

The Scribe

A film by
Ruth Cullen

Featuring political
speechwriter
Graham Freudenberg

**The story of
a political insider
and his love of language**

<http://www.metromagazine.com.au>

<https://theeducationshop.com.au>

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**A STUDY GUIDE BY
KATY MARRINER**

Content Hyperlinks

- 3 Curriculum links
- 4 Synopsis
- 4 Graham Freudenberg
- 5 Director's statement
- 6 What is a speech?
- 6 What is a speechwriter?
- 7 'Words are central to my life'
- 8 'Friends and flukes'
- 8 Modus operandi
- 9 'Come on Abe, give me some inspiration.'
- 9 'Three types of speeches'
- 10 'The palm without the dust'
- 10 The Drumbeat speech
- 11 'Sometimes the weapon is the speech'
- 11 It's Time
- 12 More than just a speechwriter
- 13 Leader
- 13 Gallipoli Spirits
- 14 The new technology
- 14 Keep the show running
- 15 Discussing film style
- 15 Your turn
- 15 Ruth Cullen, Director
- 16 Appendixes
- 18 Recommended reading



Graham
Freudenberg

DURATION:
58 MINS

1000 SPEECHES – 6 POLITICAL LEADERS – 50 YEARS

THE SCRIBE (2018) IS A FEATURE DOCUMENTARY WRITTEN, DIRECTED AND PRODUCED BY RUTH CULLEN. GRAHAM FREUDENBERG IS AN AUSTRALIAN POLITICAL SPEECHWRITER. *THE SCRIBE* RECOUNTS HIS WORKING LIFE AND HIS ENDURING LEGACY.

Curriculum links

The Scribe is suitable for secondary students in Years 10 – 12 studying Civics and Citizenship, English, History, and Media Arts.

Through the study of Civics and Citizenship, students can develop skills of inquiry, values and dispositions that enable them to be active and informed citizens. *The Scribe* provides opportunities for students to investigate the nature and exercise of political power and the formulation and implementation of domestic and foreign policy.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Students develop knowledge and understanding of the nature and exercise of political power;
- Students analyse political speeches and the impact of these political speeches;
- Students investigate past Australian domestic and foreign policy issues and consider the response of the Australian Government and Opposition to these issues.

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One of the stated aims of The Australian Curriculum: English is to ensure that students become confident communicators, imaginative thinkers and informed citizens. Given this aim, *The Scribe* offers teachers the opportunity to develop students' knowledge, understanding and skills within the strands of Language and Literacy.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Students learn that language is constantly evolving due to historical, social and cultural changes, and technological innovations;
- Students learn that the language used by individuals varies according to their social setting and the relationships between the participants;
- Students develop their knowledge and understanding of how language use can have inclusive and exclusive social effects, and can empower or disempower people;
- Students identify and explore the purposes and effects of different text structures and language features of spoken texts, and use

this knowledge to create purposeful texts that inform, persuade and engage.

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A knowledge and understanding of history is essential for informed and active participation in society and in creating rewarding personal and collective futures. The study of History promotes debate and encourages thinking about human values, including present and future challenges. *The Scribe* provides opportunities for students to develop historical knowledge and understanding.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Students identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past;
- Students investigate significant world events and the impact of these events;
- Students investigate government policies and the impact of these policies;
- Students critically analyse and interpret primary and secondary sources.

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In Media Arts, students learn to be critically aware of ways that the media are culturally used and negotiated, and are dynamic and central to the way they make sense of the world and of themselves. *The Scribe* allows students to explore and interpret human experience through representations in images, sounds and text.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Students develop knowledge and understanding of media languages used to tell stories;
- Students make informed critical judgements about the media artworks they see, hear, interact with and consume as audiences;
- Students identify ways audiences interact and engage with the media as a result of the growth of digital technologies across media forms.

Teachers are advised to consult the Australian Curriculum documentation for these learning areas online at <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/>, as well as curriculum documents for these learning areas endorsed by their state or territory.

Synopsis

Master speechwriter Graham Freudenberg is the quintessential political insider. Advisor, confidant, master crafter and repository, his influence extends way beyond speech writing.

Graham was an essential part of the formation and articulation of policies which redefined Australia. His powers of expression continue to inspire and transcend while capturing the very essence of why politics matter.

Good speech writers are ghost orators. Not only do they need to get inside the mind of the speaker, they also need to combine the high visions of policy with the brass knuckle realities of political expediency.

Graham has written speeches for Federal and State leaders from Arthur Calwell to Simon Crean. This group includes Gough Whitlam, Neville Wran, Bob Carr and Bob Hawke, who described him as the 'chameleon' of speech writers. Over fifty years he has adapted his voice to that of his masters and the times.

The Scribe interrogates the symbiotic relationship between the speechwriter and the orator as it explores the craft of political speech writing from the man who re-defined the role in Australia. In the process, it examines the changing language of the political environment from the introduction of TV to the arrival of Trump.

Graham has written over a thousand speeches and *The Scribe* takes some of these epic speeches and interrogates common themes, many of which are still relevant – war, equality and the changing nature of power in our parliamentary democracy. Whether we realise it or not, Graham's words have shaped our views today.

It is Graham's wonderful ability to combine the high visions of political aspiration with the realities of winning votes that make his insights so significant and relevant. In this time of widespread cynicism about politicians, it is time to step back and ask bigger questions. *The Scribe* transcends party politics to reflect on the contract between the people and their elected representatives and how that has changed.

<https://www.thescribefilm.com/>



Graham Freudenberg
at his desk

Graham Freudenberg

'The greatest speechwriter this country has produced.'

Graham Freudenberg has written more than 1000 political speeches in a career spanning more than 50 years. Known as Australia's first professional political speechwriter, he is revered across both sides of parliament. Mark Latham described him as the 'Donald Bradman' of speechwriting; Bob Hawke called him the 'chameleon'. Throughout the Whitlam years he was known as Gough Whitlam's ghost and they remained close until Whitlam's death in 2014. Throughout the various slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, Graham has remained in the engine of government, observing, influencing, and writing.

Graham Freudenberg

Born: 1934 Brisbane, Queensland (eighty-four years)

Education: Anglican Church Grammar School (Churchy) - Brisbane

Employment

1961–1966: Arthur Calwell–Press Secretary

1967–1975: Gough Whitlam–Special Advisor

1976–1986: Neville Wran

1986–1988: Barrie Unsworth

1983–1991: Bob Hawke

1992–2005: Bob Carr

<https://www.thescribefilm.com/graham-freudenberg>

Director's statement

My films have always been about bringing fresh perspectives onto the screen – somewhere you haven't been before. I wanted this film to feel like you'd spent a single night inside Graham's mighty mind, pole vaulting around key influences and events.

The Scribe is essentially about a love of politics. It's about why politics matter and by focusing on Graham, I wanted to show the intelligence, the dedication and the passion that goes into the shadowy world of the political staffer – someone in the thick of things, but spared the public scrutiny and accountability that politicians face. It's a perspective that we haven't seen on the screen in such an intimate and revealing way – until now.

I grew up believing that politics was an honourable profession and, although that belief has been sorely tested in recent years, it hasn't changed.

Graham is not a typical staffer; his influence, his longevity and his brilliance make him anything but that. However, he is at heart a 'backroom boy'; Australia's first acknowledged political speechwriter and one who articulated policies that changed the country – even if his words were spoken by others.

In many ways, a documentary director's job is not unlike a speech writer's in that both involve crafting an authentic voice for someone else through one's own filter. And although I have made many documentaries, this one is in many ways my most personal. Not because I knew Graham well when I began filming, (I didn't) but because I knew his world. I grew up in it.

My father Peter (a former Whitlam staffer and later lobbyist) was a close friend of Graham's and in this universe, politics was the *only* conversation. It's where defeat and victory were stared squarely in the face and endlessly dissected as new lessons were learned.

And it mattered.

For a young child growing up in such a secular environment, politics was the door to a more just and equitable world. It was also fascinatingly Shakespearean in its twists and turns of human betrayals and loyalties as power waxed and waned. But above all, politics was an ongoing life force, and although I never took it up professionally, my passion for it has never diminished.

We ignore politics at our own peril, and our democracy is only as good as the citizens who actively participate in it. Politics must attract the best or we are lost and the way to preserve democracy (still the best system going) is by engaging with the political processes, not ignoring them.



Producer/
director
Ruth Cullen

The key is to aim high not low, and Graham is one of the finest. He articulated essential issues about who are we, what our role is in the world, what citizenship means and how we exercise that responsibly and have something valuable for the next generation.

This documentary is also about the ties that bind it as it explores the symbiotic and unique relationship between Graham and Gough Whitlam which lasted for over fifty years –

opposites in temperament yet an absolute meeting of the minds. Gough called him 'my dearest friend and comrade'. Graham's last birthday message to him was simply 'my Leader as ever'.

The Trump presidency has been a game changer in the language of governance and now is the time to reflect on just what that means for democracy and leadership – and the language of politics is the key to that.

Traditionally, the scribe was the bridge between the intention and the audience. Now the scribe becomes the orator.

The language of political discourse is more important than ever. I am not one for nostalgia but in this instance the past has immense relevance today, regardless of one's political persuasion.

RUTH CULLEN

What is a speech?

A speech is a formal address, delivered to an audience, that seeks to convince, persuade, inspire or inform.

- Make a list of the speeches that you have made. Can you remember the first speech that you made? What was the subject and the purpose of the speech? What can you recall about the most recent speech that you have made? What do you think are the most important things when making a speech?

Which speeches on your list were made at school in response to an assessment task? How does writing a speech differ from writing an essay? Do you enjoy giving speeches in class?

Which speeches on your list were made for other reasons? Choose one of these speeches and share your memories of making this speech with your peers. What was the subject? What was the purpose? Who was the audience? How did you attempt to engage your audience? Did you enjoy making the speech?

- Do you enjoy listening to speeches? Think about a really good speech you may have heard. What made

this speech memorable for you? Make a list of the top ten qualities of a great speech.

- Working as a class, make a list of famous speeches. Share what you know about one or more of these speeches with the class. Why do you think these speeches have become famous?

Choose one of the speeches from the list. Locate a transcript and if possible an audio or video recording of the speech. Your task is to write an analysis of this speech. Use the table (see Appendix 1.) to support your reading and analysis of the speech.

- ‘Great speeches have persuaded people to great action.’

Hold a class forum to debate this contention. Every student in the class should write, rehearse and deliver a one-minute speech in response to this contention. When every student has delivered their speech, use the remaining time for impromptu rebuttal.



Graham still writes all of his speeches by hand

What is a speechwriter?

A speechwriter is a person who is employed to write speeches for others to deliver. Speechwriters are usually employed by people in senior positions in the government and private enterprise.

- Aside from Graham Freudenberg, the speechwriter who is the subject of *The Scribe*, can you name any other speechwriters?

Return to the class list of famous speeches and identify who delivered each of the speeches on the list. Use the Internet to research who wrote each of the speeches.

- After you have watched and discussed *The Scribe*, write a job description for a speechwriter that outlines the role and its responsibilities, and the skills required to undertake the position.
- ‘Speech writing, I was never alone. First of all, I had the person for whom I was writing – they were always my companions in thought. And you have a

host of orators, part of your mind and your cultural companionship.’ – Graham Freudenberg

What does this statement reveal about the rewards of Graham Freudenberg’s work as a speechwriter?

‘The trouble with speechwriting as distinct from speechmaking is that there is bound to be a loss of spontaneity and to some degree a loss of authenticity in that someone else has written these words.’ – Graham Freudenberg

Drawing on *The Scribe*, spend time as a class discussing how Graham Freudenberg negotiated this challenge. What do you think might be some of the other ‘troubles’ of speechwriting?

‘Words are central to my life’

- In *The Scribe*, Graham Freudenberg recollects falling in love with the English language as a teenager. What do words mean to you?

As a boy, growing up in Brisbane, Graham Freudenberg’s childhood and world view was coloured by World War 2. He wrote his first speech when he was eleven years old. Titled ‘Victory at Last’, Graham’s speech was written after he listened to the radio broadcast of Winston Churchill’s announcement of victory in Europe.

You can listen to Winston Churchill’s announcement of victory on 8 May 1945 online at < <https://winstonchurchill.org/resources/speeches/1941-1945-war-leader/> >

- *‘At last, the Germans have been defeated. Victims of the horror camp shall be revenged. You might say that the Nazis have been paid in their own coin. But who do we thank for this? We thank God for giving strength to our army and other services. For giving strength to the politicians to sort out the problems and put everything right.’*

Read the excerpt from Graham’s first speech. What does this excerpt reveal about eleven-year-old Graham’s world view? How does Graham view his first speech?

Winston Churchill was the prime minister of the United Kingdom from 1940 to 1945 and again from 1951 to 1955. He delivered some of the most inspirational speeches in history.

- *‘Like good comrades to the utmost of their strength we shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France; we shall fight on the seas and oceans; we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air. We will defend our island.’* – Winston Churchill
The above excerpt is taken from a speech made to the House of Commons of the Parliament of the United Kingdom on 4 June 1940. This speech is usually referred to by the title ‘We Shall Fight on the Beaches’.



Graham
Freudenberg
at home in his
study

It is one of the defining speeches of World War II.

Access a transcript of the speech and information about the speech online at <<https://winstonchurchill.org/resources/speeches/1940-the-finest-hour/fight-them-on-the-beaches/>>. Listen to the speech online at <<https://winstonchurchill.org/resources/speeches/1940-the-finest-hour/we-shall-never-surrender/>>

What is the first thing you notice about this speech? What is the message of this speech? What persuasive appeals does Churchill use (logic, emotion, ethics)? How does Churchill’s voice add to the message he delivers? Why do you think politicians make speeches like this during difficult times?

In his teenage years, Graham became interested in the speeches of ‘the great orators’. In *The Scribe* he recalls declaiming these speeches when he found himself home alone.

- *‘I made up my mind that I would be a writer like Disraeli. I would be a journalist like Disraeli. And I would go into politics like Disraeli. Going into politics probably for me meant becoming prime minister of England.’* – Graham Freudenberg

Benjamin Disraeli was a British conservative politician and novelist. He served as prime minister from 1868 to 1868 and from 1874 to 1880.

Recommended links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/history/past-prime-ministers/>

benjamin-disraeli-the-earl-of-beaconsfield
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1oXFdVi-hSE>
 Disraeli's words have endured. Use the Internet to locate lists of Disraeli's words. Do you recognise any of these quotes? What is your favourite Disraeli quote? Why? Imagine if Disraeli was alive today and had a Twitter account. Select a Disraeli quote that relates to a current news event and construct a Tweet about this event that incorporates the quote. Add the hashtag – #disraeli – to complete your Tweet. Format the tweet using an online Twitter template.

- 'I approach every speech I've ever written with dread – a sense of dread. That this will be the one I can't do.' – Graham Freudenberg
 Given Graham Freudenberg's long and successful career as a speechwriter, were you surprised by this admission?

Friends and Aukes'

Graham Freudenberg initially pursued a career in journalism. By his own admission, he was not a very good reporter. He was at a party when a friend told him that the job of Arthur Calwell's secretary was vacant.

Calwell was an Australian politician who served as the leader of the Australian Labor Party from 1960 to 1967. He led the party to three federal elections without success.

Graham was appointed Calwell's press secretary in June 1961, aged twenty-seven. While it was never part of the job description, Graham was soon writing speeches for Calwell.

- 'There was never any suggestion that I'd call him Arthur. He was already a legendary figure.' – Graham Freudenberg
 Use the Internet to research the political career of Arthur Calwell. Given your research, why do you think Graham Freudenberg refers to him as 'a legendary figure'?
- 'The chief role of the press secretary was to liaise with the Canberra press gallery. Men, all men. I was very largely writing press releases, trying to keep abreast with what the gossip was in the non-members bar which was a great place to get information.'
 What insight does Graham Freudenberg offer into the role of a press secretary? How does the archival footage portray the role of a press secretary? Take a look at the Prime Minister of Australia's Media Centre online at <<https://www.pm.gov.au/media>>. To what extent has the role of a press secretary changed since Graham's time as press secretary to Arthur Calwell?

Modus operandi

'How do I know what I think until I see what I have written?' – Graham Freudenberg

The Scribe documents Graham Freudenberg's speech writing process and work ethic. His preference for writing rather than typing:

'So when you're writing the hand is yours and it's your human bridge between the mind and the words.'

His eschewing of a 9 to 5 routine:

'I'm essentially a nocturnal person, I come to life at night.'

'I might start in the afternoon, I might start after dinner, might work over dinner. Then we'd toddle back to Parliament House and get down to the serious stuff. In my heyday, my normal practice was to dictate a speech to a stenographer. I won the lottery in getting the two women who would put up with my nocturnal working habits, and my immensely long pauses.'

His fondness for liquid refreshment:

'I used to measure my speeches by the number of cans consumed. The average speech might be a six can job. A great speech would end up a thirteen or fifteen can job.'

In *The Scribe*, Carol Summerhayes*, a stenographer in the Office of the Leader of the Opposition, Gough Whitlam, and from December 1972 Personal Secretary to the Prime Minister, offers an insight into Graham's process. She recalls that her shorthand skills were not put to the test by Graham's dictation pace of three words a minute. Former Premier of New South Wales, Bob Carr also acknowledges Graham's efficient but rather unorthodox method:

'Never missed a deadline. So, you never worried about the fact that he wasn't answering his phone during daylight hours, and he needed tobacco and tins of beer. Didn't matter, because it always arrived out of the fax machine as required.'

- 'But there was always the right word. It very rarely changed after, it was those words that lasted.' – Carol Summerhayes
'For the big speeches he served them up without any conference or discussion with me. Because the depth of his history, and the diamond-hard quality in his memory. This is from someone who's largely self-educated, self-read.' – Bob Carr

How do these claims add to your understanding of Graham Freudenberg's 'modus operandi'? How do the archival still photographs and the contemporary footage portray Graham's work ethic?

*An interesting interview with Carol Summerhayes about her career can be accessed online at <<https://oralhistories.moadoph.gov.au/carol-summerhayes>>.

'Come on Abe, give me some inspiration.'

In *The Scribe*, Graham Freudenberg acknowledges his sources of inspiration:

'I always am amused when some poor politician is accused of plagiarism. We're plagiarising everybody all the time. We plagiarise Shakespeare every time we open our mouths practically. And I've borrowed from the whole range of literature from the Bible to Shakespeare, Abraham Lincoln, Churchill, Menzies, numerous politicians. The language grows by what other writers have done previously.'

- 'Lincoln is my ideal of how a politician can bend events to his purposes via the use of reason, ability to compromise, and of course a mastery of this English language of ours.' – Graham Freudenberg
Abraham Lincoln was the President of the United States from 1861 to 1865. How does *The Scribe* show Abraham Lincoln to be a source of inspiration for Graham Freudenberg?
Learn about Abraham Lincoln online at < <https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/presidents/abraham-lincoln/>>.

In *The Scribe*, Graham explains his decision to quote the last line of Dante's *Inferno* in the speech written for Gough Whitlam, elected leader of the Australian Labor Party, to deliver on the occasion of President Saragat of Italy's visit to Australia in 1967, and his tendency to use the line whenever the speech was connected to Italy or Italians.

- 'We must make sure next Saturday that in the words of the divine Dante, "E quindi uscimmo a riveder le stelle".'
- Explain the significance of President Saragat's visit to Australia.
Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZmJFkW2E3Q>
Why did Gough Whitlam make a speech on this occasion? What was the intended outcome of the speech? Was this outcome achieved?
- 'Always get Shakespeare right.' – Graham Freudenberg
Have you ever heard anyone say the famous line 'To be or not to be, that is the question?' This is a line from William Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*.
What is a soliloquy in Shakespeare?
Read and annotate the soliloquy in which this line appears.
Link: <https://poets.org/poem/hamlet-act-iii-scene-i-be-or-not-to-be>
What is the subject of Hamlet's soliloquy? Why do you think this soliloquy has become so famous?

'Three types of speeches'

In *The Scribe*, Graham Freudenberg explains that there are three types of speeches. The first is the Gettysburg Address made by President Abraham Lincoln on November 19, 1863. The second is an election speech made by Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Harold Wilson in the town of Chatham in 1964. The third is a mix of the two.

- Abraham Lincoln's most famous speech is the Gettysburg Address. Read a transcript of the Gettysburg address online at <http://rnc.library.cornell.edu/gettysburg/good_cause/transcript.htm>. For further information visit <<http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm>>. What type of speech is the Gettysburg Address? The Gettysburg Address is 272 words in length. Your task is to write a 272-word analysis of the Gettysburg address that conveys its ongoing significance.
- 'When it's all said and done it all comes down to persuading people to vote your way.' – Graham Freudenberg
The Chatham speech made by Harold Wilson was an election speech. What is the purpose of an election speech, or as Graham Freudenberg calls it, a policy speech? What are the characteristics of a policy speech? What importance does Graham attribute to those speeches made during an election campaign? Explain the significance of Graham's recollection of the policy speeches of the election campaigns of the mid-twentieth century. How does the archival footage portray these policy speeches? What does Graham mean when he describes the policy speech as 'a mixture of high endeavour and pork barreling'?
Visit the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House online at <<https://www.moadoph.gov.au/>>. Access information about the Australian Prime Ministers featured in *The Scribe*. Read and explore the election speeches of Australia's Prime Ministerial candidates.
Links:
<https://primeministers.moadoph.gov.au/>
<https://electionspeeches.moadoph.gov.au/>
<https://electionspeeches.moadoph.gov.au/explore>
Read the election speech of Australia's first elected prime minister, Edward Barton. What do Barton's speaking notes tell a contemporary audience about his 'high endeavours' for the nation?
Use the applications on the 'Explore the Speeches' page to analyse the speeches. Share your observations and findings with the class.
- 'It's a mistake to think that the Gettysburg Address is just a set of clichés.' – Graham Freudenberg
Explain the significance of Graham Freudenberg's claim. Can you think of other lines from great speeches that have become well-worn? Have these lines diminished in power because they are so often repeated?

'The palm without the dust'

In *The Scribe*, Eric Walsh, a long-time member of the Canberra Press Gallery and Press Secretary to Prime Minister Whitlam, acknowledges Graham Freudenberg as the first in Australian politics who made his name as a speechwriter.

- 'I was the quintessential backroom boy. I never had the title of speechwriter; the role was never acknowledged. It wasn't the done thing in those days.'
'Here I was in the center of things, enjoying it immensely. All the excitement. I had as the ancient Greeks used to say, "The palm without the dust." The laurels without the grubby business of having to do the electoral work.' – Graham Freudenberg
What is the meaning of the term 'backroom boy'? Why do you think 'it wasn't the done thing' to publicly acknowledge Graham Freudenberg's work during the time that he was writing for Arthur Calwell and Gough Whitlam? What do Graham's claims suggest about his desire for his work to be acknowledged?

Politicians are some of society's most prolific speechmakers. Their success can often be attributed to their ability to address voters through powerful and passionate speeches.

- 'I regard myself as a politician. What was all that work about? It was about politics.'
'Anyone who thinks they've got the formula for how politics works doesn't know politics. It's the unpredictability of it that makes it exciting, and sometimes glorious. More often, of course, pretty awful. That's its fascination. Its fatal fascination.' – Graham Freudenberg
Drawing on these claims, describe Graham Freudenberg's 'fascination' with politics. Do you share Graham's fascination?
Why do you think politicians employ speechwriters?
- *'I was a kid sitting in the gallery of the town hall hearing a speech by then Labor party leader Arthur Augustus Calwell, and I later realised it was a Freudenberg speech. And, it had beautiful touches in it. It made Arthur Calwell a figure of more authority, and of some style, more than he was really entitled to be. It enhanced him, it enhanced his leadership.'* – Bob Carr
'...an element of his uniqueness in my judgment was a sheer unadulterated beauty and perception of his writing for the leaders that he served, and it was not as though when we were speaking we were seen just to be uttering the words of Freudy, although everyone knew so much of those words were Freudy, but we still kept our own character wrapped around those words.' – Bob Hawke
What do the statements of Bob Carr and Bob Hawke reveal about Graham Freudenberg's expertise as a speechwriter?



Cullen and Freudenberg

The Drumbeat speech

The Vietnam War was a conflict that pitted the communist government of North Vietnam against South Vietnam and its principal ally, the United States. In 1965, the U.S. Government escalated its military support to the anti-communist government of South Vietnam. Soon after, Australia's Prime Minister Robert Menzies announced that Australia would do the same.

- 'And so my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.' – John F. Kennedy

In *The Scribe*, Graham Freudenberg labels John F. Kennedy's inaugural speech of 20 January 1961 as 'great' and 'inspirational'. Why do you think the speech deserves such accolades?

Graham also believes that the speech can be used to explain what he calls the 'American disaster in Vietnam'. Why do you think Graham makes this association? Provide evidence from the speech to support your answer to this question.

Links:

<https://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/kennedy-inaugural-address-speech-text/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEC1C4p0k3E>

The Australian Labor Party led by Arthur Calwell took what is described in *The Scribe* as 'a bold stand' denouncing the war in Vietnam. On 4 May 1965, Calwell delivered what is now known as the Drumbeat speech. Graham Freudenberg wrote the speech, making the case against Australia entering the Vietnam War. Graham estimates that he probably wrote forty major speeches on Vietnam over the ten years it was the major international issue confronting Australia.

- 'I ask you to make conscription the issue, because a vote for conscription, a vote for conscription on Saturday is a blood vote.' – Arthur Calwell

Link: <https://australianpolitics.com/1965/05/04/calwell-response-to-vietnam-commitment.html>

No recording exists of this speech.

What is the main contention of the Drumbeat speech? What arguments are offered to support this main contention? Who was the audience of this speech? Why do you think Graham Freudenberg considers this speech to be one of the most important speeches that he has written? What do you think makes the speech so important? Why do you think this speech should still be respected today?

'Sometimes the weapon is the speech'

In 1967 Gough Whitlam became leader of the Australian Labor Party. He offered Graham Freudenberg a job. Graham recalls:

'The first thing he said to me was, "You can call me Gough, you know." I said, "Well, I won't because one day you'll be Prime Minister and I'm not going to call you Gough then. But I don't want to be calling you Prime Minister, so I'll call you leader.'

One of Whitlam's first priorities was internal reform of the Australian Labor Party.

- Why was the Australian Labor Party of this time in need of reform?

- Read the transcript of the speech that Gough Whitlam delivered on 9 June 1967.

<https://whitlamdismissal.com/1967/06/09/the-impotent-are-pure-speech.html>

What was the subject of the speech? Who was the audience of the speech? How did the audience respond during its delivery? What did Whitlam want the speech to achieve? Did it achieve its purpose? What part did the words of Abraham Lincoln play in this speech? What do Graham's recollections reveal about the collaborative relationship between the speechwriter and the orator?



Graham Freudenberg at home in his study

It's Time

In *The Scribe*, Graham Freudenberg names the It's Time policy speech as 'the outstanding one'. Given by leader of the Australian Labor Party, Gough Whitlam at the 1972 ALP policy launch, Graham explains that the speech was five years in the writing.

- 'There are moments in history when the whole fate and future of nations can be decided by a single decision. For Australia this is such a time.' – Gough Whitlam

Links:

<https://electionspeeches.moadoph.gov.au/speeches/1972-gough-whitlam>

<https://whitlamdismissal.com/1972/11/13/whitlam-1972-election-policy-speech.html>

Write a detailed analysis of the It's Time speech.

In the introduction of the analysis identify the following aspects of the speech:

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| - the title | - the audience |
| - the speaker | - the subject |
| - the context | - the purpose |

In the body of the analysis, establish the key arguments of the speech and explain how language and rhetorical devices are used to render these arguments persuasive. In the conclusion of your analysis, provide an evaluation of the speech's impact and comment on its ongoing importance.

What does Graham mean when he says of the speech, 'Whitlam was always the driving force, but perhaps on this occasion I was the midwife.'?

More than just a speechwriter

Drawing on *The Scribe* and on other sources, complete the following table. Graham Freudenberg worked for all of politicians named in the table.

	POLITICAL CAREER AND ACHIEVEMENTS	RELATIONSHIP WITH GRAHAM FREUDENBERG
ARTHUR CALWELL		
NEVILLE WRAN		
BARRIE UNSWORTH		
BOB HAWKE		
BOB CARR		
SIMON CREAN		

Leader

The Scribe provides an insight into the relationship between Graham Freudenberg and Gough Whitlam.

- *'He once said: Comrade, your problem is that you're too dithyrambic. My problem is that I'm too inspissated. Well, who could argue with that? So as soon as I decently could I looked up the dictionary to see whether I'd been complimented or insulted.'* – Graham Freudenberg
Using this statement as a starting point describe the relationship between Graham Freudenberg and Gough Whitlam.
How do the archival stills and footage portray the relationship?
What do the observations of Eric Walsh, Bob Carr and Graham's brother suggest about the relationship?
Explain the significance of Graham's leather-bound copy of *The Whitlam Government 1972 – 1975*.

On 11 November 1975, Prime Minister Gough Whitlam was dismissed from office by Governor-General Sir John Kerr, who then commissioned the Leader of the Opposition, Malcolm Fraser of the Liberal Party, as caretaker Prime Minister. This event is usually referred to as the Dismissal.

Links:

<https://whitlamdismissal.com/>

<https://whitlamdismissal.com/what-happened/overview>

<http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/snapshots/d dismissal/timeline.aspx>

<https://www.nfsa.gov.au/collection/curated/kerrs-cur-speech-gough-whitlam>

- Why is the dismissal of the Whitlam Government on 11 November 1975 regarded as the most dramatic political event in the history of Australia's Federation?
- *'The question I'm still most often asked is did you write that speech just after the dismissal?'* – Graham Freudenberg
Write an analysis of Whitlam's verdict of the events of 11 November 1975. Your analysis should comment on the content, the delivery and the audience's response to Whitlam's speech.



Graham
Freudenberg

Gallipoli Spirits

In *The Scribe*, Bob Hawke acknowledges Graham's talent as a speechwriter:

'I had many moving experiences as Prime Minister, but I would have to say that nothing was more moving for me than the Gallipoli experience. That was a remarkable speech.'

- *'None of us come here to glorify war, for us no place on earth more grimly symbolises the waste and the futility of war, this scene of carnage in a campaign, which failed. It is not the waste of war in which Australians find the meaning of Gallipoli. Then, or now.'* –

Bob Hawke

Link: <https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/release/transcript-8010>

What was the purpose of the Gallipoli Spirits speech?
Who was the audience of this speech? Who did Graham Freudenberg have in mind as he wrote the speech?
Graham hoped that the speech would convey ANZAC day as inclusive. Why was this objective important to Graham?
Do you think this objective was achieved?

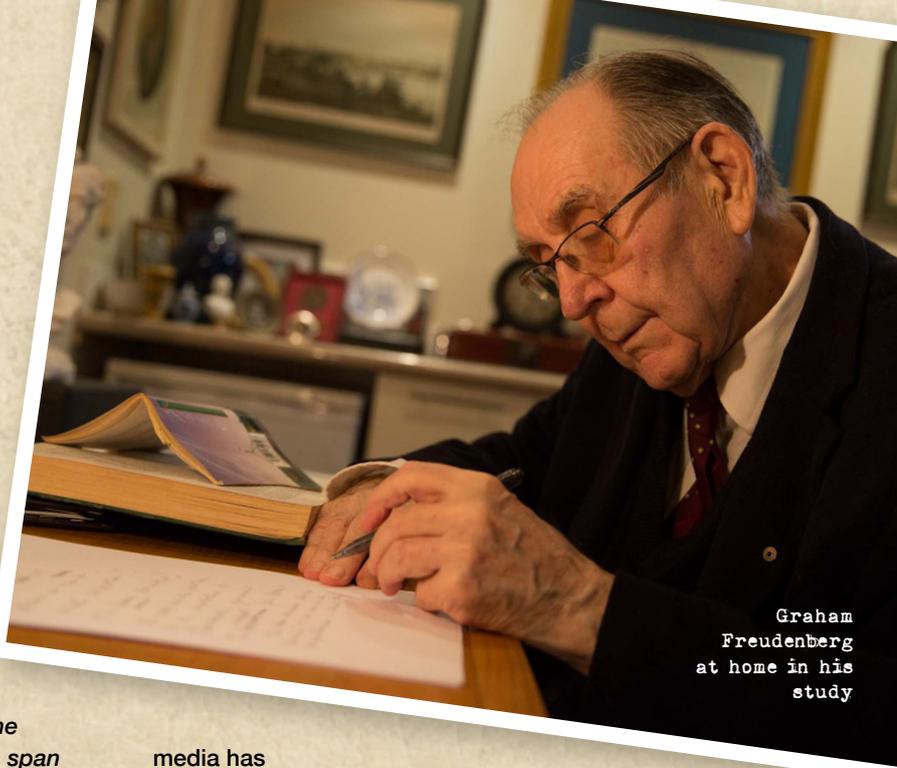
The new technology

The Scribe draws on the political career of U.S. President Donald Trump to comment on how the rise of digital technology and in particular social media platforms like Twitter have changed the way that elected governments, political parties and politicians engage with voters.

Of Trump's use of this new technology, Graham Freudenberg comments:

'But I think the reason why Trump can get away with telling so many lies, or saying so many contradictory things, is that because of the pervasiveness of the new technology our attention span is diminishing, so that people no longer need the threat of an argument. You just make a point.'

- How do you think digital technology, especially social

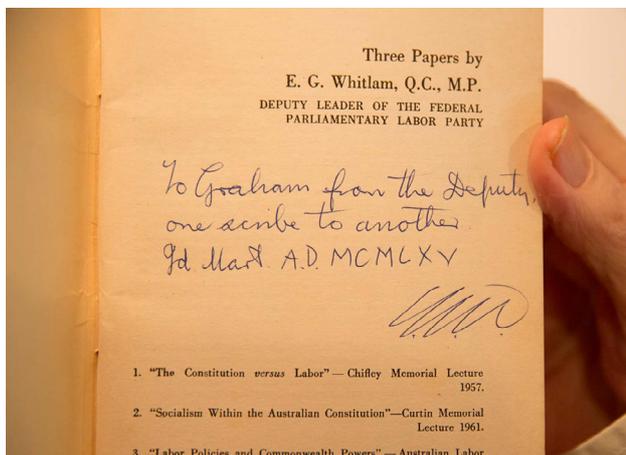


Graham Freudenberg at home in his study

media has changed the nature of political communication? Do you think that the use of new technologies has improved political behaviour for better or worse?

Keep the show running

- 'You have to have a sense of history. It's not knowledge of history; it is the sense that you are taking part in the making of it.' – Graham Freudenberg
The Scribe highlights how Graham Freudenberg has taken part in the making of Australia's history. Your task is to research one of the Australian speechwriters that have followed his lead and taken their part in the making of Australia's history.
Suggested subjects:



Inscription from Gough Whitlam to Graham while EGW was Deputy leader "from the Deputy one scribe to another"

DON WATSON – speechwriter to Prime Minister Paul Keating

JAMES BUTTON – speechwriter to Prime Minister Kevin Rudd

TIM DIXON – speechwriter to Prime Ministers Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard

MICHAEL COONEY – speechwriter to Prime Minister Julia Gillard

PAUL RITCHIE – speechwriter to Prime Minister Tony Abbott

- 'We get to the core of things when we recognise that if parliamentary democracy is to survive, then we must attract the best and respect the men and women who attempt to keep the show running.' – Graham Freudenberg
What does this statement reveal about Graham Freudenberg's view of politics and politicians? Can you make any connections between this statement and the speech written by Graham at age eleven? Why do you think *The Scribe* ends with this statement?

On 2 June 2017, the NSW Branch of the Labor Party hosted a dinner for Graham Freudenberg. Read the transcript of the speech that Graham delivered at the dinner online at <https://johnmenadue.com/graham-freudenberg-his-speech-at-the-graham-freudenberg-tribute-dinner-2-june-2017/>.

Discussing film style

A documentary is a non-fiction text that represents events and people from real life. The purpose of a documentary could be to provoke thought, to educate or to persuade. To be successful a documentary also needs to engage its audience.

- Have you watched other documentaries? Share your experiences of this genre with the class. In what ways is *The Scribe* like other documentaries that you have watched? How does it differ? Share your responses to these questions with the class.
- What type of documentary is *The Scribe*? Before you answer this question, spend time online reading about the types of documentaries and the codes and conventions of each type. Use evidence from the film to endorse your answer to this question.
- Graham Freudenberg's career as a speechwriter is documented through:
 - still photographs
 - dramatisations
 - archival footage
 - contemporary interviews

Working with a partner, write an analysis of how these documentary film techniques are used in *The Scribe*.

- Read the director's statement that is featured in this study guide. Imagine you had the opportunity to interview Ruth Cullen. Compile a list of three questions you would like to ask her about *The Scribe*. Spend time as a class, discussing the potential answers to these questions.

Ruth Cullen, Director

Ruth Cullen is known for her fearless and empathetic character portrayals and her willingness to seek out the untested. Her films have screened around the world including the prestigious IDFA (Amsterdam) as well as Montreal, Los Angeles, Cork, Wellington, Sydney and Melbourne film festivals. Her latest work is the feature documentary *The Scribe*. Other recent work includes the ground-breaking ABC series: *Don't Stop The Music* (post director) and *The Dreamhouse* (Series Director & Writer).

For more information: <https://www.ruthcullen.com/>



Ruth Cullen and Graham Freudenberg filming.

Your turn

'It's a mistake to think that great speeches are just a series of great one-liners just as it would be a mistake to think of Hamlet as a series of famous quotations. A real gutsy speech has an argument, makes a case.' – Graham Freudenberg

You have been asked to write a sustained and reasoned speech that will be delivered in a class youth parliament.

Your speech must present a point of view on an issue of current significance in Australian society. Your point of view is not just your opinion 'for' or 'against' an issue; it also includes your reasons for holding this opinion, your reasons for rejecting opposing viewpoints, and the examples and evidence that support your view. It is expected that your speech will be five minutes in duration. It is expected that your speech will show a use of persuasive language and rhetorical devices.

Step 1: Choose an issue and research this issue.

You are required to compile an electronic file that documents your research. This file is part of your assessment.

Step 2: What is your point of view? Having researched the issue, choose your position. State your position as a main contention. Your main contention should begin with the word 'That...'. Your teacher will approve your choice of issue and your position.

Step 3: Plan and write the first draft of your speech. It is expected that you will edit this draft and participate in a conferencing session with your teacher. This will enable your teacher to give feedback and check the authenticity of your work.

Step 4: Is your speech persuasive? Many students make the mistake of writing a speech that informs rather than persuades. Remember that your speech must have a real sense of purpose: What do you want your audience to agree with? How will you persuade the audience to accept your contention?

Step 5: Rehearse Don't forget that your vocality and body language will play a significant part in the persuasiveness of the speech. This is why you need to rehearse the delivery of your speech. It is expected that you will be very familiar with your speech. You may use prompt cards but you must not read your speech.

See **Appendix 2** for an assessment rubric.

ANALYSING A SPEECH



Title	
Speaker	
Date delivered	
Occasion	
Subject	
Audience	
Purpose	
Main contention	
Key ideas	
Evidence	
Use of language	
Use of logical appeals	
Use of ethical appeals	
Use of emotional appeals	
Other rhetorical devices	
Impact at the time the speech was first delivered	
Impact on you	

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	VERY HIGH
Ability to research the issue and provide evidence of research and planning.	Digital file cites sources used during research phase.	Digital file cites sources and provides a skeleton plan of point of view.	Digital file cites a range of sources and provides a plan consisting of main contention and supporting arguments.	Digital file cites a range of sources supporting the selected point of view and opposing points of view; plan is complete and detailed.
Ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the issue and the chosen position	Presents information about the selected issue.	Uses information to present a point of view on the selected issue.	Uses information as evidence to support a point of view on the issue and speaks for the required length of time.	Carefully selects and synthesises information to support a pertinent point of view and rebuttal of opposing viewpoints.
Ability to structure ideas in a logical and cohesive way	Relates some arguments to the chosen position.	Relates all arguments to the chosen position.	Logically orders arguments.	Provides essential contextual detail in the argument introduction and provides an effective resolution.
Ability to use argument and language to persuade	Uses basic argument and language to position the audience to support the point of view.	Uses argument and language to position the audience to support the point of view.	Uses credible argument and language to position the audience to support the point of view.	Uses complex argument and language to position the audience to support the point of view.
Ability to use oral language and the conventions of public speaking to engage an audience	Reads from prompt cards.	Reads from prompt cards at an appropriate pace.	Uses prompt cards to support the presentation of the speech, makes eye contact with the audience and demonstrates rehearsal before delivery of the speech.	Controls and varies volume, pace and tone to enhance the persuasiveness of the speech and demonstrates thorough rehearsal before delivery of the speech.

Recommended reading

Susan Chenery, 'The Scribe: portrait of Freudenberg, author of the speech that changed Australia', *Guardian Online*, 9 October 2018 <<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/oct/09/the-scribe-graham-freudenberg-author-speech-that-changed-australia>>, accessed 1 July 2019.

Michael Richardson, 'Ghosting Politics: Speechwriters, Speechmakers and the (Re)crafting of Identity', *Cultural Studies Review*, vol. 23, no. 2, September

2017, pp.3–17. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321317905_Ghosting_Politics_Speechwriters_Speechmakers_and_the_Recrafting_of_Identity>, accessed 1 July 2019.

'The life of a celebrated political speechwriter', *Sunday Extra*, Radio National, 7 October 2018 <<https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/sundayextra/2018-10-07/10308996>>, accessed 1 July 2019.



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