



# The Mobility of Presidential Reputation: Herbert Hoover, Lyndon Johnson, and Political Legacy-Building

**Professor Dean J. Kotlowski**

**Visiting Fellow**  
*Fulbright Distinguished Chair in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*

Presidential reputations have gone up or down or remained the same with little predictability or consistency. Dwight Eisenhower's standing with historians has grown, as has Theodore Roosevelt's while the stock of Andrew Jackson and Woodrow Wilson have fallen. Many reputations have remained stationary, with Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, and Franklin Roosevelt placing first, second, and third in polls of America's greatest presidents. Nevertheless, presidents have striven to sculpt their legacies and boost their standing.

This seminar examines the legacy-building efforts of Herbert Hoover and Lyndon Johnson, a pair of presidents who had to work hard to gain the approval of the public and of posterity for their administrations were marred by political disasters: Hoover's ineffective response to the Great Depression and Johnson's failed war in Vietnam.

They thus emphasized other aspects of their careers and presidencies. Hoover stressed his non-presidential accomplishments as a World War I-era international humanitarian and post-1945 public servant. Johnson focused squarely on his civil rights accomplishments as president, hoping that these would overshadow his policy in Vietnam. At the time of Hoover's death in 1964, Americans mourned Hoover the person more than Hoover the president.

**Register here**

**Details**

**Tuesday 30 August 2022. 4:30PM**

Research School of Social Sciences Building (RSSS)  
Auditorium 1.28

Humanities Research Centre ANU  
College of Arts & Social Sciences  
E : [admin.HAL@anu.edu.au](mailto:admin.HAL@anu.edu.au)



**Australian  
National  
University**