

# NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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## ROBERT SCHLESINGER TO DISCUSS PRESIDENTS AND THEIR SPEECHWRITERS AT THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

PHILADELPHIA, PA (June 5, 2008) – Veteran Washington reporter **Robert Schlesinger** will join the National Constitution Center to open a fresh and revealing window on the modern presidency from FDR to George W. Bush through the perspective of their speechwriters. Drawing on his new book, *White House Ghosts: Presidents and Their Speechwriters*, Schlesinger will discuss the crucial and often hidden role played by the men and women who help presidents find the words they hope will define their places in history. The program will take place on Thursday, June 26 at 6:30 p.m. Admission is free, but reservations are required and can be made by calling 215.409.6700.

*White House Ghosts* tells the fascinating inside stories behind some of the most iconic presidential phrases, including the first inaugurals of FDR (“the only thing we have to fear is fear itself”) and JFK (“ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country”); Richard Nixon’s “I am not a crook” and Ronald Reagan’s “tear down this wall” speeches; Bill Clinton’s ending “the era of big government” State of the Union address; and George W. Bush’s post-9/11 declaration that “whether we bring our enemies to justice or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done.” The book also addresses crucial questions surrounding the complex relationship between speechwriter and speech giver, such as who actually crafted the most memorable phrases, who deserves credit for them, and who has claimed it.

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ADD ONE/ROBERT SCHLESINGER

Robert Schlesinger is the deputy assistant managing editor, opinion at *U.S. News & World Report*. Formerly political editor of the insider publication, *The Hill* and a Washington correspondent for *The Boston Globe*, his work has appeared in *The Washington Monthly*, Salon.com, *The Weekly Standard*, *People*, and the *Boston Globe Magazine*. He teaches political journalism at the Boston University Washington Journalism Center.

**John Kenneth White**, Professor of Politics at the Catholic University of America, will moderate. He is the author of *The Values Divide: American Politics and Culture in Transition*, and has written extensively about the American party system and the U.S. presidency.

The National Constitution Center is celebrating the election season with an exiting year long series, ***Election '08: The Power of We***, which is designed to promote voting during the presidential election and active citizenship every day.

A book sale and signing will follow the program, courtesy of Joseph Fox Bookshop. The National Constitution Center, located at 525 Arch St. on Philadelphia's Independence Mall, is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of the U.S. Constitution and the ideas and values it represents. The Center serves as a museum, an education center, and a forum for debate on constitutional issues. The museum dramatically tells the story of the Constitution from Revolutionary times to the present through more than 100 interactive, multimedia exhibits, film, photographs, text, sculpture and artifacts, and features a powerful, award-winning theatrical performance, "Freedom Rising". The Center also houses the Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, which serves as the hub for national constitutional education. Also, as a nonpartisan forum for constitutional discourse, the Center presents – without endorsement – programs that contain diverse viewpoints on a broad range of issues. For more information, call 215.409.6700 or visit [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org).

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