

Ruth Marcus's Jackson Lecture at Chautauqua Institution

*John Q. Barrett**

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On July 6, 2020, Ruth Marcus, deputy editorial page editor of *The Washington Post*, was Chautauqua Institution's 16th annual Robert H. Jackson Lecturer on the Supreme Court of the United States.

Because of the pandemic, this year's Jackson "lecture" occurred online, in the format of Marcus in conversation with me and then answering viewer questions.

For video of the program, in which Marcus discussed her excellent 2019 book, *Supreme Ambition: Brett Kavanaugh and the Conservative Takeover*, the Supreme Court, the Justices, and decisions from the current Court term, [click here](#).



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Ruth Marcus, who oversees *The Washington Post's* signed opinion content, is a highly acclaimed reporter who has covered every major institution in Washington, D.C., including the U.S. Supreme Court, the White House, and Congress, and written about judicial nominations and appointments stretching back to Judge Robert Bork in 1987.

After receiving her bachelor's degree at Yale College, Marcus wrote for the *National Law Journal* before attending Harvard Law School. She began writing for the *Post* while at Harvard, from which she earned her J.D. in 1984, and she formally joined the paper after graduation.

Marcus joined the *Post's* national staff in 1986, covering campaign finance, the U.S. Department of Justice, the Supreme Court, and the White House. From 1999 through 2002, she served as deputy national editor, supervising reporters who covered money and politics, Congress, the Supreme Court, and other national issues. She joined the editorial board in 2003 and began writing a regular column, now a syndicated column, in 2006. She was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for Commentary in 2007.

Marcus is the author of *Supreme Ambition: Brett Kavanaugh and the Conservative Takeover*, published in 2019 by Simon & Schuster. A deeply reported book, it is the definitive account of a pivotal moment in modern U.S. history, one that was 30 years in the making and that will shape the judicial system of America for generations to come.

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Chautauqua Institution's Robert H. Jackson Lecture is named in honor of the former Chautauquan, western New York-based lawyer, New Dealer, U.S. Solicitor General, U.S. Attorney General, U.S. Supreme Court justice, and Nuremberg chief prosecutor.

The Jackson Lecture at Chautauqua Institution is a leading expert's annual consideration of the U.S. Supreme Court, its Justices, signal decisions, and related topics in the weeks following—or, this unusual summer, just days before—the completion of the Supreme Court's annual Term.

Chautauqua's Jackson Lecturers have been:

- 2005: Geoffrey R. Stone, University of Chicago professor;
- 2006: Linda Greenhouse, *New York Times* journalist and Yale University lecturer and research scholar;
- 2007: Seth P. Waxman, WilmerHale partner and former Solicitor General of the United States;
- 2008: Jeffrey Toobin, staff writer at *The New Yorker* and CNN senior legal analyst;
- 2009: Paul D. Clement, Kirkland & Ellis partner and former Solicitor General of the United States;
- 2010: Jeff Shesol, historian, communications strategist, and former White House speechwriter;
- 2011: Dahlia Lithwick, senior editor at *Slate*;
- 2012: Pamela Karlan, Stanford University professor;
- 2013: Charles Fried, Harvard University professor and former Solicitor General of the United States;
- 2014: Akhil Reed Amar, Yale University professor;
- 2015: Laurence H. Tribe, Harvard University professor;
- 2016: Tracey L. Meares, Yale University professor.
- 2017: Judge Jon O. Newman, U.S. Circuit Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit;
- 2018: Justice Rosalie Silberman Abella, Supreme Court of Canada;
- 2019: Donald B. Verrilli, Jr., Munger, Tolles & Olson partner and former Solicitor General of the United States; and
- 2020: Ruth Marcus, Deputy Editorial Page Editor, *The Washington Post*.