

SEE HOW THEY RUN

SHOWCASING THE OUTLIER CANDIDATES
IN THE 2020 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION



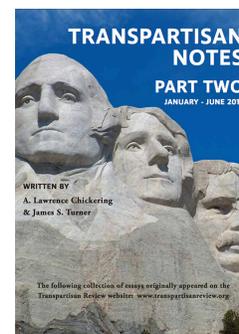
A. LAWRENCE CHICKERING, JAMES S. TURNER & ANITHA BEBERG

ABOUT THIS PROJECT

The Transpartisan Review's Stand-alone Series

*A recurring feature of The Transpartisan Review (TTR)
beginning in January 2019, TTR's second anniversary.*

This series joins our weekly *Transpartisan Notes* series (now on note #114) begun July 4, 2016 and consists of important articles from the transpartisan community. The articles come from individuals such as *The Transpartisan Review's* advisors, colleagues, family, friends and commenters. We plan to publish such articles as they seem useful.



Thank you for your interest in *The Transpartisan Review*.

To receive notifications of our latest content,
send your email address to editor@transpartisanreview.com.

SEPTEMBER 2019

See How They Run

A. Lawrence Chickering, James S. Turner & Anitha Beberg



Election Day 1815 by John Lewis Krimmel

The Transpartisan Review
Stand-alone Article #9

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

To mark the beginning of the 2020 election season, having recently celebrated the third anniversary of the launch of *The Transpartisan Review*, we share our introductory comments on the US Presidential election.

During these past three years, the recognition of what we see as *The Transpartisan Impulse* and the significance of the *more* than 70% of Americans Constitutionally eligible to vote who refrain from identifying with either the Republican or Democratic parties continued to grow. We expect this Transpartisan constituency to play an even large role in 2020 than it played in 2016. We plan to continue pointing out its presence in the 2020 election beginning with today's post.

To this end, we present the first in a series of articles and essays examining the election, *See How They Run*. With this first piece, we look at the current political climate and how our Transpartisan Matrix can inform us about the long, electoral road ahead. We also take a closer look at three Democratic candidates and learn that stories about citizen engagement can add substantive and rhetorical momentum to political campaigns.

See How They Run

by A. Lawrence Chickering, James S. Turner & Anitha Beberg

Showcasing the Outlier Candidates in the 2020 Presidential Election

And they're off! Twenty-three Democrats and two Republicans currently running for the White House. The Democratic field looks like a *Where's Waldo?* children's book. Nevertheless, from our transpartisan perspective, the least 'professionally political' candidates — **Andrew Yang, Marianne Williamson, Pete Buttigieg and Donald Trump** — are the most interesting because their campaigns shed interesting light on real issues mostly ignored by the frontrunners.



The Outliers

The challenge of running for office, including President, is largely a theatrical challenge because success depends on visibility, and visibility depends largely on media attention. All, but Trump, struggle for media coverage. Theater begins in Act I as the characters come on stage. What they say moves the production along. **The Outliers** now have a chance to rewrite the script.

Transpartisan Tools for Would-Be Presidents Harnessing the Power of Political Theater

All but Trump struggle for media coverage. Trump creates his own media. The folks who control mass media access tend to cover Trump as a stylized cartoon, repeating his self-created media show. They do not understand how much of Trump's appeal comes from his symbolic opposition to crucial, missing pieces in the mainstream debate. The missing pieces are those that connect the four quadrants in the Matrix. They would describe our political crisis *as a whole*, with a *connected vision* of the solution that all sides continue searching for. The media tend to treat the other unconventional candidates as deluded children, who are lost.

Since the media pros are in the entertainment business, delivering audiences to advertisers for money, their dismissive strategies make sense as long as the cash rolls in. And roll in, it does.

Then CBS chairman Leslie Moonves captured the exultant media understanding that the political crisis has created a *profit bonanza* for them: 'It may not be good for America, but it's damn good for

CBS . . . The money's rolling in and this is fun,' Moonves said. 'I've never seen anything like this . . . ' On December 17th 2018, Moonves was fired for cause—sexual misconduct allegations. 'The people' always have ways to reign in 'the powerful.'

This rapidly changing, difficult-to-predict, wildly vacillating world, we believe, is largely influenced by a failure in the debate to explore the Whole Problem that is our political crisis and possible approaches to address it. Voters want this larger conversation, and some of the outlier candidates are articulating parts of it.

Understanding and explaining the widespread voter alienation and proposing reforms to reduce it would transfuse new ideas into a debate that has little to offer in new ideas. It would produce a sensational media story, theatrically pitting a candidate against the other candidates and also against the media.

Anyone who runs against the media *and* the candidates from both parties — and explains that posture in serious ways — would be on their way to instant super-stardom in the center of the stage. Developing a policy agenda that draws from both sides and learns to identify how transpartisan proposals benefit from and integrate the four quadrants will dominate all conversations.

Conflict and polarization undermine policies in all areas including foreign policy because no one can trust the government to sustain policies people can rely on. With such conflict, no reform proposal has any chance to succeed. It is time to start listening to positions that bring people together and have a chance to solve real problems. None of the major positions in the current debate comes *close* to making that claim.

Missing Elements in the Matrix

Our *Four-Quadrant Transpartisan Matrix* sketches the multiple values that people (voters) value. The crisis in our politics arises from the tension between the people, committed to all four quadrant values, with supporting institutions and policies, and the political system and media, which see the quadrants as separate, conflicting visions. The current debate, as represented by both political candidates and the media, presents only disconnected ideas from each quadrant.

To some extent, the 'outliers' and unconventional candidates present parts of the missing whole. Except for Trump, their challenge is to win the *media attention* that will give them the visibility they currently lack.

Being in the entertainment business, the entry fee is the *theatrical quality* that makes up ‘stories’. Donald Trump is the destructive master of this. The challenge for anyone opposing him is to develop a strategy for stories *that bring people together*, avoiding Trump’s master theme of stories that often promote conflict between citizens and tear the country apart.

These principles suggest strategies for political outliers to transcend partisan politics and win media coverage—and thus *public attention*—for new ideas with transpartisan appeal. The importance of ‘transpartisan’ here lies in a vision that integrates the quadrants and speaks to the large number of voting age-eligible citizens (as many as 70%) who are alienated from the mainstream system and who avoid participating in it.

Herewith some thoughts on the broad electoral tournament as a Matrix; storytelling to reach them; and breaking open the hard-shell policy conventions with new ideas from and for the Transpartisan constituency.

Lessons from Trump: The Disempowered Citizen/Voter Constituency

1. Voters: ‘Populism’ is ‘in’; yet in the current debate ‘the people’ are a tiny minority of voting age-eligible citizens standing in for the totality of ‘The People’. The vast majority of ‘The People’ avoid association with either major party. They register as Independent or, so turned off, don’t register at all. These citizen outliers form the political outlier’s primary audience.

The 2016 Presidential popular vote split 46% for Trump and 48% for Hillary. If you compare *the vote for each to the votes that each did not get*, the numbers are 26% for Trump, and 74% who did NOT vote for him. 27% voted for Hillary, and 73% did NOT vote for her. *Over 70% of age-eligible citizens failed to vote for the winner who is now our President.* That 70%+ seeks new ideas and new candidates.

We are governed by a small minority. Why are so many opting out? The material is there for a national debate. The answer could become a powerful media ‘story’. The following sentences might lead off a campaign, especially if the candidate surrounds him/herself with representatives of their ‘base’—the American People, especially when the People are represented theatrically by mixing people from the ‘victim’ groups in Identity Politics that form the electoral ‘bases’ of the two major parties (white working people [especially with Southern accents], blacks, women, LGBTQ, those covered by the Americans With Disabilities Act, and so on:

“I am running for the votes of the large majority of citizens who are turned off by conventional candidates of both governing parties who act as more dedicated to their closed system than to government by the people. Their closed system has produced the conflict that is paralyzing positive public action. An open system would bring people together and empower them to play active roles in solving public issues from education to health and others. Now is the time to register and vote for new ideas.”

In addition to the disengaged, one of the most puzzling elements of the 2016 election, at least for a lot of Americans according to Vox (Oct 16, 2018), is that between 6.7 and 9.2 million Americans switched from Obama to Trump. Since the 2016 election was decided by 40,000 votes, Vox went on, ‘It’s fair to say that Obama-Trump switchers were one of the key reasons that Hillary Clinton lost.’

2. Learning from Trump. Trump, by chance, skill, instinct, or electoral interference, navigated through the voting morass to a narrow, minority, Electoral College victory. We think seeing the electorate as a Matrix, broader than a left-right spectrum and with four quadrant values, offers an expanded way to see, understand, and respond to the electorate’s intentions and to its 2016 reaction

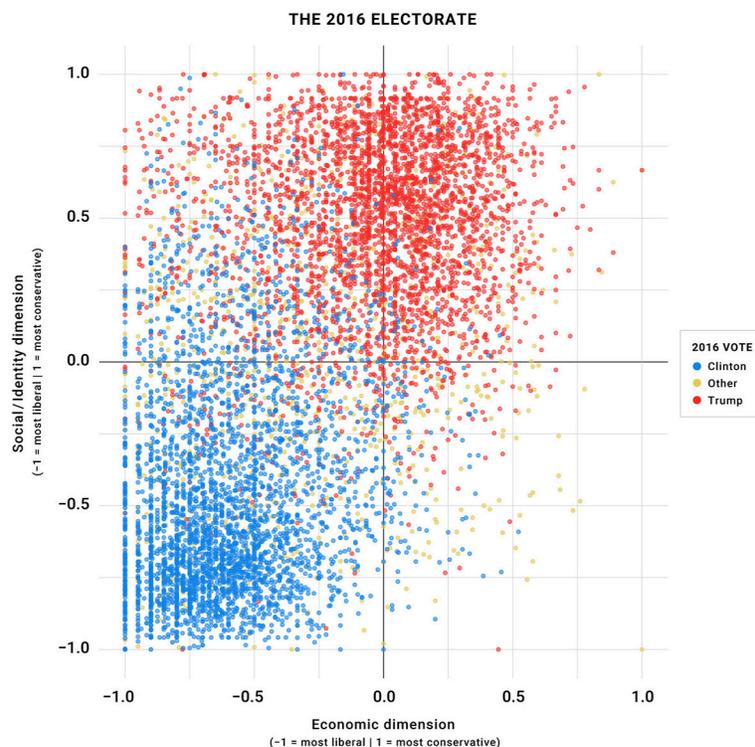


Chart from *Political Divisions in 2016 and Beyond Tensions Between and Within the Two Parties* by Lee Drutman, Democracy Fund’s Voter Study Group.

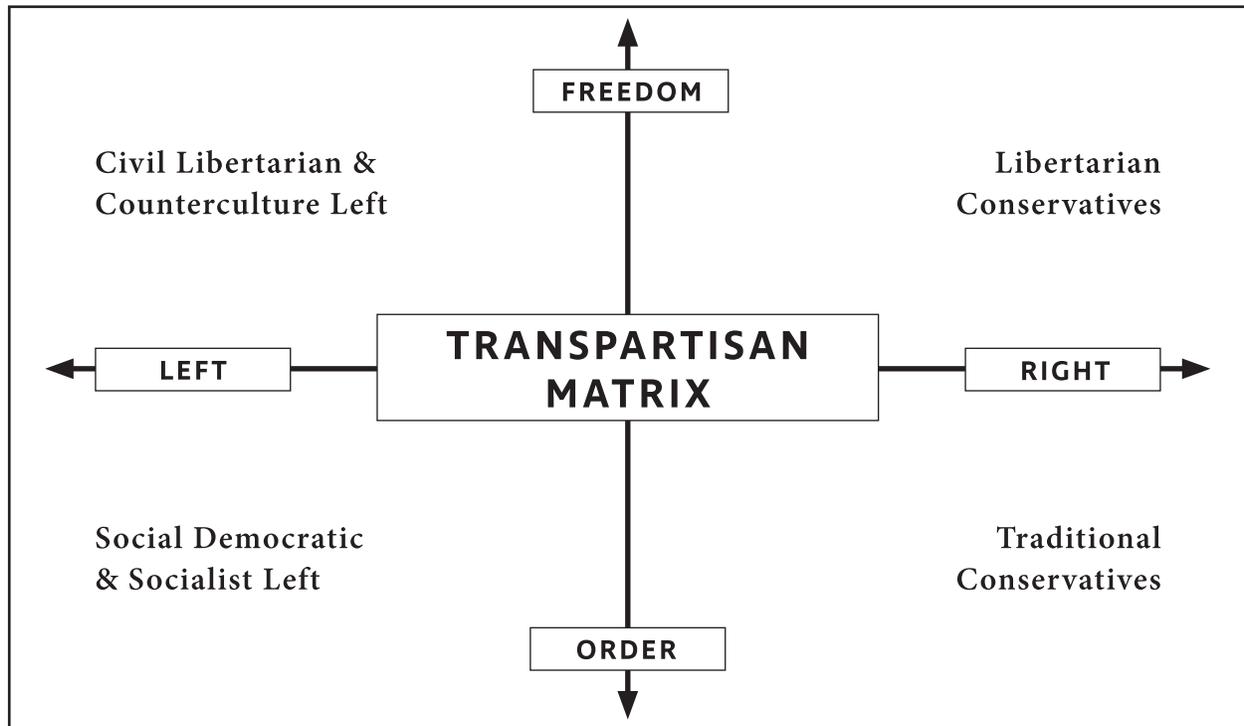
THE TRANSPARTISAN REVIEW STAND-ALONE SERIES

to Trump. By looking closely at outlier candidates in the current campaign, we can gain further clues to understanding why integrating the quadrants is essential to end the crisis in our politics and bring people together again.

Shoehorning today's electorate into the tiny confines of a left/right spectrum unnecessarily distorts public communication. *New York Times* Columnist Ross Douthat made the point when he introduced a matrix into his analysis of American politics ('In Search of the American Center,' NYT 6/21/17) based on data from The Democracy Fund Voter Study Group. Douthat also relied on a report by Lee Drutman, a senior fellow in the Political Reform program at New America, using the Democracy Fund data. This data formed the above matrix.

We wrote about this matrix when Douthat's article first appeared. We focused on the empty lower-right quadrant, noting that this matrix 'does well capturing voters, but poorly describing the totality of the electorate, which includes the 44% of nonvoters.'

Our more general *Transpartisan Matrix* (left/right and freedom/order axes) accounts for non-voters. We believe it offers a broader picture of the U.S. political system and electorate and of their transpartisan political values and opportunities. Here is *that* matrix.



Trump, viscerally, intuitively, and in real TV entertainment mode, scattered stories, slogans, insults, and preening all over our *Transpartisan Matrix*. Since he chose to switch from being a

nominal Democrat to being a nominal Republican, commentators worked hard to put him on the conservative side of the left/right spectrum, but many traditional conservatives called him a ‘fake’ conservative.

In fact, he intuitively reached out to the counter-authority (freedom) quadrants. Bernie Sanders did much the same on the Democratic side. Sanders gathered a motley crew of, like himself, ‘independent’ followers not seen before and not expected in elections.

These follower’s unique integration of pro and antigovernment sentiment was best captured by a campaigner who said “I want the government to keep its hands off my Medicare.” “What anti-governmental sentiment do you see for Sanders?” asks one freedom advocate. “His proposals are **ALL-GOVERNMENT.**”

Our point is elections are at least as much (we think more) about the constituencies than candidates. It appears to us that many free-left constituents saw Hilary as more authoritarian than Bernie and many of them saw Bernie as more authoritarian than Trump. We think this might be a beginning for understanding why 6 to 9 million voters went from Obama to Trump. It also points to a way of understanding why more than twice as many people did not vote for Trump as voted for him.

In a straight-on battle between a devotee of conventional authority (Clinton) and a free-swinging, anti-convention, anti-authority, media master (Trump), voters had a hard time choosing, and Trump squeaked through. In a straight-up battle between conventional authority and free-swinging anti-authority, Trump could win again—especially if 44% stay home.

We take away this lesson from Trump: a disciplined critic of conventional authority telling compelling stories, illustrating systematic ideas, and creating a positive vision of how empowered citizens could be recruited to play active, engaged roles in bringing people together solving problems might, win or not, significantly affect the course of the 2020 election and America’s future. Stories could range from education to health and law enforcement even to security policy.

When we look more closely at the outlier candidates, we can learn more about this opportunity. Before we consider some of them, we want to say a few more things about the challenge of integrating the four quadrant values and why this is *essential* to the larger purpose here.

Integrating the Quadrants—Learning from Critiques of ‘Left’ and ‘Right’

The key values here are ‘order’ and ‘freedom’. The quotation marks are important because

these words mean different things to conservatives and to progressives. For example, ‘freedom’ to conservatives tends to mean economic freedom, freedom *from* government. ‘Freedom’ to progressives is concerned less with *economic* freedom than with *social* freedom, freedom *from* values imposed by tradition, especially religion. ‘Order’ to conservatives means traditional order, often religious. ‘Order’ to progressives means *Justice through equality*.

What can one learn from *critiques* of these positions by opponents, and what do the critiques reveal about crucial missing pieces in each quadrant value?

Order Right (OR) – Critics of the Order Right (OR) focus on authoritarianism, the absence of freedom. Subjectively, OR is for many people and in its purest form a *preconscious position*, lacking the *significance* of conscious choice, which relies on and opens the way for freedom.

The most important *positive* (transpartisan) OR value is relationships ‘close-by’, which draws its strength from personal, spiritual connections. The missing piece is consciousness and freedom, which piece explains the counterintuitive, crucially transpartisan relationship that OR has with the Freedom Left (FL—see below).

Order Left (OL) – Critics of the Order Left (OL) focus on authoritarianism, mechanized relationships, in which everybody is dead without consciousness and freedom, and *lack of significance*, which depends on free choice. Rousseau’s famous statement about the importance of *forcing people to be free* is at the heart of a pure Order Left vision.

Freedom Quadrants (FR and FL) – Critics of the Freedom Right (FR) focus on greed and egocentrism – the absence of a higher good (order), without which all action also lacks significance. Critics of the Freedom Left (FL) focus on anomie, libertinism, exploitation — absence of a higher good, which the left understands in terms of *justice*.

The most important *positive* (transpartisan) value is *significance*, which results from *combining both order and freedom*. Both values are essential to significance and *meaning*. Order, either preconscious (OR) or imposed and mechanized (dead from OL), without *consciousness* freedom has no meaning; and freedom, either economic or social, has no meaning without a vision of order (the higher good). *Spirituality* is essential because order without consciousness is mechanized, dead.

These thoughts may help reveal values in the outlier candidates that suggest elements that integrate the quadrants. All of these values, we think, imply significant roles for active citizens engaging each other in positive ways, revealing real integration of the quadrants.

We see and, in our writings, point to active citizens routinely engaging each other in positive ways across the country and around the world. We see this citizen action transcending traditional political and economic institutions.

We also see those institutions—political parties, governments, corporate head-quarters—fighting back to hang onto their power. This struggle between empowered citizens and weakening institutions seems to us to characterize political paralysis.

We believe ending the paralysis requires integrating empowered citizens into working institutions. In turn this requires escaping the left/right straight jacket. We see the *Transpartisan Matrix* as a first step in one approach to transcending left/right paralysis.

POLITICAL THEATER ACT I: Why the Old Script Needs Rewriting

Theater begins with Act I bringing the characters on stage. The content of what the characters say moves the production along. The Outliers have a chance to rewrite the script.

1. The Current Script – The traditional script for Presidential candidates is to act ‘Presidential’—remote, charismatic, promising effective leadership for positive agendas. Even as they differ on specifics, opposing candidates currently agree on one, central belief: they will use the federal government and the ‘rule of law’ to lead the way to their view of a ‘better tomorrow’. The 70%+ less politically engaged doubt the federal-government-will-lead promise. Their doubt comes in part from the same place as the doubt they feel toward past centralized authorities, especially the Church.

Before addressing the heart of developing an agenda for institutional and policy reform, we want to add a few words about the subversive role that ‘the rule of law’ is playing in mechanizing relationships, promoting conflict, and obstructing the engaged citizenship that is essential for real solutions.

‘The rule of law’ is a demanding mistress. It performs, primarily, as warfare by other means. Conflict decided by mortal combat (war) in the middle ages now gets resolved in ‘the courts.’ This is still conflict, meant to be conducted justly (blind justice weighing the evidence).

In fact, court conflicts tend to be decided by and for those who have social power. Courts make social change as a byproduct of resolving conflicts. To expect courts to reform society leads to disappointment—for both the left and the right. Courts are objectively mechanistic. They have far more interest in a smooth-running society than in individual welfare.

While Democrats call for more government and Republicans for less, *neither has a vision for actively recruiting empowered citizens into their campaigns* or into active participation in schools or housing projects or health programs—recruiting them as principals into public institutions. Both see a strong government providing services to passive citizens, in the model of passive consumers, which Republicans tend to oppose and Democrats tend to support.

However, in today's world, citizens, consumers, and non-voters affected by government policy see themselves less as objects and more as subject-actors and partners. More to be listened to, as partners, than pitied and commanded. They engage in ways that mobilize larger communities in support of solutions, engaging in ways that are extremely difficult for governments. ^[1]

Existing institutions, particularly political institutions, have yet to figure out how to best accept this engagement and encourage it. All programs that successfully engage 'difficult' populations, mostly NGOs, operate from this 'strong concept of citizenship'.

The passive producer-consumer relationship is detached and separated. The passive citizen model of the relationship between governments and The People explains, we think, an important reason why citizens are alienated from the political system — especially from the two major parties.

Since the 1950s, society has been marked by an ongoing decline of tradition in structuring identity in favor of increasing 'individuation' and demands for self-expression, which has profoundly changed all social relationships. The power of personal connection—enhanced by new information media—has been replacing passive with active citizens.

The challenge of individuation is especially great in relation to all very large organizations, including religious organizations. ^[2] This broad social current is increasingly influencing politics as citizens demand greater roles in creating institutions and making them work. Yet our political institutions, including the legal system, have been *the slowest and least responsive in adapting to citizen demands for empowerment.*

Political system lethargy creates the impression of disengaged people. The real story, however, is about *the system's* lethargy, and it is all but invisible in the current political, all-powerful-government, mythos. As Les Moonves and his cohort now know, The People, pushed out of politics, have other ways of being heard.

The institutions most needing active citizen participation include schools as the highest priority, with health care right behind, followed by policing, national security and all other social institutions that affect individual lives. While engaged citizens offer live examples of success, even working with the

most difficult social populations and problems, politics backed by law and then police and the army shuns them and leaves large groups of citizens behind.

The old script is losing contact with people. Futurist John Naisbitt saw this starting to happen in his concept of ‘high-tech, high-touch’ in his bestselling 1982 book, *Megatrends*, a guide for corporate leaders to understand the future.

Based on researching thousands of newspaper articles and interviewing dozens of experts in science, medicine, sociology, psychology, education, business, and theology, he asserted that in a world of technology, *people long for personal, human contact*.



*John & Doris Naisbitt discuss global Megatrends.
(GlobalLearningTV on YouTube, 2015.)*

The tech/touch separation, we believe, powerfully affects contemporary politics as transpartisan voters seem to scan for candidates who are looking for *connection*, which an active self-governing role in public institutions. Connected candidates can build empathy with and empower constituents by making live *site visits to successful programs*. They will connect best with voters if they speak in the friendly, informal language like that which Mayor Pete Buttigieg uses and most politicians avoid. Voters will respond to and connect with any candidate who speaks *in their language*: plainly, with empathy, and even profoundly to them.

The challenge of opening opportunities for citizens to ‘break in’ and become active in public spaces is partly caused by political institutions that want to maintain control of the theater. But the problem is not limited to political institutions alone. There is a larger, related problem that needs to be understood and addressed: ‘The Media.’

The Mass Media and the Theater of Politics

While pretending to be in the news business, the mass media are really in the entertainment business, delivering audiences to advertisers. While some people complain about media’s ideological bias, we believe that *theatrical bias* is at least as distorting as any ideological bias.

Theatrical bias determines the stories the media cover, and it often emphasizes conflict as the most entertaining material attracting audiences. The media *own the theater*, and they decide what to show. Their bias toward conflict of course fits powerfully with politicians’ bias toward conflict to differentiate their ‘products’ from each other.

The media's theatrical bias toward conflict is aligned with the highly centralized government system combined with theatrical, convulsive public policy change. How are our television impresarios supposed to show 'organic change' on the evening news? Organic change is powerful precisely because it is NOT THEATRICAL. Theatrical change brings theatrical conflict — which destroys hopes for real change.

Our centralized/high conflict system is modeled on the Medieval Church. Its time has now passed for the same reason that highly centralized religious institutions are now struggling to maintain credibility with their followers. Tradition has weakened before increasing demands for individual knowledge and self-expression.

When citizens are disempowered — when the old script still dominates the stage after the show has closed — they surrender to 'narratives of grievance' and demand things from governments that can only come from empowerment. When narratives of grievance dominate political discourse, people are always turned 'OUTWARD' (toward the government and the TV cameras).

Empowerment creates *shared ownership of public spaces*, starting with schools and continues on to every aspect of contemporary daily living. When citizens are empowered, they turn INWARD (engaging *each other*, working for common purposes — which is to say *away from both government and the TV cameras*). Their power will be felt if not within the formal political system, then without it.

When 'narratives of grievance' become the dominant language of politics, polarization and conflict take over — especially when the two principal leadership groups — political leaders themselves and the mass media, who own the theater — 'maximize profits' by surrendering to grievance language and promoting it.

Strong citizen engagement on issues as diverse as school and health policy, criminal justice and penal reform, and local food production are now appearing throughout the Matrix, across the country, and around the world. *It is in such citizen activism and engagement that the four quadrants in the Matrix become integrated.* We believe that candidates will strike their most potent transpartisan appeals when appealing to this 'connected engagement'.

2. Connecting Policy to Stories – Issues on which people are acting locally, we think, are ideal instruments for candidates to promote citizen engagement and political connection nationally. Focus on such issues would combine the most important approaches to citizens' empowerment with reforms more powerful than any ideas currently in play. This approach suggests **combining three campaign strategies**:

- **First**, *concrete proposals for institutional reform* empowering citizens as active participants in programs such as schools, health centers, law enforcement, and other subjects, which address major social issues;
- **Second**, Buttigieg’s story-telling rhetorical style, connecting candidate and voters in narrative examples of the value of self-governance and how it works; and then
- **Third**, combining these rhetorical appeals with *live visits to model institutions* that are succeeding with both affluent and ‘difficult’ populations. Candidates need to recruit citizens who are active in citizen-empowered organizations as *advocates for and exemplars* of this new empowered vision.

For anyone skeptical that such engagement with empowered citizens can play any role in a Presidential campaign, we cite as a theatrical example the third season of *Designated Survivor*, starring Kiefer Sutherland and produced by Davis Guggenheim, the legendary political campaign film maker who directed Al Gore’s movie, *An Inconvenient Truth*. In one episode, Sutherland is President and is running for re-election. A conventional, staged & canned speech to an audience falls through, so he improvises and gives a spontaneous talk to people on the street. They went wild, and his direct appeal to citizens breathed new life into his campaign.



*Engaging citizens through a direct appeal.
(Designated Survivor, S.3 E.1)*

From Mayor Pete Buttigieg we are learning that stories about citizen engagement can add substantive and rhetorical momentum to political campaigns. They make real experiences *come alive* and create intimate experiences for anyone sharing them. These stories—every candidate and community has them—can be enhanced by visits to model institutions and programs that work and by intimate conversations with empowering citizens who are *living their empowerment*.

The visits can be produced (‘staged’) to create powerful contexts for ‘stories’ for media that have an unlimited appetite for compelling narratives. Combining stories with location, people, and narratives explaining their success could, when well-conceived and produced, combine into powerful, concrete proposals for new leadership and institutional reform that are also compelling media.

‘Reform’ means reform in and of any and all institutions—schools, hospitals, policing, criminal justice, housing, work, gender, all aspects of community life. A campaign highlighting powerful,

real life examples of current success showcasing empowered citizens as real change makers working in civil society institutions, will greatly expand the political stage and bring citizens onto it. They will showcase how *active citizenship is an essential feature of every healthy democracy and every successful political campaign.*

3. Empowering Citizens Without Mobilizing Political Opposition – Connecting stories and rhetoric to successful experiences is actually the easy part. A more difficult part is the *policy challenge* of empowering citizens in institutions that are failing and where citizens are disempowered. The challenge is *empowering citizens without mobilizing political opposition* from current power structures (e.g., teachers' unions)?

Powerful examples exist showing how to do this even on issue consumed by political conflict on this very subject. The issue is demands for empowerment and 'choice' in education, which is very conflicted in either of the two forms it takes in the U.S.: charter schools or full voucher programs. This is too large a subject to discuss in detail here. A summary of a solution is to focus choice on *empowerment*, available to all schools. When benefits are available to everyone and no one needs to fear being 'left behind', all fear disappears, and it can gain political support from everywhere and will enormously reduce opposition. ^[3]

The *mechanism of empowerment* will also be important. In Western democracies, change happens *mechanically*, 'on Tuesday' (the arbitrary day when a vote or decision happens). When change is mechanical 'on Tuesday', fear of uncertainty from a sudden change, tends, by itself, to mobilize opposition (recall the saying 'People tend to prefer a known evil to an unknown good').

Programs featuring choice without opposition happen when change mechanisms are implemented *organically* (gradually) rather than *mechanically* (*by order*). When change is organic, there is no difference between Tuesday and Wednesday; and there is no moment when pressures build for opposition. *Educate Girls Globally* (EGG), promoting citizen empowerment in government schools in India, has used an organic process to install its program in thousands of schools serving hundreds of thousands of kids, and in fifteen years it has not encountered significant conflict or opposition *in a single school*.

The challenge of running for office, including President, is largely a theatrical challenge because success depends on visibility, and visibility depends largely on media attention. Theater begins in Act I as the *actors* come on stage. What they say moves the production along. The Outliers now have a chance to rewrite the script.

Understanding the Actors in Terms of the Transpartisan Matrix

The left-right spectrum of our *Four-Quadrant Transpartisan Matrix* presents political values and issues as if left and right were both consistent and coherent sets of ideas. *The core conceptual assumption* of the spectrum is that each side is a discrete ‘package’ of ideas, in total conflict with the other. In this conceptual framework, *there is no overlap at all between the ideas set on one side versus the other*. This assumption is completely inaccurate. Yet it sets up a perfect darkness-and-light binary conflict of visions that, while ideal for candidates emphasizing their differences and for the media coverage on the evening news, has no value whatever for any other purpose.

The binary frame has nothing whatever to do with *what real people actually value*, which is much more complicated (and often conflicted *within* the left and *within* the right!) than the spectrum describes them. Our Four-Quadrant Matrix presents a map of what real people value, even in politics, with a ‘Freedom’ and ‘Order’ quadrant on both the left and the right.

Introducing the Players: Pete Buttigieg, Andrew Yang, and Marianne Williamson

A *front page story* in *The New York Times* recently explored the meteoric rise of the “playwright” **Mayor Pete Buttigieg** from an unknown Mayor of a small Midwestern city (South Bend, Indiana) to a serious candidate who is getting major media coverage and is raising significant campaign funding. The writer, Alexander Burns, describes Buttigieg’s style as ‘story-telling, wrapping conventional liberalism in an earnest, youthful persona . . .’

Burns quotes Buttigieg himself, citing his interest in ‘the interaction of “narrative and politics,” and how people connect with people beyond policy decrees.’ He believes that voters long for a ‘values-led message,’ and he is holding off a release of a heavy policy agenda to avoid ‘drown[ing] people in minutiae.’

We think Buttigieg is making a powerful statement of a truth we are emphasizing, which is also important to voters. He focuses on stories about the breakdown of civil society institutions. This aligns strongly with a consistent theme in our writing, which emphasizes strong, transpartisan institutional reform and self-governance, based on personal citizen engagement at every governance level, local, national and global.

Reactions to Buttigieg suggest he is striking a cord across the Matrix. He would strike an even stronger transpartisan cord if his policy proposals were consistent with and spoke to his vision. His biggest problem is not seeing how his insight and vision can be translated into proposals for

institutional and policy reform. If he fails in this, he runs the risk of reducing his sentiment to an empty abstraction. The most obvious example of this failing became apparent in his first debate, when he tried to explain the continuing racial conflict in South Bend.

In trying to explain, the first words out of his mouth were something like: ‘Because I failed to solve it.’ Those few words revealed a sentiment *precisely opposite* to the position quoted above, suggesting he has no *clue* what really matters. The other debaters shared his ignorance by their failure to respond to him.

‘I failed to solve it.’ Conflict between citizens *cannot be solved by government officials. Only citizens themselves can solve such conflicts*, citizens empowered to work together and engage each other to address issues of common interest. Government officials, especially using their *convening power*, have an important role to play by bringing people together and facilitating conversations that move people beyond conflict. But they are not principals to the conflict who can, by themselves, actively solve it.



The Playwright Pete Buttigieg

Mayor Pete’s informal, engaged style evokes the intimate (close-by) relationships of OR, but his vagueness on policy until now may reflect real uncertainty about how to institutionalize policies promoting engaged relationships and spiritual connections that create ‘spaces’ for bringing people together and solving problems. Burns calls his policy ‘conventional liberalism,’ and he may be right, given his account of his handling of the race issues in South Bend (Katie Gallito, *Politico* [04/10/2010]), but conservatives (especially Order Right) are also attracted to him, which surprises the author. It is not surprising, given the alignment of his ‘connected’ values with the OR.

One may assume that criticism of him comes mostly from traditional public policy types who see governments as the major (if not exclusive) policy implementers, solving all issues and problems. But his more specific need is to think more clearly about how *subjective, personal, local connections can shape national and global policy*—how to promote reforms that encourage those connections.

The second paragraph of a Buttigieg speech following ‘Now is the time to . . . vote for new ideas’ might sound something like this:

We’ve got to get away from this kill-switch mentality that we see on Twitter. I have seen my once disapproving parents dance at their gay son’s wedding and homophobic military officers

take back their words. I believe in the power of redemption and forgiveness. This idea that we just sort people into baskets of good and evil ignores the central fact of human existence—that each of us is a basket of good and evil. The job of politics is to summon the good—summon back the human—and beat back the evil, which is in the stereotypes (adapted from Time, May 2, 2019).

Every candidate has such stories. Beyond the candidate, civic associations depend on finding empowered, empathetic, and engaged citizens. We highlight many of them in our more than a hundred *Transpartisan Notes* and additional articles posted in *The Transpartisan Review* since July 4, 2016. The role of traditional civic institutions as places of belonging for increasingly individuated people has grown weaker, leaving people feeling unconnected and isolated. The need, at this moment, is to develop new institutional structures, promoted by active citizens, to fill the void, bringing people together and solving problems.

Mayor Pete's policy proposals must now join his stories. New and/or newly revitalized institutions must create welcoming homes for empowered citizens with compelling stories and new ideas. *Visits to communities to showcase successes will ground ideas in the actual experiences of real people, telling their own stories.*

If Buttigieg fails to develop such policies—or even if he succeeds—other candidates can adopt his style and manner and combine it with a powerfully connected policy agenda. There is plenty of room for this 'connected' campaign vision, especially as it will speak in powerful ways to the transpartisan constituency, vision, and opportunity.

The Outliers Explore the Other Quadrants

We suggest the challenge for Democratic Presidential candidates is to search beyond their current focus in the Order Left to the other quadrants. We find the other quadrants in the less conventionally political, outlier candidates. We started with Mayor Pete dubbed him The Playwright in our theatrical metaphor because his rhetoric comes across as powerfully 'connecting' and transpartisan. We see him as a scribe to rewriting the performance. We also find elements of the Order Right in his stories of engagement between people 'close by'. It is no accident that Order Right conservatives are attracted to him even as most of his policy proposals are straight Order Left. Yang and Williamson seem to us to contribute additional access to the four quadrants of the transpartisan constituency.

Yang presents a High Tech Blueprint

Andrew Yang brings strong elements of the **Freedom Right**. We see no hint in Yang of Identity Politics or of seeing the disadvantaged as ‘victims’ oppressed either by oppressors or by culture, unable to help themselves. He comes from an immigrant family; his father was a scientist whose research at I.B.M. resulted in 69 patents with his name on them.

Andrew is an entrepreneur, politician, and philanthropist who founded Venture for America (VFA) in 2012. Its mission is ‘to revitalize American cities and communities through entrepreneurship’ by training recent graduates and young professionals to work for startups in emerging cities throughout the country. That makes him a venture capitalist investing in entrepreneurship and job creation—core objectives of the Freedom Right. He was, as *Freakonomics Radio* interviewer Stephen Dubner said, ‘a pretty big winner . . . [but] along the way, he came to see that for every winner, there were thousands upon thousands of losers.’

VFA’s goal is to have its Fellows create jobs at companies where they are initially placed or by starting their own companies, which hire people. VFA has placed over 700 Fellows in 450 startups in 19 cities in 15 states, which have 219 of the 270 Electoral College votes necessary to win the Presidency. VFA’s programs, headquartered in Detroit, take place in Cincinnati, Detroit, Las Vegas, New Orleans, Denver, Providence, Baltimore, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Columbus, Miami, San Antonio, St. Louis, Birmingham, Charlotte, Pittsburgh, Atlanta, Nashville and Kansas City, a rainbow of the American backbone. Building a Presidential campaign out from these cities, where he has established personal ties, gives Yang a transpartisan tool of enormous potential.

Yang set up **VFA** to recruit recent college graduates to work in various startup industries, or the related industry of venture funding, for two years in economically challenged US cities. All Fellows attend a five-week summer training program in Detroit, Michigan, where they are taught and mentored by investors, venture capitalists, and innovation firms.

Breaking out of the left/right, blue/red dichotomy straightjacket frees him to re-imagine the electorate. Yang is almost the rhetorical opposite of Buttigieg—sharper tongued but bookish compared to the soft-spoken and eloquent yet policy-diffused Buttigieg. Yang’s **campaign platform** has 107 discreet policy proposals and he speaks with the sharper voice of someone who sees wide entrepreneurial potential. He says things like:

As an entrepreneur, I feel driven to try and solve problems, and this [all the jobs are about to disappear] seems like the greatest problem that we face. And you think, ‘Hey, if I bust my

ass for several years, I have a chance to potentially accelerate the eradication of poverty and helping my country manage through the most difficult transition in decades. And I think if I put my heart and soul into it, I have some chance of making that happen.’ And then if you don’t do that, you must be an asshole.

He describes one of his earliest jobs as a knife salesman.

Freakonomics Radio’s DUBNER asks: A knife salesman? YANG: Oh yeah, Cutco, I still know the sales patter. DUBNER: Let’s hear it. YANG: What’s really dangerous is not a sharp knife. It’s a dull knife, because then you start putting elbow grease into it, and that’s when accidents happen.’

Yang spices his campaign with proposals that make headlines like ‘The President should make \$4 million a year’, and he supports a program that will pay Americans \$1,000 a month. Yang proposes \$4 million-a-year for the President to discourage post office corruption by abuse of free mail privileges extended to all former Presidents.



The Entrepreneur Andrew Yang

The \$1,000 a month is a form of Universal Basic Income (UBI), which, despite some problems, is a concept with growing acceptance around the world. He proposes it as a hedge against the massive job elimination that he—and many others—see coming from new technologies such as robotics, Artificial Intelligence and information analytics. Andrew can contribute the High Tech section of the Transpartisan stump speech:

I’m Andrew Yang, and I’m running for President as a Democrat in 2020 because I fear for the future of our country. New technologies – robots, software, artificial intelligence – have already destroyed more than 4 million US jobs, and in the next 5-10 years, they will eliminate millions more. A third of all-American workers are at risk of permanent unemployment. And this time, the jobs will not come back.

I’m not a career politician—I’m an entrepreneur who understands the economy. It’s clear to me, and to many of the nation’s best job creators, that we need to make an unprecedented change requiring bold steps. As president, my first priority will be to implement Universal Basic Income for every American adult over the age of 18: \$1,000 a month, no strings attached, paid for by a new tax on the companies benefiting most from automation. UBI is

just the beginning. A crisis is underway—we have to work together to stop it, or risk losing the heart of our country. The stakes have never been higher.

When we said the challenge for Democrats is to search beyond the Order Left to the other quadrants, no candidate is immune from that suggestion. In Yang's case, his proposal to give \$1,000 to every citizen over 18 should include a proposal to promote community and connections—and the *spirit* of Order Right relationships 'close by'—which could especially help 'difficult' populations (e.g., people suffering addictions) that might lack the discipline to spend the bounty wisely. Yang does mention in his book *The War on Normal People* this type of proposal, but for some reason has ceased speaking about this during the campaign trail.

A UBI would address a significant proportion of the lack of work through increased humanity, caring, creativity, and enterprise. That said, we are going to have to do much more. "Timebanking" is a system through which people trade time and build credits within communities by performing various helpful tasks—transporting an item, walking a dog, cleaning up a yard, cooking a meal, providing a ride to the doctor, and so on. The idea was championed in the mid-1990s in the United States by Edgar Cahn, a law professor and anti-poverty activist as a way to strengthen communities.

Now imagine a supercharged version of timebanking backed by the US government where in addition to providing social value there's real monetary value underlying it. This new currency—Digital Social Credits—would reward people for doing things that serve the community. By creating a new currency, the government could essentially induce billions of dollars of positive social activity without having to spend nearly that amount. We could create an entirely new parallel economy around social good.

Healing the Soul of America — Marianne Williamson Presents a High Touch Challenge

Marianne Williamson is a best-selling 'spiritual' leader and improbable politician. In 1992, Oprah featured her first book, *A Return to Love*, which was on *The New York Times* bestseller list for 39 weeks. She has published 12 other books, seven of which have been *Times* bestsellers and four of which have been #1. Her books have sold more than 3 million copies. She has 2.6 million twitter followers.

In 1997 Williamson published *The Healing of America*, which was republished and expanded three years later as *Healing the Soul of America*. The book kicked off an effort to bring her widely popular self-help message into politics. In it, she laid out plans to 'transform the American political consciousness and encourage powerful citizen involvement'.

She published a 20th anniversary revised edition in 2018, and in it she wrote in her New Age, ‘spiritual’ language what could be the third paragraph of the ‘outliers’ stump speech:

It is a task of our generation [Williamson is 66] to recreate the American political system to awaken from our culture of distraction and re-engage the process of democracy with soulfulness and hope. Yes, we see there are problems in the world. But we believe in a universal force that, when activated by the human heart, has the power to make all things right. Such is the divine authority of love: to renew the heart, renew the nations, and ultimately, renew the world.

Her candidacy challenges the political system from the ‘far-out’ world of the New Age, which is to say, from radically different epistemological assumptions and rhetoric than the assumptions and rhetoric that dominate mainstream politics. Relying on direct appeals to spiritual and religious ‘higher’ powers that are difficult for mainstream political figures to understand, she speaks entirely from and to her New Age audience and makes no effort to ‘translate’ her message for politicians.

Her message speaks powerfully to her core audience. We (Chickering and Turner) had the eye-opening experience of being retained by Williamson’s publisher to assist her in her 1997 book tour, and we saw—*live*—her powerful appeal. We saw her in various venues, including some in Washington, DC, when she inspired 500 activists over an entire weekend meeting Washington “policy pros” and speaking to enthralled crowds at churches, fund-raisers, and book signings, uplifting them by reinvigorating the soul of America into the political process. Her purpose, which continues today, was to promote the ‘spirit of America’ into Washington politics.

Media figures have struggled to understand her appeal, and many of them, commenting on her final appeal to Love in the first debate could only relate to it by laughing.

Although we understand why her appeal, articulated in ‘soft’ New Age terms, cannot reach beyond her own audience, we are interested in her because when one ‘deconstructs’ her rhetoric, it becomes clear that *she brings essential pieces of the Matrix into the debate*. One way to state possibilities raised by her candidacy is by this question: can the brittle, ‘objective’ political contests that control our governing institutions accept and harness the ‘subjective’ energetic outpouring that is emerging and becoming manifest in communities across the country and around the world?

The challenge to understand Williamson’s appeal to ‘LOVE’ is to relate a word normally used only in the most intimate, *personal* relationships to describe relationships that are entirely *impersonal* in the political world. That is, in fact, the central political challenge of our time: how to impart into

national politics the values of local politics and private life into national politics. These two political realms, national versus local, yield very different outcomes. In local and personal relationships people work cooperatively, while our national politics is torn apart by conflict, distrust and resulting political paralysis.

Local politics reflects the realities and truths of what people value *in private life*—which is *engaged, private interactions and contact*—while national politics and policymaking are driven by calculations of private (political) advantage, pitting opponents against each other in darkness-and-light morality plays, choreographed for the mass media addiction to conflict. James Fallows wrote a book exploring this very subject and exploring the same issues in national versus local politics, based on traveling 100,000 miles to every part of the country.

National policy-making is a ‘representative’ system, in which *empowered, active policymakers* ‘make policy’ for *disempowered, passive citizens* in an almost entirely impersonal, mechanistic system. Everybody is a machine in the mechanistic system of national politics, and that explains why so many people are alienated from it—because it forces everyone to be dead.

That is the world Marianne is trying to speak to in her larger mission to ‘transform the American political consciousness and encourage powerful citizen involvement’. Our interest in her is that more than any other candidate, she is working to import into national politics subjective, spiritual values, which are crucially important in both private life and local politics. This means deconstructing the word ‘love’ into the language of proposals for institutional and policy reform.

Marianne has made almost no effort to translate her spiritual appeals into policy proposals. One fleeting moment occurred in the first debate when she responded to assertions, led by Bernie Sanders, about ‘the right of health care for all.’ Williamson shot back that the health care system they were advocating was a system *focused on sickness, rather than health*. Her idea was that the subject being debated should be HEALTH not ‘spending money on health care’, which, in practical terms, meant spending money on Western, allopathic medicine and the American Medical Association alone while ignoring alternative modalities, including self-care.



The Healer Marianne Williamson

Her translation challenge is primarily for those in the Order Left quadrant, suffocating under a vision of relentless exploitation and repression, whose vision of hope is confined to proposals enforced by legal orders and the heel of a boot. They see no possibility for empowering ‘victims’ with the freedom quadrants, connecting people by transforming relationships with those ‘close by’ (from the Order Right).

They cannot see beyond the Order Left quadrant, commanding people ‘to be good’. They cannot see why programs fail everywhere that feature only commands because they are unaware of programs everywhere that are achieving positive results by empowering people, including the poor, to experience the empowering effect the Freedom Quadrants can bring to people in community (the Order Right). Their successes occur even working with the most ‘difficult’ populations in the most ‘difficult’ regions. Those experiences contain the lessons for accomplishing social change that are often called ‘miracles’.

When Marianne (as quoted above) affirms her belief ‘in a universal force that, when activated by the human heart, has the power to make all things right,’ she is right even if her words still fall short of speaking to political elites. She indicates she understands how to accomplish real policy change when she endorses the crucial element of ‘powerful citizen involvement.’

Focusing on Health would combine traditional health care with a variety of alternative care modalities, including self-care. Self-care would bring in community and connection, encouraging it, which is part of Williamson’s appeal to love as a metaphor. A really serious debate on the subject would focus on Health and would explore different components contributing to it without making false claims about the perfection of other health care systems without mentioning their severe problems.

In terms of the *Matrix*, Williamson’s appeal to Love is *a metaphor for integrating the Four Quadrants*. If you follow her ‘love’ logic, first treat others, as you want them to treat you. In our transpartisan political sense, this means being open to those in quadrants other than your own.

Williamson argues that our democracy will work only when people start listening to each other. Across the country local jurisdictions are promoting this by creating new, programs, policies, and processes that encourage the transpartisan values of personal engagement and listening to all voices.

When Marianne starts introducing into her stump speeches ideas for policy reform that promote active citizenship, working together promoting change that only active citizens can achieve, people will stop laughing.

The perspective presented here aligns with the futurist John Naisbitt's vision, which he first developed in his 1982 best-selling *Megatrends*, a corporate leaders' guide to the future. Naisbitt asserted, based on culling thousands of newspaper articles and interviewing dozens of experts in science, medicine, sociology, psychology, education, business, and theology, that in a world of technology, people long for personal and human contact.

We believe that a major cause of voter alienation from the political system comes from individuated citizens seeking empowerment to engage each other as change makers. It needs to happen in public spaces such as schools, health projects, law enforcement, and other arenas of social need. This vision is hardest to realize for the Order Left in relation to 'victims', following Identity Politics, unable to escape the Order Left Quadrant, and failing to see how freedom (FR and FL) is essential to facilitate *conscious connections* that are crucial to empower the disadvantaged and free them from their roles as 'victims'.

Conclusion

Conflict in American politics, both within the parties and between them, is one among several forces alienating voters and driving them away from the political system. When voters are so polarized, government is paralyzed. Institutional factors push both politicians and the media non-stop to sustain conflict.

Understanding and explaining these factors could produce a sensational media story, putting anyone who raises the issue in the center of the stage. Anyone who in effect runs against the media and candidates in both parties and explains that posture in serious ways would be on her way to instant super-stardom. Developing a policy agenda that draws from both sides and learns to identify how transpartisan proposals draw from and integrate the four quadrants will dominate all conversations.

Conflict and polarization undermine policies in all areas including foreign policy because no one can trust the government to sustain policies people can rely on. In an environment of such conflict no reform proposal has any chance to succeed. The longer this conflict continues, the more alienated people will become. It is time to start listening to positions that bring people together and have a chance to solve real problems. It is impossible to say that about any of the major positions in the current debate.

Endnotes

[1] They are not impossible, but they are not ‘natural’ for governments, which are used to promoting change by commands. *Educate Girls Globally* began in 2001 convinced that people in poor, traditional communities *can* mobilize, build skills, and act to shape new futures for their girls.

[2] Since 1417, we have been, for example, in an era of ‘*two Popes*’, representing competing visions of church authority: tradition-directed versus increasingly self-directed. At present, these conflicting visions are represented by Benedict and Francis, both living at The Vatican in Rome, as their respective followers vie for the soul of the Catholic Church.

[3] See www.educategirls.org.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

A. Lawrence Chickering is co-founder and co-executive editor of *The Transpartisan Review*. He has helped establish several public policy organizations. In 1985, he co-founded (with Nicolas Ardito-Barletta) the International Center for Economic Growth, which worked with economic policy organizations in more than 100 countries to promote economic and social reform. In 1999, he founded *Educate Girls Globally*, which works in India and will soon expand to Africa and the Middle East. In 1993, he published *Beyond Left and Right*. In 2008, he and James Turner co-authored *Voice of the People: The Transpartisan Imperative in American Life*.

James S. Turner, founding partner in the Washington, D.C. law firm of *Swankin & Turner*, is co-founder and co-executive editor of *The Transpartisan Review*. As one of the original Nader's Raiders, he directed the project and wrote the report, *The Chemical Feast: The Ralph Nader Study Group Report on Food Protection and the Food and Drug Administration*. He has served as Board Chair of Citizens for Health and Voice for HOPE (Healers Of Planet Earth). He has appeared before every major consumer regulatory agency, including the *Food and Drug Administration*, *Environmental Protection Agency*, *Consumer Product Safety Commission* and *Federal Trade Commission*, as well as the *Department of Agriculture* and the *National Institutes of Health*.

Anitha Beberg is the Founder and CEO of *Seva Exchange Corporation*, which works with organizations supporting blockchain for social impact and universal basic income, including *TimeBanks.org*, Mannabase, and Andrew Yang and Tulsi Gabbard's 2020 Presidential Campaigns. Anitha wants to use her software background to galvanize global volunteerism by reinventing timebanking services for the modern digital economy.

THE TRANSPARTISAN REVIEW

THE TRANSPARTISAN REVIEW is a digital journal of politics, society, and culture, exploring the apparent disintegration of the traditional political, social and cultural order from a transpartisan point of view. This stand-alone article, and the series it belongs to, shares this exploration of the transpartisan impulse.

EXECUTIVE EDITORS

A. Lawrence Chickering & James S. Turner

ADVISORY BOARD

Ralph Benko	Michael Murphy	Bill Shireman
Joan Blades	Michael Ostrolenk	John Steiner
Clare Lockhart	Saafir Rabb	Michael Strong

SUPERVISORY EDITOR

Andy Fluke

Direct inquiries to editor@transpartisanreview.com.

Unless otherwise noted, all rights to the material associated with this article remain with the author of the article or the original publication. Images are sourced from the public domain or used under the fair use guidelines set down by federal statute. All other material is copyright ©2016 - 2019 by *The Transpartisan Review*.

Visit us online at www.transpartisanreview.org for more illuminating transpartisan discourse.

Candidate images sourced from the candidate's election websites. The John Nesbitt image and the still from the television show Designated Survivor were sourced from publicly posted videos on YouTube.com. Election Day 1815 painting image from the Wikimedia Commons.