

## When Nixon Was Here

The Top 10 Politicians to Visit Pacific

By Elias Gilman '09

**Editor's note** | *Forest Grove may be a little out of the way for politicians on the stump. Nevertheless, quite a few notables, many connected with the Tom McCall Forum, have made their way to campus. Here are the Top Ten, as chosen by the Library Archives staff.*

·**Richard Nixon**: In 1968, presidential candidate Nixon met a group of Alpha Zeta fraternity members and was given a certificate granting him honorary AZ membership. He was also photographed with the group and Boxer. The advisor to the AZs, Eldon Hout, mentioned to Nixon that the last presidential candidate to hold Boxer had been William Jennings Bryan in 1896 (the year he lost to McKinley). Hout quickly reassured Nixon that Pacific University wished him better luck in his endeavors. According to an *Index* article documenting the event, "Nixon smiled but hurriedly returned the bronze idol."

·**William Jennings Bryan**: In 1896, as the three-time presidential hopeful gave a speech in Marsh Hall's Brighton Chapel attended by Pacific students, Bryan asked to see Boxer. Obligated by a group of admiring students, Boxer put in a brief appearance. However, this caused something of a riot, as other students rushed to get their hands on the elusive School Spirit. The resulting melee caused Bryan's speech to be postponed to the next day.

·**Harold Stassen**: Visiting campus to speak to voters on May 20, 1948, Stassen spoke to a crowd estimated at 1,000 people, including a number of highly enthusiastic Pacific students, who cheered "our man Stassen!" His visit had to be timed so as to be separate from that of **Thomas Dewey**, who was also visiting that day, although his crowd was estimated to be 2,500. Both were trying to woo voters for the Oregon primary the next day. Stassen lost. He was, perhaps, later consoled by the fact that Dewey was defeated by Harry S. Truman, in a now famous episode where the *Chicago Daily Tribune* released a number of papers proclaiming Dewey had won the election.

·**Dan Quayle**: The man who famously and disastrously compared himself to President Kennedy got a chance to debate Robert F.

Kennedy Jr. about environmental policy at Pacific's Tom McCall Forum in 1997. Quayle and Kennedy's Q&A session for students packed Taylor-Meade Auditorium, and the Forum sold a record number of tickets that year. The event also was the first occasion a former vice president of the United States was one of Forum participants.

·**Pat Schroeder** the first woman elected to Congress from Colorado and briefly a presidential candidate in 1987, and former UN Ambassador **Jeane Kirkpatrick** (the first woman to hold that position) fought it out at the Tom McCall Forum in 1988. Around 2,500 filled Pacific's athletic center to hear the two speak about issues pertaining to national security. Schroeder was born in Portland, Ore. and graduated from Roosevelt High School.

·**Pat Buchanan**: The unabashedly conservative commentator, author, and advisor to several former presidents came to campus to debate democratic stalwart Tom Daschle over American democracy and whether or not the current system was working.

·**Dennis Kucinich**: Swinging by campus on April 26, 2004 on the Oregon leg of his campaign for the 2004 presidential election, the Ohio congressman spoke briefly to students and community members in an event in Taylor Auditorium at Marsh Hall.

·**Dick Gregory**: During the 1977 Black Culture Week, put on by Pacific's Concerned Black Students group, comedian/activist Dick Gregory spoke for two-and-a-half hours to about 300 enthralled students, covering everything from the (then current) Swine flu epidemic to weather modification and the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr.