

**The original documents are located in Box 30, folder “Nixon - Kennedy Debates (1)” of the Michael Raoul-Duval Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

### **Copyright Notice**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Michael Raoul-Duval donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Some items in this folder were not digitized because it contains copyrighted materials. Please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library for access to these materials.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 14, 1976

TO: MIKE DUVAL  
FROM: HELEN COLLINS

I am having WHCA record PBS's special tonight of highlights from the 1960 debates, followed by the panel discussion.

cc: Dave Gergen



---

# *The Debates, Old and New*

*By John Carmody*

The 1960 Kennedy-Nixon televised debates will get a couple of thorough reviews on Channel 26 this month, including a rerun of the entire four

PRESIDENTIAL RECORD BOOK  
SECTION, WHITE HOUSE  
02 E. O. B.

DATE: 8/21/76

TO: Patty de Souza  
107 East Wing



RETURN DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

DATE 8-27

TO:

Mike Deval

FROM:

JOSEPH S. JENCKES V

FOR YOUR INFORMATION \_\_\_\_\_

FOR YOUR COMMENTS \_\_\_\_\_

FOR APPROPRIATE HANDLING \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER

*This is an excellent  
article. Perhaps it  
will be of value in  
planning the debate.  
Written by Ted White on  
the strategy of the Kennedy  
Nixon debate. See Page 287*

making all together the  
ny of the major regions

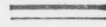
elt Nixon victory to the  
s certainly true in other  
t in the farm belt it was  
he culture of the small  
d upbringing, by speech  
e and Harvard prose of  
elegance of the Demo-  
spect.

ved in the sun and the  
as conspicuous. He had  
n the small towns; had  
d ham sandwiches) at  
orial of the Grand Army  
the crown piece of the  
r, where the State Plow-  
badly—the farmers and  
sun and listened to his  
fferently, as if they were  
es, as if no one, not even  
scoped his prepared re-  
sit to the issue of peace  
m on solid ground again  
e to the road once more.  
shing the children who  
“Imagine coming to see  
ing you out of school for  
dark at peak form.

not help but please him.  
ern appearances; and as  
d resonance wherever he  
ace; some of his advisers  
e,” but he told them that  
ase the image of pugnac-  
hysically with travel and  
her Black Thursday, and  
edule, his health began to

the second round of the  
episode not only new to  
ep of American political

## CHAPTER ELEVEN



### ROUND TWO: THE TELEVISION DEBATES

*Joe Rose White*

**A**T 8:30 P.M., Chicago time, on the evening of September 26th, 1960, the voice and shadow of the previous show faded from the screen; in a few seconds it was followed by another voice and by a visual clip extolling the virtues of Liggett and Myers cigarettes; fifteen seconds were then devoted to Maybelline, the mascara “devoted exclusively to eye beauty, velvety soft and smooth.” Then a deep voice regretfully announced that the viewers who turned to this channel would tonight be denied the privilege of viewing the Andy Griffith Show—and the screen dissolved to three men who were about to confirm a revolution in American Presidential politics.

This revolution had been made by no one of the three men on screen—John F. Kennedy, Richard M. Nixon or Howard K. Smith, the moderator. It was a revolution born of the ceaseless American genius in technology; its sole agent and organizer had been the common American television set. Tonight it was to permit the simultaneous gathering of all the tribes of America to ponder their choice between two chieftains in the largest political convocation in the history of man.

Again, it is the census that best describes this revolution. Ten years earlier (in 1950) of America’s then 40,000,000 families only 11 per cent (or 4,400,000) enjoyed the pleasures of a television set. By 1960 the number of American families had grown to 44,000,000, and of these *no less than 88 per cent, or 40,000,000, possessed a television set.* The installation of this equipment had in some years of the previous decade partaken of the quality of stampede—and in the peak stampede years of 1954–1955–1956 no fewer than 10,000 American homes had each been installing a new television set for the first time *every single day of the year.* The change that came about with this stampede is almost immeasurable. By the summer of 1960 the average

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON  
9/6/76

*File*

TO : Mike Duval  
FROM: DAVE GERGEN

Well worth reading.

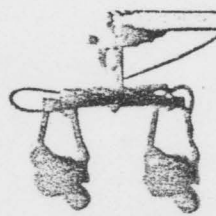




It was the day that changed politics. Before it, politicians had looked like politicians and bosses were still bosses; after it nothing was the same: the bosses were on their way downhill and the candidates looked different, the tailoring was better, cut tighter at the waist, the hair was a little longer because television diminished normal-length hair. Even the smells were different, the old smell of cigars replaced by the smell of cosmetics, though, in deference to the macho of the candidates, some networks, like CBS, had an iron rule that no photographers were allowed in the room where a candidate was putting on makeup. Afterwards candidates and their managers planned schedules not so much by cities or states but by television *markets*, that was the television word, and, fittingly, they were there to sell themselves in markets. It changed the entire balance and nature of political exposure; in the old pre-television campaign, perhaps fifty thousand people might view a Presidential candidate in a given city on a very good day, and perhaps three to four hundred thousand might see him in an entire campaign. Now it was all changing; millions and millions could see the candidate in one night. The bosses were quickly being replaced by a new breed of arbiter of American political taste, men like David Garth and Bill Wilson and Charles Guggenheim, television advisers to political candidates, and the respect for Garth, for example, and the power he had were so great that his very willingness to take on a given candidate made that candidate a serious contender and meant that money might come in.

The first debate, in 1960, had changed it all, ushered in one era and closed out another. John Kennedy had gone in, if not exactly an unknown, certainly the underdog, and he had come out looking a winner, while Richard Nixon had squandered the advantage of eight years of the Vice-Presidency, and he had come out looking a loser. It

David Halberstam, author of *The Best and the Brightest*, is a frequent contributor to Esquire. This article is part of a book now in progress, a study of power in America.



## PRESIDENT VIDEO

by David Halberstam

How television became our most powerful political machine



had changed the balance of an election, and the power was so great that sixteen years later no two Presidential nominees had ever again debated, though the entire nation wanted more debates. There was simply too much to lose. The big winner that night in 1960, of course, had been television, more specifically the networks. From then on, television sets were that much more respectable and mandatory in homes, and television was that much more legitimized as the main instrument of political discourse. It was a great night for the networks, something they had wanted for years, and, indeed, in 1952, Frank Stanton, the president of CBS, had broached the idea to Dwight Eisenhower, asking him to debate Adlai Stevenson on television. Ike, who always deferred to staff expertise, asked if Stanton had checked with Ben Duffy of B.B.D.&O., his principal media adviser. Stanton said he had. "And what did he say?" asked Eisenhower. "No," said Stanton. "Well, that's my answer," said Ike.

The mystery, of course, was why Richard Nixon had agreed to the debates, had in effect granted Jack Kennedy instant equality. He had surprised his own staff by announcing that he would debate. Previously he had emphasized to his campaign aides that there would be no debates, and that no one on the staff was to mention debates. It was verboten. "In 1946, a damn fool incumbent named Jerry Voorhis debated a young lawyer and it cost him the election," Nixon told one staff meeting, as if to emphasize how strongly he felt. The political aides in the room, like Leonard Hall, who had been the head of the Republican party, felt reassured hearing Nixon talk like that, for there was nothing to win and a lot to lose. Hall was a good deal less assured a few weeks later when Nixon, acting entirely on his own, consulting with no one, announced that he *would* debate Kennedy. Hall was shocked when he heard the news from a friendly reporter. Though Len Hall was principally responsible for keeping Nixon on the ticket in 1956, though no one had worked as hard to facilitate Nixon's road to the nomination in

Pictorial Parade

8

START ON  
PAGE

3

## The Counterfeit Debates

J. JEFFERY AUER

WOODROW WILSON once told an AFL convention that "It is always dangerous for a man to have the floor by himself." G. B. Shaw declared that "The way to get at the merits of a case is not to listen to the fool who imagines himself impartial, but to get it argued with reckless bias for and against." These epigrammatic observations characterize the philosophy of the traditional public debate in English-speaking nations. The purpose of this brief comment is to provide an historical background to the Nixon-Kennedy debates, examining them within the context of the debate tradition, and judging them as contributions to it.

The public debate is one of the great traditions in American life. It provides for a forensic confrontation by those holding divergent views, an orderly and comprehensive review of the arguments for and against a specific proposal before minds are made up and votes are cast. As Reuben Davis observed of political debating a hundred years ago, "constant practice had made our public speakers so skillful in debate that every question was made clear even to men otherwise uneducated."<sup>1</sup> Debate also provides a fair method for a minority to challenge an established majority. Indeed, Americans pay the salaries of minority members in state and national legislatures so that they will oppose in debate the majority views on controversial issues.

In short, debate has historically been regarded as an essential tool of a democratic society where the majority rules in a milieu of free speech. This concept is illustrated in a review of debate as an educational method, as a legislative process, and as a judicial procedure.

*As an educational method* debate was first employed more than

2,400 years ago by one Protagoras of Abdera; his pupils argued both sides of questions similar to those agitating their elders.<sup>2</sup> In the schools of the Middle Ages debating appeared in assigned student disputations, "Some for a show dispute and for exercising themselves . . . others for truth."<sup>3</sup> Records as early as 1531 refer to joint disputations by students at Oxford and at Cambridge,<sup>4</sup> and this teaching device was adopted in the American colonial colleges as admirably suited to train young men for the ministry and for leadership in government. While instruction in dialectic was commonly included in the collegiate course of study, the practice of debate most often centered in the literary societies. From these society activities developed intramural and then intercollegiate debating, the latter probably dating from 1883 and a first forensic contest between Knox College and the Rockford Female Seminary.<sup>5</sup> The college literary society of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is now virtually extinct, but extensive programs of debate on current public questions continue in high schools and colleges. They provide, as President John F. Kennedy observed, "a most valuable training whether for politics, the law, business, or for service on community committees such as the PTA and the League of Women Voters. . . . The give and take of debating, the testing of ideas, is essential to democracy."<sup>6</sup>

*As a legislative process* debate is basic to democratic parliamentary action. In some pseudo-democracies, of course, there is a pretense of consulting the people by giving them a chance to vote "Yes" under circumstances that make it unlikely that they will vote "No." But when the people, or their elected representatives, have a real voice in the affairs of government, final decisions follow parliamentary debate. This has been true in American government since the first colonial legislatures, and the history of Congress could well be written in a sequence of chapters focusing upon significant debates over the bank question, the slavery issue, imperialism, the tariff, the League of Nations, the neutrality controversy before World War II, and involving such stalwarts as Benton, Beveridge, Calhoun, Clay, Corwin, LaFollette, Lodge, Taft, Vandenburg, and Webster. It is here in the debate of the legislative process, believes Walter Lippmann, that freedom of speech is best conceived, "by having in mind the picture of a place like the American Congress, an assembly where opposing views are presented, where ideas are not merely uttered but debated, or the British Parliament where men who are free to speak are also compelled to answer."<sup>7</sup>



1

Handwritten initials or signature

THE JOINT APPEARANCES OF  
Senator John F. Kennedy  
AND  
Vice President Richard M. Nixon  
PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN  
OF 1960



SENATOR JOHN F. KENNEDY AND VICE PRESIDENT RICHARD M. NIXON:  
FIRST JOINT RADIO-TELEVISION BROADCAST, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26,  
1960, ORIGINATING CBS, CHICAGO, ILL., ALL NETWORKS CARRIED

Mr. SMITH. Good evening.

The television and radio stations of the United States and their affiliated stations are proud to provide facilities for a discussion of issues in the current political campaign by the two major candidates for the Presidency.

The candidates need no introduction. The Republican candidate, Vice President Richard M. Nixon, and the Democratic candidate, Senator John F. Kennedy.

According to rules set by the candidates themselves, each man shall make an opening statement of approximately 8 minutes' duration and a closing statement of approximately 3 minutes' duration.

In between the candidates will answer or comment upon answers to questions put by a panel of correspondents.

In this, the first discussion in a series of four joint appearances, the subject matter, it has been agreed, will be restricted to internal or domestic American matters.

And now, for the first opening statement by Senator John F. Kennedy.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Smith, Mr. Nixon.

In the election of 1860, Abraham Lincoln said the question was whether this Nation could exist half slave or half free.

In the election of 1960, and with the world around us, the question is whether the world will exist half slave or half free, whether it will move in the direction of freedom, in the direction of the road that we are taking or whether it will move in the direction of slavery.

I think it will depend in great measure upon what we do here in the United States, on the kind of society that we build, on the kind of strength that we maintain.

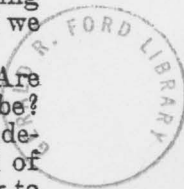
We discuss tonight domestic issues, but I would not want that to be—any implication to be given that this does not involve directly our struggle with Mr. Khrushchev for survival.

Mr. Khrushchev is in New York and he maintains the Communist offensive throughout the world because of the productive power of the Soviet Union, itself.

The Chinese Communists have always had a large population but they are important and dangerous now because they are mounting a major effort within their own country; the kind of country we have here, the kind of society we have, the kind of strength we build in the United States will be the defense of freedom.

If we do well here, if we meet our obligations, if we are moving ahead, then I think freedom will be secure around the world. If we fail, then freedom fails.

Therefore, I think the question before the American people is: Are we doing as much as we can do? Are we as strong as we should be? Are we as strong as we must be if we are going to maintain our independence, and if we're going to maintain and hold out the hand of friendship to those who look to us for assistance, to those who look to us for survival. I should make it very clear that I do not think we're doing enough, that I am not satisfied as an American with the progress that we are making.



evening. Both programs will be carried on NBC radio from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m., New York time. NBC News will resume the "Election Countdown" 2 weeks from tonight, with X Minus Nineteen.

(Tape begins)

VOICE (simulated intercom with rocket firing in background).  
\* \* \* Four, three, two, one.

(Music: Theme up and out)

(Tape ends)

ANNOUNCER. This is an NBC News Department presentation, James L. Holton, producer; Gene Hamilton speaking.

VICE PRESIDENT RICHARD M. NIXON AND SENATOR JOHN F. KENNEDY,  
SECOND JOINT RADIO-TELEVISION BROADCAST, OCTOBER 7, 1960,  
ORIGINATING NBC, WASHINGTON, D.C., ALL NETWORKS CARRIED

Moderator: Frank McGee, NBC.

Panelists: Edward P. Morgan, ABC; Paul Niven, CBS; Alvin Spivak, UPI; Hal Levy, Newsday.

Mr. McGEE. Good evening. This is Frank McGee, NBC News in Washington.

This is the second in a series of programs unmatched in history. Never have so many people seen the major candidates for President of the United States at the same time, and never until this series have Americans seen the candidates in face-to-face exchange.

Tonight the candidates have agreed to devote the full hour to answering questions on any issue of the campaign, and here tonight are the Republican candidate, Vice President Richard M. Nixon, and the Democratic candidate, Senator John F. Kennedy.

Now, representatives of the candidates and of all the radio and television networks have agreed on these rules:

Neither candidate will make an opening statement or a closing summation.

Each will be questioned in turn.

Each will have an opportunity to comment upon the answer of the other.

Each reporter will ask only one question in turn. He is free to ask any question he chooses.

Neither candidate knows what questions will be asked and only the clock will determine who will be asked the last question.

These programs represent an unprecedented opportunity for the candidates to present their philosophies and programs directly to the people and for the people to compare these and the candidates.

The four reporters on tonight's panel include a newspaperman and a wire service representative. These two were selected by lot by the press secretaries of the candidates from among the reporters



travelin  
selected

Paul  
of Uni

Now  
Nixon

Mr.

that th  
Would

of you  
minis

Mr.  
that C

tion ca  
we are

course  
will se

of pro  
tion w

Ameri  
Nov

part, c

He  
in pov

the ad  
glad t

were  
we can

one in  
We

Sen  
thoug

for fr  
Nov

eign  
this k

he toc  
has a

which  
other

a stat  
No

isn't  
isn't

There  
peopl

will a  
No

by S  
Mr

Mr  
was l

that