

## Amity Shlaes

Author & Historian

Amity Shlaes, a sought-after keynote speaker who places the current economy in the context of the past has given speeches and lectures covering a wide range of topics to financial institutions, corporations, colleges, universities, and historical societies. She writes a syndicated column for *Forbes*, is Chairman and CEO of the Coolidge Foundation, and serves as Presidential Scholar at the King's College, a Christian college based in New York.

Known as the conservative Doris Kearns Goodwin, Shlaes is the author of *Great Society: A New History*, *Coolidge*, a comprehensive biography and reassessment of President Calvin Coolidge, four *New York Times* bestsellers, *The Forgotten Man Graphic Edition*, *Coolidge* (debuted at number three on the *Times* nonfiction list, was a *Times* "Editor's Choice," and Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan named it a book of the year), *The Forgotten Man: A New History of the Great Depression* (named by *The Wall Street Journal* as one of the best books to read during a financial crisis), and *The Greedy Hand*.

A long-time columnist for *Bloomberg* and the *Financial Times*, Shlaes commenced her career at *The Wall Street Journal*, where she was an editorial board member. Over the years she has published as well as in *The New Yorker*, *Fortune*, *National Review*, *The New Republic*, and *Foreign Affairs*. She has appeared on PBS's *News Hour with Jim Lehrer*, Comedy Central's *The Daily Show*, Fox News' *Glenn Beck*, ABC's *Good Morning America*, *Charlie Rose*, CNBC's *Kudlow*, contributes to Public Radio International's *Marketplace*, and Bloomberg radio. For the past five years she has chaired the jury of the Manhattan Institute's Hayek Book Prize and has won both the Hayek (2009) and the Bastiat Prize for Journalism (2002).

*Great Society* is Shlaes's stunning revision of our last great period of idealism, the 1960s, with burning relevance for our contemporary challenges that the *Wall Street Journal* calls "an

illuminating alternative to sentimental reminiscences of liberals' attempts in the 1960s." Today, a battle rages in our country. Many Americans are attracted to socialism and economic redistribution while opponents of those ideas argue for purer capitalism. In the 1960s, Americans sought the same goals many seek now: an end to poverty, higher standards of living for the middle class, a better environment and more access to health care and education. Then, too, we debated socialism and capitalism, public sector reform versus private sector advancement. Time and again, whether under John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, or Richard Nixon, the country chose the public sector. Shlaes shows how Johnson's and Nixon's programs shackled millions of families in permanent government dependence. Ironically, Shlaes argues, the costs of entitlement commitments made a half century ago preclude the very reforms that Americans will need in coming decades.

*Coolidge* is both follow up and precursor to her much lauded *The Forgotten Man*, a book that continues to spark discussion and debate. In *Coolidge* she delivers a brilliant and provocative reexamination of America's thirtieth president and the enormous economic growth he helped to produce. After a divisive period of government excess and corruption, Coolidge restored national trust in Washington and achieved what few other peacetime presidents have: he left office with a federal budget smaller than the one he inherited. In her *Coolidge* talks Shlaes shows that the restraint that sometimes earned him ridicule was in fact his greatest strength: he reduced the federal budget during this time in office even as the economy grew, wages rose, taxes fell, and unemployment dropped. Her speeches reveal the lessons that financial institutions, municipal governments, politicians, corporations, insurance companies, philanthropic organizations, and educators can take away from Coolidge's vastly under-rated presidency.

Shlaes graduated *magna cum laude* from Yale and studied at the Free University in Berlin on a DAAD fellowship. Yale named her to its "Who's Been Blue," list of most distinguished alumni. She lives with her family in New York.

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