

For Andrew, Adrian and their cousins,
in memory of Mark – J.H.

For my parents, who taught me
how to get involved – J.L.

For my family, who have always given me invaluable support,
and for all the people involved in this book, whom I have
had the opportunity to learn so much from – A.D.

A TEMPLAR BOOK

First published in the UK in 2022 by Templar Books,
an imprint of Bonnier Books UK,
4th Floor, Victoria House,
Bloomsbury Square, London WC1B 4DA
Owned by Bonnier Books,
Sveavägen 56, Stockholm, Sweden
www.bonnierbooks.co.uk

Text copyright © 2022 by Joan Haig and Joan Lennon
Illustration copyright © 2022 by André Ducci
Design copyright © 2022 by Templar Books

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

All rights reserved

ISBN 978-1-78741-732-8

This book was typeset in Archer and Tomarik.
The illustrations were created digitally.

Edited by Carly Blake and Lydia Watson
Designed by Adam Allori
Production by Neil Randles

Printed in Latvia

TALKING HISTORY

templar books

This PDF snapshot was generated on Friday 15 October 2021. Visit bookshelf.bonnierbooks.co.uk for up-to-date previews and information.

FROM THE AUTHORS

Many years ago, there was a teacher called Mrs Chamberlain. Among many other things, she taught her pupils to knit. While the class sat twiddling their wool, Mrs Chamberlain played them old vinyl records of famous speeches. And as the knitting grew, those speeches took the children to different places around the world and spoke to them of hardships and inspirations, challenges and hope. The voices they heard made the pupils see the world in new ways. The words they heard made them feel, and prompted them to think.

This book grew from that seed.

Words can change the world, and the last 150 years have been rich in historic speeches that have helped to shape the societies we live in today. This book explores 16 of those speeches from all over the world, addressing a range of issues from politics and human rights to global warming, scientific adventure and the need for change. In 1863, Abraham Lincoln reminded a nation of their past in a rallying cry for their future. In 1964, Nelson Mandela told a court of justice he was prepared to die for the ideal of racial equality. In 2019, Greta Thunberg's uncompromising words on the climate crisis inspired a global movement. They are all people with something to say, and the words to say it with.

As Harvey Milk said in 1978, "Rights are won only by those who make their voices heard". The speakers in this book have made their voices heard. Now, more than ever, we need to listen.

Joan Haig and Joan Lennon

ABOUT THE BOOK

This book is organised into chapters, each of which introduces you to a speech and tells you the story of who made it and why.

Many of the speeches were thousands of words long and some lasted hours, so they are not printed in full. Instead, we have chosen extracts that capture the main points. The parts of speech that are missing are shown by three dots (...).

Alongside each speech, you will find information that talks about the speaker's message and how they used words and language. This text is shown in *italics*.

If you get stuck on a difficult word or phrase, head to the glossary at the back of the book to find out what it means.

The book is set out in date order, but you can read it any way you like. At the end of each chapter, follow the signposts in the direction you want to go.

This PDF snapshot was generated on Friday 15 October 2021. Visit bookshelf.bonnierbooks.co.uk for up-to-date previews and information.

MEET THE SPEAKERS

10

'THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS' 1863
ABRAHAM LINCOLN

14

'FREEDOM OR DEATH' 1913
EMMELINE PANKHURST

18

'AN ABORIGINAL WOMAN ASKS FOR JUSTICE' 1938
PEARL GIBBS

22

'THEIR FINEST HOUR' 1940
WINSTON CHURCHILL

26

'A TRYST WITH DESTINY' 1947
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

30

'A TALK ABOUT WOMEN' 1949
FUNMILAYO RANTOME-KUTI

34

'THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF LOUIS BRAILLE' 1952
HELEN KELLER

38

'FIRST FLIGHT OF A MAN INTO COSMIC SPACE' 1961
YURI GAGARIN

42

'STATEMENT FROM THE DOCK' 1964
NELSON MANDELA

46

'THE CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS' 1968
RENÉ CASSIN

50

'THE HOPE SPEECH' 1978
HARVEY MILK

54

'ADDRESS TO THE UNITED NATIONS YOUTH ASSEMBLY' 2013
MALALA YOUSAFZAI

58

'REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT AT THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SELMA TO MONTGOMERY MARCHES' 2015
BARACK OBAMA

62

'STATEMENT TO THE WHO WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY IN GENEVA' 2015
ANGELA MERKEL

66

'LISTEN TO THE CHILDREN' 1992 & 'OUR HOUSE IS ON FIRE' 2019
SEVERN CULLIS-SUZUKI & GRETA THUNBERG

72

GLOSSARY

This PDF snapshot was generated on Friday 15 October 2021. Visit bookshelf.bonnierbooks.co.uk for up-to-date previews and information.

... A NEW NATION, CONCEIVED IN LIBERTY, AND DEDICATED TO THE PROPOSITION THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL.

'THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS'

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

1863

THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

The American Civil War (1861–1865) was fought between the northern states (the Union) and the southern states (the Confederacy) to decide the future of the nation. Abraham Lincoln was leader of the Union throughout the war.

19 November 1863

It was a cold, bright winter's day, just outside the little town of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, USA.

A few months before, thousands of soldiers had been killed nearby at the Battle of Gettysburg. Now, with the war still raging, huge crowds were gathering to honour them at the dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery.

The Battle of Gettysburg began on 1 July 1863 and lasted for three long summer days. It was one of the bloodiest conflicts in the American Civil War.

But why were the Confederacy and the Union fighting? Wars always have more than one cause. The two sides had both been part of the United States of America, until disagreements over economics, politics, attitudes to slavery and different ways of life finally caused a divide. From 1860 to 1861, the 11 southern states of the Confederacy officially withdrew from being part of the country.



At the Battle of Gettysburg, the armies of both sides were badly hit. Around 50,000 soldiers were killed, wounded, captured or reported missing.

During the four years of the American Civil War, more than 50,000 amputations were performed. Between operations, surgical instruments were wiped on the surgeon's sleeve.

As the fighting continued, medicine and anaesthetics kept running out. Whisky was often the only pain relief available.



The dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery at Gettysburg in 1863 was attended by six state governors and 15,000 spectators. Former US Secretary of State Edward Everett was the main speaker. He spoke eloquently about the horrors of the war, describing Confederate conspiracies and atrocities against the Union, and calling angrily for vengeance. After two long hours, he sat down to thunderous applause.



For every soldier killed in battle during the American Civil War, two more died of disease.



And then something extraordinary happened ...



This PDF snapshot was generated on Friday 15 October 2021. Visit bookshelf.bonnierbooks.co.uk for up-to-date previews and information.

'THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS'

19 NOVEMBER 1863

President Abraham Lincoln began to speak. A little over two minutes later, he had already sat down again.

The speech was so short, the photographer didn't even have time to take a picture, and yet the words of Lincoln's 'Gettysburg Address' are remembered all over the world to this day.

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war ... We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live ...

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate —we can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract ... It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us ... that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.



Lincoln's speech was perfectly paced for such a solemn occasion. Read it aloud and you will find you can't hurry. There were pauses built into the sentences to give the words time to sink in.

He used repetition in threes as a way of emphasising important ideas: "we can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground" and "government of the people, by the people, for the people".

Lincoln had complicated views on the issues behind the war, but in his speech, unlike Everett, he didn't talk about hating the enemy or abolishing slavery or getting revenge. Instead, with his opening sentence, he invited the audience to look back to 1776, to the Declaration of Independence. This was the document that marked the beginning of the United States of America, describing a new nation dedicated to equality, freedom and democracy. Then, with his closing sentence, Lincoln asked his listeners to look to the future, and to work towards a time when those ideals could be fully realised.

WHAT DID THE NEWSPAPERS SAY?



HARRISBURG PATRIOT & UNION

"We pass over the silly remarks of the President. For the credit of the nation we are willing that the veil of oblivion shall be dropped over them, and that they shall no more be repeated or thought of."

CHICAGO TIMES

"The cheeks of every American must tingle with shame as he reads the silly, flat, and dishwatery utterances."

SPRINGFIELD REPUBLICAN

"[President Lincoln's] little speech is a perfect gem; deep in feeling, compact in thought and expression, and tasteful and elegant in every word and comma ... Turn back and read it over, it will repay study as a model speech. Strong feelings and a large brain are its parents."

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

"The dedicatory remarks by President Lincoln will live among the annals of man."



At the time, opinions on the Gettysburg Address and Abraham Lincoln varied. What the newspapers said about the speech depended on whether the editors – and their readers – had voted for or against Lincoln for President.

DID LINCOLN'S SPEECH AT GETTYSBURG END THE CIVIL WAR?

No. The war dragged on for two more years and, by its end in 1865, as many as 750,000 soldiers are thought to have died.

Lincoln was commander-in-chief of the Union for all four years of the vicious conflict. Like any war, nobody knew how it was going to end, or how the deep divisions of the nation could be healed, yet Lincoln held on to his innate kindness and gentleness.

During a major military campaign in early 1865, weeks before the end of the war, Lincoln was distracted at a meeting with a general by the unhappy mewing of kittens. He was heard to remark: "Kitties, thank God you are cats, and can't understand this terrible strife that is going on," and as he left, he asked an officer to make sure they were "given plenty of milk and treated kindly".





The American Civil War officially ended on 9 April 1865, but the divisions between the North and the South still remained. Five days later, while at the theatre with his wife, Abraham Lincoln was shot by Confederate supporter John Wilkes Booth. Lincoln died the next morning.

Lincoln's speech at Gettysburg was like a signpost, pointing his listeners back to where they had come from, and forwards to where they wanted to go. It is a reminder and a call to action still worth listening to.



This PDF snapshot was generated on Friday 15 October 2021. Visit bookshelf.bonnierbooks.co.uk for up-to-date previews and information.



In 1903, in the city of Manchester, UK, Emmeline Pankhurst and her eldest daughter Christabel founded the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU). The organisation campaigned fearlessly for women's right to vote.

THE SUFFRAGETTE MOVEMENT

This wasn't the first time that women in Britain had fought for the vote. Since the mid-nineteenth century, female campaigners called 'suffragists' had tried to win rights for women in society through peaceful petitions and, later on, by refusing to pay their taxes.

But this campaign was slow with few results. After years of unsuccessful peaceful protest by the suffragists, the WSPU decided that it was time for action – 'Deeds Not Words', as their motto said. Members of the WSPU took part in 'civil disobedience' to literally fight for their cause. They chained themselves to railings, heckled politicians, placed bombs in empty buildings, and smashed windows in public places, constantly clashing with the authorities. They were so determined to achieve their political aims that they deliberately took part in violence and vandalism to influence the public and the government.

Newspapers began referring to militant WSPU campaigners as 'suffragettes'. By 1909, the WSPU had branches all over the country.

THE CAT AND MOUSE ACT

Around 1,000 suffragettes were imprisoned for their 'nuisance' behaviour. While in jail, some continued to fight by going on hunger strike, refusing to eat or drink. At first, they were released to prevent them from starving, but, by 1909, prison wardens began to force-feed them. Women were badly hurt, prompting public outrage at what was seen as government torture.

The government responded by passing the 1913 Prisoners' (Temporary Discharge for Ill Health) Act. Under this new law, when women on hunger strike became critically weak, they were sent home. As soon as they recovered, they were promptly rearrested to continue their sentence. It was dubbed the 'Cat and Mouse Act', likened to the way a cat plays with its prey, repeatedly letting it escape before catching it again.

Emmeline Pankhurst was imprisoned and released 11 times! It was in 1913, in between prison sentences, that she visited the United States to campaign for support and funding. She addressed a group of women at the Parsons Theatre in Hartford, Connecticut, in a powerful speech attempting to justify the use of militant tactics in the fight for women's rights.



This PDF snapshot was generated on Friday 15 October 2021. Visit bookshelf.bonnierbooks.co.uk for up-to-date previews and information.

'FREEDOM OR DEATH'
13 NOVEMBER 1913
PARSONS THEATRE, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT, USA

"I do not come here as an advocate ...

VOTES FOR WOMEN

I am here as a soldier ...

We women, in trying to make our case clear, always have to make as part of our argument,

and urge upon men in our audience the fact

– a very simple fact –

that women are human beings.

... We wear no mark; we belong to every class; we permeate every class ... and so you see in the woman's civil war the dear men of my country are discovering it is absolutely impossible to deal with it: you cannot locate it, and you cannot stop it.

... we will put the enemy in the position where they will have to choose between giving us freedom or giving us death.

So here am I ... I come after having been four times imprisoned under the 'Cat and Mouse Act', probably going back to be rearrested as soon as I set my foot on British soil. I come to ask you to help to win this fight.

If we win it, this hardest of all fights, then, to be sure, in the future it is going to be made easier for women all over the world to win their fight when their time comes."

The "enemy" was the government in the cat-and-mouse chase. If the government did not grant women the right to vote, they would continue to die for the cause.

Pankhurst empowered individuals by putting them at the centre of a universal fight. She talked first about herself, then about the women at the rally ("we") and then about "women all over the world".

Pankhurst didn't go to the US to explain why women should fight for the vote; she went to convince them that the only way to win was to wage what she called "civil war". Her language was blunt, direct and forceful.

The feminist movement in the US was divided, like in Britain. Pankhurst aimed to rally together women from different political parties and social classes under one banner.

WOMEN IN WORLD WAR I

Much of Pankhurst's speech drew on the language of war, with words like "fight", "soldier" and "enemy". When World War I broke out in 1914, her words took on a different meaning: she encouraged women to join the war effort as a way to win the vote.

What is the use of fighting for a vote if we have not got a country to vote in?

But by the onset of WWI, Emmeline's other daughter, Sylvia, had become a pacifist – she believed that war and violence were unjustifiable.

War is callous and wicked!

We want peace and equal rights for ALL those who are disenfranchised!

By "disenfranchised", Sylvia meant everyone who didn't have the right to vote for their government – those who were seen as too poor or too ill, not just women. While her mother and sister found themselves linking women's suffrage to the fight for Britain, Sylvia found herself fighting for a wider social cause.



The War Effort

Women in Britain were not allowed to fight on the front line. Instead, two million women took up the jobs left by men who had been recruited as soldiers, and worked as ambulance drivers, bookkeepers and in factories.



The Women's Party

In 1917, Emmeline and Christabel transformed the WSPU into the Women's Party with the new motto: 'Victory, National Security and Progress'. They recruited men and women to fight against a common, foreign enemy – Germany. Sylvia, meanwhile, dedicated her time to helping women and the poor make ends meet.



1918 Representation of the People Act

People's collective effort during WWI forced the British government to change the law. The right to vote was extended to women aged 30 or older who owned property, women who were university graduates, and to all men over the age of 21. Women were also allowed, for the first time, to stand as Members of Parliament.



Universal Suffrage

In 1928, the same year that Emmeline Pankhurst died, aged 69, the government passed the Equal Franchise Act. Under this law, all women in the UK could finally vote in national elections, on exactly the same terms as men.



This PDF snapshot was generated on Friday 15 October 2021. Visit bookshelf.bonnierbooks.co.uk for up-to-date previews and information.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I AM AN AUSTRALIAN.

ABORIGINAL PEOPLE CLAIM CITIZEN RIGHTS!

'AN ABORIGINAL WOMAN ASKS FOR JUSTICE'
PEARL GIBBS (GAMBANYI*)
1938

*Gambanyi is Pearl Gibbs' name in Ngiyamboa, the language of the Wangaibon and Wellwan peoples.



The first peoples of Australia are known to have lived and thrived across the continent for at least 65,000 years, developing many different cultures, customs and languages. In 1606, European invasion of Australia began on the west coast.

Nearly two centuries later, in 1770, a lieutenant in the British army, James Cook, invaded Australia's east coast to lay claim to the continent for Britain. Due to harsh laws that existed in England, which led to the overcrowding of prisons, Britain decided to send its convicts to Australia, to serve their sentences on the other side of the world. Free settlers followed soon after and Britain continued to invade the mainland, eventually taking over the whole continent and making it a colony. The colonisation of Australia devastated the many different groups of native Australians who became known collectively as Aboriginal, Indigenous or First Nations peoples.

HARD TIMES

Using modern guns, the settlers killed many thousands of Aboriginal people, sometimes slaughtering entire communities to steal land. Australia's original inhabitants also had no immunity to the new diseases the colonists brought with them and lost their lives in great numbers to tuberculosis, smallpox and other illnesses.

The Australian colonial government turned a blind eye to the massacres. They also ignored the right of Indigenous Australians to be counted in the country's census until 1967, cutting First Nations peoples off from federal services, including education and health care.



THE STOLEN GENERATIONS

By 1883, the settler authorities had set up 'Aboriginal Protection Boards'. These Boards were meant to provide food and medical aid to Aboriginal groups and to help them find work. But their real purpose was to control all aspects of their lives. The Boards forced Aboriginal groups off their land and on to reserves, handed out poor-quality food and destroyed traditional culture and lifestyles. Poverty and early death were common.

Between 1910 and 1969, government policies made it legal for Aboriginal children to be forcibly removed from their families. Most of these children were put into institutions to be trained as servants and labourers. The colonists tried to force First Nations children to reject their cultural heritage and languages, so they could fit into what the settlers saw as a superior society. The idea behind this was never equality, but to eliminate First Nations peoples and create a servant class for European colonists. These children became known as 'the Stolen Generations'.



PEARL GIBBS

Pearl Brown, later Gibbs, was born in 1901 in southeast Australia. A descendent of both Indigenous Australians and European colonists, she proudly described herself as "the grand-daughter of a full-blooded Aboriginal woman ... having lived and been with them as much as I have been with white people".

When Pearl left school, her job prospects were limited, so she worked as a domestic servant and a field labourer. She was appalled by the oppression that she saw around her. Pearl began to organise strikes among the Aboriginal women pea-pickers for better working conditions and arranged a boycott against a segregated local cinema.

Then, in Sydney in 1938, Gibbs was involved in the first major Aboriginal civil rights demonstration.



This PDF snapshot was generated on Friday 15 October 2021. Visit bookshelf.bonnierbooks.co.uk for up-to-date previews and information.

26 JANUARY 1788

On this day, Captain Arthur Phillip led the permanent invasion of Australia with the first shipload of British convicts and planted the flag of Great Britain, proclaiming it a colonial outpost of the British Empire. The local Eora people's name for this landing place was Warrane, but Cook had renamed it Port Jackson. The 26 January was celebrated by European settlers as First Landing Day, Foundation Day and then Australia Day. For First Nations peoples, it became known as Invasion Day or Survival Day.

26 JANUARY 1938

On this day, 150 years after the invasion began, Pearl Gibbs joined Aboriginal activists Jack Patten, William Ferguson and William Cooper in a mass protest, known as the Day of Mourning.

THE DAY OF MOURNING

The official Australia Day events included a sailing regatta, a lawn bowls tournament, a triumphant re-enactment of Captain Phillip's landing and a parade.

But Pearl Gibbs and many other Aboriginal rights campaigners had different plans to mark this day. Standing in the hot Australian sun, wearing formal black clothes, more than 1,000 supporters waited for the Australia Day parade to pass by, before marching silently from Sydney Town Hall to a conference in Australia Hall. Attendees had to enter by the back door of the hall, as the front door was for Europeans only. This meeting was for Aboriginal people only, to mourn the loss of their country, their freedom and the deaths of so many.

PEARL GIBBS SPEAKS

Pearl Gibbs was the only woman to address this first national Aborigines Conference at Australia Hall, and the last speaker of the day, but she made her voice heard. She spoke out passionately against the terrible conditions she had seen on Aboriginal reserves. Afterwards, memorial wreaths she had made were floated out to sea, as a symbol of 150 years of loss and oppression of Indigenous Australians.

AUSTRALIA DAY TODAY

Today, Australia Day is the official name for the holiday, although it is still known as Survival or Invasion Day. Every year on 26 January, in Sydney, many Australians flock to the Yabun Festival (Yabun means 'music to a beat' in Gadigal, a language of the Eora people), an alternative celebration with music, dancing, stalls and forums to commemorate the survival of Aboriginal culture. Here, everyone is welcome to celebrate all that it means to be Australian.

WOMAN TODAY

No.13 April 1938 Monthly 3.d

After the first Day of Mourning, Pearl Gibbs continued to campaign for Aboriginal rights, addressing non-Aboriginal audiences as well as Indigenous communities. Complete records of Gibbs' many speeches do not exist, but 'An Aboriginal Woman Asks for Justice' appeared as a letter in the magazine *Woman Today* in April 1938.

Gibbs understood the importance of the media to spread the message of equal rights, and made the first radio broadcast by an Aboriginal woman in 1941.



'AN ABORIGINAL WOMAN ASKS FOR JUSTICE'

1938

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am an Australian.

I have lived here all my Life.

I love my country and I love its People. I wish something more for them than Riches and Prosperity. I wish for their greatness ...

We aboriginal women are intelligent enough to ask for the same citizenship rights and conditions of life as our white sisters ...

I am appealing to you on behalf of my people to raise your voices with ours and help us to a better deal in life ... in a word to grant [us] all the rights and responsibilities of DEMOCRACY.

When Pearl Gibbs introduced herself as an Australian, she was doing something subversive. With four simple words, she was challenging a mountain of colonial history and assumptions about what it meant to be Australian.

Gibbs was claiming her right to say "I am an Australian" based on the fact that she had lived in Australia all her life, but there was an emotional aspect as well. Her strong feeling for her country was part of what made her Australian.

In spite of everything that had happened to Aboriginal peoples, Gibbs was not preaching hate. She wanted her listeners to share her pride in Australia, and her hopes for its future.

It was common for non-Aboriginal Australian women to benefit from having low-paid Aboriginal servants. By addressing non-Aboriginal women as "my white sisters", Gibbs was challenging that relationship.

It was important that Gibbs included responsibilities along with rights. For too long, Aboriginal lives had been controlled by the Protection Boards. Indigenous Australians wanted to be allowed to act as accountable members of society.



BUILDING BRIDGES

Pearl Gibbs had a gift for bringing people together. As a campaigner, she acted as a link between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups working for change. Gibbs carried on organising rallies, petitions and protests that eventually led to a landmark referendum in 1967 where the Australian people voted overwhelmingly for, among other things, Indigenous Australians to be included in the census. Gibbs was an active campaigner into the 1970s and she died in 1983.



Want to hear more about women and colonialism? Visit page 30



Want to hear more about the fight to be heard? Visit page 50



Want to hear more about love of your country? Visit page 38

This PDF snapshot was generated on Friday 15 October 2021. Visit bookshelf.bonnierbooks.co.uk for up-to-date previews and information.