



THE
TRANS

PARTISAN
REVIEW

THE TRANSPARTISAN EFFECT
INTROSPECTIVE ISSUE • SUMMER 2017

Patience and perseverance have a magical effect before
which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish.

- John Quincy Adams



THE TRANSPARTISAN REVIEW

VOLUME ONE : ISSUE TWO

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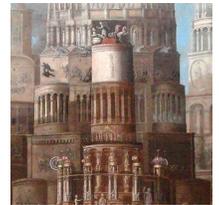
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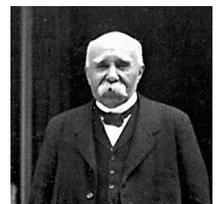
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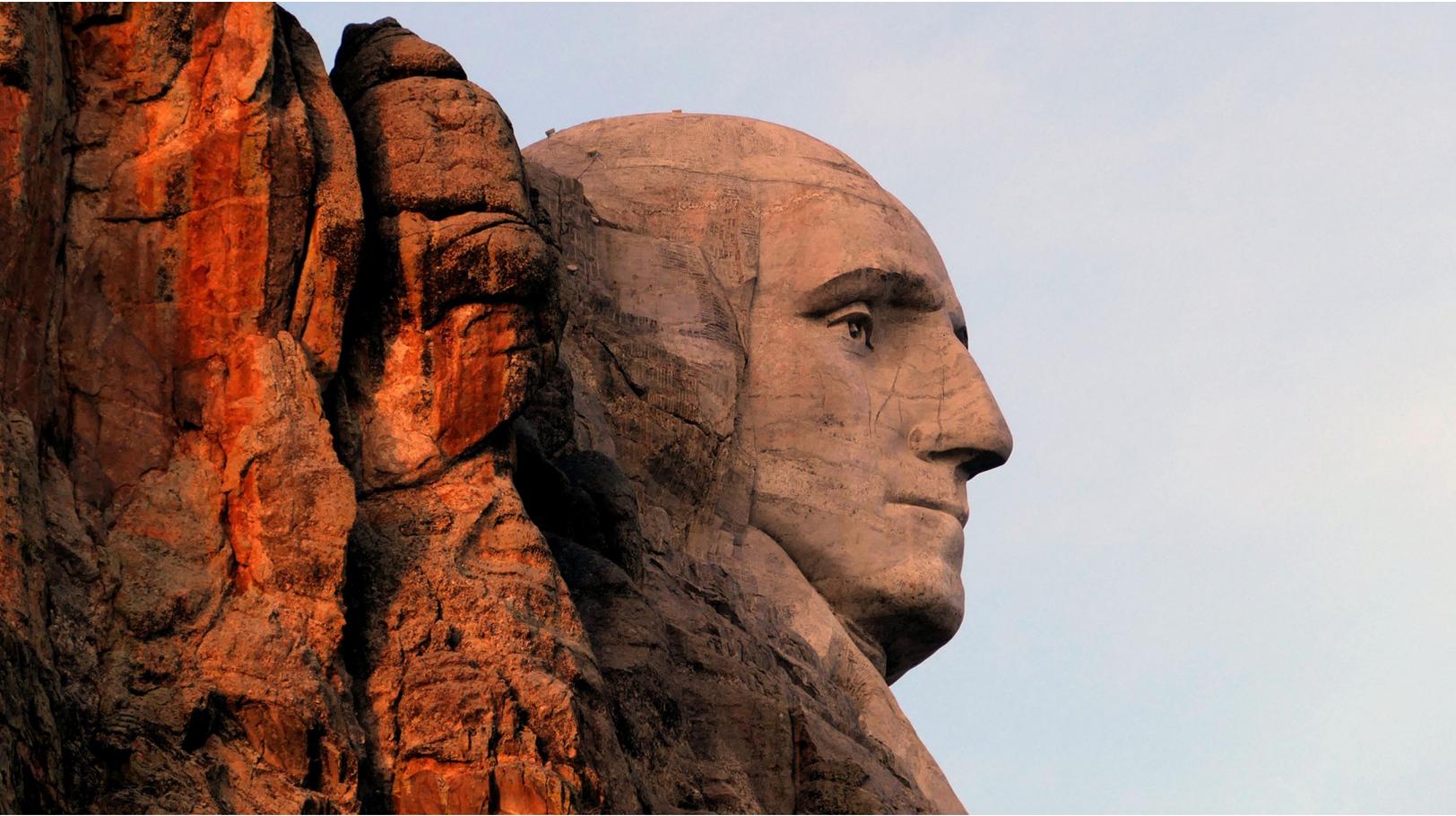


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INTRODUCTION



A REMARKABLE TIME OF CHANGE

We introduce Volume I Issue 2 of The Transpartisan Review as hyper-partisan battles rage. In this issue, we explore how broad ideas and social forces are shaping our political institutions and our choice of leaders, including President Donald Trump.

One strand of the contemporary American narrative holds the current President responsible as the chief cause of the daily chaos in our politics. We contend that the upheaval stems, rather, from deeper social forces, within which the President plays the role of an effect at least as much as that of a cause. We go deeper into our four-quadrant Transpartisan Matrix, suggesting that these driving social forces continue to push people on both the left and the right toward “freedom” and away from “order.” These forces, we believe, reflect the continuing “individuation” of human beings that is characteristic of modern technologically-advanced societies, primarily, but not solely, in the West. Highly individuated people feel increasingly constrained by, disenchanted with, and alienated from highly bureaucratic and centralized economic, political, and cultural institutions.

Simultaneously, the strength and speed of the continuing push toward freedom generates a reaction that has people looking back wistfully and forward anxiously, searching for the reassuring sense of “order” left behind. This sense of lost order affects all but a small percentage of people, although in substantially different ways and to substantially different degrees. Modern society has yet to evolve institutions and practices that support continued individuation while at the same time providing the sense of order, or “settled rightness,” that all human beings desire and need.

People search for — and expect from their leaders — institutions and practices that support their individuation through a stronger sense of identity and value, but that also provide a calming sense of order. We believe those institutions and practices — whether in government policymaking, health care, education, law enforcement, public works, communications, commerce, national security, care for the vulnerable and the rest of the nation’s agenda — will tend toward local, voluntary, inclusive, and highly participatory systems within structures that support personal relationships while maintaining the integrity of communities. We believe as well that these new institutions and practices have already begun to form — and that by paying these seedlings of social invention very careful attention we can lower the social cost of massive upheaval underway in our contemporary lives.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

Today, July 31, 2017 (Day 192 in the presidency of Donald Trump) we welcome you to “The Transpartisan Effect,” an exploration of the remarkable time of change in which we are living. The present is a transitional phase between the extended post-war period of the last century and the emerging world of the 21st. Our unsettled, roiling politics reflects tensions among competing social and cultural forces. These forces push toward deep changes in the relationship between citizens and governments, and toward major reforms in our political institutions. It is a moment of great danger, but also of immense opportunity.

The past 192 days—Donald Trump’s first six months in office—highlight both the dangers and the opportunities of this time of social and political flux. Following through on his campaign promises, the Trump administration is challenging the widely-shared traditional assumptions underlying both the content and the process of making policy, foreign as well as domestic. On international issues, he is moving away from the post-World War II “internationalist” consensus. In the domestic arena, he is reversing longstanding trends in health, education, the environment, and other policy areas. The central theme in both spheres is withdrawal of the state and increasing emphasis on private/individual authority and action.

Apart from his policy agenda, the President’s governing style strains the patience and credulity of all who have come to expect a more “presidential” performance. Yet, perhaps not surprisingly, Mr. Trump appears to have retained the support of many Americans who are deeply alienated from traditional politics. This helps explain why thus far there is scant evidence that the Democrats have yet to benefit from his markedly unconventional behavior.

But making sense of the current turmoil requires appreciating just how weak support for the President actually is. Candidate Trump received electoral support from fewer than 30 percent of eligible voters. The prevailing “narrative” of political news reporting and commenting—that “40 percent” of American voters supported the President—thus greatly exaggerates his real “base.” Significantly, this misleading figure is not unique to Trump; it characterized Obama’s base, and would have misrepresented support for Hillary Clinton’s presidency as well, since the votes actually cast for her represented just 28 percent of the eligible voters.

The electorate’s concerns and priorities, we should note, have changed considerably over the past seventy years as a consequence of unprecedented social and economic conditions. The most important of these changes may be the decline of historically-important *sources of adversity*—especially major wars and depressions—which invited or required large-scale, centralized solutions. The desire for “order” is never far from the surface of people’s attention. At least three new threats may incite the demand for collective solutions necessary to preserve or restore order. *Terrorism*, though it inflicts the most damage locally, strikes (as it is

intended to) at people's primal need for safety, security, and predictability. Extreme and volatile *weather* might also resurrect collective responses, if predicted effects of climate change turn out to be correct. Individuals and local communities may be overwhelmed and unable to manage without assistance from outside. Finally, as recent developments in North Korea remind us, the threat of *nuclear weapons* has not gone away—indeed, it may be growing—and it is hard to see how a decentralized response could be effective.

The revolution in technology has propelled new generations into a world that both reflects and demands the continuing individuation of persons. More than half the population is now under thirty years of age. Instant global communication is more likely to swell the numbers of people demanding the freedom to exercise greater control over their lives than to generate vast constituencies wanting more centralized decision-making.

Even though the earth's populations seem headed down the path to ever-greater individuation and freedom, “order” (connectedness, community, stability, peace, justice, etc.) remains essential to their happiness. The puzzle of how to construct a new balance between freedom and order in a fast-changing world is already being addressed by people constructing new institutions and practices that emphasize individual self-governance. Successful experiments in public school reform, alcohol and drug rehabilitation, the liberation of women and girls in traditional societies, and similar developments are spreading almost as fast as the news of their effectiveness and popularity.

Several of the articles in this issue address the need for institutional and policy reform in response to the challenges raised by advancing individuation. Our advisor Ralph Benko offers an ingenious suggestion for grass-roots organizing. Edgar Feige revisits his innovative (and, in our view, drastically under-considered) proposal for supplementing or even eliminating income taxes. Jack Matlock, U.S. Ambassador to the U.S.S.R. during the crucial period from 1987 to 1991, offers his thoughts concerning what he views as the distracting preoccupation with Russia's involvement in the presidential campaign. Pete Peterson, Dean of the Pepperdine University School of Public Policy and 2016 Republican candidate for California Secretary of State, suggests that “while there's some truth in the contention that the relationship between citizens and government has broken down completely, the fact is that our relationship with government is ‘merely’ changing. That's a good thing...” Lynne Twist and Lawry Chickering report on the results of a Living Room Conversation they co-hosted, bringing together three “conservatives” and three “progressives” on a transpartisan journey to imagine how to bring the country together again. (MoveOn.org co-founder Joan Blades founded LRC.)

Finally, we are pleased to note that the Transpartisan Review has been placed in the category rated “[least biased](#)” by Media Bias/Fact Check.

["Least-biased"] sources have minimal bias and use very few loaded words (wording that attempts to influence an audience by using appeal to emotion or stereotypes). The reporting is factual and usually sourced. These are the most credible media sources. ... Transpartisan Review (TR), founded by A. Lawrence Chickering and James S. Turner, is an online magazine for the transpartisan political belief. Akin to Third Way politics and centrism in some respects, transpartisan politics eschews a left or right view and promotes cooperation from all sides—left, right, center, etc.—with the goal of finding solutions instead. The articles in TR are factual and well sourced, and the only bias evident is towards the transpartisan belief. (D. Kelley)

We hope you find reading our second issue rewarding, and we look forward to any and all comments you might have. Post comments to www.transpartisanreview.com/issue-two.

COVER STORY



THE TRANSPARTISAN EFFECT

UNDERSTANDING THE POLITICAL TURMOIL

THE TRANSPARTISAN EFFECT

UNDERSTANDING THE POLITICAL TURMOIL

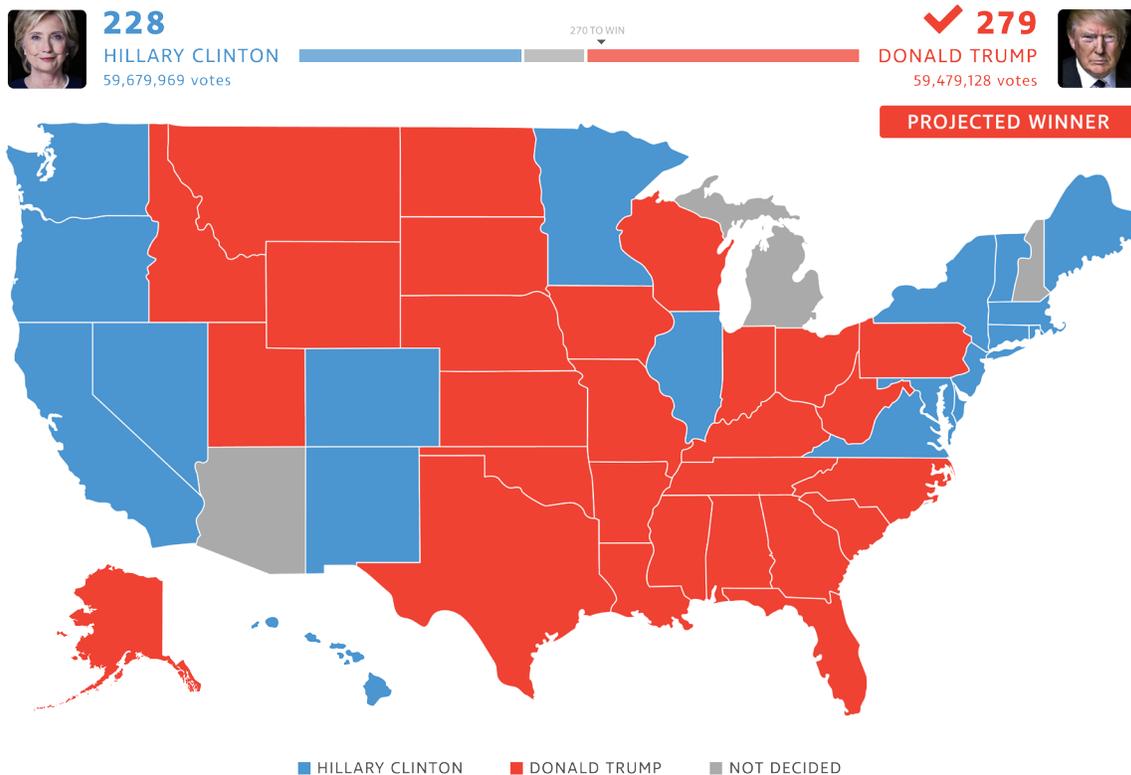
The Election Meant More Than You Thought

by A. Lawrence Chickering and James S. Turner

We believe that the political roiling of the Trump administration's first six months stems in large part from President Trump's misreading of America and America's misreading of the Trump election.

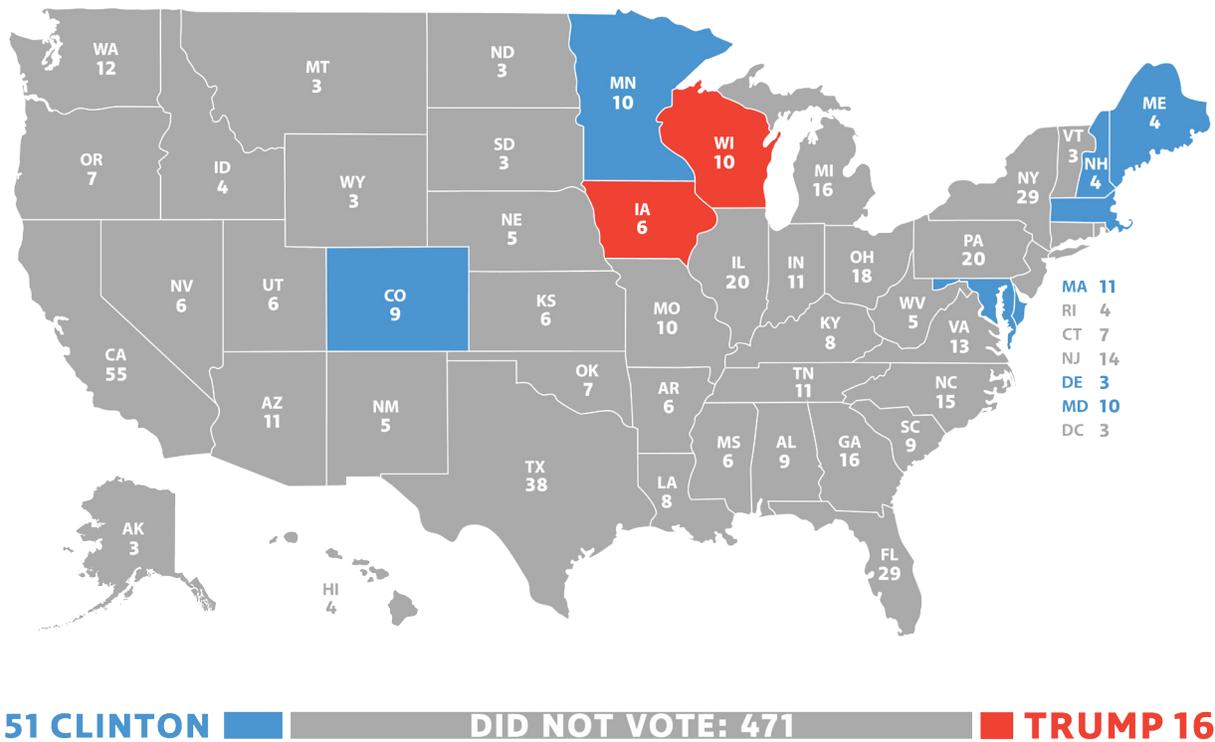
RETHINKING THE ELECTION: TWO MAPS

On Day 99 of his term in office, President Trump underscored his view of the election by sharing with reporters a map from Reuters illustrating his electoral win (recreated below).



Trump loves this map. It presents his personal subjective political reality, which happens also to be the formal, legal reality. It appears to give Trump all the political power. Nevertheless, it also presents a very narrow picture of the election.

The second map below, based on a map from [Brilliant Maps](#), shows Electoral College votes as if ‘Did Not Vote’ had been a candidate. It presents a very different picture of a very different reality.



The map above shows what the 2016 US Presidential Election results would have been if votes not cast for Clinton, Trump or one of the third party candidates had gone to a fictional candidate, ‘Did Not Vote’. [Brilliant Maps, author of this map](#), points out that ‘as a percentage of eligible voters, Clinton received 28.43% (65,845,063) of all votes, compared to Trump’s 27.20% (62,980,160), and to Did Not Vote’s 44.37% (102,731,399).’¹

The first map shows formal, constitutional power. The second map presents a broader and more accurate picture of the real support that Trump received — compared to the overall constituency he must serve and lead. The second map highlights the daunting task he faces trying to govern. Obama faced a similar reality, and if Clinton had won the last election, she would have faced it too. In today’s world, our formal electoral system gives the elected President support of between 25 and 30% of ‘the people’.

Trump’s love of the first map blinds him to a larger view of his limited ‘base,’ which represents a narrow support group compared to the much larger constituency he must represent, be supported by, and lead as President.

The second map highlights forces that do not fall neatly onto the left-right spectrum but greatly influence the political opportunities of any political leader whether they understand them or not. We call these forces transpartisan. Underestimating or ignoring them leads to vast misunderstanding of political reality and to the kind of political turmoil we are experiencing.

THREE CONSTITUENCIES

The media, Trump resisters, and the public are each misreading Trump's victory. Each underscores their narrow reading of Trump's constituency by accepting his voters as 40% of the total when they actually number about 27%. They call Trump fans 'hard-core right' when they are much more varied, and they tend to see his voters as traditionally Republican when they include many traditional Democrats and independents.

Political analyst David Paul Kuhn, in an article called 'Sorry, Liberals. Bigotry Didn't Elect Donald Trump' (NYT, Dec 26, 2016), which we quoted in TTR Vol I Issue 1, has written that Trump won the white working-class vote (traditionally Democratic) over Clinton by more than any major-party nominee had bested his opponent since World War II. One-fifth of voters — more than 25 million Americans — disapproved of Trump's treatment of women; yet Trump won three-quarters of these voters. By 50 to 45% Trump voters support legal status rather than deportation for working illegal immigrants. Trump won about 1/4 of voters who want the next president to follow more liberal policies.

Kuhn concludes that '...stereotyping of Trump voters is not only illiberal, it falsely presumes Mr. Trump won because of his worst comments about women and minorities rather than despite them.' Exit polls said that 20% of voters disapproved of both candidates. If divided evenly, Clinton wins. They backed Trump overwhelmingly.

We believe that in the current political environment stereotyping tends to lose elections. Trump voters are a much more complicated lot than normally assumed. We also believe that relying on the left/right spectrum alone misreads and misleads the country, especially partisan combatants.

We see here three constituencies: 1) hard-core Trump; 2) hard-core Clinton; and 3) pox on both your parties. Trump stands to lose ground if he doubles down on his 27%. Resisters stand to be overrun if they tie themselves to Clinton's 28%. Both could lose if they neglect the 44% pox-on-both constituency. We believe broadening the left/right continuum to a matrix (see below) effectively integrates the 44%.

Whoever provides the 44% transpartisan constituency with plausible policies and programs will gain the most between now and the next election and beyond. Dismissing Trump voters as narrow-minded, right-wing, bigoted 'deplorables,' or dedicated public servants as 'nut-jobs,' walks away from the 44%.

WHY THE ALIENATION? INDIVIDUATION

Out of Touch

Although the two maps show widespread public alienation from mainstream politics, people inside the system — including both political party leaders and media opinion leaders — act as if they control or should control events. People inside see a narrow problem, an erratic leader somewhere between still learning the trade to usurper. Since the formal, constitutional systems are working — the Electoral College and the carefully-crafted Congressional Districts, which create sinecures for the great majority of elected legislative representatives who fill the available jobs — insiders do not see that the country as in a real crisis.

It does not register with the opinion elites that so many people are not voting in the formal systems as a way of voting 'no' to business as usual. They know these formal systems are allowing weak minorities — perhaps

40% (counting both Democrats and Republicans) — to control the government over a much larger majority (voting Independents and non-voters). This system has little if anything to do with expressing the ‘consent of the governed.’

When something approaching *three-quarters* of age-eligible citizens are refusing to identify with the winning candidate, when more people are registering Independent than either Democrat or Republican, you know the results of the formal system are out of touch with the public.

Outsiders Exploit the Alienation

The alienation that conservatives and progressives — and Republicans and Democrats — feel toward each other *within the system* imitates the alienation that many Americans *outside the system* feel toward those inside — their political leaders, their government, and the entire political system. The recent election showed how advanced alienation is in both parties as outsider populists challenged insider candidates supported by the party elites.

Bernie Sanders, an Independent, self-identified ‘socialist,’ starting with no money and little inside Democratic support, nearly upset Hillary Clinton, who enjoyed every advantage in formal party support. (Democratic Party insiders even tilted the formal party apparatus for her and against Sanders.) Donald Trump ran his campaign *against* the Republican Party and *against* the system as well as against all other candidates. He won the Republican nomination and then the election — absolutely *mocking* every convention in the formal political playbook.

In the current environment, Trump’s behavior is totally distracting, tempting us to think he is causing our political upheavals. The upheavals, however, long predate him. The conflict that continues raging around us and him arises from forces — and is itself — larger than he is or we are.

Trump is a phenomenon — at least as much *result* as cause — shaped by forces that are shaping the world. (The same was true of Sanders.) Although his disruptions — behavior, fits and starts, apparent contradictions, and what seems obsessive self-promotion — are exasperating, they also provide insight to his Presidency, the national constituencies, and the forces that are influencing our world.

We described in [our last issue](#) some of the basic, *objective* forces that are shaping our world, especially technology.² We also think significant *subjective* forces are affecting us — even more, possibly, than the objective ones. Subjective forces, however, are not easy to see; and the political idiom, following science, tends to avoid and ignore them. As formal politics stresses the objective, it feeds alienation and fuels outsider candidates.

Recognizing the Subjective

Following objective ‘truths,’ ‘things’ become the dominant prizes that politics (and economics) offer. ‘Things’ symbolize materialism, represented by money and valued by people as objects, *separate from their relationships*. For both the left and the right public policy tends to be all about getting money. At the extremes, Marxists and progressive economic planners care most about money to equalize incomes, and free market economists and conservative supply siders care most about money to create economically efficient incentives. Both focus on money for people as objects and neglect subjective values (people as subjects, in relationships).

Their mantra: ‘It’s the money, stupid.’

For example now, July 2017, we are mired in the 25th year of the modern ‘health care’ debate. However, the political debate is less about ‘health care’ than about health care ‘financing.’ Both sides agree, at least tacitly if not assertively, that the U.S. has the best health care system in the world. The political problem: how do we get the money to each individual so they can access that wonderful system?

In fact, the U.S. system is twice as costly per capita as the next most expensive and ranks 35th in the world by accepted quality measures.³ In the meantime, 50% or more of the public (a number roughly comparable to those disaffected from partisan politics) use one or more of the more than 100 organized complementary, alternative, integrative health modalities (diet, exercise, dietary supplements, nutrition, chiropractic, acupuncture, massage therapies, meditation, etc.) that fall under the mandate of the [National Institute of Health National Center for Complimentary and Integrative Health](#).

An important part of the problem is the focus on ‘health care’ rather than ‘health.’ As we noted in recent [TTR Note #48](#), ‘An Atlantic article quoted Hippocrates to capture the core of integrative health: “It is more important to know what sort of person has a disease than to know what sort of disease a person has.”’

It is useful to distinguish two elements in the alternative health field: *health issues caused by negative behaviors and habits and alternative health care interventions*. From the introduction of Hillarycare in 1992 to the present, the ‘health care’ reformers on both sides have used the Congress, the courts, and the regulators to exclude the representatives of alternative health care modalities from the health *financing* debate. Virtually no alternative modalities are eligible for financial support under any of the various reform proposals, and the reform proposals also pay little more than lip service to promoting behaviors and habits that would improve health and reduce the need for health care.

The health reform political battles rage about money while vast numbers of the electorate seek better ways to advance their health using their own money.

The political debate likes ‘things’ (objects) because they are easy to observe and measure — and are also comparatively easy for policy to deliver. Of course ‘things’ alone don’t make people happy because people are not objects. They are *social creatures*, with *subjective values*, who are happy *in relationships*. Being *subjective*, relationships are hard to observe and measure, and hard to harness for political campaigns run on polling and fund raising. However, leadership, policy, and the structure of institutions can influence relationships when people are seen as subjects (holding subjective values) — who thrive in communities and with connections that include those values.

Relationships are important because they relieve what is arguably the most painful form of *deprivation: personal (subjective) isolation* otherwise known as *loneliness*. There is evidence linking personal isolation or loneliness to many forms of health and social dysfunction — alcoholism, drug addiction, poverty, crime and political alienation as well as physical [disease](#) itself. Unfortunately, *scientific analyses*, which often undergird government policies and see people primarily as objects, are often helpless to relieve these problems when they focus on *poverty reduction* (objective) as a solution. They do not understand that reducing poverty can only be accomplished by people as *subjects*.

Understanding people as subjects is especially important at the present time because we believe that *valuing the subjective — the desire for self-expression or ‘individuation’ — is growing in societies throughout the*

world. This increasing force may also be understood as the increasing need for self-expression, which is first observable as people grow up from infancy through adolescence to adulthood.

Individuation: Infusing Objective with Subjective

Although the current political debate pays little if any attention to individuation, individuation is a *major force influencing our political system.* Individuation drives people away from political parties that are interested only in voters as objects.

Subjective values are important as an instrument of consciousness, motivating decisions by choice rather than habit (tradition) or force (law). When consciousness is weak — think of an infant or small child — desires are for ‘things’ as the principal instruments of identity. As consciousness becomes stronger, individuation motivates people to make their own choices and search for values and relationships that are ‘theirs.’

Understanding the increasing importance of subjectivity is essential to understanding both policy challenges that resist solution and Trump’s recent election as President (or the loss of Clinton and the many other Republican presidential primary candidates). People were protesting a system that denies or ignores their need as subjects to exercise increasing control of their lives. We trace the collapse of repeal and replace Obamacare, in large measure, to its focus on objective cost rather than subjective aspects of health and wellbeing.

The current political system, both left and right, rests on a foundation of *imposed order* — tradition from the right and law (enforcing ‘justice’) from the left. In part because it is invisible in the political debate, advancing individuation presents major threats to both sides as it challenges and threatens *imposed order in both forms,* from both left and right.

Understanding issues relating to the subjective is important to understanding the increasing alienation from our political system. The ‘old’ system treated everyone as simple and the same and imposed structures on them. Advancing individuation breaks down relationships based on tradition, habit, and hierarchy. It weakens institutions that have not understood the changing terms of peoples’ consent — this would include relationships in marriage, religion, organizational management, producer and consumer, health and many, if not most (or possibly all) others. All contemporary institutions struggle — and their leaders struggle — as our political system now struggles.

Expanding Self-Expression

Our current political system developed to unite and connect thirteen independent states. It required a civil war, abolishing slavery, to unite them around the principles of justice and equality expressed in the Declaration of Independence, which principles remain our core values. After the abolition of slavery, states perpetuated injustices by enforcing segregation, which would have to wait until the 1950s to start to change.

Through World War II the progressive agenda was all about *centralized authority* to meet great crises — first the Depression and then the mobilization for and conduct of war. The 1950s, the first full decade after WW II, brought the nation’s attention back to the two great values in all human beings, especially in the modern era. These values are *order* and *freedom.*

The 1950s were a decade committed to *order* (tradition), but the fifties were also the decade that brought the first post-war stirrings for *freedom* (self-expression).

The principal expressions of these apparently conflicting values appeared in the arts. Expression of freedom (self-expression) happened first in music, with the beginning of rock, Elvis Presley, Bill Haley and the Comets; critiques of the new mass culture (*The Organization Man*, *The Lonely Crowd*); and jazz, which came from the emerging African-American voice for freedom (Miles Davis, Duke Ellington). It was a decade of innocence ('Ozzie and Harriet') but also of rebellion in urban gangs ('Blackboard Jungle').

The desire for self-expression and freedom was emerging, eroding tradition. It was the beginning of the modern *conflict between freedom and order* that has been a major force influencing our politics over the past seventy years. The desire for self-expression started to push against traditional attitudes focused on collective action. To respond to these early stirrings of individuation, the old politics divided people into progressives and conservatives — 'left' and 'right' — but divisions also appeared *within* the left and *within* the right, expressing the relationship between order and freedom.

Evolving Self-Expression: Robust Freedom, Resilient Order

The growing impulse for self-expression started pushing us to expand our vision of people and of political positions, and this growing impulse continues, even today (mid-2017) to erode the authority of imposed order, from both left and right.

The simple left-right categories alienate large numbers of age-eligible voters, who see themselves as other than, or beyond, left and right. We developed the Transpartisan Matrix to distinguish the freedom and order themes and factions on both sides of the partisan divide.⁴ Yet the political debate continues to be defined in terms of a simple left-right conflict that has little meaning except to deepen the polarization and intensify the conflict that further alienate people and drive them away from the two major parties.

The Matrix also encourages general agreement when one understands that the freedom and order value quadrants are reinforcing and complementary, rather than conflicting. *Winning politics seeks to integrate freedom and order.*

THE FOUR-QUADRANT MATRIX: FROM ORDER TO FREEDOM

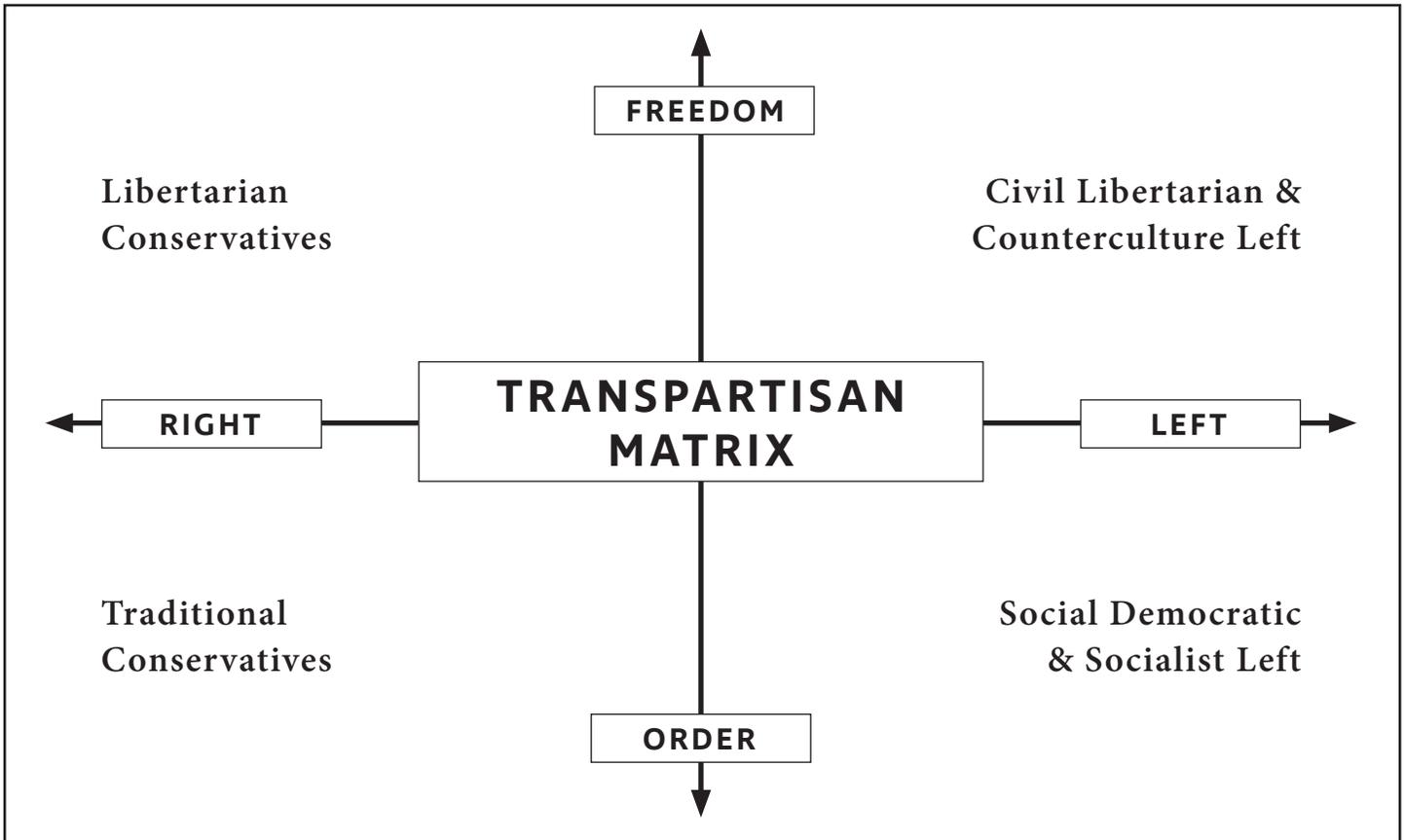
Opportunities

We created our Four-Quadrant Transpartisan Matrix™ to broaden understanding of what people actually care about — values that the current political system is oversimplifying. People want *more* than simply freedom (the central Republican message) or justice (the Democrats'), which the left-right spectrum currently offers them. They want *both*. The left-right spectrum, however, conceals two important factors:

- The powerful, emerging demands for self-expression (freedom) in almost all constituencies. Empowerment as self-expression is an important need of growing numbers of people — not just minorities — for justice; and

- The extraordinary agreement in the country that everyone needs both freedom and order (tradition and justice); and also that resolution of issues that seem intractable will only be found when institutions and policy are reformed to promote active roles by citizens as participating subjects. Solutions will remain beyond our reach as long as they are viewed in terms of the left-right spectrum alone and are seen to be about citizens as objects.

The Matrix, in four quadrants, appears as follows:



The Matrix identifies the principal values and forces influencing our politics, including the behavior of non-voting skeptics. Viewing Trump’s first 192 days through the Matrix, it is clear that the left-right spectrum alone explains very few of the complexities in the current national debate.

Expanding Self-Expression

Advancing individuation (self-expression) may be seen on the Matrix *as movement from the order quadrants to the freedom quadrants*. By bringing free expression into the order quadrants, the order quadrants are changed from preconscious connections to increasingly conscious ones by people *as subjects*.

Understanding that no quadrant is independent, existing on its own, one may come to understand how the quadrants represent *complementary values*. Individuated people tend, increasingly, to insist on *choosing* their relationships, their life styles, and their personal life paths, bringing the freedom quadrants and the order quadrants together. ‘Traditional’ government services for citizens — from education to law enforcement to health care — limit citizens’ roles to passive acceptance.

In the new environment, ‘good’ schools promote active parental, student, and community participation. They know that active parental and student involvement strengthens the entire learning environment, which influences (strengthens) students’ motivation and learning. Health depends on *people taking care of themselves* as well as on doctors and hospitals. And law enforcement is greatly enhanced when communities share responsibility for it with the police.

In these and other arenas active civil society organizations, drawing on experiences in many countries, promote change from the bottom up. None of these emergent possibilities falls neatly on a left/right spectrum, but all depend on reform of government institutions to promote active citizen roles; and over time government institutions themselves will assume operational and cultural forms that look increasingly like civil society functions.

We are imagining changes that may seem far from any current realities. We will explore these emergent potentialities in future issues of *TTR*. For now, we can only say that one can find powerful examples of these changes in many places right now, and we mention some of them below.

A major precondition facilitating the institutional and policy changes we are talking about will be to change how we view *the rule of law*.⁵ At the present time, we often see ‘justice’ as something that laws or traditions impose on people, mostly from the order-left quadrant, though as the power of tradition wanes, the order-right quadrant increasingly uses law to impose its values.

Imposing justice (order) produces a hollow justice, which ignores the demands of individuating citizens for active, voluntary engagement among citizens with much deeper significance than justice imposed impersonally. Forcing people to be just is hollow because it treats citizens as objects and leaves no room for citizens as subjects to reach out to each other in common purpose. These abstract statements will become clearer by examining real experiences revealing what seem to be miraculous outcomes.

The leadership challenge is to engage citizens and offer them opportunities to share ownership and become actively involved as *co-producers of services*. It is a challenge way beyond left and right alone.

This approach will allow the Trump or any administration to govern more effectively, resisters to resist more successfully, and for the very large part of the community who express themselves as beyond partisan — well over 50% and perhaps as much as 70%, who see themselves as outside partisan battles (or wish they were) — to work for institutional reform as individuals and in civil society organizations (CSOs) brought in from outside the formal political system.

We believe transpartisan politics says stereotyping voters loses elections. Arraying Map Two’s numbers on the Transpartisan Matrix, with freedom-right and freedom-left folks opposing order-right and -left elites, begins to reveal complexities that cannot be seen using the simple left-right spectrum alone.

Real examples of the freedom quadrants arrayed against and integrating with the order quadrants include: gay marriage; Whole Foods; integrative health and school choice programs; the sharing economy including firms like Uber, Airbnb, and Snapgoods; dating sites like eHarmony, Tinder and EliteSingles; travel tools like Priceline, GPS, EasyPass, and OnStar; companies like Facebook, Amazon, Apple, Google and many others. Each of these organizations moves individuals from the order of tradition and law toward the freedom of expression and choice within new forms of order.

‘Advancing individuation’ is exerting pressure for change on the mainstream political system. One factor retarding change in this direction may be that political leaders do not know how to sell active citizenship as an important part of winning political campaigns. They may also be unaware of real experiences both in the U.S. and many other countries showing real success and progress in empowering even the most disempowered populations. Without awareness of initiatives that integrate freedom and order reflecting self-expression and individuation, it is almost impossible for politicians to sell the concept as an answer for the future. If this vision does not or cannot come from them, it is likely that it will be forced on them.

Matrix Revealed Complexities

New York Times columnist Ross Douthat cracks the door on the political Matrix opportunity. Writing ‘In Search of the American Center,’ on June 21 (NYT, 6/21/17), he reports on a study by the Democracy Fund Voter Study Group. He also describes an accompanying report by Lee Drutman assessing voter sentiment along two axes. The data and report create the following matrix.

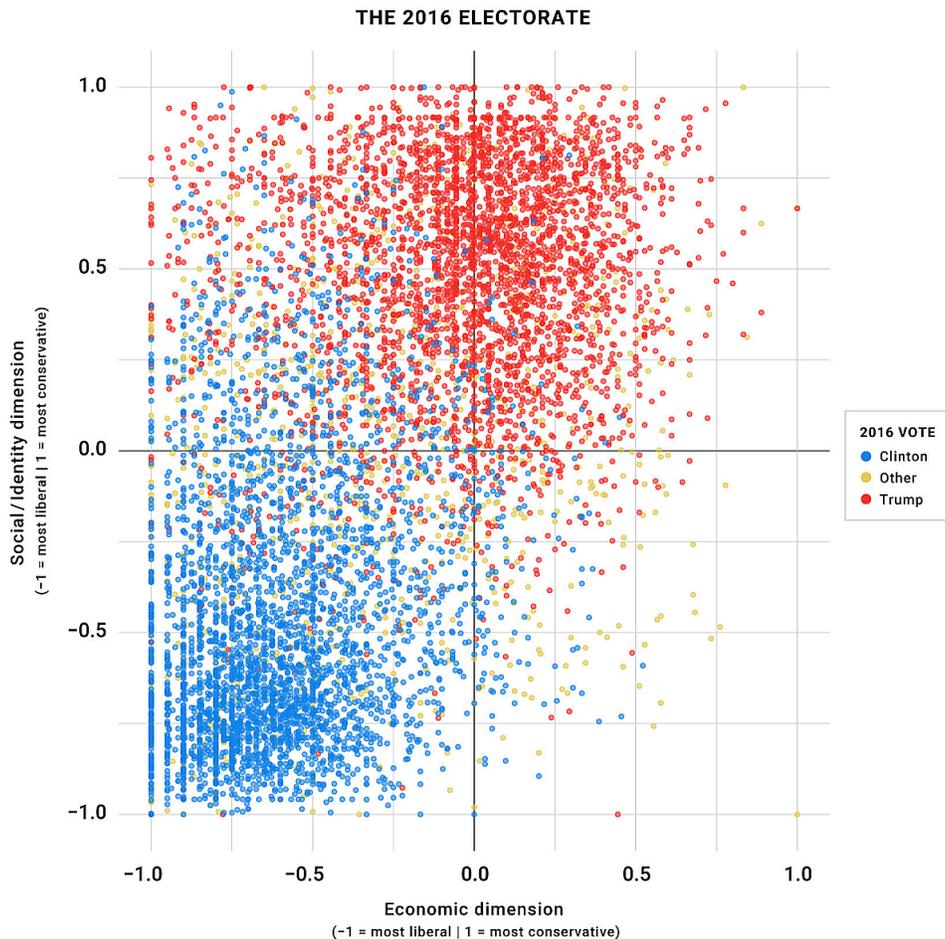


Chart from [Political Divisions in 2016 and Beyond Tensions Between and Within the Two Parties](#) by Lee Drutman (Democracy Fund’s Voter Study Group)

This Matrix ‘helps explain,’ Douthat says, ‘why Donald Trump won the presidency and why his administration is such a policy train wreck, why Democrats keep losing even though the country seems to be getting more liberal, and why populist surges are likely to be with us for a while — a trifecta of rather important explanations.’

We believe the data arrayed on the Drutman matrix point to the *objective left/right horizontal* component of *current politics*, with citizens passively accepting government services. In the old model, governments are active, but government *officials* (contrary to common belief) are passive, following legal rules and regulations that, in effect, mechanize relationships between people. This effectively depresses government officials by forcing them to fight for human contact.⁶ With its freedom/order vertical axis, the Transpartisan Matrix expands the *objective left/right continuum* analysis to include subjective values.

Douthat writes, ‘Look at the smear of red across the top two quadrants and the fist of blue in the lower left, stare awhile at the chart’s lower right-hand quadrant, home of social liberals and fiscal conservatives. It’s astonishingly empty. . .’ Empty, we suggest, because, seeing candidates skip their interests, it is likely this freedom quadrant’s occupants did not vote.

These data, Douthat says, reveal a voter consensus very moderately culturally conservative and very moderately economically liberal that ‘sit(s) low in the upper left quadrant of our chart — the place where Trump won voters who had previously voted for Obama.’ We see Obama/Trump voters as part of a transpartisan public. They are not bound by party or ideology. They respond to authenticity, charisma, and apparent independence, all of which are subjective and difficult to poll for or count. Their subjectivity makes them wildcards.

That transpartisan public also includes the 44% nonvoters. Both groups transcend ideology and occupy political space outside the established parties. It’s as if the ‘empty’ quadrant was the abandoned home of the 44%, whose bumpers read ‘Pox on Both Your Parties. Neither candidate is qualified. Stay home, make a statement.’

We believe that the Douthat-reported matrix takes a major step forward in moving beyond the limits of the left/right spectrum. It is a breakthrough in political analysis. At the same time, we see that matrix reporting the political system in static terms, influencing distributional (economic) and moral (social) outcomes. In this respect, it accepts the system exactly as it is now, with the government as active and voters/citizens as passive. (We mean ‘passive’ here in the sense that citizens’ only active role in the governance system is at the ballot box, when they vote for the order they want the government to impose on them.)

From this perspective, it is not surprising to find a freedom quadrant mostly vacant. Freedom — or ‘free-expression’ — has significance mostly in subjective terms: how people choose to engage with one another, how they relate to communities. This matrix shows the quadrants as representing only unitary values. In our perspective ‘freedom’ has little meaning by itself; it becomes meaningful only when integrated with a social component (an order quadrant).

In our Matrix the freedom quadrants are *the most important quadrants in our immediate political circumstances* but will only show up if a voter can express *freedom together with an order quadrant*.

We believe the empty quadrant contains a signal from a powerful part of the national constituency, seeking

integration between free expression and an order quadrant. When this freedom quadrant is empty, we expect alienation will be high and governance will be difficult.

This issue of *The Transpartisan Review* contains an article by our colleague Michael Briand that addresses the Transpartisan Matrix. That article and our comments on it expand this discussion of the objective and subjective aspects of these two matrices. We believe expanding political analysis from a left/right spectrum alone to a matrix helps find insights otherwise hidden.

WHY TRUMP WON: BONDING WITH THE MEDIA

Outrage

To understand why and how Donald Trump won the 2016 Presidential election, one must understand the role that the media played in his victory. The background for the story starts with the widespread voter alienation from the major parties and their candidates. This opened the field to outraged ‘outsiders’ carrying the flag against the ‘corrupt’ insiders.

The media played a special role in the last election because one candidate, Donald Trump, understood how the media business model set the media up to be manipulated. As an entertainer rather than a politician, Trump understood the model and, before politics, made a fortune working it to his benefit. He also understood that in the model objective facts play a limited role because the model is driven mostly by subjective feelings in what is essentially a theatrical business. Trump has simply played to the model (as one commentator put it) and has *turned the White House into a reality television show*.

Trump did this from the first moment he joined the race for the Republican Presidential nomination. When he started his reality show, serious questions could have been raised about the very troublesome implications. Yet people in the media did not ask these questions, possibly because they knew the answers would shine a light on their own behavior. As CBS president Leslie Moonves [said](#) in February 2016, “It [the presidential race] may not be good for America, but it’s damn good for CBS.”

It would have been hard to conceal the enabling function the media were playing in Trump’s take-over of a role that, in an instant, changed the appearance of the Presidency from an historical constitutional institution to something very different — from something (thought to be) deeply serious to something (it seemed) entirely trivial.

The last thing the media would want to do, as moralists chiding Trump for concocting ‘fake-news’, was to have to explain how an entertainer, who knew and knows nothing about being President, was able to hijack a Presidential campaign and then a Presidential administration and turn them into a reality TV show. If they are the ‘conscience’ of the process that they hold themselves out to be (and that we need), how could this happen without their active cooperation?

With help coming straight from the media business model, his critics might say that Trump has undermined the constitutional responsibilities of the Presidency away from serious policymaking and turned them into a vehicle for entertaining people and making them laugh. But then one might say he pricked the bubble of the haughty and made the pompous pay with embarrassment.

Not everyone is entertained and laughing, of course. The media themselves are raging, but that, too, is entertaining for many people; and the media continue reporting every syllable he utters. While attention is focused on Trump's latest tweet, contradiction, or photo op, or family email the government, as seen by the did-not-voters, continues to grind on in much the way it did pre-Trump. As it grinds, the lives of millions are altered.

Disrupter Entertainer

The story of Trump's Presidency is just beginning. A traditional perspective, such as former Defense Secretary Robert Gates's, might see Trump as a 'disrupter' who is shaking up the traditional system and is opening possibilities for rethinking issues that need rethinking. Many people think that his behavior is creating important opportunities for going forward even as they understand the enormous costs associated with it — in civility, in degrading and coarsening our civic discourse, even in the loss of confidence that our almost universally-admired democratic principles have any real control over our future and our destiny.

The media are not in the news business; they are in the entertainment business. They make money delivering audiences to advertisers. If what they say and do is not entertaining, advertisers lose interest, and their revenues suffer. Media professionals who are successful know how to be entertaining. This is true even if an important part of their reporting is of their own disbelief and rage protesting the President's behavior.

What media professionals do is very profitable, paying its 'rock star' anchors like real rock stars. While many readers will cringe at this thought, it is hard (from this perspective) to avoid the conclusion that, in maximizing entertainment for audiences, the media, while protesting otherwise, are not primarily interested in facts; their main interest is in appealing to and feeding subjective appetites.

As a media entertainer himself, Donald Trump also knows how to be entertaining, while politicians, who *only* know how to be 'Presidential,' are clueless about how to be anything else. (It may be, in fact, that 'Presidential' and entertaining are close to perfect opposites.)

While all political professionals want Trump to be more 'Presidential,' he knows instinctively that Presidential is not entertaining. He also seems to know, at least intuitively, that doing 'crazy' as the continuing theme of his reality show sustains his symbolic 'middle finger' against the system and therefore many followers and potential followers (recall map two above) continue their support. He is the only public figure who is expressing (symbolically at least) their deep alienation from the system.

A perfect symbol of his relentless *mocking* of Presidential protocols was his parodied wrestler's 'take-down' of a CNN opponent, taking CNN to the floor, next to the ring, and lying fully on top of him, as if to squeeze all life out of him. As much as one may want to avoid this conclusion, it is hard to understand this as anything but a crude, crass reality show staged with one audience (of crazed supporters) screaming their approval and the other (critics) screaming their disgust. That Jeff Zucker, the current president of CNN, formerly producer of the Trump Apprentice NBC TV show, served as the driving force behind Trump's TV career contributes to the eerie tone of the Trump/media relationship.⁷

After his wrestling caper, critics asked: has he 'gone too far, stepped over a line?' The obvious answer is: he didn't step over any line when posing as a wrestler; the line had been erased. He stepped over the line *from the beginning*, when he launched his campaign. Trump *lives* 'over the line.' *And he pulled us all over the line with*

him at the same time. He understood that ‘over the line’ was the only way he could run and win, trading on the media’s business model. Over the line he knew and knows the media are helpless to touch him because his corruption was made possible by their corruption.

Serious readers will have no trouble seeing the deep trouble we face. Trump has thrown everything up in the air, in a ride driven by deep voter alienation from politics as traditionally practiced. We are all with him now, over the line defined by entertainment and theater. The media have an important role to play in helping guide us back to sanity, but only when major media figures start to take seriously their complicity in this nightmare. (We plan to explore this major theme in future issues of *TTR*.)

Assaulting convention at every turn keeps people watching and keeps critics complaining and raging their disgust. It also keeps everyone off balance, including the unfortunate folks who work for him and have to ‘explain’ him to mainstream political audiences everywhere. They never know what he is going to say next — or what he or his family has previously said or done will turn up — except he knows instinctively that the demands of a reality show require that he always be impulsive .

Their nightmare also increases mainstream media audiences and profits. The Democrats are invisible because his reality show has no major roles cast for them, at least at the moment. He is holding them off-stage, waiting to be cued on-stage when his script calls for it.

From Frivolous to Serious Theatre

Serious political people know that Trump is exploiting our endangered system of laws not so much by egregiously violating the President’s obligations under the rule of law — though he does that too — but in some ways much worse: by turning the entire process of Presidential governance into a theatrical enterprise that has nothing at all to do with providing political leadership for the country.

Nevertheless, recalling Robert Gates’s thought about disruption, that may be exactly what the system needs.

We need to add here that Trump, too, knows — or *should know* — that he is not invulnerable. His situation is in fact quite vulnerable because television shows do not last forever. At some point his ratings will start to tank, and as they decline, the ‘myth’ of his Presidency will become vulnerable to a collapse. If (when) that happens, he could find himself standing naked and alone on an empty stage.

Can he avoid this fate? There is a specific transpartisan policy agenda that will speak to the alienated, including his followers, his adversaries and the nonvoters. He needs to find a path to it, moving from the frivolous reality show to serious reform to keep his base and start to grow it. Moving away from the reality show does not mean having to close the theater. Serious reform also contains an important theatrical element.

Whether Trump, as an actor, is equal to the challenge of the new role associated with *meaningful* reform is subject to serious doubt and remains to be seen. It is possible he is not the person to make this happen. It is possible, if not likely, that others will come forward to do it.

Media... Love It, Hate It, Cannot Do Without It

The media hate Trump because he is using their business model to subvert the orderly governance of the country. They love Trump because he makes them a lot of money. Political candidates traditionally target their

campaigns at voters. The media has sold traditional candidates with discussions of serious issues. Trump was (and is) almost entirely disinterested and therefore usually ignorant about issues that, until now, have been important to successful Presidencies. He embraced his reality television role and ran his campaign *not for voters, but for the media* — for the sole purpose of maximizing media coverage. Voters followed him. Non-voters dropped out.

As an entertainer, Trump understands what drives ratings: *stories*. What ‘stories’? Trump’s answer: outrageous remarks of any kind including lies and theatrical irresponsibility. He says anything that conflicts with mainstream media behavior, assuming people will forget if he is theatrically ‘Presidential’ enough of the time to remind people that he, as an actor, can play *any role*; he can play ‘Presidential’ as well as he plays the reality show host.

The media also hate Trump because he has *mocked* the media market’s insane incentives, which distort our political system and degrade public debate. The media loves Trump because he entertains, drawing big audiences. Since the beginnings of big-time TV news in 1960, this entertainment medium has been vulnerable to hijacking. That has now finally happened, combining the talents of a charismatic entertainer speaking to deeply alienated voters who want **out**.

Political leaders join the attack because they are slaves to the same, insane market. (The media and political markets create similar incentives. Politicians *act out entertainment* in the form of the conflict and polarization they and the media pretend to deplore but that builds their fortunes and reputations. Politicians do the on-stage acting, leaving the media to be the impresarios, managing the theater. In Iago’s words, plotting the demise of Othello, they, those close to Othello, whom Iago manipulates, ‘will as tenderly be led by th’ nose as asses are.’)

Conflict Sells

Where does political news create greatest entertainment or political value? *In conflict*. Despite whining about polarization, both the media and political classes *live off it*. The *greatest conflicts* occur in high-theater morality plays, with attacks on opponents as embodiments of evil. Our bi-polar, left-right political system is a *perfect medium* for staging never-ending morality plays. There is nothing remotely like it anywhere else in ‘real life.’

When you understand the media’s business model and how it influences what gets on television, on the radio, in the movies, on-line and into all media, you can understand how an entertainer, with no experience or understanding of political issues, could dominate television news and all other media while his opponents shrank into insignificance. This happened when they got almost no television coverage for the masses of money their donors wasted on them, trying to buy air time. It was a ‘perfect storm’ of circumstance — widespread voter alienation, looking for an outsider to assault ‘the system’ with rage . . . and theatrical talent.

Seeing last fall’s election as a reality show organized for entertainment rather than as a political campaign, it is nevertheless still hard to stop thinking about Trump’s Presidency as basically ‘normal’ . . . if idiosyncratic.

At some point, however, reality needs a place at the table. In important ways Trump’s campaign *was not a political campaign*; it really was and is a reality show, with the candidate, casting himself in the leading role, then winning the election, and now continuing the show.

Trump is caught between the two worlds, trying to play both parts: the reality show president and the real, Constitutional President. Temperamentally, the reality show entertainer clearly represents his superior function. Despite nearly universal advice to be more ‘Presidential,’ he can’t seem to escape the entertainer’s role, which provokes continual troubles for him politically.

Media Therapy

Media commentators pretend they played no role in creating and enabling this phenomenon. Unfortunately, the media are so compromised by their historical role, it is hard to see how they find their way to the role of honest broker and critic they claim to be and that we need.

Our purpose here is not to play critic, moralize, and ask who is to ‘blame’ for our predicament. It is hard to blame anyone for a hurricane, and Trump’s political storm is driven by massive social forces beyond the control of any individual. Moral superiority and blame are the theatrical instruments in the psycho-drama of our traditional debate and political system, deranged today by mythic polarization. In this situation, the transpartisan perspective has a chance to be *therapeutic*: trying to understand how we got to where we are and how we might start to move toward a more positive place.

Megyn Kelly used a therapeutic stance in her extraordinary interview with Trump in May 2016. (Her media critics *eviscerated her* for not *savaging* him.) Kelly turned the interview into a *confessional*, creating space, without judgment, to allow Trump to acknowledge his frailties. In the process, she encouraged him to become real and human in a way we have rarely seen before or since. He revealed himself as a deeply troubled and frightened man, always ‘counter-punching’ against imaginary adversaries. After her interview, no one should have been surprised by *anything* he has done in more than a year since then.

Peggy Noonan, in a recent *Wall Street Journal* column, embraced Kelly’s therapeutic position but appealed to the community of journalists. She said Trump is modeling craziness, and his critics are imitating him, deranged and crazy in their attacks. She appealed to his critics to rediscover their critical faculties, stop giving him so much power over them. She did not touch the complicating factor of their own role in creating him. Unfortunately, if you are a media critic with any capacity for self-reflection and self-criticism, you need more perspective than most people have when you realize that your fingerprints are all over the thing you despise so much.

Reality

Our role, along with many other people, is to work to inject some actual reality into discussion of the Trump Presidency and the effect it is having on our country and the political system.

Trump won the election, we believe, largely because he crudely embodied both the freedom (self-expression) and order (authoritarianism) values in his campaign messaging that an important part of the country’s increasingly individuated electorate wants and needs. Trump’s personal behavior, especially his Twitter addiction, maintains the theater of continuing craziness; and those used to more conventional Presidential behavior and rhetoric see it as a combination of sociopathic narcissism and a child’s inability to control his impulses.

So far, Trump’s base, though softening slightly, stays with him — apparently seeing the craziness as, to repeat, a big middle finger to political elites and the system. The challenge for the rest of us is to understand and embrace the positive effect it is having on shaking people out of trances verbally cued by the major party

narratives and creating spaces for a real debate on how our institutions and policies need to be altered to serve our increasingly individuated electorate.

Strong and free, the Trump message plays well with certain individuals within the American electorate. So far, a real program for the administration, its resisters, or the ambivalent that embodies ‘strong and free’ remains unformed. The public waits for a plan.

THE CHALLENGE FOR TRUMP AND ALL POLITICAL LEADERS

Up to this point we have relayed thoughts about how we got to the very difficult place we are in, 192 days after the Inauguration. Some readers may struggle at thinking about the President’s first months in office as a reality television show rather than a Presidential administration. We reached this conclusion by simply watching him. Another way of looking at it is in terms of what he *knows*. Politically a reality show and entertainment is *all he knows*. Why should anyone be surprised that he is doing what he knows?

There is little question that he has a problem, and he knows it. Over time even successful TV shows lose their freshness, and people lose interest. In this case, however, their attitudes toward Trump’s show are driven by their alienation from the political system, which injects unusual variables into the mix. We see no signs that either the Democratic or Republican parties are waking up to the underlying political problem or that they are effectively searching for new ways of connecting with non-voters or even voters for that matter.

The need here — for Trump or others, including his opponents — is to promote institutional and policy reforms that empower individuated citizens who have outgrown the passive roles cast for them by the traditional system. They want more active roles, especially in political institutions that most influence their lives. These might start with education, health, housing, and law enforcement.

Moving in a positive direction will *change the role of the country’s political leaders*. This is problematic, coming out of the gate, because our entire political class was selected for the qualities defined by the current system: a profoundly hierarchical system, with active leaders and passive followers (‘citizens’ who are really objects, with no roles as real citizens). The increasingly individuated electorate wants more active roles as *subjects*. Many among our current political leaders will find their new roles less appealing than the old ones. We suspect that many people in public life are attracted to that life because they like giving orders.

A good analogy is the change in the role of teachers ‘talking at’ passive students (‘rote learning’ is the descriptive phrase) to the more modern view of teachers facilitating active participation by students doing ‘creative’ learning. In experiences we are aware of, teachers *welcome* this change because interacting with active, responsive students has more *life* in it than the older passive model, which involves little or no real interaction. The old model is often, in effect, *dead*; and most teachers prefer life to the alternative. We believe this is a major reason why many public-school teachers leave teaching so early (one-third after five years).

The shift in education toward more active student roles has been in place for a long time, and it can be found even in the most traditional places in developing countries (in Upper Egypt, for example; and in rural India). Our political system lags, at this point, far behind.

An important part of the new leadership roles for more active citizens and students is *theatrical*. Before we get to that, we first need to understand the principles underlying a new empowerment agenda.

PRINCIPLES FOR A NEW POLICY AGENDA

We will now start referring to where we are going as ‘empowerment’ models in both education and politics. An excellent roadmap to empowerment is to learn from successful experiments on different issue areas in different global regions. In this issue of *TTR* we are publishing an article coauthored by Lawry Chickering and Lynne Twist describing a Living Room Conversation (LRC) they cohosted recently on the subject ‘United and Divided: Where Do We Go from Here? Living Room Conversation on a Transpartisan Journey.’ (LRC is a transpartisan organization founded by Joan Blades, co-founder of MoveOn.org.) They end the article by listing five highly-successful programs that empower disadvantaged communities in different social areas. They then extract the basic principles they think account for the programs’ success. We are repeating these principles at least as partial guidelines for a new, future policy agenda.

The programs are **Delancey Street Foundation**, the widely-celebrated drug rehabilitation program that began in San Francisco and now has satellite projects in other cities; **UNICEF’s Girls’ Community Schools** in Upper Egypt, in a region many people regard as the epicenter of Islamic terrorism in Egypt; the **All Stars Project** in New York City, founded by Dr. Lenora Fulani, a ‘radical’ transpartisan who twice ran for President of the United States and who is closely associated with Jacqueline Salit and her Committee for a Unified Independent Party, one of the leading Independents’ organization in the country; and **Visitacion Valley Middle School** (San Francisco; principal: James Dierke). For his path-breaking empowerment program (which included transcendental meditation for his inner-city students), Dierke won awards as the outstanding principal of a middle school in California one year and then won the award for the entire country the next year. He was also Executive Vice President of the National Association of School Administrators, showing how innovative and entrepreneurial action can occur inside government and quasi-governmental institutions. And finally **Educate Girls Globally** (EGG), founded by Lawry Chickering, is promoting education for girls in the most difficult parts of rural India in government schools. EGG promotes empowerment of traditional people, including girls, and promotes cultural change both in traditional, passive communities and in government bureaucracies.

These programs operate by similar empowerment principles. They are:

- The **core ‘conservative’ (order-right) value** of personal responsibility;
- **Strong senses of community, co-ownership, and engagement** by stakeholders, reinforcing shared values; **high social trust** and (therefore) **little opposition or conflict**.
- **Organic processes of change** rather than the mechanical change associated with most governmental action (legislative, judicial, executive decisions);
- Mostly **developed by civil society (nongovernment) organizations** but with two CSOs working in government programs. Only Dierke did his magic entirely from inside the government school system, but following the same principles as the other four.
- **Voluntary action** governed all change. Compulsion played no part in any of these programs (the freedom quadrants).

One might be tempted to think that governments cannot, by their nature, successfully design and implement programs like these. Yet three of the programs are actually operating in government institutions, and EGG

has been working for more than fifteen years on reform of government schools in two states of India, showing it can be done. With positive leadership and institutional incentives that encourage change, we believe this vision can gain far more support from government officials than commonly thought.

We think the example of the district in Uttarakhand, requesting EGG's model in *every school at all levels*, may reveal how government jurisdictions might embrace the model so it expands very rapidly. The triggering moment came when the Chief Magistrate for the District attended a conference of EGG's Girls' Parliaments from all fifty schools. He planned to stay ten minutes, but when he saw the girls asking strong questions of public officials, including the police, and repeating questions when the answers were inadequate, he stayed for two hours. As he was leaving, he said he wanted to see EGG's Executive Director in his office as soon as she could get there. He told her he wanted the Girls' Parliaments in every one of the district's 2,500 schools (serving 334,000 children, two-thirds of them girls) as soon as possible. More than that, he wants EGG to *train the ministry staff to implement it*. Although the precise design of the project EGG negotiates with him may be different than this, the important point is that a government is showing active interest in integrating into its institutional structure EGG's program, and EGG is organizing itself for other, potentially larger requests going forward.

These programs differ from failed programs that can be found in every country, we believe, because they *deal organically with people as subjects, while programs that fail operate mechanistically on people as objects*. Some of these successful programs benefit, of course, from relatively small scale, which facilitates engaged, personal interactions. The UNICEF schools, on the other hand, were 206 in number, serving tens of thousands of children. EGG's model is in more than 7,000 schools, serving about 500,000 children; and in Uttarakhand, it will soon start training the ministry staff to implement and expand the program to schools serving 100,000 children. Connection is important for everyone, the very rich and the very poor. (In EGG's case, success includes work with tribal girls who grow up afraid to speak up in front of boys. The model works at very large scales. EGG has seen no drop-off in impact resulting from increasing scale.)

In the beginning, EGG gained acceptance from government ministries, and that led to active support. When Uttarakhand said they wanted EGG's program in every school in a district, it was the first time a government had formally requested EGG to train ministry staff to implement the program, with EGG oversight.

In every school using the model, EGG has experienced *no significant conflict or opposition in a single school* in two states. Its experience has shown that there is no need for compulsion to achieve 'justice': *an entirely voluntary system (the freedom quadrants) will work without any conflict or opposition when people are in relationships (order) they care about*.

Moving in a positive, transpartisan direction begins with social trust based on the belief that people are basically good and will do 'good'. This is especially true in civic engagement with 'different' people engaging each other and seeing each other across differences as subjects and as human. Much of the dysfunction in public spaces today is caused by laws trying to force people to be good. This, in effect, *mechanizes relationships*, treating people as objects — which is to say, as not entirely human.

Jim Dierke's tenure as Principal of Visitacion Valley Middle School showed that people inside government systems can also take leadership and follow these principles.

These experiences show the power of civic engagement, either from organizations formally organized as CSOs or from government departments that are behaving like CSOs. Achieving change at large scales depends on active government involvement. As in EGG's role in Uttarakhand, CSOs can help them by transferring empowerment models and training department staffs to implement them.

Every leader facing voter alienation and demands for change should consider moving toward reform on this empowerment model. We have approached this agenda from a 'traditional' perspective. We have described Trump's very different approach to leadership and governance. We will now consider how he might move toward this reform agenda without giving up his vision of politics as theater.

TRUMP'S THEATER AND THE NEW REFORM AGENDA

Politics has *always* been theater in important ways. However, the demands of today's individuated voters require a shift in the leader's theatrical role. Since Trump is an actor, 'capable of playing any role,' we have no doubt he can play the role we see before us and will now describe.

To the extent that Trump cannot play, or falls short of playing, this role, the forces propelling society offer resisters and ambivalents an historical opportunity to positively shape events. The stage is larger than any single individual. Hamlet the play is bigger than Hamlet the character.

Family as Model

It may seem far-fetched to think of Presidential leadership as a theatrical challenge, but all forms of leadership have theatrical components. The example of leadership in a family — in relationships between parents and children — involves a changing leadership role throughout a person's entire life.

In the first years children are entirely dependent. As they grow up — subjectively *individuate* — consciousness grows, and parents' start to relax their control. In adolescence, children become more independent. Parents' authority starts to depend on communication and persuasion. The time when they can simply 'give orders' passes. As children 'separate,' parents who try to hold onto control court trouble. Parents can maintain 'influence' if they respect this need and if they give children the space to grow up.

One can think of parents' changing roles in *theatrical terms*, with the parents loosening their control and stepping back. This transition to a collaborative relationship is smooth and 'connected' in healthy relationships. In troubled relationships, the reason for distress is often that the transition from control to influence was also troubled.

If Donald Trump wants his Presidency to be successful — or *seen* as successful — he will need to commit to a similar kind of transition from the reality show to a new role guiding social and cultural change toward new, decentralized institutions serving increasingly individuated, empowered citizens. His current role, beginning when he entered the Presidential sweepstakes, brings together unusual qualities — again, combining strong subjective free-expression with authoritarian outbursts — strong and free. Incoherent to his critics, who still rage at him every day, his base understands and accepts his behavior as coherent in opposition to the system and the elites who run it.

Presidency as Theatre: The Bully Pulpit

All Presidents prior to the current President assumed the ‘Presidential’ role as leader. We have described President Trump’s role as reality show host, and now — if he wants to be successful — he needs to change it.

Even as President, Trump has been playing the role of outsider, angry with the system, committed to ‘draining the swamp.’ The affect that goes with this role has been the tough-guy, jaw prominently displayed and permanent scowl on his face. It is the face of somebody who is never happy, who is always threatened by hostile forces. While this demeanor is perfect for his current role, opposing the ‘corrupt’ system, it spells disaster for getting anything done. Successfully replacing corruption requires more than merely opposing it. The road of American democracy is littered with moralisms turned into legislation and then thrown aside by the forces of history. Remember Prohibition.

The new role calls for leadership in a new, positive time, when people are growing into empowerment, throwing off and escaping the disempowerment that previously shackled them. The old time and system were dominated by large, impersonal forces, indifferent to ordinary people and their real lives. Civic engagement is the key to a new, individuated, connected world. That world needs a welcoming, embracing leader who understands the struggles of ordinary people and embraces the challenge of connecting with them. He or she cherishes the opportunity to offer them the empowerment that the old system denied them. Rhetorical thrusting alone, no matter how inspired, falls flat without real accomplishments. The new policy agenda we propose will require few Congressional votes. It will be surprisingly easy to implement politically.

Trump’s current role, as noted above, combines extreme expressions of freedom and order: strong subjective, free expressions communicated principally through his tweets, campaign performances, and turn-on-a-dime management style combined with strongly authoritarian postures. His theatrical postures and voice, which have been defined by his strident facial expression, show a strong, powerful leader who gives orders and publicly displays almost no capacity for personal contact, engagement, or intimacy.

(It is important to be clear that we are not describing or judging his actual personal qualities here, what they really are. Rather, we are commenting only on his qualities as *theatrically presented by his public postures and affect*. ‘Trump on television very much differs from the man in reality,’ Russian President Vladimir Putin said at a press conference after meeting with Trump. [The Hill 7-8-17](#) quotes *Wall Street Journal* reporter Anton Troianovski’s translation. On Air Force one flying to Paris Trump met with reporters presenting, according to Mark Lanler and Maggie Haberman of the New York Times “...a loose, good-humored side of Mr. Trump that the public rarely sees.” Individuals we know who have been to Trump tower or the White House say the same about the President — he is different in private than publically.)

Trump’s Struggle

The principal, current emotions that Trump expresses theatrically are *independence, anger, and dominance*. He manifests as his own man perpetually at war, and this posture serves perfectly his current reality show role, a demeanor determined to effect profound change in the political system while facing united opposition from enemies inhabiting ‘the swamp.’

The institutional and policy changes we are advocating appear very radical. Yet if implemented organically — from the bottom-up — in such successful experiences as the land grant college education system, combined

with the free land program that built much of the Western United States together with the agriculture extension system that empowered individual farmers to build the U.S. agricultural system, they will not seem radical; and people will celebrate rather than fear them. People will accept these proposals because they will bring a radical end implemented by conservative (Burkean) means. The politically fallen away will have a role and begin reengagement.

The end we are talking about might well upend or greatly weaken the entire, hierarchical structure of the current political system and replace it with a system that empowers citizens as real partners in the American political enterprise. The forces driving contemporary society point in this direction. In the process, the swamp will drain.

To lead this change, the President will need a new theatrical role. In this radically changing world, he can no longer be the odd combination of insurgent and dictator, at perpetual war with insiders and resisters. The new role calls for a benevolent leader dedicated to empowering people. It would be in the very nature of the reform that the swamp would be gone.

The most difficult part of this proposal *for Trump* may be his role change from angry, bellicose insurgent to benevolent protector ushering in a new era. If he can manage it — starts to do it — he will trigger confusion on a scale that has few analogies in our history. The confusion will be felt by his allies, his adversaries, and the ambivalents alike. But if he plays the theater right — and sustains it — his allies will quickly support him; his ‘base’ will start to grow as ambivalents begin to focus, and adversaries will soften. If he gets the theatre wrong, more ambivalents will join resisters, and the creative leadership moment will pass from his hands.

Depending on how he designs his theatrical and operational strategies for the change, he will be able, in profound ways, to start to accelerate expression of peoples’ subjective self-concept. This could be especially powerful if he selects as priorities for his attention groups he has treated, at various times, as adversaries in addition to leading groups in his ‘base’. We are thinking about African-Americans, Latinos, Muslims, and women for example — which is to say, by certain objective measures, the heart of the Democratic base. Nothing would stir greater confusion than that; yet with great preparation both operationally and theatrically, it would send a powerful, transformative empowering message to many people.

A key element in this strategy of citizen empowerment will be the operational and theatrical empowerment of groups such as these, sharing leadership with them in self-governing communities while encouraging strong, positive identity formation. If he fails to design effective strategies, he will lose the opportunity to use the emerging power of change to harness engaged citizens. Currently, Trump’s struggle appears unresolved.

Effective Strategy

Implementing this new strategy will require two things: an operational plan and a supporting, theatrical plan.

The politics will be tricky, on two fronts: first, ensuring that his base supports the concept; and second, sharing the concept with his opponents and ambivalents in a way that would avoid instant opposition. Part of managing these relationships would require encouraging communications and civic engagement *across loyalties* — between groups that at present have little or no apparent contact. And then publicizing the engagement.

As we are writing, we are witnessing a live example of activities that perfectly exemplify what we are talking about. It is occurring during the celebration of Ramadan, the Muslim month of fasting. We reported in [TTR Note #51](#) a number of stories of Mormons, Latinos, Jews, and other groups joining with Muslims to recognize Ramadan. Under the approach we are suggesting, the President *would have attended* some of them and perhaps would have given a major speech about them. He might well have held a Ramadan breakfast in the White House or other symbolic location, as the Israeli Ambassador to the United States did this year in the Israeli embassy.

This is one example. Many such efforts at reconciliation are occurring across the country every day. Highlighting them daily, weekly or even monthly would alert the country to the massive, positive change underway, which the President was embracing.

We believe that if organized effectively, the dominant ‘narrative’ about Trump and this new engagement with the society would start to register very quickly. If he continued on this new course, the bitter criticism of him that dominates the news would turn to silence. The silence of his elite opponents would not, however, distract from the joyous, jubilant response from multiple, multi-racial and multi-ethnic communities around the country that were starting to experience the new empowerment reality and narrative. With a consistent dedication to sustain civic engagement between groups, the commitment to integrating freedom and order, left and right, among the four quadrants, would gain support from new adherents representing all four quadrants.

If, on the other hand, he keeps shaming and attacking particular groups, all bets would be off. The ambivalents may start turning into resisters, and his opportunity would be lost.

If he takes the path we are proposing, Trump would challenge the media to cover this unfolding story as we wish they had covered the stories of reconciliation that appeared in local media recently, in different parts of the country. There is no question, in fact, that wherever he went to be with these local groups, the media would follow him because the President is a media story — not only this President, but *all* Presidents — no matter what he does. The national media would be forced to cover these stories of the President, cheering these local, transpartisan initiatives.

Justice

We noted a new perspective on **justice** for disempowered groups in this age of increasing individuation and the expanding impulse toward self-expression. For groups suffering long-standing discrimination, justice may require opportunities to launch positive, redemptive initiatives promoting strong, positive identity formation. Such positive initiatives may be especially important for groups that are either ignored by the major parties or branded as ‘victims’ with no chance to succeed because of politically-inflamed antagonism from other, equally disempowered groups. (African-Americans and unemployed white industrial workers might be examples.)

Few actions would make greater changes in peoples’ sense of opportunities than expanding ownership in public spaces such as schools, housing projects, and neighborhoods. When people don’t own anything, as is true with the great majority of people in many countries, there is nothing to hang onto, nothing focusing their attention to build their own lives. With no stake in a society and in this powerless condition, people are often vulnerable to ‘narratives of grievance’ exploited by cynical politicians.

Hernando de Soto's article, 'Fighting Terrorism by Empowering the Poor,' which we published in [TTR Vol. I, No. 1](#), reports how extending ownership to poor Peruvian peasants in the early 1990s created a fierce sense of engagement that led to the defeat of a terrorist group some called the most violent in Latin America (the *Sendero Luminoso*). When people have ownership, especially shared ownership of public spaces such as schools, their attention turns toward preserving and strengthening their communities, and sharing ownership of common space encourages them to work together in common enterprises. This has been the powerful experience of the UNICEF schools in Egypt and the EGG schools in India. Across the country and around the world individuals and groups repeat the 'ownership' experience in styles that show the way to empowerment and justice.

OTHER EXAMPLES PAST AND FUTURE

PAST: Jack Kemp's Project Hope

This point about ownership requires a caution. Such a policy cannot simply be broadcast as policy, hoping that everyone can or will take advantage of it without some preparation and training. That more is needed was a lesson from an initiative called Project Hope launched by Jack Kemp when he was head of the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) during the administration of George H. W. Bush. Its purpose was to allow residents of public housing to gain authority, control, and eventually ownership of public housing projects.

Kemp's initiative never had the impact it might have had because it failed to provide for supporting services, such as training to build residents' capacities to take control of housing projects successfully and sustainably. When in the 19th and early 20th century the U.S. carried out the dispersion of agricultural knowledge across the country, one of the most successful knowledge transfer programs in world history, it used a service of agricultural agents stationed in virtually every county of the United States.

One of the most important issues in transferring authority and ownership from governments to citizens is *political counseling*. This is needed to help residents navigate what can be significant obstacles issuing from local political forces, especially those that may lose power and influence when citizens are empowered. This is a large subject, which deserves more detailed attention. It needs to be effectively addressed for any initiative like Project Hope to succeed.

A public leader such as the President, a state Governor, or even a cabinet member can play a strong role in promoting public awareness of powerful, community-based projects that are achieving positive social and cultural change. Success stories can also help publicize opportunities for communities to bid for such empowerment projects. Project Hope gives a sense of what might be tried, while mindful of pitfalls that also need to be addressed. Current HUD Secretary Ben Carson could help develop the Trump strategy we sketch here by reviving the Kemp program with the previously missing counseling component included.

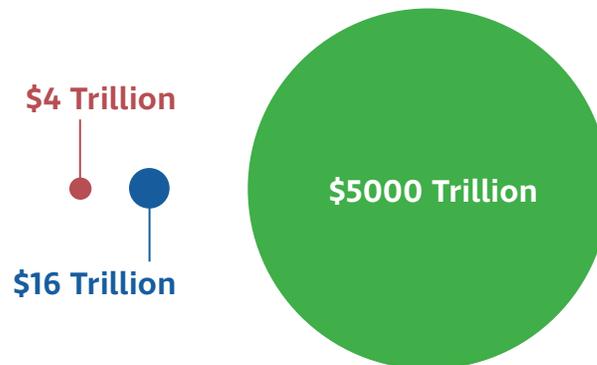
With 'Make America Great Again' his campaign mantra, President Trump went everywhere lifting up and tearing down different groups. He built up some such as Rust Belt voters to see a positive future, while he tore down others in what often seemed like brutal ways (Muslims, Mexicans, and African-Americans). Promoting some people at the expense of others will leave core problems unaddressed and unresolved. This may be the point that determines if the President can make the transition to a new, benevolent role. To be successful as

President, he needs to provide positive leadership for every group in the society; and it will only be credible if the anger and the frown can be permanently retired to the costume closet.

FUTURE: The Automated Payment Transaction (APT) Tax or Fee

In a world shaped by Amazon, Facebook, Apple, Uber, Airbnb, and hundreds of other information technology-based companies, a smart leader might look to the expanding use of new information tools to help implement public policy to manage the towering forces shaping our lives. One idea that we find especially intriguing is the Automated Payment Transaction (APT) Tax or fee created by Edgar L. Feige, an emeritus professor of economics at the University of Wisconsin. If implemented, the proposal would transform how government finances its activities and operations.

‘Capitalizing on financial data processing technology,’ according to the APT website, ‘we can create a tax system for the 21st century that is simple to understand and easy to administer.’ The website for the book, [‘The Economist’s Tale,’](#) which illustrates the disparities with red, blue, and green spheres, says, ‘We tax the \$16 trillion in income we earn, the small blue sphere in the diagram...’ We don’t tax the whopping \$5,000 trillion in payments that occur each year, the large green sphere. Our government’s budget is \$4 trillion, the tiny red sphere. The red sphere takes a big bite out of the blue sphere — which is why income tax rates are so high. But the red sphere takes a tiny bite out of the green sphere. ‘If we taxed payments at the miniscule rate of 1/10th of 1%, we’d have a trillion-dollar surplus.’ Summarizing the impact on an individual, the site says, ‘Taxes on \$100,000 would drop from \$31,000 to \$100, and the budget would be balanced.’



Red – Current Taxes **Blue – Current Collective Income** **Green – Taxable Payments**

The relative sizes of these balls are meant as impressionistic representations, not as precise representations.

Individuals and groups from a variety of political viewpoints support the idea, and it is being considered in major, international political forums. We present the concept in a more detailed article by Professor Feige in this issue of *TTR* as an idea that policymakers inside governments and individuals outside might find useful in considering this large and important issue. We are including with the article an excerpt from Professor Feige’s original 2000 paper explaining how it works and how it would affect average taxpayers.

We frequently note the transpartisan insight that our conventional left-right debate often overlooks possibilities that fall outside current ideologies but might be useful to solve real problems. The APT gives a taste of what might be possible if we opened our ideological minds.

Imagine that the powerful forces shaping our daily lives can be harnessed and managed. Every day the American people and people globally show that it can be done. A smart leader would collaborate with them.

CONCLUSION

Our political system, representing small minorities, is electing Presidents to the White House while large majorities of citizens withhold their allegiance from formal political processes and parties. They passively acquiesce and accept the outcomes without enthusiasm. At the same time, billions of people globally, including hundreds of millions of Americans, are enthusiastically embracing the new tools of information dissemination and economic efficiency — social media, internet, shopping, sharing, dating, traveling, virtually every aspect of daily life — created by technology entrepreneurs, engineers, and marketers.

We believe that confining political discourse to the narrow left-right spectrum and a small minority of voting age-eligible citizens is promoting widespread political lethargy and alienation. Information tools transcend left/right ideology, while the political tools enforce it. Individuals increasingly answer the question ‘Are you on the left or on the right?’ with a single word — ‘No’. To successfully fulfill its role of representing our whole people, the system needs to expand both our discourse and our institutions. It needs to start creating a system that genuinely responds to the needs of increasingly individuated people by empowering them to play active roles in meeting public challenges.

Public alienation especially from the two major parties is very real. It is time to start understanding why people are so turned off. A good place to start might be to understand that peoples’ identity is not tied to either the left or the right.

Forces shaping the world are sending strong signals demanding significant institutional and policy reforms. Elected officials need to engage with citizens in very public forums on multiple issues, especially including opportunities for involvement.

We have suggested tools to align politics with people. In this age of increasingly individuated people, we need new, empowering institutions and policies. It will be interesting to see which political leaders emerge to align their leadership agenda with the public’s emerging interests and demands. The American nation stands on the brink of realizing fantastic new possibilities. Aligning its politics with its people offers an exciting opportunity to realize the promise of these possibilities.

The nation moves forward while it waits to see who will lead the way.

ENDNOTES FOR “THE TRANSPARTISAN EFFECT”

1. See Brilliant Maps, brilliantmaps.com.
2. ‘These forces (shaping our world) include the apparent calm of the 1950s and the turbulence of the 1960s, the upheavals of a transforming global economy, volatile demographics, explosive technology, capricious and faltering institutions, and the global disruptions following the Cold War’s end.’
3. Which countries have the best healthcare? Medical Press May 19, 2017 <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-05-countries-healthcare.html> U.S. Health-Care System Ranks as One of the Least-Efficient; Bloomberg September 28, 2016 <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-09-29/u-s-health-care-system-ranks-as-one-of-the-least-efficient> U.S. Health Care Ranked Worst in the Developed World Time June 6, 2014 <http://time.com/2888403/u-s-health-care-ranked-worst-in-the-developed-world/>
4. A. Lawrence Chickering developed the first sketches of the Matrix in 1993, in his *Beyond Left and Right*.
5. *Law and Society in Transition: Toward Responsive Law* 1st Edition by Philippe Nonet (Author), Philip Selznick (Author), Robert A. Kagan (Author) <https://www.amazon.com/Law-Society-Transition-Toward-Responsive/dp/0765806428#>
6. In *Voice of the People* we relayed a story about Lawry Chickering, in conversation with his friend the late economist Milton Friedman. Lawry said, ‘I know you think that bureaucrats and teachers’ unions (in education), implementing government regulations, are behaving like monopoly capitalists, unwilling to share power.’ His next question then highlighted the reality: ‘If they are really monopoly capitalists, why aren’t they having more fun?’
7. Jeff Zucker’s singular role in promoting Donald Trump’s rise https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/jeff-zuckers-singular-role-in-promoting-donald-trumps-rise/2016/10/02/7c3d4366-865b-11e6-a3ef-f35afb41797f_story.html?utm_term=.96c555d0d6c3

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FEATURE



A REPUBLIC, IF YOU CAN KEEP IT

Ralph Benko

Ralph Benko is a counselor to nonprofit civic groups, the president of the Alinsky Center (www.alinskycenter.com), and an internationally published weekly columnist based in Washington, DC. He is also a principal of Living Room Conversations (www.livingroomconversations.org) and a member of the Advisory Board of The Transpartisan Review.

*‘For the want of a nail the shoe was lost,
For the want of a shoe the horse was lost,
For the want of a horse the rider was lost,
For the want of a rider the battle was lost,
For the want of a battle the kingdom was lost,
And all for the want of a horseshoe-nail.’*

I’m by disposition an optimist, and in practice a realist. America’s ‘battle for the kingdom’ — the effort to keep our liberal republic — appears more

likely to be lost than won, and all for the want of a “horseshoe nail,” a tiny expenditure upon which all else depends.

At the close of the [Constitutional Convention of 1787](#), ‘a lady [one Mrs. Powel of Philadelphia] asked Dr. Franklin, “Well, Doctor, what have we got a republic, or a monarchy?” — “A republic”, replied the Doctor, “if you can keep it”’

We got a republic. Can we keep it?

America had a great run. We really made an impact on shifting the world order from thousands of years of the imperial to a republican order.

In 1910, the year my father was born, something like 80 percent of the world's population lived under an emperor. That *ancien régime* had endured for millennia. By July 24, 1923 four of the five great empires — the Austro-Hungarian, the Ottoman, the Russian, and the Chinese — had fallen. The fifth and least autocratic, the British, was in terminal decline.

Tyranny followed Empire. America entered and won World War II and implanted liberal republican principles in Western Europe and Japan. Then we prosecuted, and won, the Cold War, enabling liberal republican principles to emerge in Eastern Europe and, to an extent, Russia and China (which works on a much longer timeline than we impetuous Americans do).

The magnitude of this world political transformation is so massive as to be mostly ignored. It was the Big Bang of our contemporary political universe.

Jefferson had called for an '[empire of Liberty](#)'. We got that. Can we keep it?

There is no way to predict whether the liberal republican world order America inspired and built will, absent a liberal republican America, continue to build, or sustain itself, or dissipate. Let us hope that a near-future historian won't be writing a six-volume 'Decline and Fall of the American Republic'. That said, we are in decline and such a fall looks likely.

Follow along. If our historian writes such a work, she is likely to conclude that the decline and fall was all for the want of a 'horseshoe nail', a relatively trivial (but unexpended) sum necessary to keep the republic. The cost of keeping the republic would be less than 1 percent (per year) of the cost of the 2016 US election cycle. It would be 0.0000025 of our GDP. It would be about fifteen cents per capita.

And we are unlikely to spend it.

What is needed to keep the republic (and the "empire of Liberty," practically speaking) is the constitution, sustenance, and mobilization of a ***national citizens' league*** of around 100,000 people. One hundred thousand is a little less than one third of one percent of the American population. Not an extravagant sum, yet the resources to do it — the "horseshoe nail" — are nowhere on the horizon.

The requisite \$50 million a year is out of reach of regular people. No philanthropist has shown the slightest interest in making such an investment. Yet that is what is needed. No more. No less.

If such a league's members were consistently and proficiently to engage with their elected Representatives, many of our political morbidities — including hyper-partisanship — would organically resolve. More participants, of course, would be better.

The evidence suggests that around 200 people (of diverse, or no, partisan affiliation and no nationally-directed agenda), consistently acting in each of the 435 congressional districts, would represent a very powerful force indeed. That would be larger than the active membership of many, perhaps most, Democratic or Republican Party county committees within a given congressional district. [Concerned Women for America](#) achieved disproportionate influence with many fewer than that.

Civic force trumps partisan force.

Deploying a civic force would effectively project 'soft power' to dramatically improve both the quality and the legitimacy of our governance. As Margaret Mead (perhaps) said, 'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.' This claim is axiomatic.

Such a league, however, would not confer partisan or political advantage on any of the warring camps.

Thus, it is almost certain not to occur. Politics is about gaining power, not serving the general welfare (except insofar making and delivering promises proves useful in gaining and keeping power).

Let's go back, for a moment, to first principles.

Merriam-Webster defines '[partisan](#)' as 'a firm adherent to a [party](#), faction, cause, or person; *especially*: one exhibiting blind, prejudiced, and unreasoning allegiance, *political partisans who see only one side of the problem.*' (*emphasis added*)

Let us turn, for a moment, to a good old word: 'civic'. *Merriam-Webster* defines '[civic](#)' as 'of or relating to a citizen, a city, citizenship, or community affairs, *civic duty, civic pride, civic leaders*' (*emphasis added*). It is my contention that, *in a context of strong civic engagement*, partisanship is a healthy thing. Properly done, partisanship is a way for those who seek office to compete for votes by offering competing policies — conjoined with capability — to better serve the general interest. Inject the common sense of consistently and proficiently engaged citizens and — 'game on.'

The republican form of government — representative democracy — is imperfect. To quote Churchill's [observation](#) of November 11, 1947:

Many forms of Government have been tried, and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed it has been said that democracy is the worst form of Government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time...

So, while stipulating to the flaws of representative democracy, including those latent in partisanship, let us also recognize its virtue. Unhealthy partisanship — 'one exhibiting blind, prejudiced, and unreasoning allegiance' — represents a mere species of dogmatism. Dogmatism, not partisanship, is the real enemy. As Saul Alinsky wrote in *Rules for Radicals*:

I detest and fear dogma. I know that all revolutions must have ideologies to spur them on. That in the heat of conflict these ideologies tend to be smelted into rigid dogmas claiming exclusive possession of the truth, and the keys to paradise, is tragic. Dogma is the enemy of human freedom. Dogma must be watched for and apprehended at every turn and twist of the revolutionary movement. The human spirit glows from that small inner light of doubt whether we are right, while those who believe with complete certainty that they possess the right are dark inside and darken the world outside with cruelty, pain, and injustice. Those who enshrine the poor or Have-Nots are as guilty as other dogmatists and just as dangerous. To diminish the danger that ideology will deteriorate into dogma, and to protect the free, open, questing, and creative mind of man, as well as to allow for change, no ideology should be more specific than that of America's founding fathers: 'For the general welfare.'

Dogma is much less likely to prevail in the context of the common sense that can be provided only by consistent citizen civic engagement. If a small fraction of our citizens were to engage on a purely civic, rather than partisan, basis there would be a strong counterweight to partisan factionalism. Toxic partisanship is merely a symptom of the atrophy of civic engagement. Treating symptoms — fighting dogmatic factionalism — will not cure the underlying malady. That malady is citizen disengagement. Engage the citizens and the symptoms will resolve.

I have worked in the nation's capital for over 30 years, in or with executive branch agencies, as a junior White House official, and for a while quite closely with congressional offices. Let me now reveal an open secret. I believe it contains a hidden key.

The House of Representatives was designed to be, and is, the central organ of the federal government.

It is the first of the three bodies constituted by the Constitution and the closest to the people.

Successful elected officials in the House of Representatives — the ‘People’s House’ — have a very special gift. They are good at *representing*. Successful Congressmen and Congresswomen are observant souls who are very good at weighing who cares, how much, and about what — or they don’t last long.

Legislators are almost invariably ‘people’ people rather than intellectuals or policy wonks (they hire policy wonks). This is not a criticism. Their reliance on solid cognitive heuristics, rather than naked logic, is a kind of genius. Cold logic often misleads because human nature is not strictly logical. It is more wonderful than that.

Our representatives, observed up close, spend most of their time communicating with their peers, party leadership, ‘interest groups’ affected by proposed legislation, pressure groups, media, donors, and — last, but most powerful — their constituents. Representatives covet the good opinion of their constituents above all things.

Their constituents are their root. Second to that they covet acceptance by their (party) peers and leadership. That’s their branch. Donors, media, and ‘special interest’ and pressure groups are mostly relevant insofar as they have the potential to have an impact on constituents. Constituents rule.

The words, ‘What I’m hearing from the folks back home...’ — meaning the opinion of constituents — is usually a ‘get-out-of-jail-free card’ with party leadership when such leaders are pushing for them to vote another way on a piece of legislation. (Party leaders do not long remain party leaders if they are pushing their rank-and-file members to vote in ways that could cost them re-election.)

And yet our representatives generally hear least from those whose good opinion is the most coveted: us. We have enormous power at our disposal. We, the

people, deploy that power all too rarely, and rather capriciously.

Our own neglect of our elected representatives, an abdication of power, is the root of our current political affliction. In [Shakespeare’s words](#), ‘The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars / But in ourselves, that we are underlings.’

Let’s put aside for now the matter of the United States Senate. The Senate was invented by the Founders to stymie bad legislation emerging from the House of Representatives. While the Senate sometimes stops good legislation as well, on balance it does a fine job in its designated role as goalie. And the White House tends to pick up and amplify ideas coming out of the House of Representatives, only rarely generating important legislation itself. Significant legislative initiatives come, almost exclusively, from the House. These could, and sometimes do, come from us. Too rarely.

Recently, my impressions were confirmed, emphatically, by a very astute article in the March 6, 2017 issue of *The New Yorker*, Kathryn Schulz’s [What Calling Congress Achieves](#):

Of all the liberties guaranteed by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, the most underrated by far is the one that gives us the right to complain to our elected officials. Freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly: all of these are far more widely known, legislated, and litigated than the right to—as the founders rather tactfully put it—‘petition the Government for a redress of grievances.’

There are a great many ways to petition the government, including with actual petitions, but, short of showing up in person, the one reputed to be the most effective is picking up the phone and calling your congressional representatives.



CIVIC FORCE TRUMPS PARTISAN FORCE



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Schulz sorts out the signal from the noise very adeptly. She observes:

[M]ost communications to Congress fall into one of two categories. ...The second category...might be called constituent demands: someone calls and expresses a political preference to anyone who answers the phone and hopes that his or her legislator will act on it. It is a curious thing about Americans that we simultaneously believe nothing gets done in Congress and have faith that this strategy works.

Actually, this strategy *does* work in a surprising number of cases, though probably not the ones that you're thinking of. If you ask your senator to co-sponsor a bill on mud-flap dimensions or to propose a change to the bottling requirements for apple cider or to vote in favor of increased funding for a rare childhood disease, you stand a decent chance of succeeding. This is not a trivial point, since such requests make up the majority of those raised by constituents. (They also represent the underappreciated but crucial role that average citizens play in the legislative process. 'I've written bills that became law because people called to complain about a particular issue I was unaware of,' Akin, of Senator Wyden's office, said. It was constituents, for instance, who educated Congress about America's opioid crisis and got members to dedicate funds and draft health legislation to begin dealing with it.)

If, however, you want a member of Congress to vote your way on a matter of intense partisan fervor—immigration, education, entitlement programs, health insurance, climate change, gun control, abortion—your odds of success are, to understate matters, considerably slimmer.

Kristina Miler, a political scientist at the University of Maryland and the author of the book *Constituency Representation in Congress*,

has argued that activism works in part simply by making previously hidden segments of the population more visible to legislators. Tasked with representing anywhere from seven hundred and fifty thousand people to tens of millions of them, most lawmakers are familiar with only a tiny fraction of their district or state. But, in a series of surveys and experiments, Miler found that hearing from citizens changed lawmakers' mental maps and, in doing so, altered how they legislate. (The *Stop Online Piracy Act* (SOPA) is a good example of this. Before it failed, Members of Congress considering an intellectual-property bill were most likely to think about its potential impact on major copyright holders like the Walt Disney Corporation. Today, no one can contemplate such legislation without remembering other constituents, from librarians to the tech community, and adjusting plans and votes accordingly.)

In other words, the system is working pretty much as it is designed to do.

Except for us. We're AWOL.

We, the people, have abdicated most—or at any rate, too much—of our power. Notwithstanding our fulminations against our elected officials, we ourselves are the missing ingredient. We are the key ingredient. Reclaiming and exercising our power would be a straightforward matter and would work miracles.

Civic force trumps partisan force.

As noted above, *if* around 200 people in each of the 435 Congressional Districts would civically organize, and consistently and proficiently engage with their elected Representatives, much of our political morbidity would resolve. Of course, the consistency and proficiency of such civic action is at least equally important as the number of people engaging. The civic dynamic would give disproportionate, yet healthy, power to proficient citizens committed to

bettering many of our political and policy outcomes. A MoveOn.org or Change.org petition pales, in power, by comparison.

What might that look like? Representatives are accustomed to short-lived emotional bursts from their constituents. They know that most of these are, as Britain's [Lord Chancellor Thurlow](#) nicely termed it, 'a tempest in a teapot'.

Our venting to (or on) our elected officials, while emotionally satisfying, isn't of the essence of good governance. Consistency is key to demonstrating seriousness of purpose and sustainability. Proficiency also is key.

Dogma is much less likely to prevail in the context of the common sense that can be provided only by consistent citizen civic engagement.

Our effectiveness depends as well on our focusing on important matters. There is a great [story](#) about President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who in 1954 visited Northwestern University, where he delivered an address to the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches. He said:

Now, my friends of this convocation, there is another thing we can hope to learn from your being with us. I illustrate it by quoting the statement of a former college president, and I can understand the reason for his speaking as he did. I am sure President Miller can. This president said, "I have two kinds of problems, the urgent and the important. The urgent are not important, and the important are never urgent." Now this, I think, represents a dilemma of modern man. Your being here can help place the important before us, and perhaps even give the important the touch of urgency. And you can strengthen

our faith that men of goodwill, working together, can solve the problems confronting them.

If the 'folks back home' — us — focus, consistently, on the important rather than the urgent, we will have influence. Recall the staff person in Senator Wyden's office who said, 'I've written bills that became law because people called to complain about a particular issue I was unaware of...'

Of course, this is less true for high-profile, contentious issues. These represent a tiny fraction of what Congress addresses. Leave those to our elected Representatives.

As Edmund Burke observed in his [Speech to the Electors of Bristol](#):

Certainly, gentlemen, it ought to be the happiness and glory of a representative to live in the strictest union, the closest correspondence, and the most unreserved communication with his constituents. Their wishes ought to have great weight with him; their opinion, high respect; their business, unremitting attention. It is his duty to sacrifice his repose, his pleasures, his satisfactions, to theirs; and above all, ever, and in all cases, to prefer their interest to his own. But his unbiased opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you, to any man, or to any set of men living. These he does not derive from your pleasure; no, nor from the law and the constitution. They are a trust from Providence, for the abuse of which he is deeply answerable. Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion.

Good news: Organizing and sustaining a national citizens' league — a group that is self-defined, and disciplined to act, as a civic rather than partisan body — is straightforward. Even better news: It's pretty easy to organize such a group.

The bad news? It is laborious and takes dedicated effort by an organizer. There is little evidence that such a body can be sustained on valor and public spirit on an amateur basis. It needs professional — meaning paid — staff to manage the process in the Congressional District and a national office to hire, train, and manage the field organizers who would, in turn, manage the district directors.

The cost of maintaining each district organizer would be, on average, around \$100,000/year. Multiply that by the 435 Congressional Districts: \$43,500,000/year. Round that up to \$50 million to support robust national and field offices.

\$50 million? Sound expensive?

Well. Let's put it in perspective. The figure the White House used in 2009 as the [average cost of maintaining one troop](#) in the field in Afghanistan was \$1 million a year. \$50 million is equivalent to the cost of keeping merely 50 troops in the field. The White House was then looking to field 40 *thousand* more troops. Do the math.

To put this into a political perspective, the 2016 elections — both presidential and otherwise — was [estimated](#) to run close to \$7 billion. For the cost of one (presidential) election cycle we could sustain such a citizens' league for over a century.

To put this into a philanthropic perspective, \$50 million is less than 1 percent of the 2015 expenditure of the [Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation](#).

To put this into a governance perspective, the 2017 federal outlay will be something like \$3.65 trillion. That's more than 50,000 times the cost of sustaining such a citizens' league.

To put this into the perspective of America's national income, \$18.56 trillion in 2016, it averages (far, far) less than a penny per person per year. On a per capita basis, it's about fifteen cents. Curiously, fifteen cents is the price of two... [horseshoe nails](#).

Our physical infrastructure of bridges, roads, and airports visibly decay. We have also let the infrastructure of a republican form of government invisibly decay.

To paraphrase Rep. Robert Goodloe Harper: *Millions for defense, but not one cent for tribunes.*

Call it neglect.

Call it negligence.

Just don't point fingers. '[We have met the enemy and he is us.](#)'

There appears to be no philanthropic or civic interest in underwriting such a project. There is no apparent interest even in doing a demonstration project (at one-tenth the cost, or less) in a representative number of congressional districts.

So here we are. There is a pretty obvious mechanism by which government effectiveness, in accord with the legitimizing 'consent of the governed,' can be re-established.

A citizens' league wouldn't solve everything. Yet it would organically resolve much of the political morbidity that plagues America.

Civic force trumps partisan force.

A citizens' league is the essential, yet missing, ingredient in the recipe for saving the republic. It would cost each American about as much as two horseshoe nails.

*'For the want of a nail the shoe was lost,
For the want of a shoe the horse was lost,
For the want of a horse the rider was lost,
For the want of a rider the battle was lost,
For the want of a battle the kingdom was lost,
And all for the want of a horseshoe-nail.'*

'A republic,' replied the Doctor, 'if you can keep it.'



RUSSIA IS NOT OUR ENEMY

A TTR Interview with Former Ambassador Jack F. Matlock

TTR: Ambassador Matlock, thank you for agreeing to chat with The Transpartisan Review. Over your career, how much time have you spent getting to know the Russians.

Jack F. Matlock: I spent over 35 years in the diplomatic corps. I had four tours at the American Embassy in Moscow. My first tour was from 1961 to 1963. I served as Deputy Chief of Mission from 1974 to 1978. I was in charge in 1981, and from 1987 to 1991 I was Ambassador. Altogether, I spent about 11 years in Moscow between 1961 and 1991.

TTR: Ambassador, what important changes, if any, have occurred in the relationship between the U.S. and Russia in recent years? How would you characterize the present state of that relationship?

Jack F. Matlock: When the Soviet Union came to an end 25 years ago, Europe was whole and free. We assumed the Russian Federation wanted a cooperative relationship with us and would help us maintain it. But we have drifted, step by step and year after year, once again into a very dangerous confrontation.

TTR: Had Secretary Clinton been elected, would she have acted differently than President Trump has? Would she have perpetuated that shift?

Jack F. Matlock: One can never know with certainty what a new president will do. But Secretary Clinton had indicated that she considered Russia an adversary. She had compared the Russian president, Mr. Putin, to Hitler and was conducting, I think, a rather personalized polemic with Russia over matters that were not crucial to U.S. security. We need to understand that Russia and the United States together possess more than 90 percent of the nuclear weapons in existence. If these are ever used, civilization and maybe humanity itself will be extinguished. People seem to have forgotten this completely and are arguing about all sorts of other things that ultimately are far less important. Certainly, while campaigning Secretary Clinton signaled that she had in mind to continue a confrontational stance with Russia and that she might be even more willing to use force in areas like Syria than President Obama had been. I think that certainly colored the Russian attitude toward her candidacy.

TTR: How does our relationship with Russia differ from our relationships with other countries, including China? Why is it different?

Jack F. Matlock: We are the two major nuclear weapons powers. We ended the Cold War because we both knew that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. We agreed that there could be no war between us. If there could be no war between us, we could not be enemies. President Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev agreed at their first meeting that this was true.

Now, obviously there are other nuclear powers, but they have many fewer weapons than the U.S. and Russia. For this reason, our relationship with Russia is by far the most important security issue for the United States. If we don't get that relationship right, we're not going to solve the most serious security problem we face.

TTR: Our relationship with China differs, then, because it requires nothing like the scale of the challenge of controlling nuclear weapons. Because the threat to our security is not the same, we don't have the same need to work together, correct?

Jack F. Matlock: I don't think any country has any interest in attacking the United States with nuclear weapons. The problem is, if they're ever used we could find ourselves in an escalation that would be unstoppable. The relationship with China is also very important relationship to the United States. We have nothing to gain by posing a challenge to their own security situation. So I hope we will have good relations with China and with Russia.

If the question, though, is whether there's a difference between our relationships with Russia and China, I would say there is, and it rests on the difference in the size of their nuclear arsenals. The fact is, we are going to have great difficulty dealing with proliferation of nuclear weapons, and we are going to have difficulty convincing other countries that they should reduce their reliance on them. If the U.S. and Russia don't continue cooperating to prevent proliferation; to persuade other countries to forego them; and to keep nuclear materials secure, the world will become much more dangerous for all of us. Other relationships are important, but the sheer size of the Russian arsenal makes that relationship uniquely so.

TTR: What are your views on the question of Russia's alleged involvement in the 2016 presidential election?

Jack F. Matlock: I don't think there's any evidence that Russia influenced the vote. I think the allegation is ridiculous. The intelligence report that people cite says, on the first page, that the investigators are making no assessment of the effects in the United States. Further on they say there is no evidence of any tampering with the election machines or with the vote count. Moreover, even in those areas in which the investigators found credible evidence, they say only that the Russians might have hacked the Democratic National Committee emails, which turned up on Wikileaks. But they also said there was no falsification. People knew the DNC was supporting Clinton rather than Sanders. How would that have influenced votes to support Trump? The idea that Russian actions had an effect on the election is ludicrous.

TTR: What about the charge that the Trump campaign had illegal or inappropriate dealings with the Russians during the campaign?

Jack F. Matlock: Obviously, that's being investigated. I don't know the details. I do know that, in general, there's absolutely nothing wrong with talking to Russian Embassy officials on the telephone, even in order to discuss policy. If you're an advisor to a candidate, how are you going to help him or her prepare for governing if you don't talk with the officials of a foreign government as important as Russia's? Anyone interested in improving relations with Russia and avoiding another nuclear arms race—which is a vital interest of the United States—should talk with Ambassador Kislyak and members of his staff. To consider him “toxic” is nonsense. I find the attitude of much of our political establishment and of some of our once-respected media outlets quite appalling.

When I was the U.S. Ambassador in Moscow and Russia started holding elections, we talked to all the candidates. As the person in charge of our embassy, I would often set up meetings with Soviet officials for presidential candidates and their staffs. That was part of our job. During the Cold War, both Democrats and Republicans contacted Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin to discuss matters with him. I spent 35 years as a career diplomat trying to open up the Soviet Union and to make communication between Russians and Americans a normal practice. It's a mistake to assume that such conversations are somehow suspect. When Gorbachev finally allowed competitive elections, we in the U.S. embassy talked to everyone. I made a special point of keeping a good personal relationship with Boris Yeltsin when he in effect led the opposition. We didn't do that to help get him elected—we favored Gorbachev—but to understand his actions tactics and policies and to make sure he understood ours.

In any event, I don't think anyone associated with Mr. Trump who might be investigated had access to classified information, not while President Obama was still in office. If the FBI was listening to telephone conversations, as they probably were, and if they detected evidence that laws were being broken, they should have reported this to the Justice Department, and I presume they would have. If the U.S. Attorney General thought there was enough evidence, they should have assembled a grand jury and sought an indictment. Nothing should be made public until the grand jury returns an indictment.

The press is speculating about all sorts of things that make no sense, and that in any case are irrelevant. We were all surprised that Trump won. He won because we have an electoral college. Did the Russians put the electoral college in our Constitution? He won because Republicans have gerrymandered congressional districts in a way that gave them an advantage. Did the Russians do that? The Russians didn't affect any votes. The intelligence agencies have said that.

I just have to wonder why the Democrats won't face the fact that they lost the election according to the rules they had no objection to themselves. They have created an atmosphere that makes it difficult for President Trump, and indeed any future president, to solve some of the problems we have with Russia. That's not in our national interest. There is no good reason for considering Russia an enemy, or even an adversary. There is every reason in the world for us to cooperate in meeting common threats—and most of the threats we face are also ones the Russians face. The idea that somehow talking to them about solving these problems was disloyal or something worse is absurd, and it's not helpful.

What worries me is that we have now done something that President Eisenhower in his farewell address warned us not to do. We have built an enormous military-industrial complex. That military-industrial complex does not need carrier task forces, and supersonic bombers, and a lot of sophisticated equipment to deal with the terrorist threat. They need big countries to label as enemies. They need to make Russia and China enemies. That is dangerous. It's really very dangerous. It's not in our security interest whatsoever. But I'm afraid it's simply politics and money that's behind a lot of this demonizing Russia. Both Democrats and Republicans are pushing for increases in the defense budget. We don't need increases in the defense budget. We should be cutting it drastically and putting it in our infrastructure here.

Once you say, "Well, Russia is an enemy," then anything somebody can do to make it seem that trying to work with the Russians is disloyal begins to make sense. It's as if peace breaking out and cooperative relations with Russia is something they don't want. The only reason not to want it is to keep on getting big, lucrative defense contracts.

TTR: Is there reason to be hopeful that a good working relationship can evolve between our two countries?

Jack F. Matlock: I certainly hope so. If things can quiet down, maybe we can find a way. The problem is, in both countries there are people trying to portray the other as a threat and an enemy for domestic political purposes. People just assume we're antagonistic. As I keep repeating, there is no good reason for us to be enemies and some very good reasons not to be.

Now, that doesn't mean we can or should try to be military allies. But the attempt by the United States in effect to establish its hegemony all over the world and to interfere anywhere we like at any time is bound to provoke a reaction. If we continue to do that, particularly in places like Ukraine, then Russia's going to react. It's not unreasonable for them to do that. We're not going to be able to have a normal relationship like we have with Great Britain or Japan. But when we really look closely at what our biggest challenges and our most basic problems are, they're the same one the Russians are facing. The most important one, as I've said, is nuclear weapons. If we don't handle the problem of those weapons properly, we're both going to find ourselves at an existential crossroads.

In the longer run, the great challenge—again for both our countries—is global warming. Terrorism is manageable. But there is no reason for us to get into a fight over who controls what territory around the world. That's what got us into two world wars, and we're beginning to act now like countries did in 1913 and 1914. It's crazy. We will remain at risk of stumbling into unimaginably devastating warfare until we get some leaders to say, "Look, we've got to look at what our real interests are and start concentrating on those and not these areas where we simply have differences of opinion about how to solve problems involving other countries." Unfortunately, as things stand right now, it seems unlikely that people are going to regain their sanity anytime soon.



TAXATION IN THE AGE OF DIGITAL GLOBALIZATION

Edgar Feige

Edgar L. Feige is an emeritus professor of economics at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He has published widely on such topics as underground and shadow economies; tax evasion; transition economics; financial transaction taxes the Automated Payment Transaction tax; and monetary theory and policy.

Innovations in finance and information technology have radically reduced transaction costs, thereby stimulating the globalization of goods, services and capital. Capital mobility, the growth of multinational corporations, high frequency trading, complex financial instruments, and global equity exchanges, have increased the risks of global financial instability, while making the identification and assessment of income and profits by national origin increasingly obscure and difficult. Tax avoidance and evasion

behaviors drastically limit the revenues and hence social expenditures of national governments whose citizens perceive existing tax systems to be overly complex, inefficient, and inequitable with high costs of administration and compliance. In contrast to the speed of financial and technological innovation, tax systems remain mired in inertia, eluding global calls for tax reform. How then, can tax systems be adapted to the digital age?

There is broad consensus on the objectives of tax reform: simplification, efficiency, equity, and reduced costs of administration and compliance. Simplification and reduction in administrative and compliance costs require abandoning the plethora of loopholes and tax expenditures that well-off stakeholders have lobbied politicians to introduce by supporting their campaigns for reelection. A reformed tax law requires a clear and simple statement of what is taxable, how much it will be taxed and how the tax will be collected.

In earlier work, I proposed replacing the existing U.S. tax system with a revenue neutral Automatic Payment Transaction (APT) tax. In place of Title 26, the twenty volume IRS Regulations describing the current tax system, the APT tax scheme can simply be described as a flat tax rate on all transactions. By adopting zero tolerance of any proposal for deductions, exemptions, and differential tax rates, the APT tax eliminates the opportunities for stakeholders to lobby politicians for the special interest loopholes that have so totally compromised the transparency of the tax code while corrupting the political process. Broadening the tax base by taxing all transactions without exception maximizes the tax base, thereby minimizing the flat tax rate required to maintain revenue neutrality. The approximate tax rate required to maintain revenue neutrality is three tenths of one percent (.3%) charged to the buyer and seller in every transaction. The radical reduction in the tax rate significantly reduces the inefficiencies introduced by the current system of high corporate and individual tax rates.

The major components of the vastly enlarged tax base are financial transactions - exchanges of stocks, bonds, currencies and derivatives. Proposals to include financial transactions in the tax base are not new. In 1936, John Maynard Keynes proposed taxing stock and bond transactions as a means of reducing speculation in the “casino” of financial markets and in 1972, Noble Laureate James Tobin, proposed the

inclusion of a tax on all foreign currency transactions to “throw some sand in the wheels” of international money markets to reduce their volatility. The uniqueness APT tax is that it incorporates these proposals but extends the coverage of the tax base to all transactions in services, goods and real and financial assets and liabilities. Since the wealthy undertake a disproportionate share of exchanges of financial assets and liabilities, the APT tax achieves equity through the progressivity of the tax base rather than by employing progressive tax rates as under the present system.

Finally, the APT tax is collected digitally whenever final payment is made in settlement of any transaction. Just as stock brokers and credit card companies automatically collect brokerage fees from their customers for facilitating transactions, the APT tax can be viewed as a government brokerage fee levied on all transactions to pay for the monetary, legal, and protective institutions that facilitate, sanction, enforce and protect property rights, contracts and facilitate exchange transactions over space and time. The tax payment is automatically assessed and transferred to the government at the time of settlement. As such, the APT tax scheme requires no additional filing of information or tax returns and the government receives its tax revenue digitally in real time. The forgoing features of the proposed tax satisfy all of the criteria for optimal tax reform - simplification, efficiency, equity and reduction in compliance and administrative costs.

In light of these apparently appealing advantages, why has the APT tax not replaced current tax systems? History has shown that tax reform, when enacted, is incremental rather than radical in nature. Powerful interest groups that benefit from the complexity and opacity of the current tax system support its inertia, propagating the notion that the incentives and subsidies incorporated in the existing tax structure broadly conforms to politically affirmed societal goals. Nevertheless, one response to

repeated financial crises has been to broaden the tax base to include some form of financial transaction taxes (FTTs). Some forty countries have adopted FTTs and there are several current Congressional and EU proposals to impose low tax rates on various types of financial transactions. Critics correctly argue that the adoption of an FTT tax in one country will shift financial business to other countries; thereby reducing its revenue potential for the adopting nation. Moreover, some FTTs may not lower speculation or market volatility. In order to obtain the tax reform benefits that an APT tax envisions, it is necessary to tax all transactions in a similar manner rather than just add some financial assets to the tax base. Global adoption of a small additional APT tax would minimize the unintended consequences and other potential distortions of proposed FTTs by eliminating substitution possibilities between asset classes over time and space.

In light of the stubborn resistance to radical tax reform, I am now convinced that the most promising avenue for progress is to lobby for the adoption of a tiny APT tax Version 2.0 of perhaps one tenth of

one percent (.1%) on all transactions globally as an addition rather than a replacement of current tax systems. The revenues collected by each nation would be used to reduce the tax rates of their existing tax systems, thereby reducing their inefficiencies without reducing their overall government revenues. The advantage of such a proposal is that it would establish a universal standard for real time automatic digital tax collection via the global financial settlement system. Adoption by the major developed nations would eliminate the incentives for tax shifting between nations currently entertaining FFT proposals, while allowing every country to maintain what it regards as the advantages of its current tax system. Empirically monitoring the actual consequences of a small globally adopted APT tax would provide the evidence necessary to guide future policy decisions concerning the desirability of its expansion. The type of leadership and cooperation that achieved the Paris climate accords is now required as the first step toward a global tax reform that incorporates the opportunities for efficiency, equity and simplicity made possible by 21st century innovative technologies.

EDITOR'S NOTE

The example that follows is based on Dr. Feige's original article which proposed the APT tax as a revenue neutral replacement for the entire U.S. tax system and appeared as:

“Taxation for the 21st century: the automated payment transaction (APT) tax”, *Economic Policy* Vol. 30, October, 2000, pp. 475-511.

Professor Feige calculated, in his words, “that a revenue neutral APT tax that would replace the US tax system would require an APT tax rate of roughly .6% on every transaction (therefore .3% on every transactor) if the volume of transaction is assumed to fall by 50%. Under that assumption, consider a family with an annual income of \$60,000, paying \$20,000 in interest and mortgage payments on their house and spending \$40,000 on all other items. The family has total transactions of \$120,000. Today that family would owe

roughly \$20,000 in total taxes. Under the APT tax, with a rate of 0.6% they would pay \$180 (.3% x \$60000) on their income receipts and \$180 on their expenditures for a total tax of \$360. Their employer would pay \$180 tax on the income payment, the mortgage company would pay \$60 on its receipts and the merchants receiving the family's \$40,000 of other expenses would pay another \$120 in taxes. In total, the government would receive \$660. And all the taxes would be automatically assessed and paid without filing tax returns.

“How then does the government collect enough taxes to pay its bills? Most of the revenues would be collected from the massive volume of stock, bond, and derivative trades and foreign exchange transactions none of which are now taxed. One might be concerned that imposing taxes on these types of transactions would stifle economic activity in these critical areas, however, the tax is so small it would be dwarfed by the simple fluctuations in price that typically occur during the trading process. Although ‘day trading’ and short term foreign exchange transactions will certainly decline, the reduction in these ‘hot money’ transactions are most likely to reduce speculative market activity, thereby reducing the volatility of prices in these markets. And the tax burden would be progressive since the wealthy undertake a disproportionate share of financial transactions.”

FEATURE



THE DAY E PLURIBUS UNUM HIT HOME

Josh Goldstein

Joshua Goldstein is an expert on international disability rights, having served until recently as Vice President for Economic Citizenship and Disability Inclusion at Accion, the global microfinance provider. He is also an educator and playwright whose poetry and prose appear in the New Republic.

Last summer I enjoyed a hiking vacation in the majestic Cumberland Gap National Historic Park in the Appalachians. The Gap, famous as ‘a narrow pass through the long ridge of the Cumberland Mountains,’ is situated ‘near the junction of the states of Kentucky, Virginia, and Tennessee.’ First used by Native Americans, Daniel Boone pioneered it as a path to the West for settlers from the East.

One night, after a full day hiking in the mountains, my friend Tim and I decided on dinner at Heavy’s,

a restaurant reputed to have the best barbecue around. So we put Heavy’s, Harrogate, Tennessee, in Google Maps as our destination and turned on the Navigation. It was a 15-minute drive to Heavy’s through heavily forested country roads from the tiny town of Cumberland, Kentucky, where we were staying. All went smoothly until the Navigation lost the Satellite signal just a mile or two from our destination.

It was dusk as we drove down a winding road that ran parallel to a narrow, slow moving, and vegetation-clad river. Summer foliage was at its peak. Aesthetically pleasing as this was, it didn't change the fact that we were lost. And it was getting dark. We drove a little farther, hoping the navigation signal would kick back in, looking for the Heavy's sign.

Hungry and crabby after our ten-mile hike, we were about to turn around when I noticed a guy standing on the side of the road in front of an ATV. Tim pulled over and I leaned out the window to ask directions. I did this with a little trepidation. The man with the gray beard and long, gray straggly hair, was drinking out of a silver flask. He was wearing a United States Marines t-shirt, and on his head sported a black cap embossed with the Marines insignia and the hardly anodyne words, 'When it absolutely, positively has to be destroyed overnight.' A little disconcerting for a couple of effete Yankees from the heart of the 'blue' East.

'Sorry to bother you, man, but do you happen to know the way to Heavy's? It's some barbecue place?'

'Why sure. Heavy's my cousin. Great ribs. Next right turn and drive about a mile. My name's John.'

'I'm Josh and this is my buddy, Tim. Nice meeting you.'

'Have a drink.'

And he handed me the flask. Thinking to myself that this would make for a 'good story' to bring home (and because I didn't want to look like a wimp to this probable ex-Marine) I took a swig of what I hoped was 100-proof backwoods moonshine—but later found out was merely 80 proof bourbon. Very smooth.

'Have another shot.' We watched each other with studied interest—recognizably fellow Americans, but curiosities to each other: like Seinfeld meets the Beverly Hillbillies (but in the hollers, not in the Hills).

I drank another shot and then one more, finding my rhythm. His grin broadened.

I was more than slightly buzzed now; my mask of sobriety gave way, and with it what remained of my circumspection. Tim, who was not partaking, was getting a little uneasy.

'You served in the Marines?'

'Yeah, Nam.'

I hesitated a moment. Then I said, 'Well, listen, I want to thank you for your service. And more than that, I want to apologize.'

'What the hell for?'

'While you were in Vietnam, I was an 18-year old kid going to massive demonstrations against the war. In New Haven, New York—Yankee country.'

'Guess you could say that, back then, I was kind of "counter culture..."—a hippie type with long hair. I had a high draft number, but to be honest I probably would have hightailed it to Canada as a "draft dodger" if I'd ever been called up. But anyway, what I want to say is, the sad fact is, many of us protesters didn't respect returning vets. We called you guys "pigs," "fascists," and shit like that. Of course, you guys were young, like me, and just following orders. And here we were treating you like war criminals.'

'Man, I really appreciate you saying that. That stuff hurt.'

'How many Vietnam vets have committed suicide? Maybe ten thousand, right?'

'You got it.'

'Anyway,' I said, taking yet another swig, 'I wish we'd given you guys your due. I really do apologize. Better late than never, I hope. And thank you again for your service.'

We shook hands and my designated driver, Tim, and I made our way to Heavy's.

Five minutes later we were there. It really wasn't much more than a large shack with a few tables inside and outside. A shack right out of central casting. The epitome of a shack. Parking was on the half-acre of grass that fronted the restaurant. It was pretty busy.

The philosophy of the restaurant, both culinary and political, was summed up in italics at the bottom of the menu. 'We will not assume liability for adverse reactions to food consumed, or items one may come in contact with while eating at our establishments or catered events. We do not accept special orders based on allergies.' Healthy eating was not on the menu at Heavy's. In the name of cultural solidarity, I abandoned my 'no red meat—I don't eat mammals' diet and tucked into the ribs, which were spectacular.

I chatted briefly with Heavy, who was no longer heavy—having lost 60 pounds in his pursuit of health and a longer life. Heavy and I met in the middle, so to speak: we each gave up something for the sake of comity and practicality.

Just as we polished off the ribs, John showed up on his ATV and invited us to his home just up the hill from Heavy's. I looked at Tim. There was no way we were going to say no to such down-home hospitality. But we were also just a bit nervous. What did we really know about this guy? Was he a crazy survivalist, with homicidal tendencies? The sort of fellow who might get a gig as an extra in a remake of *Deliverance*? We were in a foreign country and unsure of the customs and how to read the locals.

John's place—a small, modest ranch-style house—was the proverbial stone's throw away. We sat in lawn chairs around a campfire in the back yard. John tended to the fire from time to time. His wife joined us and was as welcoming as her husband. She introduced us to their dog, 'Elly Mae Clampett,' an arch reference to Jed's pretty daughter in *The Beverly Hillbillies*.

A much younger couple drove up a few minutes later. The man, like John, was a vet who had just

finished up his tour of duty in Afghanistan. Like John—and, it seemed, like many guys in the Gap—he was also a long-distance trucker. His new wife loved to travel with him when he was on the road—an extended honeymoon, in the sleeper cabin of the semi-trailer truck, seeing America.

Ever the attentive host, John brought out beer for Tim and bourbon for me, placing a whole bottle under my arm chair. Then he went back to in the house and brought out his banjo to play a few chords.



The show-and-tell continued when he brought out his pistol and with a big wink gave it to me to handle. I promptly confirmed his suspicion that I had never handled a firearm. I waved it around carelessly, prompting him to read me the riot act on gun safety practices, even with unloaded guns. (Observing my recklessness, surely 'gun control' had to have started making more sense to him.) Just as he 'was a good story' for me to tell sometime, I was the same for him. Anthropological interest continued to go both ways.

We talked about all manner of things. I told him about the daughter I adopted from Haiti and he told me about his sister who had married a black guy. At first his mother objected—but in the end it was all good. I told him I was still hoping to try possum pie, and he told me 'that stuff'll kill you, 'cuz possums feed on the entrails of dead cows'—he had seen it himself as a boy long ago in Florida.

Before long our conversation turned back to military matters. Turned out John was highly critical of the way we conducted the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, wars that led, as in Viet Nam, to inconclusive and costly results. We both took a dim view of wars without end. Tim had remained silent about his own story. Announcing he was gay seemed a confession too far.

It was getting late and we were making noises about having to go when John said to me, ‘I bet y’all’ve never hung out with a redneck before.’

‘Come on, John. I don’t think of you that way.’

‘Oh, don’t get me wrong—I’m saying it with pride. I want people where you’re from to hear that red necks like me aren’t so bad.’

‘Absolutely, John, same thing on my side. I hope you’ll keep in mind that somebody like me was also ok.’



We said goodbye. (Yes, we did hug.) We had found some common ground on touchy subjects, and just by sitting together a while I think we started tearing down some ugly stereotypes. Turned out that a self-described ‘redneck’ and an ‘East Coast elitist liberal’ had no trouble becoming friends.

Reflecting back months later on my evening with John, I got to thinking about what lies behind the profound divisions in our country. One of them,

surely, revolves around education and military service. John and I are from the same generation, but our ‘American Experience’ couldn’t be more different. I am eastern and college-educated. He is a southerner and has a high school education. He drives trucks. I write. Above all, he served his country by fighting in Vietnam. I did not.

One of the things that united the so-called ‘greatest generation’ was that most men, no matter their ethnic or religious background, served in the military during World War II. After serving side by side, no matter how deep their partisan and philosophical divides might be, the shared experience of having once been comrades in arms reminded them of their shared humanity. Or at least their shared mortality. They put themselves in harm’s way and came away with a first-hand look at violent and premature death. In the process, they also discovered, I think, that what we have in common ultimately is more important than what divides us.

This throwing young Americans together in a common experience seldom happens anymore. In America today, people like John and me almost never get to know each other, not even a little bit. We have been foreigners to each other since birth—and would be today, but for a chance encounter.

We became ‘fellow Americans’ because of it. If our country has a future, it depends on our ability to rise above the concerns, and fears, and priorities that divide us. We need a public life that welcomes the partisan, the bi-partisan, and the non-partisan alike. We need a democracy that is transpartisan. It will come about only if there are millions of small personal breakthroughs like the one I had in Cumberland Gap—mini ‘truth and reconciliation commissions,’ if you will.

That day last June was a day when the truth of *e pluribus unum* hit home for me, and made some headway into both our hearts.

FEATURE



DEMOCRACY IN THE AGE OF AMAZON

Pete Peterson

Pete Peterson is Dean of the Pepperdine University School of Public Policy and Senior fellow of the Davenport Institute for Public Engagement and Civic Leadership. Pete is a well-known national speaker and writer on issues related to civic participation and the use of technology to make government more responsive and transparent. He was the first executive director of Common Sense California, a bipartisan think tank devoted to increasing civic participation throughout the state. In 2014, he ran a strong campaign as the Republican candidate for Secretary of State, hoping to become the state's first 'Chief Engagement Officer.'

These days, an observer might be forgiven for thinking the relationship between citizens and government has broken down completely, even permanently. But while there's some truth in that contention, the fact is that our relationship with government is 'merely' changing. That's a good

thing—provided, of course, that change proceeds in the right direction and can be sustained.

In particular, just as pervasive technology in contemporary life is altering how we interact with each other, in both business and in our social relations, it is also changing how we relate to our

governing institutions. From how we learn about what government is doing, to how we interact with government—on everything from paying parking tickets to obtaining building permits—technology is radically changing our relationship with the structures and processes through which we organize and conduct our public life. And it is doing so faster and more profoundly than we realize.

Moreover, just as technology has changed what we expect from the businesses that provide us with goods and services, it is also changing what we *expect* from the departments, agencies, and offices that make it possible for us to live life together in a free and orderly manner. Some of these expectations are good – greater transparency, faster service, less paperwork – but some are not: the speed with which deliberation of policy solutions proceeds lags far behind ordering plane tickets on Kayak.

The great political thinker Max Weber described politics as the ‘slow boring through thick boards.’

But to expect the former to proceed at the pace of the latter is to expect—unrealistically and unwisely—what I call the ‘Amazonification’ of public goods and services. The great political thinker Max Weber described politics as the ‘slow boring through thick boards.’ Why? Because in a democracy, people are not just consumers of the goods and services government provides—they’re also *producers*. Human beings can possess the same facts and arrive at very different ideas for what they want the policymaking process to produce. These differences make political decisions very ‘thick boards’ indeed. The best solutions to the challenges and opportunities we encounter in public life are the ones that all well-informed, thoughtful people can support. In a democracy like ours, these solutions

have to emerge from the political process—ideally, after careful public deliberation. That process never can be, and never should be, as fast and easy as clicking on that CD you buy through Amazon.

* * *

In 2013, I decided to run for California Secretary of State. I came up with the title, ‘Chief Engagement Officer,’ to convey what I hoped to accomplish if my campaign was successful. In California as elsewhere, the SOS helps make government more transparent and accessible. The office performs a variety of tasks, such as registering businesses and non-profit organizations and collecting financial information from candidates and lobbyists. Arguably its most important task, though, is organizing and overseeing the electoral process.

During my time as executive director of Pepperdine University’s Davenport Institute, I learned a lot about how the office was performing. I believed I could make a positive change for all Californians by running. The Secretary of State’s Office has had numerous issues with regard to implementing technology both in platforms intended to inform voters about campaign finance issues and in the voting booth itself. I believed my background in technology and civic engagement made me a strong candidate.

What I found so enjoyable about the campaign is that it fit so seamlessly into the work I was doing, and continue to do, at the Davenport Institute. In fact, there were many days during the campaign when I led a public engagement training session with government officials in the morning, and held a fundraising event in the evening. Both jobs, in my estimation, are about getting Californians more involved in local decision-making. So I always felt comfortable out ‘on the stump.’ I wrote every word on my campaign website, every speech, and every op-ed, and I prepared for every debate by myself.

The policy side of the campaign was something I knew extremely well.

The Davenport Institute promotes citizen participation in governance. We do this through our three main programs: training, consulting, and grant-making. (Lately we've added evaluation as a complement to our consulting work). We've trained over 2,000 municipal government officials in how to engage residents more effectively through public involvement processes that allow for real interaction among citizens and between them and government representatives. We've also shown officials how to use technology to reach more of their residents and to keep them well informed about issues facing the community. We've served as consultants on dozens of these processes throughout California, often bringing together officials and skilled, experienced facilitators. In this connection, we've also launched our 'How Are We Doing?' online platform, which helps cities evaluate their own public processes. Finally, we support these efforts with grants to the communities that decide to bring citizens more fully into the policymaking process.

* * *

What role should citizens play—and not play—in solving public problems and making other decisions? Why do we need citizens to participate in any way other than voting?

At the Davenport Institute, we think of public engagement as a 'tool in the toolbox of public leadership.' The reality is, government officials can't ask for public feedback on every issue and every decision they have to make. There just isn't enough time. Rightfully, people expect government to make sound decisions within the broad framework of the purposes and goals citizens set for them. Sometimes, moreover, a little public input is worse than no input at all. If the folks talking with government aren't

representative of the community as a whole, or if they're poorly informed, or if they just want officials to side with them and don't want to see the bigger picture of what's best for the community as a whole, it's usually better for officials to act on the basis of their best judgment.

That said, government should aspire to involve the public to the greatest extent and in the most appropriate way possible whenever important issues must be resolved. Too little of the right sort of input from citizens often results in ballot propositions or even lawsuits, which are two places where the crucial nuances that come from facilitated public processes will be glaringly and even disastrously absent. At the Institute we emphasize that, on issues within this limited range, conducting facilitated public processes with a good-faith intention to listen and heed the public's concerns not only creates better-informed residents, but also decisions that are widely and supported and likely to prove durable. When citizens are partners, in return for influence they accept greater responsibility for what government does in their name.

What role should citizens play—and not play—in solving public problems and making other decisions? Why do we need citizens to participate in any way other than voting?

Voting, of course, is an indispensable form of participation in self-government. I think of voting as being near the top of the citizen engagement 'funnel,' where the top requires the least time and effort, and the bottom, where it demands the most. I say 'near the top' is the least demanding but also essential responsibility of staying informed (and that means fully informed; citizens should read

news and analysis *from diverse sources*, including those they're inclined to disagree with.) Below voting there's involvement through participating in civil society organizations – from church-based food pantries and mentoring students to coaching youth sports. Next comes attending local council meetings on issues you care about, and participating in public processes like the ones I described above. At the bottom of the funnel is working on election or ballot campaigns, including running for office. I encourage many people to think about running. It offers a tremendous education in how democracy works (or doesn't) in the area that matters most to us most of the time: our local communities. In the course of campaigning, you'll gain greater respect for those whom you've elected and who are trying now to make the best decisions possible for your community.

* * *

In Washington, where power and prestige are everything, politics takes place on a great stage in front of millions of who've come to see the 'show,' not to scrutinize the complex and often tedious process of making policy. Partisanship is part of the performance. Washington will not begin working hard to arrive at decisions that are good for the country, and that members of both political parties can support, until it is required to behave differently by ordinary folks like you and me.

Because few of us can pay close attention to Washington, it only makes sense for us to focus on problems, issues, and opportunities at home. Most of the citizen participation processes I've been a part of have been local or regional affairs. In processes at this level of government, the issues – from budgets to water policy – don't usually provoke intense partisanship. It's quite remarkable (to me, at least) to watch people who would never vote for the same national-level candidate come quickly and easily to agreement on what's best for their own community.

Facilitated participation should be used only in instances where the regular council or staff decision-making process is unlikely to produce a satisfactory result in the absence of substantial citizen involvement. These engagements take longer and can cost more than the usual public process, but I've seen them create much more sustainable decisions and avert very costly alternatives, such as legal decisions and referendums or initiatives.

* * *

California has adopted two recent innovations for increasing government responsiveness to public concerns: the '[top-two blanket primary](#)' and the Citizens' Redistricting Commission. In general, I support both of these measures, provided that citizens understand them very well and actively participate in the work they require. In [California's non-partisan blanket primary](#), voters may choose one candidate for each office without regard to party affiliation. For example, a person might select a Democratic candidate for governor and a Republican candidate for senator. Then, the top two vote-getters face each other in the general election. When I ran for public office in a blanket primary, I knew I had to reach out to non-registered Republican voters for support. This was good practice for the type of campaign I would wage in the general election after making it through the primary. The blanket primary enables candidates to campaign during the primary on issues and positions that are much more consistent with those he or she will have to address effectively in order to win the general election.

I think the [Citizens' Redistricting Commission](#) can be a great improvement and better than the alternative of Legislature-controlled districting, provided that the public is well-represented in the Commission itself and in the hearings that are held throughout the decision-making process. I think there's some truth to the contention that Republican-leaning and Democrat-leaning districts are becoming

more so. [Gerrymandering](#) exacerbates the situation. But there may be a cause we can't do much about, at least in the short-term. In [The Big Sort](#), author Bill Bishop argues that people aren't having more-partisan district boundaries imposed on them – they're moving into them intentionally. I don't know whether this is an issue that can be solved or even mitigated through the districting process.

Washington will not begin working hard to arrive at decisions that are good for the country, and that members of both political parties can support, until it is required to behave differently by ordinary folks like you and me.

In general, I believe that, in our highly partisan environment today, we need more people to act in more 'transpartisan' ways—accepting the fact of partisanship but also transcending it in order to generate more widely-supported results. We mustn't lose sight of the fact that there are genuine differences in how we human beings understand the world around us. In his book, [The Righteous Mind](#), Jonathan Haidt offers strong evidence that, even with the same information and with the best of intentions, people can disagree on the right way to proceed. It can help us all just to acknowledge this reality and find ways to understand better, not only the perceptions and thinking of 'the other side,' but of our own, which too many of us don't understand well. Second, because most of the work I do is at the local level, I see many discussions of issues where the solution doesn't have an obvious 'red' or 'blue' answer. At the local level, you see much more transpartisan behavior, but it's rarely identified as such because oftentimes the participants don't disclose their own party affiliation.

* * *

What can ordinary citizens do to improve the policymaking process? Allowing our passions to rule us in politics can generate more heat than light. But passion is important when it stimulates us to learn more about an issue, to engage with others who disagree with us, and to act. I urge people to focus on a policy area they're interested in and where they can contribute their experience, knowledge, or skills to crafting sound policy. If you're a small business owner, maybe you care about how your city is zoned, or how it provides economic development (or doesn't), or how it facilitates the business processes that engage with government. For others – particularly parents – it might be education, and how well (or not) your local school district is providing it.

Once you find that area of interest, there are many different points of entry into the policymaking process: blogging about it, attending council meetings, working on campaigns, even running for office yourself. Along the way, doors will open and close. But it's the journey that matters, and I urge everyone to embark on it. It's part of a fulfilling life.

Of course, you might want to take a couple of years out of your busy life to join me here at Pepperdine University's School of Public Policy!



UNITED AND DIVIDED: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Living Room Conversation on a Transpartisan Journey

A. Lawrence Chickering & Lynne Twist

On May 22, 2017, Lynne Twist and Lawry Chickering co-hosted a ‘Living Room Conversation’ at Lynne’s home in San Francisco. Created in 2010, Living Room Conversations is based on the conviction that, when we have authentic, respectful conversations, we strengthen our relationships and advance our understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and solutions before us.

The ‘liberals’ who participated in the conversation were Lynne, her husband Bill, and Jan D’Alessandro. The ‘conservatives’ were Lawry, Stewart Emery, and his wife, Joan. Lynne selected the participants and, with Lawry’s gratitude, generously did all the advance preparation. The dialogue was not recorded. This report is based on notes circulated later. None of the participants had participated previously in a Living Room Conversation.

WHO ARE WE?

Lynne Twist began by expressing her deep distress and concern about the widespread polarization and conflict in the country, especially following President Trump's election. She said she hoped that this Living Room Conversation might provide significant clues about how to bring people together and find solutions to problems that seem insoluble.

The participants started by introducing themselves. **Lawry Chickering** noted that, although he is listed as a 'conservative' and has conservative credentials, he has not identified himself that way since he started working for the conservative icon, William F. Buckley, Jr., at the end of the 1960s. Since then, he has considered himself a 'transpartisan,' who is committed to integrating the best of both left and right.

Lawry made this intellectual shift after he met a group of black radical intellectuals in New York soon after joining Buckley. They persuaded him that their ideas about race and about the poor were much more like those of conservatives at *National Review* than of the mainstream left-liberal culture. Lawry organized a day-long meeting bringing the two groups together—which, viewed in retrospect, resembled an enlarged Living Room Conversation, in which the two sides embraced important common values. They opposed the narrative that still dominates the race issue today that blacks are 'victims' denied success by white racism. They agreed that this view disempowers anyone it touches, taking power from them and giving it to their enemies.

Rejecting the claim that blacks are victims led to agreement that *empowerment* rather than *equality* should be the central objective for policy on all 'disadvantaged'. While equality is not possible (because everyone cannot be above or precisely average), many real experiences show that everyone can become empowered, including even the most disadvantaged, such as girls in very traditional

parts of developing countries. Lawry said his entire professional life had been defined by the insights gained in bringing the two sides together at the workshop, during that time of great polarization and conflict.

Stewart Emery, an immigrant from Australia, shared a little of his personal story. When he landed in San Francisco in 1971 for what he expected to be a short visit, Australia was under the thumb of the most destructive elements of the British Labor Movement and the marginal tax rate was 75% (it currently stands at 45%). He quickly discovered that, in America, stronger incentives existed for pursuing individual and societal development. Because excellence is one of Stewart's core values, he chose to stay. He then became actively involved in the human potential movement.

While he recognizes that there are people and classes of people who are or have been victims, he holds that continually relating to them only as victims creates entitlement, which ultimately becomes destructive.

He and his wife, Joan, strongly believe that empowering people to take effective action on their own behalf results in the greatest individual and social good. He also believes that the role of government should be to support equal opportunity for its citizens, rather than attempt to regulate for equality of outcomes. He views himself as a social progressive and a financial conservative, and in this sense he sees himself as a centrist politically.

Joan Emery told her own story about growing up an entitled young girl who was unhappy and felt small and like a victim as a result of expecting more from her parents than they were willing to give her. When she got a job in the film industry, things began to change. She loved her job so much that she arrived early, left late, worked hard, learned everything she could about her job, and began to experience her self-esteem grow.

She discovered that the more she accomplished, the better she felt about herself and the more whole she felt as a person.

In 1975, after taking Stewart's course, *Actualizations*, her pivotal moment came when she realized that we are all responsible for our lives, happiness, and self-esteem—she realized that no one can give those to you. Being accountable as a young adult allowed her the experience of freedom to see she could become more tomorrow than she had been yesterday. Joan said she believed that when people feel entitled, they lose important incentives for personal excellence and contribution. It is hard to feel these powerful motives for living when people believe the system should and will take care of them.

She enjoyed being part of the group conversation as everyone seemed to open up, share their stories, feelings, and thoughts, which added to the success of the evening.

(Joan later emailed and said she realized, looking back, that she is a centrist.)

Bill Twist introduced himself as a business leader and the CEO of the NGO Pachamama Alliance. He said that although he was sympathetic to the values that Stewart and Joan expressed, he did not feel that our society offers much opportunity for the disadvantaged to experience and acquire those values. He said he is committed to extending opportunity to the disadvantaged so there can be a level playing field.

Jan D'Alessandro became an attorney after studying art and literature at Brown as a way of applying practical skills to further the arts. She moved to San Francisco and became a prominent attorney in the emergence of the Internet, holding leadership positions at AOL, Yahoo, and several venture-backed start-ups—working to make the internet a tool for good. She wanted especially for the Internet to encourage collaboration and cooperation

between people, making sure that everyone has access to its benefits.

THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

Lynne asked participants to share their visions of hope for the country. She said she worried that President Trump was modeling hostile and aggressive behavior that the country was imitating, and she wondered how we could come through this difficult period without a serious decline in public attitudes and morals.

Lawry proposed another way of looking at President Trump, more as an effect of larger forces than a cause. He said he and his partner, Jim Turner, have written an article on the widespread alienation in the country from the major political parties and the political system. This alienation predated Trump's presidential campaign. If we compare the number of people who voted for the two major candidates in the recent election to the number who did not vote for either, we find that Trump and Clinton each won fewer than 30 percent of the votes of all those who were eligible to vote, compared to 70 percent who either voted for another candidate or chose not to vote at all.

Many Americans are deeply alienated from politics because the current system is not representing them. Lawry suggested that many of them view Trump's behavior as a *symbolic protest* against the system, which protest expresses their anger at politicians and disgust with the system.

WHAT'S A 'CONSERVATIVE'? A 'LIBERAL'? A 'PROGRESSIVE'?

In public, people typically accept partisan political labels as accurate descriptions of real people who hold clear and coherent ideas. When Stewart said he was an 'economic conservative' and a 'social

liberal', he reminded us that the words 'conservative' and 'liberal' do not mean clear or consistent things. On the conservative side, the primary elections provided a strong reminder of the deep conflicts and differences between what Lawry Chickering and Jim Turner call the 'order-right' (traditional, especially religious, conservatives) and the 'freedom-right' (free market conservatives). Turner notes that even if they are harder to see, the same conflicts are strong on the left between the freedom and order factions.

Failure to observe such differences *within* the right and *within* the left makes it impossible to understand either concept. Without understanding the four positions, it is impossible to understand the differences between the concepts of 'freedom' and 'order' for progressives and for conservatives. Seeing the differences would reveal that none of these concepts actually conflict; they are complementary and incomplete, each needing integration with the others to be complete.

WE'RE ALL TRANSPARTISANS NOW — OR SHOULD BE.

Bill's agreement with the conservative values expressed by Stewart and Joan came with a reservation and concern about the disadvantaged: how do personal responsibility and accountability become realistically available choices for the chronically (even generationally) disadvantaged? How to make them available to tribal girls who grow up afraid to speak up in front of boys in rural Pakistan?

Bill's concern is often expressed by partisans on the order-left (social democratic left) quadrant of the Matrix. The really difficult question needs to focus on experiences, either implemented by governments or by nongovernment organizations, that are successfully promoting these individual values to the disadvantaged.

The best way to become clear about approaches that can succeed where there is so much failure is by examining the real experiences of highly successful programs that are actually achieving results working with 'difficult populations.' For example:

- The **Delancey Street Foundation**, the widely-celebrated drug rehabilitation program that began in San Francisco and now has satellite projects in other cities around the country.
- **UNICEF's Girls' Community Schools around the city of Asyut in Upper Egypt**, the epicenter of Islamic terrorism in Egypt.
- The **All Stars Project** in New York City helps transform the lives of youth and poor communities using the developmental power of performance. Founded by Dr. Lenora Fulani, a 'radical' who at one time was in a partnership with conservative Pat Buchanan, she is now closely associated with Jacqueline Salit and her Committee for a Unified Independent Party.
- James Dierke's pathbreaking work at the inner-city **Visitacion Valley Middle School in San Francisco** resulted, in part, from his introduction of transcendental meditation into VVMC. He demonstrated that innovative and entrepreneurial action can occur inside government institutions. He won an award as the outstanding principal in a middle school first in California, and the next year in the entire country. Dierke was Executive Vice President of the National Association of School Administrators.
- **Educate Girls Globally**, founded by Lawry Chickering, promotes reform of government schools in the most traditional parts of rural India, promoting empowerment of traditional people, including girls, and effects change in culture in traditional communities and in government bureaucracies.

A key to understanding why such undertakings have been successful is that they embody values and principles that cannot easily be built in to government programs. In each of these examples, for example, programs are organized around ‘conservative’ values like personal responsibility and development of personal relationships among those helping, those being helped, and even those who aren’t affected directly. Moreover, all are based in local communities and draw on their strengths.

In each program, all stakeholders gain genuine ‘ownership’ of the work. One important result is high social trust and (therefore) little opposition or conflict. Finally, in each program change is natural and ‘organic,’ arising from within rather than being imposed mechanically from without. It is gradual, slow, and accommodating of different needs, concerns, capacities, and priorities. One size does not have to fit all, because decision-making authority is close to the ground, accessible, and responsive to the need for flexibility.

Since a couple of these success stories are operating in government programs, there is no reason to believe that models such as these cannot be successfully designed and implemented in government institutions. Educate Girls Globally has been actively experimenting with transferring its model to the state ministry of education in Northern India, and the chief education officer in one district was so impressed by the empowerment of girls in EGG’s Girls’ Parliaments that he announced he wants the program *in every school in the district at all levels*—primary, upper-primary, and secondary. More than that, he wants EGG to train the ministry staff to implement it. Given problems with the scale and details with his request, EGG is negotiating with him about the design of a project. The important point is that a government is showing active interest in integrating EGG’s program with its institutional structure, and EGG is organizing itself FOR other, potentially larger requests going forward.

If change is to be accomplished at really large scales, governments will have to become actively involved and embrace programs such as this. When program models combine the values of all four quadrants, as EGG does—a vision of justice (order-left), voluntary action (freedom-right and freedom-left), and personal engagement (order-right) across loyalties, the results are extremely positive, and opposition and conflict disappear.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

At the beginning of our conversation, everyone resisted being labeled politically. When people are labeled, they tend to listen only to their own ‘tribe’ and shut everyone else out. They see other values always in conflict and miss how they might be complementary. Conversations like this work best when people see past conflicts that go nowhere and imagine how their commitments can be adapted and integrated with others’ commitments.

The exercise of examining programs that are *working* with very difficult populations is valuable because the programs reveal multiple quadrants interacting. They show how much people share common values. One way to approach a conversation hoping it might become transpartisan is to pick an issue and then choose a program that is successfully addressing it. Then search for each of the four quadrants in it (the changes are very good that they are all there). Most such programs are run by civil society organizations (CSOs).

Finally, think of how the model driving this program might be transferred to a government.

All of the participants in this exercise agreed the conversation was robust, vivid, and strongly in the spirit of Living Room Conversations. It was almost giddily unsettling to discover how easy we found it to discuss issues and questions that were important to us but that people often tend to suppress in

public out of fear of provoking negative emotional reactions. When anyone in the group can identify the positive role of each quadrant, everyone will feel heard; and there will be no conflict.

Jan's subsequent reflection on our experience summed up the experience for all of us: 'My big take-away from the conversation,' she said, 'was that *we are all transpartisans*. When people speak from their own experience and from their principled convictions, it is hard to dismiss their opinions and positions as the result of ignorance, obtuseness, or perversity.'

To imagine a new political environment that would encourage deliberations like this one would require several things. First, it would require that political leaders take leadership and explain changes so they did not stimulate opposition and subversion. Second, it would require renouncing political promises that solutions are possible through

centralized, mechanistic action. It will require that conservatives and progressives work together to integrate important elements of their visions to achieve success where there has (in the past) been so much failure. Most importantly, it would require understanding and a commitment to a process of civic engagement that will bring people together who are now largely isolated from each other.

Progressives need to give up promises of centralized, bureaucratic solutions that can be imposed on people. And conservatives need to open themselves to using their commitment to engagement with those 'close by' in relationships reaching 'across loyalties' and engaging with people based on their common humanity.

We hope that the excellent beginning represented by this Living Room Conversation can be built on, expanded, and applied to specific issues.

MORE ABOUT LIVING ROOM CONVERSATIONS

From the Living Room Conversations website:

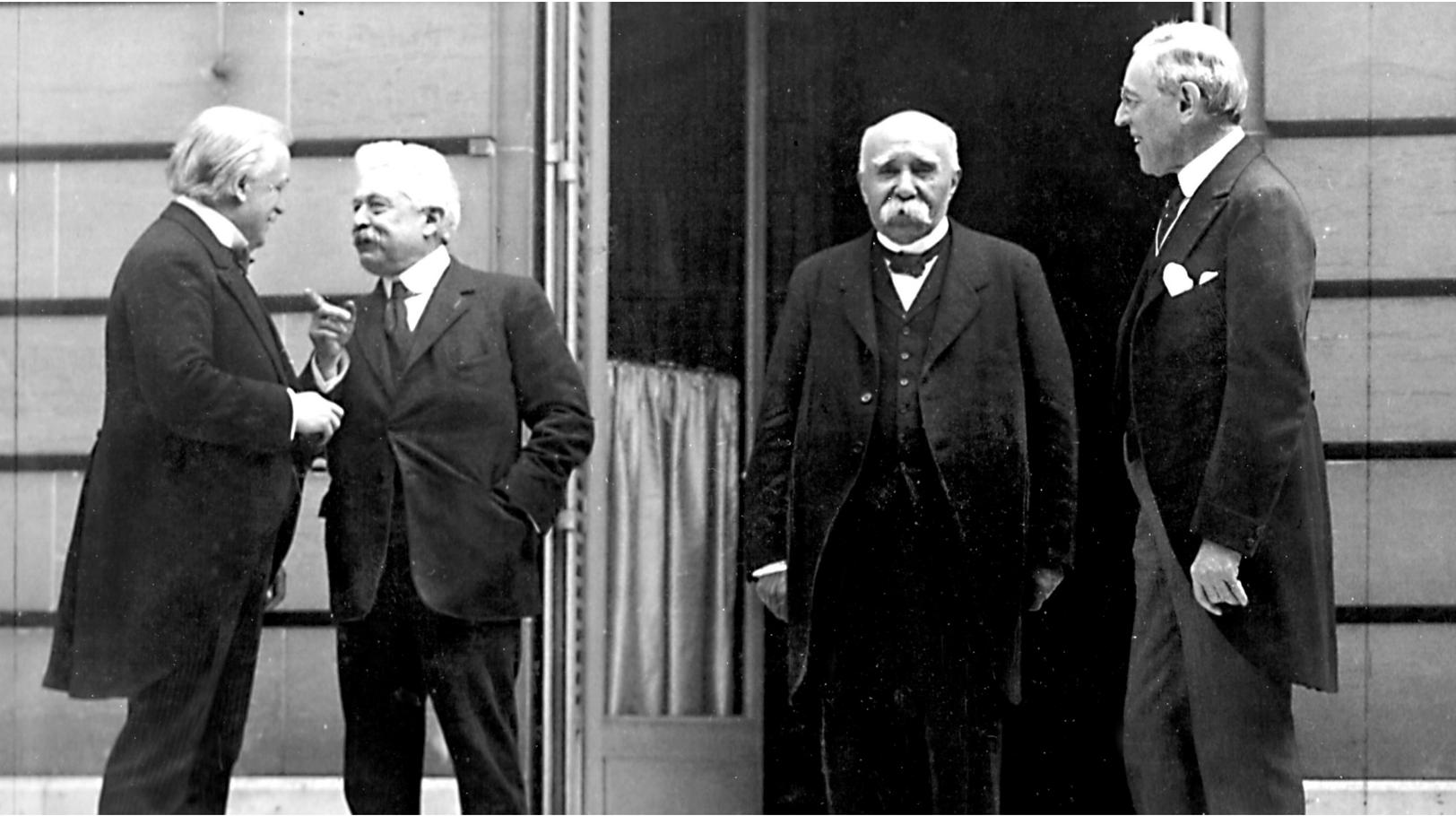
In late 2010, Joan Blades partnered with dialogue experts, Walt Roberts, Debilyn Molineaux, Amanda Kathryn Roman and Heather Tischbein, to create a structured, intimate conversation format that would empower everyday citizens to discuss important issues with friends of differing political affiliations and backgrounds. The theory was that if two friends with different points of view, each invited two friends to join a conversation, with full disclosure about the intent and structure of the conversation, they could create a safe space for a respectful and meaningful exchange of ideas, develop new relationships and perhaps find common ground.

Amanda Kathryn Roman and Joan Blades formed a transpartisan political partnership, recruited an advisory board and launched the website to make the Living Room Conversations open-source format available to individuals and organizations around the country. Their hope was to empower participants to begin to reweave the fabric of our civil society by demonstrating that respectful conversation can enrich our lives and enable us to create better solutions to the challenges we face together.



Learn more at www.livingroomconversations.com.

FEATURE



IN HINDSIGHT: MAKING THE WORLD SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY

Paul B. Clemenceau

Paul Clemenceau is a Houston Lawyer with 40 years experience representing both large and small corporations in the U.S. and Europe, specializing in general corporate counseling and corporate transactions. He has served on a number of civic boards and mayorial counsels, and also served at the French Ambassador's invitation on a special committee of businessmen.

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION: *'Should America Have Entered World War I?' is the question that Georgetown history professor Michael Kazin poses in an essay published in the April 6th edition of New York Times. Kazin contends that the United States would have been better served if it had stayed out of the Great War. He argues that both sides were exhausted and about to quit; that the punitive Treaty of Versailles would have been avoided; and that as a result Hitler would not have come to power, thereby sparing the 50 million who lost their lives in the Second World War.*

Professor Kazin suggests that World War I established 'the larger aim of American foreign policy under both liberal and conservative presidents...: to make the world "safe for democracy."' This aim, he says, created 'a

military-industrial establishment funded...by income taxes' that caused us to give up a large amount of the freedom we once enjoyed.

This intervention, Professor Kazin argues, led to 'the creation of a political order most citizens now take for granted, even as some protest against it: a state equipped to fight war after war abroad while keeping a close watch on allegedly subversive activities at home.' It was the existence of this political order that made possible the restrictions on liberty following 9/11.

We asked our friend Paul B. Clemenceau, a Houston lawyer and great-grandson of Georges ('The Tiger') Clemenceau, two-time Prime Minister of France (the second time from 1917 to 1920), to comment on the article. The senior Clemenceau played a driving role in securing the Versailles Treaty. Paul, whose comments on Kazin's essay appear below, takes a position different from Kazin.

We argue in other places in this journal, in our weekly notes, and in various other essays that powerful forces shape the world we live in at least as much as powerful people. History is one of those forces. As part of the transpartisan process, we suggest it is useful to reflect on how two individuals coming from divergent points of view underscore history's role in our daily politics.

As President Trump draws the world's attention to the budget of the 70-year-old North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), we think it useful to remember that NATO came into existence to end the previous 70 years of recurring violence at the heart of Europe. It succeeded. Clemenceau's comments and Kazin's article illuminate how a century-old conflict still shapes our lives today...

In Hindsight: Making The World Safe for Democracy

Given time enough, all historical events are reviewed and dissected, and things that were accepted as right and appropriate in the heat of the moment are subsequently found to be wrong or misguided. It is no doubt true that England, France, and Germany were being bled to death and were nearing civil collapse by the time America finally entered the war. But if left to their own devices, I am not sure they would have settled the war in a manner that would have avoided a subsequent rise of the German war machine a few decades later. It took the prospect of more than two million fresh troops from America pouring into Europe to finally make the Germans realize that they could not win. Without the colossal American reinforcements, Germany may well have hung in there until the allies were forced to sue for peace.

One of the great issues that historians continue to debate is the contribution to the Second World War of the Treaty of Versailles, which ended the Great War. In many ways, the Treaty abandoned the Wilsonian ideals expressed in his Fourteen Points. A common criticism of Clemenceau, who was determined to ensure that Germany could never invade his country again, is that he insisted on punitive measures that actually forced Germany to rearm.

A number of factors appear to have played a role in Germany's great inflation of 1921-23. Some historians note that the Treaty's draconian reparations played a less important part in Germany's economic collapse than commonly believed, because Germany never paid more than a small fraction of what was owed (one estimate

held that they paid only about 10 percent of the amount required by the Treaty). Concern about the reparations played some role, because Germany paid them with currency debased by inflation. In 1922 the Weimar government started printing money. The value of the mark thus depreciated from 320 to the dollar in mid-1922 to 7,400 marks to the dollar by year's end.

In 1923 French and Belgian troops invaded the Ruhr, Germany's industrial heartland, to ensure payment of reparations, and Weimar continued to pay workers on strike with marks further devalued by printing still more money. That year inflation increased to unfathomable heights. In November, the exchange rate was 4,210,500,000,000 to the dollar.

We on this side of the Atlantic tend to forget the fractious relationship between France and Germany. Clemenceau had witnessed the war of 1870 and the loss of Alsace as a result of German aggression. He had lived the horror of WWI first-hand, and he was not ready to accept the idealistic notions of President Wilson, a messianic man who lived an ocean away and was far removed from the country that had twice visited death and destruction on his own. Clemenceau once famously said of Wilson's Fourteen Points, 'Who does Wilson think he is? God only had ten!'

Had the U.S. stayed out of the war, we would have been a creditor nation, but the nations deeply indebted to us, France and England, may never have been able to repay us. They may well have lost the war. To assume Germany would have collapsed at the same time as France and England is to assume much and to fail to understand Germanic resolve and the geographical fact that Germany and France are contiguous nations, while England is an island.

By entering the war, the U.S. hastened the complete defeat of the aggressor and ended up being the world's superpower, not just its temporary banker. That Wilson's ideals failed in

part to be realized is Wilson's fault, not the fault of England, France, and Germany. It was Wilson, the uncompromising idealist, who drove the Senate to reject the Treaty and the League of Nations. When he refused to compromise with the Republicans and Cabot Lodge, a compromise that would have given him almost all that he asked for, he instructed the Democrats in the Senate to defeat the bill. He killed his own work rather than give up a little of it.

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I don't know whether the outcome of WWI had much to do with the rise of the USSR as a great power. Germany would have been weakened, perhaps beyond repair, in either case. I would guess that Communism's rise had more to do with the USSR's own industrial revolution. Perhaps one can argue that the advent of WWI resulted in the acceleration of the industrial state to meet the demands of supplying the war effort and that this expanded the labor pool while increasingly concentrating wealth at the same time that poverty and misery spread to the general populace. Under those circumstances, it was inevitable that Marxism would find fertile ground in which to flourish.

Personally, I'm glad the U.S. entered the war. Although it took yet another brutal war to realize some of Wilson's points, his delineation of America's role in foreign affairs remains the foundation of our foreign policy—and, yes, something of a curse. We have been investing both the blood of our youth and our treasure on making the world safe for democracy ever since, while eschewing all pretension of empire. Noble to be sure—but costly. On that point, I agree with Professor Kazin.

FEATURE



NOT JUST AN ABSTRACTION ANYMORE

The Matrix Validated

Michael Briand

America's political system is troubled. The chief problem, though, is not unbridgeable differences between partisans of the left and right. Rather, it's the divide that's opened up between "ordinary" people and the nation's political elite.

As evidence, consider that, since 1968, more than four out of every ten people eligible to vote in presidential elections has chosen not to.¹ Among those who do vote, many cast their ballots without enthusiasm, more from of a sense of duty or out

of habit than from the expectation that they can shape the nation's policy-making. Between half and two-thirds of adults in our country are either so indifferent to politics, or so put off by it, that they have as little to do with politics as they can.²

Can we blame them? Politics doesn't seem to accomplish much these days.³ A study by Professors Martin Gilens of Princeton University and Benjamin Page of Northwestern University⁴ looked at more than 20 years of data to answer this question:

‘Does the government represent the people?’ They found that the opinions of the bottom 90 percent of income-earners in America have essentially no impact at all on the decision-making of elected officials. As the authors put it, ‘the preferences of the average American appear to have only a minuscule, near-zero, statistically non-significant impact upon public policy.’ One reviewer went further: ‘If you’ve ever felt like your opinion doesn’t matter and that the government doesn’t really care what you think, well, you’re right. Your opinion literally does not matter.’⁵

For a variety of reasons, the ‘system’ isn’t working the way it used to.⁶ For example, because of gerrymandering, more than 98 percent of Congressional seats are “safe” for the incumbent, whether Democrat or Republican. Owing to the

Citizens United decision of the Supreme Court, organized interest groups now can provide friendly candidates and incumbents with almost unlimited financial support for their campaigns. It seems clear that the influence that “professional partisans” can bring to bear in Washington, D.C. and even in state capitals is growing by leaps and bounds relative to that of the ordinary citizen.

Would it make a difference to the conduct of politics if the 50 to 70 percent of Americans who do not vote—or who vote but do so with little interest, passion, or feeling of empowerment—felt engaged enough to express an informed preference at election time? We believe it would. To understand why we believe this, let’s revisit the Transpartisan ‘matrix’.



The Four-Quadrant Matrix

When we think about how to describe ourselves in political terms, most of us try to place ourselves somewhere on the traditional liberal-conservative spectrum. But there's more to our political views than how far "left" or "right" we are. People's political outlooks are influenced by deep assumptions and predispositions that relate to two basic orientations, not just one.

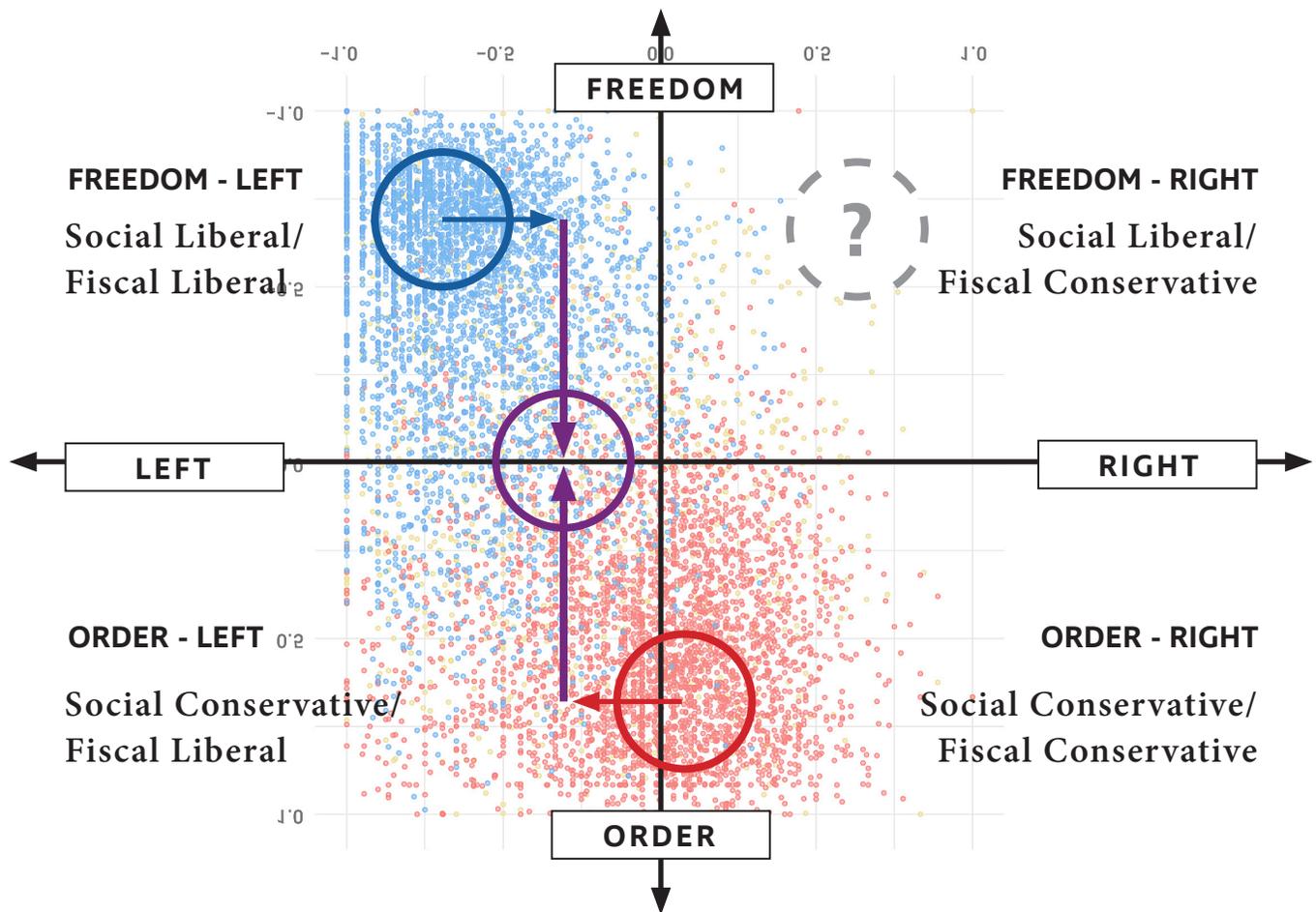
- **The "Left-Right" Axis:** The horizontal axis, above, is the familiar liberal-conservative continuum. It reflects where people stand on *distributional* questions. These are economic issues, including welfare, entitlements, jobs, wages, trade, income distribution, etc. Placement on the left-right spectrum reflects our beliefs about how much *equality* we want. Who gets what? And who decides? At its most basic, the left-right axis of the matrix reflects our answers to the question of how far beyond the borders of our "natural affections" for family and friends we should extend our care and concern for others. *Who matters* in a community or society? Does everyone matter the same, or are some persons (and groups) "more equal" than others? Should we care the same for everyone, or may we care about some more than others?
- **The "Freedom-Order" Axis:** The continuum that forms the vertical axis reflects where people stand on *moral* issues (abortion, religion, education, free speech, marriage, criminal punishment, drugs) and on issues relating to people's primary *needs* (military defense, terrorism, police and criminal prosecution), especially those having to do with their *identities* (race, gender, immigration, patriotism). Broadly speaking, the continuum has to do with what's right and wrong, fair and unfair, proper and improper. It also has to do, therefore, with the question of who has moral *authority*: the

individual or the community (society)? Should the individual defer to the judgment of the group? In what circumstances and in connection with what issues?

Why is the matrix important? On any given issue, people's views may fall at any point *within* any of the four quadrants created by the two continuums. The matrix invites us to add nuance to what is otherwise a vastly oversimplified characterization of people's views. Trying to capture people's political views by indicating where on the left-right spectrum they fall oversimplifies their complexity. Oversimplification may cause us to misread the true sources of people's beliefs and attitudes, our own included. Misreading leads to misunderstanding, and hence to lack of appreciation for people's legitimate concerns, and to lack of empathy and respect for them as persons. In turn, we may fail to recognize potential allies among the folks who are distant from us on the left-right continuum, but close to us on the freedom-order spectrum (or vice versa).

Would it make a difference to the conduct of politics if the 50 to 70% of Americans who do not vote — or who vote but do so with little interest, passion, or feeling of empowerment — felt engaged enough to express an informed preference at election time?

Moreover, where we locate ourselves on both continuums changes *from issue to issue*. As a result, we miss many opportunities for alliances and cooperation across "party lines." We need more of these shifting alliances to preserve our political relationships and to free our politics from the gridlock and partisan antagonism that keep us from making progress on the nation's problems and challenges.



Adapted from Drutman, Lee. *Political Divisions in 2016 and Beyond Tensions Between and Within the Two Parties*, June 2017.

The matrix validated. A recent study of voters during the 2016 election shows how useful the matrix is.⁷ Using a diagram almost identical to the matrix, Lee Drutman plotted voting data along two axes. As you can see in the diagram above, most Clinton voters clustered around a position close to the “left” pole of the distribution (left-right) axis and close to the “freedom” pole of the morality-identity (freedom-order) axis. Trump voters, in contrast, clustered around a position near the “order” pole of the of the morality-identity (freedom-order) axis and just slightly right of center on the “distribution” (left-right) axis.

What does this analysis tell us? First, it tells us that voters who leaned Democratic in 2016 hold views that are less moderate than those of those who leaned Republican. Further, it implies that, if the two

groups were willing to meet each other half way in order for a more pragmatic majority point of view to emerge, (1) Trump voters would need to move only slightly farther left on the left-right continuum (from the red circle to the purple circle, above); (2) Clinton voters would need to move right on the left-right continuum (from the blue circle to the purple circle), to a spot that is still left of center); (3) On the freedom-order continuum, Clinton voters would need to move substantially toward the order pole on the freedom-order continuum (from the blue circle to the purple circle)—much more so than (4) Trump voters would have to move toward the freedom pole (from the red circle to the purple circle).

The second point to glean from the diagram above has to do with Ross Douthat’s observation that the “freedom-right” quadrant is almost empty. Why did

both Clinton and Trump appeal to so few people with a socially liberal but fiscally conservative outlook? It's not that such people are unknown to American politics. As Douthat pointed out, a lot of people who are active in politics can be characterized in this manner.

And therein lies a clue. The explanation for why so few voters with this outlook voted for neither Clinton or Trump is likely that *they did not vote at all*. Surely, among the 40 percent of eligible voters who did not vote there must have been some not-insignificant percentage whose political perspective can be characterized as socially liberal but fiscally conservative.

Why is this important? Look again at the diagram. Non-voters whose outlook would place them in the freedom-order quadrant of the matrix would, had they voted, "pulled" the blue circle to the right on the left-right continuum and the red circle toward the freedom pole of the freedom-order continuum. How much the "center" would have moved, we can't say. But in a close election like 2016, it might have changed, if not the outcome, at least the perceived "mandate" of the winning side.

READ THE REPORT...

In both this article and this issue's cover story, we refer to findings from [*Political Divisions in 2016 and Beyond Tensions Between and Within the Two Parties*](#), a Democracy Fund Voter Study Group project written by Lee Drutman. Lee is a senior fellow in the program on political reform at New America. He is also the author of *The Business of America is Lobbying* and winner of the 2016 American Political Science Association's Robert A. Dahl Award.

We encourage you to read this report, available from the Voter Study Group's website (www.voterstudygroup.org). In it, Drutman explores several elements from the 2016 election including its primary conflict involving questions of national identity, race, and morality; Democratic voters loss of faith in the political system; and Trump's success with previously Democratic populists. - TTR

It's interesting to speculate on what might have been. But it's much more important for what is yet to be. The country needs a new political majority, one that is sufficiently appealing to the great majority of Americans that the major political parties must heed their views and begin working together to craft policies that are acceptable to that majority. The matrix makes it clear that the political center of the electorate is probably somewhat more redistributionist (i.e., left-leaning on the left-right continuum) and considerably less individualist (order-leaning on the freedom-order continuum) than all of us — elected officials not least of all — have been inclined to believe.

If we want politicians to leave their ideologies at home when they go to the office to conduct the people's business, we will have to make it clear that we are as willing to work together despite our partisan differences as we want them to be. In other words, we are going to have to think and act in a more transpartisan fashion than we are doing currently. The question for us is, how shall we accomplish that? *The Transpartisan Review* is a place for all of us to discuss this vital matter.



Comment from the Creators of the Transpartisan Matrix

In this article, Michael Briand expands the Transpartisan Matrix concept in three ways. First, he arrays 2016 voting data organized by Lee Drutman on the Transpartisan four-quadrant matrix, placing the left/right continuum into a larger freedom/order context. Second, he describes how this matrix-created context allows, issue-by-issue, ‘nuance’ to play a greater role in our political debate. Third, he describes how this more robust context, shaded by nuance, creates/discovers/reveals opportunities for collaboration across conventional left/right constraints.

We think this expansion of the Matrix concept uncovers some additional useful information. First, the Drutman 2016 data includes only voters. We believe that the empty quadrant—free-right in this rendering of the data on the Transpartisan Matrix—represents the 44% did-not-vote constituency. Recognizing this 44% of the age-eligible voting public underscores the degree to which the society at large is moving in the individual freedom direction. This recognition, in turn, makes more vivid the degree and cause of separation between the ‘public’ and the ‘politicians.’

Second, in our essay “The Transpartisan Effect” in this issue of the *Transpartisan Review*, we report New York Times columnist Ross Douthat’s comment that the Lee Drutman data array reveals a voter consensus that sits ‘in the place where Trump won voters who had previously voted for Obama.’ We see Obama/Trump voters as part of a transpartisan public—not bound by party or ideology. They respond to authenticity, charisma, and apparent independence, all of which are subjective and difficult to count or poll for. Their subjectivity makes them wildcards. That transpartisan public also includes the 44% nonvoters.

Finally, we believe that posting the voting data on the Transpartisan Matrix broadens consideration from what Lee Drutman calls ‘social’ issues to what Ross Douthat, reporting on Drutman’s data Matrix, calls ‘moral’ issues. This shift clarifies the subjective aspects of the current political environment. As Michael Briand points out, the ‘Freedom-Order’ axis addresses moral issues, people’s primary needs and personal identities. Broadly speaking, the continuum addresses what is right and wrong, fair and unfair, proper and improper—all subjective concerns.

When Briand rotates the Lee Drutman Matrix and arrays the 2016 voting data on the Transpartisan Matrix, he creates an opportunity to make nuanced observations on the subjective aspects of the entire voting eligible population, including the 44% did-not-vote cohort. This array offers a blueprint for leadership for any current officeholder and for all out-of-office challengers, resisters, and ambivalents. It points to a significant portion—50 to 70%—of the voting eligible population as disinterested in the partisan arguments that currently dominate our political debate.

Creating an agenda that intentionally avoids left/right conventionalities offers promise to any political leader clever and bold enough to run with it. For a taste of how such an approach might work, see Emmanuel Macron, President of France, and some of his [news](#), [speeches](#), and [biography](#). Opportunity knocks. A blueprint points the way. Is there a leader in the house?

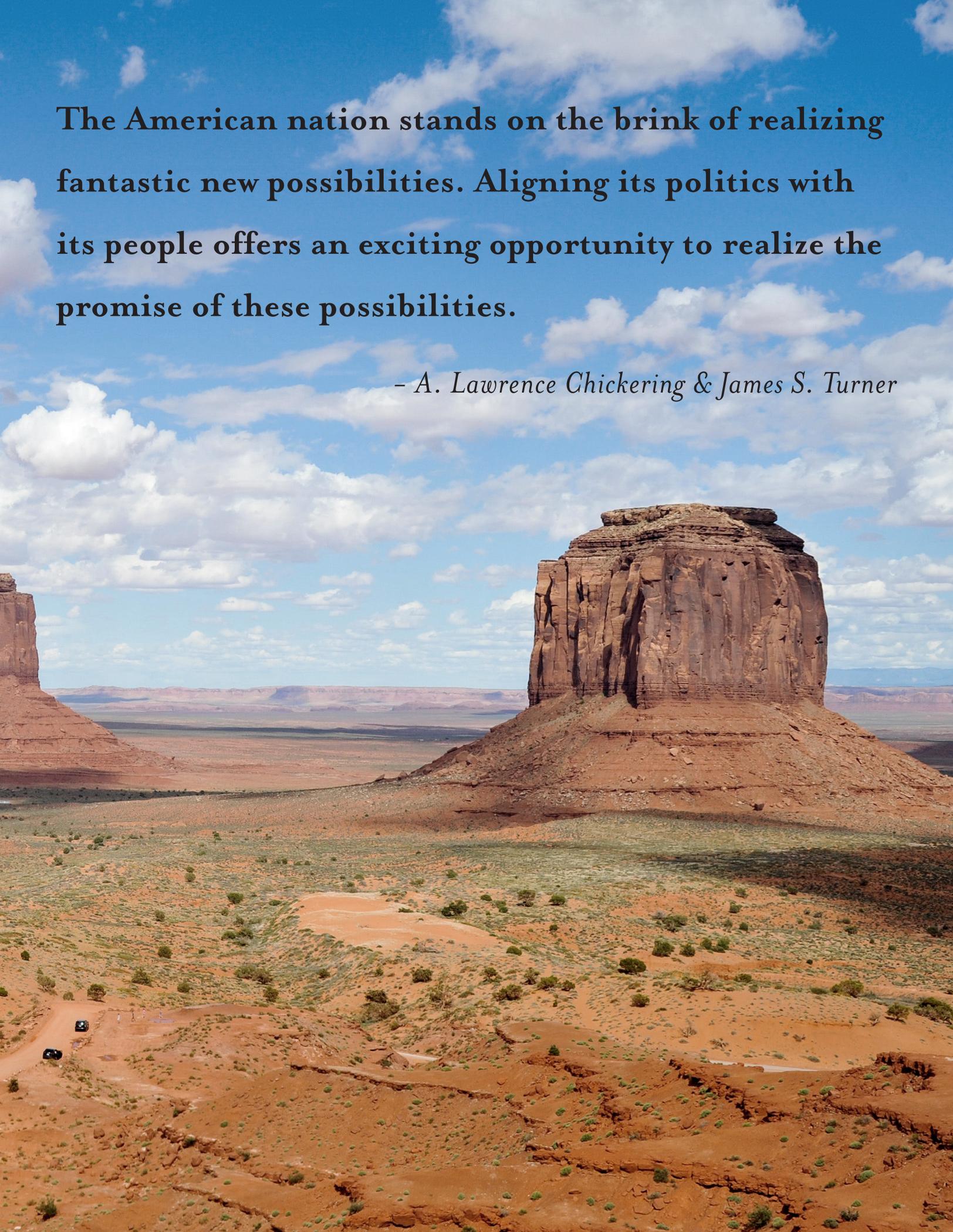
- A. Lawrence Chickering & James S. Turner

ENDNOTES FOR “NOT JUST AN ABSTRACTION ANYMORE”

1. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/data/turnout.php>
2. ‘Tens of millions of registered voters did not cast a ballot in the 2016 presidential election, and the share who cited a “dislike of the candidates or campaign issues” as their main reason for not participating reached a new high of 25 percent.’ Lopez, Gustavo and Flores, Antonio. ‘Dislike of candidates or campaign issues was most common reason for not voting in 2016’. Pew Research Center. June 1, 2017. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/06/01/dislike-of-candidates-or-campaign-issues-was-most-common-reason-for-not-voting-in-2016/>
3. “[A] consensus politics based around what voters actually want...would be very moderately culturally conservative and very moderately economically liberal, and it would [occupy] the place where Trump won voters who had previously voted for Obama. ...The task of statesmanship should be to reconcile the wisdom in the elite view (of which there is some, here and there) with the wisdom of the wider public. Douthat, Ross. “In Search of the American Center.” The New York Times. June 21, 2017. https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/21/opinion/in-search-of-the-american-center.html?emc=edit_th_20170621&nl=todaysheadlines&nid=57317676&r=0
4. Gilens, Martin, and Page, Benjamin. ‘Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens.’ Journal of the American Political Science Association. 2014. https://scholar.princeton.edu/sites/default/files/mgilens/files/gilens_and_page_2014_testing_theories_of_american_politics.doc.pdf See also Cassidy, John. ‘Is America an Oligarchy?’ The New Yorker. April 19, 2014. <http://www.newyorker.com/news/john-cassidy/is-america-an-oligarchy>
5. Gidfar, Mansur. ‘20 years of data reveals that Congress doesn’t care what you think.’ <http://www.upworthy.com/20-years-of-data-reveals-that-congress-doesnt-care-what-you-think>
6. It can be argued that, as a nation, we have entered an age that could not have been imagined by the Founders, and that, in consequence, our political institutions are showing signs of age and no longer can produce, reliably and effectively, the outcomes they were designed to achieve.
7. Drutman, Lee. “Tensions Between and Within the Two Parties.” June 2017. <https://www.voterstudygroup.org/reports/2016-elections/political-divisions-in-2016-and-beyond>

The American nation stands on the brink of realizing fantastic new possibilities. Aligning its politics with its people offers an exciting opportunity to realize the promise of these possibilities.

- A. Lawrence Chickering & James S. Turner





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