

The **BASIC**
SYMBOLS
of the
AMERICAN
POLITICAL
TRADITION

by WILLMOORE KENDALL
and GEORGE W. CAREY

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To my friend Willmoore
Requiescat in pace

Preface

Willmoore Kendall was invited to give a series of lectures at Vanderbilt University in the summer of 1964 on the American political tradition. These lectures, five in all, have been dubbed by Willmoore's colleagues and students "The Vanderbilt Lectures."

Soon after Willmoore's death, his wife asked me to assume the task of editing and expanding the lectures so that they would be suitable for a book. I readily agreed to this undertaking for reasons that are too numerous and complicated to cite here.

The following facts ought to be stated for the benefit of those who read this book:

(a) The first four chapters of this volume constitute the heart of the Vanderbilt lectures as they were delivered. These lectures, because they were designed for oral presentation required some editing and the adding of footnotes in order that they would be suitable for book form. I have tried to make only those revisions and additions necessary for that purpose.

(b) The last four chapters (with exceptions I will note immediately below) are mine. Because Willmoore and I were close friends and collaborators who spent the better part of our time together discussing the very matters analyzed in this book (as well as being of like mind in our thinking and approaches to the American tradition), the last four chapters are

best read as a continuation of the first four. Though different stylistically, the theme and the thrust of the materials for which I bear primary responsibility are in keeping with our views of the American experience—views which are readily discernible in the Vanderbilt Lectures.

The exceptions to which I referred above would be these: First, the final chapter of this book contains a good deal of the material presented in the fifth Vanderbilt lecture. However, because it was an "extra" lecture, written on the spot under the pressures of time and circumstance, I felt less constrained (less, that is, than when dealing with the first four lectures) in editing or adding to it. Moreover, in light of the expansion of the lectures into book form, additions and changes of fairly substantial nature were definitely called for.

Second, wherever possible I have tried to incorporate Willmoore's thinking and views concerning the issues raised in the lectures and in my chapters. To this end I have gone over with great care lecture notes provided me by certain of Willmoore's better students at the University of Dallas, his writings pertaining to the matters raised in this book, and our personal correspondence.

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To Professor Avery Leiserson, who invited Willmoore Kendall to speak at Vanderbilt University.

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To my wife Claire, for reasons that I shan't disclose.

Finally, to paraphrase Willmoore: Let us have no foolishness about their not being responsible for this book and its contents. All, in their own way, must bear some part of the responsibility.

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