

Academy Meeting at the Fairmont Le Chateau Frontenac in Quebec City

General Meeting Speaker, Friday, June 14, 2019

Michael Beschloss: Presidential Courage OR Great Presidents, Past and Present



If anyone knows the American President, it is **Michael Beschloss**. The widely praised author of nine books, he has been called “**the nation’s leading Presidential historian**” by *Newsweek*. Beschloss uses history to help us understand our own time and find perspective and nuance in current events. He also has the largest Twitter following of any historian on earth, and he appears on *TIME’s* list of the world’s top Twitter feeds. He speaks with eloquence about not only the presidency, but about the men who sat in the Oval Office in times of tumult and change. His history lessons

come alive with humanity and enthusiasm, and his lectures are riveting windows into the mind of the most powerful official in the world. By looking at past presidents, Beschloss helps predict the future of presidential politics and the impact of elections. In presentations filled with anecdotes, humor, and stories almost too good to be true, Beschloss gives context to the crucial events of our time. Trained at the Harvard Business School in leadership studies, he offers a look at the leadership that has affected the course of our nation, describing the leadership skills essential to almost every kind of success.

Resurrecting the West Wing. Beschloss’ book, *Presidential Courage: Brave Leaders and How They Changed America, 1789-1989*, has been lauded as an absorbing and inspiring saga detailing the crucial moments in American history when courageous presidents influenced the future of the country. It was a *New York Times* and *Washington Post* best-seller. With new sources and a dazzling command of history and human character, Beschloss brings to life these flawed, complex men, their wives, their families, their friends, and their foes. His book *Presidents of the United States of America* recounts the lives and administrations of the American presidents through Barack Obama and is illustrated by official White House portraits. Never have we had a more intimate, behind-the-scenes view of presidents coping with the supreme dilemmas of leading the free world and their own lives.

Other books include a highly praised trilogy on President Lyndon Johnson’s secret tapes, *Taking Charge and Reaching for Glory*, hailed as incomparable portraits of a President at work. *The Crisis Years: Kennedy and Khrushchev, 1960-1963*, won the Ambassador Book Prize and was cited by the *New Yorker* as the “definitive” history of John Kennedy and the Cold War. *The Conquerors: Roosevelt, Truman and the Destruction of Hitler’s Germany, 1941-1945* was a *New York Times* best-seller.

Beschloss is also a contributing columnist on history for the *New York Times* and the Emmy-winning *NBC News* presidential historian appearing regularly on *Meet the Press*, the *Today* show, *NBC Nightly News*, and *MSNBC*. He is a contributor to *The NewsHour* with Jim Lehrer on *PBS*. In September 2005, Beschloss was awarded an Emmy for creating the *Discovery Channel* series *Decisions that Shook the World*.

A Presidential Scholar, Decorated and Dedicated. Beschloss has served as a historian on the staff of the Smithsonian Institution, was appointed a senior associate member at Oxford University in England and was elected a senior fellow of the Annenberg Foundation. He is the recipient of the Order of Lincoln and the Harry S. Truman Public Service Award. In addition, he is a trustee of the White House Historical Association, the National Archives Foundation, the Thomas Jefferson Foundation, and the University of Virginia’s Miller Center of Public Affairs.