

## The American Presidency: Pivotal Elections

Americans will go to the polls in a few months to vote in what innumerable commentators are calling a pivotal presidential election, even one of the most consequential in American history. But it's hardly the first time such claims have been made. Across the last 250 years, many presidential races have featured sharply contrasting agendas, political outlooks, and personal styles, with dire predictions about the nation's future if one candidate or the other prevailed. How did these races unfold? How did presidential races encapsulate profound cleavages running through the nation? How did the outcomes shape the nation's future? Looking back at elections from the nation's past may provide perspective on our moment.

This six-part virtual series explores these and other questions through lively conversations with eminent historians of American politics and the presidency. Each session will begin with a moderated discussion led by LBJ Library Director Mark Lawrence but will allow ample time for questions from the audience. Over six weeks leading up to Presidents' Day, we will sweep across American political history by delving into the elections of 1860, 1896, 1948, 1964, 1968, and 1980. We will examine presidents from Abraham Lincoln to Ronald Reagan, exploring the races that elevated them to the Oval Office and the implications of the races they won.

Schedule: Each session will run from 3:00 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. (MST)

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| January 11  | A.J. Baime, author of <i>Dewey Defeats Truman: The 1948 Election and the Battle for America's Soul</i>   |
| January 18  | Luke Nichter, author of <i>The Year that Broke Politics: Collusion and Chaos in the Presidential Election of 1968</i>                                  |
| January 25  | Edward Achorn, author of <i>The Lincoln Miracle: Inside the Republican Convention that Changed History</i>   |
| February 1  | Nancy Beck Young, author of <i>Two Suns of the Southwest: Lyndon Johnson, Barry Goldwater, and the 1964 Battle between Liberalism and Conservatism</i> |
| February 8  | Karl Rove, author of <i>The Triumph of William McKinley: Why the Election of 1896 Still Matters</i>  |
| February 15 | Jon Ward, author of <i>Camelot's End: The Democrats' Last Great Civil War</i>  |



Mark Lawrence  
Interview Host



Sarah McCracken  
Q&A Host



Sandy Kress  
Q&A Host



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Zoom Link for all sessions is Here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87076407288?pwd=SHpUQmd0VkJjK0VvcFI2MINWb3podz09>

Please contact the UT OLLI office with any questions at (512) 471-3124 or [utolli@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:utolli@austin.utexas.edu).

