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# News Gram



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## Looking to the Year Ahead

by Pierre David

**T**HE SUMMER IS WINDING DOWN SLOWLY, TEASINGLY, BLEEDING into September, fall — work, school. All this means it's an excellent time to survey the year ahead. What major developments can we expect between now and next summer? How will our lives change or grow? How will each of us react to these changes?

Usually, we think of the summer as a time to recuperate, to regain our strength, our vitality, following a long, often arduous year of getting up early, working hard all day, contending with all the challenges and pitfalls of day to day living. Summer, in this way, is timeless. To be in a summer state of mind is to forget whatever came before and not think about whatever is coming next. It is to unwind.

But that's an incomplete view of things. That misses the point. We're now a little more tanned, a little more rested. We've hopefully had time to read a few books, see a few friends, swim, barbeque, stroll, sleep late, ponder.

The question we should now be grappling with is: What do we want to accomplish in the coming year?

We have far more power to decide what happens to us, what our daily lives look like, than we sometimes admit. The fact is, barring some calamity, the next twelve months are waiting to be written; they will not simply happen; they will not be an accident; they will be a confluence of forces, personal and otherwise.

For millions of Americans, the next year will be about getting or holding onto a job, paying down debt, paying the mortgage, coming up with tuition, staying afloat. For kids, it will be about grades, sports, getting onto the team, getting into college. For good reason, most of us will spend almost all our time tending to the bare necessities. With a little reflection now, in the waning weeks of summer, we can (just maybe) squeeze a little more out of the year ahead. That means not just greater productivity. It means a renewed sense of purpose.

This entails thinking a little about a few things that we rarely, if ever, set aside time for. The next year will not just be about what we do, or where we go, or what we acquire. The next year will be

— continued on page 3

# The Making of the President 1960

by Theodore White

IT'S BEEN A HALF-CENTURY SINCE THEODORE WHITE WROTE HIS groundbreaking account of the 1960 presidential campaign, *The Making of the President 1960*. For anyone who cares a whit about politics or government or the future of the United States, this ought to be required reading as we head into the fall — and the beginning of the 2012 race for the White House.

It was, as White makes abundantly clear, the most spectacular, most unprecedented race that any of the veteran journalists covering the race could recall. In one corner was Richard Nixon, the vice president. Nixon was hardly inspirational, but he had Dwight Eisenhower in his corner. And he had peace and relative prosperity. And he had a lot of experience in government, in Congress and in the executive branch. He was seasoned if a little dull, cynical, inward-looking. In the opposing camp was the senator from Massachusetts, John F. Kennedy. Kennedy, as is well known, seemed to embody something magical: His idealism, his optimism, his sense that America could — and must — do better, at home and abroad.

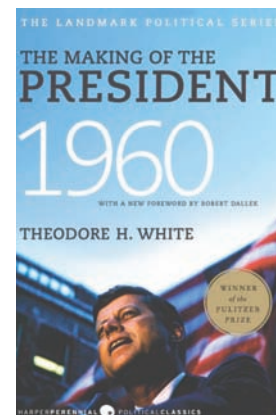
White portrays the two candidates as gladiator-chess players. Both men were fueled by an overriding ambition — a desire not simply for personal advancement but a sense that their worldview must prevail, that the country depended on it.

Through the prism of the present, the outcome looks preordained. We cannot imagine America today without a President Kennedy, so then-candidate Kennedy's victory looks inevitable to us. It hardly was. In the fight for the highest office in the land, innumerable issues swirled through the airwaves: Fears of national decline, a troubled economy, the plight of the farmers, the plight of the steelworkers, the Soviets, the space race. And there was religion. No Catholic had ever been president. Neither Nixon nor Hubert Humphrey, Kennedy's chief rival during the Democratic primaries, used Kennedy's Catholicism against him. (Both were scared of looking bigoted.) But they didn't have to. There were millions of Americans who wondered whether a Catholic president could be counted on to lead his country or whether he would be secretly controlled by Rome. Kennedy, to his immense credit, managed to assuage those fears while appealing to voters' best inclinations: Tolerance, trust, understanding would always trump fear and narrowness. This worked in West Virginia, the primary battleground where Kennedy first proved his bona fides, and, in the end, it worked in the general election. Kennedy made Americans proud, and he changed permanently the national consciousness.

But there's a more complicated side to all this that White artfully exposes. Kennedy was a very thoughtful man, intelligent, filled with ideas — but he was also infused with a certain hubris, and this had a dramatic impact not only on the 1960 race but on subsequent races. At the heart of the Kennedy campaign was that America was stagnating, that big things were going on in the world and that the United States, under the old and tired leadership of Eisenhower, was not seizing the moment. If he were elected, Kennedy proclaimed time and again, he would seize the moment. He would do what America had been destined to do — to fight

poverty, expand healthcare, combat the communists. This sounds very noble, very American, and it is — and it isn't. On the one hand, Kennedy tapped into Americans' undying optimism. On the other hand, his campaign (and, later, his administration) represented a break with history, a history that had generally put the American people, society, at the center of progress and regarded government as a necessary evil. Yes, there were precedents: Franklin Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Theodore Roosevelt. But the language of contemporary politics — the idea of government as a vehicle for metabolic change — was born then, in the early 1960s. That was when our leaders began telling us they could do everything, if only we would vote for them and donate to their campaigns.

Kennedy was, of course, just one man, and his administration lasted, tragically, less than three years. But we shouldn't lose sight of the importance of his White House. It was not simply smart, young men building a better America. It represents a rupture. White's contribution is to have cast a spotlight on this altered history. —PD



## ANNA NICOLE SMITH, PSYCHIATRISTS, AND WORKERS' COMP

The psychiatrist Khristine Eroshevich, who once treated former model and TV star Anna Nicole Smith, faces new criminal charges.

According to the California medical board of dishonest acts, Eroshevich is accused of falsifying records and unprofessional conduct. Specifically, the accusations filed in mid-July reveal that Eroshevich filed psychiatric reports for two patients — unrelated to Smith — she falsely claimed to have examined for workers' compensation and disability claims back in 2004 and 2006, respectively.

Her attorney, Bradley Brunon has pushed back on the charges, suggesting they were filed "way too late." The accusations, however, made headlines not simply because Eroshevich treated Smith, but also because she was previously convicted of two felonies in the Smith drug trial — one of which included obtaining medication under a false name.

While an LA County Superior Court judge dropped one of the felony convictions and reduced the other to a misdemeanor, the original charges have left a shroud of distrust around the psychiatrist.

Even 4 years after her death, it appears California is still fascinated by news about Anna Nicole Smith.

— Sabrina L. Schaeffer

## Looking to the Year Ahead

—continued from page 1

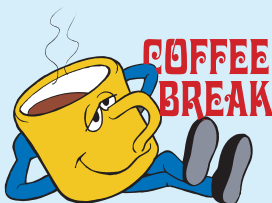
defined by our interior — by the ways in which we think and imagine ourselves and, of course, change. This is not a bunch of New Age, feel-good drivel. It goes to the heart of the same questions and ideas that all the great poets have grappled with since the beginning of time. It is, to get a little highfalutin for just a moment, existential. Hemingway famously observed that once you have been enveloped by war, everything inessential melts away, and the only things that are left behind are the most basic, most fundamental elements: walls, hills, signs, pebbles on the ground, clouds in the sky. We needn't enlist to understand what Hemingway has in mind. All we need to do is think about the fundamentals, the things we are supposed to think about when everything else disappears. The trick is this: No one can tell anyone else what their fundamentals are. No one can prescribe for us our interiors. But when we begin to think about these things — when we start boring through all the layers of sediment all the way to our deepest inclinations — we arrive at somewhere that is much, much more meaningful. This is the place that Hemingway is trying to lead us to. It is where we want to be.

Granted, all this is a lot to think about, especially while still trying to squeeze in a few more days at the beach or by the pool. But we should. One often senses that most of our collective problems, the abstract issues that define the national discourse, might be alleviated, if not done away with, if we had a better sense of ourselves. (This includes serious issues like unemployment, crime and even war.) Certainly, the ancient Greeks believed as much. If we knew why we were here, what made us happy, what we truly cared about, we might know better what our politics and our geopolitics ought to be, and we might expect less from others and more from ourselves.

Summer is almost over, but there's still time to think about the year ahead and where we'd like to be come next May or June. And not just where — but *who*. In this season of inflated political rhetoric and hyperbole and stupidity and invective run amuck, it's easy to lose sight of these things. That's a real pity. Knowing oneself — and knowing who we want to be, who we ought to be — is of the utmost importance. It is the beginning of everything else. —PD

### Ex parte refers to:

- A. Divorce
- B. a dramatic role in 19th century tragedy
- C. a legal stipulation insisting that participants in a trial cannot communicate with each other during or before the proceedings.
- D. a division of a legal action in numerous parts.



ANSWER: C  
Ex parte applies to a communication that may jeopardize a legal process to proceed fairly

## NEW IDEAS

As we watch the summer sun descend toward September, we are enthused about the days we have yet to see. Our summer thoughts address our education program for physicians that will raise the level of each doctor's work. We're not asking about *Marbury vs. Madison*, but about new laws, decisions, evidence and a variety of refinements in the system. At the very beginning, the program will focus on specifics and then spread out to more considerations.

The more I've worked on this important project, the more I realize the depth and subtlety of legal thinking. I've enjoyed the opportunity to have participated in the deposition process and will share my experience as a medical expert witness with my colleagues. This is a good time to solicit your intelligence and energy in our novel plan. If you are interested in helping to raise the standards of medical-legal reports on the border of psychiatry and the law, please call us at 310-517-1717. I am looking forward to working together and doing our best toward improving the quality of our work toward serving injured workers, employers and taxpayers who increasingly demand improvements in critical programs that affect the quality of California life.

— Irwin Savodnik, MD

## Is CA a Nanny State?

When California lawmakers return to session on Monday, they will have nearly 900 bills awaiting final action. One in particular — a bill intended to protect hotel housekeepers from back injuries — has grabbed headlines and reignited a heated debate over whether or not the Golden State has, in fact, turned into a "nanny state."

The "sheets bill," SB 432, introduced by state Sen. Kevin De Leon (D-Los Angeles) would require that California hotels use fitted sheets to cut down on the amount of mattress lifting housekeepers do while changing beds and cleaning rooms. Additionally, the bill would require other equipment changes, such as long-handled mops to help eliminate back-bending work.

The problem of hotel worker injuries is not imagined. According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, hotel workers suffer significantly higher injury rates than other service industry employees, with an average of 5 injuries per 100 workers. Last year alone more than 7,400 California hotel housekeepers filed workers' compensation claims — 883 of which were related to back injuries. And some have suggested that an "amenities arms race" in the hotel industry, in which hotels are increasingly using heavy "luxury" mattresses, many more pillows, thicker duvets, and bed skirts, has exacerbated the problem.

Still, opponents to the legislation claim this is simply more meddling by the state along the lines of recent proposals to ban spanking of children, shark fin soup, trans fats, and Styrofoam food containers. What's more, critics argue this bill will cost the hotel industry upwards of \$30 million at a time when the state is already suffering from a down economy and high unemployment. In addition, they argue the legislation will encourage far more employee lawsuits.

While it's unclear whether or not De Leon's bill will pass, it is likely that if the trend toward more lavish beds continues hotels will have to start making changes to the way they conduct housekeeping operations.

— Sabrina L. Schaeffer

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