



# PRESS RELEASE

**The Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum**  
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PRESENTS AUTHOR TALK & BOOK SIGNING

**RICHARD PARKER**  
**AUTHOR OF**  
***JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH:***  
***HIS LIFE, HIS POLITICS, HIS ECONOMICS***  
**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29 2 PM**  
**HENRY A. WALLACE CENTER**

HYDE PARK, NY—The Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum will host an author talk and book signing at 2 p.m. on Sunday, October 29, with **Richard Parker**, author of *John Kenneth Galbraith: His Life, His Politics, His Economics*, in the Henry A. Wallace Center. Parker will be available to sign copies of his book following the talk.

John Kenneth Galbraith was America's most famous economist for good reason. A witty commentator on America's political follies and a versatile author of bestselling books that warn prophetically of the dangers of deregulated markets, corporate greed, and inattention to the costs of our military power (among them *The Great Crash: 1929*, *The Affluent Society*, and *The New Industrial State*), Galbraith always made economics relevant to the crises of the day. *John Kenneth Galbraith: His Life, His Politics, His Economics*, the first full-length Galbraith biography is, in Richard Parker's hands, an important reinterpretation both of public policy and of how economics is practiced.

Born in 1908 and raised on a small Canadian farm, Galbraith began to teach at Harvard in

his twenties. In 1938 he left to work in New Deal Washington, eventually rising to become FDR's "price czar" during the war. Following his years as a writer at *Fortune*, where he did much to introduce the work of John Maynard Keynes to a wide audience, he returned to Harvard in 1949 and began writing the books that would make him famous.

Over the years, Galbraith developed a distinctive way of "doing economics," and it made him a critic both of conservatives and of many liberal economists. Parker's vibrant, nuanced portrait is enlightening on Galbraith's engagement with his fellow economists and the politics they influenced—from the "Neoclassical Synthesis" and the New Frontier to monetarism, supply-siders, and the conservative revolution of the 1980s and 1990s. It is also a dramatic narrative about public policies and the people who create them, for Galbraith was often at the very epicenter of politics in his time.

From his acerbic analysis of the nation's "private wealth and public squalor" in the 1950s to his denunciations of the Vietnam War, Galbraith regularly challenged the "conventional wisdom" (a phrase he coined). Parker's account of Galbraith's friendship with John F. Kennedy, whom he served as ambassador to India, is filled with new insights and information about economic policy, about American policy in Asia, and about the heavy influence of the Pentagon's budget on every aspect of public affairs. Subsequent chapters, analyzing Galbraith's responses to the mistakes made by later administrations in managing America's wealth and power, offer a powerful critique of the Johnson, Nixon, Reagan, and Clinton years. But Parker gives equal attention to the warm, lively, and nourishing friendships that shaped the private life of Kenneth and Kitty Galbraith and their high-spirited family.

In the *National Review* (Friday, March 4th, 2005), William F. Buckley Jr. wrote:

**"Professor John Kenneth Galbraith leans back on his chaise lounge and answers the question about the book: 'I think it's fine. I couldn't have done it better if I had written it myself.' The reference is to *John***

***Kenneth Galbraith: His Life, His Politics, His Economics*, by Richard Parker. “Did you read it?”**

**“Yes.”**

**“The whole thing? I bet you didn't.”**

**But his visitor had read it all, 800 pages, pronouncing it the most readable and instructive biography—certainly of the century.”**

Renowned historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. commented:

**“This is a superb book, literate and fascinating, about one of the truly original minds of the century. No one can write about contemporary economics, politics, diplomacy, wit, satire, and phrase-making without taking John Kenneth Galbraith into just account, and Richard Parker is the ideal biographer.”**

An Oxford-trained economist, Richard Parker teaches political economy at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, where he is also the senior fellow of the Shorenstein Center. A cofounder of the magazine *Mother Jones*, and former advisor to Senators Kennedy, McGovern, Cranston, and Glenn, he writes extensively on economics and public policy. His articles have appeared in numerous academic books and journals as well as in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *New Republic*, *Nation*, *Harper's*, *Le Monde*, *Atlantic Monthly*, and *Foreign Affairs*, among others. He lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts, with his wife and children.

Copies of Mr. Parker's book will be available for sale after the lecture. There is no charge for this event. Please contact Cliff Laube, Public Affairs Specialist, at (845) 486-7745 or email [clifford.laube@nara.gov](mailto:clifford.laube@nara.gov) with any questions about the book talk.

The Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum is dedicated to preserving historical material and providing innovative educational programs, community events, and public outreach. It is one of twelve presidential libraries administered by the National Archives and Records Administration. For information about the FDR Presidential Library call (800) 337-8474 or visit [www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu](http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu).

Historic Hyde Park is a group of government and private non-profit organizations based in Hyde Park, New York. Each has a unique mission, but all are united in their dedication to extending the legacy of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt to new generations. HHP includes the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site, Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site, the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill, the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute, and Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site. For more information about HHP visit [www.HistoricHydePark.org](http://www.HistoricHydePark.org).