



The Coolidge Brief

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Creating Future Leaders through Debate at Plymouth Notch

Summer is here and the presidential campaign season is already heating up. Within months the first primary debates will take place, giving Americans a glimpse at the candidates and their respective policy platforms. While the debates are indeed exciting, trying to work through and compare the details of the candidates' various plans can be daunting.

Education about public policy works best when started early. Thinking about tax reform or Social Security for the first time during a presidential debate is far too late. Beginning in high school, or even earlier, Americans should be learning about policy and debating it amongst themselves.

That is why we've made youth debate a centerpiece of our work here at the Coolidge Foundation. President Coolidge himself was a debater and understood the power of words, remarking in his own high school commencement oration that: "It would be hardly too much to say, that since the dawn of civilization, the triumphs of the tongue have rivaled, if not surpassed, those of the sword."

Debate is the optimal vehicle to develop leaders and thinkers. Evidence shows that each semester a student debates, his or her grades in school improve. In urban high school settings, debate students are *three times* more likely to graduate if they participate in debate. High school debaters are also significantly more likely to enroll in college and persist through to earn their degrees.

These outcomes are no coincidence. The competition fostered through debate teaches students to think critically, engage others in a civil manner, consider new ideas, and grow their sphere of influence. It is advantageous to work with debate students because they themselves are future multipliers.



Students debating property rights last summer at the Notch.

This summer, for the third year in a row, the Notch will welcome hundreds of high school debate students from across America to participate in our presidential debate program. Our partner is the Debate Institutes of Dartmouth and its leader Nicole Wanzer-Serrano. We are also very excited to host our second annual homeschool debate camp and launch our first annual Team USA debate training camp. Our Team USA camp will help prepare students to be competitive candidates for America's national debate team, which competes around the world. This camp has already filled up with competitors from as far away as California and even North Dakota.

What sets our debate program apart from any other is the quality of the content instruction. After all, it is impossible to debate well if one does not have a solid grounding in the issues. Each summer the Foundation brings in star content coaches who work with the students to craft and convey materials that address both sides of the students' debate issue.

continued on page 3

Elevate Your Summer At The Notch

4th of July Festivities

The Annual Parade begins at noon, including the Wreath-Laying at President Coolidge's grave site. Additionally, the day will include a Naturalization Ceremony for new Americans, beginning at 10:00 am, followed by the performance of "More Than Two Words" by famed Coolidge impersonator Jim Cooke! The public reading of *The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge* will begin at 2:30 pm in the Union Christian Church.

Pre-register today to reserve your spot as an official reader!



Wreath-Laying at President Coolidge's Grave Site



High School Debate

July 3rd, 6th and 25th High School Debate

The Coolidge Foundation, in partnership with the Debate Institutes at Dartmouth, will host some of the best and brightest high school debaters, including Vermont debaters, at the Notch to debate presidential history and economics. We invite Foundation members and friends to participate in this exciting event as judges. Novice judges are welcome.

Pre-register today to reserve your spot as a judge!

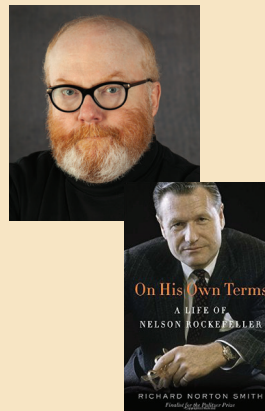
August 1st

Plymouth Old Home Day including the re-enactment of the 1923 inauguration at 2:47 p.m.

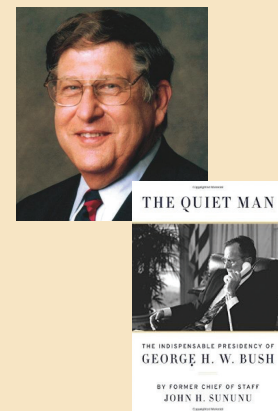
The Summer Gala "Under the Tent" featuring famed presidential historian Richard Norton Smith, author most recently of the masterful biography *On His Own Terms: A Life of Nelson Rockefeller*. The Gala will also feature Former New Hampshire Governor and White House Chief of Staff John H. Sununu, author of the new book *The Quiet Man: The Indispensable Presidency of George H.W. Bush*. (Tickets are required for the Summer Gala).

2015 Summer Gala Speakers

Richard Norton Smith



John H. Sununu



*For more information on all these events, please visit
CoolidgeFoundation.org or call 802.672.3389*

Last year, for example, students debated the resolution: “Resolved: Strong property rights are necessary for strong economic growth.” Prior to the student debates, Roberto Salinas-León, a charismatic international economist from Mexico, and William Beach, the chief economist of the U.S. Senate Budget Committee, presented the most compelling evidence supporting either side of the resolution through a mock debate. Salinas-León and Beach also led educational sessions on the economic and historical arguments inherent in the property rights topic. The students then immediately applied what they learned through competitive debate with prizes in the form of college scholarship money going to the winners. It is incredible to see how quickly the students learn the material, and how well they can integrate it into a persuasive argument.

We need your help to make our debate program truly world class. There are two ways you can get involved. The first, of course, is to help underwrite some of the costs of the program with a sponsorship. A donation envelope is enclosed in this newsletter. Your gift is greatly appreciated, and will be put to good use. We provide generous scholarship funding for many of our debaters. Travel, especially cross country, is expensive.

The second way is to volunteer as a judge in the program. Judges are most needed this summer on **July 25**. Judges play a critical role in helping to teach and mentor our students. Even if you have never judged before, you are very welcome in our program. We have a judge trainer who will give you all the tools you need, and indeed we find novice judges often are the best. To reserve your spot as a judge, please email Events@Calvin-Coolidge.org. Our colleague, Rushad Thomas, will reply to this email.

Today’s young people face formidable challenges. But with the right encouragement and instruction through debate, there’s no doubt they will rise above them. After seeing these students in action, we think you’ll agree our nation’s future is in good hands.

Matthew Denhart | Amity Shlaes
Executive Director | Chairman

Grace Coolidge Opens the State Historic Site for the Season

The highlight of the season is the new exhibit: *First Lady Grace Coolidge: “A Glass of Fashion.”* Mrs. Coolidge helped establish the first lady’s role of fashion trendsetter and her look reflected the best of “Roaring Twenties” style. Couture’s answer to the caricatured flapper of the day, Grace Coolidge’s gowns, jewelry, and other elaborate accessories typical of this glamorous era are now on temporary display.

The Coolidge family donated all the objects in the exhibit to the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, which operates the President Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site. Because of the fragile nature of the textiles, many of the dresses have been hidden in storage for almost two decades. Some items have never been publicly exhibited. Charles Gibson Design of Hanover, New Hampshire, designed the exhibit, which was funded through the generous support of the Alma Gibbs Donchian Foundation and Mimi Baird of Woodstock, Vermont.

The Vermont Division for Historic Preservation has planned a busy season of special events at the Coolidge Site, including the *July 4th President Coolidge Birthday Celebration*, *Plymouth Old Home Day*, *Grace Coolidge Musicales*, *Plymouth Folk & Blues Concerts*, and *Plymouth Notch Antique Apple Fest*. Ongoing programs include *Tuesday Tales of The Notch*, *Wednesday Afternoons with Farmer Fred*, and *Summer Thursdays at the Old Notch School*.

The President Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site is open May 23 – October 18, 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. daily.

For further information, call 802.672.3773, or visit the state-owned historic sites online at historicsites.vermont.gov.

—William W. Jenney
Regional Historic Site Administrator

Are You Ready to Judge Debate?

This summer students from all over the country will be coming to Plymouth Notch to tour the Historic Site, learn about Coolidge and compete in debate.

Don’t worry if you’ve never judged debate before! We will be here to guide you through the process!

Please email events@calvin-coolidge.org to sign up as a judge for our debate program!

We need your participation to make this event a success!

Calvin Coolidge and the 1924 Presidential Campaign

No real inevitability punctuated Calvin Coolidge's election to the presidency in 1924. Republicans endured large losses in 1922's Congressional midterms. The Harding scandals stood ready to break. Coolidge was a newcomer to the national stage.

Neither was even his nomination foreordained. Neither had other vice presidents John Tyler, Millard Fillmore, Andrew Johnson, nor Chester Arthur secured nomination following their accidental elevations to Pennsylvania Avenue. Theodore Roosevelt had broken that mold, but as those, like Henry Cabot Lodge, who enjoyed familiarity with both TR and Calvin Coolidge might observe: Coolidge was no Teddy Roosevelt.

But he was what he was: straightforward and straight-shooting and in step with what the times and the nation demanded. He eschewed insincere flattery. He lived and spoke simply. His response to the ballooning Harding scandals was merely to investigate them and let the chips fall where they may.

He got out of the box quickly, assembling a campaign team (businessman and long-time ally Frank W. Stearns, Massachusetts politician William Butler, and former Virginia Congressman Bascom Slep) that might secure his nomination, but his great home run occurred in his first speech to Congress. There, in rapid-fire-order, he outlined his positions on the day's issues: against the League of Nations and against recognition of Red Russia, opposed to an expensive Veterans Bonus. For economy and then more economy. For tax cuts and for growth. Congress didn't much listen but the public did. It saw something new: strength and honesty. It liked what it saw.

The nomination that at first seemed so elusive fell easily into his grasp. He continued to speak out on the issues. On immigration, he declared: "Restricted immigration is not an offensive but purely a defensive action. It is not adopted in criticism of others in the slightest degree, but solely for the purpose of protecting ourselves. We cast no aspersions on any race or creed, but we must remember that every object of our institutions of society and government will fail unless America be kept American."

In October 1924 to a diverse group of immigrants visiting the White House, he re-enforced that message: "As a nation, our first duty must be those who are already our inhabitants, whether native or immigrants."

A major issue dividing the parties, as it had for a century, was the protection of American industries and workers. "The present tariff law has accomplished its two main objects," Coolidge noted, "It has secured an abundant revenue and been productive of an abounding prosperity. Under it



Election posters such as this one were highly popular in the 1920s.
Photo Credit: York County Heritage Trust.

the country has had a very large export and import trade." Presciently, however, he warned against tinkering with tariff schedules as his successor Herbert Hoover would via the Smoot-Hawley Tariff. "A constant revision of the tariff by the Congress is disturbing and harmful," Coolidge cautioned.

It was a time of intolerance and the Klan. While never directly criticizing the Invisible Empire, Coolidge, nonetheless, maintained a high-profile outreach to groups under KKK attack, most spectacularly his September 1924 Washington address to the Catholic Holy Name Society, a direct rebuke to Catholic-bashing bigots. Further, in a world in which secularism and skepticism launched major inroads, he defended the old verities and the ancient underpinnings of the American system. "The foundation of our independence and our Government rests upon our basic religious convictions" he noted, "Back of the authority of our laws is the authority of the Supreme Judge of the World, to whom we still appeal for their final justification."

He defended an independent judiciary, calling it, "One of the great contributions which America made to the science of government," as well as restraints on governmental power, remarking, "Some people do not seem to understand fully the purpose of our constitutional restraints." And, overall,

Calvin Coolidge faced, however, a problem that had not faced Warren Harding in 1920. Progressives had again bolted the Republican Party. They had no Theodore Roosevelt to lead them but did possess Wisconsin's Senator Robert La Follette, Sr. His 1924 version of the Progressive Party possessed sizable strength not only in the Upper Midwest but also in the Far West. A deadlocked Electoral College emerged as a possibility, tossing the election into the House of Representatives, where the result would be uncertain.

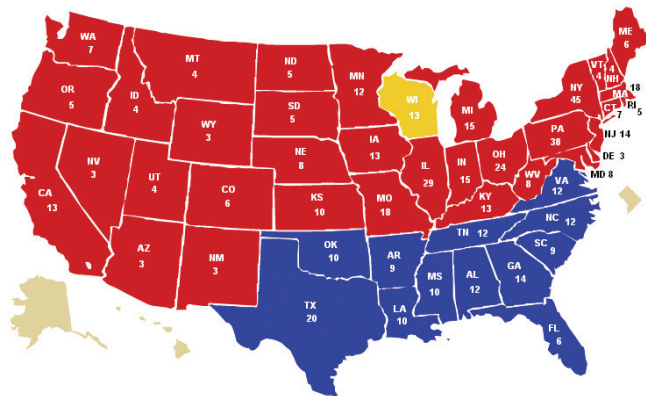


Photo Credit: 270 to Win.

Coolidge – the unlikely candidate – had once again proved to be the candidate the people liked best.

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John W. Davis: The Forgotten Challenger



Very, very few Americans can name the 1924 Democratic nominee for president. No twentieth century presidential nominee of a major political party has fallen into greater – and more undeserved – obscurity than John W. Davis, the 1924 Democratic nominee. Yet columnist Walter Lippmann believed Davis was “one of the finest men ever

nominated for President.” For most unsuspecting Americans there are several compelling aspects of Davis that give credence to Lippmann’s long forgotten opinion.

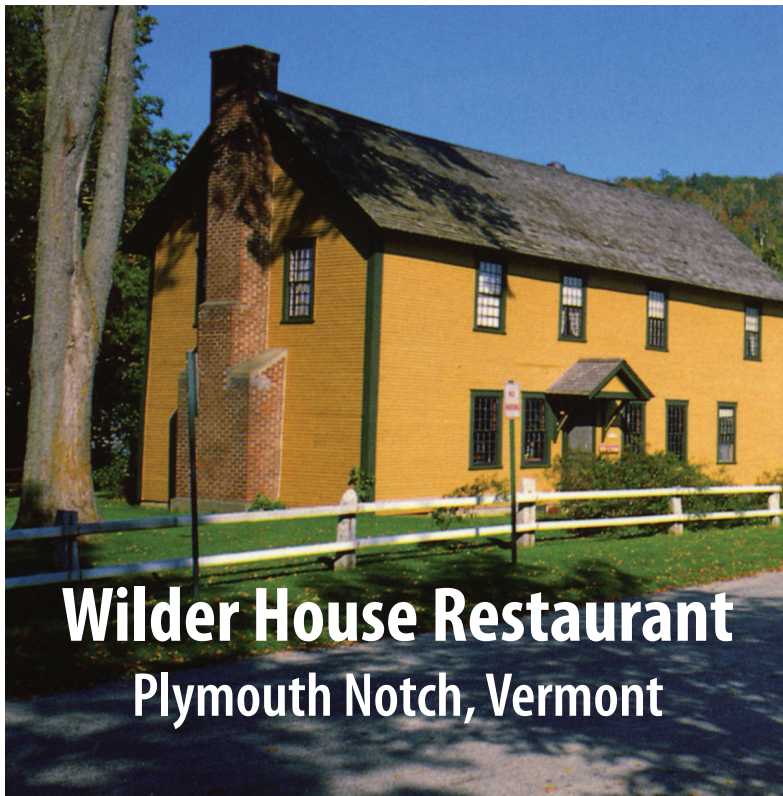
To an American public today, grown weary of petty partisanship, the two adjectives most often applied to Davis during his lifetime are bound to resonate – even if they seem sadly outdated. Graciousness and civility marked Davis’s private and public lives. As the Washington Post noted, he was “a gentleman in the sense that Confucius used that much abused word – a superior man, with a courtliness that came from a fine intellect and a warm heart and a gentle manner. In whatever circle he moved, there was none other who seemed so fitted to be at the head of the table. To that place his fellows instinctively beckoned him.”

As Solicitor General of the United States under President Woodrow Wilson, and later as senior partner of his Wall Street law firm, Davis argued more cases before the Supreme

Court than any other American save Daniel Webster. He was known as the greatest appellate lawyer of the 20th century and “the lawyers’ lawyer.” While hammering hard on the issues at hand, Davis could always seem to engage his adversaries on a personal level. Justice Learned Hand spoke for many of his colleagues when he said, “I do not like to have John W. Davis come into my courtroom. I am so fascinated by his charm and eloquence that I always fear that I am going to decide in his favor irrespective of the merits of the case.”

Davis’ civility and graciousness, although widely admired, were not great assets in his 1924 presidential race. While he spoke with conviction – and some passion, Davis was not a rousing stump orator. He often reflected on how his training as a trial lawyer worked against him as a politician.

The second hallmark of Mr. Davis was integrity. In his long public career, no trace of scandal ever touched him. Shortly after receiving the Democratic nomination, he was confronted with the hottest political issue of the day. The Klu Klux Klan was a national force in the 1920s – especially within the Democratic Party. The night before the opening speech of his campaign, the Klan delivered to Davis a letter offering to provide critical support if he would refrain from speaking out against the Klan. Davis read the letter, tore it in two, and handed it back to the Klansman, saying. “That is your answer.” The next day he denounced the Klan and forfeited their support. As Lippmann wrote of Davis, “I have known a good many men under the awful temptation of the presidency. I have never seen another who had such absolute respect.”



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We look forward to another
great season!*



John W. Davis with future Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall.

In his long career as a lawyer, Davis appeared always able to inspire trust from clients, adversaries, and judges alike. In his last case before the Supreme Court, Davis represented the State of South Carolina in the companion case to *Brown v. Board of Education*. The opposing counsel was Thurgood Marshall, who spoke admiringly of Davis shortly after the trial, “John Davis is the greatest solicitor general we ever had. You and I will never see a greater one. He was a great advocate, the greatest.”

Finally, Mr. Davis left a well-reasoned, clearly articulated record of traditional, Jeffersonian conservatism, which was very similar to that of President Calvin Coolidge, his 1924 opponent. Davis’ bedrock values were the sanctity of private property, the rule of law, and the obligation of the government to ensure equality of opportunity – not outcome.

From his parents, Davis inherited an underlying Jeffersonian distrust of government. He wrote, “The chief aim of all government is to preserve the freedom of the citizen. The world is in more danger of being governed too much than too little.” He believed that strong local (and state) government provided the greatest protection to individual liberty, “A centralized and distant bureaucracy is the worst of all tyranny.”

Fiscal conservatism was of central importance to Davis, “Any nation that continues to spend more than it receives is headed for inevitable disaster; neither a nation nor a man can find solvency by borrowing; neither he nor it can spend its way into prosperity nor beg itself into comfort.”

Davis’ opponent in 1924, Calvin Coolidge, put it succinctly, “I am for economy in government, not to save money, but to save people.”

Davis heartily agreed. The progressive notion that government should become, in Davis’ words, “a grab-bag” raised the question of “Who shall get the largest share?” Now, I don’t believe that popular government can survive once that doctrine is accepted. That idea of government as a juicy melon is poison. If it continues, what is a privilege or grant today becomes a right tomorrow.” Wise words of somber warning.

Similarly, in matters of taxation, Davis took a narrow view. He believed that for any government “to tax one person,

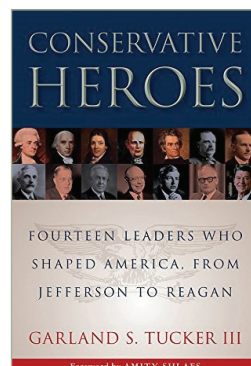
class, or section to provide revenue for the benefit of another is none the less robbery because done under the form of law and called ‘taxation.’” Taxation should be used only to support the most basic functions of government- primarily maintenance of order and national defense, for he believed taxation “for any other purpose is no different than confiscation.”

Davis saw the indivisibility of property rights and human rights. He said they “are not different or antagonistic but parts of one and the same thing going to make up the bundle of rights which constitute American liberty. History furnishes no instance where the right of man to acquire and hold property has been taken away without the complete destruction of liberty in all its forms.”

Davis always viewed himself as “an old fashioned liberal,” in the eighteenth century sense of the term. Writing to a close friend in the 1940’s – after the term “liberal” had been appropriated by the progressives, Davis commented, “I have gloried in the name of liberal, which I interpret to mean a love for the greatest liberty consistent with public order. The great trouble with our modern ‘liberals’ is that they think liberalism means exceeding liberality with other people’s money.” Not a bad definition for the twenty-first century as well.

In his book, *Simple Justice*, Richard Kluger presents the conundrum of the forgotten Davis: “To his wife, John W. Davis was ‘the most perfect husband any woman ever had.’ To his valet, giving lie to the old saw, he was very much a hero. To King George V, he was ‘the most perfect gentleman I have ever met.’ To Oliver Wendell Holmes, who sat for thirty years on the Supreme Court, no advocate who ever argued before him was ‘more elegant, more clear [sic], more concise, or more logical.’ So apparent were his qualities that in 1924 the Democratic Party nominated him for President while he barely lifted a finger. Indeed, few lives have been more exemplary of the impulses that distinguish Americans as a people, and yet, for all the grace and virtuosity of the man, few schoolboys’ hearts quickened at the mention of John William Davis.”

At age 81, shortly before his death, a reporter asked Davis what advice he could offer. He thought for a moment, and then replied with a twinkle in his eye, “Let every man make an honest man of himself then he can be sure there will be one less rascal!” Good advice from one of America’s great forgotten men.

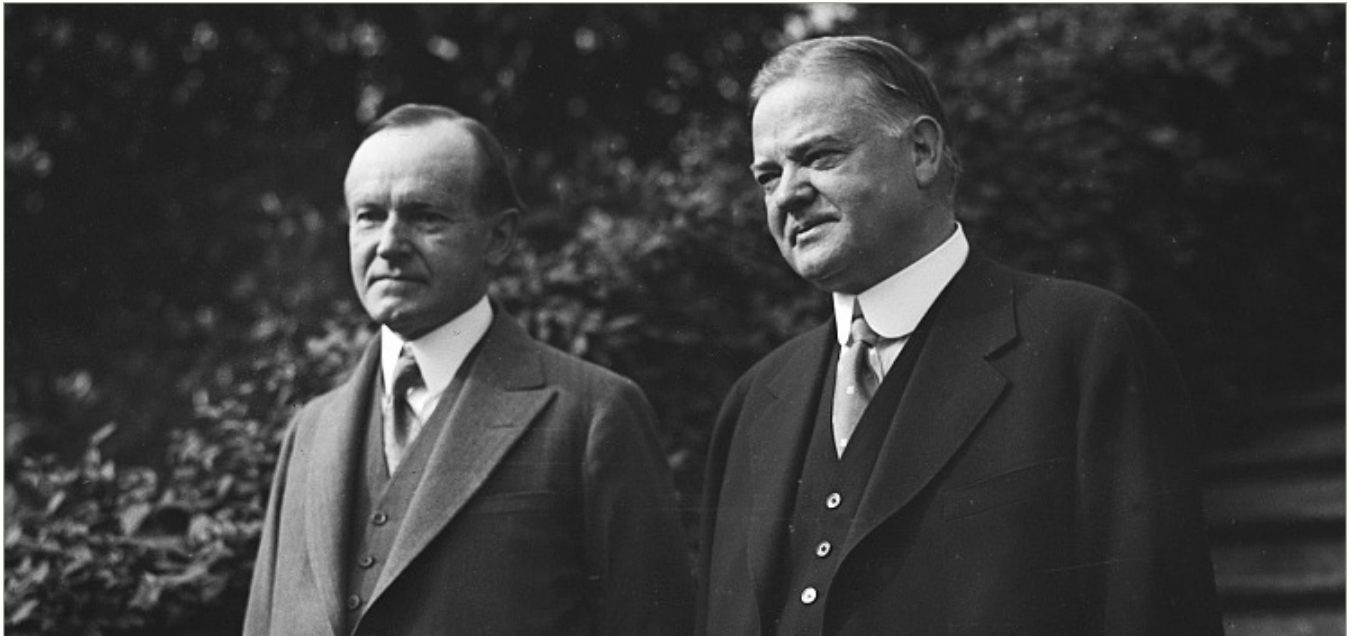


—Garland S. Tucker, III
President and CEO
TriangleCapital Corporation

Trustee, Calvin Coolidge
Presidential Foundation

Author of *Conservative Heroes*
(ISI, 2015)

Modern American Conservatism: A Spirited Conversation at the Hoover Institution



President Coolidge standing with his successor, Herbert Hoover. Photo Credit: Library of Congress.

It can be said with a high degree of certainty that Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover did not have the warmest of relationships. As the trailblazing Secretary of Commerce Hoover campaigned for industry standardization and greatly increased the influence and power of the sleepy backwater Commerce Department. Coolidge never thought highly of Hoover's activist sentiments, referring to him as "wonderboy." Nonetheless, Coolidge supported Hoover in both 1928 and 1932, giving his last public speech in the run-up to the 1932 presidential election in Hoover's favor.

Given this frosty history it might seem strange that the two foundations dedicated to these presidential rivals would team up on any significant endeavor. On Monday, March 16 the Coolidge Foundation and the Hoover Institution fortunately convened in Washington, D.C. to bury the proverbial hatchet, and jointly celebrate the contributions of Presidents #30 and #31 to the modern conservative movement.

Our own chairman, Coolidge biographer Amity Shlaes, began the conversation with a deeply interesting discussion of three major themes in President Coolidge's life that retain major relevance today: faith, unions, and taxation. She described how Coolidge's confidence in faith communities led him to extol examples of civil society relieving the burden on government to provide social welfare. She also recounted Coolidge's actions during the 1919 Boston Police Strike, in which he rebuked striking officers in declaring "there is no right to strike against the public safety by anybody, anywhere, anytime." Amity then explored Coolidge's experience with "scientific taxation," in which he cut the top marginal tax rate

down to 25%, leading to an increase in revenue due to more high-wage persons exposing their earnings to the reduced income tax rate.

Hoover Institution Fellow David Davenport, co-author with Gordon Lloyd of the recent book *The New Deal and Modern American Conservatism: A Defining Rivalry*, argued that the roots of modern conservatism lie with Herbert Hoover's crusade against the New Deal in the 1930s and 1940s. This is a widely overlooked aspect of President Hoover's legacy. Recent scholars, including our National Advisory Board member Dr. George Nash, have done important work to bring this period of President Hoover's life back into the historical conversation. Davenport argued that the foundations of modern American conservatism lie with Hoover because of the central importance of the New Deal to the conservative critique of American liberalism over the course of the 20th century.



Coolidge biographer Amity Shlaes speaks at the joint Coolidge-Hoover event at the Hoover Institution. Photo Credit: Jay Mallin.

Heritage Foundation Fellow Dr. Lee Edwards brought the conversation to a more recent period in history, placing the roots of modern conservatism in a book (Russell Kirk's *The Conservative Mind*), a magazine (William F. Buckley's *National Review*), and a political campaign (the 1964 presidential bid of Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater). Edwards argued that Kirk provided a historical framework through which modern conservatives could view their philosophy, tracing the roots of the movement back to the ideas of 18th century philosopher Edmund Burke. William F. Buckley's publication provided a proving ground for conservative thought leaders to flesh out their ideas and coalesce around shared principles, leading to the strategy known as "fusionism," in which anti-communist defense hawks, fiscal and economic libertarians,

and social conservatives could join in a common political project. Goldwater's 1964 campaign provided the first opportunity for Buckley's fusionist coalition to test its electoral strength. While that effort ended in a huge defeat to President Lyndon Johnson, Edwards quoted Dr. George Will who has often remarked that Goldwater won the 1964 election, it just took them sixteen years to count the votes; they view Reagan's landslide victory in 1980 as the culmination of the Goldwater movement's hegemony in national politics.

The Coolidge Foundation is tremendously grateful for this collaboration with the Hoover Institution. We hope to bring you more joint Coolidge-Hoover events in the future!

—Rushad Thomas
Program and Editorial Associate

Students from Salisbury School Kick Off Our 2015 Debates

After a long, cold winter at the Notch, the Coolidge Foundation was pleased to welcome 31 high school students from Salisbury School in Connecticut, who came up for a day of learning and debate on Friday, April 17. Thanks to the generosity of one of their trustees, Mr. John Childs, the students were able to spend the day learning about the benefits and costs of college education. Their debate topic, "Resolved: Attending college is worth the cost to students and their families," gave the young men the opportunity to think critically about whether or not a college education would ultimately reap the rewards they hope for.

The students debated this topic in light of President Coolidge's grappling with college costs. Many of the letters he wrote to his father from 1891 to 1895 contain requests for the elder Coolidge to send money, for one reason or another. Tuition, room, and board at Amherst College, Coolidge's alma mater, was about \$8,000 in inflation-adjusted dollars in 1891, Coolidge's freshman year. Today, the annual cost of an Amherst education now stands at more than \$60,000.

We all know how allergic Coolidge was to debt. In the six years of his presidency, Calvin Coolidge never ran a budget deficit, a feat that has not been replicated by any president since. He also paid down one-third of the outstanding national debt, bringing the total debt held by the government to \$16.9 billion in 1929 from \$22.3 billion in 1923. Given the large sums of debt that students incur to finance higher education these days, it's likely that Coolidge would have balked at the prospect of financing college in such an expensive manner.

The Coolidge family was able to afford the tuition at Amherst for Calvin's undergraduate education, but when it came time for move on to the next chapter of his life, Calvin chose a more affordable route. Instead of heading to Boston to attend Harvard Law or to Yale in Connecticut, Calvin went to the Law Offices of Hammond and Field and read the law. This apprenticeship method of legal training has almost entirely died out in the United States, but it was quite common in the



The top four students face off in a championship debate round.

late 19th century. Thus Calvin eliminated the need to finance a law school education, but was still able to accomplish his goal of becoming an attorney.

This issue is highly contentious, and people of good will can disagree about the relative costs and benefits of college education in the 21st century. The important truth to remember, however, is that through debate young people learn to think critically about important issues and to argue forcefully, but respectfully, in the context of our civil society. As a man who held strongly to his conservative principles, yet never openly disparaged a political opponent, President Coolidge would certainly applaud our commitment to training young people for citizenship in a manner that encourages respectful dialogue. We are grateful to Mr. John Childs, Headmaster Chisholm Chandler, Dean Hilary Barhydt, and Ms. Jennifer Siff for making this debate day possible.

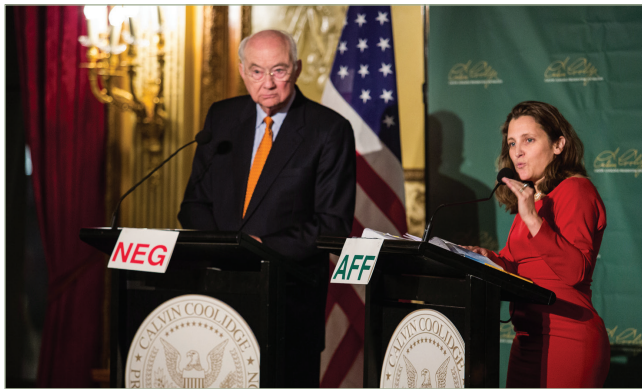


Salisbury School Trustee John Childs addresses the students at the beginning of the day.

—Rushad Thomas
Program and Editorial Associate

A Night of Contest:

2014 Coolidge Foundation New York City Gala



Canadian M.P. Chrystia Freeland makes the case for income redistribution as former Texas Senator Phil Gramm looks on.



Dr. Donald Boudreaux of George Mason University won the 2014 Coolidge Prize for Journalism.

Our Second Annual Gala Awards Dinner, held on November 6, 2014 at the Metropolitan Club in Manhattan, was a smashing success. More than 200 Coolidge friends joined us to celebrate the legacy of Silent Cal. Foundation chairman Amity Shlaes remarked that “our foundation is dead serious about bringing this president back to his proper rank, and about setting the record of history straight so that he is accorded the respect he deserves. We think he is so good he ought to be running in 2016.”

The highlight of the evening was the spirited debate between former Texas Senator Phil Gramm and Canadian Parliamentarian Chrystia Freeland on the topic of wealth redistribution. Gramm, who holds a Ph.D. in economics, argued that taking from the rich and giving to the poor would not jumpstart economic growth. Ms. Freeland, author of the book *Plutocrats: The Rise of the New Global Super-Rich and the Fall of Everyone Else*, made the case that rising income inequality would lead to dire consequences for the future of free-market capitalism, and that wealth redistribution is key to heading off worldwide economic disaster.

The debate was also enriched by the presence of several students from the national high school debate teams for the

United States and Canada. Prior to the adult debate, Tiana Menon, an 11th grader from Grand Junction, Colorado, and Amelia Miller, an 11th grader from Studio City, California, debated Rory Flynn, an 11th grader from Halifax, Nova Scotia, and Lloyd Lyall, a 12th grader from Vancouver, British Columbia. Mirroring the adult debate, Team USA argued in opposition to wealth redistribution, while Team Canada argued in favor.

We also awarded the second Coolidge Prize for Journalism. The \$20,000 Coolidge Prize for Journalism honors the writer who best captures the spirit and style of the thirtieth president and the ideals he embodied. The Calvin Prize for Vermont Youth awards \$1,500 to the first place winner and \$500 to the runner-up. In total, 82 writers applied for the Coolidge Prize, and nearly 100 Vermont youths submitted writings to the Calvin Prize contest. The Coolidge submissions were judged by a panel that included, among others, New York radio host John Batchelor, former Indiana governor Mitch Daniels, Forbes Media Chairman Steve Forbes, and syndicated columnist Cal Thomas. Judges for the Calvin Prize included Coolidge Foundation Trustee Emerita Mimi Baird, Vermont Public Radio host Jane Lindholm, Vermont Standard publisher Phil Camp, Vermont author Bill Schubarb, and Vermont radio host Mark Johnson.

The prize was announced by Milt Valera and Christopher Coolidge Jeter, great-grandson of President Coolidge. The winner of the 2014 Coolidge Prize for Journalism is Dr. Donald Boudreaux of George Mason University, a scholar in economics who has revolutionized the letter-to-the-editor, setting the record straight every day in response to factoids taken out of context.

Catherine Nelson, Rushad Thomas, and Coolidge great-granddaughter Jennifer Sayles Harville presented the 2014 Calvin Prize for Vermont Youth to Sydney Benjamin of Peacham, Vermont. The 2014 runner-up was Jay Tilden of St. Johnsbury, Vermont. The 2014 Calvin Prize prompt, “Should I Stay or Should I Go,” asked Vermont young people to reflect on whether or not they wished to remain in Vermont or go elsewhere when the time comes, drawing from the experience and example of President Calvin Coolidge.

The Foundation thanks all of the Coolidge fans who joined us in New York for our second annual dinner. It could not have been such a success without your support. We especially thank the Thomas W. Smith Foundation for its support of the Coolidge and Calvin prizes. Visit the multimedia section of our website CoolidgeFoundation.org to view the entire dinner, including the income inequality debate. *We hope to see you in New York in 2015.*

The Virtuous Obsession: Budget Skunks and Julie Andrews

You're probably wondering what skunks and Julie Andrews have to do with President Calvin Coolidge. During our conference held November 12, 2014 on Capitol Hill entitled "The Virtuous Obsession: How Better Budget Law is Key to Meeting our Nation's Fiscal Challenges," former Congressional Budget Office Director June O'Neill brought a stuffed toy skunk for use as a prop. This skunk was given to Dr. O'Neill by her immediate predecessor, Robert Reischauer, when she became CBO director in 1995. The skunk serves as a constant reminder that the CBO's role is to provide, as far as possible, an accurate picture of the fiscal impact of proposed legislation, even if it means "skunking" the rhetoric and projections of the two major political parties.

Now you're likely asking yourself what in the world Julie Andrews has to do with the Federal budget process. Well, in his keynote address, honorary co-host Senator Jeff Sessions referred to the famed British actress as one of his favorite economists. Why? A line from the famous Andrews film *The Sound of Music*: "Nothing comes from nothing, nothing ever could." That is to say, when it comes to budgeting, we must be sure to not spend money we don't have.

Sen. Sessions praised President Coolidge many times in his keynote speech, saying "The legacy of President Calvin Coolidge points the way forward," and quoting Coolidge at length regarding Coolidge's belief that budgeting is the noblest of virtues. Sen. Sessions sounded much like Coolidge in other areas of his speech as well, saying a top goal for him "is to impose financial discipline on every single agency of this government," and stressing "we have to be consistent about it."



The famous budget skunk rests next to the image of President Coolidge on the conference program.

Our conference featured a vast array of impressive bipartisan experts on the budget process. They provided tremendous insight into the nuances and history of the Federal budget process. They also offered a number of innovative solutions to make the process work better for the American people and ultimately put our country on a sounder fiscal trajectory, in line with the spirit of President Calvin Coolidge. Please visit CoolidgeFoundation.org to view videos of each of the panel discussions and learn more about the importance of sound budget practices, a cause President Coolidge championed as his virtuous obsession.

—Rushad Thomas
Program and Editorial Associate

White House Historical Association Launches 2015 Coolidge Ornament



White House Christmas Ornament 2015

On Thursday, February 12 at the Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C., the White House Historical Association released its 2015 White House Christmas Ornament, and the Coolidge Foundation was represented at the release by Executive Director Matt Denhart and Program Associate Rushad Thomas. This ornament series has been ongoing for more than thirty years, and we're excited that this year President Calvin Coolidge is the honoree! The ornament features many poignant images from the life of Calvin Coolidge, from Rebecca the Pet Raccoon to the cannon the Plymouth Notch boys lifted from Plymouth Union during Coolidge's childhood. We hope you will visit the website of the White House Historical Association and order your ornament today. The order site features an interactive component that allows you to click on each image on the ornament to read an explanation and view a historic Coolidge photo relating to the image. We are grateful for the White House Historical Association's excellent work honoring President Coolidge.

—Rushad Thomas
Program and Editorial Associate



Calvin and Grace Coolidge with the Republican Businessmen Association of New York in 1924. Photo Credit: Library of Congress.

Coolidge's Lessons for the Business Community

The importance of President Calvin Coolidge's legacy to our modern era is indisputable. While Coolidge's legacy of civility and budgetary constraint is most often cited as an example to be followed by our political leaders in Washington D.C., it acts as an equally important beacon for those of us in the private business sector.

Civility, as practiced by Coolidge, involves treating others with respect above all else. This applies to friend and foe alike. Coolidge's civility is most often referred to when describing his words and actions toward political adversaries and those who sought to minimize him. He maintained this civility without comprising his core beliefs. Civility does not mean yielding, but it does require listening to opposing views in a thoughtful way and allowing those views to further shape one's own.

In the private sector, civility is an absolute necessity when attempting to build relationships with customers, employees, co-workers and regulators among others. These relationships are ultimately what will allow a company to thrive. Employees' efforts will not be maximized if their ideas and views are not respected by their superiors or their co-workers. Customers will not be driven towards companies whose employees do not respect them, and businesses cannot exist without customers. Without civility, companies will struggle to adapt and grow in our changing world.

Coolidge's obsession with budgetary constraint is legendary: revered by many and mocked by others. Those in the latter category fail to understand the importance of building a sustainable budgetary framework when creating an organization that can withstand the countless obstacles that our complex and interconnected world economy will undoubtedly throw at it. Organizations, regardless of size, must be nimble in order to react.

One of the greatest impediments to this needed agility is the burden of excessive overhead. During a crisis or economic downturn, unnecessary fixed expenses can act like quicksand. Expense management that assumes overly optimistic revenue growth will occur indefinitely can lead to the creation of an organization that cannot withstand a totally predictable decline in the business cycle. Budgetary constraint is not synonymous with capital constraint. Prudent companies make the investments in infrastructure and people that are necessary to ensure future success. Understanding the difference between unnecessary expenses and critical investments is key. Avoiding the former allows one to focus on the latter. As Coolidge said, "There is no dignity quite so impressive, and no one independence quite so important, as living within your means." Budgetary constraint is necessary in order to achieve this independence.

The bank where I work was founded in 1899 in the back of the local general store. It had one employee whose modest salary was contingent on the bank's profits. Its first safe was borrowed, and its stationery had been discarded by a bank in a neighboring county. Despite these frugal beginnings, the bank has operated for 115 years, surviving the Great Depression and even paying a dividend every year during those trying years in the 1930s. Budgetary constraint served the bank well and continues to do so today.

Unfortunately, sometimes politicians and regulators hinder budgetary constraint. Regulatory burdens often cripple industries by forcing the addition of massive overhead expenses that do little to protect consumers or the economy at large. My industry, community banking, is under assault, with the primary weapon being voluminous and confusing regulations created as a result of the recent financial crisis. These regulations were created with noble intentions, but

have done little to accomplish their goals. The primary result has been the forced addition of crippling overhead expenses that impede the agility of the community banking industry and hinder its ability to react to future crises. In this instance, Coolidge's dual legacies of civility and budgetary constraint go hand in hand. Civility in negotiations with regulatory authorities and politicians is necessary in order to allow companies to practice the type of budgetary constraint necessary to promote their independence and future success.

Coolidge's relevance applies not just to politicians but also to the private sector. His example serves as a model for those attempting to build a business that can survive. This should not be forgotten, and for those who are not familiar with the Coolidge legacy, it should be studied.

—Chris Nunn

*CFO of Security Bancorp of Tennessee, Inc.
Trustee, Calvin Coolidge Presidential Foundation*

Study Well Repaid: High School Debate at Plymouth Notch

In his *Autobiography*, Calvin Coolidge, ever the political animal, discusses some of his recollections about the 1896 presidential campaign, which pitted Republican William McKinley against Democrat William Jennings Bryan. Dubbed by Coolidge as “the famous free silver campaign of 1896,” the election that year was a classic contest pitting the business and industry-backed McKinley against the populist everyman Bryan. Coolidge, a firm McKinley Republican, relished challenging Bryan supporters on their campaign for “free silver,” a commodity much more abundant than the gold that backed America's currency at the time. “When I was home that summer I took part in a small neighborhood debate in which I supported the gold standard,” Coolidge wrote. “The study I put on this subject well repaid me. Of course Northampton went handsomely for McKinley.”

As Coolidge recounts, the tradition of debate in Plymouth Notch goes back many, many years. The 19th century Notch was a deeply political community. Local citizens, including Coolidge's father, were intimately involved with the workings of civic institutions in the village: the school board, collecting the snow tax, town meeting, etc. It is no surprise that this sleepy hamlet produced a master public servant like Calvin Coolidge. Through our High School Presidential Debate program, the Coolidge Foundation forms future public servants in the tradition of civil discourse embodied by the thirtieth president.

Now in its third year, the summer debate program will be expanding to even greater heights with the introduction of our World Schools Debate Camp. This camp will bring the best and the brightest high school debate students to learn about the World Schools debate format followed by the USA Debate Team, which competes internationally. Students will train with top World Schools debate coaches and internationally-

renowned content experts. This camp provides top high school debate students with an inside edge for applying to the USA Debate Team.

Our partnership with the Debate Institutes at Dartmouth will also continue this year. Many students, including many underprivileged and minority students, have the opportunity to spend several weeks on the campus of Dartmouth College honing their debate skills. The Coolidge Foundation helps to underwrite this unique opportunity at Dartmouth, an Ivy League college, by providing scholarship money for students to attend the camp. On July 6 and 25 we will bring these students to Plymouth Notch to spend a day learning about President Coolidge and debating important issues in light of Coolidge's philosophy.

We are also pleased that our home school debate camp, which was such a success in 2014, will be continuing again this year. Led by Southern Methodist University Communications Professor Ben Voth, this camp will help debaters learn how American history and economic principles can give them an edge debating their own annual topic. Last year more than 30 students from throughout the Northeast attended this camp, and we expect a similar turnout this year.

Debate is an exciting sport that exercises the most important muscle in the body: the brain! Young people who engage in this sport will run intellectual marathons for life. The Coolidge Foundation is proud to help students explore the important issues and perspectives that shape our world today. Who knows? Maybe one day a student who came to the Notch to debate taxes or property rights will go on to become president of the United States and write about it in his or her autobiography just like Coolidge! We certainly would be gratified by that, but we're also happy to provide this opportunity for students who will go on to impact their communities and their country in many other ways as well.

—Rushad Thomas

Program and Editorial Associate

ANNUAL FUND APPEAL

Coolidge Needs Your Help!

The Calvin Coolidge Presidential Foundation exists to perpetuate the legacy and ideals of our 30th President. Just as President Coolidge would have it, we receive no regular funding from federal or state government, and depend entirely upon the goodwill of people like you who value the things we do. Please look for the donation envelope contained in this newsletter, and please give what you can to support our programs. You can also contribute quickly and easily on the web by logging onto our site at CoolidgeFoundation.org.

Thank you so much for your support today!

2014 - 2015 SUPPORTERS

We thank all our friends for their loyal support and for making the Foundation's year such a resounding success. If your name has been inadvertently omitted from this list or you find an error, we sincerely apologize. Please bring corrections to the attention of Rushad Thomas at 802.672.3389.

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“If I had permitted my failures, or what seemed to me at the time a lack of success, to discourage me, I cannot see any way in which I would ever have made progress.”

—Calvin Coolidge


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DID YOU KNOW?

1. During the Garfield-Hancock campaign of 1880, young Calvin asked his father for a penny to buy candy. John Coolidge refused, explaining that if the Democrats won the election, hard times could be expected. After Garfield won, Calvin reminded his father that the Republicans had stayed in power. He got the penny.
2. Calvin Coolidge's mother, Victoria Moor Coolidge, died on her birthday, March 14. She was born on that day in 1846 and died on that day in 1885.
3. During his White House years, President Coolidge was given a pair of twin lion cubs that he named Budget Bureau and Tax Reduction. In keeping with his equal commitment to both sound budgeting and low tax rates, Coolidge kept the cubs the same weight.
4. Grace Coolidge was the third of five American First Ladies who were only children. The others were Eliza Johnson, Ellen Arthur, Nancy Reagan, and Laura Bush.
5. Calvin and Grace Coolidge didn't own a home until after they left the White House.
6. The City of Coolidge, Arizona is the only municipality in America known to have been named for President Calvin Coolidge, who visited southeastern Arizona in 1930 to dedicate the Coolidge Dam, also named for him.

And the rest is history...