



# Creatures of Politics: Media, Message, and the American Presidency

*Michael Lempert, Michael Silverstein*

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It's a common complaint that a presidential candidate's style matters more than substance and that the issues have been eclipsed by mass-media-fueled obsession with a candidate's every slip, gaffe, and peccadillo. This book explores political communication in American presidential politics, focusing on what political insiders call "message." Message, Michael Lempert and Michael Silverstein argue, is not simply an individual's positions on the issues but the craft used to fashion the creature the public sees as the candidate. Lempert and Silverstein examine some of the revelatory moments in debates, political ads, interviews, speeches, and talk shows to explain how these political creations come to have a life of their own. From the pandering "Flip-Flopper" to the self-reliant "Maverick," the authors demonstrate how these figures are fashioned out of the verbal, gestural, sartorial, behavioral—as well as linguistic—matter that comprises political communication.

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