

## Journalist Murray Kempton to deliver 1974 Mandeville Lecture Series

**January 14, 1974**

Journalist Murray Kempton, known as "a master phrase-maker with a sharp ear and a sharper pen," has been chosen to deliver the four-part 1974 Mandeville Lecture series sponsored by the University of California, San Diego. Kempton's topic for the series is "The Press and the Rest of Us."

The first lecture, dealing with the obsolescence of journalism, will be held Tuesday, January 22, in the auditorium of the San Diego Gas and Electric Building, 101 Ash Street. The three remaining lectures, scheduled for January 23, 28 and 31, will be held in Garren Auditorium at the School of Medicine on the UCSD campus. All of the lectures will begin at 8:00 p.m. and all are free and open to the public.

In the second lecture Kempton will deal with the training of journalists. On January 28 his subject will be the newspapers and their freedom. On January 31, Kempton will discuss "What Might Newspapers Be?"

Author of a four-day-a-week column for the New York Post for about 17 years, Kempton established a reputation for his fairness and dedication to truth while disdaining such political labels as "liberal" or "radical." During the 1960's he served briefly as an editor with the "New Republic" and as a columnist with the New York "World-Telegram and Sun."

Since 1969 Kempton has devoted himself to free-lance writing and has regularly contributed to the "New York Review of Books." His articles have focused upon individuals at significant moments - including labor leaders, mobsters, politicians, Communists, Freedom Riders, baseball players, and movie stars. He has been a commentator on CBS's Spectrum series since 1971 and is currently serving as a Fellow at the Adlai Stevenson Institute in Chicago.

During the McCarthy era, Kempton was one of the few journalists who publicly defended the civil liberties of Communists. In 1961 he traveled from Montgomery, Alabama, to Jackson, Mississippi, with civil rights' activists. His articles have earned him several journalism awards including the Sidney Hillman Foundation award for reporting and twice the Page One award from the Newspaper Guild of New York. In 1967 he received the George Polk Memorial Award for interpretive reporting that is "intellectually sensitive, morally responsive, and powerfully instructive."

Kempton is the author of "Part of Our Time" (1955), a study of radicals in the 1930's; "America Comes of Middle Age" (1963), a collection of his columns; and the recently published "The Briar Patch," about the Black Panther movement.

Kempton was born in Baltimore, Maryland in 1918. He studied government and history At Johns Hopkins University, obtaining his B.A. degree in 1939. In late 1942, Kempton joined the staff of the New York "Post" as a labor reporter. Following service in the Army, Kempton was assistant to the "Post's" labor editor and columnist, Victor Riesel, whom he succeeded in 1949.

In the beginning, Kempton wrote mainly about labor events and personalities, with special emphasis on the relationships between certain union leaders and organized crime. Eventually he expanded the range of his subjects to include civil rights and civil liberties as well as foreign affairs and domestic politics. During the

McCarthy era of the 1950's Kempton devoted much of his effort to what he called "some external exiles" - American Communists who had been fired from jobs, expelled from labor unions, evicted from housing projects, and denied pension benefits.

In the mid-1950's Kempton devoted some columns to the beginnings of the Black struggle for civil rights in the South. In 1958 he took a year's leave from the "Post" and went to Italy to teach journalism at the University of Rome on a Fulbright grant. A year later he was one of a group of journalists who accompanied Nikita S. Khrushchev on his coast-to-coast tour of the United States.

In addition to his regular columns, Kempton has contributed scores of free-lance articles to various magazines, including the "Reporter," "Commonweal," "Saturday Evening Post," "Life," "Harper's Magazine," "Atlantic Monthly," "Esquire," and "Playboy. "

Kempton's work has been both praised and criticized. "Time" Magazine said that his work was "weirdly overwritten." On the other hand, Robert Lekachman said, "on his good days Kempton is the nation's most exciting political journalist and on his bad ones he can be dreadfully interesting," and William F. Buckley said "...as columnist the noblest of us all."

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