

Episode 178: "Stops Along the Way" with Brent Bozell

Bill Walton ([00:01](#)):

Well, the idea of changing our brand from conservative and focusing on what we really are, Americans, is exactly the right thing to do. And I think it captures a lot more people. "Conservative" is such a turnoff word for so many people.

Brent Bozell ([00:17](#)):

Once upon a time, the word "unAmerican" was a word you did not use. But you can freely use it now because the other side wants to be unAmerican. It's not that they're recoiling at being accused. George McGovern would wave the American flag because he loved America, as radical as he was. He was the most radical of them all, but he loved America. This radical Left hates America. You don't see the Media Research Center in the end zone of an NFL stadium. You do see Black Lives Matter in the end zone of a stadium. They're the most powerful force in the world today, political force, in the world today, run by Marxists with a policy statement that calls for the destruction of the nuclear family, which means the destruction of the West. This is their policy, not mine.

Bill Walton ([01:07](#)):

And it's right there on the website. Although ...

Brent Bozell ([01:09](#)):

Yeah. It's right there. It's their mission statement, which they took it down. But it's still up there.

Bill Walton ([01:13](#)):

They still believe it. Hey, we got to talk about a book, your book.

Brent Bozell ([01:17](#)):

My book.

Bill Walton ([01:20](#)):

This is a good one. Hey, Sarah's here. Sarah took a look at the book.

Sarah ([01:28](#)):

I read it. It was terrific. And I think aside from growing up one of 10 children and your parents moving you out to a big mansion in the country near where we live, and obviously there weren't good public schools. So without batting an eyelash, your father sent three boys off to boarding school in Spain when you didn't speak a word of English and expected as Bozells you would thrive. And you did. It's unbelievable. And that's what your whole family kept doing, things like that.

Brent Bozell ([01:58](#)):

We did all of our lives. My father, my mother too, challenged us in ways that people just don't get challenged anymore.

Sarah ([02:07](#)):

No, no. You came from a very eccentric family, eccentric in a good way.

Brent Bozell ([02:09](#)):

We did. We loved it. We loved being different.

Bill Walton ([02:12](#)):

Well, it looks like they just turned you loose on 50 acres out there.

Brent Bozell ([02:16](#)):

Well, they turned us loose on an entire continent when they sent my brothers and me to Spain. But they did. You just think about it today, could something like this happen today? Sadly, no. But in 1973, it's absolutely true. We were asked to go to Spain.

Bill Walton ([02:34](#)):

Sarah, you wanted to mention Terry Dolan too, didn't you?

Sarah ([02:35](#)):

Oh, yeah. I loved reading about your first political job working for Terry Dolan. And I particularly liked the sentence where he said, "Brent, I think I'll put you in charge of fundraising." And you'd never fundraised before, and who knew, it was going to start your whole life. Another time you've been thrown into the deep end of the pool.

Brent Bozell ([02:56](#)):

Well, yeah, I had to do that, but it's very sad. This man is arguably, I believe, one of the two or three most important people in the modern conservative movement. And why do I say that? Because without him there would've been no political machine in the United States House and Senate that would've been enacted the Reagan Economic Recovery Program. We would not have had Reagan's program, but for what this man did in electing, and most importantly, defeating the most powerful liberals in the Senate in 1980. And the sad thing is, I imagine nine out of 10, maybe 99 out of 100, conservatives don't even know who he was.

Bill Walton ([03:42](#)):

I didn't know who he was before I read the book.

Sarah ([03:43](#)):

I didn't either. And he was so creative. I mean, he invented a whole way of being political.

Brent Bozell ([03:49](#)):

He was a genius. He came to the fore in 1976, he was 27 years old, and he took the position that, "If the Republican Party isn't going to do it, let's have the conservative movement do it and they'll just follow us." And that was the beginning of the new Right. And he and Richard Viguerie and Paul Weyrich, [inaudible 00:04:09]-

Bill Walton ([04:08](#)):

When was this? This was circa 1985?

Brent Bozell (04:12):

No, no, no. This would've been 1976 when he started.

Bill Walton (04:16):

'76? Okay. All right. So this was right at the beginning of the beginning, even before the Council for National Policy.

Sarah (04:20):

And he made it up as they went along. It was incredible.

Brent Bozell (04:24):

He did. You know what, but he applied business principles to what he did.

Bill Walton (04:28):

I'm going to get to him. Let's do a quick segment on him when we get in [inaudible 00:04:32]. I guess we got to tape the show.

Speaker 4 (04:33):

The show [crosstalk 00:04:36] March 17.

Speaker 5 (04:41):

Welcome to the Bill Walton Show, featuring conversations with leaders, entrepreneurs, artists, and thinkers, fresh perspectives on money, culture, politics and human flourishing. Interesting people, interesting things.

Bill Walton (05:02):

Welcome to the Bill Walton show. I'm Bill Walton. We're here today to talk about a terrific book: *Stops Along the Way: A Catholic Soul, a Conservative Heart, an Irish Temper, and a Love of Life*. And we're here to talk with its author, Brent Bozell.

Bill Walton (05:23):

What can you say about L. Brent Bozell III? Lecturer, syndicated columnist, television commentator, debater, marketer, businessman, author, publisher, and activist. Brent is one of the most outspoken and effective national leaders in the conservative movement today. He's also a good friend.

Bill Walton (05:48):

So, Brent, welcome.

Brent Bozell (05:49):

Absolutely. Thank you. Thank you for having me.

Bill Walton (05:51):

Of course, we all know Brent founded and is president of the Media Research Center, the largest media watchdog organization in America. He started MRC in 1987. And since then it's developed the largest video archive in the world. He also founded newsbusters.org, CNSNews.com, MRC Business, MRC Culture, MRC TV, MRC Latino, and most recently Free Speech America. MRC has nearly 600,000 members nationwide with over 12 million fans on Facebook and over seven million video views per week online.

Bill Walton ([06:29](#)):

If that's not enough, Brent also in 2010 founded ForAmerica which has grown to over seven million people on Facebook with the most engaged social media followers in a conservative movement. Even the New York Times has declared ForAmerica was one of the greatest unexpected influences on the 2016 election.

Bill Walton ([06:54](#)):

Brent, your resume is exhausting, but I've only got just some of it. So, anyway, I'm glad you're here.

Brent Bozell ([07:00](#)):

Well, you serve on our board. I get all the credit for things, but I always say, and you've heard me say it before, it's the boards and the staff of the organizations that make it happen.

Bill Walton ([07:11](#)):

All the good CEOs say that.

Brent Bozell ([07:13](#)):

No. Well, I mean it, I mean it. I mean it.

Bill Walton ([07:14](#)):

I've gotten that once or twice.

Brent Bozell ([07:16](#)):

They don't mean it. I do.

Bill Walton ([07:18](#)):

So this is a little different for you, a different approach to this. This is far more personal than your other books. What prompted the ...

Brent Bozell ([07:28](#)):

Well, I could be flippant and say that this is what you do when you're on airplanes and you're sick of watching the screen in front of you. I could be flipping and I could say my mother told me to write stories.

Brent Bozell ([07:42](#)):

But this is more serious than that. I wanted to tell two broad stories. One was on life and through true stories, trying to open up your or mind to a world that once was and could be again, this is not supposed

to be nostalgia, "Oh, why? In the good old days ..." That's not the purpose of this. The purpose is to make you think of the world of possibilities if we wanted it to be so. And how do you get there?

Brent Bozell ([08:18](#)):

The second part of it is more political. It is looking at some of the serious challenges, not facing so much this country, although I do get into that, but other nations that were fighting against communism and what they were going through to make people understand the importance of liberty and how this country ought never to take advantage of it, because the old axiom we're one generation away.

Brent Bozell ([08:47](#)):

Well, we're one generation removed from what was an incredible struggle against communism. And with what's going on in Ukraine today, it's the same kind of totalitarianism coming from the same city with the same people in charge. They just don't call them communists anymore.

Bill Walton ([09:06](#)):

So the family Bozell, I mean, there's a Brent Bozell III sitting right here, we have, but Brent Bozell Jr. Your father was an extraordinary at the beginning, founder of the modern conservative movement. I mean, he went to, was it Yale with Bill Buckley?

Brent Bozell ([09:25](#)):

Yeah. They were roommates and best friends.

Bill Walton ([09:27](#)):

And together they dominated the Debate Society and I think your father won the National Debate Championship when he was in prep school, and ...

Brent Bozell ([09:36](#)):

Yeah, yeah. This is bragging time for me, but I love it. No, he got his scholarship to Yale. He bested a field of 16,000 in a national oratory contest, and that got him his scholarship. He headed the debate team. Bill was his second. Bill ran in his paper and bill and my father was his second.

Bill Walton ([10:03](#)):

Did I hear that right? Bill Buckley was your father's second on the debate? He was not the starting?

Brent Bozell ([10:08](#)):

No. No, no, no.

Bill Walton ([10:10](#)):

That's great.

Brent Bozell ([10:10](#)):

No. No, no. Try being a son raised by a father who had that kind of command. You couldn't pull anything off of him. Bill, he's one of those extraordinary people who saw everything through the lens of black and white. There was no gray matter. Either things were right or things were wrong. And he wasn't

passionate; he never raised his voice about anything. Things were quietly right, things were quietly wrong. When he talked to you, it didn't matter who you were. You were going to speak in those terms to him or he was going to speak in those terms to you. You couldn't say anything, get anything by him, because he saw the world that way. There are very few people in the world who can see things that way. He did.

Bill Walton ([10:59](#)):

You all lived in Bethesda, and you had a pretty big place in Bethesda, but you'd worn out your welcome in Bethesda.

Brent Bozell ([11:07](#)):

We really did.

Bill Walton ([11:08](#)):

I understand that 10 kids, it's ...

Brent Bozell ([11:09](#)):

Oh, we were terrible. We were terrible.

Bill Walton ([11:12](#)):

And maybe not for that reason, but for some other reason-

Brent Bozell ([11:15](#)):

It was for that reason, we were terrible.

Bill Walton ([11:17](#)):

Well, you've got about 80 pages in the book about that, which I think is really fun. And we got to talk about your smoking habit. But you picked up, and he bought a place in, is it now Huntly, Virginia?

Brent Bozell ([11:32](#)):

Huntly, Virginia.

Bill Walton ([11:32](#)):

And it was an old estate, rather modern looking, actually, not the old classic Southern estate, but a rather beautiful stone place on 50, 60 acres. And he picked everybody up and moved out there and you lived out there for 13 or 14 years.

Brent Bozell ([11:49](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Bill Walton ([11:49](#)):

And that had to be ...

Brent Bozell ([11:52](#)):

It was thrust into another world. Imagine in 1964, we go out to this hamlet.

Bill Walton ([11:58](#)):

This is the world that once was.

Brent Bozell ([12:00](#)):

Yeah, this is the world that once was with warts, it's not all good news, some bad. There was some tough stuff. For example, and this is a true story, when we arrived in October of 1964 into this house that had been dilapidated, was starting to fall apart and we fixed it and saved it, there was a diminutive black man in the great room, big, empty, great room, sweeping the floor. He had an old cap on, he had his constant old overalls, boots and a flannel shirt, this was his dress for as long as I knew him. My dad went up to him and he said, "Who are you?" And he said, "My name's Douglas." And I's come with the place."

Brent Bozell ([12:52](#)):

We had just, for all intents and purposes, purchased Douglas 1964. What we didn't know was over the hill we also had purchased two tenant houses that came with the property. In it there were two black families. One was a black family that was there for several years and they finally left, my dad let them live there. Another one was Douglas and his mother Miss Gracie. The book, by the way, is dedicated to Douglas and Miss Gracie. He was 48, she was 70, looked 100, maybe 65 and she looked 100, she was old, grizzled and rocked on a rocking chair, mostly deaf, missing most of her teeth. And we were madly in love with her.

Brent Bozell ([13:38](#)):

And the Bozell children would spend all their time in the Russell House, in their tenant house. He became as a grandfather to us. He lived for the rest of his life with us, died of cancer. But there's this lovely story between my dad and he, and this, again, sign of the times. Douglas knew not-

Bill Walton ([14:03](#)):

Now, to set the stage, your father was a giant. He was 6'3", 6'4", towering figure, Lincolnesque, I've heard. And Douglas was 4'11"?

Brent Bozell ([14:11](#)):

Yeah, 5'2" on a good day. So yeah, they were very different. And my dad said to Doug, "Well, I guess you work for me now." Well, Douglas, this is 1964, had no understanding of the concept of money. None. His whole life was spent on this property. On Saturdays he would either go four miles west to Flint Hill or eight miles east to Front Royal. And he would hitchhike. And the first car that would drive by would pick him up.

Brent Bozell ([14:49](#)):

And I said it in the book, and I'll just say it this way. All those people who picked him up had a nickname for him. He was The Little N, that was what they called him, The Little N, and they stopped and they picked him up. This is 1964. We were there for about two or three weeks. And one night in the great room, somebody yelled out, "There's a fire." And we looked in the front yard, big cross on fire in our front yard. It was, "Welcome to the neighborhood, Catholics." People forget that the KKK don't like

Catholics either. We had that happen to us. It was a very different world. In any event, back [crosstalk 00:15:30]-

Bill Walton ([15:29](#)):

My impression in the book was you didn't really see color. You just had Douglas. For you, you didn't see it.

Brent Bozell ([15:37](#)):

It was none whatsoever. No, none, none. And we came to find out who some of those people were who had burned that cross. They were just good old boy in that area ...

Bill Walton ([15:52](#)):

Full disclosure, my house is in Virginia, it's only about 10 miles from there. So, you're going to have to name names so I could be ...

Brent Bozell ([16:01](#)):

Well, yeah, but you know what the sad thing is? The sad thing is that if you go to Raphine County today, you won't see a single black man there. It was maybe 50:50 or maybe 60:40. That's how many blacks lived there. We grew up with them. They were country folk. There were poor white farmers and even poorer blacks. That's what you had in Raphine County. So that was a real bond there. But land prices went up, they sold their land, they went to Baltimore and that was the end of it. It's very sad. To me it's a tragic thing that in Raphine County you don't see what was the bedrock.

Brent Bozell ([16:35](#)):

I got to finish this story, though. So my dad paid Douglas \$50 a week, just gave him cash. That was to go into town to buy his wine and drink with his friends. And he would come back and have a hangover, which he would nurse on Sundays and go back to work on Mondays. Nobody knew that my dad was doing the following. When Douglas was diagnosed with cancer about eight years later, my dad went to him and said, "Douglas, you're now retired." And Douglas said, "What's I going to do?" And my dad handed him a bank book. Back then you had bank books where you wrote things on [crosstalk 00:17:12] with a pencil, and you had your savings. And my dad said, "Here's your savings account."

Brent Bozell ([17:19](#)):

I don't know how many thousand dollars in it, but it had thousands of dollars in there. My dad had been regularly putting money in a savings account for him. And he handed him thousands of dollars. Douglas had no idea what to do with it. He came to me first and he said, "Master Brent, I want to put you through law school." And then went to my brother, "Master Johnny. I want to put you through med school." And he tried to give it to all of us. I've never known a man with a greater heart. Maybe my dad, but the two of them in different ways, the greatest hearts I've ever known.

Bill Walton ([17:52](#)):

So your dad and your mom, Mom was Pat Buckley, she was married to bill Buckley. She was Bill Buckley's sister, rather. So he married his a debate partner's sister.

Brent Bozell ([18:06](#)):

And she introduced Bill to his future wife. This was very, very incestuous.

Bill Walton ([18:15](#)):

I don't want to diverge. We'll save that for an addendum. But your father and mother came from very sophisticated backgrounds. Your father's father had started a company called Bozell Worldwide.

Brent Bozell ([18:32](#)):

It was Bozell & Jacobs. It became Bozell Worldwide.

Bill Walton ([18:35](#)):

Who coined which phrase?

Brent Bozell ([18:38](#)):

Oh, I'm forgetting it right now.

Sarah ([18:39](#)):

Pork-

Bill Walton ([18:41](#)):

Pork ... Oh, wait, who we got? Sarah, you do it. You tell us ...

Sarah ([18:43](#)):

Pork, the other white meat.

Bill Walton ([18:47](#)):

She's off mic. Pork, the other white meat.

Brent Bozell ([18:48](#)):

Yep. That was this.

Bill Walton ([18:49](#)):

And they also coined Corinthian leather.

Brent Bozell ([18:51](#)):

Yeah. Oh, I didn't know that one.

Bill Walton ([18:53](#)):

Yeah. Corinthian leather. But it turns out that Corinthian leather was just the same as any other leather, just-

Brent Bozell ([18:58](#)):

There you go. See, here's a remarkable thing about that. Bozell was Presbyterian, my father was the convert, my grandfather was Presbyterian. Jacobs was Jewish. And they worked in Omaha.

Bill Walton ([19:14](#)):

He was the partner.

Brent Bozell ([19:16](#)):

Yeah. [crosstalk 00:19:17]. Jacobs did the books. My grandfather was the marketing guy. I never knew my grandfather. Jacob's grandson told me at an awards thing where we met each other, he said that his grandfather told him that in over 25 years of partnership together, that my grandfather never once asked to look at the books from Mr. Jacobs. That's how close the two of them were. And there's this story that is told, I read the article in the Omaha Press from 1930-something about how Mr. Bozell and Mr. Jacobs had a difference with the City Council. They were seeing [inaudible 00:19:53] City Hall with pool sticks, they emerged and they had their way.

Bill Walton ([20:00](#)):

This is the Bill Walton Show. I'm here with the amazing Brent Bozell and we're talking about a world that once was. So, your grandfather wasn't good with money, your father wasn't good with money.

Brent Bozell ([20:16](#)):

He was terrible.

Bill Walton ([20:17](#)):

I've been on your board, though. Fortunately, you are, so that's good. I mean, you met our guy Tommy Dolan. And that's like a half a billion dollars later that you've raised.

Brent Bozell ([20:32](#)):

Yeah. But that doesn't mean I'm know how to manage it.

Bill Walton ([20:34](#)):

Okay. All right.

Brent Bozell ([20:35](#)):

I turned it over to people who know what they're doing. [crosstalk 00:20:37]-

Bill Walton ([20:37](#)):

... your father's money management skills, because it's really interesting. He's in Bethesda, they're very sophisticated people, decides they want to have a certain type house. The only place they could afford was in Huntly, but they had this grand estate, but your mother and your father commuted back into D.C.

Brent Bozell ([20:56](#)):

70 miles each way.

Bill Walton ([20:57](#)):

Your mother got up at 4:30 in the morning to go in.

Brent Bozell ([20:59](#)):

70 miles each way, and there was no Route 66. It was Route 50, either 50 or 55, two-lane roads. If you got behind a logging truck, it was longer.

Bill Walton ([21:11](#)):

But then as Sarah mentioned, he then lock, stock, and barrel picked up the family and moved to Spain several years later. You were in Huntly from '65 until '70 ...

Brent Bozell ([21:21](#)):

'70 through '76, I think it was. '70, '76, '77.

Bill Walton ([21:27](#)):

When did you go to Spain?

Brent Bozell ([21:28](#)):

I went to Spain in '73, but the first time we went was in '61 while we were living still in Maryland. We went in '61. It was kind of remarkable because in 1948 after the war, he hitchhiked to Spain. And nobody went to Spain because there was a worldwide embargo against Spain because of what Spain did [crosstalk 00:21:48]-

Bill Walton ([21:48](#)):

Yeah, Franco was a pariah, even though Franco was actually pretty good.

Brent Bozell ([21:52](#)):

Absolutely. And that's another topic for a whole show. I would never defend fascism or Nazism, but you put the whole perspective together with the world, and he was a friend of the United States. Put that aside, my dad went there in '48 ...

Bill Walton ([22:07](#)):

We should do a show on that.

Brent Bozell ([22:09](#)):

We should.

Bill Walton ([22:09](#)):

Franco is one of the most misrepresented and mischaracterized figures in world history.

Brent Bozell ([22:15](#)):

The Left has defined him terribly. But my dad went there and fell in love with Spain and returned 13 years later with a wife and eight children. Catholics.

Bill Walton ([22:29](#)):

You only have five.

Brent Bozell ([22:31](#)):

Yeah, I only have five, but I have my 16th grandchild. So I'm catching up. No, we went in 1961, and again, just a bold move. This is a time, Bill, when in many places you didn't have running water, where oxen came up the hill. There wasn't homogenized milk. Many places didn't have electricity at night. So that's where he took eight children to live for two years.

Brent Bozell ([23:02](#)):

Now, he found the villa and the villa had servants, it had a driver, it had all those lovely things on the villa. But you still were restrained by the world that you were living around. The people in El Escorial, it was completely unknown town. Nobody in the world knew that this town existed. Today it's one of the most popular places.

Bill Walton ([23:26](#)):

Was it in central Spain, near Madrid?

Brent Bozell ([23:28](#)):

Central Spain, just north of Madrid, about 45 minutes north of Madrid. It's got the monastery of El Escorial built by Phillip II, which is one of the largest, most impressive buildings in the world. But nobody knew it was there because of the embargo. But my dad fell in love with it. So he brought the family there and we lived there for two years. That's where he wrote *The Conscience of a Conservative* ...

Bill Walton ([23:51](#)):

For Barry Goldwater.

Brent Bozell ([23:53](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. He wrote it in 19 days, he thought it was terrible, he gave away the paperback rights on it, that's the lore, which would be typical for my father to give away the paperback-

Bill Walton ([24:05](#)):

We've been talking about money management.

Brent Bozell ([24:06](#)):

Yeah. Well, yeah, yeah. It'd be typical for him to give away the rights of a book that sold millions of copies. He did.

Bill Walton ([24:15](#)):

So he was there at the founding in the '60s for many of this, and you became active when? In '76 when you went-

Brent Bozell ([24:29](#)):

'78, '79.

Bill Walton ([24:31](#)):

Yeah. And what was your first job?

Brent Bozell ([24:33](#)):

It was with the National Conservative Political Action Committee. I had a wife, I had two children, I had just come back from college to Virginia and I needed a job. And I was offered a job as a fundraiser, which I did not want to do. But when you're struggling, you're struggling, you do whatever you have to. I not only found that I enjoyed it and I was pretty good at it, but it was more important than that. That position gave me an opening to a whole new world because I was working underneath this young guy who was an absolute genius.

Bill Walton ([25:12](#)):

He was just 29 at the time.

Brent Bozell ([25:13](#)):

Yeah, just absolute genius. Anyone in the movement can have a strength in polling, in fundraising, in strategy, in advanced work, in speaking, whatever, he had them all. He was a genius on all fronts. And you looked at him in wonderment. And the best thing about him was, Bill, he had an extraordinary sense of humor and he was always smiling on the inside where the Left, but he was the meanest, vilest, smoke come out of his ears, horns and everything else. And the guy just chuckled back at the office. He was having so much fun at their expense.

Bill Walton ([25:54](#)):

So, want to circle back also to your mother. I mean, one of the stories I read of was that your mother was attending a lecture at Catholic University, and the lecturer started ... Can I let you finish the story?

Brent Bozell ([26:12](#)):

Yeah. It's very Buckley.

Bill Walton ([26:13](#)):

This is Pat Buckley.

Brent Bozell ([26:17](#)):

My mother was Patricia Buckley, she went by Trish or Tish. And she was known to have an Irish temper, the sweetest, most angelic lady you would ever meet in your life, and ask anyone who's ever known my mother, and they will say that St. Theresa has nothing on her unless you rubbed her the wrong way, in which case be careful. Well, T. Grace Atkinson was this very loud, lesbian, militant anti-Catholic going around the country saying that the Virgin Mary had been knocked up.

Brent Bozell ([26:55](#)):

Typical for the times, Catholic University invited her-

Bill Walton ([26:59](#)):

In 1971.

Brent Bozell ([27:00](#)):

Yeah. Catholic University invited her to speak, a woman who goes around the country saying that the blessed Virgin Mary has been knocked up. So my father led a protest there and they were going to say a rosary. And there was a big group he put together to say a non-violent rosary outside on their knees and they weren't going to protest. They weren't going to disrupt it.

Brent Bozell ([27:22](#)):

My mother told my dad she wanted to come. My dad said, "No, I don't trust you." She promised to obey. True story. And she participated in the rosary. As my dad later said, he turned at one point and my mother wasn't there. She just simply got up, went inside, went up to the rectum and slapped T. Grace Atkinson in the face and made national news. She was on Time magazine the next week.

Bill Walton ([27:47](#)):

Well, she also captured what she thought T. Grace Atkinson was saying. She said, "This is an illiterate harangue against the mystical body of Christ. And it was.

Brent Bozell ([27:58](#)):

Yeah, it really was. And that's the way they spoke. And that's what she believe. I'm kidding when I say anger. She didn't do it because she was angry. She did it because she believed it needed to be done.

Bill Walton ([28:10](#)):

How do you resolve your own Catholicism with The libertarian political world and conservative political world, the born again world? I mean, it seems like there are a lot of swirling currents in that, and your father at some point, your father who admittedly had some health issues, which we can talk about or not, but he went very firmly radical Catholic, in fact, at one point repudiated the Founding Fathers saying they shouldn't have built the city of man that should have built the city of God.

Brent Bozell ([28:45](#)):

He couldn't reconcile, ultimately. And ultimately for him it was an either/ or choice and he chose Catholicism over it. It was difficult. In fact it cost him a lot. It cost him his magazine ultimately.

Bill Walton ([29:05](#)):

And it cost his friendship with Buckley. And these two had been inseparable.

Brent Bozell ([29:11](#)):

Inseparable, best of friends in college. It was to make you weep what the two of them went through. Tell you a personal story? When my father died, Bill called me the day before and said, "You must call me the moment your dad passes." And I did. And he gasped and he hung up the phone. And he went right to St. Patrick's.

Brent Bozell ([29:52](#)):

They were very close, the two of them. They were also intellectual giants and neither one was willing to get off his pedestal. They met quietly, they would meet for hours and they would try and try and try. And they couldn't reconcile it. At the end of the day, Bill believed you could reconcile libertarianism, you could reconcile fusionism. My father at the end of the day couldn't. And it was the Nixon administration

that really broke him away. And it was Clare Boothe Luce writing in National Review that maybe conservatives needed to rethink abortion. And that was pretty much it for my father.

Bill Walton ([30:39](#)):

Well, Buckley did something similar.

Brent Bozell ([30:41](#)):

Well, Buckley came out in favor of birth control.

Bill Walton ([30:45](#)):

That's it.

Brent Bozell ([30:45](#)):

And for a Catholic, from my father's worldview, that is ground zero. If you believe that is a potential of a soul to go to heaven and you get in the way of a potential of a soul going to heaven, then that is a terrible sin. That's how my father viewed it. Bill saw that it wasn't. He didn't see it that way. And that was one of the distinctions. Bill was also a very strong Catholic. They weren't poles apart. I wish they'd been poles apart. It'd be easier. They were so close, yet on that 5% that they disagreed on, that ruined everything for the two of them.

Brent Bozell ([31:32](#)):

And my dad in time, because of his health issues, I write about this in the book-

Bill Walton ([31:37](#)):

He was bipolar.

Brent Bozell ([31:39](#)):

... was bipolar. He was diagnosed as bipolar in 1976. He'd always been eccentric with an eccentricity that we loved, which is what drew thousands of people to him. I mean, he was the one who gave the speech in 1962, the very first Tear Down This Wall came from him at Madison Square Garden in front of 18,000 people. He had a magnetism to him. He loved life, he loved quirkiness. But suddenly the quirkiness started taking a new personality and it started getting irrational, and not just unconventional, but irreconcilable. And he started making decisions that were just wrong. I mean, buying things that he didn't need to buy, selling things he didn't need to sell, hiring people he didn't need to hire, that sort of stuff.

Brent Bozell ([32:39](#)):

And eventually we realized there was something terribly, terribly wrong. It had just been discovered, bipolarism had just been discovered. And he was one of the earliest people who was diagnosed as being bipolar. Then it was called manic depression. For the rest of his life he struggled with that. It is an illness that I don't wish on my worst enemy because not only when you're in a manic state can you not control what you're doing, but in his state, when he finally did come back to reality, he would be crushed by what he had done, and through no fault of his own.

Brent Bozell ([33:22](#)):

But the end of the story is an incredible story, Bill. At the end of it, not only did the political not matter to him, but the activist Catholic didn't matter to him either. He became an extraordinary mystic who saw the world in a plane that very few people could reach. He wrote a book Mustard Seeds. Good luck trying to keep up to read that book. It is so deep. His thinking became so deep, and his idea of enjoyment was to go at six o'clock in the morning to downtown into deepest, darkest Washington D.C. and serve breakfast to the poor. And that's what he would do. And that was his enjoyment. Or to go to Lorton Prison and talk to inmates. That's what his life became about. All the trappings, all the luxuries were all set aside, he didn't care about any of it anymore. He died a Third Order Carmelite monk.

Bill Walton ([34:32](#)):

I've always admired your sense of mission. And it seems like you didn't fall far from that metaphorical tree. I mean, that's incredible. What do you personally take from his sense of passion, devotion, spirituality? How does that guide you today?

Brent Bozell ([34:52](#)):

Courage, courage. He was unafraid. But it was more than being unafraid. He felt, not just the moral certitude, but the moral obligation to say the things he did and to do the things he did. And if he left me with something, it was that. It sounds braggadocious. I don't mean that, but ...

Bill Walton ([35:19](#)):

No, no, I brought it up. I've observed in you, you've got that.

Brent Bozell ([35:23](#)):

... but you have to do that. You have to do that. And because in politics, sometimes you have to compromise. You know me, I hate compromising. I'm not very good at ... You ought to see a tweet I put out this morning, you'll see how I'm not very good at it. But that's what he taught me.

Brent Bozell ([35:45](#)):

Also, it was pure love for anyone who knew him. Bill, if you talk to ... and there's still people around today who knew him, I'll all tell you the same thing. If there were 50 people in the room in a cocktail party and you walked in and he made eye contact with you, the other 49 didn't matter. He went right to you and he would talk right to you and get right inside your soul. And it would all be white noise all around you because you were talking to him. He could do that with anybody. And he meant it. He meant it. It didn't matter. If he went to talk to you, the first thing he'd ask is, "How are you?" And he want to know all about your life and you would open up to him and you would tell him everything. It was extraordinary. It was extraordinary what he could do.

Bill Walton ([36:32](#)):

We talked about fusionism. What do you see as the state of fusionism today? I know you're working on a project to define our so-called conservative movement in different terms. Not principles, but terms.

Brent Bozell ([36:48](#)):

Yeah. Well, I believe that it is time for conservatives to think about the word "conservative". I don't think it sells anymore. As a matter of fact, I know it doesn't sell. And that's not a bad thing. The Left went through the process in the late 1980s with the word "liberalism." On the Right, We had made it so toxic

that they knew they had to change it and they became progressive. And today the progressives, and it was a very, very smart move on their part.

Brent Bozell ([37:23](#)):

Okay. If you look at the word "conservative" today and compare it to how it was in 1984, you'll see a remarkable sea change. In 1984, a plurality of Americans saw themselves as conservative. It was something like 60%, 30% moderate, 10% liberal, something like that. Today, where young people are concerned, where the next generation is concerned, only 20% call themselves conservative. 80% of young people do not want to be seen as conservatives. And yet, when you look at it as a value proposition, they agree with us on issue after issue after issue.

Brent Bozell ([38:06](#)):

So the word "conservative" is getting in the way. So since the election in 2020, I've been meeting with different groups of conservative leaders, you've been part of this, to explore, what do we need to do with the conservative movement? We've taken massive national surveys, we've done focus group testing, and we are announcing next month, formally announcing, three new national organizations that are going to be launched. The word should not be "conservative", not at this point. We are at an existential point in America's history. So this should be all about America, because it is all about America.

Brent Bozell ([38:47](#)):

The strongest political force in America today is Black Lives Matter. They get their names on helmets. The Media Research Center doesn't get its names on football helmets. But what does Black Lives Matter believe? It's run by Marxists, self-avowed, self-proclaimed Marxists who have a manifesto that says in black and white their goal is to destroy the nuclear family. That is the core of the Judeo-Christian tradition. That's what they want. They're not just anti-America, they're anti-Western civilization. It's there for anyone to see. It's not [inaudible 00:39:28] I'm making it up.

Brent Bozell ([39:28](#)):

So once upon a time, it was not appropriate to call somebody unAmerican. George McGovern was the most left wing United States Senator, yet on July 4th he waved an American flag. And it was simply wrong. It was immoral, it was unethical, to call him unAmerican or anti-American. Guess what? The Left today, they are anti-American and they proclaim that their anti Americanism. Fine. Let's have a debate. Are you for or against America?

Brent Bozell ([40:01](#)):

When you look at that from that standpoint ... If you look at things from conservative, liberal, it's a mishmash. If you look at things, Democrat versus Republican, yawn, if you look at things American versus anti-American, we destroy the opposition. And that's where the fight should be.

Bill Walton ([40:20](#)):

Define American.

Brent Bozell ([40:22](#)):

America. America is a process where freedom reigns in the constitution.

Bill Walton ([40:32](#)):

Let me back up just a second to frame that a little differently, because I love the phrase "American exceptionalism", and that's gotten pilloried, that's gotten mischaracterized as what you're talking about rich corporations and an aggressive military posture all over the world and basically the biggest bully in the block. So therefore America's exceptional. No. No. We're exceptional because of the ideas. And we're the only country that's really created itself based on a set of ideas and principles. And so I think when you're talking about America, you're really talking about those principles that people align with and agree about.

Brent Bozell ([41:14](#)):

Which is why we ought to talk about American exceptionalism. And we ought to restore it. A great person that we should remember at all times was Rush Limbaugh because of his clear-headedness. This is a guy who had no formal education. This was a person who didn't read the great books. But he understood the world better than 99% of the people.

Brent Bozell ([41:43](#)):

Now, some people would say he was just a throwaway. He was also a great friend of William F. Buckley at his home. Bill adored him, called him Rush Limbo. But Rush had an insight into the world and he would talk about American exceptionalism because he knew that it would strike a cord with Americans. He would talk about America as being the freest, most powerful nation in the world.

Brent Bozell ([42:10](#)):

Again, the Left wants to take air down America. The Left does not want America to be the most powerful nation in the world because they believe that's arrogance. Let's have a debate. Let's ask the American people, "Do you wish to be the strongest nation in the world or not be the strongest nation in the world?"

Brent Bozell ([42:28](#)):

American exceptionalism means a virtuous society as well. We are a generous people, we are a kind people. Let's have a debate about that. The Left says that America is a bad nation, that you're a bad person, I'm a bad person, you're a bad person, and the person we're talking to is a bad person. Let's have a debate about that. Let's debate how generous America is, how good they are. I don't see Americans climbing over other walls. I see everyone else trying to get into America. There's a reason for it. Let's have a debate about it.

Bill Walton ([42:58](#)):

Well, what's the name of the project you're going to roll out? Or is it premature?

Brent Bozell ([43:02](#)):

It's going to be called The American Movement. It's as simple as that. It's going to have a working word. Our America is what you're going to see, but the corporate title is going to be The American Movement, because that's what this is. And I want to have a discussion and a debate about America.

Bill Walton ([43:17](#)):

How do we tie this into the book?

Brent Bozell ([43:20](#)):

Because I don't want to be a gadfly daydreamer, but I do want to be a dreamer. And I think that we as a nation need to become a nation of dreamers again, because we have focused so much of the problems in society, the problems all around us, that we don't stop to think about our future, not a future for us, but a future for our great-grandchildren. Is this a future where your children are going to be able to go to Spain by themselves and live by themselves in an apartment for three years and take care of everything by themselves, no communication across the pond for three years, except for an occasional letter going back and forth? That's not today's world, but could you have a world of freedom?

Brent Bozell ([44:04](#)):

Why can't we have a world, Bill, where you don't have to lock your front door? Why can't you have that? Don't tell me you can't have that. But to get there, how do you get there? How do you make this a more noble society, a more free society? How do we make this where a black kid doesn't believe that by age 25 he's going to be imprisoned for the rest of his life or dead? How do we address that the proper ways? We've got to think different ways and we've got to be dreamers. So hopefully this book makes you dream a little bit.

Bill Walton ([44:40](#)):

It made me dream a little bit about what how much fun it must have been to grow up a Bozell.

Brent Bozell ([44:47](#)):

How much trouble.

Bill Walton ([44:48](#)):

How much trouble. Well, we avoided all that. We avoided at the bars in Spain and some of your extracurriculars.

Brent Bozell ([44:58](#)):

Well, when you don't have a drinking age in Spain and you don't have your parents, and they're 3000 miles away, things happen.

Bill Walton ([45:05](#)):

You declared it was 14.

Brent Bozell ([45:08](#)):

Well, no, no, no, no, no. Spain came up with a new law by the time we finished there, they came up with a law, they said-

Bill Walton ([45:14](#)):

It's the Bozell Law.

Brent Bozell ([45:15](#)):

Well, they said, "No one under 14 [crosstalk 00:45:17]."

Bill Walton ([45:16](#)):

Okay. Well, Brent, this is great. I'm glad we could do this. And Stops Along the Way, I highly recommend it. And we've got my great friend and great American Brent Bozell has been with us. And we could talk about probably everything for the next 42 hours, but we'll wrap this one up for today and we'll get you back on maybe talking about The American Movement [crosstalk 00:45:42]-

Brent Bozell ([45:42](#)):

Sure. Sure. Happy to do it. Happy to do it.

Bill Walton ([45:44](#)):

This has been the Bill Walton show. I've been here with Brent Bozell and you can find us as always on all the major podcast platforms, Rumble, YouTube, Apple Music, Spotify, on and on. We're also in America First streaming on Monday nights and also on Brent Bozell's platform ForAmerica, where we've got about seven million impressions for the show. So we're glad to be part of that. So, Brent, thanks and thanks you all for joining.

Speaker 4 ([46:16](#)):

Hey, excellent.

Brent Bozell ([46:17](#)):

Tell me what that is, what you do? What are those ... you're following a certain pattern.

Bill Walton ([46:26](#)):

This is my sketch pattern, and I've been using this for three or four years. I do quadrants. I do first, second, third, fourth. And I used to be rigid, saying, "Okay, we're going to do segments here, this is going to be the first segment." Well, that's all out the window. Now it's just this wonderful sketch pad. But then I sometimes write down things here that I think are the key points, which would be courage.

Brent Bozell ([46:54](#)):

I was just enthralled by what you were doing.

Bill Walton ([46:58](#)):

And then Mustard Seeds, because I've got a real penchant for mystical thinking and people that want to be transcendent. That's one of the reasons your family stories are interesting. Your brother's in a monastery and it's just great, but I've got several-

Brent Bozell ([47:13](#)):

I'll send you the book.

Bill Walton ([47:14](#)):

I got a couple these here, but then you can see, I can go back here. This is George Will. We had one with John Tamny and Don Boudreaux. And I don't think I would've had here, I think we talked about Bill of Rights. He wanted to get into trashing Trump and I changed the subject because most everybody that watches the show likes Trump.

Brent Bozell ([47:35](#)):

Sure, sure.

Bill Walton ([47:36](#)):

Well, you started out not liking Trump and then decided you liked what he did as president.

Brent Bozell ([47:41](#)):

Yeah. I don't know if you know this, but I met with Sessions during the summer of 2020. And I offered to take a leave of absence from the MRC if doing something on the Trump campaign was more helpful than doing something with the MRC to do it. I thought I could leave it on autopilot for three months and help the Trump campaign. And nothing came of it. It was like a two-hour meeting, but-

Bill Walton ([48:20](#)):

His campaign was a disaster.

Brent Bozell ([48:22](#)):

It was a disaster.

Bill Walton ([48:22](#)):

It was a disaster, arrogance and self-dealing. I mean, I don't think paid enough attention to the stuff. And we told him there were going to be issues with the mail-in ballots. I mean, in February of 2020, March of 2020 when they changed all the rules about setting the ballots out, it was clear we were going to have Katy, bar the door.

Bill Walton ([48:49](#)):

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