

# The **AMERICAN** Ruling Class

AMERICA RULES THE WORLD!  
But who rules America?

## 2005 TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL PRESS KIT

**WORLD PREMIERE SCREENING:** TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2005  
REGAL CINEMAS5  
7 PM

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# TheAMERICANRulingClass

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## OVERVIEW

*The American Ruling Class breaks new ground for documentary films.*

## THE STORY

*A classic coming of age tale and an illuminating exploration of power in America.*

## THE PARTICIPANTS

*An all-star ensemble cast.*

## THE PRODUCTION TEAM

*A celebrated American author and an award-winning production company.*

## TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL

*Screening Details*

*The American Ruling Class*, the world's first "dramatic-documentary-musical", explores our country's most taboo topic: class, power and privilege in our nominally democratic republic. This feature-length satire stars Lewis Lapham, the renowned essayist and author, and a heavy-weight ensemble cast that includes former cabinet secretaries, corporate mandarins, media magnates, and at least one journalist working as a waitress. The film follows Lapham and two recent Yale graduates as they make the rounds of Pentagon briefings, the World Economic Forum, philanthropic foundations, law firms, corporations banks, and New York society dinners as they attempt to answer the question, "Who rules America?"

The narrative portion of the film, interwoven throughout, tells the story of two representative graduates, "one rich and one poor" as they seek direction in their lives. Does America have a ruling class? If so, of what is it made, and how does it co-exist with our democracy? How does one join it: should one even want to? The real life luminaries become characters in a story about power and its responsibilities, and by the film's end, the young men must decide: do they wish to rule the world...or save it?

Already appearing in the film are a range of leaders from across the political spectrum, among them: Robert B. Altman, James A. Baker III, Bill Bradley, Harold Brown, Hodding Carter III, William T. Coleman, Jr., Walter Cronkite, Barbara Ehrenreich, Martin Garbus, Vartan Gregorian, Mike Medavoy, Joseph S. Nye, Jr., Samuel Peabody, Peter G. Peterson, Pete Seeger, Lawrence H. Summers, Arthur O. Sulzberger, Jr., William Howard Taft IV and Kurt Vonnegut.

As the editor of "a magazine with offices in New York" and author of numerous books, Lewis Lapham is one of the most respected writers today. A recent recipient of The National Magazine Award, *The New York Times* likened him to H.L. Mencken, and *Vanity Fair* suggested he was this era's Mark Twain. The film is a production of The Press & The Public Project, Inc., a leading not-for-profit production company with over twenty years of experience producing award-winning films for both commercial and public television. A consortium of international broadcasters led by the BBC, along with private investors have provided funding for the film, which will premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival in April.

Tuesday, April 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM - Regal Battery Park, Theater 5  
Thursday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 PM - Tribeca Cinemas, Theater 1  
Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at 3:15 PM - Regal Battery Park, Theater 1

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## THE PARTICIPANTS: *An all-star ensemble cast*

<b>ROBERT B. ALTMAN</b>	Film Producer, Director and Writer
<b>JAMES A. BAKER III</b>	Honorary Chair, James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy, Rice University Secretary of State, 1989-1992, Bush Administration Secretary of the Treasury, 1985-1988, Reagan Administration Under Secretary of Commerce, 1975-1976, Ford Administration
<b>BILL BRADLEY</b>	Allen & Company US Senator, New Jersey, 1978-1997 NBA, Starting Forward, New York Knicks, 1967-1977
<b>HAROLD BROWN</b>	Partner, Warburg Pincus Secretary of Defense, 1977-1981, Carter Administration President, California Institute of Technology, 1969-1977 Secretary of the Air Force, 1965-1969, Johnson Administration
<b>HODDING CARTER III</b>	President, Knight Foundation State Department Spokesman, 1977-1980, Carter Administration
<b>WILLIAM T. COLEMAN, JR.</b>	Attorney, O'Melveny and Myers Secretary of Transportation, 1975-1977, Ford Administration
<b>WALTER CRONKITE</b>	Journalist CBS News Anchorman, 1962-1981
<b>BARBARA EHRENREICH</b>	Author, Journalist
<b>MARTIN GARBUS</b>	Partner, Litigation, Davis & Gilbert, LLP
<b>VARTAN GREGORIAN</b>	President, Carnegie Corporation President, Brown University, 1989-1997 President, The New York Public Library, 1981-1989
<b>MIKE MEDAVOY</b>	Chairman, Phoenix Pictures Chairman, Tri-Star Pictures, 1990-1994 Co-Founder, Orion Pictures, 1978-1990
<b>JOSEPH S. NYE, JR.</b>	Dean, Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government, 1995-2004 Chairman, National Intelligence Council, 1993-1994, Clinton Administration Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, 1994-1995, Clinton Administration
<b>SAMUEL PEABODY</b>	Educator, Philanthropist
<b>PETER G. PETERSON</b>	Chairman of the Board, Council on Foreign Relations Founding Chairman, The Blackstone Group Secretary of Commerce, 1972-1973, Nixon Administration
<b>PETE SEEGER</b>	Folksinger, Songwriter
<b>LAWRENCE H. SUMMERS</b>	President, Harvard University Secretary of the Treasury, 1999-2001, Clinton Administration
<b>ARTHUR O. SULZBERGER, JR.</b>	Chairman, The New York Times Company Publisher, <i>The New York Times</i>
<b>WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT IV</b>	Chief Legal Advisor, US State Department Acting Secretary of Defense, 1989, Bush Administration Deputy Secretary of Defense, 1984-1989, Reagan Administration
<b>KURT VONNEGUT</b>	Author, Essayist, Dramatist

The Press & The Public Project, Inc.

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## CAST & CREDITS

<b>DIRECTOR</b>	John Kirby
<b>PRODUCERS</b>	Libby Handros
<b>SCREENWRITER</b>	Lewis Lapham
<b>DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY</b>	Mark Benjamin
<b>EDITORS</b>	John Kirby and Leah O'Donnell
<b>MUSIC</b>	Qasim Naqvi and Lucas Johnson-Yahraus
<b>PRINCIPAL CAST</b>	Lewis Lapham, Paul Cantagallo and Caton Burwell
<b>FEATURING</b>	Robert B. Altman, James A. Baker, III, Bill Bradley, Harold Brown, Hodding Carter III, William T. Coleman, Jr., Walter Cronkite, Barbara Ehrenreich, Martin Garbus, Vartan Gregorian, Mike Medavoy, Joseph S. Nye, Jr., Samuel Peabody, Peter G. Peterson, Pete Seeger, Lawrence H. Summers, Arthur O. Sulzberger, Jr., William Howard Taft IV, Kurt Vonnegut
<b>EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS</b>	Stanley Buchthal, Caroline Camougis, Paula Silver Nick Fraser for the BBC Julie Goldman, Krysanne Katsoolis, Caroline Stevens for Cactus Three

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## THE PRODUCTION TEAM

*The Press & The  
Public Project, Inc.*

*The American Ruling Class* is a production of The Press & the Public Project, an award-winning independent television production company. Over the past twenty years, the company has developed, directed, and produced over one hundred hours of prime-time programming covering a broad spectrum, including: public policy, news, sports, history, international affairs, education, press criticism, and film. The company's films have been broadcast both nationally and internationally on PBS, Showtime, Fox, HBO, ESPN and the Discovery Channel.

## TEAM STATEMENT

Innovation is one of our hallmarks. In the 80's we developed *Inside Story*, the first regular examination of the American press to appear on television. Hosted by former State Department spokesman Hodding Carter, the weekly series aired nationally on PBS for five years, winning many honors including five Emmy Awards and an Edward R. Murrow Award. Today, the series is in the Museum of Television and Radio's permanent collection. We later teamed up with Lewis Lapham to produce *Legacy of a Kidnapping: Lindbergh and the Triumph of the Tabloids*, named "the best documentary of 2000" by *Newsday*. With this film we began to explore the "possibilities of a literary form adapted to the expectations of a film and television audience," our concept for *The American Ruling Class*.

## THE PRODUCER

*Libby Handros*

Libby Handros joined The Press & the Public Project twenty years ago. She began her career working on the critically acclaimed series *Inside Story*. Since then, as the company's lead producer, she has been responsible for documentaries on a wide range of subjects for PBS, ESPN, Showtime and Fox. Recent credits include, *Legacy of a Kidnapping: Lindbergh and the Triumph of the Tabloids*, *The Good Fat Diet*, *The Future Belongs to the Educated*, *Trump: What's the Deal?* and *Baseball From the Inside Out*.

## THE DIRECTOR

*John Kirby*

John Kirby makes his feature directorial debut with *The American Ruling Class*. He has produced and edited for major broadcasters, including many projects for the award-winning Blowback Productions. His editing credits include the HBO *America Undercover* documentaries *Gladiator Days: Anatomy of a Prison Murder* and the Emmy-award winning *Thug Life in D.C.* With his production partner Libby Handros, he recently completed *The Good Fat Diet*, a ground-breaking study of the role of Omega-three fatty acids in human nutrition, to be released this year on public television.

## THE DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

*Mark Benjamin*

A veteran cameraman, Mark Benjamin most recently completed *The Protocols of Zion*, which debuted at this year's Sundance Film Festival. He produced, directed and shot *Going Home* currently airing on Cinemax. Additional credits include shooting and co-directing with Marc Levin the Robert Downey Jr. feature documentary *The Last Party*. Other recent films include: *Slam*, (Sundance, Grand Jury Prize, Cannes, Camera D'Or) *Jails Hospitals and Hip Hop*, *CIA: America's Secret Warriors* for Discovery Channel (Columbia DuPont Award), *Prisoners of the War on Drugs* for HBO, *Gang War-Banging in Little Rock* for HBO (ACE Award for Best Documentary), and *Thug Life in DC* for HBO (1999 National Emmy Best Documentary).

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## EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: BIOGRAPHIES

### STANLEY F. BUCHTHAL

Stanley F. Buchthal has Executive Produced or Produced numerous feature films including *Hairspray* (John Waters, 1987 cult classic), *Spanking the Monkey* (David O. Russell, Best Sundance Film Audience Award, 1994), Somerset Maugham's *Up at the Villa*, starring Sean Penn and Kristin Scott Thomas (Phillips Haas, 1998), *The Party is Over* (Philip Seymour Hoffman, 2002), and *Poster Boy* (Regent Entertainment release Spring 2005). Current projects include Executive Producing Sydney Pollack's *Sketches of Frank Gehry* in partnership with American Masters. Projects in development include *Fugitive Days* and the miniseries *Chasing America*, both with Barbara Kopple, a two-time Oscar-winning director. With Clearchannel Communications, Inc. and Miramax Film Corporation, Buchthal is a Producer of *All Shook Up*, a Broadway musical based on Elvis Presley's music, which recently opened at New York's Palace Theater.

### CAROLINE CAMOUGIS

Caroline Camougis, an Executive Producer, has served in many capacities in television and film, from production work at WGBH-TV, Channel 2 in Boston, to strategic planning for VTM Television in Brussels. An expert in strategic growth initiatives, she has consulted both domestically and abroad for media companies. As an advisor to nonprofits, she has been recognized for her work with *President Bush's Volunteer Service Award* in 2003 and 2004. Her first association with The Press & The Public Project, Inc. was *Legacy of a Kidnapping: Lindbergh and the Triumph of the Tabloids*, named "the best documentary of 2000" by *Newsday*.

### NICK FRASER

Nick Fraser is editor of Storyville, BBC Television's program of documentaries from all over the world. Two years ago there were eight Storyvilles on BBC TWO; now up to 50 Storyvilles are shown each year on BBC FOUR and BBC TWO. Storyvilles films are purchased, pre-bought or commissioned jointly with other broadcasters. The films have won a number of international prizes, including an Academy Award and the prestigious Grierson International trophy in Britain. Before working at the BBC Nick Fraser was a commissioning editor at Channel Four, and before that ran his own successful company, Panoptic Productions. He writes regularly for several British broadsheet newspapers and *Harper's Magazine* in New York. He also works as a reporter and presenter for the BBC. Recent films include profiles of Jacques Chirac, and former Director General of the BBC, John Birt.

### CHRIS HILTON

Chris Hilton is one of Australia's most prolific and award-winning documentary producers. He has made films on a broad range of subjects for the world's major broadcasters. His credits as director/producer include *Dealing with the Demon* (3 x 1 hour), *The Serpent and the Cross*, and most recently *Shadow Play*, a feature-length film on the Indonesian massacres for SBS, BBC, PBS and Arte, which, along with *Advertising Missionaries*, was selected for the Joris Ivens competition at the Amsterdam International Documentary Film Festival. As producer and executive producer Hilton's recent credits include: *Year of the Dogs*, *Renzo Piano - Piece by Piece*, *The Irish Empire* (5 x 1 hour), *Bondi* (6 x 30 min) and *Drama School* (9 x 30) min.

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## CACTUS THREE

Cactus Three executive produces high-end documentary films and non-fiction programming. Cactus Three offers a unique blend of production and co-production expertise, creatively developing projects as well as securing both funding and distribution. Recent productions include the IFC co-production *PUNK: attitude*, the acclaimed HBO series *Family Bonds*, Toronto Film festival stand-out *Three of Hearts* (Think Film and NBC/Bravo), and *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls*, the award-winning film based on Peter Biskind's best selling book. Films currently in production include Sydney Pollack's *Sketches of Frank Gehry* for PBS/American Masters and *Alexis* for A&E and Channel Four. Cactus Three was founded in 2003 by Julie Goldman, Krysanne Katsoolis and Caroline Stevens.

## PAULA SILVER

Paula Silver is the former President of Marketing and Publicity at Columbia Pictures and the marketing visionary behind such recent feature film hits as *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*. As the President/Founder of Beyond the Box Productions, Silver utilizes a multi-media approach to develop, produce and promote socially conscious projects through popular culture. A few of the award-winning campaigns that Ms. Silver has directed include, *Altered States*, *Back to the Future*, *Dirty Dancing*, *Gandhi*, *Mr. Holland's Opus*, *Prince of Tides*, and *Tootsie*. In 1989, Silver produced and directed in collaboration with Robert Redford a film about the Sundance Institute, and most recently she was the executive producer of *Lohan 8*, *Lifestyles of Health & Sustainability Meets the Media*. Silver speaks frequently on the role of women in media. A member of the Motion Picture Academy of Arts and Sciences, Ms. Silver sits on many boards among them The White House Project and was recently appointed a fellow by the MIT Media Lab for 2004/2005.

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## SYNOPSIS

The world's first dramatic-documentary-musical satire explores our country's most taboo topic: class, the presence of an elite in our nominally democratic republic. *Harper's Magazine* editor Lewis Lapham takes two young Ivy-League graduates on a tour of the corridors of power and their own career possibilities. Along the way they meet an all-star cast, including, among many others, former cabinet secretaries (James Baker) corporate mandarins (Peter G. Peterson) newspaper publishers (Arthur O. Sulzberger, Jr.) and at least one journalist working as a waitress (Barbara Ehrenreich). By story's end, the graduates' choice of career takes on great weight: will they try to save the world, or rule it?

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT FROM JOHN KIRBY

*The American Ruling Class* proceeds from the premise that no complex society has ever existed without a ruling elite of some kind, and that the only pertinent question may be, "What kind?" What does the American Establishment value most highly, what are its goals and opinions, what is its commitment to democracy? To war, or peace? Who are the ruling class, and how did they achieve their position? Does the ruling class recognize itself (at least publicly) as a ruling class? What does the character and composition of the ruling class foretell for a world that appears to be in ever-mounting peril from one man-made calamity or another?

While Lewis Lapham, Libby Handros and I thought about these questions, we also thought about how we might best put them before a larger audience. Having worked in documentaries in one capacity or another for a long time, Libby and I were frankly bored with the format. We wondered how we might invent it anew, at least for ourselves. What slowly emerged was the dramatic-documentary genre you will see in the theater. And while we had always angled to make it a musical of some kind or another, it wasn't until Lucas Johnson-Yahrus played us the now classic 'Revolution No. 2' that we realized how it might be done... we then commissioned 'The Mighty Wurlitzer', 'Nickel and Dimed', and 'Empire Falls', which Lucas wrote and performed-with his band *The What--* brilliantly.

Our wildest hope is that the film will help save the ruling class—along with the rest of us... and perhaps even advance, if only just a little bit, the always ongoing (if not always progressing) project of human emancipation.



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## STATEMENT FROM LEWIS LAPHAM

Subsequent to the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, I don't know of any topic as relevant to the predicament in which the country now finds itself than the composition of the American leadership class. The headlines every morning speak to the rising surge of violence in the world, much of the anger directed at the United States, and on what ethical ground do we defend our American freedom and prosperity? Nobody disputes the fact of our military predominance, but with what moral and intellectual force do we confront the hostility of people who don't see much of a difference between the prospect of death by starvation, gunfire, or disease?

The questions bear on the character of the American elites, and the film examines the ways in which we establish those elites. What do we expect our leaders to know? What values do we require them to hold? Of whom does the American leadership class consist; where does it find its philosophy, and how does it differ from its Asian and European counterparts? Define the American directorate as the few hundred thousand people who manage the government, coin the money, write the laws, administer the schools, own and operate the news media, and how do we know them when we see them? From whence do they come, and to whom or to what do they owe their positions of authority?

The documentary proceeds from the premise that no society can exist without some form of social hierarchy. The Roman Empire rested on a class system; so did medieval France and Victorian England. So does the United States—in 2005 as in 1805 and 1905. But being American, and therefore sworn at birth to the doctrine of egalitarianism, we don't like to concede the existence of our own class system. We meet it every day in the street, but we pretend it isn't there. The word, class, comes armed with so much ambivalence and so many contradictions that its meaning shifts with the social setting and the tone of voice, with the height of the ceiling, the names of the other people on the guest list, the view (or lack thereof) of the mountains or the sea. Our political rhetoric dwells on what must be done for the democratic many; the vocabulary of our commercial advertising dwells on what can be made available to the privileged few. Once having proclaimed our loyalty to the idea that all men are created equal, we do everything possible to prove ourselves unequal.

Absent a landed aristocracy that bestows entitlements at birth, a nominally democratic society must assemble its ruling elites from whatever egalitarian materials come most meritocratically to hand. Being an inventive and productive people, we manufacture our leaders in the same way that we build expensive automobiles and exclusive resort hotels. The documentary. We could as easily have made an industrial film about the composition of computer circuits.

During the years since the declaration of our war on terrorism, a good many people not only in the United States but everywhere else in the world have raised questions about the character and motives of the American Colossus. Do we hope to retain the republic that Benjamin Franklin knew would be hard to keep, or do we wish to invest ourselves with the mantle of an empire? How high a price do we set on the head of freedom? If we delete another few paragraphs from the Bill of Rights, what do we ask of the government in return for our silence in court? If we define our American democracy as a *res publica*, of what does the *res publica* consist?

Given the magnitude of the American presence in the world, the questions seem to me timely; they're likely to shape the course of events, both at home and abroad, during the first quarter of the new century, and from whom else do we expect answers if not from the American leadership class?

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## **PARTICIPANTS FEATURED AND INTERVIEWED IN *THE AMERICAN RULING CLASS***

### **ROBERT B. ALTMAN**

FILM PRODUCER, DIRECTOR AND WRITER

Robert B. Altman, one of America's leading filmmakers, was born in Missouri in 1925 and attended Junior College at Wentworth Military Academy. In a lengthy and prolific career, he has directed more than 80 films and television programs and has written over 30 screenplays. Altman is known for films that focus on the motivation of characters and their interrelationships as in *McCabe & Mrs. Miller* (1971), *Short Cuts* (1993) and *Gosford Park* (2001). He is also noted for creating the perfect illusion of reality which provides a convincing backdrop for satire as in *Secret Honor* (1984), about Nixon's life and political career, *Tanner '88* (1988), a "mockumentary" on presidential campaigns, *The Player* (1992), a caricature of Hollywood and *Prêt-à-Porter* (1994), a send-up of the fashion world. Among many honors, Altman has been nominated for several Academy Awards and his films, *M\*A\*S\*H* (1970) and *Nashville* (1975), have both been preserved in the National Film Registry at the Library of Congress. He lives in New York City.

### **JAMES A. BAKER III**

HONORARY CHAIR, JAMES A. BAKER III INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY, RICE UNIVERSITY

SECRETARY OF STATE, 1989-1992, BUSH ADMINISTRATION

SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY, 1985-1988, REAGAN ADMINISTRATION

UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE, 1975-1976, FORD ADMINISTRATION

James A. Baker III, born in Texas in 1930, has a distinguished record in public service, serving in senior positions under three US Presidents. He graduated from Princeton University and the University of Texas School of Law and then practiced law at Andrews and Kurth (1957-1975). Baker led presidential campaigns for Ford, Reagan and Bush. His public service began in 1975 as Under Secretary of Commerce, he went on to serve as Chief of Staff under Reagan (1981-1985), as Secretary of the Treasury (1985-1988), as Secretary of State (1989-1992) and as Chief of Staff and Senior Counselor to Bush (1992-1993). His book, *The Politics of Diplomacy* (1995), discusses politics in the post Cold War era. In addition to his role at the Baker Institute, he is a senior partner in the law firm of Baker Botts and Senior Counselor to The Carlyle Group, a merchant banking firm. He has continued to play a role in international affairs, most recently, as Special Presidential Envoy on the issue of Iraqi debt. Baker has been honored extensively, receiving, among others, the Presidential Medal of Freedom (1991) and numerous honorary academic degrees. He sits on many boards and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. He lives in Houston, Texas.

### **BILL BRADLEY**

ALLEN & COMPANY

US SENATOR, NEW JERSEY 1978-1997

NBA, STARTING FORWARD, NEW YORK KNICKS, 1967-1977

Bill Bradley, born in Missouri in 1943, graduated with honors from Princeton University, and was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University where he studied politics, philosophy and economics. A talented athlete, he captained the gold-winning US Olympic basketball team in 1964 and in 1965, was the first basketball player to receive the Sullivan Award which honors the top amateur athlete. Drafted by the New York Knicks, he played with them for 10 years and was instrumental in their winning the 1970 and 1973 NBA championships. He was inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame in 1982. In 1978, he ran for US Senator from New Jersey winning with 56% of the vote. He served with distinction for almost two decades in the Senate, undertaking complex reform initiatives such as the 1986 Tax Reform

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Act and the Family and Medical Leave Act. Since his unsuccessful run for the Presidential Democratic Nomination in 2000, Bradley has served in the corporate sector, and is currently with Allen & Company, a leading investment firm specializing in the entertainment industry. He has received many awards and sits on many boards. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and Bilderberg. He lives in New Jersey.

## **HAROLD BROWN**

PARTNER, WARBURG PINCUS  
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, 1977-1981, CARTER ADMINISTRATION  
PRESIDENT, CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, 1969-1977  
SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE, 1965-1969, JOHNSON ADMINISTRATION

Harold Brown, born in New York in 1927, is a national security expert who has served in both the public and private sectors. He has three degrees from Columbia University, including a Ph.D. in physics, which he earned at 21. A research scientist, he became Director of the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory, Livermore in 1960. He held many senior roles in the government including: Senior Science Advisor at the 1958-59 Conference on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Tests, Director of Defense Research and Engineering (1961-1965), and Secretary of the Air Force (1965-1969). He served as President of the California Institute of Technology (1969-1977), leaving when he was appointed Secretary of Defense. Key initiatives of Brown's national security policy were strengthening ties with NATO, upgrading U.S. military forces, improving collective security and arms control. A member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Trilateral Commission, he serves on many boards. Brown's many honors include a Presidential Medal of Freedom (1981). He lives in New York City.

## **HODDING CARTER III**

PRESIDENT, KNIGHT FOUNDATION  
STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN, 1977-1980, CARTER ADMINISTRATION

Hodding Carter III, born in Louisiana in 1935, is an award-winning journalist and public servant, and has served as President of the Knight Foundation since 1997. Carter graduated *summa cum laude* from Princeton University and then spent nearly 18 years in various roles at the *Delta Democrat-Times*, the family-owned newspaper noted for a 1946 Pulitzer Prize for its editorials on racial and religious tolerance. He worked on the Johnson (1964) and Carter (1976) presidential campaigns. In 1977, Carter became State Department spokesman and Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, most notably during the Iran hostage crisis. He was a frequent contributor to national print media as well as a regular commentator on ABC, CBS and CNN. For public affairs programs on PBS and *Inside Story*, he won four Emmy Awards and the Edward R. Murrow Award. Carter holds seven honorary doctoral degrees, he serves on many boards and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Trilateral Commission. He lives in Florida.

## **WILLIAM T. COLEMAN, JR.**

ATTORNEY, O'MELVENY AND MYERS  
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION, 1975-1977, FORD ADMINISTRATION

William T. Coleman, Jr., a leading public servant, civil rights and corporate lawyer, was born in Pennsylvania in 1920. He graduated *summa cum laude* from the University of Pennsylvania and earned his L.L.B. *magna cum laude* from Harvard Law School, becoming the first black ever to serve on the board of editors of the *Harvard Law Review*. His efforts on behalf of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund led to the historic Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), which ended school segregation. He also served as co-counsel on the landmark case, *McLaughlin v. Florida* (1964), which established the constitutionality of interracial marriages. Coleman served on presidential commissions for Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon,

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among them the Warren Commission (1964) which was charged with investigating the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Coleman became Secretary of Transportation in 1975. On numerous educational and charitable boards, he is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Trilateral Commission. Coleman has received many awards, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom (1995). He lives in Washington, D.C.

## WALTER CRONKITE

JOURNALIST

CBS NEWS ANCHORMAN, 1962-1981

Journalist and long-time CBS-TV news anchorman, Walter Cronkite was born in Missouri in 1916 and attended the University of Texas. Cronkite joined CBS in 1950 and created the CBS Evening News in 1962, serving as the anchor until 1981. Known for his nightly sign-off, "and that's the way it is" and his objective reporting, he was cited as "the most trusted man in America." Defining issues and events for almost two decades, he provided insight into the pulse of mainstream America. Cronkite also influenced foreign diplomacy: in a 1977 interview with Egyptian President Anwar El-Sadat, he asked if Sadat would meet with the Israelis in Jerusalem. Sadat agreed, and an invitation came from Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, paving the way for the Camp David Accords and an Israeli-Egyptian Peace treaty. Honors include Emmy Awards, Peabody Awards and the Presidential Medal of Freedom (1981). He lives in New York City.

## BARBARA EHRENREICH

AUTHOR, JOURNALIST

Barbara Ehrenreich, born in Montana in 1941, is a social critic who, in numerous books and magazine articles, has explored a wide range of issues from women's health and corporate power to the origins of war. She studied chemistry and physics at Reed College, and earned a Ph.D. in cell biology at Rockefeller University. She is the author or co-author of twelve books including *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*, *Fear of Falling: The Inner Life of the Middle Class*, and *Blood Rites: Origins and History of the Passions of War*. She has written for dozens of magazines, including *Ms.*, *Harper's*, *The Nation*, *The Progressive*, *The New Republic*, *The Atlantic Monthly* and *The New York Times Magazine*. *Nickel and Dimed* (2001), which recounts Ehrenreich's attempt to live on minimum wage jobs, was conceived with Lewis Lapham in 1998. A best-seller, the book has generated lively debate on solutions to this critical issue. Among many distinctions is a National Magazine Award (1980). She lives in Charlottesville, VA.

## MARTIN GARBUS

PARTNER, LITIGATION, DAVIS & GILBERT, LLP

Martin Garbus, named America's "most prominent First Amendment lawyer" by the *The National Law Journal*, graduated *magna cum laude* from both Hunter College and New York University School of Law. His cases have established legal precedents in the Supreme Court and courts throughout the country. His diverse practice includes criminal cases, such as the "French Connection" case, complex commercial litigations and "celebrity" cases. He has represented political dissidents such as Nelson Mandela and Vaclav Havel, as well as high-profile media clients. Garbus has advised countries such as Canada, England, Australia, the former Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Poland, China and Hungary in media and communications. He has authored several books, is a frequent contributor to major newspapers, magazines and scholarly journals, and has appeared as a commentator on NBC, ABC, CBS, PBS and CNN. He serves on numerous boards and has received many honors, including The First Amendment Defense Committee's Lifetime Achievement Award (2003). He lives in New York City.

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# TheAMERICANRulingClass

AMERICA RULES THE WORLD!  
But who rules America?

## VARTAN GREGORIAN

PRESIDENT, CARNEGIE CORPORATION OF NEW YORK  
PRESIDENT, BROWN UNIVERSITY, 1989-1997  
PRESIDENT, THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY, 1981-1989

Vartan Gregorian, born in Iran in 1934, is the President of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, a grant-making institution founded by Andrew Carnegie in 1911. A leading force in education and philanthropy, Gregorian studied history and humanities at Stanford University, where he received a B.A. and Ph.D. He taught at San Francisco State College, the University of California and the University of Texas. He was founding Dean and later Provost of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania. Gregorian served as a President of the New York Public Library (1981-1989), rescuing the institution from bankruptcy. From 1989-1997, he served as President of Brown University. Numerous civic and academic honors include 50 honorary degrees and decorations from the French, Italian, Austrian and Portuguese governments. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society. Awards include the Ellis Island Medal of Honor (1986) and the National Humanities Medal (1998). He lives in New York City.

## MIKE MEDAVOY

CHAIRMAN, PHOENIX PICTURES  
CHAIRMAN, TRI-STAR PICTURES, 1990-1994  
CO-FOUNDER, ORION PICTURES, 1978-1990

Mike Medavoy, a studio executive and major force in Hollywood for over 25 years, was born in China in 1941. After graduating with Honors from UCLA, he started his career in the mailroom at Universal Pictures in 1964. He joined United Artists in 1974 and was part of the team responsible for *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Rocky* and *Annie Hall*. In 1978, Medavoy co-founded Orion Pictures and during his tenure, *Platoon*, *Amadeus*, *Robocop*, *The Terminator*, *Dances with Wolves* and *Silence of the Lambs* were released. As Chairman of Tri-Star Pictures, box office successes included: *Philadelphia*, *Terminator 2*, *Sleepless in Seattle*, *Legends of the Fall* and *Hook*. In 1995, Medavoy became Co-Founder and Chairman of Phoenix Pictures whose releases include: *The People vs. Larry Flynt*, *The Thin Red Line* and *The Sixth Day*. He published his best-selling memoirs in 2002, *You're Only As Good As Your Next One: 100 Great Films, 100 Good Films and 100 For Which I Should Be Shot*. Many of Medavoy's films have received Academy Awards, and he has been recognized with many community and professional honors. A member of the Council on Foreign Relations, he lives in Los Angeles, CA.

## JOSEPH S. NYE, JR.

DEAN, HARVARD UNIVERSITY, KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT, 1995-2004  
CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE COUNCIL, 1993-1994, CLINTON ADMINISTRATION  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS, 1994-1995,  
CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

Joseph S. Nye Jr., is a Harvard University Distinguished Service Professor. Nye graduated *summa cum laude* from Princeton University, attended Oxford University on a Rhodes scholarship and earned a PhD in political science from Harvard. He joined the Harvard Faculty in 1964, and became Dean of the Kennedy School in 1995. Recognized for his expertise in international affairs, he has served in three government agencies: in the State Department (1977-1979), in the National Intelligence Council (1993-1994), and in the Defense Department (1994-1995). Nye was honored with Distinguished Service Awards for his work at all three agencies. He has served on numerous boards and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the Trilateral Commission and the Aspen Institute. A member of the editorial boards of *Foreign Policy* and *International Security* magazines, he is the

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author of numerous books and articles, his most recent book is *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (2004). Among many distinctions, he is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the Academy of Diplomacy. He lives in Cambridge, MA.

## **SAMUEL PEABODY**

EDUCATOR, PHILANTHROPIST

Samuel Peabody, educator and philanthropist, was born in Massachusetts and graduated from Harvard University. From one of the oldest and most illustrious families in the US, the Peabodys have played a pivotal role in the affairs of this country since its founding. Key contributions of family members include those of John Endicott, who founded the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1629, and Joseph Peabody, who in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, caused to be built one of Salem's largest fleets. Francis and Oliver Peabody founded the investment firm of Kidder, Peabody in 1865 and Endicott Peabody founded the Groton School in 1884, known for educating many of this nation's greatest leaders, including Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Peabody's great grandfather partnered with Junius Morgan, (J.P.'s father) to found the House of Morgan in England, his mother, an activist, was arrested for protesting the Vietnam War, his father Malcom was a Bishop in the Episcopal Church and on the Board of Harvard, his brother Endicott was the governor of Massachusetts (1963-1965) and his sister Marietta Tree was the first UN Human Rights Commissioner. After a brief career in finance, Peabody turned to education, teaching at several schools serving a Principal at the Rye Country Day School. A dedicated philanthropist, he and his wife support many educational and charitable causes. He lives in New York City.

## **PETER G. PETERSON**

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS  
FOUNDING CHAIRMAN, THE BLACKSTONE GROUP  
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE, 1972-1973, NIXON ADMINISTRATION

Peter G. Peterson was born in Nebraska in 1926. He graduated *summa cum laude* from Northwestern University and received his MBA from the University of Chicago. A leading force in fiscal and economic policy, he has served extensively in both the private and public sectors. Peterson was CEO of Bell and Howell (1963-1971), Chairman and CEO of Lehman Brothers and its successor company (1973-1984), and later, founding Chairman of The Blackstone Group, an investment banking firm. Peterson's numerous roles in government include: Assistant to the President for International Economic Affairs (1971), Secretary of Commerce (1972-1973) and Chair of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York (2000-2004). He is founding chairman of the Institute for International Economics, founding president of The Concord Coalition and Co-Chair of The Conference Board Commission on Public Trust and Private Enterprises. He is the author of several books, his most recent is *Running on Empty: How the Democratic and Republican Parties Are Bankrupting Our Future and What Americans Can Do About It* (2004). He has received numerous civic and academic honors including seven honorary degrees and he serves on many boards, including as Chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations. He lives in New York City.

## **PETE SEEGER**

FOLKSINGER, SONGWRITER

Born in New York in 1919, Peter Seeger, noted folksinger and activist, studied journalism and sociology at Harvard but left to pursue various creative endeavors. Noted for his use of traditional folk music that incorporate lyrics with social and political commentary, he has used his music to advocate social and environmental reform. Blacklisted by the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1955, Seeger was kept off radio and television for seventeen years. Awards include: Presidential Medal of the Arts (1994), Kennedy Center Award (1994), Rock and

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Roll Hall of Fame (1996), Harvard Arts Medal (1996) and Grammy (1997) for his album, *Pete*. He lives in upstate New York.

## LAWRENCE H. SUMMERS

PRESIDENT, HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY, 1999-2001, CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

Lawrence H. Summers, born in Connecticut in 1954, is the President of Harvard University. He received a B.S. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a Ph.D. from Harvard. A leading economics scholar, he became one of the youngest tenured professors at Harvard in 1983. Since 1982, Summers has served in a series of senior public policy positions, notably as Chief Economist of the World Bank (1991-1993) and Secretary of the Treasury (1999-2001). Known for helping engineer an historic pay down of U.S. debt, he also worked successfully to extend the life of the Social Security and Medicare trust funds, and led the effort to enact the most sweeping financial deregulation in 60 years. At the end of his term, Summers was awarded the Alexander Hamilton Medal, the Treasury Department's highest honor. Among many distinctions, he served as a Fellow at the Brookings Institution, is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Trilateral Commission and was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 2002. He lives in Cambridge, MA.

## ARTHUR O. SULZBERGER, JR.

CHAIRMAN, THE NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY  
PUBLISHER, THE NEW YORK TIMES

Arthur O. Sulzberger, Jr., born in New York in 1951, is Chairman of the family-owned The New York Times Company, an industry leader that has won 111 Pulitzer Prizes, more than any other news organization. Sulzberger graduated from Tufts University and Harvard Business School's Program for Management Development. He wrote for *The Raleigh Times* and The Associated Press before joining *The New York Times* in 1978. He has worked in a variety of roles, becoming publisher in 1992. Sulzberger has implemented innovative print, broadcast and online initiatives, allowing The Times to compete successfully in the 21st century global media marketplace. During Sulzberger's tenure as publisher, *The New York Times* has earned 27 Pulitzer Prizes. He has played a central role in the development of the Times Square Business Improvement District, serving as the first Chairman, and he helped found and serves as Chairman of the New York City Outward Bound Center. He lives in New York City.

## WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT IV

CHIEF LEGAL ADVISOR, U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT  
ACTING SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, 1989, BUSH ADMINISTRATION  
DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, 1984-1989, REAGAN ADMINISTRATION

William Howard Taft IV, a distinguished public servant with an expertise in law, was born in Washington, DC in 1945, and graduated from Yale and Harvard University Law School. He has practiced law in both the public and private sectors, as a senior legal advisor in various government offices and as a partner in leading law firms. He first joined the public sector in 1970 as Attorney Advisor to the Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission. Taft has held a number of high-ranking roles in several key government departments, notably: General Counsel, Department of Health Education and Welfare (1973-1976), General Counsel, Department of Defense (1981-1984), Deputy Secretary of Defense (1984-1989) Acting Secretary of Defense (1989) and US Permanent Representative to NATO (1989-1992). His great grandfather, William Howard Taft, was 27th President of the US and Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court. Taft has been widely recognized for his public service. He lives in Lorton, VA.

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## KURT VONNEGUT

AUTHOR, ESSAYIST, DRAMATIST

A major voice in American literature, Kurt Vonnegut was born in Indiana in 1922. He attended Cornell University and the University of Chicago and served in the United States Army in World War II where he was a prisoner of the German Army. Known for his satirical depictions of modern society and man's search for meaning in a meaningless universe, Vonnegut's books include: *Slaughterhouse-Five*, *Cat's Cradle*, *Breakfast of Champions*, *Welcome to the Monkey House* and *The Sirens of Titan*. He has received numerous honors, including a Literary Lion Award (1981) from the New York Public Library. He lives in New York City.



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## SELECT QUOTES FROM PARTICIPANTS FEATURED AND INTERVIEWED IN *THE AMERICAN RULING CLASS*

**LEWIS LAPHAM, NARRATOR**

“All ruling classes are based on merit...the problem is how do you define merit?”

“Benito Mussolini once said that fascism should be more properly called corporatism since it is the merger of corporate and state power.”

[Lapham’s definitions:]

- Nationalism: last refuge of small and impoverished countries without a well-developed tourist trade.
- The free market: the people who question its omniscience belong to weird religious sects.
- Civil liberties: extremely expensive and far too numerous.

“Remember Voltaire, the comfort of the rich depends upon an abundance of the poor. It’s a law of economics as old as supply and demand.”

“There is a difference between the owning class and the possessing class on the one hand and the governing class on the other. The CEO you might think of as an extremely well-paid gamekeeper, sufficiently well-paid so he doesn’t poach the birds. These are the people who serve the owners of wealth.”

“Each [member of the Ruling Class] spent time in the public sector and in the private sector. It doesn’t matter which of them you do first, as long as you do them both.”

“Recognize that the phrase 'national interest' is a synonym for 'self-interest' and you will find no moral obstacle that can not be removed from the highway of ambition.”

**JAMES A. BAKER III**

“One of the reasons that America *is* a force for good and for peace and stability when we are engaged internationally, is because we are the only country in the world that can responsibly and effectively project power the way we can around the world – and that is a *good* thing, and that is a good thing, for—I think—for, I think, Americans and for the world.”

**BILL BRADLEY**

“The most important power lies in the human spirit, quite frankly.”

“Some [corporations] are very responsible corporate leaders who think about their people and who try to use their corporation as an agent of change. I know corporations like that. There are obviously others that are more exploitative.”

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**HODDING CARTER III**

“There is something fatally attractive about joining the ruling class, starting of course with the pay, but also with the prestige and the like. But “fatally” ought to go with “attractive” in many cases because it means for a large part you are getting ready to forget about half of what you learned at Yale or anywhere else; that there are obligations in this democratic republic which I still—perhaps naively—believe need be factored in. I do not actually believe that society is best served by everybody running avidly after their own self-interest. I *particularly* think that it is a betrayal when the best and the brightest decide that their being the best and the brightest means that they jump on the gravy train and tell everyone else to ‘kiss mine’ as I leave the room.”

**WILLIAM T. COLEMAN, JR.**

“Everybody has the ability to be brilliant or stupid. Now if those are your two choices, why would you elect being stupid?”

**WALTER CRONKITE**

“The ruling class is the rich, who really command our industry, our commerce, and our finance. And those people are so able to manipulate our democracy, that they really control the democracy, I feel.

The more sensitive to our democratic needs who *join* the ruling class, the more successful our democracy will be and the more likely its survival.”

**BARBARA EHRENREICH**

“Philanthropy – don’t tell me about philanthropy, Jack. The real philanthropists in our society are the people who work for less than they can actually live on. Because they are giving of their time and their energy and their talents, all the time, so that people like you can be dressed well and fed cheaply and so on. *They* are giving to *you*.”

**MARTIN GARBUS**

“We used to think that war was aberrational, and that the basic element of our time was peace. We now know it’s something different. We now know that *peace* is aberrational. So that most of the decisions that a court is going to come down with are going to be in times of war. The Supreme Court is always, always going to over balance security. Government officials are always, always going to over balance security. It’s *our* job, whether we be lawyers, filmmakers, or activists in the street, to keep people aware of it and to resist the false claims of security. “

**VARTAN GREGORIAN**

“As my friend Mrs. Astor said, ‘Wealth is accumulated manure. If it’s collected, it stinks, so you have to spread it around.’ And there is nothing wrong with philanthropy, spreading it around.”

**MIKE MEDAVOY**

(Giving “advice” to one of the young characters) “There are no movies anymore, there is only content, content and distribution. Because if you

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are a great writer, you'll create a brand! In a word, *sales*. And who do we do it for Mike? Six multi-national, hyper-diversified, inter-locking, globe-straddling oligopolies. Today six, tomorrow three, then two, then one. “

**JOSEPH S. NYE, JR.**

“Power is the ability to get others to do things that get you what you want. There are basically three ways to do it. You can threaten people with coercion, which is sticks, or you can induce them with payments, which is carrots, or you can attract them, and get them to want what you want and co-opt them. And if you can do the third of those, which is what I call soft power, you can save a lot on carrots and sticks.”

“Spin is not soft power. Spin is propaganda, but only propaganda that works produces soft power.”

**SAMUEL PEABODY**

“Where does the leadership come from today? For my money, we're wandering. Where are we going? I don't know. In thinking about it, I thought that after the Marshall Plan, this country was at its peak. This was the most... the finest moment. After that we have been going bump, bump, bump.”

**PETER G. PETERSON**

“The idea, (and I have debated this with the President and others) that fat cats like Pete Peterson need their taxes reduced at the top level, is I think, close to rubbish. *Somebody* has to give up *something*, and has it become so politically incorrect, in this country, to ever suggest that anybody should give up something for the larger good.”

**PETE SEEGER**

“It's like this: imagine a big seesaw and one end is on the ground because its got a basket half full of rocks in it, the other end is up in the air because its got a basket one-quarter full of sand. And some of us got teaspoons, and we're trying to fill it, and of course, most people are kind of scoffing at us. They say, ‘don't you see it's leaking, just as quick as you're puttin it in? People like you have been trying for centuries, but its never going to change.’ And we say, ‘you might be right, but we think we're getting more people with teaspoons all the time, and one of these days that whole seesaw is going to go zooop!’ And people say, ‘Gee how did it happen so suddenly?’ Us and all our little teaspoons over the centuries. Who knows...”

**LAWRENCE H. SUMMERS**

“I think you can be too negative. We obviously have concerns in our society about inequality, but if you look at the fraction of families without televisions, without telephones, or the fraction where four children are confined to a single bedroom, or the fraction of people who are measured as eating inadequately, you look at any of those kinds of

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measures, you've actually seen fairly substantial trend improvements in the United States.”

**ARTHUR O. SULZBERGER, JR.**

“We are the only business, I would argue, that is protected by the Constitution of the United States. Gun manufacturers may disagree with that, but...”

**WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT, IV**

“I spent eight years in the Defense Department, and worked with them, [defense contractors] but I don't know anybody who wants there to be wars that can be avoided, not in the military, not in the defense contracting field. I'm surprised to hear it. George Orwell's prediction of perpetual war hasn't come about either.”

On advice from his great-grandfather: “Somebody asked him in fact what you just asked me ‘Mr. Chief Justice, how did you have all these wonderful posts—being President, in the Cabinet, and so forth,’ and he said, ‘Well, I always had my plate right side up when things were being passed around...’”

**KURT VONNEGUT**

“My lord...Of course, there's a ruling class, and it's based on money. It's a very simple problem. You can buy a jet plane of your own, or you can buy a president. “