



# **The House Will Come To Order: How the Texas Speaker Became a Power in State and National Politics (Focus on American History)**

*Patrick L. Cox, Michael Phillips*

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In a state assumed to have a constitutionally weak governor, the Speaker of the Texas House wields enormous power, with the ability to almost single-handedly dictate the legislative agenda. *The House Will Come to Order* charts the evolution of the Speaker's role from a relatively obscure office to one of the most powerful in the state. This fascinating account, drawn from the Briscoe Center's oral history project on the former Speakers, is the story of transition, modernization, and power struggles.

Weaving a compelling story of scandal, service, and opportunity, Patrick Cox and Michael Phillips describe the divisions within the traditional Democratic Party, the ascendance of Republicans, and how Texas business, agriculture, and media shaped perceptions of officeholders. While the governor and lieutenant governor wielded their power, the authors show how the modern Texas House Speaker built an office of equal power as the state became more complex and diverse. The authors also explore how race, class, and gender affected this transition as they explain the importance of the office in Texas and the impact the state's Speakers have had on national politics.

At the apex of its power, the Texas House Speaker's role at last receives the critical consideration it deserves.



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