

Speaker 1:

We are in the process of wanting to get all the votes counted. The road to victory of any side is going to come through Michigan and through Detroit, and to stop the votes suggests to stop the very democracy that we are running and these persons are running to elect to uphold. So, we want every vote to count because our vote is our voice, and it will be counted, and the election process will be done. Things are secure on the inside, but of course, we have intimidating efforts on the outside, but we're not deterred. As goes Detroit will go Michigan, and Michigan will join the force of others to be able to say that we have voted. We have record turnout voting. And again, if you want to represent Michigan and Detroit, you ought to want every vote counted.

Speaker 2:

Who do you think these people are?

Speaker 1:

Well, these are persons who are passionate and they're consistent. They've been saying all along, they're going to suggest that it's rigged. They've been saying all along they're going to suggest that it's flawed or fake. But they've been saying that before now. We just need to be persistent, to make sure our voice and our voice gets counted, because as goes Detroit will be done so. I will say the Black vote in Detroit is as high as it has ever been, and we will determine the outcome because we've gone from picking cotton to picking presidents.

Sarah Kendzior:

I'm Sarah Kendzior, the author of the best selling books; *The View From Flyover Country* and *Hiding in Plain Sight*.

Andrea Chalupa:

And I'm Andrea Chalupa, a filmmaker and journalist and the writer and producer of the journalistic thriller, *Mr. Jones*.

Sarah Kendzior:

And this is *Gaslit Nation*, a podcast covering corruption in the Trump administration and rising autocracy around the world. Andrea and I have barely slept since last night, the beginning of election season, as I'm calling it. I haven't slept at all. We did a special *Gaslit Nation* immediate reaction episode for Patreon listeners only. So, if you want extra fun and doom, you can go listen to that.

Sarah Kendzior:

At the time that we recorded that last night, it was looking pretty grim. It was looking like Biden might lose the Electoral College, Trump had not yet declared his coup, and we were also losing the senate, losing seats in the House. This morning, it is now 11 o'clock Central Time, things are looking better for Biden. Biden has since won Arizona. So, he managed to flip a state that Trump had won before. They're saying right now, as I'm talking, that he has won Wisconsin and that puts them on a good road for an Electoral College victory. He has won more votes than any presidential candidate in US history.

Sarah Kendzior:

The fact that his fate—that his win—is in question despite this enormous popular vote win just speaks to how incredibly dysfunctional and dangerous this time is. But as of now, it looks like Biden is on the road to win the popular vote and the electoral vote, and then we'll have to deal with Trump's reaction to that which, judging by the entirety of his behavior the last four years as well as his statements last night, will be to deny the legitimacy of Biden's win and take it to the courts that he and Mitch McConnell have been carefully packing for the last four years, in particular the Supreme Court. As we've said in previous episodes, they are going for a repeat of Bush v. Gore. That's why they put three Bush v. Gore judges as the new Supreme Court justices.

Sarah Kendzior:

This is a very dangerous situation. If that happens, we still expect to see violence, protests, pandemic, lots of stuff going on. And Andrea has been all wired up today on Twitter, full of thoughts—

Andrea Chalupa:

Fired up and ready to go.

Sarah Kendzior:

And now she is going to share her wisdom with you.

Andrea Chalupa:

Yes, well, what a night, everybody. What a night. So, I'm feeling pretty much relieved that the election's over. I am grateful that it's November 4th-

Sarah Kendzior:

Is it though? Is it over, Andrea? [laughs] Sorry, go on.

Andrea Chalupa:

I am grateful for November 4th, Sarah. I do think that... I don't know, what do we want to start with?

Sarah Kendzior:

Just say it all. Just let it all spill out. Just savor this moment, this final countdown of our American winter.

Andrea Chalupa:

Final countdown. Okay, so everybody who likes to send us messages telling us that you are canceling your Patreon support and you refuse to listen to us again because you don't think things are as bad as we're telling you they are, or how dare we insult Queen Pelosi? Nobody pops a collar like Queen Pelosi. To those folks who like to let us know that you're not going to support us and all that stuff and that we're over, you canceled us, we're letting you know that we'll be right here waiting for you in 2024 when you're wondering how the hell did it get so close in the Electoral College with Ivanka Trump looking like she might be the first President of the United States that's a woman.

Andrea Chalupa:

You may leave us after hearing this episode, but you'll be back. And I promise you, you will be back because of people like you that refuse to deal with these issues that we finally have to come to terms with as a country, or the Trumps are going to be back in the White House, all right?

Andrea Chalupa:

So a lot of this was a reckoning for centrist Democrats. You can try to say, “No, it was Trump successfully labeling Biden as a socialist, especially in Florida, among the Cubans who are terrified by Fidel Castro.” You can say all that, but you're missing the larger story and the larger story is the same deep oozing wound that got us Trump in the first place in 2016, and that is people on the ground are really, really hurting, and they're desperate for leadership They're desperate for people that see them and that care.

Andrea Chalupa:

If you try to play both sides, if you're staying neutral in the face of actual authoritarianism, if you're doing anything to normalize these very real crises we're being hit with at the same time, you are somebody that's not going to be counted on. People need leadership right now. They're flocking to leadership, and that is why—Biden aside, the Senate we thought we'd win aside and we'll go into that later in the show—but I think the big story that people are overlooking, and they need to absolutely come to terms with is that the big House majority that Pelosi and her clique thought that they were going to expand, they did not sink those shots.

Andrea Chalupa:

In fact, this was a big backlash against Pelosi in this election. So far, the Democrats are holding on to the House, and guess who did manage to expand their presence in the House? The Squad. The progressive wing of the Democratic Party did very well. They won their primaries, as we saw, and now they've expanded their presence. And that is because they are not gaslighting the public. They're having real conversations with the public. They're being aggressive in taking moonshots on climate change, they're being aggressive in taking moonshots on staggering levels of income inequality, and they're also being very upfront about white supremacy and how it works and how it gave us Donald Trump.

Andrea Chalupa:

If you're not having those real conversations with the public—and yes, I know that they're dominating in their blue areas, bluer than blue, right? Pelosi told us these are candidates that you could put up a glass of water and it would win. Well, what I'm trying to tell you is that AOC is not a glass of water. AOC is also not the boogeyman that the pundits on TV (who tend to lean conservative) want us to believe that she is either. She is somebody that is leading a very real conversation—an adult conversation—with the American people and they're having it back with her by expanding her squad.

Andrea Chalupa:

Meanwhile, Pelosi is shrinking her party's support in these conservative districts because when you're wishy washy like Max Rose was, where Max Rose was taking on corruption and refusing to take big money in his race in 2018, and yet, he comes out against impeaching the most impeachable president ever. What kind of message are you sending people, Max Rose? I knew when you came out against impeachment, you were not going to get reelected. You killed your race with that, you understand?

Andrea Chalupa:

So, what we're trying to tell you is that what the electoral map can show us, what we've already known, is that America is being held hostage by a minority. That's thanks to the slave monument of the Electoral College. Of course, you have the Senate as well. We're in a minority tyranny hostage situation. That remains. The leadership that we need to have the tough adult conversations, like Pelosi, they're like a family having a very tense dinner.

Andrea Chalupa:

Pelosi is like Annette Bening in American Beauty. She's like that Annette Bening mom, where she just doesn't want to have those tough conversations around the dinner table and there's all these issues festering beneath that she's refusing to deal with. The Squad is dealing with those conversations and that's why they're expanding. That's why your gamble is losing ground. We promise you that once the Democratic Party owns up to this and stares reality in the face and says big things like, "It's time to abolish the Electoral College, a monument to slavery and white supremacy." If you start saying those things, you're going to energize the electorate.

Andrea Chalupa:

How do we know this? Because we saw this in the big blue wave. The big blue wave in 2018 showed up to impeach Donald Trump. They voted for accountability. They voted for the Democrats to get rid of this guy. That's what they thought they were getting. And what happened immediately after the big blue wave? Pelosi shrugged off impeachment and said, "He's just not worth it." And that mattered. We're telling you at that time that that mattered, and we told you what a disaster this was going to be for Pelosi in the next election, and we were right. We were right.

Andrea Chalupa:

If you've listened to Gaslit Nation for a while now, you know that the one episode where Sarah and I are both bawling our eyes out was the episode where Pelosi refused to impeach. That was such a betrayal. That was such a disaster. We saw, like Cassandra, our future imploding before us. What she continued to do was to drag her feet and she had her troll army online screaming at people like me and Sarah and trying to discredit us and promising 4D chess and that we had to trust the plan. It was like some centrist Democrat QAnon nonsense going on.

Andrea Chalupa:

When we finally got impeachment, after it was just the writing was on the wall. Trump was trying to steal the election by strongarming Ukraine—extorting Ukraine—into inventing something on Biden. When things reached a crisis level, finally, Pelosi pops her collar and we get impeachment, and people rejoice because Pelosi was doing the bare minimum because she was forced. She had no choice at that point. Then she screws it up by limiting the Articles of Impeachment and trying to get it wrapped up right away. Where instead, what she could have done is worked with a trailblazer like AOC, or any of her friends or advisors who work in cable news, and she could have curated a stunning lineup of live congressional hearings in Congress that would have broken through Fox News' disinformation wall. People would have been glued to that.

Andrea Chalupa:

She could have just had this whole, amazing, real life crime drama playing out in the House of Representatives. Instead, she treated impeachment like it was like her stepchild that she could never really love or get behind. She had that coldness the entire time. She wanted it to be over with. We lost all that valuable airtime, because we're up against disinformation. We keep telling you that. Far-right media is consolidating. Meanwhile, because of leadership in centrist Democrats, we're fractured. We're fractured and we're fighting for Republicans who are on our side (like the Lincoln Project) to do this messaging for us because we have a fractured movement on the Left when it comes to combating disinformation from the right effectively.

Andrea Chalupa:

That was a major missed opportunity in the impeachment hearings that were just tiny–tiny–compared to what they should have been.

Sarah Kendzior:

If she wanted to lose, I can't think of anything that she would have done differently. She fractured the Democrats. We had a massive blue wave. There was party unity. There were people from the Left to the center, working together. And what we wanted was accountability. What we wanted was an end to corruption. What we wanted was transparency, hearings, investigations.

Sarah Kendzior:

Quite honestly, during 2017 and 2018, the Democrats were doing these things. There were a number of hearings held during that period that were far more aggressive and in depth than anything that happened once Pelosi took over as Speaker, in which she began to just kill any attempt at accountability, any attempt at using the tools at the House's disposal like inherent contempt, enforcing subpoenas, all of these things that were necessary, the more dire the situation got. When Bill Barr came in, when Louis DeJoy came in, when actors came in that were blatantly, purposefully destroying the election, her response was, "Vote them out."

Sarah Kendzior:

He was impeached! He was impeached for attempting to rig an election and her response was always just, "Vote." We see the disaster of that response and we also see the awareness among citizens that this was a disastrous approach. I've been hearing this from people for a year and a half. I've heard from people who didn't want to vote for the Democrats anymore because of Pelosi, because what they wanted was accountability. But more than anything, they wanted someone who had their back. They wanted to feel that the Democratic Party wasn't abandoning them, that it was looking out for them and looking out for our country, which is why you see people like AOC becoming so popular and successful, and the same is true of Katie Porter, the same has long been true for Bernie Sanders, for Elizabeth Warren. These are representatives who are not shy about standing up to power. Whatever you may think of them in terms of their policies, their personalities, whatever, that is the trait that they have in common, and that is why they've managed to garner support, particularly among young people who look out into the world and just see profound abandonment, profound institutional failure and a scramble for basic survival.

Sarah Kendzior:

The really sad thing is that the other person who's very adept at doing this is Donald Trump. He is very good at making people feel like they're not alone, that they're part of a group, that they haven't been abandoned, that no matter what happens, he's got their back. Of course, he doesn't at all. He's letting everybody die of coronavirus, including his own base. He's looting our government. He's destroying our country. But in terms of his sheer demagoguery, in terms of the kind of inclusivity (limited, of course, to white people) that he promotes. He's very good at that.

Sarah Kendzior:

I got more marketing, more recruitment, from Trump and his GOP goons than I got from any Democrats. They look at a state like mine—they look at Missouri—and they blow it off. They don't make an attempt. They have a terrible ground game. And just one more thing I want to say about the Squad and Pelosi's

dismissive “a glass of water could have won these races”: the Squad are mostly Midwestern women. It's Rashida Tlaib, it's Ilhan Omar, it's Cori Bush for my district here in St. Louis.

Sarah Kendzior:

This whole thing that she tries to do—that Pelosi tries to do—especially when she talks about AOC, like this is just some rarefied coastal elite phenomenon, it is such projection. The people who really trust their representatives are the ones who are looking to these younger folks, and this also extends to Ayanna Pressley and to Katie Porter, and to so many others. They look at Pelosi and they see someone who is absolutely out of touch, not fighting for the American people, not fighting for her own party, and that's really the most intriguing thing to me, because this approach was destined to lead to a loss in the House.

Sarah Kendzior:

At this moment, I'm still a little trepidatious that in the end we might lose the House. I'm watching these undecided races that are leaning one way or another nervously because it's much closer than people predicted it would be. So yeah, this was a disastrous thing. I said many times, people would look back at 2019 and, eventually, the full horror of the time that was wasted and the opportunities that were lost and the suffering that could have been avoided is going to hit them. This is not just due to Pelosi; this is also due to other members of the House, it's due to Mueller and his failures, and his complicity. It's due to any institutional actor who just failed.

Sarah Kendzior:

I have to say, credit due to the Biden campaign because they seem to have watched all of this, learned from this, done outreach, gathered together a diverse coalition of officials to support Biden, to come out and talk about why this is important, why this was never about Biden as a candidate, this is about a system of government. This is about our country being able to continue. I think Biden understands this as well. He has more humility than any candidate we've seen in a while.

Sarah Kendzior:

They seem to be rejecting this cult of personality politics, which is incredibly, incredibly toxic and needs to go. They did a good job and it's just an incredible shame that there are people like Pelosi in this party bringing everybody else down. Some of her lackeys are gone, like her buddy, Donna Shalala lost her race. Shalala, who, of course, Pelosi appointed to the Oversight Committee despite her lack of experience in oversight, instead of Katie Porter who is the oversight machine. This is just a very typical example of the kind of "leadership" that we've seen from the House. The stakes are so high. You really need the best people out there in the best roles.

Sarah Kendzior:

It's just really awful to watch when so many Americans are suffering from the pandemic, from the economy, from rising fascism, from incredible corruption, and just the flippancy, the total lack of seriousness with which this is approached by her and some others in the House.

Andrea Chalupa:

Yeah. And to anybody rolling their eyes at us hearing all this, you're also the same people that are praying that Michigan and are grateful to Minnesota for going blue. Those are states...Minnesota, Trump

was all over Minnesota. He thought he had a chance in Minnesota, same with Michigan, and our democracy—the way the world looks at America—hinges on Michigan and also Minnesota.

Andrea Chalupa:

As Sarah pointed out, those are Squad states. That's why you take the squad seriously, because our freedom, our democracy, depends on their districts and the votes turning out in those districts. The Squad won in the 2020 election and Pelosi and her underperformers lost. You need to accept that and understand what it means. If you're still rolling your eyes, look at Katie Porter in bright red, Orange County, California. Look at what a money machine Katie Porter is for the Democratic Party, the donations she is raking in and how safe she is.

Andrea Chalupa:

Every time you see Katie Porter saying what needs to be said in a House hearing, those clips go viral and she raises more money for herself and the party. Katie Porter is a member of the Squad, mind you. So Katie Porter shows that that way forward is the only path ahead for us, not just as a party but as a country. We need to be bold, we need to be defiant, we need to take moonshots. That is how you rally people together and you deliver and you push and you do not shrug it off. You do not gaslight.

Andrea Chalupa:

It was just heartbreaking to watch Pelosi and her little foot soldiers going on TV saying, "Oh no, that blue wave wasn't about impeachment." Yes, it was. All those articles, the exit polls, all of it going in, asking voters, "what brought you here?" Impeaching Donald Trump. Accountability. There needs to be a major reckoning. Unfortunately, how it works is that if you bring a lot of money to the party and you're not threatening to the big corporate interests that float the Democratic Party currently, you get to be a committee head, you get to be a chairperson, and you get to be the Speaker. That's how these races are done internally. It's like the people that bring in more money—the rainmakers—they're the ones that get power in the party. It's the progressives that rely on smaller donations, but a lot of them that have to fight like heck, not only to get reelected without having to be on a corporate leash, but also to get a sizable role in actual party leadership and steering the soul of Democratic Party.

Andrea Chalupa:

It's an uphill battle for the Squad and plus, you have Pelosi well-fortified, not just within the party where people refuse to turn on her, but also the media as well.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yeah, this is not some... I don't know, petty, inconsequential concern. She is a danger to our democracy. I've been saying that for a long time. We've done episodes laying out her long history of collaboration with the GOP, including things like collaborating with white supremacists in the GOP—like Steve King and Bill Barr—to free migrant labor traffickers that abuse children. That's the kind of thing she does recreationally. Her refusal to impeach George Bush, or even consider it. All of the horrific things-

Andrea Chalupa:

She's simply outdated.

Sarah Kendzior:

I think it's worse.

Andrea Chalupa:

She's grooming people to be just as outdated as her.

Sarah Kendzior:

She's as great a threat—or not as great a threat, the biggest threat, obviously, is Donald Trump and his administration and its backers, this transnational crime syndicate masquerading as a government and people like Jared Kushner, and Bill Barr, and others from the inside. The second greatest threat is obviously Mitch McConnell and the Republican Party who also are corrupted by this syndicate. The third greatest threat is Nancy Pelosi and the controlled opposition that she has enabled—these Vichy Democrats who are not fighting for you and whose presence in roles of leadership threatens the very sovereignty and national security of the United States.

Sarah Kendzior:

I say that completely seriously. This is not a personality dispute. We are literally in danger with these people in power and I hope that responsible Democrats do everything possible to remove her from this position.

Andrea Chalupa:

Yeah, me too. But I don't think it's going to happen. So, what's the solution? You donate... The solution is you listen to our interview with Congresswoman Barbara Lee, who was the lone vote in Congress, of course, against giving Bush the right to invade Iraq, Afghanistan, her big historic vote there. Listen to our interview with Barbara Lee and donate to her super PAC. She's stuck having to have a super PAC because that's the way our election system is set up. You need money to try to go after these races.

Andrea Chalupa:

Now, given that this was a billion dollar election, a lot of money that the House Democrats threw at these races, where did it go? Money is not what solves it; messaging is what solves it. Being transactional is what solves it. You go to the voters, you say, "I know you're hurting, I see your pain, I see your fear. I see your fear for your children's future. Here's what we're going to do about it. We're going to be big and bold. We're going to take these moonshots."

Andrea Chalupa:

You need to bind your soul, Democratic establishment. You need to claim your soul and lead with your soul. That is why the Squad had a great night last night, and the Democratic establishment had a rough night, and I hope they finally wake up to it. And I'm talking just about the House. I'm talking just about the House.

Andrea Chalupa:

We can look at the Senate, too. I know the Senate—given all the money that went to these races too—it's a very slim showing now. It's still not decided. There is still a slim chance that Democrats can pick up a senate seat in Georgia, and possibly Maine, that hasn't been called yet. I don't know about Alaska. There's an independent that would vote with the Democrats, that's up in Alaska, and we're still looking at Gary Peters in Michigan. When we're recording this it's still early. A lot is still shaking out. But there is



a chance that maybe the Senate might be tied and Kamala Harris as VP would be the tiebreaker. That would be great. And it would be up to us then to force Democrats in the Senate to vote as they need to vote. That won't be easy. Don't expect a cakewalk there as we've seen in the past. Remember how much we had to fight just to get impeachment of the most impeachable president in US history?

Andrea Chalupa:

All of this comes down to messaging and moonshots. The people that have the good messaging and the moonshots, they're the ones that are growing their movement. That's a lesson to the rest of us. Now to, of course, the presidential race. It looks like Trump's voter suppression that he was doing in plain sight has been working really, really well. In 2016, we had Russia's very clear and open attack on our democracy and the election hacking, which led to the recount movements and put a big, fat stamp of illegitimacy on Trump because he's an illegitimate president. We've been in a constitutional crisis ever since.

Andrea Chalupa:

Now, in 2020, we have the Postal Service basically playing that role with a Trump Lackey—a major donor, Louis DeJoy—who has been purging the Postal Service before our very eyes. It's just so shocking and blatant what he's been doing. It's extraordinary, the level of corruption there and the stealing. And it's worked. It's done a really good job, as Trump needed it to.

Andrea Chalupa:

Here we have... I'm going to read off, Harry Litman, a legal affairs columnist for the LA Times writes on Twitter: "Big developing secondary story. As everyone feared, the United States Postal Service has dropped the ball on 300,000 ballots and says there's nothing they could have done about it because they had other mail to deliver and not enough staff. Scandalous and very possibly irredeemable." David Plouffe, who was the campaign manager and White House Senior Advisor for Barack Obama calls this "Historically scandalous. These are huge numbers."

Andrea Chalupa:

I want to add to that, because this whole conversation we've been having for four years now, Sarah and I, is about election hacking. Guys, if they could be so blatant in stealing the vote, look at what they're doing in plain sight to the mail! Why wouldn't they also hack the results where they need to without getting caught? Jennifer Cohn said that Karl Rove—who is another Paul Manafort, another Roger Stone, another Donald Trump. Karl Rove is just as evil and vile as corrupt as any of them. According to Jennifer Cohn, what she tried to draw our attention to is that if an election's close, it's easier to steal. You could just hack a little bit there and there without anybody suspecting a thing. Understand that for the first two years of Trump's presidency, the Left was divided over this issue. Most people ignored it and did not want to talk about it. It took Reality Winner sacrificing her freedom to go to prison to try to expose how widespread and accessible election hacking was, especially by the Russians in 2016.

Andrea Chalupa:

We did not have any popular movement to finally secure our elections. We interviewed on this show, David Shimer, who wrote the book, *Rigged*, which does the forensics on how the Russians stole the 2016 election for Donald Trump. David Shimer confirms in his book, "Our election systems remain vulnerable. We're only strong as our weakest link." And we have a lot of weak links out there.

Andrea Chalupa:

There's also this really disturbing reporting that just came out from NBC News, talking about how the Trump campaign asks Pennsylvania counties for sensitive election security information. "President Trump's campaign asked at least three counties in Pennsylvania for a rundown of highly specific election security plans, including ballot storage locations and transportation details, according to an email obtained by NBC News. The Pennsylvania Secretary of State has advised counties not to disclose election security information to any third parties and has reached out to the FBI."

Andrea Chalupa:

Isn't that crazy? "Election officials in Cumberland, Mercer and Monterey counties—all counties that are delaying mail and ballot canvassing until Wednesday morning—received the email from a Gmail address connected to a Trump campaign volunteer. Cumberland County Commissioner Gary Eichelberger said that in his 16 years in office, he has never seen anything like the Trump campaign's request." Why would they want that? Because they were so desperate to win, they were slowing down the mail right before our very eyes, deliberately and telling their supporters not to vote by mail to ensure their votes would get counted.

Andrea Chalupa:

They shoved through a totally unqualified Supreme Court Justice right before the election, and they kept saying openly that—Trump kept saying openly—that he was going to make sure that this election goes to Supreme Court, which it still can, because God knows how things are going to play out over these coming months.

Andrea Chalupa:

If they're doing all these corrupt things and steamrolling over all these norms before our very eyes, why do you think they would suddenly have the decency not to hack our elections? And I'm not saying that's what happened here, but I'm just saying us dummies on the Left didn't get our shit together and organize a popular movement to ensure that we had only hand-marked paper ballots. Instead, we were busy fighting each other, and discrediting each other, and slamming each other over this. Pure stupidity. We could have had full peace of mind by now over these four years if we could've united over this issue.

Andrea Chalupa:

We could have said, look, whether the election tally was hacked or not in 2016, let's make sure there's a zero debate next time around, and let's get this all secure, so we don't have to worry about this. Instead, election security remained the redheaded stepchild of the Voter Protection Movement. It was just something that no one wanted to touch because it had been so slandered, and people that spoke out about it are still being mocked today.

Andrea Chalupa:

All the conformists in the media just don't know how to talk about it, so they won't. What we need to do over the next four years is to finally, finally for the love of God, secure our elections and go to hand-marked paper ballots in all the states that need them. Okay? We should not be having this conversation anymore. That is the point we're trying to make. Yes, we know with 100% certainty that white supremacy is in the election results of 2020, and so is all the rampant disinformation. Those are in the election results of 2020.

Andrea Chalupa:

And so as part of fighting all this—as part of taking back our democracy—we have to not only confront misogyny, white supremacy, and violence, and disinformation, but also we need to finally, finally secure the vote. We still have work that we should have been doing these last four years that finally needs to get done, and election security is a big part of that work.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yeah, 100% everything you said. I had notes and you're just reading my mind. But it really is frustrating because four years ago, as I'm sure you remember, you got your first call ever from me at 3:45 AM, even though I didn't really know you. I only knew you from Twitter. It was because I had looked at the results and the margins for Missouri—a state that obviously I know well—and for other places were so skewed and so bizarre and arrived in the context of clear threats from Russia, bizarre behavior by the FBI, Trump openly threatening to rig the election thus forcing the Democrats into this position saying the election can't be rigged. Then when it was rigged, they had nothing to say.

Sarah Kendzior:

It is so depressing that four years later, we are back in this place, because yes, they never fully investigated this, and it became this hot topic issue that it shouldn't have. We should have full transparency in our elections. If election machinery is hackable, that needs to be contended with and investigated. Jenny Cohn has been doing the work. She's been doing the work that the government should have been doing and she's been threatened for it. I've been threatened for it when I would bring it up, when we did audit the vote in which we weren't saying that votes were changed. We were saying we need to do an investigation to see if votes are changed.

Sarah Kendzior:

We need to do an audit because it is quite possible that they have. We know that Russia had been hacking government agencies, the State Department, the DoD, the DNC, the RNC, and so on and so forth. We knew they had penetrated voter databases and then we get the same warnings this year that Russia is set to hack the election. Yet, back in 2016, they told us, "Oh, yeah, well, they just hacked and they got in, but no, they didn't change any votes." We were somehow supposed to believe that, that out of the kindness of their hearts, the Kremlin and the generous soul of Donald Trump decided to not change votes in the pivotal states that Paul Manafort had emerged on Twitter, suddenly, to announce were going to surprisingly go for Trump. And then they did. That was Wisconsin, Michigan, and Pennsylvania. They were flaunting! This was a clearcut plot and the only thing that needed to be done was gather evidence to see, are they just bragging and shit-talking or did they really do it?

Sarah Kendzior:

Signs pointed to, they really did it, but we never got an answer, even after Obama administration officials admitted that votes were likely falsified, which is covered in David Shimer's book. They didn't do it even when Harry Reid—when he was Senate Minority Leader—warned that they planned to do this. So I have some serious questions about the results of this election.

Sarah Kendzior:

Like we said, the information is coming out now, but we're already seeing weird things going on in southern Texas, very dramatic flips from 2016 among groups that you wouldn't expect to overwhelmingly be voting for Trump, voting for Trump. I have questions about Lindsey Graham's win.

And again, like Andrea said, this doesn't negate the horrific fact that millions and millions of Americans voted for Donald Trump knowing full well what he is, that he's a white supremacist, that he's letting a pandemic spread across America, that he's a pathological liar, and they all have their reasons.

Sarah Kendzior:

But I also lean towards... I'll just say, we need a full audit of this election. We need to have done in 2020 what they refused to do in 2016 and in this digital age, this just needs to be a constant part of the process. You know? We need to validate the integrity and ensure the integrity of any kind of electronic vote. And when we've seen so many brazen attempts to rig this election—everything from the destruction of Postal Service infrastructure, to Trump bragging that he's going to rig the election, to suppression of voting rights, to court battles that are aimed only at ensuring a GOP win—there's a lot of evidence pointing in this direction.

Sarah Kendzior:

This is just another issue that needs to be investigated, and for some reason, it's still treated as a forbidden topic, and I don't get quite why now. I think in 2016, it had a lot to do with their institutions refusing to admit that they had failed to protect the United States so badly. But we all know that Trump is failing to protect the United States. That's why he's in office. He's in office to let the United States go unprotected from foreign threats so that the oligarchs, plutocrats and mafiosos that surround him can benefit off of that lack of protection and that lack of security.

Sarah Kendzior:

So it's a valid thing to look at. I hope if there is a Biden administration that this is something they consider, and at the least, I hope this is just something that we factor into all future elections. You get a vote audit, you double check, you take this issue of cybersecurity seriously.

Andrea Chalupa:

Yeah, it's ridiculous.

Sarah Kendzior:

I wonder if it explains some of the poll discrepancy as well. I know that there's great frustration with-

Andrea Chalupa:

Yes! Nate Silver, become an election security advocate. You pollsters, if you want to save your jobs, if you want to remain relevant... you know, fool us once, right? But you guys have to become election security advocates, because it's like these polls being so historically off in a lot of these places again. We're still digging through these numbers, there's still a lot of dust to settle, but you have seen commentary online going, "damn, the polls are off here and there, and they're off there". It doesn't take much to steal an election. It's close, you just bump up a few points in that precinct, who's going to know?

Andrea Chalupa:

Our point is random audits to keep the criminals on their toes, and also hand-marked paper ballots. You have had really good voices speaking out about this, so I guess we're going to have to just keep banging

on this drum and force the democrats to finally give us all the peace of mind that we deserve. It's very simple.

Andrea Chalupa:

We do have some progressive wins. There's a great account following all this stuff very closely on Twitter. His name's Daniel Nichanian, you can find him on Twitter as @taniel. He wrote, "Florida increased the minimum wage to \$15 in a referendum. Four states legalized marijuana. Oregon became the first state to decriminalize drug possession. California expanded voter eligibility via Prop 17. Progressive wins in District Attorney, sheriff races in Charleston, Austin, Orlando, likely Colorado and Georgia."

Andrea Chalupa:

I share this saying here's some progressive wins, and one man commented on Twitter that "marijuana legalization isn't progressive". That's right, friend. That's the attitude we want. None of these common sense measures like voting rights and universal health care should be seen as progressive. They're common sense, and the progressive movement has embraced the decriminalization of marijuana and other drugs. And last night was their night, and the rest of America didn't blink an eye because all these issues have been normalized to the point where they're no longer seen progressive.

Andrea Chalupa:

That's the leadership—that's the soul we're talking about—that the democrats need to embrace. Nancy Pelosi, and your cool kids table in the high school cafeteria, the Democratic Party, right? You head cheerleaders over there looking at the goth girls in the Squad, you guys can absolutely normalize all of these issues that the American people are desperate for. That's called leadership. When you unite around this messaging of all these Green New Deal, universal health care, legalizing marijuana in every state to bring in much needed tax revenue and to decriminalize Black Lives Matter, right?

Andrea Chalupa:

Remember, Nancy Pelosi got stuck on when she was asked by Joy Reid, "Do Black lives matter?", she had an "all lives matter" answer about a year or so ago. Leadership sets the culture. Leadership sets the messaging. It's okay to have a soul. It's okay to embrace a soul and to push that messaging and when you do, all those issues that are common sense—like human rights and equality, and universal health care, and an increased minimum wage—guess what? They become normalized and mainstream. That's called leadership.

Andrea Chalupa:

What we've seen in the progressive wins last night are grassroots progressive movements building these wins. Imagine how much farther we can go and how much safer we can be if Pelosi and her clique provided this leadership that we desperately need?

Sarah Kendzior:

Yep. No, I agree completely and I hope that others in the House have the fortitude to recognize the severity of this situation, because as I said, this is a national security situation. When you mentioned before that week back in March of 2019 when Pelosi announced she wasn't impeaching, I just want people to know the context of that week. That was also the week that the Mueller probe abruptly

ended. It was the week that Manafort was given a slap on the wrist in court and it was said by the judge who had been threatened that he had led an "otherwise, blameless life."

Sarah Kendzior:

We were watching every institution that was supposed to protect us from a mafia state, from a state that murders people, they murder journalists, they threaten to kill ambassadors like Marie Yovanovitch, they threatened to kill regular citizens. We were watching this, and we are people who have also been targets of this regime. Then we saw the House that people worked so hard to sweep in with this blue wave, just say, we're not worth it, our lives aren't worth it.

Sarah Kendzior:

That is definitively the message of this House is that none of it's worth it. It's not worth it to go after Bill Barr. It's not worth it to go after Mike Pompeo. America is not worth it. You're not worth it. If you're not a big money donor, you're not worth it. There's other things Pelosi has said that are disturbing, greatly. I want to make sure I quote them correctly, so I'll deal with them in another show. But it's time for something new.

Sarah Kendzior:

If the Biden administration gets in—which I really hope they do, I hope they get past all this court bullshit, that's the direction that it's heading—we need to pressure them in the same way that we have pressured the House, and pushed them to impeach against the will of the leadership because it was the right thing to do. I think Biden is far more receptive to accountability—to following the rule of law—than Nancy Pelosi, but there's still going to be forces within both the Democratic Party and within these Never Trump Republicans (or just Republicans in general, and so on) that are going to embrace what they think is common sense but is really a death sentence for this country. Because this is a time where we need to tell the full truth. We need to embrace total honesty. We need to call out all the flaws in our institutions and we need to bring those who have decimated human rights, civil rights and just our way of life over the last four years, we need to bring those people to justice.

Sarah Kendzior:

The Jared Kushners and Stephen Millers of the world, these people who are treated as untouchable, I'm always encouraging people to look at the Trump administration, look who's managed to stay in the whole time and think to yourself, why are those people viewed as indispensable? Why is Stephen Miller still there? Why is Steve Mnuchin still there? All these evil Stephens.

Sarah Kendzior:

But there's a core crime cult here that's also been put in charge of the coronavirus—along with people like Mike Pence—that I think are unusually dangerous and they've been treated as untouchable the whole time. What we need now is confirmation that no one is untouchable. No one gets to live above the law. No one gets a little pat on the back and gets to leave the White House if Biden manages to get in. There will be no moving on. There will be no forgiveness. There will only be justice. That's the non-negotiable answer to what we expect of this administration and we're going to relentlessly hound you until you get it—until we get it—because we're owed that as Americans who have had to suffer. Most of all, the people who have suffered the most—the most marginalized and vulnerable people of this country—they're owed that.

Sarah Kendzior:

I hope people get their values straight, because there's so much that's depressing about this election. It's depressing that so many people voted for Trump. It's depressing that our election security is still in tatters, even though it's never been more overt what the threat is. And it's depressing that the Democratic Party itself wouldn't stand up for the American people, even in the midst of a pandemic. But I am encouraged, somewhat, by Biden, by the Squad, by the more outspoken and activist members of this party, by all those people who aren't holding a particular office right now like Beto O'Rourke or honestly, even Pete Buttigieg, who's been very good on Fox News at countering this disinformation campaign. That might sound like a small thing but it's actually very important and it's difficult to do.

Sarah Kendzior:

There are a lot of good people out there and it's just a matter of those good people getting into positions of power, getting into positions of influence, and never bowing down to this corrupt corporate machine that has subsumed our politics and abandoned our people. There is a possibility for a better future—for a better country—but you're going to have to fight very hard and be vigilant not just against the obvious enemy, but against the enemies within.

Andrea Chalupa:

Very well said. And maintain the long view, because if you listened to our election night special last night on Patreon for our supporters there, we stressed the long view. The fact that Texas was even in play is a huge deal. That is important progressive infrastructure that's being laid out on the ground there, and that's going to help us election cycle after election cycle. We are going to have rebounds there moving forward, as well as Georgia.

Andrea Chalupa:

Look at what Stacey Abrams has done in Georgia. When Brian Kemp stole the governor's race from her with all that voter suppression in 2018, Stacey Abrams didn't succumb to her despair; she fought back. She brought all these court cases that they won to secure the vote in Georgia in 2020 and now Georgia is in play. We still don't, as of this taping, know the results there yet but it's going to be close, and that's thanks to Stacey Abrams and the work she did. And guess what? She's going into Mississippi and calling Mississippi a swing state and she's going to continue her work there and in other southern states.

Andrea Chalupa:

Please understand, for a post Civil War country that had rampant Nazi ideology, that created a holocaust against countless people—Black and brown people—and created generations of trauma, America, given that we're born out of fascism and genocide, we're doing really damn well, okay? If you accept the fact that America is a far-right country, and that we're coming out of that—that we're trying to evolve away from that for the sake of ourselves and also the rest of the world—we have a lot to be grateful for in terms of what went on last night.

Andrea Chalupa:

So, please, maintain the long view. When I started out my first job out of college, I was a community organizer in swing state, Oregon. Swing state Oregon no longer exists. It's now solidly blue, Oregon. As much as Donald Trump tried to rally up his supporters with his mobs strategy—the Nixon strategy—of creating mob riots in Portland, thinking that might help him win, Oregon just maintained blue. Not only that, Oregon is the first state to decriminalize drug possession—not just marijuana, but heroin,

methamphetamines, cocaine—and that matters because people are going to be getting the treatment they need for any addictions that come up instead of being thrown in prison where they could rot away.

Andrea Chalupa:

That matters. The progress that I personally have seen Oregon make over the last 15 years or so, that makes me hopeful. That makes me hopeful. So please don't take for granted that a lot of the swing states of yesterday are now solidly blue. Virginia, my God. Virginia was called so early and no one seemed to notice. So please, please, please look at this as the growing pains of America growing away—evolving away—from fascism and a genocidal ideology. It's going to be a bumpy ride. It's going to be painful. And the way we protect ourselves, always, is by securing and expanding the vote. We do that by having strong leadership that fights for the soul of our nation.

Andrea Chalupa:

Our discussion continues and you can get access to that by signing up on our Patreon at the truth teller level or higher.

Sarah Kendzior:

We want to encourage you to donate to your local food bank, which is experiencing a spike in demand. We also encourage you to donate to Direct Relief at [directrelief.org](http://directrelief.org) which is supplying much needed protective gear to first responders working on the frontlines in the US, China and other hard hit parts of the world.

Andrea Chalupa:

We encourage you to donate to the International Rescue Committee, a humanitarian relief organization helping refugees from Syria. Donate at [rescue.org](http://rescue.org), and if you want to help critically endangered orangutans already under pressure from the palm oil industry, donate to the orangutan project at [theorangutanproject.org](http://theorangutanproject.org). Gaslit nation is produced by Sarah Kendzior and Andrea Chalupa. If you like what we do, leave us a review on iTunes. It helps us reach more listeners and check out our Patreon it keeps us going, and subscribe to us on YouTube. We are everywhere, world domination, 2021.

Sarah Kendzior:

Our production managers are Nicholas Torres and Karlyn Daigle. Our episodes are edited by Nicholas Torres and our Patreon exclusive content is edited by Karlyn Daigle.

Andrea Chalupa:

Original music in Gaslit Nation is produced by David Whitehead, Martin Vissenberg, Nick Farr, Demien Arriaga and Karlyn Daigle.

Sarah Kendzior:

Our logo design was donated to us by Hamish Smyth of the New York based firm, Order. Thank you so much, Hamish.

Andrea Chalupa:

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