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Mark Shields

Political Commentator

Mr. Shields has been on the political playing field since Robert F. Kennedy ran for president in 1968.

Since 1988, Shields has provided weekly political analysis and commentary for the PBS NewsHour. His current on-screen counterpart is David Brooks of The New York Times. Previous counterparts were the late William Safire, Paul Gigot of the Wall Street Journal, and David Gergen.

Shields was also a regular panelist on Inside Washington, a weekly public affair show that was seen on both PBS and ABC until it ceased production in December 2013. For 17 years, Shields was moderator and panelist on CNN's Capital Gang.

Subject Area/Topic: THE STATE OF THE UNITED STATES?

Highlights: An optimist himself, Shields believes that "...Americans are the most optimistic people on the planet." He expressed his admiration for four optimistic presidents—Roosevelt, Kennedy, Reagan, and Clinton. He commended Clinton for raising taxes and balancing the budget. In contrast, he noted that it took President Trump only two years to add two trillion dollars to the national debt.

In a succinct statement of his professional philosophy, Shields said, "I like politics [and believe it can] provide a route for the legitimate resolution of disputes and a way to achieve a pragmatic compromise."

As Shields sees it, a key factor in Trump's victory in 2016 was the acceptance by his supporters of the argument that "...established politicians don't care about you." He believes that "Democrats need to reclaim optimism and ...find someone who can reach those Trump voters.