

ELLEN: Hello and welcome to the Social Breakdown, the podcast where we break down our complex world one topic at a time using our sociological imagination. We are your hosts:

PENN: Penn.

OMAR: Omar.

Ellen: And I am Ellen. And before we get into this week's topic, we just want to say big Mahalo, thank you, thank you, thank you. Penn, how do you say "thank you" in Thai?

PENN: KOB KHUN KA. That's the female version. Don't say that, Omar. Guys would say KOB KHUN KHRAP because it is gendered.

ELLEN: Interesting. I didn't know that Thai was gendered. That's very interesting. Okay. Well, we basically just want to say thank you because we've just reached our 2000 download mark which is amazing. We were just holo jazz when we've got 160 downloads which were mainly just us clicking the download button over and over again and getting our family to do it. But apparently we have 2000 family members.

PENN: We are so happy about that.

OMAR: Twitter is really helpful.

ELLEN: Yeah, thank you for supporting us. We really really appreciate it.

PENN: Yeah, please like, share, subscribe, follow us on Twitter, Facebook.

OMAR: Write reviews and just keep retweeting, hashtagging and all that.

ELLEN: Switching gears, let's get into today's topic. And today's topic is liberalism, neoliberalism, and how the heck is that different from our modern political ideal of a liberal person.

PENN: Oh, it's heavy.

ELLEN: I know this is a lot of material, but we're going to first dive into the concepts, kind of define what liberalism is, where it came from, define what neoliberalism is, and then we're going to explore where the political term liberal came from and what that symbolizes today and hopefully we can just show you how different all of these concepts really are.

OMAR: Yeah, that's really important to remember that these terms are quite distinct from each other.

ELLEN: Yeah, despite being the same word. Okay, so I guess we'll just jump into defining what liberalism is and seeing where it came from.

So liberalism is thought to be founded by the British philosopher John Locke who lived from 1632 to 1704. He is best known for this whole tabula rasa blank slate self which is the idea that everybody is born a blank slate, and our experiences are what shape us into the people we are today.

PENN: Right, so he's on the nurture side of the nature-nurture argument.

ELLEN: Exactly, exactly. And then he is also really well known for the idea of the social contract, which is that citizens enter into a social contract with their government to be governed so that they can live in a civilized peaceful society. He is seen as the father of liberalism. People, leave it all people, must be equally allowed to have civil interests which he defined as "life, liberty, health, and indolence of the body; and the possession of outward things, such as money, lands, houses, furniture, and the like."

PENN: What does indolence mean?

ELLEN: Locke was just really adamant about how every single person deserves liberty, aka freedom. Locke's idea of liberalism was taken on by Thomas Jefferson. I would say Thomas Jefferson almost plagiarized Locke.

So Thomas Jefferson, when he wrote the Declaration of Independence in 1776 definitely semi plagiarize Locke when he wrote: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights. And among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness".

So, we see Locke, who was living in the late 1600s, all of his liberal philosophy gets adopted by our Founding Fathers of this country and then of course adopted by the members of this country.

PENN: Right, so it's actually one of the founding principles of America and American democracy, right, that John Locke's liberalism.

ELLEN: Exactly, exactly. But I know that a lot of people don't really agree with Locke and his philosophies. So Omar, I know you have some beef with John Locke. What is your beef?

OMAR: My beef with Locke is not so much that he would want to talk about freedom, but that his ideas of freedom and liberty, and property are not meant in the purest sense. This wasn't about freedom for all people or property for all people. He was a scribe of the Empire, during a time period where people were breaking away from Britain, and he was an investor in the Royal African Company which was a mercantile company that invested in a lot of the gold fields on the West Coast of Africa. And the Royal African company was integral in the English slave trade. So when he talks about property, he's really talking about private property for capitalists and the owners of capital.

ELLEN: Including the ownership of humans, other humans.

OMAR: Yes, absolutely. So he does have a famous quote about no man should be in slavery etc etc but he was really talking about British men should not be caught in slavery. He was a huge proponent of people who were kidnapped, or were captives and he highly justified slavery, and he actually never crossed the Atlantic. He did a lot of his endeavors in Britain, so it's interesting that America would pick up his ideology but, of course, the connection between British and the United States isn't so far apart so that also shouldn't be much of a surprise.

ELLEN: For sure. American philosophers and the Founding Fathers were heavily influenced by British philosophers and European philosophers. So it's good to distinguish that when John Locke says that all men are created equal or that all men deserve life, liberty and indolence of body and all of these other things, that really he's talking primarily about white European men.

PENN: But that's interesting because your critique of Locke here is the same critique that the Founding Fathers face. In the same way they adopted Locke's ideologies, they also adopted his similar definition of what men means, like what it means to be considered a men, legally. Life, liberty, pursuit of happiness is not for all men, like not all men are created equal, even in our Declaration of Independence. For centuries afterwards we were trying to fix that and give something as simple as voting rights to everybody. But it's not surprising that the Founding Fathers took the same definitions as Locke. The weird thing is that they probably didn't even do it intentionally. That was just how the world was. They just couldn't even think outside of that, you know, African men, black men were just seen as property, like they weren't even considered human, like that thought never crossed their mind.

ELLEN: Or women for that matter.

PENN: Women were just seen as property.

OMAR: Exactly. There was no highly contested debate then.

PENN: Right, man was just white man.

OMAR: Yeah, and we will see later in this episode and I'm sure, even in everyday life, you will see how effective it is when we can have really vague broad theories of freedom or liberty, and then what actually happens in practice because in any representative democracy or any nation state or anything like that, there is constant tension between equality and freedom, and we can then revert back to the law and say, well this is legal, so, like you say, I want to have a country club, and I want to include everyone. And then someone who's the owner the country club will say, no, it's my freedom, I can exclude based on ABC or D. And that's just an example at country clubs, but that happens often.

PENN: I mean, you'll see, restaurants do that too.

ELLEN: Dress codes are a great way of excluding people without saying outright that you are excluding a certain group.

PENN: But any place that has a sign that says, we reserve the right to refuse anybody, so like the word righteous is considered a liberal.

OMAR: I just want to be clear again and say, not all Sociologists are liberals. We can be very very critical of the liberal framework.

Ellen: Oh yeah, for sure, a liberal in this context, John Locke's liberalism.

That's a good jumping off point to jump into a different type of liberalism, which is neoliberalism.

Penn: Neoliberalism is such a pain to talk about.

ELLEN: It is, which is why I am not going to talk about it, but one of you has to talk about it.

PENN: Okay, I could tackle it. So neo, as we know it, means new, as the Matrix taught us. Neoliberalism is new liberalism. It's supposed to be liberalism, that - it only dates back to the 1930s so it's quite new - literally it's new. It's just a new idea. In that sense, it may have ties to the John Locke's definition of liberalism but it is supposed to be a new kind of liberalism, a new kind of freedom. So it's actually a political, economic system, where the private sector takes control of businesses and just anything in society from the public sector, right basically reducing government oversight and then increasing privatization. It's a way of "solving" social problems by shrinking the government social welfare problems. And solving is quote unquote, right. Some people believe that by having less government oversight, less social welfare programs, it'll make more room for corporations and businesses to flourish.

OMAR: Yes, so by thinking about libertarians right now - less government, more freedom - there will be huge proponents of neoliberalism.

ELLEN: Like neoliberalism in the sense that like freedom, but freedom specifically from the government and the government oversight of businesses and jobs and economics, etc. etc.

PENN: My understanding of liberalism is that it is very tied to the republican ideology, not like one to one, but that republicans typically want more privatization, less government control, less government oversight. This is what we're seeing now with the argument of net neutrality, the idea that they want to take away net neutrality, which is essentially internet freedom, that all websites are treated equally. They want to take net neutrality away so that they can force people to buy into the system. Companies such as AT&T or Spectrum or Time Warner, whatever you want to call them, they can have the ability to control information because they have the money to pay for faster service.

ELLEN: The idea of dismantling net neutrality is done with the idea that if you get rid of this net neutrality, businesses are better equipped to go and kind of take over the reins of what the government was doing for the internet. That's what FCC Chairman Ajit Pai is arguing. That's what he's arguing is like, we need to take away government oversight because businesses can do this better than we can.

PENN: Which is just so confusing because the internet is fine right now. It's like you are fixing something that is not broken. Basically net neutrality - and I know we are going totally off-kilter here, we are all very passionate about it - net neutrality ensures equality on the internet, ensures an open Internet where anything can happen and whatever, there is no money involved, where companies such as Netflix or Facebook that has the money can pay Time Warner to have better service. This means that all the underdogs will lose because they're not going to have the money to compete with giant corporations such as Google or Facebook.

ELLEN: And the internet users who are also underdogs, who can't afford to pay extra fees to get access.

OMAR: Neoliberalism often will put a prefixed barrier between rich people and rich companies, and poor people or Mom-and-Pop companies or Indie companies, because the bar for participation in society goes up a lot, and the people at the bottom cannot meet up to those expectations because they can no longer then invest in a system that is moving so much faster and then in a totally different direction than was previously set before them.

What's interesting about that component is because neoliberalism started with, or at least what allowed it to make sense to people was, the dismantling of the welfare state and both Ronald Reagan, a Republican, and Bill Clinton, a Democrat, were proponents and the impetus for that was to talk junk about the government. Oh, the government systems are falling apart, so we need to have maybe private businesses or other types of social arrangements and we need to get rid of that.

PENN: Something like neoliberalism was seen as the answer to a problem like that, but, again, making room for more corporations and businesses and increasing privatization. They are talking about big big corporations. We are not talking about little companies, like Omar was saying. And this also makes you wonder, like, entrepreneurship is really big in America. Where's the room for entrepreneurship in a system of neoliberalism?

OMAR: It's funny because neoliberalism strongly emphasizes the individual. It doesn't want you to assume that there's going to be a government apparatus or a state apparatus that's going to catch you if you fall on your face. Now, the reason why that's interesting is because people who are proponents of neoliberalism would assume that people who need government assistance are just lazy, and they are benefiting off of that, say, not going to work by getting welfare checks. Ronald Reagan was huge with putting up his "Welfare Queen", the black "Welfare Queen" who was making a lot of money off of welfare, which definitely was not true at all.

People don't ball out on welfare. Then, as well as today, the vast, vast, vast majority of people on welfare are white, but it was very strategic for the government to prop up the black "Welfare Queen" to further demonize the welfare state. So neoliberalism is also one of those things that becomes significant and allowing people to vote, or go against their own self interest.

ELLEN: That what you just said, Omar, reminds me of an article from "The Nation" that came out earlier this year in June. It was called "Noam Chomsky: Neoliberalism Is Destroying Our Democracy". It is written by a guy named Christopher Lydon, and in it, Chomsky is quoted as saying society "changed in the '70s with the onset of the neoliberal era that we've been living in since. And if you ask yourself what this era is, its crucial principle is undermining mechanisms of social solidarity and mutual support and popular engagement in determining policy.

It's not called that. What it's called is "freedom," but "freedom" means a subordination to the decisions of concentrated, unaccountable, private power. That's what it means. The institutions of governance—or other kinds of association that could allow people to participate in decision making—those are systematically weakened.

Neoliberalism really breaks down social solidarity by coming up with these ideas of the black "Welfare Queen". And what would be a collective group of people gets broken up by neoliberalism, and one side starts to rag on the other side.

OMAR: In that example, the collective solidarity would be, we should all identify as workers because there is much more things that tie us together as workers like increased wages, good working conditions etc. etc., rather than looking at, oh, welfare, oh those black people, oh they're so lazy. Then it creates a then a division between this kind of worker and that kind of worker. So under neoliberalism low wage or low skilled jobs really, really feel the brunt of that type of rhetoric and then obviously the policies that follow.

PENN: Yeah, so some of the effects of neoliberalism then will be absolute neglect of jobless urban areas, because a lot of it is so focused on the individual, they will blame the individual for not being able to get a job, lack of healthcare, especially for families, youth and elders, these kind of groups of people that are not seen as independent and heavy policing. Even though having government oversight is seen as a form of policing, right. If we were to give "freedom" to Corporation businesses to conduct business in whatever way they want, each corporation can have their own way to police the consumer.

OMAR: That's the flip side to me to neoliberalism. They will disconnect when the state or given the state or the government will actually intervene in a very legitimate way. What you were saying earlier about policing, the proliferation of the criminal justice system and mass incarceration in the heavy policing of certain pockets of the United States, it's just that, it legitimizes the state intervention.

The flip side to that is, they would want people who were for neoliberalism in that context would want less freedom and more government, less freedom of the individual. And we want

more government to control the drugs and the threats to society. No longer will you have to say, those black people or those women or those disabled people, we could just say, well they threaten Society with a capital S or they undermine the American People with a capital P. And then that's why people then go, yeah you know what, those people are taking our jobs, those people are ruining society, so we need to intervene here.

ELLEN: And a big part of that is those people are getting in the way of our civil liberties. They are getting in the way of my pursuit for happiness or my liberty. That's the big argument that you hear all the time, is like, they're taking our freedom, and it's like, really?

PENN: There's not enough food to go around!

OMAR: Yes, yes.

PENN: There is Nobel Prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz who has written a lot about neoliberalism. His most famous book is "[Globalization and its Discontents](#)". It is short book but there is so much to unpack. Last year, "Business Insider" reported Stiglitz, arguing that neoliberalism is actually dead. From the time of Reagan and Margaret Thatcher in the UK, that was the height of neoliberalism, and that's partly why we've got rid of the welfare state for example because there was all these problems seen with the government.

Stiglitz uses one of the central tenets of the Neoliberal ideology. The idea that markets function best when left alone and that an unregulated market is the best way to increase economic growth has now been pretty much disproved. He quotes: "We've gone from a neoliberal euphoria that 'markets work well almost all the time' and all we need to do is keep governments on course, to 'markets don't work' and the debate is now about how we get governments to function in ways that can alleviate this."

In other words, Stiglitz says "Neoliberalism is dead in both developing and developed countries".

As a large economic system, maybe we are not subscribing to neoliberalism anymore, but we were talking about net neutrality and things like that which is happening right now, parts of it are still alive. The ideologies of neoliberalism are still alive and the republican party for example is trying to maybe even bring neoliberalism back. So even though it seems like, oh we're moving towards a world where neoliberalism is no longer a thing, like I guess I just want to point out that you have to care about neoliberalism. Neoliberalism is a very lofty term. It also sounds super boring to me, so like if you see it in a news article, you are like, I don't care about that but actually it's still an ideology that governs us today and that governs the actions of politicians today, regardless of whether or not we are in a neoliberal society. It is not actively our policy, but the ideologies are still there.

OMAR: Yes, absolutely. And one way to identify that without people saying, like you won't hear politicians saying like, I'm a neoliberalist or this, or anything like that. Often people will throw

back with, this is a neoliberal policy as a way of critique, but as Penn just said, that is an ideology, so when you hear the war on blank blank blank or the society is in crisis blank blank blank, see the idea of neoliberalism is that society is under threat or that we are in a crisis and we need to fix it.

Giving an example, in health care, Medicaid or Medicare is in crisis, or the healthcare system is in crisis, rather than actually talking about the health of people, we are talking about the viability of markets. We would try to either increase Medicaid expansion across states or pull it away. Donald Trump is an example of this when he says he wants to get rid of the Affordable Healthcare Act, not realizing what happens when you pull that away from poor people, then that becomes then an opening to then insert some new type of policy.

ELLEN: Their most recent attempt at adjusting health policy is that they're getting rid of the mandated portion of the Affordable Health Care Act. We are no longer forced to go and purchase. The idea there is why should government force you to do anything? You should have the freedom to go and buy if you want it. But the realities of that situation is that in order for the ACA to work, you have to have everybody in the system to balance out the healthcare pools and the cost.

You have to have the healthy people in there to balance out the unhealthy people. That's the whole idea of insurance. He is using a very neoliberalist tactics of saying, you shouldn't be forced to do this, you should have the freedom to go and choose to do this, but in reality it's dismantling the market, it's screwing up the market to allow large corporations to go ahead and continue to profit, rather than actually protecting the citizens.

OMAR: And we want more private companies like, oh that Medicare system, it sucks.

ELLEN: Let the private companies help us do it. No, it sucks because of the private companies. Like do you not get it, it's not the chicken or the egg. It's the insurance companies.

PENN: It's so surprising that this is how dangerous an ideology like neoliberalism is because it not only has the very basis of neoliberalism - is already problematic, the idea that we should privatize more things - but that it also provides this whole set of language that can be used to convince people to privatize or to turn away from the government. This is not to say that like myself, Omar, Ellen, we are all gung ho about the government. Governments certainly have problems, but that neoliberalism tends to increase inequality more than anything else.

OMAR: Yes, absolutely. And the reason why that is because the idea of private property then only certain people can have access to private property so then you just end up creating more divisions across people, and then you create so many divisions among people and then you have a very antisocial fragmented society. Since now you are worlds apart from each other, you can be in two towns, next to each other, one rich, one poor and you are only separated by a traffic light, but your way of living is vastly different from the institution that you're a part of, the access that you have benefits to. And of course now another neoliberalism framework is

that you have to be part of some type of market or institution to get things like health benefits, retirement benefits, some type of income tax check, like all those types of things. Now you have to be participating in society in a very way that benefits the owners of those businesses. And if you are not, there is no, oh okay we'll give you a little bit of a welfare check to make sure you don't die along the way, but no, now you're just subjected to homelessness.

PENN: Neoliberalism can be a post apocalyptic horror movie. Someone should make a movie about that.

OMAR: Neoliberal monster.

PENN: Here you go, Ridley Scott, take my idea.

But neoliberalism just sounds pretty, right when we when we talk about things in terms of freedom, in terms of liberty, right these are things that are so ingrained in the American culture that if you are not for it, then you are against America.

ELLEN: And if you are not for freedom, what are you for? That's the whole argument.

PENN: That is why neoliberalism can be so powerful. Like I said, it is not that the whole system is in place but these little ideas, these scissors there.

OMAR: The language really taps on the moral understandings of people and that's what makes it so convincing.

ELLEN: The next concept that we're going to talk about outside of liberalism and neoliberalism is the modern American political term liberals.

Today, liberals are typically seen as the opposing team to conservatives, so whatever a conservative is, a liberal is the opposite of that. Conservatives are on the right, liberals are on the left. The conservatives are pro life, liberals are pro choice. Republicans, democrats etc etc. So, really, with the modern American political liberal idea of freedom, liberty and equality are really not the central tenants of this kind of liberalism. We don't see a lot of John Locke in it and said we are really focusing on progressiveness. When you call yourself a liberal today, usually you will associate yourself with being progressive.

PENN: That actually makes more sense than going to be an opposite of conservative, right being conservative versus progressive, that makes more sense to me.

ELLEN: But I think what's kind of interesting is that a lot of us, especially in academia, think of ourselves as being very liberal, right. What I think is interesting is like liberals today, we are always focused on. We are progressive and everyone should have the ability to think what they want to think and you should really open up your arms to new ideas and all of these things but we really push our political agendas on others.

It's pretty hypocritical what we do because as soon as we see a Making-America-Great-hat on somebody, we're just like, f*** you, f***ing Trump supporter. It's a very hypocritical because we're not very progressive in our opening of arms and allowing people to think what they want to think, right. So I think that's a really interesting thing.

The history of this form of modern American political liberalism started around the 1900s, and it's thought to be pushed along by the presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, and also Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Franklin Delano Roosevelt described the American liberal in 1941 as someone who “insists that the government has the definite duty to use all of its power and resources to meet new social problems with new social controls to ensure to the average person the right to his own economic and political life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”. So this is a pretty big shift from simply saying, hey we are all equal and we deserve freedom. That is the Lockean idea of liberalism. Now with this modern American political liberalism, it has been shifted to, the government needs to make double-dog sure that we all have our rights to be equal and to have our freedom.

PENN: So in a way the modern political liberals should probably have been the neoliberal, you know? Rather than this weird economic system that is all about. You should've been born rich. The modern American liberal is different than a neoliberal, because a modern American political liberal is one who believes the government needs to step in and make sure everybody has a fair shot. So if they need welfare, you give them welfare. If they need healthcare, you give them healthcare.

ELLEN: You should have been born with it, is what they are saying. You should have been born with it or you should have done it by now. It's interesting this shift. I just saw a Gallup poll which was actually done at the start of this year in January, that said that only 25% of Americans consider themselves liberals, while 36% of the country considers themselves conservatives. So it's, I think within our social circles the three of us, we seem to find ourselves surrounded by 99% liberals, 1% uncles who like to spout off horrible racial slurs about migration. But the reality is that only a quarter of the country really identifies themselves as liberals. But if you look back at the 1990s, only 17% of the country identified themselves as liberals. So from 17% to 25%, that's a bit of an increase. I mean it's not ginormous but it's progressing.

OMAR: What bothers me a lot about the intensely polarized conservative, liberal, democrat, republican is that I might have those ideas of freedom, equality, etc but I'm always a little wary of saying, I am a liberal because I don't want someone to say that that means I always just want to vote Democrat. Not necessarily, I mean I will vote Democrat, if it means that Donald Trump is on the other side and those are the only two people that are left. And a lot of people, let's say last year, during the election would have been like, oh whoa, why wouldn't you just vote for Jill Stein or some other independent or something like that. It's like, whoa, we're not at a place yet where, if I vote for Jill Stein that she is really likely to win because there are about 10 million people who didn't vote for either Republican or Democrat, but who are actually way more on the side of the Hillary Clintons, so to speak, rather than the Donald Trumps. Had all those

people voted Democrat, we wouldn't been where we are today. So at that point, that's why I voted Democrat.

PENN: It doesn't mean you love Hillary.

OMAR: No, not necessarily and that's also not to say that we wouldn't might have other problems if Hillary Clinton would have been president. Any president is going to have some type of policy or concern that doesn't benefit everyone, like Barack Obama deported more people than George Bush. He spent more money on policing and technology of law enforcement than George Bush. So it's not like, because he is black, people should vote for him, because he is democrat, people should vote for him. I hate how polarized, look those are the only two types of political ideas that people have in this country.

PENN: I think that's the problem with having labels. This is why sociology studies labels such as conservative or labels such as liberal or progressive or democrat or republican. They all come with this huge historical contextual baggage that you're like, yeah I mean I kind of agree with that but you know, I don't know about all the rest of that, like it's just as one thing that I'm like, yes, I am Pro choice, right, but it doesn't mean that I want to go off and kill babies, it doesn't mean all these other things that you're trying to make it seem like it means. And it doesn't mean that I agree with everything Democrats have ever done ever, you know, but that's the problem when you take on labels. I think with the problem such as the Gallup poll there, they asked, do you identify as liberal or do you identify as conservative, people aren't going to say that necessarily because it means so much more than what this one little word.

It reminds me of "House of Cards" with Kevin Spacey, who has other problems right now, but the initial president who got elected was a moderate president, wasn't he? Right, so that seems to be like, oh, well, we don't want the show to go either way, so we'll just call it like, oh it's the first moderate president, right, it's supposed to be in the middle.

Maybe we will go towards that in the future and I think in reality most Americans are kind of somewhere in the middle.

ELLEN: If you look at European politics, a European liberal is totally different from an American "liberal". Or a democratic socialist here, say, Bernie Sanders, is like the most middle of the road socialist in Europe. It is vastly different in Europe and other parts of the world, compared to here in America.

OMAR: So, Ellen or Penn, do you want to talk about the term *libtard* since we're talking about labels?

ELLEN: Libtard is a term used by the alt right. And it is a portmanteau of liberal and retard, not politically correct.

PENN: Oh, that's so mean. It reminded me of leotards so that's was what I was thinking, oh, is it like the way we dress or something?

ELLEN: Yes, it is, because all liberals wear leotards.

PENN: Oh, libtard is a liberal retard, that's so mean.

ELLEN: I think it's something that's used quite often, especially in kind of all right Twitter world, which is its own very interesting world.

PENN: So does it mean that you suck at being a liberal or you are just a stupid liberal?

OMAR and ELLEN: You're a stupid liberal.

PENN: I see.

ELLEN: Like, Lock Her Up, #libtard, #MAGA.

OMAR: Which is so weird because people who are like on all right, really want like, we need to have businesses and we need more jobs in the Midwest and blah blah blah and all other stuff. But yet, people who are liberals, who in their view would want - let's say - freedom, equality, that somehow doesn't make sense.

ELLEN: Another thing is they want all of those things. And in order to get all those things, you have to have the government step in to help those industries or to offer subsidies or tax credits or whatever, so the idea of like, we want to be totally free of government, and we want to have our pristine American town, small town that runs on its own. It's like, if you want a lot of stuff, you want a lot of government. It doesn't fit their political ideology that like, to actually attaining what they want.

PENN: What the alt right wants is, is to revert America back to 1776 when Thomas Jefferson thought men, just men, white men.

OMAR: And they want everyone to go back to their country, it's like okay well then where should you go, because it ain't here.

ELLEN: Like none of us should be here.

OMAR: Exactly. Some of you guys would be in Britain, some of you would be in Germany, some of you would be in Poland.

PENN: Maybe some of you came from Africa. What is that DNA test says that shows you are African?

ELLEN: 23% in me. There's a really great, I think it was Mario, guys ever watched Mario? Saw him like at 3 pm, Monday to Friday. And there's one where they get like the Ku Klux Klan Grand Wizard to come on and then he does a DNA test and finds out that like some small percentage of him is traced back to Africa and then the whole audience is just like, whoo.

PENN: Alright so we have some suggested readings if you are interested in learning more about neoliberalism: Willie Davis article in the New Republic, [“What is ‘Neo’ About Neoliberalism?” \(New Republic 2017\)](#), so another way to break it down than the way we did.

Louis Farrakhan. Oh my God, it is 2009. I thought he was from like the 1800s or something. Oh, he is still alive. Louis Farrakhan just sounds like such an old men. He wrote [Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity \(Wacquant 2009\)](#) and then another reading is Joseph Stiglitz of [Globalization and its Discontents by Joseph Stiglitz \(2003\)](#).

ELLEN: We will definitely post all of the articles and the books that we just mentioned on the website, that'll happen.

Alrighty, that sounds signals the end of this week show. Per usual, we're gonna end with some quick breaks, these are random topics possibly current and newsworthy that I will throw at Penn and Omar who must then do a personal breakdown of the topic in five words or less, hella sociological. I'm going to start with Penn.

PENN: Ok, hit me.

ELLEN: Because it is towards the end of the semester, and we are all teaching, your topic to break down is something we see quite a bit of during this time period, which is plagiarism.

PENN: It's just hilarious, isn't it? I think that's my breakdown. Plagiarism is hilarious, like when you see people copying and pasting from websites, and they don't change the formatting, it's in a different text color, it's like you know you don't write that well, right and so when you suddenly start writing super eloquently with complete sentences, you know, and like complex fully formed thoughts, that tells me that ain't from you. Do some people will plagiarize the stupidest things like, I had a student plagiarize the summary of the TV show they were supposed to analyze. I was like, did you watch it, like just tell me what the guy did in the show, like that's the summary you know and you don't have to go and plagiarize that, that does nothing for you.

OMAR: And often it takes more time to plagiarize.

PENN: Exactly, I think students who plagiarize, they never think about whether or not that thing they're plagiarizing actually adds value to them. Sometimes they'll just plagiarize like totally off topic weirdest sentence and I am like what is that even supposed to do for your argument? Is that's supposed to help you in any way? I can go on forever but it's friggin hilarious. That's what

it is. And it's like, they don't understand that the teacher has Google also. So if you can find it on the internet, I can find it too, right.

ELLEN: Omar, are you ready for your quick break?

OMAR: Hit me with your best shot.

ELLEN: Alright, your quick break is Applebee's has just announced that they are selling \$1 Long Island ice teas until 2018. Break it down.

OMAR: I wish I had six words. I want to say just amazing marketing play. Amazing marketing play. And the reason why I say it's amazing, is because alcohol is relatively rather cheap compared to all the other types of things that can be manufactured. The idea that you could sell these things for \$1 makes a lot of sense because now people want to buy a shit ton, so you're really not going to lose a lot of money, always thought people, businesses who have to sell alcohol should make it cheap, and then you have more satisfied customers, so they're always going to come. "Yo that Applebee's! \$1 for Long Island ice teas!" So I think that's a really smart marketing device.

ELLEN: All I gotta say is Applebee's is going to be this spot for New Year's Eve, see hella drunk people Applebee's on New Year's Eve!

PENN: Mine would be, are there Applebee's in Hawaii? That's my breakdown.

OMAR: We need one on the campus.

ELLEN: Alrighty. Thanks for listening to the Social Breakdown. We really appreciate it. If you are interested in liberalism or neoliberalism and want to get a little bit more information on the books we cited today, you can check out our website, which is www.thesocialbreakdown.com . You can also find us on Facebook or Twitter @socbreakdown and @socialbreakdown. And you can subscribe to our podcast wherever you get your podcasts.

PENN: And don't forget to leave us a review, like, share, subscribe, all that good stuff.

ELLEN: Be sure to tune in next week. Until then, stay social.

PENN: Think social.

OMAR: And go read all these books, don't be a lame.