

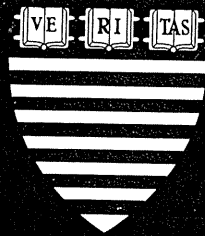
**THE THEODORE H. WHITE LECTURE**

WITH

**WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY, JR.**

The Joan Shorenstein Center

**PRESS · POLITICS**



**·PUBLIC POLICY·**

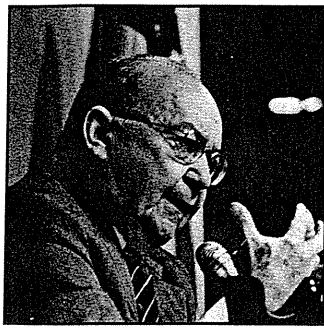
Harvard University  
John F. Kennedy School of Government

**1995**



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The Theodore H. White Lecture on Press and Politics commemorates the life of the late reporter and historian who created the style and set the standard for contemporary political journalism and campaign coverage.

White, who began his journalism career delivering the *Boston Post*, entered Harvard College in 1932 on a newsboy's scholarship. He studied Chinese history and Oriental languages. In 1939, he witnessed the bombing of Peking while freelance reporting on a Sheldon Fellowship, and later explained, "Three thousand human beings died, once I'd seen that I knew I wasn't going home to be a professor."

During the war, White covered East Asia for *Time* and returned to write *Thunder Out of China*, a controversial critique of the American-supported Nationalist Chinese government. For the next two decades, he contributed to numerous periodicals and magazines, published two books on the Second World War and even wrote fiction.

A lifelong student of American political leadership, White in 1959 sought support for a 20-year research project, a retrospective of presidential campaigns. After being advised to drop such an academic exercise by fellow reporters, he took to the campaign trail and, relegated to the "zoo plane," changed the course of American political journalism with *The Making of the President 1960*.

White's *Making of the President* editions for 1964 and 1972, and *America in Search of Itself* remain vital historical documents on campaigns and the press.

Before his death in 1986, Theodore White also served on the Kennedy School's Visiting Committee, where he was one of the early architects of what has become the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy. Blair Clark, former senior vice president of CBS who chaired the committee to establish this lectureship, asked, "Did Teddy White ever find the history he spent his life searching for? Well, of course no, he would have laughed at such pretension. But he came close, very close, didn't he? And he never quit the strenuous search for the elusive reality, and for its meaning in our lives."

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY, JR. is one of the most articulate and powerful voices of American conservatism. He has been referred to as the "philosophical architect of the conservative insurgency." The seminal event that defined Buckley as an emerging spokesman of conservatism was in 1951 with the publication of his controversial book *God and Man at Yale*, which excoriated Yale University for "fostering liberal values and stifling the political freedom of its more conservative students." In 1955, at the age of 30, Mr. Buckley founded the *National Review*, a magazine of political opinion, which today is considered to be one of the nation's most influential political journals. He was the editor of the *National Review* until 1990, at which time he became editor-at-large. His writings for the *National Review* and other publications have helped to consolidate and shape the political dialogue for the conservative movement.

In addition to writing and editing for the *National Review*, in 1962 Mr. Buckley began writing a weekly syndicated column called "On the Right" which has appeared three times a week since 1964 and is now syndicated in approximately 300 newspapers across the country. In 1965, deciding to take an active role in politics, he ran for mayor of New York City receiving 13.4% of the vote on the conservative party ticket. That was his first and last foray into politics.

In 1966 he began hosting a weekly

television show called "Firing Line" on which he spars with guests from the world of politics and the arts. "Firing Line" is one of the longest running programs on either public or commercial television and won an Emmy Award in 1969. The combination of Buckley's incisive inquiry and quick wit has generated a program of lively and informative debate.

The author of nearly forty books, both non-fiction and fiction, Mr. Buckley has written on topics ranging from politics to sailing, political philosophy to espionage novels. His most recent books are *Happy Days Were Here Again*, *Reflections of a Libertarian Journalist* and *Brothers No More*, a saga of the peccadilloes of two Yale classmates. In addition to being a prolific author, he is also a musician and has performed solo harpsichord with the Phoenix Symphony Orchestra, the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra, the Yale Symphony Orchestra, as well as for the Stamford Chamber Orchestra, the Connecticut Grand Opera and Orchestra and the Washington Bach Consort.

Mr. Buckley is the recipient of many honors including the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Julius Award for Outstanding Public Service, the Best Columnist of the Year Award, the Cleveland Amory (*TV Guide*) Award for Best Interviewer/Interviewee, the Young Republican National Federation 1979 Americanism Award, and the American Book Award for Best Mystery for *Stained Glass*. He has received honorary degrees from several colleges and universities including the College of William and Mary, New York Law School, the University of Notre Dame and Syracuse University.

William F. Buckley, Jr. is the statesman of conservative political thought, having had a major influence on the nation's political narrative over the last forty years.

## THEODORE H. WHITE LECTURE NOVEMBER 2, 1995

**Mr. Kalb:** Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Good evening. I'm Marvin Kalb, Director of the Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy. And it is my pleasure, indeed my honor, to welcome you to the annual Theodore H. White lecture. The lecture is tonight and our follow-up seminar is tomorrow morning.

It was in 1989 that friends of journalist and writer Theodore H. White, one of the exceptional products of Harvard, endowed this lecture series. The effort was spearheaded by his friend Blair Clark, also a journalist and a former network executive. From the beginning, year after year, our speakers, including among others Walter Cronkite and Ben Bradlee, have explored the role of the press and television in fashioning our politics and formulating our public policy.

Teddy White was one of the preeminent journalists of his time. His first book, *Thunder Out of China*, co-authored with Annalee Jacobee, opened our eyes to the potential of Mao's revolutionary forces. His next book, *Fire in the Ashes*, explained the confusion and the excitement of post-World War II Europe.

And then, when White turned his attention to American politics, with his ground breaking series of campaign books called the *Making of the President*, he introduced a new kind of political coverage, the reporter as eyes and ears on every aspect of a presidential campaign. In his books and articles, not only was the major speech covered but every back stage battle leading up to the major speech. Who was up, who was down, at crucial stages of the campaign; personal vendettas, marital strains, even gossip went along with exhaustive legwork.

By the mid 1970's, White himself realized that his books had such a major impact on political journalism that ironically the American people were being short changed. Too much emphasis on what proved to be trivial. Too little on what was truly substantive. We are still living with that unhappy legacy as we try to understand the new political currents running through this country.

Tonight, I'm happy to say we hear from one of the founding voices of modern American conservative thought, that of William F. Buckley, Jr., once of a place called Yale.

Normally, I would introduce him as I've introduced other lecturers in the past, but tonight I have a better idea. I have asked the esteemed John Kenneth Galbraith, the Paul M. Warburg Professor of Economics Emeritus at Harvard, to do the honors. Not because Professor Galbraith agrees with Mr. Buckley's political philosophy and is here to praise him, but rather because he has spent so much of his long, fruitful and exemplary life fighting against Mr. Buckley's conservatism. Indeed, the Galbraith-Buckley wars have raged playfully at dinner parties, humor-

ously and elegantly at public forums for quite a few years.

So for the latest chapter, I call on Professor Galbraith, who will, in his own inimitable style, introduce the Theodore H. White lecturer for this year, William Buckley, Jr.

(Applause)

**Mr. Galbraith:** I need hardly say how pleasant it is for me to be here this evening with Catherine Galbraith, and I must also say with Pat Buckley, who has made the journey from New York with Bill, to honor us on this occasion. Pat we love you very much.

Let me also just say a word too, about the man whom we honor tonight for his contribution to journalism, Teddy White, a personal friend. When I arrived in the 1930's at Harvard, there was wonderfully a shortage of economists for teaching the elementary course, so I was put immediately in charge of a section where my star student was Teddy White. He was my favorite student for all that year.

The next year I moved to Winthrop House and my first thought was to get him to come to Winthrop House so I could be his tutor. And so I arranged one day to be on the admissions committee that then sat on applicants and arranged also, in an impartial way, for Teddy to apply that day. He applied and after some thought, I admitted him.

And then I ran against the nature of Harvard in those primitive days. I was told by those really in charge that we had a full complement of the proletariat and could not have any more. Teddy came, as you know, from South Boston. So, much to my sorrow, I must say, I really was angry about it. My admission was revoked and he had to move. I think it was to Lowell House or some other inferior quarter.

I then came to know Theodore White in later years where we were both members of the staff of Time Incorporated before the great days of Time Warner, when it was still an institution with some personality. And later, of course, in the 1960 campaign, where I was traveling with Adlai Stevenson and he was writing the book which correctly, I think, seriously damaged the whole concept of the presidential campaign and turned it, the primary campaign, into show business and something of a circus. I share your regret.

And now, not reluctantly, I come to Bill Buckley. He's a wonderful person, lovable friend, generous, thoughtful, a marvelous conversationalist. I've said many times that the wonderful thing about Bill Buckley are the qualities that you so much enjoy as long as you can keep him off of politics. Oh, did I make a mistake there.

(Laughter)

**Mr. Galbraith:** Bill Buckley has been my friend, a family friend now for 30 years or more. We have debated. We have most of all joined together as fellow skiers. I remember the one time when politics intervened in our enjoyment of skiing. It was a spring day in Switzerland. The ski runs were very bad. Bill accomplished the run with competence;

I with great difficulty. As we joined eventually at the bottom of the ski slope, Bill said, 'How long have you been skiing, Ken.' I wasn't going to give him anything at all. I said, oh, about 30 years. He said, 'Same length of time you have been studying economics.'

(Laughter)

**Mr. Galbraith:** There was that other, one other occasion, Bill, when I was leaving Switzerland to go to Russia, then the Soviet Union. And Bill said to me, 'What are you going to do in that country?' And I straightened up and said, I'm going to give some lectures and he said, 'What do you have left to teach them?'

(Laughter and applause)

**Mr. Galbraith:** There's nothing that gives one more enjoyment than introducing Bill Buckley, because one knows that the longer one speaks, the greater limit he places on Bill's doctrine. But I'm going to be tolerant. I only have one final suggestion. At one juncture this evening, I was asked to be moderator, and I said that I couldn't because moderation is not possible when Bill Buckley is here.

Bill, I give way reluctantly to you.

(Applause)

**Mr. Buckley:** Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, Professor Galbraith, Mr. Kalb, Mr. Shorenstein.

I note from material so thoughtfully sent to me by Mr. Kalb that my predecessors introduced their talks, where such a link existed, by recalling personal experiences with Theodore White. I happily do as much, because we were good friends.

I met him first in the fall of 1965. He had been commissioned by *Life* magazine to do a piece on the mayoralty campaign in New York, in which I contended. I say I contended, though it never crossed anyone's mind, let alone my own, that I might

actually become the mayor. My purpose was entirely didactic, which is to say, to take advantage of the attention the press would need to pay to my campaign for the purpose of propagating my views on sound municipal government, which views were newsbreakingly sensational in New York City then, as they would be now.

(Laughter)

**Mr. Buckley:** Considerable attention was given to what I said as it was progressively acknowledged that the contest between the Democrat and the Republicans would probably turn on the size of the vote for the conservative. Sitting in my little office, Teddy White scribbled in his

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