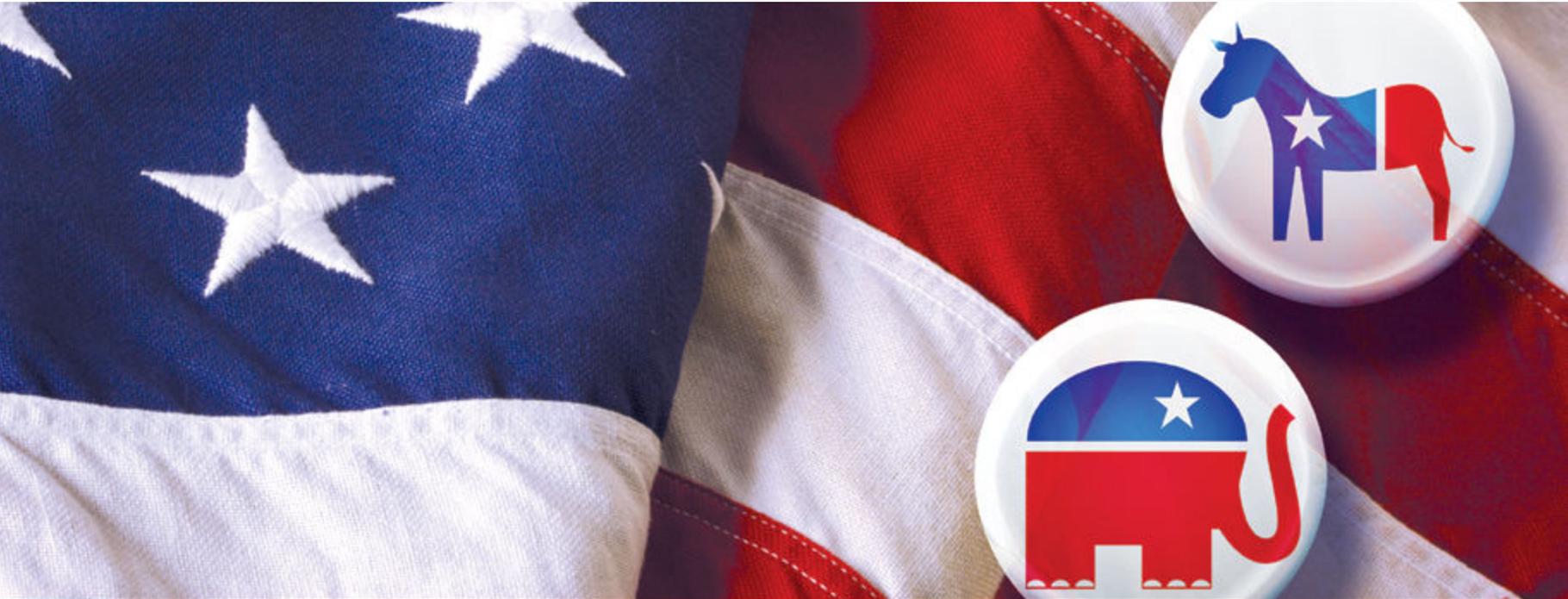


2009

CLIFFORD & VIRGINIA DURR

Lecture Series



*Presidential Politics: Media Messages about Age, Race and Gender*

## *Clifford Judkins Durr (1899-1975) and Virginia F. Durr (1903-1999)*

Clifford Judkins Durr was born and raised in Montgomery and Virginia Heard Foster in Birmingham. He attended Montgomery schools and the University of Alabama and was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University. Virginia attended Birmingham schools and Wellesley College in Massachusetts.

They moved to Washington, D.C., in 1933 when Clifford was appointed legal counsel to the Reconstruction Finance Corp. He later served as counsel to the Defense Plant Corp. Their home on Seminary Hill was a center of lively political discussion with distinguished guests.

In 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed Clifford to the Federal Communications Commission, where he distinguished himself as a strong advocate

for public television and was instrumental in obtaining for Alabama the first public educational channel. Virginia became active in the fight to eradicate the poll tax and was a founding member of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare.

While at the FCC, Clifford challenged J. Edgar Hoover by protecting the free speech rights of those with alleged communist connections, which included such innocent activities as belonging to wartime committees headed by Supreme Court justices and the vice president. Clifford refused reappointment to the FCC rather than implement a loyalty oath he believed violated the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The Supreme Court later declared the loyalty oath to be unconstitutional, but Clifford's career

The Durr family returned to Montgomery in the midst of the challenges and divisiveness of the civil rights struggle. One night E.D. Nixon called on Clifford and Virginia to come post bail for Virginia's friend, Rosa Parks, who had refused to give up her bus seat. Later, Clifford loaned his legal expertise to a young lawyer, Fred Gray, in bringing lawsuits that successfully challenged discrimination in public accommodations and education. Despite their travails, Clifford and Virginia were devoted to Alabama and to their family and many friends here.





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# Speaker Bio



Dr. Kathleen Hall Jamieson is the Elizabeth Ware Packard Professor of Communication at the Annenberg School for Communication and Walter and Leonore Annenberg director of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania. Jamieson is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a member of the American Philosophical Society. She is the author, co-author or editor of 15 books, including: *Presidents Creating the Presidency* (University of Chicago Press, 2008), *Echo Chamber: Rush Limbaugh and the Conservative Media Establishment* (Oxford, 2008) and *unSpun: Finding Facts in a World of Disinformation* (Random House, 2007). During the 2004 general election, Jamieson regularly appeared on NOW with Bill Moyers and The Newshour and throughout the 2008 campaign appeared regularly on Bill Moyers Journal. Jamieson has won university-wide teaching awards at each of the three universities at which she has taught.



## Presidential Politics: Media Messages about Age, Race and Gender

Presented by the Clifford J. and Virginia F. Durr Lectures and Auburn University at Montgomery

7:30 p.m.  Saturday, March 7

-  Welcome – [Janet Warren](#) 
-  Greetings from Durr Family – [Ann Durr Lyon](#) 
-  Introduction of Speaker – [Sheldon Hackney](#) 
-  Lecturer – [Kathleen Hall Jamieson](#) 
-  Questions and Answers 
-  Closing Remarks – [Janet Warren](#) 

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