

Transcription

Exploring how we can master ourselves by looking at how experts say it is possible with your host Suswati Basu.

Intro music

Welcome to season 2 episode 59 of How To Be...with me Suswati as your timid presenter, guiding you through life's tricky topics and skills by reading through the best books out there.

This world is shaped and influenced by those in power. It is the responsibility of the public to ensure that power is used to create a positive change in the community. It is a common misconception that the average citizen does not need to concern themselves with politics or that they don't have power. But willful ignorance of a citizen can cause them to vote for representatives that may do more harm than good.

There is a famous quote by Plato that goes "One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors".

However, it is for that exact reason that you must familiarise yourself with the political landscape. Because in all that ugliness, the beauty of the human mind will always shine through. By being politically aware, the decisions you make will be better informed, and thus have a higher chance of having a positive effect on not only yourself but your family and community as well.

So how can we be politically conscious?

Here is Anastasia Kuatkhina, creative director of sustainable fashion company Maison Magenta.

ANASTASIA KUATKHINA: I think politics worldwide apply propaganda. Uh to be politically responsible in return is not to necessarily act as we are told. Apply critical thinking. Do not accept the information presented to you as credible. Really think about what other motives, agenda and gains that could be, read up on the subject in question before imposing the view that was broadcast in mainstream media. Ask questions and seek primary sources such as directly asking uh people from the relevant area in question. The worst actions politically I have noticed lately is people thoughtlessly reposting news on Instagram, spreading hate, provoking people to choose a side. When there are no winning sides, everybody is entitled to their own opinion. Also, one can be politically responsible by participating in aid without feeling the need to record it for social media. This way, your actions and motives would be much more pure and politically responsible.

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Our first book is from Professor Lewis R. Gordon, who is the Head of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Connecticut in the US, Visiting Professor of Philosophy at the University of Johannesburg in South Africa, and Honorary President of the Global Center for Advanced Studies.

His book *Fear of Black Consciousness* explores contemporary racism and the long historical movement from black consciousness with a lower-case “b” to capital “B” Black consciousness, an active and more liberatory mentality that sees through the lies of white supremacy and works to build a better and more democratic society. Gordon examines these weighty topics through sustained readings of popular film and culture, including Jordan Peele’s *Get Out* and Ryan Coogler’s *Black Panther*. Professor Gordon was amazing to speak to, hence here is a part of our conversation but find the full interview on www.howtobe247.com or on the YouTube channel.

LEWIS R. GORDON: There was a time when there was no reason for the world for anybody to think of themselves in racialized ways or think of themselves according to categories such as black, white, Brown, yellow, red, et cetera. But because of historical circumstances of colonization, exploitation, et cetera, certain ways of looking at people, which for many people is primarily gendered. And even in societies that didn't use gender the way others use them, some societies, for instance, have seven genders. Some societies didn't even think of gender, but age, some people thought of there's so many ways we think of each other. But the society that produced the way we talk about racism and racialization, it uh came from a way of looking at people that separated them fundamentally by gender. And the historical way was to say fully developed people were men, people who are less developed were women. But then what do you do when you start now claiming that those people now meet other people who have people of different colors who could be called women and men? And so what began to happen is a realignment so the women and men in the dominating group began to change and they began to ascribe what they used to ascribe to women, to the groups they dominate. And this is why I argue, as you may have seen in the book, that it's a mistake to separate gender and race, but actually see how they're part of a way that people organize, thinking together. To put differently, I've never seen a race walking or a gender walking. I've always seen an embodied constellation of race, gender, class, all kinds of things, orientation, et cetera, because that's what we are. So when we put it together, when we put it together, this problem emerged because at first it was what? And again, this is the pejorative way of looking at it, the feminizing of whole groups of people. So the women and men in those places were put under a racial category that kept the dual or binary logic of the masculine is strong and the feminine is weak, impose that onto people. And this, of course, creates a kind of identity crisis for everybody. Because what do you do now if you're going to be calling, say, a white woman a man just because of her whiteness and this stuff, these kind of organizations of people then transformed people who were talenzi, um Asante, Wolof, Fulani, Kikuyu, Xhosa, Tuana, all these kinds of people or people who could have been Pashtun um uh Punjabi Tamil, loads of people suddenly were put onto the category black. Um and we have been struggling to work out that lowercase racialized blackness since.

Well, the truth is we're all responsible already. I think it's a little different question, which is how do we come to admit our responsibility and take it on. Because, uh as you know, one of the

things I point out in the book is a concept called bad faith. And bad faith is when we lie to ourselves and we often lie to ourselves because it's difficult to deal with a displeasing truth. And one displeasing truth we just brought up, which is that we're all responsible for the world politically. We just all are. It'll be much easier if we say they're good guys, bad guys, good women, bad women. And there are. But that's more about more specific things. I was talking to you before we began recording about the difference between moral and ethical responsibility versus political responsibility and legal responsibility. And I was bringing up. These are uh ideas talked about from people such as Karl Jasper is the great German thinker from the 20th century. Hannah Arendt, also from the 20th century, an American uh feminist thinker, Iris Young. There are many people talk about these. Franz Fanon from Martinique talks about this and it informs a lot of my work. But the main thing is this moral and ethical responsibility is something that's specific to us individually. So if someone. If you're lying down and somebody didn't see you on the beach and stepped on you, you are individually harmed and that individual stepped on you. Now, if the person said, well, I says to himself or herself or themselves, well, I didn't see you. So just keeps walking. That person, that's an individual. You may say right now, the person said, but I didn't tend to hurt you. Yeah, but the point is, you were hurt in that moment. An ethical person says, the point is somebody was harmed and just said, sorry, the whole thing could be ended by, oh, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to step on you. Right. But that's still individual. But political responsibilities, that's very different. Political responsibilities are connected uh always beyond ourselves, all the way through to people we even don't even know personally or contact tend to be anonymous. They're connected to humanity. Some people in the past looked at them specifically with States. So your political responsibility over your state, your jurisdiction. This is one of the problems we have right now with all these wars going on. Because we live in a planet right now with nation States or States that are basically saying it's their business, stay out of it. But if we look at it metaphorically, this would be like if every individual were a state and if they're there or every household was a state and they're there, like torturing the people in their household. And they could just say, no, but it's my household, stay out of it. It's private, it's my business. Well, for the political world, it isn't. It's pretty uh clear when it's political responsibility, all humanity ultimately is responsible for it. And it can go in several directions. One is the blame direction. And we know this. For instance, if a country. And this is uh why Jaspers was talking about. If a country that has behaved badly loses, everybody in that country bears responsibility for the acts of his government. But here's the thing. Um we have to bear in mind that although we may uh talk about Germany, World War II right now, Russia, or we may talk about Turkey with Armenians, or we could talk about what happened in Rwanda, but the list is long. Or if we could talk about the various corporations and they're linked to the Congo. The fact of the matter is that we I'm using there is all of humanity. We have to say, what did we do? That's the blame part. But there's another political responsibility. The responsibility is given the terrible things we're seeing, what are we doing to organize a world that could be better? And to do that, that means we have to think politically in a broader way. And this is where Iris Young's work is so important. Drusilla. Cornell's work is very important. These are all my homies, my crew, the people I talk with. And some of them are no longer alive, like Iris or Fennon, people who are no longer alive, but had great insight. And as you know in the book, I don't only talk about philosophers and people. I also talk about everyday people. I talk about people like Harriet Bailey, Frederick Douglass's mother, enslaved. Yeah, she's amazing. Everyday people. They're

a Dalit woman right now as an example, who are doing things that their names won't be known, but they're acting politically. When you act politically, you work with other human beings to expand their capacities to make power transformative. In other words, it's the use of our ability collectively to enable power to enable people to make their lives better. We use uh it in a bad way politically, Ironically, through disempowering people's capacity to act politically. And so that in other words, when we lock um people into their bodies, when they're just in their flesh, and that's all they could act on, that's disempowerment. But that's also oppression. Oppression blocks our access to the social world that we call human reality. So political action increases our capacity to live in the human world. And that means um everybody can act politically, whether it is the way we organize our neighborhoods, whether it's how we even use our technologies. What you're doing right now is actually political because it goes no, it is really is because it goes beyond you and me. It goes out to a world who may find it useful, and it also goes out there. Uh it can be used for ill, or it could be used for good things. For instance, when we think about what we're dealing with in the world today, if we commodify our political identities, if we look at political identity simply as a question for market exploitation, then the only issue is the selling of our political identity. And that means that at that point, it can actually be an affirmation of a system of commodification and exploitation. But if we actually see the political work as thinking about what we can offer people that may actually enable us creatively and for them to add to it and transform the world, then ultimately, although there are efforts to commodify politics, we have reintroduced the idea that political life is part of giving us the agency to evaluate the market, evaluate commodification, and pose limits on them.

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Professor Gordon reminds us that Black bodies with a capital B have never been a problem. The idea that those bodies had minds and were fully human has sparked terror ever since black people were shackled to ships. The enslaved were not permitted to read, write or to think, for fear that they would rise up and overthrow their so-called masters.

Hence he first explores the characteristics and qualities of “white consciousness,” the collective thought patterns that dominate in anti-black societies like the U.S. Consciousness is not an equation of the identity of individuals or communities with an abstract idea of how they think. Rather, it is a result and function of the historical development of how people collectively come to see the world and, above all, to recognize that they are seeing the world that way and why.

Professor Gordon explains that the same relationship to blackness exists today, when the Black body is fetishised but only if the mind is subdued. The obsession with the Black athlete or tanning beds, lip-fillers and Brazilian butt-lifts makes sense once we understand that it is only the body that is wanted. His use of *Get Out!*, Jordan Peele’s film about white people snatching African Americans, is the perfect avenue for this discussion.

Following in a long Black intellectual tradition, Professor Gordon distinguishes between lowercase black consciousness – recognising that you are a victim of racism – and uppercase Black consciousness, in which you are committed to fighting oppression.

For anyone still questioning whether the US can be racist because of the election of Barack Obama, he explains that having a Black body is not the ultimate barrier to the presidency. The fear lay in electing a Black body with a Black consciousness. Once Obama demonstrated he posed no danger to whiteness, his body became an empty symbol of progress.

Professor Gordon uses this to offer a warning that “neoliberal racism doesn’t at first appear racist” because of the number of “people of colour” supposedly defending individual rights while enacting racist policies around migration, policing and removal of welfare protections.

He supplies an excellent critique of anti-Black societies, and puts the killing of George Floyd in context by explaining that the “police are structurally agents of social asphyxiation”, choking off resistance. He counters the backlash – from reactionary governments and rightwing alarmists – against the term “white privilege” by proposing “white licence” as a better way to capture how whiteness is a permit to be “above ethics, morality law and politics”. From lynchings to the recent attack on the US Capitol, we can see how this license works.

He blames this on egotism, which is a pathological condition that denies the relationality of events, humans, and identities. Disorders such as neurosis, narcissism, egotism, and pleonexia drives fear of guilt about the collective responsibility of whites for racist anti-Blackness. Guilt is “aggression turned inward,” Professor Gordon writes. We see the fear of it in the white supremacist drive to ban Critical Race Theory. The refusal to take responsibility for the sources of guilt stems from the denial of the reality of, in this case, racist aggression.

Professor Gordon also offers the movie Black Panther as an example of Black consciousness, which is an interesting choice because the movie is a case study of the kind of political identity we don’t need. An African kingdom that could have ended slavery, colonialism and the current plight of the continent but decided to sit it out to protect itself.

When Wakanda finally does engage with the world, it does so with the help of the CIA and the UN, two of the best representatives of modern-day African oppression. None of this should be a surprise given that Black Panther was created by two white authors and the comics have a history of grotesque racist depictions. Professor Gordon even acknowledges that M’Baku’s character seemed apeline because he got his powers from killing, eating and bathing in the blood of a gorilla.

He says politics cannot exist without speech and power—or more specifically, power in speech. It is through communication of that kind that institutions are built. Power signifies the ability to make something happen, with access to the means for implementing it.

In racist societies, the state aims to disempower. Restricting the power of certain groups to the physical body requires neutering their capacities for expression, particularly speech. These people cease to affect the social world; they are unheard sounds. That is why all racist societies eventually become anti-political, anti-intellectual, and unimaginative.

Hence we have moral responsibilities. One moral responsibility is about our character and relationship with the rules and mores of society. The main concern is summarized by the question “Have I done the right thing?”

The next is legal responsibility, which is the matter of whether one has followed or broken rules as legislated by relevant authorities. The last form of guilt and responsibility, political, is of primary interest here. It is responsibility, borne by every member of a society, for the actions of their government.

Therefore fear of Black consciousness makes sense, then, in a society where white supremacists and antiblack racists desire to see without seeing the displeasing truth of what they have produced and the system of injustice on which they depend—namely, human degradation and the foreclosure of the breadth of human potential. Dignity, freedom, and respect with access to the conditions of meaningfully living are vital for a healthy society.

A really good example of being politically conscious is seen in the 2019 film *Official Secrets* starring Keira Knightly, Matt Smith and Ralph Fiennes. It is about Katharine Gun, a real life British intelligence specialist, who leaked a secret memo to the press in order to avoid the Iraq invasion by the US and her government. Here is a clip of the film.

OFFICIAL SECRETS:

Katherine Gunn.

I translated signals intelligence and I reported anything of interest to my clients.

You're a spy.

Do you get an email?

The Americans want us to help me get a UN resolution for war. So you work for the British government?

No.

No.

This proposed war is historically uh unpopular.

I work for British people.

I do not gather intelligence so that the government can lie to the British people.

Intelligence may be being manipulated to take this country to war. I could get you a copy.

You're asking me to collude in a breach of the Official Secrets Act and call that treason?

Someone has betrayed their government and their country.

You might need our help.

If we do not go public, we would be conceding that no one can ever tell the people when their government is lying.

Your marriage will be interrogated.

His husband had absolutely nothing to do with this.

He's a Muslim.

I'm sorry?

You chose loyalty to your country over loyalty to your government, your marriage, and yourself. I think that speaks rather highly of you.

Katherine was charged with an offense of the Official Secrets Act.

Do you want to risk it all?

How do you plead?

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The final book is from Jessamyn Conrad, who is a senior consultant at Copperfield Advisory and holds degrees from Harvard, Columbia and Cambridge Universities. Her book *What You Should Know About Politics . . . But Don't: A Nonpartisan Guide to the Issues That Matter*, is a primer looking at a range of topics to allow people to understand what is happening around them. Here she is speaking to Northeastern University in 2008.

JESSAMYN CONRAD: People always assume that I know a lot about politics. And while it's true that there are these kind of funny things that I've learned, it's also true that uh I didn't necessarily always know about every side of every issue. And especially, I think, uh the other side of an opinion that I had. I wouldn't necessarily be able to explain to you what the ideas behind it were, what the ideology was, why people thought what they thought. And I also found that when I wanted to learn more about issues, it was really very hard. I found it was very hard to find basic information. And I found it was very hard to find nontainted, not very partisan information. That always bothered me. And I always sort of wondered why a book like mine didn't exist. And it really didn't. There was a surprising thing when I was writing the book proposal for it that I really looked around for something that was nonpartisan basic information on political issues. And I could not find a single thing. And one of the things that I think is important about writing this as a book um instead of, for example, a website or um somebody having a talk uh radio program where they just talk about issues was that in a book you have a sort of permanent record of information, something that you can come back to. It sits there, it's accessible, but it's also a lot of information in one place, all bound together. And one of the reasons I tried to bold, if you look at the book, you'll see that there are all these state terms that are in bold print, because as I say, I find it very hard to find out what necessarily a term means. So one of the things that you'll hear a lot, um for example, especially right now, is that the Fed sets interest rates. I mean, you've heard this in the past year, right? Okay, this is a lie. The Fed does not, by any stretch of the imagination, set interest rates. It targets interest rates. And so what it does is we think the interest rate should be 5%, and it buys in itself government securities in order to force the market to create an interest rate around what they want. This is important because if you say that the Fed sets interest rates, what you're implying is a certain kind of power that this agency has over policy. And if you say that it, in fact can only target it, you are more accurately representing the kind of power that the Fed has and the kind of power that other institutions have. And that's a really important distinction. And it's that kind of distinction that often gets glossed over in sort of basic media sources.

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The American economy is a top issue for voters – but it's such a large and complex system that few understand how it works. The federal government aims to create economic circumstances that are just right: growth, but not so much growth that the machinery overheats. During the 2008 financial crisis, housing values inflated into a bubble.

The mortgage meltdown and Great Recession led to increased political scrutiny of the two quasi-public mortgage giants, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Government bailouts sparked a backlash in the form of the Occupy Wall Street movement, which criticized how Wall Street and Washington, DC, elites ran the economy.

Political discussions of the economy often veer into tax policy, a source of wide disagreement. Republicans generally dislike income taxes, considering them punitive because the rich pay more in taxes than the poor do. Liberals counter that the wealthy pay less in taxes as a share of their overall income than middle-income taxpayers do.

Democrats also argue that taxes are necessary to pay for social programs, safety nets and public infrastructure. Underlying the tax debate is a disconnect about the role of government: Liberals think the state can solve societal problems, while conservatives see government bureaucracy as the enemy rather than a savior.

US foreign policy pits isolationism against interventionism. The Monroe Doctrine of 1823 established the United States as a neutral party in world affairs, while it also urged European powers to stop further colonization in the Western Hemisphere. In 1898, America and Spain clashed over Spanish influence in Cuba. The United States won the Spanish-American War, and suddenly America was itself a colonial power. When World War I erupted, President Woodrow Wilson adopted an isolationist position. But German provocations drew the United States into the war. America maintained its active role on the global stage during World War II. Rising anticommunist sentiment led to the Cold War and American intervention in the conflict in Vietnam.

The defining foreign entanglements of recent decades have occurred in the Middle East. President George H.W. Bush built an international coalition for the first Gulf War, which pushed Iraqi forces out of Kuwait but left Saddam Hussein in power. The elder Bush worried that removing Hussein would lead to civil war in Iraq.

The September 11, 2001, attacks opened the door for President George W. Bush to oust Hussein. Unlike his father, the younger Bush didn't wait for United Nations approval, nor did he create a multinational alliance. The media and Congress bought into Bush's assertion that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. Bush and his supporters envisioned Iraqis greeting the American invaders as liberators. But US forces ran afoul of cultural norms in Iraq, not to mention deep-seated societal divides, and Iraq devolved into violence.

Conrad then talks about the American health care system, which is expensive and unavailable to millions. US health care is the best in the world, but some 40 million Americans lack the

insurance that gives them access to that care. The United States is the only developed nation that doesn't provide medical care for all citizens, and medical bills cause personal bankruptcies. Most Americans have insurance through their employers. These plans take the form of either health management organizations or preferred provider organizations.

The US government provides health care in the form of Medicare, the insurance program for Americans 65 and older, and Medicaid, a program for the poor. Republicans widely support the status quo, while Democrats have sought to expand coverage to the uninsured.

On the left, there's a growing movement to provide health care for all, with a belief that access to medical treatment is nothing less than a basic human right. Republicans remain skeptical of calls for more robust government involvement in health care. A number of factors are driving costs in the American medical system: Pharmaceutical companies argue that they must charge high prices for prescription medicines because of the steep investment required to bring a drug to market.

Skeptics wonder why they can buy the same drugs in Mexico and Canada for much less than in the United States. Another factor raising costs is that hospitals compete for customers by investing in cutting-edge equipment that can provide the latest tests or dole out the newest treatments.

Now environmental policy has moved on from questioning whether climate change is real to determining how to address the issue.

There's little disagreement among scientists that climate change is real. Globally, however, gaps remain between scientific reality and political action. China has grown into a mighty economic power, yet it's home to nine of the 10 most polluted cities on the planet. One solution is a cap-and-trade system that sets limits on emissions but lets nations exceed those limits by buying carbon credits or by mitigating the damage through carbon offsets, such as by planting trees.

Concern about global warming has led to the rise of alternatives to fossil fuels. These green options include solar and wind energy, and vehicles powered by ethanol, electricity or biodiesel. Wind and solar power aren't always available, however. And ethanol is traditionally produced with corn, which requires water, fertilizer and pesticides. One alternative is switchgrass, a hardy plant that grows with little care and can replace corn as an ingredient in ethanol.

The mainstream political parties hold inconsistent views about civil liberties.

Liberals tend to favor stricter rules on gun rights but oppose torture and wiretapping as government overreach. Conservatives dislike gun control but view torture and wiretapping as necessary to protect public safety. Libertarians are the only group who consistently embrace civil liberties.

Liberals and conservatives can't even agree on what the Second Amendment means: Liberals focus on the first half of the sentence, which reads "A well-regulated Militia being necessary to

the security of a free state,” and argue that the framers of the US Constitution didn’t envision widespread gun ownership. Conservatives focus on the second half of the amendment – “the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed” – and say the language couldn’t be clearer.

The Fourth Amendment is another flashpoint in debates about civil liberties. That section of the Constitution guarantees “against unreasonable searches and seizures.” It requires authorities to prove probable cause and to possess search warrants. After the 9/11 terror attacks, the Bush administration began allowing warrantless wiretaps of American citizens speaking to foreigners. When the policy became public, Republicans supported the government’s right to listen to phone conversations, arguing that foreign citizens didn’t enjoy Fourth Amendment protections and that the initiative targeted enemies of the state in a time of war.

Next America’s culture wars date back to the 1960s – a time when the counterculture rebelled against racial discrimination and the war in Vietnam, and agitated for women’s rights and sexual freedom. The battle heated up again in the 1980s, when some Republicans embraced social conservatism as a way to appeal to voters. Divisive issues included feminism, abortion, the role of religion and the rights of gay people. Abortion remains a hot topic in the culture wars, with social conservatives continuing to chafe at the Supreme Court ruling in *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 case that led to the nationwide legalization of abortion.

An offshoot of the right-to-life battle is the debate over the right to die. A prominent case involved Terri Schiavo, a Florida woman who mysteriously collapsed in 1990 and lived for years in a vegetative state. Schiavo’s parents, devout Catholics, insisted on keeping her alive. Her husband argued that she would not have wanted to remain in a coma. The Florida Legislature passed Terri’s Law in 2003, which gave Governor Jeb Bush the authority to keep Schiavo alive. However, the Florida Supreme Court overturned Terri’s Law, and Schiavo died after her feeding tubes were removed.

Same-sex marriage emerged as a new front in the cultural war in the 1990s. The Catholic Church, conservative Protestants and African-American churches opposed gay marriage. In 1996, the Defense of Marriage Act codified marriage as a heterosexual institution.

Immigration and Social Security policies are longstanding, divisive issues in the United States. In the 19th century, many Americans reviled poor arrivals from Ireland and Germany. Today, Hispanic immigrants are at the center of the US immigration debate. There’s disagreement about immigration policy even among Republicans. George W. Bush pushed for a lenient immigration policy that would appeal to Hispanic voters. But immigration hardliners shot down Bush’s proposal. Democrats, for their part, tend to look at immigration as secondary to the economy, health care and foreign policy.

Social Security is another socioeconomic policy that divides conservatives and liberals. Republicans often describe the system, which dates to President Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal, as broken. Democrats revere it as a basic safety net for the elderly. Payroll taxes fund the

Social Security trust fund, and surpluses are invested in US treasury instruments. But Social Security's obligations will likely outpace its revenues sometime between 2020 and 2022. That reality has some Republicans calling for a privatization of Social Security. Democrats tend to dismiss such proposals as overly risky.

American schools and universities are a battleground for their own culture wars. Admissions standards at US colleges are a hot topic. Liberals contend that Black and Hispanic Americans need broader access to college degrees, and that universities should take pains to admit more nonwhite students. Conservative critics counter that bending admission standards along racial lines hurts everyone, eroding the quality of education while giving unfair preference to undeserving students.

Several cases about affirmative action in university admissions have gone to the Supreme Court. In a 1978 case, a white man who was rejected by the University of California at Davis Medical School sued, saying he was rejected in favor of nonwhite students with lower scores on the medical school entrance exam. In that case, justices ruled that schools could use race as one factor but not the only factor in admissions. A 2003 Supreme Court case concerning the University of Michigan reached a similar outcome.

The free flow of international trade has created both benefits and backlash. Since the 1980s, international markets have grown less constrained and more competitive. Pro-market economists often argue that the benefits of global competition outweigh any downsides in the form of domestic job losses. President Ronald Reagan advocated for free trade, but, as with many other political issues, the ideological lines aren't always clear. People considered President Bill Clinton, a Democrat, a proponent of free trade because he pushed through the North American Free Trade Agreement.

One element of the trade debate focuses on fundamental fairness. If US consumers save money at Walmart because most goods are now made in China, that's a benefit. But hundreds of thousands of American workers have also lost manufacturing jobs because of free trade. The unequal playing field for companies abroad raises more issues: Protectionists point to tax loopholes enjoyed by US companies that manufacture abroad and also to the lack of basic health and safety regulations to protect workers in China.

So to sum up:

Professor Gordon says in *Fear of Black Consciousness* that Black consciousness is linked to building a better world to come. This is the quest for liberation. As liberation would require a radical change of society, we could also call it revolution. Black consciousness is political because of its organic relationship to fighting against societal forces of disempowerment. It requires Black Power.

In Conrad's book *What You Should Know About Politics . . . But Don't that*

- The American economy is a top issue for voters – but it's such a large and complex system that few understand how it works.

US foreign policy pits isolationism against interventionism.

- American health care is expensive and unavailable to millions.

- Environmental policy has moved on from questioning whether climate change is real to determining how to address the issue.

- The mainstream political parties hold inconsistent views about civil liberties.

- Cultural issues divide Americans, with faith and geography playing major roles.

- Immigration and Social Security policies are longstanding, divisive issues in the United States.

- American schools and universities are a battleground for their own culture wars.

- The free flow of international trade has created both benefits and backlash.

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Please do leave a review if you found this helpful! Thank you to King's College London Teaching Fellow Dr Zeno Leoni for your lovely comments saying "They are both pleasant to listen and helpful in the everyday life."

See you in two week's time!

HELLO I'M LISTENING: Hello, I'm listening. This is a podcast about everything and anything with me. Danny and me Wolfie. You may know us from translating love. We did a relationship podcast uh for over 80 episodes but then thought we might open up a little bit. We wanted to kind of broaden the topics a little bit outside of just relationships. So then we thought of Hello, I'm listening, which is a podcast where we literally can talk about anything. Anything that moves us, that makes us think, talk about a topic or something that we can relate to or have experienced. One thing we're really excited about with hello and listening is having guests on the podcast to talk about their interests, Their expertise and their opinions and thoughts on different topics. Um right. So join us in our journey and follow us everywhere you get podcasts. Hello, I'm listening.