

Gaslit Nation Transcript

16 November 2022

“Election Breakdown”

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/election-74712528>

[intro - theme music]

Sarah Kendzior (00:00:10):

I'm Sarah Kendzior, the author of the bestsellers, *The View From Flyover Country* and *Hiding in Plain Sight* and of the book, *They Knew: How a Culture of Conspiracy Keeps America Complacent*, out now.

Andrea Chalupa (00:00:23):

I'm Andrea Chalupa, a journalist and filmmaker and the writer and producer of the journalistic thriller, *Mr. Jones*, about Stalin's genocide famine in Ukraine, the film the Kremlin does not want you to see.

Sarah Kendzior (00:00:36):

And this is *Gaslit Nation*, a podcast covering corruption in the United States and rising autocracy around the world. And so for those of you who don't know, I'm recovering from surgery. Mercifully, I was unconscious and heavily drugged the day after the election. So that means Andrea is going to give you the bulk of our post-election roundup. I have lots of questions about strange occurrences, strange things that happened, but I'm gonna pass it over to her so she can kick it off with the outlook. As of today, this is Tuesday... I don't know, whatever day it is.

Andrea Chalupa (00:01:17):

[laughs] November 15.

Sarah Kendzior (00:01:18):

[laughs] Thank you. Tuesday. I am off of the pain pills despite what this sounds like. Tuesday, November 15th at about noon central time, so whatever information we're giving you, that is the time we're recording it. Trump has not yet announced anything, for example. If he does do that, we'll try to do a follow up. Ugh. Yuck. God. Give me back my drugs and my anesthesia. Anyway, Andrea, what happened last week?

Andrea Chalupa (00:01:43):

Yeah, so this is a real election recap update for Sarah. Literally, I'm telling her, “Here's what happened last week when...” Okay, so first I want to pay tribute to our *Gaslit Nation* community. We have an extraordinarily wonderful group of listeners across the country and around the world who showed up to fight like hell, fight fascism, and I got to meet some of you guys and I was so blown away in all of these phone banks that we're doing. And so I wanna read a letter we received from one of our listeners over Patreon. He supports the show on Patreon and I met him at a recent phone bank and I asked if I could share this letter that he wrote to us because it's an example of how we did what we did in these midterms in standing up to fascism and defying the polls, defying the expectations of a red wave.

Andrea Chalupa (00:02:36):

It's people like this multiplied across the country. And I'm so grateful for people like this and I'm gonna read the letter now. It's from Ray. He writes, "Hi, Andrea, Sarah, and the *Gaslit Nation* team. I wanna thank y'all—" And Ray's in Texas, alright?—"I wanna thank y'all for putting on the phone bank events from Mandela Barnes and Lauren Underwood. It's great to see that the calls for Underwood helped and still keeping fingers crossed for Barnes. It was a good way to spend Election Eve, and I was ecstatic to be picked for the signed book and movie poster. That's a hell of a better prize than the damn lottery." [laughs] That's right, Ray. "A few hours after the phonebanks, I hopped on a bus from Austin to McAllen, Texas to help with election day get-out-the-vote efforts. We managed to keep Vincent Gonzalez in his new district and vote out the right-winger Maria Flores, that transplanted Texas resident Elon Musk proudly voted for."

Andrea Chalupa (00:03:28):

"Unfortunately, we were unable to do the same for a great progressive Michelle Vallejo running in the newly gerrymandered 15th district. We hoped her race would've gone better, but whatever forces and suppressions propelled Abbott over Beto here took Vallejo as another victim. At least we were seeing the building of a progressive base in the Rio Grande Valley, which will pay off in the future." Absolutely. "Hopped on another bus at 11:00 PM and made it back to Austin in time for work today. Looking forward to listening to your episode later today. Thank you all for what you do. And one more thing about Michelle Vallejo, listening to her speak reminded me of the first time I heard Cori Bush speak in person when she was helping the Bernie Sanders get-out-the-vote efforts in 2020. Cori Bush was so inspiring that afterwards I gave her my cowboy hat, and I have given other hats away and have reasons for doing so, but I've taken enough of y'all's time and will save the story for another time."

(00:04:19):

"Sarah, you have one really damn good representative up there in Missouri." Aw, thank you Ray. All right, Sarah, so here's what you missed. [laughs]

Sarah Kendzior:

Okay.

Andrea Chalupa:

And so obviously, as we all know, Dems keep the Senate, looks like the GOP's keeping the House, thanks to Republican Sean Patrick Maloney, the disastrous Vichy Democrat chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, who made history as being the rare chair of the DCCC to lose his own election. This rarely ever happens.

Sarah Kendzior:

On purpose. I swear to God, it's on purpose.

Andrea Chalupa:

It's completely on purpose, completely on purpose. You know when we talk about Vichy Dems? This is who we're talking about.

Sarah Kendzior (00:05:04):

<affirmative> The call is inside the house and it's like the killer from *Scream*. Go on.

Andrea Chalupa (00:05:08):

Sean Patrick Maloney is uber rich. The guy has a 7,000 square foot house in the district that he ran and lost in. I have nothing against rich people. I have something against rich people that try to stop other people from becoming rich or aspirational or just basically achieving the American dream. And that's essentially what Sean Patrick Maloney stands for. He stands for greed. We know that because like typical Republicans/Vichy Democrats, he's pro fracking, which is very unpopular in that part of New York, the Hudson Valley area, which is a beautiful, plush area. Sean Patrick Maloney in the district that he should have ran in, right next to him—the district that he left—the Democrat in that district won on an environmental platform. He won in the district Sean Patrick Maloney abandoned to go run in this new district. So pro fracking Republican/Vichy Democrat Sean Patrick Maloney knifed in the chest—not in the back, in the chest—a native son of the Rockland County District, New York 17 that he chose to run in, Mondaire Jones.

Andrea Chalupa (00:06:11):

Mondaire Jones is from the district, born and raised. Born and raised in this Hudson Valley area, born and raised. Mondaire Jones is an openly gay Black man, young, a rising star progressive in the Democratic Party, currently a member of Congress. This was his district, this was his home. This is where he was born and raised, and he represented his native district in Congress. And he was one of the superstars, the future of the Democratic party; young, fresh, progressive, interesting, visibility—showing young gay kids that they too could rise up and be members of Congress, showing young Black kids that they too could rise up and become members of Congress. What did super rich pro fracking Republican Vichy Democrat Sean Patrick Maloney do? He knifed young, progressive Mondaire Jones in the chest and stole his district from him and said, “As the chair of the DCCC, I'm now running in your district.”

Andrea Chalupa(00:07:20):

“I'm pushing you out. Too bad for you. It's now my district.” And Mondaire Jones will not be in Congress because of this. A rising star of the Democratic Party was pushed out by a leader, one of the senior members of the Democratic Party. They eat their own in the Democratic Party right now. And Nancy Pelosi is clearly okay with this. Sean Patrick Maloney is her guy. And that's very important because it ended up biting Sean Patrick Maloney. He had a tougher time. As we saw, he lost his race. There was an article that came out that said one of the reasons why he lost his race is because people remembered what he did to Mondaire Jones. Mondaire Jones is one of them. Mondaire Jones is of the community, and he was betrayed publicly—ruthlessly—by Sean Patrick Maloney and the voters in that district just didn't like the guy for doing that.

Andrea Chalupa (00:08:11):

They didn't wanna vote for him. Some did hold their noses and vote. And not only that, Sean Patrick Maloney had opened disdain for the grassroots of the area. He didn't reach out to the Indivisible group, he didn't have a ground game, and he basically slept on his district. When it became clear that he was going to lose, he took money—millions of dollars—and pumped it into adrenaline like that scene in *Pulp Fiction* where she gets stabbed in the chest with the adrenaline needle. He tried to do that with his district to revive his dying campaign, pumping millions of dollars which he took from other campaigns that needed that money that were razor edge, that stood a better chance of winning.

Sarah Kendzior (00:08:54):

And that is an emblematic strategy, yes, of the DCC? That there are all these races across the country that could have been won had people actually been funded adequately, but instead they either funded Nazis because they thought the Nazi would be easy to beat or they hoarded the money for themselves

or they spent it unwisely? And I will also add this is money that is being given to them by Russian oligarch proxies like Len Blavatnik, which people don't wanna look into. Am I correct in this assessment? Is this generally the way things played out?

Andrea Chalupa (00:09:24):

Well, Sean Patrick Maloney did pump up the Nazis in the Republican primaries. There was that controversial move where the Democrats were giving in some cases millions to Republican MAGA hats in the Republican primaries, and people were appalled by this. It looks like that gamble so far has largely paid off because what this election came down to was several things—which we'll talk about this episode—but one was quality candidates. When it came down to, “Will you vote for the Democrat no matter who it is or the crazy person?” people would always vote against the crazy person. But the larger catastrophe of Sean Patrick Maloney is that it really feels like... When we look at the miracles in Michigan, how Michigan Democrats just dominated, if we look at the miracles in Arizona where the Arizona Democrats just dominated, when we look at the miracles in Nevada where the Nevada Democrats just dominated for the most part in a very tight race, what we are reminded of is where there's a will, there's a way. If you wanna win, you will win or come very close to winning.

Andrea Chalupa (00:10:37):

And we simply did not have that in New York state. And we lost winnable races in the House because there clearly, under Sean Patrick Maloney's leadership, wasn't a will to win. And you have to wonder, given the track record of Sean Patrick Maloney—he's a super wealthy guy, he's pro fracking in a part of New York state that's very environmental, he had no problem publicly humiliating and betraying and pushing out a rising star progressive in Congress—I mean, it's very clear he was serving the mega donor class in a midterm election where the Democratic Party was raising handover fist small dollar donations from regular people across the country, just a war chest amassed from regular people. They did not need the mega donor class. The Republicans, which did really badly in this election—they didn't get their red wave—the Republican Party is propped up by mega donors. The Democratic Party this election was not.

Andrea Chalupa(00:11:43):

It was people like you and me donating across the country, even beyond what we could comfortably afford right now in our fixed family budgets. That is who gave a historic, massive war chest to the Democratic Party. Instead of serving those interests, instead of seeing that writing on the wall, Sean Patrick Maloney was very clearly serving the mega donor class. It's like he did that by tripping the Democratic Party just as they were reaching the finish line, right? It's like he sabotaged his own party. He put a massive amount of money into the campaigns of other Vichy Democrats, like Gottheimer over in New Jersey who didn't need it. And meanwhile, he was starving the campaigns—deliberately—of progressives like Christy Smith, who we at *Gaslit Nation* made calls for in California's 27th district. Christy Smith was not quiet about losing. She went to Twitter with a very thoughtful thread breaking down how she was massively outspent by the Republican Party. Massively.

Andrea Chalupa (00:12:48):

And the Democratic Party ignored her, starved her. Not only that, they made sure that she would blow through her own resources by giving her a primary that she had to fight for. So by the time she got outta that bruising primary against the Democratic establishment's appointed candidate for that district, she was weaker. And keep in mind, she nearly won this district last time around by 333 votes. 333 votes. And yet the Democratic Party, instead of saying, “Hey Christy Smith, you nearly won this district last time around by 333 votes, we're gonna get behind you. We're gonna make sure you win it this time.” Instead of seeing the writing on the wall, the Democratic Party establishment decided to primary her.

Sarah Kendzior (00:13:36):

Yeah, well those primaries, I mean, that's a disaster unto its own and I think there's a couple of takeaways from this election and one is, as Andrea has rightly said, this was an election where people individually fought back. People *did* understand the threat to democracy. People *did* care about that, despite what all the pundits were saying. People turned out in droves *once again*, in particular young people and in particular young women. People *did* care about the threat to reproductive rights. So all the horse shit that pundits were selling you once again was wrong. The thing that is holding us back—besides the fact that we are a burgeoning mafia state, but this goes hand in hand with that—is the lack of campaign finance reforms. It's all of these proxy networks that want to manipulate our elections, often for foreign countries. AIPAC is a major offender in this regard.

Sarah Kendzior (00:14:33):

Saudi Arabia is a major offender. There was just a new article about the UAE and obviously Russia, which now has much, much less money. But we've covered that extensively in the past. The types of offenders that are out there, they're people who don't really have loyalty to a particular country often. They are plutocrats. They are oligarchs. They are people who want to assert control. They want to destroy dissent. They want to annihilate the ability of lawmakers to pass certain policies and they don't care about the rights of Americans. And so I watched this play out in St. Louis with Cori Bush, who they went out of the way to try to primary through fake groups, you know, some group called "Progressives for Missouri, Inc." It didn't exist. It was just a branch of AIPAC under another name. They wasted so much time and they damaged relationships within the Democratic Party so badly.

Sarah Kendzior (00:15:30):

I look back to 2017/2018 before the Democrats won the House and as a party they were in much better shape because everyone was kind of on the same page and they were not backstabbing each other so relentlessly. That backstabbing is a product of one, Pelosi and her style of leadership in putting people like Maloney in charge of things like the DCCC, but also their incredibly shady, awful dark money donor network, which is not as bad as the Republicans but is really out there. And you've got the Sam Bankman-Fried case now hovering over all of this and it's just disgusting. It makes me really angry because people really put their heart and soul into protecting this country and trying to protect their future and trying to get back their basic rights. And they are absolutely betrayed from within and then just told over and over, "Give us more money, suck it up. Oh, it's your fault."

Sarah Kendzior (00:16:26):

That's coming now. It's not clear, completely, yet that the Democrats have lost the House, but it looks like it's heading that direction. As soon as that is finalized, then will come the backlash. All the people that they're thanking for turning out the vote and getting the Senate for the Democrats—Black voters, young people and so on—they are now going to blame. They're gonna be like, "Oh, you didn't vote hard enough. You didn't work hard enough." They do this every goddamn cycle. Y'all worked hard enough. Y'all did just fine. And they have betrayed you.

Andrea Chalupa (00:16:59):

And you might be saying, "Wait a minute, the Democrats came close to holding the House and it's going to be such a thin majority that Kevin McCarthy and the Republicans will hold in the House, that it's a pyrrhic victory, basically. The Republicans are gonna be chaotic there and the Democrats will have a powerful hand to play against them in the House." And you might think, "Well, Sean Patrick Maloney is head of the DCC, he should get some credit for Democrats defying expectations of a red wave. There were polls saying that Republicans would pick up 30 seats, would have a 30 seat lead or something like

that in the House and that didn't happen, so shouldn't Sean Patrick Maloney get credit?" No! Absolutely not because it was the environment that propelled Democrats. It was people like you and me who were phone banking when we didn't feel like phone banking, who were cutting stuff out of their family budget to make room for donations to the candidates we need in positions of power to protect us.

Andrea Chalupa (00:18:02):

This was the first major election since all of us as a country watched in horror a violent attempted coup, of police officers being beaten ruthlessly, of police officers dying by suicide in the weeks that followed, of amassed trauma, living through one of the darkest chapters of America's history. This was the first major election since that so of course we see what's happening. We believe our eyes and our ears. We're trying to protect ourselves. It's like we're in survival mode, as we keep saying on this show. So that's what the Democrats are benefiting from. And on top of that, to really emphasize that point and throw gasoline on it: the theocrats that were packed on the Trumpian Supreme Court by a corrupt criminal—career criminal who was brought to power with the help of a genocidal mass murdering mafia state of Russia—those theocrats then overturn 50 years of precedent with *Roe v. Wade*.

Andrea Chalupa (00:19:04):

Taking away a right that we've lived with as the air we breathe, endangering the lives of countless people and opening the eyes of so many people, including Republican women in so-called red states who are facing death because of the party they had been standing by for so long. There was one story of a woman in South Carolina that nearly died because she had to carry her lost fetus because she couldn't get an abortion in South Carolina. As we keep saying on the show, reality is catching up with people. And so it wasn't Sean Patrick Maloney doing anything special for the DCCC in these House races (other than pumping millions of dollars into the Nazis during the Republican primaries), it was really just reality and people being radicalized by reality and fighting like hell for their own protection and for their own survival. You had a record number of women—young women—registering to vote.

Andrea Chalupa (00:20:00):

We saw the miracle in Kansas, where Kansas unified to protect abortion rights in Kansas. We saw Democrats doing extremely well and all of these special elections that were being held in the months leading up to the midterms. This was not a red wave because it was a Roe wave and that had nothing to do with Sean Patrick Maloney. And instead, instead of taking advantage of this opportunity, he worked against it. He tripped Democrats as they were running ahead in the race towards the finish line for the House. And he did that by starving progressive candidates who needed the money to go over the finish line. And he did it by being a jackass in his own district. And he did it from the jump when he got this high stakes midterms started by knifing in front of everyone a rising star in the Democratic Party, Mondaire Jones. That just set the stage of where things were headed. That was like, this is not good. You need to unite or die. You need to unite or die. And Sean Patrick Maloney chose to die.

Sarah Kendzior (00:21:12):

He chose to kill. I mean, that's what I feel like has happened. And I gotta say, it's real interesting watching this play out from Missouri, from one of those states that everyone likes to blame for everything going wrong in America, and of course there's plenty of blame to be had here. We have terrible representatives and we have a gerrymandered system and we're the dark money capital of the country and blah, blah blah. BuUuUt, where was the House lost? Where was the great defeat? It's New York! It's New York flipping from Democrat to Republican. And it's more proof of what I am endlessly saying: that there is no such thing as a red state and there's also no such thing as a blue state. Every state is a purple state and that includes New York. New York is a purple state. But one thing that I think gets really underemphasized because all of these coastal reporters, they love to parachute into places where I live

and go find a diner and go find the same three Trump fans with their little MAGA hats talking about how Donald Trump is the Messiah, saving them from their grim existence, blah, blah, blah.

Sarah Kendzior (00:22:17):

It is often literally the same three people. The real Trump base, the absolute heart of the Trump base, is Wall Street. It is people living in mansions on Long Island. It is people living in fancy houses like Sean Patrick Maloney. It's people like that. It's rich people. Rich people are the real Trump base and especially Rich New Yorkers; Giuliani, Michael Cohen, Carl Icahn. That is where Trump was made. The whole tabloid media enterprise that bolstered him; Rupert Murdoch, Maggie Haberman, *The New York Times*, the *New York Post*, the entertainment industry, Jeff Zucker... I mean I could go on and on. He is a product of that environment. So it is not particularly surprising to me that these places flipped at all because they were never all that liberal. I lived there. I remember the Giuliani reign. I remember Amadou Diallo. I remember how incredibly racist people are in New York. And they're also racist all over the rest of the country.

Sarah Kendzior (00:23:16):

There's no sort of bastion here where you get to escape racism. But there's often this idea that people are really super extra racist in the South and somehow they're just not in the North. No! Also very racist in the North and especially in government. And so this is the legacy of Giuliani and Cuomo. Cuomo with his redistricting in New York. And this is just a big lesson to learn. We've had these surprise races, and I'm sorry I don't have people's names off the top of my head, but there was a surprise race in Southern Washington state where a Democrat flipped a district and people just weren't expecting that because it's a place that wasn't traditionally Democratic and people didn't think of it that way. There's currently the very contentious race (I'm not sure it's been decided yet) between Lauren Boebert—who hopefully will lose it—and her opponent who got no money, no support from the Democratic Party, no support from the DCCC and is within less than a hundred votes of potentially winning.

Sarah Kendzior (00:24:13):

And the reason that these people were not invested in properly and that the New York races were taken for granted is because of these stereotypes. These stereotypes of red and blue, that somehow New York is just eternally blue and will stay that way even though it never was. When I lived there, there was a Republican governor, Republican mayor, Michael Bloomberg then came in and replaced Giuliani. There is a big conservative streak. It's just not confederate flags, it's not that kind of conservatism. It's money-based, tax-based and very, very racist, again, very anti-Black specifically. And I think that that comes into play with Mondaire Jones. I've never seen as much anti-Black racism as in New York, even more than in St. Louis. And believe me, if you live in St. Louis, it's a lot. So anyway, I'm going on about that. But that is an important takeaway.

Sarah Kendzior (00:25:01):

So you cannot fall for these media portrayals of all of these areas and then base your assumptions on who's gonna win and how much they should be supported and how much funding they need and all of that on stereotypes and generalizations. You have to actually talk to voters and go there and talk to the candidates and hear what the candidate thinks about their own situation and their odds and what strategies work. And one final thing on this, the kind of ultimate swing state I think was Pennsylvania this time. Fetterman. Fetterman and his people, his campaign, they understood this very well. They ran a local campaign that we all got to enjoy from Twitter, but that was absolutely aimed at Pennsylvanians and was full of in-jokes. And it created a sense of community. And it put Dr. Oz rightfully as an outsider, as an outcast, and as a threat. As a threat to Pennsylvania. That is how you win. And they understood that. And this other shit where, you know, you just see them blowing off people in their localities and the

things that make them special and which strategies work, and just trying to apply an all purpose strategy to a very diverse nation...No, you can't do that shit. Anyway, that's it for me.

Andrea Chalupa (00:26:13):

Yeah, the same media industrial complex of New York City that helped usher Donald Trump into power, that beat the dead horse of Hillary's emails, that's also the ones that are going on and on as well about crime in New York City. It's maddening what's happening in New York. You have indigenous organizations in Arizona risking their lives basically, risking their communities, risking all sorts of dangers under the threat of far-right militias in Arizona who are trying to suppress the vote. I mean, look at Kari Lake. Kari Lake. Over a million—well over a million—people in Arizona heard Kari Lake say things like, “Martin Luther King would've been America First”, America First being a Nazi movement. Well over a million people in Arizona heard that and said, “Yes, sign me up for that.” And so you have indigenous organizations in Arizona risking their own personal safety to get out the vote in the face of all those threats of far-right extremism. Full-on Nazism.

Andrea Chalupa (00:27:20):

And yet here in New York state, we're not pulling our weight. New York state in this election, we got a massive bond passed in order to protect our infrastructure for climate change crisis and sustainability. There's a lot of things that us New Yorkers got outta this election for ourselves here in New York state. But did we fight like hell to make sure our own state would turn blue and be a reliable partner for the rest of the country in the national fight and the global fight against fascism? No, we didn't. Why is that? Why did New York State fall short and betray the rest of the country when so many other people across the country risked so much to do their part and help protect our democracy as they did in Arizona? We will now have good governance controlling Arizona. That protects the integrity of the 2024 election. We dodged the bullet of election deniers coming to power in key states like Arizona, Nevada, Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, because of hard work and unity and coalition-building in those states.

Andrea Chalupa (00:28:28):

Why couldn't New York state do the same? Why did we lose the House? It wasn't just Sean Patrick Maloney, it was also the New York State Democratic Party, which is run by a Cuomo guy (the guy appointed by Andrew Cuomo) by the name of Jay Jacobs. Jay Jacobs is just a racist. He's like a casual racist. This is on record. There was a Democratic socialist who was running for mayor of Buffalo. She won the primary. She's a young Black woman. He compared her to David Duke. He's out of his mind. That's Jay Jacobs, the guy that runs a New York State Democratic Party, calling a young Black woman who won her primary—Democratic primary—for the mayor of Buffalo, calling her David Duke. He said that publicly. He's out of his mind. He also, as I said on the show, back in 2021, there was a ballot measure that, if passed, would've given the Democratic Party an advantage over the redistricting process.

Andrea Chalupa (00:29:26):

And that would've given us a much-needed advantage heading into these midterms. The Republican Party, if given such an opportunity, would've ensured they seized it. What did our Democratic Party do under j Jacobs? Not a damn thing. They ensured that this ballot measure would lose. How? Well, the Republican Party of New York state invested millions of dollars in creating this massive ground game across the state, campaigning against this ballot measure on redistricting. And the Democratic Party in New York state under Jay Jacobs spent \$0 in combating that, countering it in any way. So the ballot measure that would've given Democrats an advantage in redistricting lost. It lost. And then on top of that, you had Andrew Cuomo's Republican judges that he appointed to the New York State Supreme Court vote in favor of Republicans on the redistricting map. So a lot of this comes back to Andrew Cuomo, just like a lot of the victories in Nevada on election night come back to Harry Reid. What they

have in Nevada, the big broad coalition that delivered Nevada for the Democrats, that is known as the Reid Machine.

Andrea Chalupa (00:30:35):

Harry Reid, the great statesmen who we love. who we're big fans of here on *Gaslit Nation*. He was outspoken in 2016 against the Russia threat to our democracy, calling out f then FBI director James Comey not once but twice. He's been outspoken in calling out the US government for hiding what's really going on with UFOs and aliens. And for that, Sarah and I love him.

Sarah Kendzior:

[laughs]

Andrea Chalupa:

We're huge fans of Harry Reid here on *Gaslit Nation*. And add to his great legacy the Reid Machine. It delivered Nevada for Democrats, whereas the Andrew Cuomo machine here in New York state destroyed our chances of the House. It's Andrew Cuomo's guy that is running the New York State Democrats. It's Andrew Cuomo's judges that voted against Democrats when it came to redistricting. And it's just this calcified Andrew Cuomo ruling elite class that is keeping this dysfunction in power and refusing to do anything about it.

Andrea Chalupa (00:31:31):

And that's the danger of what we're presently in. You have some of the complicit actors in this, which is former cop New York City mayor Eric Adams, who says some weird off-the-wall shit that you kind of wonder, is that Trump I'm listening to? He talks in the third person. He has a crazy social life where he goes out all the time, he goes to rouse with known Republican operatives. He's somebody that is mobbed up with some of the wrong people. And Eric Adams is always going on about "crime, crime, crime in New York City, getting more money for the police" and so on. And you have guys like Jay Jacobs, head of the New York State Democrats, coming from Nassau County in Long Island, one of the safest places in the entire nation, and he's very much of Long Island where they just see New York City as a progressive cesspool of crime thanks to the meme of bail reform, which is just a meme.

Andrea Chalupa (00:32:27):

So let me tell you about New York City and the whole meme that it's crime ridden and whatever. I've lived here since 2006. I've seen all sorts of crime. During the Bloomberg years, I've been on the street outside of my building at night and a bunch of fireworks went off down the street. Oh, nope, not fireworks. Turns out a bunch of people just got shot and the gunman runs right by me. So I've been here long enough to see all sorts of crime, right? It's New York City. But let me just tell you one thing: it's not the New York City of the 1970s and the 1980s. New York City today is Disneyland.

Sarah Kendzior (00:33:02):

Yes, it's like a bunch of fucking banks and Starbucks. It's boring. Coming from the crime capital of America, which is where I live, New York is nothing. It is nothing. When I go there, somebody asked if I was scared and I thought they meant scared because everything costs like three zillion dollars. You pay like \$30 for lunch. I'm like, what the fuck is this? That's the scary thing about New York is that it's a gilded citadel. It's impossible to survive in for a day because you go broke, not because you get stabbed. Anyway, go on.

Andrea Chalupa (00:33:31):

There are massive sections of Brooklyn where the greatest danger to you is getting slammed by a stroller because there's so many damn strollers on the street. Just this weekend, what do you know what I did in crime ridden progressive cesspool New York City? Do you know what I did this past weekend? I went to a petting zoo in New York City. I went to a petting zoo and I showed up there with my kid. And I didn't wanna pay the extra money to buy a head of lettuce to feed the animals and all the other parents in the petting zoo who came from all walks of life, including immigrants, because they were speaking in different languages, they were offering my kid their own lettuce to share with them because they saw what a cheapskate the mom was. You know what I mean? That's New York City, where people will share their lettuce with you at the petting zoo. That's New York City today.

Sarah Kendzior (00:34:20):

And it's also just objectively lower crime. I mean, just look at the statistics. It has lower crime than most cities. It had, like all other cities, higher crime over the last year or so, the post pandemic—or it's not post pandemic, it's going on—but the covid frenzy, the result of all these people going through trauma, having their lives upended happened nationwide. Compared to many cities including, again, the one I live in, it's nothing. I mean, it's strange. And this is such an indication of what happens when the national media is conglomerated not just in New York City, but they're not representative of New York City. They are representative of the richest, wealthiest, most privileged, spoiled people of New York City. They're not getting stories from just everyday folks like the people you saw at the petting zoo. It's not just folks living their lives, it's legacy hires, nepotism, the equivalent of the Cuomos, the equivalent of the Trumps installed into media.

Sarah Kendzior (00:35:17):

And so they go outside and they see a homeless man on the street and instead of feeling empathy, instead of feeling like, “Wow, what can we do to help this guy? What has gone wrong with our institutions? Why is there all this failure?”, they see it as just fear and hatred. I mean, that's been my experience dealing with these kinds of folks. And that's not unique to New York. You know, you see that all over the place. But I think the richer the city is, the more the media represents this really removed, vicious kind of mentality. And then they insert it into politics and they start taking their own “struggles”—and you definitely see this on display at *The New York Times* op ed section like, “Oh my God, I saw a Squeegee man, what is the world coming to?”—and trying to convince people that this constitutes some kind of crisis.

Sarah Kendzior (00:36:04):

Whereas the real crises of New York City, they're happening in skyscrapers. They're happening in boardrooms. They're happening on stock markets. They're happening in the police force. That is where the real brutality of New York City lies. That is how people—ordinary New Yorkers—are getting hurt in New York City; not by criminals and thieves and whatnot. That is so minor compared to the terrible, terrible white-collar crime and governmental crime that is being perpetrated against the people in New York. And I just wanna throw that in there in case people think I hate New Yorkers. I don't. New Yorkers are great. It's the New York City apparatus that built Trump and Giuliani and all these other horrible people that I can't stand. So just to make that clear,

Andrea Chalupa (00:36:48):

When you talk about this whole crime wave meme and bail reform meme, I mean, it's a failure on both the Right and the Left, because the Right... Lee Zeldin, his whole campaign was just the worst of the worst crime videos not even from the state as I saw reported, I think, somewhere. That was his

campaign; just showing you horrific crime videos of Black people. It is always Black people, all selectively edited and chosen and all that. That was Lee Zeldin's campaign. And so many pundits took that hook, line and sinker like, "Oh, the Democrats are gonna get washed out by a red wave because of crime, because of inflation." Then people on the Left to counter all this were sharing massive reports on, "Well, it's not bail reform. There's this study that says it's not bail reform. It's not this." There needs to be stronger messaging on the Left that isn't reactive.

Andrea Chalupa (00:37:42):

It's offensive. And I think it needs to come from the fact that, my God, New York was ground zero for a once in a century pandemic. We were ground zero. We had mass graves. We had overflowing morgues. Our parks were turned into morgues. We were the very first to have to figure out what to do and shut everything down. And what that did to working parents across the entire city, what that did to frontline workers with kids that needed to be in school and so on... We're still dealing with the fallout and the trauma of that. That's not something you bounce back from. Our healthcare system here in New York, like so many other places in the world, is completely stressed. When I was giving birth in New York, my nurse fainted. My nurse who was helping me in the delivery room fainted. They had to press the emergency button.

Andrea Chalupa (00:38:37):

A whole team of nurses rushed in looking at me, the mother, thinking, "Oh wait, it's not the patient. It's one of our own?" And that really broke the ice in that delivery room over stories I've read about in the press saying healthcare workers are stressed. There's a massive amount of turnover in the healthcare industry up and down the chain. What do you think that is doing for the mental health crisis that comes with the trauma of being round zero of a pandemic? So it's not a crime problem we have, it's a mental health crisis that we have currently in New York City because you don't have the resources to take care of the people that need care. And they're falling through the cracks of society. And on top of that, you have an education crisis, a school crisis, because teachers are really stressed by what's going on with the pandemic as well.

Andrea Chalupa (00:39:28):

Schools are stressed. You've had a massive number of people move out of the city. Admissions are down to public schools. Admissions are down so the city's not getting as much tax dollars as they need. Schools aren't as full as they could be, and teachers are stressed from everything that they've had to go through being on the front lines of this pandemic. And so you have big turnover with teachers. It's harder to hire teachers. And when the public schools are being hit right now, what is that doing to the young kids? All the support they need that rely on those social structures. So what I'm saying is we're not dealing with a crime problem in New York City, we're dealing with a trauma problem in New York City that has greatly impacted pillars of our society that we rely on in order to catch the vulnerable, help the vulnerable and protect the vulnerable.

Andrea Chalupa (00:40:17):

And that's the healthcare industry and that is public schools. And you cannot count on a Republican to fix that because all they will do is prey on the vulnerable, round them up and throw them into prisons where they will die and break up families and compound greater trauma. That is what is at issue here. And unfortunately, too many establishment Democrats in New York state like Jay Jacobs, the head of the New York State Democratic Party, believe in that. They buy into that. They buy into that it's Black people that's the problem. They buy into that, that it's bail reform that's the problem. They buy into that, that it's progressives like AOC creating a crime wave in New York City, the cesspool of progressive crime. That's what they're buying into. And because the Democratic establishment buys into those rightwing

talking points, they're clinging onto their power and refusing to make the New York State Democratic Party a unifying force to build coalition, to bring people together and fight like hell to ensure that all of New York state is blue and that we pull our weight and that we do our part to win the House races that we need to ensure Democratic control of the House.

Andrea Chalupa (00:41:26):

This problem's not going to go away. You had over a thousand people—public officials, organizers, heads of all types of organizations—you had over a thousand people sign a letter to Governor Kathy Hochul, who was saved, by the way, by progressives. It was the Working Family Party of New York City that was ringing the alarm that Lee Zeldin could win and that we needed to organize like hell against him and say no to far-right extremism. It was the Working Family Party, which has a massive presence here in New York City, that saved Kathy Hochul's race. Kathy Hochul won her race with one of the lowest margins of victory in decades for a governor here in the state, one of the lowest margins of victory in decades. And she squeaked through after basically sleeping on her own general election with the help of the Working Families Party, which canvassed for her, which helped get out the vote for her, which rang the alarm on social media for her.

Andrea Chalupa (00:42:29):

And yet after over a thousand people signed a letter to Governor Kathy Hochul saying, "Please, for the love of God, replace Jay Jacobs with someone else who will bring us all together and be a unifying force" Kathy Hochul is like "*shrug* No, I like him. I'm keeping him in place." That's how calcified this corporate Democrat, mega donor, anti progressive wing of the Democratic Party here is in New York state. And it's divisive and it's scary. It's not AOC who's being divisive. AOC was out there organizing She was out there campaigning. She went to Katie Porter's district in California to help her friend, Katie Porter. She gave money to all these campaigns. She was going to campaign events with Governor Kathy Hochul and so on. And yet she's the one that gets accused of being divisive. What's divisive is the Vichy Democrats within the party that are working against their own party. So simply put, to summarize: The reason why New York state let the rest of the country down, the reason why New York State costs us the House—which is going to endanger the lives of my friends and family in Ukraine who depend on America's support right now to fend off a genocide—it all comes down to a Democratic Party establishment that is more at war with its progressive wing than actual fascists.

Sarah Kendzior (00:43:55):

The only thing I wanna add is I think you hit on something really important that we don't talk about enough and that people don't talk about enough because it's fading into the background and it absolutely should not, which is the pandemic, the ongoing pandemic. But also the incredible trauma of the last couple of years. And we've had a multitude of traumatic events happen. We have had wars, we have had attempted cos. But I think that that shock, that fundamental rift and the loss and the grief and over a million Americans dead, probably much more because they stopped counting. They started hiding them. They started hiding those deaths and treating them as either unimportant or deserved. They started weaponizing the pandemic. I mean, Trump did this immediately, but then Biden and his team did this as well with the "pandemic of the unvaccinated", which it was not.

Sarah Kendzior (00:44:50):

There were people who got vaccinated and they got covid anyway. The CDC failed us. Our institutions failed us. And what it showed people is that they see all of you as disposable. You are not a person to them. You are a thing to extract money from and then be taken away and with no one left to grieve you. And I think knowing that provoked a variety of reactions in people. It provoked cruelty because when people see themselves as under threat they lash out as a gesture of self protectiveness. And this is not a

good quality. This is a choice to a large degree that people are making. They think, Well, if they're out to get me, if they're out to kill me, I'm gonna be on the killing side. I'm gonna be on the side that wins because then I'll be safe and my family will be safe.

Sarah Kendzior (00:45:38):

That is how fascism has thrived. That's how autocracy has thrived. But I think in the selection, especially when you look at who turned out to vote, you see the flip side of this. You see people who know that their survival is deeply, deeply threatened in that they need to do everything they can—not just voting, but all sorts of activities—to be able to continue to survive in America. And to say that “I matter, my life matters. The lives of my family matter, the lives of the people who were taken away from us matter and they need to be counted and this needs to come to light.” I think there is much more empathy and much more community than most folks are aware of or give Americans credit for. There is so much ceding the land so that fascism could bloom in the months leading up to this election.

Sarah Kendzior (00:46:28):

They went on and on—these pundits—about the red wave. They fired people from networks who weren't white or who were women, people like Tiffany Cross from MSNBC or the rearrangement of CNN and *Politico*, and even in entertainment with HBO Max. They were creating a landscape that was ripe for autocracy to thrive. And this, of course, extends to what is happening with Twitter and Musk. And then you look at the election and once again, once again people came out and they said, “No, I don't want this. I do not want a GOP apocalyptic death cult.” And I don't think this was an election in favor of the Democrats. I think it was an election very, very strongly against the GOP because even in the states where the GOP won, they often did not win by as much or they were held back by gerrymandering and all of these structural impediments that basically make it impossible for the Democrats to win in Wisconsin, in Ohio, in my state of Missouri.

Sarah Kendzior (00:47:28):

But even if you look at my state, the one that they love to call deep red, even though when I moved here about 18 years ago, it had a Democratic senator, a Democratic governor, about half the legislature was Democratic, so on and so forth. If you look at the margins of these races, we started to turn blue; not enough to flip really anything significant here, but the Republicans are losing more. And I think it's a rejection of that cruelty and a realization, especially among white people, that yes, you too are disposable. You too can be treated like utter garbage by your government. They will lie to you about covid, they will lie to you about the vaccine. It is not as effective as they say. They will pretend that your existence didn't happen, didn't matter. I mean, it's just such a horrific way to treat people.

Sarah Kendzior (00:48:16):

And it's happened before in history. You saw outbreaks of violence and erratic behavior and a sense of impending collapse after the Spanish flu. But I think, you know, this is sort of going back, I was thinking of Andrea's comments about the “crime wave” which is really just a mental health crisis, I think that extends beyond New York to the whole country because we've been going through this again and again with every variant. And the more that they bury this, the more that Biden comes out and says the pandemic is over on the same day that, say, five people you know get covid (this is a thing that literally happened to me), I mean, it's gaslighting. It's gaslighting on an epic scale about life or death in the most fundamental manner. And that's enough to make people act crazy and to make people act hateful, but also to make people more cautious and more contemplative and more, in some cases I think, likely to look out for each other.

Sarah Kendzior (00:49:13):

And I think the youngest people see this the most clearly because they didn't have illusions to begin with, so they didn't need their illusions to be shattered by tragedy. It's been tragedy from the get go for these young folks. And... I'm sorry, I'm getting very emotional. I think it's a betrayal. And the thing is, I'm profoundly grateful that these young folks came out and voted, especially young women whose bodily autonomy has been taken from them. But I hate the sort of "they'll save us" shit because it's not their job. We are the parents here, or for our older audience, we're the grandparents. We're the older generations. It's our responsibility to protect them. They should not be the ones protecting us from a fucking gerontocracy, from a bunch of 70 and 80 year olds who don't care that the planet is burning and that a pandemic is still thriving and that our country is collapsing.

Sarah Kendzior (00:50:10):

It seems to mean nothing to them because they wanna have to live through it and they won't have to die through it. But we will have to live through it. We will have to watch people die through it. And that's the horrible reality of it. That is what we are working so hard to change and we owe them. We owe them so much more. Even if our future is in great jeopardy, their future matters. The future of the younger people who came out, the future of our children. It matters so much. It is always worth fighting for. And it's so much more than an election. An election is a day of your life. It's everything that comes after. It's that daily fight and that fight to not give into that force, to that comfort of hate, the way it can envelop you like a blanket and pull you into a cult or a click that will make you justify abhorrent behavior that you would normally condemn.

Sarah Kendzior (00:51:03):

Just do not fall for that. I am worried in the months to come about that, especially with the GOP having the House and being so adept at medium manipulation and us losing our platforms where we're able to debunk propaganda and to dispel this hateful mythology, places like Twitter. A lot of changes are around the bend but that's why I keep emphasizing to people, please, hold onto your morality and fight for their future. Even if you think our future, we were born at a bad time, we were just born at a bad time and we're bearing the brunt of it in a lot of respects. But young people deserve better. If you need motivation, then find it there.

Andrea Chalupa (00:51:40):

Very well said. I wanna just point out that what the progressives have been doing is just primarying the establishment Democrats that aren't serving the public, they're serving their own interests, they're serving big corporate interests, they're serving greed. And the Democratic establishment responds through Republican warfare tactics like pushing Mondaire Jones out of his own district and just creating this hostile environment for progressives. Enough is enough already because the young people are pissed. Remember we did that interview with Dakota Hall on youth activists. The episode was called "Will Young People Save Us?" Yes, they saved the Democratic Party. Absolutely. And guess what? We just got the first Gen Z member of Congress out of Florida, a state that the Democratic Party pre surrendered. The reason why DeSantis grabbed Florida and Florida's no longer a swing state is because a Democratic Party failed to invest, failed to build a grassroots engine there, failed to build authenticity there, as we saw with Fetterman's win in Pennsylvania, which was years in the making with grassroots organizations there.

Andrea Chalupa (00:52:43):

They failed to foster that same sort of movement in Florida. Florida was not won by the Republican Party. Florida was lost by the Democratic Party. And we know that for a fact because it just elected the first Gen Z member of Congress. That guy did it because of grassroots power, not because Nancy Pelosi came in and ordained him. So just remember Gen Z's coming for you, Sean Patrick Maloney of the

world, and you cannot stop them. To the Jay Jacobs of the world: Gen Z's coming for you because they're pissed and it's not their job to clean up your messes and to stop your greed. You should be resigning. You should be knowing better, but you lack any sort of moral compass clearly. You're just an extension of the rightwing disinformation machine.

Andrea Chalupa (00:53:37):

Gen Z is going to primary the Democratic establishment and the Democratic establishment in turn will do ruthless things that only Republicans would do. You know what I mean? That's what we're faced with.

Sarah Kendzior

<affirmative> Mmmhmm

Andrea Chalupa:

But there are a lot of good Democrats out there who desperately need us, who are doing right by us. And one of these Democratic leaders is, of course, the Reverend Rafael Warnock, who came from Martin Luther King's church in Georgia. He is a genuinely good person and due to a racist system in Georgia that has runoffs in order to stop people like him from coming to power, we have to fight like hell to ensure that he wins his white supremacist, structural critical race theory, if you will, runoff in Georgia. So we're going to be doing phone banks for Warnock. Why are we doing this? Because he's good. He fights for us.

Andrea Chalupa (00:54:32):

We should fight for him. The other reason is, do you want six years of Herschel Walker, a guy who says "evolution can't be real because apes are still walking around. If we came from apes, then what are the apes still doing here?" That's Herschel Walker. He's a Republican's version of a Black person. And reason number three is the Senate map for Democrats in 2024 is going to be extremely tough and so we need as many senators on team democracy as possible. We need to bank Warnock in the Senate to protect ourselves in 2024 when the Senate map is gonna be brutal for Democrats. Also, a fourth reason, having 51 Democratic senators gives Democrats a clean majority in the Senate, meaning they don't have to do power sharing with Republicans in overseeing committees and it gives the Democratic Party a stronger hand in negotiating with ruthless Mitch McConnell and ruthless Joe Manchin and ruthless Sinema.

Andrea Chalupa (00:55:29):

So yes, we need that 51. And the fifth reason is having a majority in the Senate with Warnock ensures that two Democrats can miss votes for whatever reason—covid, whatever—and the work can still go on. So it helps streamline the process. And so for a whole list of reasons we desperately need Warnock. So what we're going to do is we're gonna come together as a *Gaslit Nation* community—because we've still got some fight left in us—and we're going to gather this Saturday, November 19th at 3:00 PM Eastern with our friends at Indivisible to phone bank to Georgia. So come join me at that. From all the people that attend, we're going to select one person to get a signed copy of Sarah's latest book *They Knew* and a *Mr. Jones* poster. And at that event, we're going to be joined by our special guest, David Pepper, who is the author of *Laboratories of Autocracy*.

Andrea Chalupa (00:56:26):

He's wonderful. He's an expert on how to out-organize authoritarianism and he is in Ohio, where Ohio actually did a good job. They won some surprising House seats in Ohio. So David Pepper will be our special guest at that phone bank this Saturday, November 19th at 3:00 PM Eastern. Sign up in the show notes. And also we're gonna be doing it again, another phone bank on Thursday, December 1st at 6:00 PM Eastern within Invisible. And then finally Monday, December 5th at 5:00 PM Eastern. And again, at

every single event, you may be selected to get some wonderful *Gaslit Nation* gifts from us to thank you for all your work. And we wanna thank you for everyone that phone banks, because look, we stopped a red wave together. It was people just like us, countless people who chose to do something instead of nothing. So we're the ones who are going to fight for the future because Gen Z should not have to do it on their own. So please join us this Saturday for a phone bank for Reverend Warnock, I cannot wait to see you there and meet more members of our community.

[outro - theme music, roll credits]

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:

Pakistan has been decimated by record floods and people need help. To help victims of the floods, donate to Pakistan Emergency Flood Aid at www.launchgood.com/campaign/pakistan_emergency_flood_aid. Climate and economic crises are everywhere. So continue supporting your local food bank as well.

Andrea Chalupa:

We encourage you to help support Ukraine by donating to Razom For Ukraine at razomforukraine.org. We also encourage you to donate to the International Rescue Committee, a humanitarian relief organization helping refugees from Syria, Ukraine, and Afghanistan. Donate at 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. *Gaslit Nation* is produced by Sarah Kendzior and Andrea Chalupa. If you like what we do, leave us a review and iTunes. It helps us reach more listeners. And check out our Patreon. It keeps us going.

Sarah Kendzior:

Our production manager is Nicholas Torres and our associate producer is 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, Nik Far, 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:

Gaslit Nation would like to thank our supporters at the producer level on Patreon and higher...