

# THE PROGRESSIVE FORUM

Great Minds, Great Answers

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For Release

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Gail Collins, *New York Times* columnist at The Progressive Forum June 26, 2012

*New York Times* columnist and best selling author, Gail Collins, will speak at The Progressive Forum Tuesday, June 26. The event will be at the Wortham Center, Cullen Theater, at 7:30 PM. She will sign books and greet fans at the end of the evening.

Tickets range from \$14 to \$54. A limited number of \$74 tickets are available, which includes a pre-event, green room reception with Collins at 6:15 PM and center-front seating. 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.

Collins is releasing a new book, *As Texas Goes...How the Lone Star State Hijacked the American Agenda*. In what her publisher says is one of the most explosive and timely political books in years, Gail Collins declares, "What happens in Texas doesn't stay in Texas anymore."

The publisher, W.W. Norton, continues:

Not until she visited Texas, did Collins realize that she had missed the one place that mattered most in America's political landscape. Raised in Ohio, Collins had previously seen the American fundamental divide as a war between the Republican heartland and its two liberal coasts. But the real story, she came to see, was in Texas, where Bush, Cheney, Rove and Perry had created a conservative political agenda that is now sweeping the country and defining our national identity. Through its vigorous support of banking deregulation, lax environmental standards, and draconian tax cuts, through its fierce championing of states rights, gun ownership, and, of course, sexual abstinence, Texas, with Governor Rick Perry's presidential ambitions, has become the bellwether of a far-reaching national movement that continues to have profound social and economic consequences. Like it or not, as Texas goes, so goes the nation.

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Gail Collins joined *The New York Times* in 1995 as a member of the editorial board. In 2001, she became the first woman ever appointed editor of *The New York Times* editorial page, serving from 2001 to 2007. She continues to serve as op-ed columnist.

She also authored *When Everything Changed: The Amazing Journey of American Women from 1960 to the Present* (2009). The book is a mix of oral history and research covering politics, fashion, culture, economics, sex, families, and work. It ends in 2008 with Hillary Clinton's historic presidential campaign. It is a definitive book on the five crucial decades of progress in every realm of women's lives, through the testimonies of both those who made history and those who simply made their way.

*When Everything Changed* was a sequel to her earlier historical work, *America's Women: 400 Years of Dolls, Drudges, Helpmates and Heroines* (2007).

Before joining *The Times*, Collins was a columnist at *New York Newsday* and the *New York Daily News*, and a reporter for United Press International. Her first jobs in journalism were in Connecticut where she founded the Connecticut State News Bureau which provided coverage of the state capitol and politics. When she sold it in 1977, the CSNB was the largest news service of its kind in the country with more than 30 weekly and daily newspaper chains.

Collins also authored *Scorpion Tongues: Gossip, Celebrity and American Politics* (2007) as well as *The Millennium Book* (1990) which she co-authored with her husband, Dan Collins, a CBS News producer.

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.

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. In June 12, 2009, Nancy Pelosi became the first sitting U.S. House Speaker to make a public appearance in Houston in modern times. On 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*. And on November 16, 2010, The Progressive Forum presented John Paul Stevens, the first U.S. Supreme Court Justice to appear in a public event in Houston.

Other speakers have included Karen Armstrong, Lester Brown, Ken Burns, Richard Dawkins, Jared Diamond, Sylvia Earle, Elizabeth Edwards, Tim Flannery, Jane Goodall, Brian

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Greene, Arianna Huffington, Seymour Hersh, Molly Ivins, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., George Soros, Edward O. Wilson, Frank Rich, Garrison Keillor, Joe Klein, Anna Deavere Smith, George Lakoff, Richard Leakey, Bill McKibben, Bill Moyers, Michael Pollan, Eric Schlosser, T. Boone Pickens, Larry Wilmore, and Edward O. Wilson.

The Progressive Forum originated a new model for civic speaker organizations in Houston, designed to deliver a larger audience in a theater with a higher quality experience, compared with hotel luncheons by traditional speaker organizations. The Progressive Forum model is similar to a performing arts company by using the finest theaters, paying speaker fees to present top intellectual stars, and marketing throughout the region with public media. It offers convenient box office services through its website, as well as traditional phone sales.

Founder and president, Randall R. Morton has owned Randall Morton International, Inc. for 35 years, an advertising and public relations agency whose clients have included the leading oil equipment companies in the U.S., Japan, Mexico, and Europe. Morton created, produced, and hosted the Oilfield Breakfast Forum from 1994 to 2003, a another speaker series which is still the largest in the oil industry. He earned a B.A. degree in government from Georgetown University, and attained a national ranking of three as a pass receiver in nonscholarship football. While at Georgetown, he served as an issue writer for the Democratic National Committee. Later, he earned a second B.A. in communications from Tulsa University, serving the following year as adjunct professor teaching advertising design and copy.