

# THE PROGRESSIVE FORUM

Great Minds, Great Answers

June 29, 2010  
For Release

Contact:  
Randall Morton  
President, Progressive Forum  
713-664-0020 office  
713-702-2245 cell  
rmorton@progressiveforumhouston.org

More at [www.progressiveforumhouston.org](http://www.progressiveforumhouston.org)

Arianna Huffington, Wednesday September 15

Eric Schlosser, Thursday September 30

Richard Dawkins, Tuesday October 5

Richard Leakey, Thursday October 28

John Paul Stevens, Tuesday November 16

The Progressive Forum, Houston, is presenting five events this fall 2010.

All events are at the Wortham Center, Cullen Theater, at 7:30 PM. Tickets range from \$14 to \$54. A limited number of \$74 patron tickets are available which include green room reception with the speaker. Tickets are available at [www.progressiveforumhouston.org](http://www.progressiveforumhouston.org) or by calling 832-251-0706. There is no physical box office except at the theater on event night.

Books will be on sale at four of the five events where the author will sign books and greet fans after the program, Justice John Paul Stevens has not written a book.

Co-founder and editor-in-chief of *The Huffington Post*, Arianna Huffington, will appear September 15, releasing a new book, *Third World America: How Our Politicians Are Abandoning the Middle Class and Betraying the American Dream*.

-More-

Renowned investigative reporter, Eric Schlosser, is author of *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal*, he will appear September 30. This event is produced in association with Urban Harvest.

Evolutionary British biologist Richard Dawkins will appear October 5, he's author of *The Greatest Show on Earth: The Evidence for Evolution* and *The God Delusion*.

The world's most famous paleoanthropologist, Richard Leakey, will appear October 28, author of *The Sixth Extinction*.

U.S Supreme Court Justice, John Paul Stevens, will appear November 16, he has not written a book, there will be no post-event activity.

Arianna Huffington is the author of 13 books including *Third World America*. She launched *The Huffington Post* in May 2005, which *Newsweek* called the "winner among internet media companies today." Her site attracted 24.3 million unique viewers in June 2010.

Huffington is a nationally syndicated columnist and co-host of the popular public radio show, *Left, Right & Center*. She is a constant presence on television in shows such as *Charlie Rose*, *Larry King Live*, *Countdown with Keith Obermann*, *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, and *The O'Reilly Factor*. *Time* magazine named her among the top 100 most influential people of the world. The Financial times named her among the 50 people who shaped the decade.

Eric Schlosser's *Fast Food Nation* (2001) has been translated into more than twenty languages and remained on *The New York Times* bestseller list for over two years. It helped start a revolution in how American's think about what they eat. The book is a fierce indictment of our industrialized food-agricultural system which has a range of global impacts such as rising obesity rates, food borne illnesses, unfair labor practices, the decline of farming and ranching, environmental degradation, and more.

Schlosser also co-produced and co-starred in the film *Food, Inc.* (2009), which was nominated for an Academy Award for best documentary feature. According to the film's website, [www.foodincmovie.com](http://www.foodincmovie.com), the film "exposes America's industrialized agricultural system and its effect on our environment, health, economy, and worker's rights."

British biologist Richard Dawkins, author of *The Greatest Show on Earth: The Evidence for Evolution* (2009), will appear Tuesday, October 5. Dawkins is also the author of *The God Delusion* (2006), a blockbuster which sold more than 2 million copies in English alone.

*The Greatest Show on Earth* is a counterattack on advocates of the concept of intelligent design, explaining the evidence for evolution. Dawkins sifts through layers of scientific evidence such as living examples of natural selection, clues in the fossil records, intricacies of developing embryos, plate tectonics, molecular genetics, and more.

Dawkins first catapulted to fame with *The Selfish Gene*. He's a Fellow of both the Royal Society and the Royal Society of Literature. He retired from his position as professor at Oxford University in 2008 and remains a Fellow of New College of Oxford University.

The world's most famous paleoanthropologist, Richard Leakey, will appear Thursday October 28. *Time* magazine named him among the top 100 great minds of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. His presentation is entitled "Why Our Origins Matter." Leakey is credited with some of the most significant fossil discoveries including the legendary Turkana Boy found near Lake Turkana in Kenya which lived over 1.6 million years ago which was the

“first early human with...a tall stature like our own,” according to the American Museum of Natural History.

As a leading conservationist, Leakey also spearheaded efforts to end rampant elephant poaching, raising over \$150 million and rallying international support. As an activist, he started a new political party in his native Kenya, taking a stand against corruption. More recently, he founded WildlifeDirect.org, an online service that allows anyone to play a role in saving the world’s most endangered species. Leakey has co-authored over 100 scientific papers. He’s the author of several books including *The Sixth Extinction: Patterns of Life and the Future of Mankind*.

Retired Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens will appear Tuesday November 16. He’s the third-longest serving justice in the Court’s history and widely acclaimed as the leader of the liberal wing of the Court. President Obama’s nominee, Elena Kagen, has succeeded Stevens.

Stevens earned a Bronze Star in World War II for his work as a code-breaker in the Pacific theater. He graduated from Northwestern Law School where he distinguished himself as editor of the law review, graduating with the highest grades in the law school’s history up to that time. His work as an anti-trust attorney in his native Chicago led to positions with special counsels to the House of Representatives and the U.S. Attorney General’s office. He also served as a lecturer on anti-trust law at the law schools of Northwestern and the University of Chicago. In 1970, President Richard Nixon appointed him to the U.S. Court of Appeals. Five years later, President Gerald Ford appointed him to the U.S. Supreme Court.

-More-

The Progressive Forum is a nonprofit 501(C)(3) civic speaker organization presenting its events at The Wortham Center. It's the only civic speaker organization in America dedicated expressly to progressive values. Its purpose is to enrich our democracy and culture by striving to present the greatest minds from all the fields of human endeavor, the sciences and the humanities as well as politics and public affairs, great minds it believes are advancing the success of individuals, our species, and life on the earth.

This year of 2010 marks the fifth anniversary of The Progressive Forum.

The Progressive Forum premiered on June 13, 2005, with Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. and Houston Mayor Bill White in a program called "Our Environmental Challenges." Al Gore launched *An Inconvenient Truth* at The Progressive Forum June 7, 2006, his first U.S. book event for that title. On September 17, 2008, Gloria Steinem celebrated the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the historic National Women's Conference held in Houston. On March 27, 2008, Robert Redford introduced a film he produced and narrated, *Fighting Goliath: Texas Coal Wars*, a documentary about 32 Texas cities banding together opposing coal plant permits. Last year June 12, 2009, Nancy Pelosi became the first sitting U.S. House Speaker to make a public appearance in Houston in modern times. More recently, December 7, 2009, The Progressive Forum produced the national launch event for the first book by premier climatologist James Hansen of NASA, *Storms of My Grandchildren: The Truth about the Coming Climate Catastrophe and Our last Chance to Save Humanity*.

-More-

Other speakers have included Jared Diamond, Seymour Hersh, Molly Ivins, George Soros, Edward O. Wilson, Frank Rich, Garrison Keillor, Joe Klein, Tim Flannery, Anna Deavere Smith, Ken Burns, George Lakoff, Robert Redford, Bill McKibben, Elizabeth Edwards, Larry Wilmore, T. Boone Pickens, Lester Brown, Brian Greene, and Karen Armstrong.

The Progressive Forum originated a new model in civic speaker organizations in Houston to deliver a larger audience and a higher quality experience in a theater rather than a hotel luncheon with traditional speaking events. The Progressive Forum model is similar to a performing arts company by using the finest theaters, paying speaker fees to present the top intellectual stars, and marketing throughout the region. It offers convenient box office services through its website allowing ticket buyers to print tickets at their computer in addition to traditional phone sales.

Founder and president, Randall R. Morton has owned Randall Morton International, Inc. for 34 years, an advertising and public relations agency whose clients have included leading oil equipment in the U.S., Japan, Mexico, and Europe. Morton co-created, produced, and hosted the Oilfield Breakfast Forum from 1994 to 2003, a another speaker platform which is still the largest in the oil industry. While earning a degree in government from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., he served as an issue writer for the Democratic National Committee.