

# The First Modern Campaign



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The presidential campaign that pitted Richard M. Nixon against John F. Kennedy was the most significant political campaign since World War II. With Eisenhower's tenure at an end, American society broke with the culture of the war years. This social shift was reflected in and provoked by new trends in American political life and political campaigning, all of which made 1960 a landmark year in American politics. In this engaging book, Gary A. Donaldson tells the story of Kennedy versus Nixon with a sharp eye for the salient political developments and a keen sense of the drama of an election that was unlike any other the nation had experienced. The election of 1960 was also an orchestrated political drama, organized as a sweeping campaign from coast to coast and staged for a national television audience. This made it the first modern campaign in which the television media changed the dynamics of presidential politics and in which photographs, charisma, and direct appeals to voters counted as they had never done before. It was also an election of intense personal rivalry made all the more spirited by the prejudice against Kennedy's Catholicism and his intention to widen the American political arena. Ideological shifts within the parties as they combined with innovations in campaigning would mark a clear divide in politics as it was practiced and politics as it would have to be practiced in the future. Yet not since Theodore White's journalistic account, *The Making of the President*, has attention been paid to the full 1960 campaign as it played out in the early primaries and then culminated in the November election. Donaldson shows why the whole political season is critical to understanding American politics today. *The First Modern Campaign* is essential and engaging reading for anyone interested in contemporary politics in the United States.

作者介绍:

目录:

[The First Modern Campaign\\_下载链接1](#)

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