, capitalist countries were threatened not only by Nazi socialism but also Communist domination. The Cold War began when the Soviet Union succeeded in building nuclear weapons. For four decades the United States did what it could to contain the Communist threat and avoid nuclear war. World War II had not ended the threat of totalitarian government. It was Ronald Reagan who found a way not just to contain Communism, but to negotiate with the Soviets to end the Cold War and with it the threat of nuclear Armageddon.

The Andersons, of course, were not alone in using biography – or revisionist biography – to champion their cause. Over the years, hundreds of less influential books, many of them by other former Reagan aides – attempted to build a case for Reagan as one of the nation’s greatest leaders. That case usually rested on four pillars:

- (1) Ronald Reagan won the Cold War.
- (2) Ronald Reagan reduced federal taxes and his policies led to the subsequent boom in the American economy in the 1980s.
- (3) Ronald Reagan reduced the size of government.
- (4) Ronald Reagan restored Americans’ faith in themselves and in their government.

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Counterarguments can be made to all of those boasts – beginning with Reagan’s inaugural pronouncement that “government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem.” – but the fact is that books attacking presidents’ records tend to be written by journalists and published with the president in question still in office. Examples in Reagan’s case would be *Gambling With History: Reagan in the White House* by Laurence Barrett in 1983 and *Landslide: The Unmaking of the President, 1984-1988* by Jane Mayer and Doyle MacManus, published in 1988. The end of any administration is too early for historians and, by the nature of their craft, White House correspondents and other reporters tend to move on to a new president or new assignments. That’s when former White House assistants – most of them acolytes – begin remembering the glow and glory of the Oval Office. Many are perceptive; many are of an old genre: “And then I told the president. ...” Occasionally, a former insider will write a negative book – Donald T. Regan’s *For the Record: From Wall Street to Washington* is an example – but the overall effect is almost always positive. (8)

If published portraits of a Mount Rushmore-ready Ronald Reagan can be considered revisionist history or biography, there has been notably little re-revisionist work in recent years. One book that would qualify is *Tear Down This Myth: How the Reagan Legacy Has Distorted Our Politics and Haunts Our Future*, published by Philadelphia journalist Will Bunch in 2009.

Bunch went down the list of “accomplishments” attributed to Reagan by conservatives, dismissing the claim that any one man ended the Cold War, arguing that it was a triumph of the American people and a line of presidents going back to Harry S. Truman. As for Reaganomics, Bunch quoted a *Washington Post* series in April 1987 that concluded: “In less than a decade, the world’s largest creditor nation has become its leading debtor, foreign competition humbled America’s mightiest

companies, hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs have disappeared and middle-class living standards have declined in many communities.”

He portrayed Reagan as a politician who rose by attacking “tax and spend” Democrats and then became the father of Republican “borrow and spend” economics. Under Reagan, government spending increased by 2.5 percent, and the number of federal employees increased from 2.8 million to 3 million. (9)

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When presidents leave office, there is some residual bitterness and score-settling to be sure, but political opponents usually have little reason to re-fight old battles. In Reagan’s case, there were more books than usual, more than a thousand, most of them ranging from positive to adoring. There are, however, particularly in Reagan’s case, important reasons to mount and continue a last Reagan campaign that continues today. And, for those reasons (among others), Reagan’s historical stature rose after his personal, political and ideological allies began to make their arguments. Reagan’s Gallup Poll approval ratings increased from 63 percent when he left Washington in 1989 to 74 percent in November 2010. Only two other modern presidents did better. Jimmy Carter’s approval rate went from a very low 34 percent to 52 percent as he wrote a series of books about his humanitarian efforts as an ex-president. John Kennedy – whose aides and friends launched a “last campaign,” framed by his wife’s invention of “Camelot” to describe his White House years, as vigorous as the later Reagan campaign – jumped from 58 percent to 85 percent approval in Gallup polls between 1963 and 2010. (10)

(In general, poll numbers for presidents tend to rise after they leave office, as memories mellow and adversaries take on new, more immediate targets. Gerald Ford’s approval numbers in Gallup polls steadily increased from 53 percent to 61 percent after he left office in 1977. Even Richard Nixon’s numbers have improved, from 24 percent to 29 percent. One example of the differences between contemporary polling and later perceptions was *USA Today* polling four days after the Berlin Wall fell in November 1989. On the question of who was most responsible for the ending of the Cold War, only 14 percent of American respondents named Reagan, while 43 percent said Gorbachev. Among Germans, 2 percent said Reagan and 70 percent said Gorbachev. Since then, however, dozens – perhaps hundreds – of books have been written by former Reagan assistants crediting their boss with ending the Cold War almost single-handedly.) (11)

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It is no exaggeration to say that Ronald Reagan – or “Reaganism” – is the true core of both the Republican Party and the modern conservative movement in the United States. To diminish him and his legacy is a step toward fracturing the cause. To begin with, Reagan is the only president

known by an “ism.” There is no “Rooseveltism,” even though the 32nd president and his policies were at the core of the Democratic Party and American liberalism for decades.

It is, again, no exaggeration to compare Reagan as an ideological figure to Roosevelt. There is an old New York political story about a candidate for the State Assembly in Brooklyn who complained to his county chairman that the party was doing nothing for his campaign. The chairman asked the candidate if he ever watched the ferries come in from Staten Island and saw the garbage and flotsam that swirled into the dock with the big boat. Said the chairman: “Roosevelt is the ferry. You’re the garbage he’ll bring in on Election Day.”

Roosevelt’s public-policy legacy, nurtured by his family and liberal politicians, has remained a remarkable thing long after his death. In effect, he was “president” to much of the country for at least 30 years or more. Even Richard Nixon, elected in 1968, essentially governed within the liberal tradition – the Roosevelt tradition. The same lasting impact can be said of Reagan. In many ways, he is still “president”; his ideas and rhetoric, sometimes embellished, are part of every modern policy debate.

This is what I wrote covering the 1984 Republican National Convention for *The New York Times Magazine*:

“A more accurate model of the Republican Party, it seemed to me, looked like an atom – a series of whirling concentric circles around an electromagnetic nucleus named ‘Reagan.’ ... The first ring, close to the center, but not very wide, was the Reaganites, the group including the White House staff and Vice President Bush. The next two rings were the pragmatists – the ‘traditionalists’ and the ‘old right.’ ... These included most of the party’s Congressional leadership, beginning with Senators Howard Baker and Robert Dole. Circling them were the ‘new right,’ from Jack Kemp to Newt Gingrich, who saw themselves as new populists not only opposed to big government but [also] to the country club elitism of older conservatives. There were three wobblier orbits, one included ‘moderates.’ ... then ‘the religious right’ and ‘the crazies,’ many of them ‘libertarians.’” (12)

I assumed that the whole spinning apparatus would implode when the nucleus, Reagan, was removed. I was wrong: Some of that did happen, but it was soon replaced by “Reaganism.” In effect, “Reaganism was a word that could be used by all men for their own things.

Whenever it was used or Reagan’s name invoked, it was proof of a sort that Reagan was still the center of the party. That is why it is so important to Republicans and conservatives to build and preserve the “Reagan legacy.” It is what unites them.

Whether they call themselves fiscal conservatives, tea-partiers or social conservatives, they are all proud to call themselves Reagan Republicans. And they honor or swear by the four pillars of Reaganism: (1) Strong defense, (2) lower taxes, (3) smaller government, and (4)



nationalism/unquestioning patriotism. Pull out the core – Reaganism – and the party and conservative movement are again in danger of spinning out of control.

Jeff Shesol, a speechwriter for President Clinton, made a similar argument in discussing the impact of *In His Own Hand* in a review of Reagan-related books in the May 22, 2005, edition of *The New York Times Book Review*, writing:

“With the impending publication of Reagan’s White House diaries, the legacy-building is likely to intensify – if only because his followers are banking everything on him. In the pantheon of modern presidents, the Democrats claim Roosevelt, Truman, Kennedy and Johnson. The Republicans have only Reagan. Neither Ford nor Nixon commands the party’s devotion, and Eisenhower, who resisted McCarthyism, has little to offer the cultural and religious conservatives who dominate the party today.

“Reagan has become the Great Touchstone. Yet to be truly useful to his present-day heirs, his record has to be retouched. As president, he cut deals with Democrats, boosted taxes, public spending and the size of government; sought arms reduction with the Soviet Union; and did less than promised to regulate private behavior. Within the Reagan administration, the true believers, more often than not, lost badly at the hands of moderates.” (13)

But the true believers, led by conservatives like Norquist, aggressively claimed victory and Ronald Reagan’s legacy as their own as the president rode off into the sunset. When he began the Reagan Legacy Project, Norquist told the *Baltimore Sun* of his grand ambitions: “The guy ended the Cold War; he turned the economy around. He deserves a monument like the Jefferson or the FDR – or the Colossus of Rhodes!” (14)

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## NOTES

1. Howard Phillips, quoted in *The New York Times*, 12/11/1987.
2. Author interview with Rollins.
3. *The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge*, Plymouth Notch, VT. Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation; 1989; p. 196.
4. *Tear Down This Myth: How the Reagan Legacy Has Distorted Our Politics and Haunts our Future*, by Will Bunch, Free Press, New York, 2009, p. 143.
5. [www.reaganlegacyproject.com](http://www.reaganlegacyproject.com)
6. Interview with Martin and Annelise Anderson, Hoover Institution, Stanford University, 12/7/10.
7. David Brooks, *The New York Times Book Review*, 1/28/01, p.10
8. Reagan Inaugural Address, *The New York Times*, 1/21/81.
9. *Tear Down This Myth: How the Reagan Legacy Has Distorted Our Politics and Haunts our Future*, by Will Bunch, Free Press, New York, 2009, p. 61.
10. November 19-21 Gallup Poll, *Los Angeles Times*, 12/17/10, p.18.
11. *USA Today*, 11/13/89, p. 1.
12. *The Reagan Detour* by Richard Reeves, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1985, p. 67.
13. Jeff Shesol, "The Legacy Project." *The New York Times*, 5/22/05.
14. "How Republicans Created the Myth of Ronald Reagan," by Will Bunch, [www.salon.com](http://www.salon.com), 2/2/09.

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The following bibliographic essay is from Richard Reeves' 2005 book *President Reagan: The Triumph of Imagination*.

According to Amazon.com, more than 1,000 books have been written about Ronald Reagan. Of these, three are especially important for understanding Reagan. The first, *An American Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990), is Reagan's own version of his life and times, and is as interesting for what is left out as for what is included. While his recollections are self-selected, however, they do provide considerable information on what the president knew and when he knew it. In the second work, Lou Cannon's *President Reagan: The Role of a Lifetime* (New York: Public Affairs, 2000), the author – who covered Reagan throughout his political career, beginning in 1966 – produces a detailed account of Reagan and the people in his orbit. For other writers, Cannon is more than a journalist. He is a character in this history, a trusted eyewitness. The third book, Edmund Morris' *Dutch: A Memoir of Ronald Reagan* (New York: Random House, 2000), is the first authorized biography of a sitting president. A fascinating book by a brilliant writer, it was flawed by a Reaganesque mixing of nonfiction and fiction.

Several other significant books view Reagan from different perspectives. Adriana Bosch's *Reagan: An American Story* (New York: TV Books, 2000) is an excellent, concise biography, the product of interviews with many and varied sources; Lou Cannon's *Reagan* (New York: Putnam, 1982) is an earlier work by the journalist; and Garry Wills' *Reagan's America* (New York: Penguin, 2000) examines the forces and institutions that shaped Reagan.

Early analyses of the Reagan administration by journalists were usually critical, even dismissive. Those works include: Laurence Barrett's very professional overview of the Reagan administration's first year, *Gambling with History: Reagan in the White House* (New York: Doubleday, 1983); Sidney Blumenthal's *The Rise of the Counter-Establishment: From Conservative Ideology to Political Power* (New York: Times Books, 1986) and Lesley Stahl's *Reporting Live* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999), a delightful and incisive journalist's memoir.

Additional contemporary views of Reagan from the press include: Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, *The Reagan Revolution* (New York: Dutton, 1981); Jane Mayer and Doyle McManus, *Landslide: The Unmaking of the President* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988); Mark Hertsgaard, *On Bended Knee: The Press and the Reagan Presidency* (New York: Schocken, 1989); Haynes Johnson, *Sleepwalking Through History: America in the Reagan Years* (New York: Anchor, 1992); Richard Reeves, *The Reagan Detour* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1985); and Bob Schieffer and Gary Paul Gates, *The Acting President* (New York: Dutton, 1989).

While academic criticism of Reagan tended to be published after the presidency – Walter Williams, *Reaganism and the Death of Representative Democracy* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2003), is an example – relatively neutral works have been produced as well, including Larry Berman, ed., *Looking Back on the Reagan Presidency* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press,

1990); Paul Boyer, ed., *Reagan As President* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1990); W. Elliot Brownlee and Hugh Davis Graham, eds., *The Reagan Presidency* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003); and Eric J. Schmertz, Natalie Datlof and Alexej Ugrinsky, eds., *Ronald Reagan's America* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997).

There is a full and growing list of Reagan literature, most of it celebratory, by men and women who served or admired him. Many are obvious attempts to build a case for historical greatness, though some have touches of vengeance in them: Martin Anderson, *Revolution: The Reagan Legacy* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1990); Terrell H. Bell, *The Thirteenth Man: A Reagan Cabinet Memoir* (New York: Free Press, 1988); Richard Darman, *Who's in Control: Polar Politics and the Sensible Center* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996); Michael K. Deaver, *Behind the Scenes* (New York: William Morrow, 1988); Michael K. Deaver, *A Different Drummer: My Thirty Years With Ronald Reagan* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001); Donald J. Deine, *Reagan's Terrible Swift Sword: Reforming and Controlling the Federal Bureaucracy* (Ottawa, IL: Jameson Books, 1991); Dinesh D'Souza, *Ronald Reagan: How an Ordinary Man Became an Extraordinary Leader* (New York: Free Press, 1999); David Gergen, *Eyewitness to Power* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000); Steven Greffenius, *The Last Jeffersonian* (New York: American Book Publishing, 2001); Alexander Haig, *Caveat: Realism, Reagan and Foreign Policy* (New York: Scribner, 1984); C. Everett Koop, *Koop* (New York: Random House, 1991); Jim Kuhn, *Ronald Reagan in Private* (New York: Sentinel, 2004); Robert C. McFarlane with Sofia Smardz, *Special Trust* (New York: Cadell & Davies, 1994); Edwin Meese III, *With Reagan: The Inside Story* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 1992); Lyn Nofziger, *Nofziger* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 1992); Peggy Noonan's captivating *What I Saw at the Revolution: A Political Life in the Reagan Era* (New York: Scribner, 1993); Peggy Noonan, *When Character Was King: A Story of Ronald Reagan* (New York: Penguin, 2002); Oliver L. North with William Novak, *Under Fire: An American Story* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991); Donald T. Regan, *For the Record: From Wall Street to Washington* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988); Peter Robinson, *How Ronald Reagan Changed My Life* (New York: Regan Books, 2003); Ed Rollins, *Bare Knuckles and Back Rooms: My Life in American Politics* (New York: Broadway Books, 1996); Selwa Roosevelt, *Keeper of the Gate* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990); William French Smith, *Law and Justice in the Reagan Administration* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1991); Larry Speakes, *Speaking Out: The Reagan Presidency From Inside the White House* (New York: Avon, 1989), a candid assessment of staffers and cabinet members; David A. Stockman, *The Triumph of Politics: Why the Reagan Revolution Failed* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), a sensation in its time; Peter J. Wallison, *Ronald Reagan: The Power of Conviction and the Success of His Presidency* (New York: Perseus, 2002); and Caspar Weinberger, *Fighting for Peace: Seven Critical Years in the Pentagon* (New York: Warner Books, 1990).

Books on Nancy Reagan, or primarily concerned with the first lady, include: *Nancy Reagan, My Turn: the Memoirs of Nancy Reagan* (New York: Random House, 1989); Kitty Kelley, *Nancy Reagan* (New York: Pocket Books, 1992), a detailed book attacked for inaccuracies; and Joan Quigley, *What Does Joan Say?* (New York: Pinnacle, 1991), a slight book by the first lady's favorite astrologer.

An eyewitness account of John Hinckley Jr.'s assassination attempt on President Reagan is presented by Joseph Petro with Jeffrey Robinson in *Standing Next to History* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2005). The seriousness of the president's condition and the behind-the-scenes confusion in the aftermath of the shooting is documented in Herbert Abrams, *The President Has Been Shot* (New York: W. W. Horton, 1992).

Related memoirs and biographies of congressmen include: John M. Barry, *The Ambition and the Power* (New York: Viking, 1989), a biography of Jim Wright; John A. Farrell, *Tip O'Neill and the Democratic Century* (Boston: Little, Brown, 2001); and Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill with William Novak, *Man of the House: The Life and Memoirs of Speaker Tip O'Neill* (New York: Random House, 1987).

Other sources providing insight from within or near the administration include: Deborah Hart Strober and Gerald S. Strober, *Reagan: The Man and His Presidency* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998), a sympathetic and very valuable oral history; and Kenneth W. Thompson, ed., *Leadership in the Reagan Presidency: Seven Intimate Perspectives* (Lanham, MD: Madison Books, 2000), which was more balanced.

Ronald Reagan's high regard for words and ideas is reflected in volumes on his letters and speeches. The collections of letters are his correspondence with the nation: Kiron K. Skinner, Annelise Anderson and Martin Anderson, eds., *Reagan in His Own Hand* (New York: Free Press, 2001); Kiron K. Skinner, Annelise Anderson and Martin Anderson, eds., *A Life in Letters* (New York: Free Press, 2003); Ralph E. Weber and Ralph A. Weber, eds., *Dear Americans: Letters From the Desk of Ronald Reagan* (New York: Doubleday, 2003).

Collections and studies of his speeches and rhetoric can be found in Ronald Reagan and D. Erik Felten, *A Shining City* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998), a collection of speeches and tributes; Carol Gelderman, *All the Presidents' Words: The Bully Pulpit and the Creation of the Virtual Presidency* (New York: Walker, 1997); William Ker Muir, *The Bully Pulpit: The Presidential Leadership of Ronald Reagan* (San Francisco: ICS Press, 1992); and Mary E. Stuckey, *Playing the Game: The Presidential Rhetoric of Ronald Reagan* (New York: Praeger, 1990).

Works by and about previous presidents help put Reagan's presidency into context. Those works begin with the Reagan's own favorites, Calvin Coolidge, *The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge* (Plymouth Notch, VT: Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation, 1989); and Jane Curtis and Will Curtis with Frank Lieberman, *Return to These Hills: The Vermont Years of Calvin Coolidge* (Woodstock, VT: Curtis Lieberman Books, 1985), which Reagan was reading in 1985 when doctors came into his hospital room to tell him his colon cancer operation was a success. Other relevant works include: Fred I. Greenstein, *The Hidden-Hand Presidency: Eisenhower as a Leader* (New York: Basic Books, 1982); and Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (New York: Bantam, 1982).

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