

# **The Next Chapter**

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(Shortwave broadcast only: Roll 'Simple Gifts' id)

(Announcer:) The following program is a production of the North American Service of Radio Alexandria. (Begin domestic broadcast: Roll open theme, then under for:)

Hello Team Humanity. I'm Roland B. Hunt & you're listening to The Next Chapter. (Theme up, then under for:)

The Next Chapter looks at where we seem to be headed as a species on this little blue planet, do we really want to go there, & what are our options? Today I'm going to begin a series of programs on the deep political, economic, and social divisions, not only in this country but around the world and what those divisions may mean for the future of humanity. This week we'll kick off the series with an extended conversation featuring American political commentators David Brooks and Gretchen Carlson. Next week we go global with a two part interview with the controversial Israeli historian Yuval Harari.

(Pause for stations airing 4 min. newscast.)

The Next Chapter is about ideas. It's not about any particular religion, or joining some movement or cause, or buying gold coins or land in Belize. But if you want intellectual adventure, if you like trying to answer tough questions & solve tough problems, you've come to the right place. & if you go away from this broadcast without feeling challenged or even annoyed by some of what you've heard then I have failed in my effort to rattle cages & stimulate original thinking. We live in a dangerous age but also are full of opportunity to advance humankind to our fullest potential. Let's seize that opportunity while we still can.

Before we get started let's quickly review the ground rules we follow on the Next Chapter. First, we don't do religion on this program. I'm not a theologian & make no claims to be wise. Everyone is welcome here though, whether you're a fundamentalist believer, militant atheist, or anywhere in between.

Second, The Next Chapter doesn't pay much attention to conspiracy theories, Big Foot, UFOs, or who killed JFK. I keep an open mind on these subjects & once in a while I might touch on them but generally I let George Noory, Alex Jones, & others carry the black briefcase on such matters.

Third, we have nothing to sell here. No books, no MREs, no gold coins, no land in Central America. We might look at the pros & cons of owning gold, or if you're thinking of moving overseas, what factors you need to consider. But in the end it's up to you to do your own homework & make your own decisions.

Fourth & last, The Next Chapter is neither for or against any government. After living & working for much of my adult life in more than a dozen poor & often war-torn nations, I've come to the conclusion that all governments, ours included, are going to do whatever it takes to keep

themselves in power. That's what govern-ments do. What we as individuals do tho is up to us, not blind, impersonal historical forces...or men in black.

Unlike our ancient ancestors who lived day to day & had no way to anticipate mega-disasters, now we not only anticipate & plan for them, we humans can & hav built vast underground bunkers in many countries that wil allow thousands of humans to live underground for years until conditions on the surface improve. The US has them. So do the Russians & the Chinese.

Switzerland reportedly has bunkers that can shelter its entire populashun of eight milyun for up to two years. That kind of capability is a game changer but it doesn't alter the reality that our species has cum up against som extremely dangerous problems for which we curently appear to hav no solushuns. Weapons of mass destrucshun, bioterrorism, & mass unemployment caused by the rise of inteligent machines ar just three examples.

So if for whatever reason modern civilizashun does pass into history, there wil be survivors. The question is, wil those who cum after us be able to learn from our mistakes & not repeat them?

The Next Chapter is for the elite but in this case the elite is self selecting. It's anywun who enjoys thinking deeply about serious issues. som liseners may find som of the subjects we talk about on this broadcast disturbing but u can be sure that elites in governments & private research institutes around the world ar also thinking about these issues. Our goal is to bring as many people as posible into the conversashun. In a complex technological society we can't hope to meet tomorrow's chalenges unles we understand them. (pause for stations carrying a newscast to rejoin the program)

Today we're going to lisen to an extended discushun between TED curator Chris Anderson & political comentators Grechen Carlson & David Brooks as they analyze the deep political divishuns that afflict our society. The talk was recorded the day after President Trump delivered his State of the Union address to Congress.

(Insert: Carlson/Brooks TED talk "Welcome... ..Thank you." )(Interview transcript in standard English)

Chris Anderson: Welcome to this next edition of TED Dialogues. We're trying to do some bridging here today. You know, the American dream has inspired millions of people around the world for many years. Today, I think, you can say that America is divided, perhaps more than ever, and the divisions seem to be getting worse. It's actually really hard for people on different sides to even have a conversation. People almost feel... disgusted with each other. Some families can't even speak to each other right now. Our purpose in this dialogue today is to try to do something about that, to try to have a different kind of conversation, to do some listening, some thinking, some understanding. And I have two people with us to help us do that.

They're not going to come at this hammer and tong against each other. This is not like cable news. This is two people who have both spent a lot of their working life in the political center or right of the center. They've immersed themselves in conservative worldviews, if you like. They know that space very well. And we're going to explore together how to think about what is happening right now, and whether we can find new ways to bridge and just to have wiser, more connected conversations.

With me, first of all, Gretchen Carlson, who has spent a decade working at Fox News, hosting "Fox and Friends" and then "The Real Story," before taking a courageous stance in filing sexual

harassment claims against Roger Ailes, which eventually led to his departure from Fox News. David Brooks, who has earned the wrath of many of [The New York Times's] left-leaning readers because of his conservative views, and more recently, perhaps, some of the right-leaning readers because of his criticism of some aspects of Trump. Yet, his columns are usually the top one, two or three most-read content of the day because they're brilliant, because they bring psychology and social science to providing understanding for what's going on. So without further ado, a huge welcome to Gretchen and David. Come and join me.

(Applause)

So, Gretchen. Sixty-three million Americans voted for Donald Trump. Why did they do this?

Gretchen Carlson: There are a lot of reasons, in my mind, why it happened. I mean, I think it was a movement of sorts, but it started long ago. It didn't just happen overnight. "Anger" would be the first word that I would think of -- anger with nothing being done in Washington, anger about not being heard. I think there was a huge swath of the population that feels like Washington never listens to them, you know, a good part of the middle of America, not just the coasts, and he was somebody they felt was listening to their concerns. So I think those two issues would be the main reason. I have to throw in there also celebrity. I think that had a huge impact on Donald Trump becoming president.

CA: Was the anger justified?

David Brooks: Yeah, I think so. In 2015 and early 2016, I wrote about 30 columns with the following theme: don't worry, Donald Trump will never be the Republican nominee.

(Laughter)

And having done that and gotten that so wrong, I decided to spend the ensuing year just out in Trumpworld, and I found a lot of economic dislocation. I ran into a woman in West Virginia who was going to a funeral for her mom. She said, "The nice thing about being Catholic is we don't have to speak, and that's good, because we're not word people." That phrase rung in my head: word people. A lot of us in the TED community are word people, but if you're not, the economy has not been angled toward you, and so 11 million men, for example, are out of the labor force because those jobs are done away. A lot of social injury. You used to be able to say, "I'm not the richest person in the world, I'm not the most famous, but my neighbors can count on me and I get some dignity out of that." And because of celebritification or whatever, if you're not rich or famous, you feel invisible. And a lot of moral injury, sense of feeling betrayed, and frankly, in this country, we almost have one success story, which is you go to college, get a white-collar job, and you're a success, and if you don't fit in that formula, you feel like you're not respected. And so that accumulation of things -- and when I talked to Trump voters and still do, I found most of them completely realistic about his failings, but they said, this is my shot.

GC: And yet I predicted that he would be the nominee, because I've known him for 27 years. He's a master marketer, and one of the things he did extremely well that President Obama also did extremely well, was simplifying the message, simplifying down to phrases and to a populist message. Even if he can't achieve it, it sounded good. And many people latched on to that simplicity again. It's something they could grasp onto: "I get that. I want that. That sounds fantastic." And I remember when he used to come on my show originally, before "The

Apprentice" was even "The Apprentice," and he'd say it was the number one show on TV. I'd say back to him, "No, it's not." And he would say, "Yes it is, Gretchen." And I would say, "No it's not." But people at home would see that, and they'd be like, "Wow, I should be watching the number one show on TV." And -- lo and behold -- it became the number one show on TV. So he had this, I've seen this ability in him to be the master marketer.

CA: It's puzzling to a lot of people on the left that so many women voted for him, despite some of his comments.

GC: I wrote a column about this for Time Motto, saying that I really believe that lot of people put on blinders, and maybe for the first time, some people decided that policies they believed in and being heard and not being invisible anymore was more important to them than the way in which he had acted or acts as a human. And so human dignity -- whether it would be the dust-up about the disabled reporter, or what happened in that audiotape with Billy Bush and the way in which he spoke about women -- they put that aside and pretended as if they hadn't seen that or heard that, because to them, policies were more important.

CA: Right, so just because someone voted for Trump, it's not blind adherence to everything that he's said or stood for.

GC: No. I heard a lot of people that would say to me, "Wow, I just wish he would shut up before the election. If he would just stay quiet, he'd get elected."

CA: And so, maybe for people on the left there's a trap there, to sort of despise or just be baffled by the support, assuming that it's for some of the unattractive features. Actually, maybe they're supporting him despite those, because they see something exciting. They see a man of action. They see the choking hold of government being thrown off in some way and they're excited by that.

GC: But don't forget we saw that on the left as well -- Bernie Sanders. So this is one of the commonalities that I think we can talk about today, "The Year of the Outsider," David -- right? And even though Bernie Sanders has been in Congress for a long time, he was deemed an outsider this time. And so there was anger on the left as well, and so many people were in favor of Bernie Sanders. So I see it as a commonality. People who like Trump, people who like Bernie Sanders, they were liking different policies, but the underpinning was anger.

CA: David, there's often this narrative, then, that the sole explanation for Trump's victory and his rise is his tapping into anger in a very visceral way. But you've written a bit about that it's actually more than that, that there's a worldview that's being worked on here. Could you talk about that?

DB: I would say he understood what, frankly, I didn't, which is what debate we were having. And so I'd grown up starting with Reagan, and it was the big government versus small government debate. It was Barry Goldwater versus George McGovern, and that was the debate we had been having for a generation. It was: Democrats wanted to use government to enhance equality, Republicans wanted to limit government to enhance freedom. That was the debate. He understood what I think the two major parties did not, which was that's not the debate anymore. The debate is now open versus closed. On one side are those who have the tailwinds of globalization and the meritocracy blowing at their back, and they tend to favor open trade, open

borders, open social mores, because there are so many opportunities. On the other side are those who feel the headwinds of globalization and the meritocracy just blasting in their faces, and they favor closed trade, closed borders, closed social mores, because they just want some security. And so he was right on that fundamental issue, and people were willing to overlook a lot to get there. And so he felt that sense of security.

We're speaking the morning after Trump's joint session speech. There are three traditional groups in the Republican Party. There are the foreign policies hawks who believe in America as global policeman. Trump totally repudiated that view. Second, there was the social conservatives who believed in religious liberty, pro-life, prayer in schools. He totally ignored that. There was not a single mention of a single social conservative issue. And then there were the fiscal hawks, the people who wanted to cut down on the national debt, Tea Party, cut the size of government. He's expanding the size of government! Here's a man who has single-handedly revolutionized a major American party because he understood where the debate was headed before other people. And then guys like Steve Bannon come in and give him substance to his impulses.

CA: And so take that a bit further, and maybe expand a bit more on your insights into Steve Bannon's worldview. Because he's sometimes tarred in very simple terms as this dangerous, racist, xenophobic, anger-sparking person. There's more to the story; that is perhaps an unfair simplification.

DB: I think that part is true, but there's another part that's probably true, too. He's part of a global movement. It's like being around Marxists in 1917. There's him here, there's the UKIP party, there's the National Front in France, there's Putin, there's a Turkish version, a Philippine version. So we have to recognize that this is a global intellectual movement. And it believes that wisdom and virtue is not held in individual conversation and civility the way a lot of us in the enlightenment side of the world do. It's held in -- the German word is the "volk" -- in the people, in the common, instinctive wisdom of the plain people. And the essential virtue of that people is always being threatened by outsiders. And he's got a strategy for how to get there. He's got a series of policies to bring the people up and repudiate the outsiders, whether those outsiders are Islam, Mexicans, the media, the coastal elites... And there's a whole worldview there; it's a very coherent worldview. I sort of have more respect for him. I loathe what he stands for and I think he's wrong on the substance, but it's interesting to see someone with a set of ideas find a vehicle, Donald Trump, and then try to take control of the White House in order to advance his viewpoint.

CA: So it's almost become, like, that the core question of our time now is: Can you be patriotic but also have a global mindset? Are these two things implacably opposed to each other? I mean, a lot of conservatives and, to the extent that it's a different category, a lot of Trump supporters, are infuriated by the coastal elites and the globalists because they see them as, sort of, not cheering for America, not embracing fully American values. I mean, have you seen that in your conversations with people, in your understanding of their mindset?

GC: I do think that there's a huge difference between -- I hate to put people in categories, but, Middle America versus people who live on the coasts. It's an entirely different existence. And I grew up in Minnesota, so I have an understanding of Middle America, and I've never forgotten it. And maybe that's why I have an understanding of what happened here, because those people often feel like nobody's listening to them, and that we're only concentrating on California and

New York. And so I think that was a huge reason why Trump was elected. I mean, these people felt like they were being heard. Whether or not patriotism falls into that, I'm not sure about that. I do know one thing: a lot of things Trump talked about last night are not conservative things. Had Hillary Clinton gotten up and given that speech, not one Republican would have stood up to applaud. I mean, he's talking about spending a trillion dollars on infrastructure. That is not a conservative viewpoint. He talked about government-mandated maternity leave. A lot of women may love that; it's not a conservative viewpoint. So it's fascinating that people who loved what his message was during the campaign, I'm not sure -- how do you think they'll react to that?

DB: I should say I grew up in Lower Manhattan, in the triangle between ABC Carpets, the Strand Bookstore and The Odeon restaurant.

(Laughter)

GC: Come to Minnesota sometime!

(Laughter)

CA: You are a card-carrying member of the coastal elite, my man. But what did you make of the speech last night? It seemed to be a move to a more moderate position, on the face of it.

DB: Yeah, I thought it was his best speech, and it took away the freakishness of him. I do think he's a moral freak, and I think he'll be undone by that fact, the fact that he just doesn't know anything about anything and is uncurious about it.

(Laughter)

But if you take away these minor flaws, I think we got to see him at his best, and it was revealing for me to see him at his best, because to me, it exposed a central contradiction that he's got to confront, that a lot of what he's doing is offering security. So, "I'm ordering closed borders, I'm going to secure the world for you, for my people." But then if you actually look at a lot of his economic policies, like health care reform, which is about private health care accounts, that's not security, that's risk. Educational vouchers: that's risk. Deregulation: that's risk. There's really a contradiction between the security of the mindset and a lot of the policies, which are very risk-oriented. And what I would say, especially having spent this year, the people in rural Minnesota, in New Mexico -- they've got enough risk in their lives. And so they're going to say, "No thank you." And I think his health care repeal will fail for that reason.

CA: But despite the criticisms you just made of him, it does at least seem that he's listening to a surprisingly wide range of voices; it's not like everyone is coming from the same place. And maybe that leads to a certain amount of chaos and confusion, but --

GC: I actually don't think he's listening to a wide range of voices. I think he's listening to very few people. That's just my impression of it. I believe that some of the things he said last night had Ivanka all over them. So I believe he was listening to her before that speech. And he was Teleprompter Trump last night, as opposed to Twitter Trump. And that's why, before we came out here, I said, "We better check Twitter to see if anything's changed." And also I think you have to keep in mind that because he's such a unique character, what was the bar that we were expecting last night? Was it here or here or here? And so he comes out and gives a looking political speech, and everyone goes, "Wow! He can do it." It just depends on which direction he goes.

DB: Yeah, and we're trying to build bridges here, and especially for an audience that may have contempt for Trump, it's important to say, no, this is a real thing. But as I try my best to go an hour showing respect for him, my thyroid is surging, because I think the oddities of his character really are condemnatory and are going to doom him.

CA: Your reputation is as a conservative. People would you describe you as right of center, and yet here you are with this visceral reaction against him and some of what he stands for. I mean, I'm -- how do you have a conversation? The people who support him, on evidence so far, are probably pretty excited. He's certainly shown real engagement in a lot of what he promised to do, and there is a strong desire to change the system radically. People hate what government has become and how it's left them out.

GC: I totally agree with that, but I think that when he was proposing a huge government program last night that we used to call the bad s-word, "stimulus," I find it completely ironic. To spend a trillion dollars on something -- that is not a conservative viewpoint. Then again, I don't really believe he's a Republican.

DB: And I would say, as someone who identifies as conservative: first of all, to be conservative is to believe in the limitations of politics. Samuel Johnson said, "Of all the things that human hearts endure, how few are those that kings can cause and cure." Politics is a limited realm; what matters most is the moral nature of the society. And so I have to think character comes first, and a man who doesn't pass the character threshold cannot be a good president. Second, I'm the kind of conservative who -- I harken back to Alexander Hamilton, who was a Latino hip-hop star from the heights --

(Laughter)

but his definition of America was very future-oriented. He was a poor boy from the islands who had this rapid and amazing rise to success, and he wanted government to give poor boys and girls like him a chance to succeed, using limited but energetic government to create social mobility. For him and for Lincoln and for Teddy Roosevelt, the idea of America was the idea of the future. We may have division and racism and slavery in our past, but we have a common future. The definition of America that Steve Bannon stands for is backwards-looking. It's nostalgic; it's for the past. And that is not traditionally the American identity. That's traditionally, frankly, the Russian identity. That's how they define virtue. And so I think it is a fundamental and foundational betrayal of what conservatism used to stand for.

CA: Well, I'd like actually like to hear from you, and if we see some comments coming in from some of you, we'll -- oh, well here's one right now. Jeffrey Alan Carnegie: I've tried to convince progressive friends that they need to understand what motivates Trump supporters, yet many of them have given up trying to understand in the face of what they perceive as lies, selfishness and hatred. How would you reach out to such people, the Tea Party of the left, to try to bridge this divide?

GC: I actually think there are commonalities in anger, as I expressed earlier. So I think you can come to the table, both being passionate about something. So at least you care. And I would like to believe -- the c-word has also become a horrible word -- "compromise," right? So you have the far left and the far right, and compromise -- forget it. Those groups don't want to even think about

it. But you have a huge swath of voters, myself included, who are registered independents, like 40 percent of us, right? So there is a huge faction of America that wants to see change and wants to see people come together. It's just that we have to figure out how to do that.

CA: So let's talk about that for a minute, because we're having these TED Dialogues, we're trying to bridge. There's a lot of people out there, right now, perhaps especially on the left, who think this is a terrible idea, that actually, the only moral response to the great tyranny that may be about to emerge in America is to resist it at every stage, is to fight it tooth and nail, it's a mistake to try and do this. Just fight! Is there a case for that?

DB: It depends what "fight" means. If it means literal fighting, then no. If it means marching, well maybe marching to raise consciousness, that seems fine. But if you want change in this country, we do it through parties and politics. We organize parties, and those parties are big, diverse, messy coalitions, and we engage in politics, and politics is always morally unsatisfying because it's always a bunch of compromises. But politics is essentially a competition between partial truths. The Trump people have a piece of the truth in America. I think Trump himself is the wrong answer to the right question, but they have some truth, and it's truth found in the epidemic of opiates around the country, it's truth found in the spread of loneliness, it's the truth found in people whose lives are inverted. They peaked professionally at age 30, and it's all been downhill since. And so, understanding that doesn't take fighting, it takes conversation and then asking, "What are we going to replace Trump with?"

GC: But you saw fighting last night, even at the speech, because you saw the Democratic women who came and wore white to honor the suffragette movement. I remember back during the campaign where some Trump supporters wanted to actually get rid of the amendment that allowed us to vote as women. It was like, what? So I don't know if that's the right way to fight. It was interesting, because I was looking in the audience, trying to see Democratic women who didn't wear white. So there's a lot going on there, and there's a lot of ways to fight that are not necessarily doing that.

CA: I mean, one of the key questions, to me, is: The people who voted for Trump but, if you like, are more in the center, like they're possibly amenable to persuasion -- are they more likely to be persuaded by seeing a passionate uprising of people saying, "No, no, no, you can't!" or will that actually piss them off and push them away?

DB: How are any of us persuaded? Am I going to persuade you by saying, "Well, you're kind of a bigot, you're supporting bigotry, you're supporting sexism. You're a primitive, fascistic rise from some authoritarian past"? That's probably not going to be too persuasive to you. And so the way any of us are persuaded is by: a) some basic show of respect for the point of view, and saying, "I think this guy is not going to get you where you need to go." And there are two phrases you've heard over and over again, wherever you go in the country. One, the phrase "flyover country." And that's been heard for years, but I would say this year, I heard it almost on an hourly basis, a sense of feeling invisible. And then the sense a sense of the phrase "political correctness." Just that rebellion: "They're not even letting us say what we think." And I teach at Yale. The narrowing of debate is real.

CA: So you would say this is a trap that liberals have fallen into by celebrating causes they really believe in, often expressed through the language of "political correctness." They have done



damage. They have pushed people away.

DB: I would say a lot of the argument, though, with "descent to fascism," "authoritarianism" -- that just feels over-the-top to people. And listen, I've written eight million anti-Trump columns, but it is a problem, especially for the coastal media, that every time he does something slightly wrong, we go to 11, and we're at 11 every day. And it just strains credibility at some point.

CA: Crying wolf a little too loud and a little too early. But there may be a time when we really do have to cry wolf.

GC: But see -- one of the most important things to me is how the conservative media handles Trump. Will they call him out when things are not true, or will they just go along with it? To me, that is what is essential in this entire discussion, because when you have followers of somebody who don't really care if he tells the truth or not, that can be very dangerous. So to me, it's: How is the conservative media going to respond to it? I mean, you've been calling them out. But how will other forms of conservative media deal with that as we move forward?

DB: It's all shifted, though. The conservative media used to be Fox or Charles Krauthammer or George Will. They're no longer the conservative media. Now there's another whole set of institutions further right, which is Breitbart and Infowars, Alex Jones, Laura Ingraham, and so they're the ones who are now his base, not even so much Fox.

CA: My last question for the time being is just on this question of the truth. I mean, it's one of the scariest things to people right now, that there is no agreement, nationally, on what is true. I've never seen anything like it, where facts are so massively disputed. Your whole newspaper, sir, is delivering fake news every day.

DB: And failing.

(Laughter)

CA: And failing. My commiserations. But is there any path whereby we can start to get some kind of consensus, to believe the same things? Can online communities play a role here? How do we fix this?

GC: See, I understand how that happened. That's another groundswell kind of emotion that was going on in the middle of America and not being heard, in thinking that the mainstream media was biased. There's a difference, though, between being biased and being fake. To me, that is a very important distinction in this conversation. So let's just say that there was some bias in the mainstream media. OK. So there are ways to try and mend that. But what Trump's doing is nuclearizing that and saying, "Look, we're just going to call all of that fake." That's where it gets dangerous.

CA: Do you think enough of his supporters have a greater loyalty to the truth than to any ... Like, the principle of not supporting something that is demonstrably not true actually matters, so there will be a correction at some point?

DB: I think the truth eventually comes out. So for example, Donald Trump has based a lot of his economic policy on this supposition that Americans have lost manufacturing jobs because they've been stolen by the Chinese. That is maybe 13 percent of the jobs that left. The truth is that 87 percent of the jobs were replaced by technology. That is just the truth. And so as a result, when he

says, "I'm going to close TPP and all the jobs will come roaring back," they will not come roaring back. So that is an actual fact, in my belief. And --

(Laughter)

GC: But I'm saying what his supporters think is the truth, no matter how many times you might say that, they still believe him.

DB: But eventually either jobs will come back or they will not come back, and at that point, either something will work or it doesn't work, and it doesn't work or not work because of great marketing, it works because it actually addresses a real problem and so I happen to think the truth will out.

CA: If you've got a question, please raise your hand here.

Yael Eisenstat: I'll speak into the box. My name's Yael Eisenstat. I hear a lot of this talk about how we all need to start talking to each other more and understanding each other more, and I've even written about this, published on this subject as well, but now today I keep hearing liberals -- yes, I live in New York, I can be considered a liberal -- we sit here and self-analyze: What did we do to not understand the Rust Belt? Or: What can we do to understand Middle America better? And what I'd like to know: Have you seen any attempts or conversations from Middle America of what can I do to understand the so-called coastal elites better? Because I'm just offended as being put in a box as a coastal elite as someone in Middle America is as being considered a flyover state and not listened to.

CA: There you go, I can hear Facebook cheering as you --

(Laughter)

DB: I would say -- and this is someone who has been conservative all my adult life -- when you grow up conservative, you learn to speak both languages. Because if I'm going to listen to music, I'm not going to listen to Ted Nugent. So a lot of my favorite rock bands are all on the left. If I'm going to go to a school, I'm going probably to school where the culture is liberal. If I'm going to watch a sitcom or a late-night comedy show, it's going to be liberal. If I'm going to read a good newspaper, it'll be the New York Times. As a result, you learn to speak both languages. And that actually, at least for a number of years, when I started at National Review with William F. Buckley, it made us sharper, because we were used to arguing against people every day. The problem now that's happened is you have ghettoization on the right and you can live entirely in rightworld, so as a result, the quality of argument on the right has diminished, because you're not in the other side all the time. But I do think if you're living in Minnesota or Iowa or Arizona, the coastal elites make themselves aware to you, so you know that language as well, but it's not the reverse.

CA: But what does Middle America not get about coastal elites? So the critique is, you are not dealing with the real problems. There's a feeling of a snobbishness, an elitism that is very off-putting. What are they missing? If you could plant one piece of truth from the mindset of someone in this room, for example, what would you say to them?

DB: Just how insanely wonderful we are.

(Laughter)

No, I reject the category. The problem with populism is the same problem with elitism. It's just a prejudice on the basis of probably an over-generalized social class distinction which is too simplistic to apply in reality. Those of us in New York know there are some people in New York who are completely awesome, and some people who are pathetic, and if you live in Iowa, some people are awesome and some people are pathetic. It's not a question of what degree you have or where you happen to live in the country. The distinction is just a crude simplification to arouse political power.

GC: But I would encourage people to watch a television news show or read a column that they normally wouldn't. So if you are a Trump supporter, watch the other side for a day, because you need to come out of the bubble if you're ever going to have a conversation. And both sides -- so if you're a liberal, then watch something that's very conservative. Read a column that is not something you would normally read, because then you gain perspective of what the other side is thinking, and to me, that's a start of coming together. I worry about the same thing you worry about, these bubbles. I think if you only watch certain entities, you have no idea what the rest of the world is talking about.

DB: I think not only watching, being part of an organization that meets at least once a month that puts you in direct contact with people completely unlike yourself is something we all have a responsibility for. I may get this a little wrong, but I think of the top-selling automotive models in this country, I think the top three or four are all pickup trucks. So ask yourself: How many people do I know who own a pickup truck? And it could be very few or zero for a lot of people. And that's sort of a warning sign kind of a problem. Where can I join a club where I'll have a lot in common with a person who drives a pickup truck because we have a common interest in whatever?

CA: And so the internet is definitely contributing to this. A question here from Chris Ajemian: "How do you feel structure of communications, especially the prevalence of social media and individualized content, can be used to bring together a political divide, instead of just filing communities into echo chambers?" I mean, it looks like Facebook and Google, since the election, are working hard on this question. They're trying to change the algorithms so that they don't amplify fake news to the extent that it happened last time round. Do you see any other promising signs of ...?

GC: ... or amplify one side of the equation.

CA: Exactly.

GC: I think that was the constant argument from the right, that social media and the internet in general was putting articles towards the top that were not their worldview. I think, again, that fed into the anger. It fed into the anger of: "You're pushing something that's not what I believe." But social media has obviously changed everything, and I think Trump is the example of Twitter changing absolutely everything. And from his point of view, he's reaching the American people without a filter, which he believes the media is.

CA: Question from the audience.

Destiny: Hi. I'm Destiny. I have a question regarding political correctness, and I'm curious: When did political correctness become synonymous with silencing, versus a way that we speak about

other people to show them respect and preserve their dignity?

GC: Well, I think the conservative media really pounded this issue for the last 10 years. I think that they really, really spent a lot of time talking about political correctness, and how people should have the ability to say what they think. Another reason why Trump became so popular: because he says what he thinks. It also makes me think about the fact that I do believe there are a lot of people in America who agree with Steve Bannon, but they would never say it publicly, and so voting for Trump gave them the opportunity to agree with it silently.

DB: On the issue of immigration, it's a legitimate point of view that we have too many immigrants in the country, that it's economically costly.

CA: That we have too many --

DB: Immigrants in the country, especially from Britain.

(Laughter)

GC: I kind of like the British accent, OK?

CA: I apologize. America, I am sorry.

(Laughter)

I'll go now.

DB: But it became sort of impermissible to say that, because it was a sign that somehow you must be a bigot of some sort. So the political correctness was not only cracking down on speech that we would all find completely offensive, it was cracking down on some speech that was legitimate, and then it was turning speech and thought into action and treating it as a crime, and people getting fired and people thrown out of schools, and there were speech codes written. Now there are these diversity teams, where if you say something that somebody finds offensive, like, "Smoking is really dangerous," you can say "You're insulting my group," and the team from the administration will come down into your dorm room and put thought police upon you. And so there has been a genuine narrowing of what is permissible to say. And some of it is legitimate. There are certain words that there should be some social sanction against, but some of it was used to enforce a political agenda.

CA: So is that a project you would urge on liberals, if you like -- progressives -- to rethink the ground rules around political correctness and accept a little more uncomfortable language in certain circumstances? Can you see that being solved to an extent that others won't be so offended?

DB: I mean, most American universities, especially elite universities, are overwhelmingly on the left, and there's just an ease of temptation to use your overwhelming cultural power to try to enforce some sort of thought that you think is right and correct thought. So, be a little more self-suspicious of, are we doing that? And second, my university, the University of Chicago, sent out this letter saying, we will have no safe spaces. There will be no critique of micro-aggression. If you get your feelings hurt, well, welcome to the world of education. I do think that policy -- which is being embraced by a lot of people on the left, by the way -- is just a corrective to what's happened.

CA: So here's a question from Karen Holloway: How do we foster an American culture that's forward-looking, like Hamilton, that expects and deals with change, rather than wanting to have everything go back to some fictional past? That's an easy question, right?

GC: Well, I'm still a believer in the American dream, and I think what we can teach our children is the basics, which is that hard work and believing in yourself in America, you can achieve whatever you want. I was told that every single day. When I got in the real world, I was like, wow, that's maybe not always so true. But I still believe in that. Maybe I'm being too optimistic. So I still look towards the future for that to continue.

DB: I think you're being too optimistic.

GC: You do?

DB: The odds of an American young person exceeding their parents' salary -- a generation ago, like 86 percent did it. Now 51 percent do it. There's just been a problem in social mobility in the country.

CA: You've written that this entire century has basically been a disaster, that the age of sunny growth is over and we're in deep trouble.

DB: Yeah, I mean, we averaged, in real terms, population-adjusted, two or three percent growth for 50 years, and now we've had less than one percent growth. And so there's something seeping out. And so if I'm going to tell people that they should take risks, one of the things we're seeing is a rapid decline in mobility, the number of people who are moving across state lines, and that's especially true among millennials. It's young people that are moving less. So how do we give people the security from which they can take risk? And I'm a big believer in attachment theory of raising children, and attachment theory is based on the motto that all of life is a series of daring adventures from a secure base. Have you parents given you a secure base? And as a society, we do not have a secure base, and we won't get to that "Hamilton," risk-taking, energetic ethos until we can supply a secure base.

CA: So I wonder whether there's ground here to create almost like a shared agenda, a bridging conversation, on the one hand recognizing that there is this really deep problem that the system, the economic system that we built, seems to be misfiring right now. Second, that maybe, if you're right that it's not all about immigrants, it's probably more about technology, if you could win that argument, that de-emphasizes what seems to me the single most divisive territory between Trump supporters and others, which is around the role of the other. It's very offensive to people on the left to have the other demonized to the extent that the other seems to be demonized. That feels deeply immoral, and maybe people on the left could agree, as you said, that immigration may have happened too fast, and there is a limit beyond which human societies struggle, but nonetheless this whole problem becomes de-emphasized if automation is the key issue, and then we try to work together on recognizing that it's real, recognizing that the problem probably wasn't properly addressed or seen or heard, and try to figure out how to rebuild communities using, well, using what? That seems to me to become the fertile conversation of the future: How do we rebuild communities in this modern age, with technology doing what it's doing, and reimagine this bright future?

GC: That's why I go back to optimism. I'm not being ... it's not like I'm not looking at the facts,

where we've come or where we've come from. But for gosh sakes, if we don't look at it from an optimistic point of view -- I'm refusing to do that just yet. I'm not raising my 12- and 13-year-old to say, "Look, the world is dim."

CA: We're going to have one more question from the room here.

Questioner: Hi. Hello. Sorry. You both mentioned the infrastructure plan and Russia and some other things that wouldn't be traditional Republican priorities. What do you think, or when, will Republicans be motivated to take a stand against Trumpism?

GC: After last night, not for a while. He changed a lot last night, I believe.

DB: His popularity among Republicans -- he's got 85 percent approval, which is higher than Reagan had at this time, and that's because society has just gotten more polarized. So people follow the party much more than they used to. So if you're waiting for Paul Ryan and the Republicans in Congress to flake away, it's going to take a little while.

GC: But also because they're all concerned about reelection, and Trump has so much power with getting people either for you or against you, and so, they're vacillating every day, probably: "Well, should I go against or should I not?" But last night, where he finally sounded presidential, I think most Republicans are breathing a sigh of relief today.

DB: The half-life of that is short.

GC: Right -- I was just going to say, until Twitter happens again.

CA: OK, I want to give each of you the chance to imagine you're speaking to -- I don't know -- the people online who are watching this, who may be Trump supporters, who may be on the left, somewhere in the middle. How would you advise them to bridge or to relate to other people? Can you share any final wisdom on this? Or if you think that they shouldn't, tell them that as well.

GC: I would just start by saying that I really think any change and coming together starts from the top, just like any other organization. And I would love if, somehow, Trump supporters or people on the left could encourage their leaders to show that compassion from the top, because imagine the change that we could have if Donald Trump tweeted out today, to all of his supporters, "Let's not be vile anymore to each other. Let's have more understanding. As a leader, I'm going to be more inclusive to all of the people of America." To me, it starts at the top. Is he going to do that? I have no idea. But I think that everything starts from the top, and the power that he has in encouraging his supporters to have an understanding of where people are coming from on the other side.

CA: David. DB: Yeah, I guess I would say I don't think we can teach each other to be civil, and give us sermons on civility. That's not going to do it. It's substance and how we act, and the nice thing about Donald Trump is he smashed our categories. All the categories that we thought we were thinking in, they're obsolete. They were great for the 20th century. They're not good for today. He's got an agenda which is about closing borders and closing trade. I just don't think it's going to work. I think if we want to rebuild communities, recreate jobs, we need a different set of agenda that smashes through all our current divisions and our current categories. For me, that agenda is Reaganism on macroeconomic policy, Sweden on welfare policy and cuts across right and left. I think we have to have a dynamic economy that creates growth. That's the Reagan on

economic policy. But people have to have that secure base. There have to be nurse-family partnerships; there has to be universal preschool; there have to be charter schools; there have to be college programs with wraparound programs for parents and communities. We need to help heal the crisis of social solidarity in this country and help heal families, and government just has to get a lot more involved in the way liberals like to rebuild communities. At the other hand, we have to have an economy that's free and open the way conservatives used to like. And so getting the substance right is how you smash through the partisan identities, because the substance is what ultimately shapes our polarization.

CA: David and Gretchen, thank you so much for an absolutely fascinating conversation. Thank you. That was really, really interesting.

(Applause)

Hey, let's keep the conversation going. We're continuing to try and figure out whether we can add something here, so keep the conversation going on Facebook. Give us your thoughts from whatever part of the political spectrum you're on, and actually, wherever in the world you are. This is not just about America. It's about the world, too. But we're not going to end today without music, because if we put music in every political conversation, the world would be completely different, frankly. It just would.

(Applause)

Up in Harlem, this extraordinary woman, Vy Higginsen, who's actually right here -- let's get a shot of her.

(Applause)

She created this program that brings teens together, teaches them the joy and the impact of gospel music, and hundreds of teens have gone through this program. It's transformative for them. The music they made, as you already heard, is extraordinary, and I can't think of a better way of ending this TED Dialogue than welcoming Vy Higginsen's Gospel Choir from Harlem. Thank you.

(Applause)

(Singing) Choir: O beautiful for spacious skies For amber waves of grain For purple mountain majesties Above the fruited plain America! America! America! America! God shed his grace on thee And crown thy good with brotherhood From sea to shining sea From sea to shining sea

(Applause) (End of TED dialogue)

That was a discussion between TED curator Chris Anderson & political commentators David Brooks and Gretchen Carlson recorded a day after President Trump's State of the Union Address in January. You're listening to The Next Chapter, a production of the North American Service of Radio Alexandria.

### **PSA: Listener feedback**

Feedback is important here at Radio Alexandria so I hope you will take the time to email or write & share your ideas. Did you find yourself agreeing in part & disagreeing in part? Did we make you cheer or did you want to throw something at the radio? The whole point of Radio Alexandria & The Next Chapter is to get people to thinking. Send us an email & tell us your opinions. Please be concise & to the point. We can't respond personally to every email but we will with your permission we

may include some of your comments & ideas in future broadcasts. You'll only be identified by first name & the name of the state, or province, or region you're writing from.

Radio Alexandria is named after the greatest library in the ancient world, one that was founded several hundred years before the common era. That center of learning was burned to the ground by religious zealots in the fifth century AD so almost all of its books were lost to posterity. Radio Alexandria's mission is to make sure that doesn't happen again. The goal is to spread ideas far & wide across the globe to the remotest village & mountain top, ideas about government, society, & the future of our species on this planet.

As a radio station we can't physically spread the great books of today but we can share the ideas contained within them. Our goal is not to tell listeners what to think but how to think, how to use logic & evidence to make rational decisions about the future drawing upon lessons learned from the past.

We live in a busy world so if you tuned in late or have to leave early you can always listen to today's program as a podcast. Just go to [radioalexandria.net](http://radioalexandria.net) & click on programs. Transcripts of all the programs in The Next Chapter series are also available on the website.

Right now our greatest out of pocket expense is paying for airtime. If we had additional funding we could buy more airtime to beam Radio Alexandria into Europe & Russia. The longer term plan is to offer The Next Chapter not only in English but in other languages as well. The goal is not to get mired in the domestic politics of countries. They have to solve their own problems. What we at Radio Alexandria are trying to do is look at issues all modern governments are confronting & see if there might be some common solutions.

Humanity is entering a period of profound change, driven by technological forces we have never before encountered as a species. Radio Alexandria's mission is to explore solutions that will benefit all in society, both individually & collectively. Radio Alexandria is radio for the future.  
(end promo)

Today I believe there's enough evidence to support the idea that we are probably not alone. Other intelligent life has likely evolved elsewhere in the universe & that probably means we are not the first to face these challenges. Some species no doubt found solutions to them while others did not & perished. If we humans are to have any hope of longterm survival we need to both start thinking of ourselves as an intelligent species & then begin acting like one. If we can spread the idea to the remotest village and most isolated hamlet that we are members of one intelligent species among many in the universe, working toward a goal of greater enlightenment, then no matter what catastrophe might befall us in the coming years, those who survive will have a common vision of humankind, a shared ideal of who we are & where we want to go in this adventure we call life.

This is our planet & we are its stewards. Every one has a part to play in the drama that is human existence. & that's what Radio Alexandria is all about. You, our listeners, are the wild cards. History could one day turn on your knowledge & insight. Until next time think deeply & act wisely. The future is in our hands Team Humanity. Let us embrace it! (music up until end)  
(announcer:) You've been listening to The Next Chapter with your host Roland B. Hunt. A transcript of this broadcast is available at our website [radioalexandria.net](http://radioalexandria.net). Tune in again next week at this time for a new exploration into alternative futures on The Next Chapter, coming to you from Radio Alexandria.

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Definitions of commonly used terms on The Next Chapter:

The Hunt Paradox, sometime called the Strangelove Paradox, was inspired by the famous 1964 motion picture *Dr. Strangelove or How I Learned to Stop Worrying & Love the Bomb*. The more advanced an intelligent species becomes the more likely it is to destroy itself.

The Hunt Paradigm is a conjectural premise that states there are quite a few carbon based intelligent species in the universe. After reaching a certain level in their evolution they all go through a similar process of development until the point they encounter the Hunt-Strangelove Paradox. Some find a solution to the paradox & advance to a still higher level. Others do not & destroy themselves.

Note: It is not necessary that the conjecture be true. It is merely a useful mental construct for integrating ideas about evolution with ideas about the rise & fall of civilizations.