

ROBERT P. WATSON, PH.D.

HISTORIAN, AUTHOR, PROFESSOR, POLITICAL COMMENTATOR, COMMUNITY LEADER

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Robert Watson is an award-winning author who has published over 40 books on topics in history and politics, 200 scholarly articles and chapters, and two multi-edition encyclopedia sets on the presidents and first ladies. His recent books include: *Affairs of State* (2012); *America's First Crisis* (2014), winner of the Independent Publisher's Gold Medal in History; *The Presidents' Wives* (2014), released in an expanded 2nd edition; *The Nazi Titanic* (2016), which is being made into a motion picture; *The Ghost Ship of Brooklyn* (2017), subject of a National Geographic TV special and winner of the John Barry and John Lyman Book Awards; and the forthcoming books *George Washington's Final Battle* (2020) and *Escape! The Story of the Confederacy's Infamous Libby Prison* (2020). Several of his books have been published in international translation, nominated for book awards, and were featured on Book TV and at prominent literary festivals.

A frequent media commentator, Watson has been interviewed thousands of times by news outlets around the country and world, including CNN, MSNBC, *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, NPR, and the BBC, and has appeared on *Hardball* with Chris Matthews, *The Daily Show* with Jon Stewart, and C-SPAN's *American History TV* and *The Washington Journal*. For many years, he was a Sunday columnist for the *Sun-Sentinel* newspaper, the political analyst for WPTV 5 (NBC), and a regular guest on such outlets as WPBT 2 (PBS), WIOD 610 AM, WFTL 850 AM, RTE 1 Ireland, and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. He was also the featured commentator for many TV special reports and documentaries on presidential campaigns, presidential debates, military crises, the passing of noted leaders, and events such as school shootings and the killing of bin-Laden.

Dr. Watson co-convoked several national conferences on the American presidency and co-founded the annual Truman Legacy Symposium for the Truman Presidential Library. He served as a visiting scholar with dozens of historic sites including the Truman Presidential Library, Gerald Ford Presidential Museum, Illinois Holocaust Museum, US Military Academy, National Archives, Smithsonian National Museum of American History, Pentagon, Museum of the American Revolution, National Museum of the US Navy, George Washington's Mount Vernon, James Madison's Montpelier, and the South Dakota Humanities Council, to name a few. Watson also served as the editor of the scholarly journal *White House Studies*, the assistant editor and book review editor of *The Social Science Journal*, and the "Presidency Series" editor for the State University of New York Press. He is one of the select group of historians invited to rank the presidents every few years and has been a board member with numerous academic associations, community groups, and the Harry S. Truman Foundation, Calvin Coolidge Foundation, and George McGovern Center for Leadership.

As a community leader, Watson has hosted many voter registration drives, mock elections and civic education programs for schools, and workshops for social studies teachers, and served as a judge for History Day contests, pronouncer for spelling bees, and moderator for political debates and community town halls. He co-founded three non-profits dedicated to civic engagement, political reform, and fact-checking political ads and, with his teenage son, hosted an annual writing contest for five years for students in southeast Florida called "Let's Write Together." Watson has delivered roughly 2,000 lectures to libraries, museums, historic sites, community groups, and corporate conventions around the world, is a popular lecturer with One Day University and on board luxury cruise ships, and has led "study tours" to historic sites around the U.S. and internationally.

Watson is the recipient of many awards for his election commentary, community service, civics programs, efforts to combat anti-Semitism and promote civility, and contributions to the study of the presidency. He was named "Professor of the Year" at Florida Atlantic University and Lynn University (3 times), won campus service awards at Florida Atlantic University (twice) and Lynn University, and has been inducted into two sports halls of fame.

Robert was born in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, attended public schools in Hershey, and was educated at Virginia Tech, where he was a member of the football and track teams. He holds the title Distinguished Professor of American History and Director of Project *Civitas* at Lynn University in Boca Raton, Florida and serves as Senior Fellow with Senator Bob Graham's Florida Joint Center for Citizenship.