

THE PROGRESSIVE FORUM

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Jared Diamond to Lead Progressive Forum's
First Full Season, Including Seymour Hersh and Molly Ivins

PHOTOS: Jared Diamond, Seymour Hersh, Molly Ivins

The Progressive Forum, Houston, will present "An Evening with Jared Diamond," author of the bestseller *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*, on Friday, February 24, at the InterContinental Hotel at 7:30 p.m. This event will open the first full season of The Progressive Forum, which also includes Seymour Hersh, acclaimed investigative reporter for the *New Yorker*, on March 23, and Molly Ivins, nationally syndicated political columnist, on April 17.

Randall R. Morton, president, said, "Jared Diamond will discuss questions from his book *Collapse*, now in paperback, such as why did great civilizations collapse, how likely is it ours will too, how do we maximize human prosperity while sparing the planet from ecological ruin?"

Morton continued, "Jared Diamond won the Pulitzer Prize for his earlier bestseller, *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, which was made into a three-part PBS television series. Diamond is one of the world's most awarded scientists. He's received America's highest civilian award in science, the National Medal of Science, for his landmark research in evolutionary biology."

Seymour Hersh will appear Thursday, March 23, also at the InterContinental Hotel. He broke the story of U.S. prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib. His most recent book is called *Chain of Command: The Road From 9/11 to Abu Ghraib*. Hersh won the Pulitzer Prize for uncovering the My Lai massacre during the Vietnam War. His famous reports

include Nixon's secret bombing of Cambodia, Kissinger's wire tapping of newsmen, and Pakistan's growing nuclear arsenal.

Molly Ivins, a native Houstonian, will appear Monday, April 17, at the Wortham Cullen Theater. Her recent books include *Bushwhacked: Life in George W. Bush's America* and *Who Let the Dogs In? Incredible Political Animals I have Known*. Ivins began her career at the *Houston Chronicle*. She was also co-editor of the *Texas Observer* and a reporter for *The New York Times*. Her work appears in publications such as *Esquire*, *The Atlantic*, and *The Nation*, as well as on National Public Radio.

Morton said, "The Progressive Forum is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, civic speaker organization whose purpose is to enrich our democracy and culture by presenting the greatest minds from all fields of human endeavor—the sciences and the humanities as well as the world of politics and public affairs. Our progressive viewpoint is rooted in the mainstream constitutional, enlightenment, and egalitarian values of America's founding fathers, a bedrock of moderate values that need affirming, now more than ever."

Morton continued, "We're also pioneering a new model in the field of public affairs to deliver a higher quality experience to larger audiences, similar to a performing arts company. We use the finest theaters and venues, we feature the world's top cultural and intellectual stars, and we use intensive marketing and convenient box office services. As far as I know, we're the first civic speaker organization in the nation with a performance company model, and our progressive viewpoint makes us doubly unique."

The Progressive Forum, Houston, is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. The first event featured Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., and Mayor Bill White speaking on the environment June 5, 2005, at The Hobby Center.

Founder Randall Morton has owned Randall Morton International, Inc., for 30 years, an advertising and public relations agency whose clients have included leading oil equipment companies in the U.S., Japan, Mexico and Europe. Morton created and hosted the Oilfield Breakfast Forum, which became the largest speaker platform in the petroleum industry whose surplus went to Houston's SEARCH-Homeless Project. While earning a degree in government from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., he served as an issue writer for the Democratic National Committee.

Tickets for the Jared Diamond event are \$34 and \$54 with discounts for seniors, students, and groups. Patron seats are \$100 and include a private reception with Jared Diamond, an autographed book, and premium seat location. A discount subscription is available by purchasing tickets to all three events—Jared Diamond, Seymour Hersh, and Molly Ivins. Subscription deadline for the three events is February 24. To purchase tickets, call 713-315-2525, visit The Hobby Center box office at 800 Bagby, or go online to progressiveforumhouston.com.