



John Kenneth Galbraith: His Life, His Politics, His Economics

Richard Parker

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The life and times of America's most celebrated economist, assessing his lessons-and warnings-for us today

John Kenneth Galbraith's books -- among them *The Affluent Society* and *American Capitalism* -- are famous for good reason. Written by a scholar renowned for energetic political engagement and irrepressible wit, they are models of provocative good sense that warn prophetically of the dangers of deregulated markets, war in Asia, corporate greed, and stock-market bubbles. Galbraith's work has also deeply-and controversially-influenced his own profession, and in Richard Parker's hands his biography becomes a vital reinterpretation of American economics and public policy.

Born and raised on a small Canadian farm, Galbraith began teaching at Harvard during the Depression. He was FDR's "price czar" during the war and then a senior editor of *Fortune* before returning to Harvard and to fame as a bestselling writer. Parker shows how, from his early championing of Keynes to his acerbic analysis of America's "private wealth and public squalor," Galbraith regularly challenged prevailing theories and policies. And his account of Galbraith's remarkable friendship with John F. Kennedy, whom he served as a close advisor while ambassador to India, is especially relevant for its analysis of the intense, dynamic debates that economists and politicians can have over how America should manage its wealth and power. This masterful chronicle gives color, depth, and meaning to the record of an extraordinary life.

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