

## **THE TEXAS DEBATES: RACE FOR U.S. SENATE**

### **Paul Sadler vs. Grady Yarbrough**

DALLAS/FORT WORTH – KERA hosted a U.S. Senate debate between the Democrats who finished first and second in the May primary. In *The Texas Debates: Race for U.S. Senate*, former state representative Paul Sadler and retired educator Grady Yarbrough faced off in a one-hour television debate that was broadcast on KERA-TV Channel 13 at 7:00 p.m. CDT on Wednesday, June 27, with an encore broadcast at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, July 1. The program, sponsored by [AARP](#), aired on KERA 90.1 FM at 9:00 p.m. CDT on Friday, June 29, with an encore broadcast at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, July 1. The debate was broadcast on television and radio stations in other Texas markets at various times (check local listings), and available for online viewing at [texasdebates.org](#).

This debate was the second in a series of two U.S. Senate debates produced by KERA. The Republican candidates for the U.S. Senate squared off first on Friday, June 22 at 8:00 p.m. CDT. The debate between Ted Cruz, former Texas Solicitor General, and Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst aired live on KERA-TV Channel 13, KERA 90.1 FM and more than 20 other television stations and 16 radio stations around the state, and online at [texasdebates.org](#). The program was repeated at 6:00 p.m., Sunday, June 24 on KERA TV and KERA 90.1 FM. Video of the Republican debate was available for on-demand viewing at [texasdebates.org](#) within 24 hours after the debate's conclusion. Spanish language translation of the Republican debate was streamed online after broadcast at [www.univision.com](#) and aired on Univision Texas at 10:00 a.m., Saturday, June 23. The program was sponsored by [AARP](#) and the [Texas Lyceum](#).

Both the Republican and Democratic debates were moderated by KERA Managing Editor Shelley Kofler. Questions were posed by Crystal Ayala, political reporter for Univision Texas, Peggy Fikac, Austin bureau chief for the *San Antonio Express-News/Houston Chronicle*, and Ross Ramsey, executive editor of *The Texas Tribune*. To find out more information about the programs and the candidates, go to [texasdebates.org](#).

*The Texas Debates* was produced by KERA in partnership with Univision Texas, *The Texas Tribune*, *San Antonio Express-News/Houston Chronicle*, Texas Association of Broadcasters (TAB), Texas State Networks and the Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas.

*The Texas Debates* originated from the studios of KERA TV Channel 13 in Dallas. The program was distributed to commercial and public radio and television stations statewide as a public

service, courtesy of the Texas Association of Broadcasters (TAB). Stations had the option of taking the broadcast live or delaying it. The television broadcast was available in English and Spanish and was closed captioned. The television broadcast could be heard in Spanish on the SAP channel of the debate feed. Real-time translation and closed captioning were also provided by TAB, a service it has contributed for broadcast debates since 1998. The debates were moderated by KERA Managing Editor, Shelley Kofler. Questions were posed by a panel of journalists:

- Crystal Ayala, Univision Texas Political Reporter
- Peggy Fikac, Austin Bureau Chief at *San Antonio Express-News/Houston Chronicle*
- Ross Ramsey, *The Texas Tribune* Executive Editor

More information about the *The Texas Debates* is available at [texasdebates.org](http://texasdebates.org), which also provided live audio and video streaming of the Republican debate the night of the broadcast.

### **MODERATOR AND PANELISTS**

KERA Managing Editor and Debate Moderator **Shelley Kofler** is an award-winning broadcast journalist and television producer with expertise covering public policy issues, statewide elections and presidential primaries for KXAS-TV/NBC-5, WFAA-TV/ABC and KERA.

**Crystal Ayala** is an Emmy-nominated journalist currently working as a news anchor and reporter for Univision Dallas. Previously, she worked as a San Juan news correspondent for NTN24TV (International News Network), an associate producer for Univision National News and Affiliate News Department and as a reporter for Univision Denver.

**Peggy Fikac** is the Austin bureau chief for the *San Antonio Express-News* and the *Houston Chronicle*, covering government and politics. She previously was deputy bureau chief for the newspapers, which merged their Austin bureaus in 2006, when she was *Express-News* bureau chief. She has been a reporter for the Associated Press and Austin correspondent for three Rio Grande Valley newspapers.

**Ross Ramsey** is executive editor of *The Texas Tribune* and continues as editor of *Texas Weekly*, the premier newsletter on government and politics in the Lone Star State, a role he's had since September 1998. Before joining *Texas Weekly*, Ramsey spent 17 years in journalism, reporting for the *Houston Chronicle* from its Austin bureau and for the *Dallas Times Herald*, first on the business desk in Dallas and later as the paper's Austin bureau chief.

### **THE PRODUCTION TEAM**

**Sylvia Komatsu**, Executive-in-Charge, is executive vice president and chief content officer for KERA/KXT. She conceived and developed the national Emmy Award-winning series, *The U.S.-Mexican War (1846-1848)*. Among her many national public television credits as program executive are *JFK: Breaking the News*, *Matisse & Picasso* and *After Goodbye: An AIDS Story*.

**Shelley Kofler**, Executive Producer and Moderator, is managing editor for KERA News and an award-winning broadcast journalist and television producer with expertise covering public policy issues, statewide elections and presidential primaries for KXAS-TV/NBC-5, WFAA-TV/ABC and KERA.

**Alexis Yancey**, Producer, is an independent producer and owner of Alexis Yancey Productions. An award-winning network news producer, her credits include contributions to the CBS *Weekend News*, *Sunday Morning*, *Street Stories* with Ed Bradley, *20<sup>th</sup> Century* with Mike Wallace, *America Tonight* and CBS *News This Morning*, and additional experience with WFAA-TV in Dallas, WBZ-TV in Boston and WTMJ-TV in Milwaukee.

#### **ABOUT THE PARTNERS**

**KERA** is a not-for-profit public media organization that serves the people of North Texas. The station broadcasts to the fourth-largest population area in the United States. KERA produces original multimedia content, carries the best in national and international public television and radio programs, and provides online resources at [www.kera.org](http://www.kera.org). KERA-TV broadcasts on Channel 13.1. KERA-FM broadcasts on 90.1 in Dallas/Fort Worth/Denton, 88.3 in Wichita Falls, 100.1 in Tyler and 99.3 in Sherman.

**Univision Communications Inc.** (UCI) is the leading media company serving Hispanic America. Among many assets, UCI includes Univision Network, one of the top five networks in the U.S. regardless of language, and the most-watched Spanish-language broadcast television network in the country, reaching 97% of U.S. Hispanic households; and Univision Television Group, which owns and/or operates 62 television stations in major U.S. Hispanic markets and Puerto Rico. [www.univision.net](http://www.univision.net)

**The Texas Tribune** is a nonprofit and nonpartisan news source founded in 2009 that aims to improve civic engagement in Texas, to serve the journalism community as a source of innovation and to encourage disclosure on public policy, politics and government. Online at [www.texastribune.org](http://www.texastribune.org).

**The San Antonio Express-News and Houston Chronicle** are two of the largest news organizations in Texas. With a long history of aggressive coverage of state government and politics, the two Hearst newspapers are dedicated to providing news and information across multiple platforms – print and digital.

[www.chron.com](http://www.chron.com) and [www.mysa.com](http://www.mysa.com)

**The Texas Association of Broadcasters (TAB)** is a non-profit, professional trade organization representing the interests of Texas radio and television stations. TAB promotes and protects a favorable climate for free, over-the-air broadcasting and educates its members and the public about opportunities and advances possible through broadcast operations. TAB is dedicated to the preservation of rights granted to the news media and individuals under the Texas Constitution and First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Online at [www.tab.org](http://www.tab.org).

**Texas State Networks** is the oldest and largest state radio network in the country with more than 200 news affiliates in Texas. A member of the National Association of State Radio Networks, TSN provides hourly newscasts, long-form and short-form news, sports and talk radio programs. NASRN affiliates include Texas State News Network, Texas Agribusiness Network and the Texas Rangers Radio Network. Online at [www.tsnradio.com](http://www.tsnradio.com).

**Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas** is a nonprofit resource that encourages, sponsors and facilitates a greater appreciation, knowledge and understanding of the First Amendment. Working since 1978 to ensure that the public's business is conducted in public, the FOIFT's mission is to protect and preserve the state's open meetings and open records laws. Details are available at [www.foift.org](http://www.foift.org).