



The Style and Rhetoric of Elizabeth Dole: Public Persona and Political Discourse

Rachel B. Friedman, Ronald E. Lee

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This book analyses the public discourse of Elizabeth Dole. It explores the way in which this trail-blazing public figure navigated the double binds that confront women who obtain and exercise political power. The text argues that Dole crafted a conservative, feminine persona in which she depicted herself as a selfless public servant. This sense of servant was defined through Dole's appeal to the transcendent moral purposes of Christianity. She used this image to great effect in her most noteworthy public addresses, especially her 1996 Republican National Convention speech in support of her husband's presidential campaign. In her 2008 unsuccessful North Carolina U.S. Senate reelection campaign Elizabeth Dole's political style unraveled in the face of a series of effective attacks by her opponent, Kay Hagan, and her own desperate rhetorical appeals to stave off defeat.

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