

## *Original Paper*

# A Precis on How Democracies Die as a Consequence of America's, Failure of Government Working for the People while Serving the Interests of the Wealthy

Frederick D. Bedell<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Fountain Hills, Arizona, USA

Received: September 29, 2021    Accepted: October 20, 2021    Online Published: November 4, 2021  
doi:10.22158/sshsr.v2n4p65    URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/sshsr.v2n4p65>

### **Abstract**

*This precis speaks to the failure of the United States government to sustain the wealth of the middle-class after the post-World War Two years', while serving the wealthiest Americans.*

*It will document how the country has become polarized and fractured along ideological and cultural lines. This situation has created a segmentation of the country that has competing visions, purpose and meaning which is tearing it apart.*

*It will also focus on the inequality in the country that has emerged from the Oligarchy's domination of the political and free market space-government of the 1%, by the 1% AND FOR THE 1%. Their mantra is to keep the government out of business and have business in the government.*

### **Keywords**

*Oligarchs, Plutocracy, Inequality, conservatism, deregulate, privatize, tax cuts, legislation, democracy ideology, Cultures, Democrat, Republican Labeling*

### **1. Introduction**

Today's voters are inundated with a plethora of information and issues, political views that often confuse them. Some of the information is accurate and some slanted to the advantage of the political party producing the information which maybe inaccurate. Misinformation, disinformation is the communication vehicle that often finds it way into our homes. The question becomes-how do we sort thru information that is based on facts and is accurate. "Historical Illiteracy" Contributes to an uninformed electorate. We hope this narrative will help.

The context of this precis is to document the events and practices that have contributed to America's failure to work for the middle-class while serving the wealthy-oligarchs, which is how Democracies die.

The precis will be divided into two parts- the Oligarchy and the Division the country as divided in the essays of George Packer and David Brooks.

### *1.1 The Oligarchy*

Most of the information presented in part one will be gleaned from Thom Hartmann's book, "The Hidden History of American Oligarchy" (2021).

We start with the reason why Mr. Hartmann wrote the book. He "states that he wanted to address the reclaiming of our democracy for the working-class in America". Part two dovetails with this theme as the essays written by Georg Packer and David follow his narrative.

Mr. Hartmann asks the question—how did we get where we are and what are the dangers. His answer is the American Oligarchy's "take over" of the political system in the United States.

He defines "oligarchy as wealthy individuals (synonymous with Plutocracy) seizing control of the political market-place and turning it to their benefit". In a democracy government works for the people thru their elected representatives and not for the oligarchs'.

### *1.2 Previous Oligarchies*

The American revolution was fought by the American colonists against the British Monarchy for their freedom, (1700's)

The Civil War- the South became an oligarchy as a result of the take-over of the political space in the South in the (1830's)

The Invention of the cotton gin by Eli Whitney was the technological device that enhanced the wealth of the big plantation owners. The gin was very expensive and were bought by the wealthy plantation owners which increased their cotton growing wealth. This wealth enabled them to buy up the land of the small plantation owners essentially putting them out of business.

The cotton gin transformed the economics of the South from a tough existence into one of opulence and great wealth which was enjoyed by a small number. It changed the culture and the politics of the South from a mostly democratic republic into a tyrannical oligarchy.

The price of slaves was enhanced. The greed for power took possession of the slave holders which resulted in the reason for the extension of slavery.

The wealthy took possession of the church and, local government. Then came the Dred Scott decision by the Supreme Court which held the Africans were not eligible for citizenship.

By the 1830's the South was firmly held in the hands of a small number of wealthy plantation owners, politically, economically and socially as a result of the innovation of the cotton gin.

The Southern Oligarchs had become so strong that they wanted to dominate the North. The purpose of the rebellion was not to secure toleration for slavery within the seceding states but to compel the adoption of slavery by the nation. In other words, the South wanted to have a slave empire that encompassed the whole of the United States and extend it to the Caribbean Islands.

### *1.2 Haves and Have Nots*

Russell Kirk (1951) wrote a book entitled “The Conservative Mind”. It provided a framework to justify maintaining the oligarchy using certain systems, e.g. “calling it conservatism which became the official religion of the Republican party. In 1964 Barry Goldwater (Senator from Arizona) was the first modern GOP candidate for president to espouse that way of thinking”.

Many conservatives saw a racial hierarchy, Kirk wrote, “the Supreme Court’s decision on equal rights among races such as Brown vs. The Board of Education will work mischief and injury rather than fulfill responsible democracy”.

Lewis Powell’s memo (1971) titled “Attack on the American Free Enterprise System” Was a **CORPORATE BLUEPRINT** to dominate democracy. The memo called for corporate America to become more aggressive in molding society’s thinking about business, government, politics and law in the US. The blue print gave rise to the American conservative movement and the formation of influential right-wing think tanks and lobbying organizations, such as the Heritage Foundation and the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC).

It also encouraged the Chambers of Commerce to become more politically active.

### *1.3 Andrew Carnegie*

Andrew Carnegie, steel magnate and philanthropist, penned an essay, “The Gospel of Wealth”, which for all intents and purposes gave his rationale for giving money to the poor to justify his accumulation of wealth.

Mr. Carnegie donated vast sums of his wealth in building monuments, e.g. museums, and libraries, etc. as a way of giving back to the communities as a consequence of his amassing great wealth. He felt that income inequality was a problem of rich and poor to be solved.

He felt inequality was a brief state between taking and giving phases. Giving back, he wrote is “the true antidote for the temporary unequal distribution of wealth, the reconciliation of the rich and poor”. He felt the idea of temporary unequal inequality is transitional and necessary for progress, but reversible thanks to the fruits of progress (Giridharadas, 2018).

Mr. Carnegie felt inequality exists and he defended it and stated, “The necessary of temporary inequality, wealth passing through the hands of the few can be made a much more potent force for the elevation of our race than if it had been distributed in small amounts to the people themselves”.

He believes that there is a compromise, a true effect which leaves us alone in the competitive market-place and we will tend to the poor after the winnings are won.

He states. “The money will be spent more wisely on you (the less fortunate) than by you. You will have your choice to enjoy our wealth in the way we think that you should enjoy it” as written by Mr. Giridharadas in his book, “Winners Take All” (2018).

### *1.4 American Legislative Exchange Council, (ALEC)*

ALEC is a nationwide consortium of state legislators who work side by side with some of American Corporations. Their mission is to change the country by changing the laws. It creates model legislation

that are pro corporate interests that its members push in state houses across the country. ALEC member corporations craft bills and pass them on to state legislators who introduce and vote on the bills which become law that enables member corporations to get state money (Wikipedia).

### *1.5 Reagan Revolution*

When Ronald Reagan Came into the office of the presidency (1980) he had two mandates-**to defund the democratic party and to destroy the nation's unions**. At the time one half of American workers belonged to unions. Unions were the primary source of funding for the Democratic Party. He demolished the Air Flight controllers Union as a starter. He followed the strategy of Margaret Thatcher's demolition of the Coal Miners Union in England.

In addition, he also had an agenda to overturn the legislation for *Brown v. Board of Education* (Integration of schools) and *Rose v. Wade* (abortion/women's reproductive rights) which were unsuccessful.

He overturned the Fairness Doctrine in 1980 relating to Media communication, Hartmann (2021).

The Fairness Doctrine required Radio stations (and media outlets) to have programs in the public interest by offering programming with opposing points of view. Its purpose was to strengthen democracy by producing an informed and educated electorate.

This action was viewed by many as a reward to the Christian right who helped his campaign. Today, five corporations control the majority of media outlets, stated by Robert Kennedy a guest on the Tavis Smiley TV show (2013).

### *1.6 Legislative Actions*

Actions taken by the Congress to help the influence of corporations.

**Legislative Capture**-large corporations account for half of the national economy and pay more for lobbyists to write and pass laws in Congress more favorable to themselves than federal taxes. The way in which Congressional committee was suppose to watch certain industries, was diminished, in effect they became beholden to corporations which is called legislative capture (Wikipedia)

### *1.7 Repeal of the Glass Steagall Act*

June 16, 1933. The Glass Steagall Act effectively separated commercial banking and created the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, among other things. It was one of the most widely debated legislative initiatives being signed into law by FDR in June of 1933.

Subsequently, President Bill Clinton signed the Financial Services Modernization Act, commonly known as Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act which Neutralized Glass Steagall by repealing key components of the act, (March 15, 2018).

The Glass-Steagall was viewed as over regulation of the banking Industry which resulted in Banks being able to invest money in risky ventures which was prohibited under the act. The risk is viewed as one of the key factors in the financial crisis of 2008 (Wikipedia).

### *1.8 White Collar Government*

In Nicholas Carnes book, “White Collar Government: The Hidden role of Class in Economic Policy Making” (2013). He begins with an example of a working-class citizen’s election to Congress. Edward Beard, a house painter was elected to Rhode Island’s state legislature in 1971. In 1974 he was elected to Congress. His agenda was geared to the working class, and to foster his goals, he founded the Blue-Collar Caucus, which supported union causes and working-class issues. He is reported as saying, “only two percent of the members of Congress come from the majority of voters”. I think you can guess if this is in operation now.

Donald Matthews, a political scientist observed- and quoted that “compared to more than a quarter of a century ago almost every legislator is better educated, possesses higher status occupations, and has a more privileged background than the people they represent”. In other words, the working-class is vastly underrepresented in public office, and the vast majority of policies are made by a white-collar government.

### *1.9 Supreme Court Actions*

The Supreme Court in June, 2019 repealed the one-hundred-year-old act that forbade corporations to contribute to candidates for federal office. The New Law is called “**Citizens United**” (2019).

This law reinforces corporate dominance in the every day lives of the populace to make necessary changes for a true democracy.

In the October issue of the magazine, “The Nation”, the editor Katrina Vander Heuvel, commented, that the court handed the conservative right wing of the party with money that moved our representative government toward a plutocracy (Oligarchy)-political power derived from wealth and is devoted to protecting wealth by allowing money to be given secretly to political campaigns.

The rationale behind the Act is that Money is free speech and corporations are people (Hartmann, 2021).

### *1.10 Tax Havens*

In an article written by Gabriel Zuckman and Gus Werezek, titled “Shut down the Tax Havens”, in the New York Times Paper (7/11/21). The authors shed light on the negative impact tax havens have on the working-class in the United States.

In the decades after World War II close to 50 percent of American company’s earnings went to state and federal taxes. Economically, it was a golden period. Middle class income grew at roughly, the same rate as those of the richest Americans. But as globalization gave companies the ability to choose where they recorded profits, Congress scrambled to keep business by lowering corporate taxes. Corporate tax breaks have helped business owners amass inconceivable amounts of money over the past decades. Meanwhile, middle class Americans have footed the bill as Congress has propped up the budget by raising taxes on wages.

Companies have resorted to devious schemes to justify their profit shifting for years.

The rights to Nike's swoosh trademark belonged to one of the company's Bermuda subsidiaries. In its quest to avoid taxes, Apple moved some of its intellectual property to Jersey, a small island in the English Channel.

In 2018, Facebook made \$15 billion in profit in Ireland- the equivalent of about @10 million for each of its employees there. Bristol Meyers Squibb recorded close to 5 billion in profits in Ireland, or roughly @7.5 million per employee. This is tax evasion It is when a company logs billions of dollars in a shell company, it violates the spirit of the internal Revenue Code, which states that a transaction must have a purpose other than reducing a tax Liability (Zuckman & Wezerk, 7/21).

Tax Havens and business owners have driven international tax policy. The result has been a nation where working-class Americans are with underfunded public schools and hospitals as the Wealthy board rocket ships to outer space.

Thom Hartmann compares a wealth tax to the working-class and the oligarchs. We pay a property tax (our home is our wealth) on our homes usually about 5% of its assessed value. The taxes go to pay for community services such as schools, police and fire services, etc.

**Corporations should pay taxes on their money-bills in the same manner we pay taxes on our homes-their fair share of the burden.**

**Bill Moyers: "How to Save Democracy From the Plutocracy" (oligarchs) published in the Alternet-News Letter, (9/14/16) by Bill Moyers and Tom Dispald.**

Mr. Moyer suggests that the very wealthy convert their financial might into political power to guard their wealth while exacerbating inequality further.

Mr. Moyer when he was a cub reporter in his small East Texas town witnessed "The housewife's rebellion". Fifteen women in that town decided not to pay the social security withholding taxes for their domestic workers. The housewives were white while the housekeepers were black. The housewives argued that social security was unconstitutional and imposing a tax was taxation without representation. They even equated it with slavery. They took the case to court and lost.

This episode convinced Mr. Moyer to engage in issues of money and power equality and democracy over his journalist career.

This housewives rebellion placed a perspective on racial issues as this group couldn't see beyond their own prerogatives-white privilege.

This situation in his view highlighted the history of this country's narrative, "one nation indivisible was merely a charade and manipulating the interests of the powerful and privileged to sustain their own way of life at the expense of others". Do we have a democracy in name only-that is a good question?

What does the preamble of the Constitution mean, if not that we are all in the business of nation building together.

Mr. Moyer observes, "that early America was a moral morose. One in five people were enslaved, women suffered vertical peonage, Native American people (Indian) were forced from their land". He states, "that inside the voting booth on a level playing field on the ground floor of democracy was

gained by heroes that sacrificed, suffered and died so that all Americans could gain footing. And yet today money has become the great equalizer, the usurper of our democratic soul”.

During this time (20<sup>th</sup> century) the movie “Wall Street” was made. The stock market trader Gordon Greko stated, “the richest one percent of this country owned half of the country’s wealth, five trillion dollars”. “You got ninety percent of America’s public out there with little or no net worth”. He says, “I create nothing. We make the rules”.

The Greek historian, Plutarch is said to have warned that “imbalance between the rich and poor is the oldest and the main fatal flaw of a Republic”.

The Washington Post at this time pointed out that income equality may be higher at this moment than at any time in the American past. Since 1980 the economy has continued to grow but most of the benefit has migrated to the top. At this time workers were more productive but received less of the wealth they were helping to create.

Inequality matters as it slows economic growth, undermines health, erodes social cohesion and solidarity and starves education.

In a study by the Pew Research Center between 2000 and 2014, the middle class shrank in virtually all parts of the country. Nine out of ten metropolitan areas showed a decline in middle class neighborhoods.

Meanwhile, between 2009 and 2013 the top one percent captured 85% of all income growth and by 2013 held nearly half of all stock and mutual fund assets Americas owned.

**American Exceptionalism** at one time according to Isabel Sawhill and Sara McClanahan in their 2006 report, “Opportunity in America,” observed, “the America’s idea was one in which all children had a roughly chance of success regardless of the economic status of the family in which they were born- which is not the case today”.

Moyer states that, “Capitalism produces winners and losers. Winners use their wealth to gain political power, often thru campaign contributions and lobbying. Both parties cater to wealthy individuals and their interests, gaining tax breaks and legislation”.

Edward R. Morrow, Journalist once stated, “plutocracy (oligarchy) and democracy don’t mix”, and Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis said, “We may have democracy, or we may have wealth concentrated in the hands of the few, but we can’t have both”.

How did we ignore the warning signs as Mr. Thom Hartmann indicates, In the 1970’s big business began to refine its ability to act as a class and ganged up on Congress. Even before the Supreme Court’s “Citizen United” decision, Political Action Committees (PAC) deluged politics with dollars, foundations and corporations. Rich individuals funded think tanks that turned out study after study with results skewed to their ideology and interests. Political strategists made allowances with the religious right to wage a cultural war that would camouflage the economic assault on working people and the middle class.

A plethora of studies concluded America's political system has already been transformed from a democracy into an oligarchy.

Martin Gilene and Benjamin Page for instance studied data from 1800 different policy initiatives launched between 1981 and 2002. They found that economic elites and organization growth representing business interests have substantial independent impact on the US government policy. Mass based interest groups and average citizens have little or no independent influence whether Republican or Democrat. They concluded, "the government more often follows the preferences of major lobbying groups than it does for ordinary citizens".

How to address these issues-Moyer suggests the following:

"First, remind people that societies can die of too much inequality".

Second, Give them copies of Jared Diamond's Book, "Collapse"-how societies choose to fail or succeed to remind them that we are not immune.

Third, discuss the real meaning of sacrifice and bliss with them that was the title of the fourth episode of my PBS series-"Joseph Campbell and" The Power of the Myth "is when we put our well-being ahead of others".

Moyer states, "The truth of our country isn't actually so complicated. It is in the moral compact implicit in the preamble of our Constitution: **We are all in this together**".

### *1.11 Lackoff*

George Lackoff, In his, "Little Blue Book" Publication (2014) defines the mission of government and Politics. "**Politics** is about working for and representing people and their concerns. People want to know how politics affect their lives".

"**The mission of government** is to protect and empower all equally through the use of the public (commons') which is defined as resources for the betterment of life provided for all. This concept has made for a civilized and humane private life- style and a prosperous enterprise".

## **2. Summary of Part I**

Democracies Die usually as a consequence of the failure of government's not working for the people. This situation breeds mistrust and creates a vacuum in the political space that allows oligarchs and demagogues to take over the government. We saw this in Italy when Mussolini took control and in Germany when Hitler took control of the country.

Oligarchy is defined as situations when wealthy individuals seize control of the political market-place and turn it to their benefit (Hartmann, 2021).

This situation occurred when the American Colonists waged war against the British Monarchy to gain freedom; when the South in the US initiated a civil war against the North in an effort to create a slave empire encompassing the whole of the US and extend it to the Caribbean Islands.



### *2.1 The Have and Have Nots*

The Haves (wealthy) embraced a conservative ideology that sought to decimate the middle-class by passing legislation and taking actions to utilize the institutions of government for their own interests.

The country was on the brink of becoming an oligarchy on the insurrection on January 6, 2021, when a mob stormed the capital in Washington DC to take over the government.

This precis gives a warning sign that if the present political party in the White House (2021) does not build trust in government by passing meaningful programs that work for the people we may be witnessing the fall of democracy as we know it.

Part I sets the framework for Part II that examines the Ill's of the country that has become polarized along cultural and ideological lines.

Journalists, George Packer and David Brooks have written essays emphasizing America's failure to sustain and enlarge the middle-class democracy of the post-World War Two years.

People have lost trust in government and as a consequence, it has become fragmented and is divided into competing visions of the country's meaning and purpose and it is tearing the country apart.

## **3. Part II**

In this section of the precis, we will explore the diagnosis of the ills of the country as depicted by Packer and Brooks. The competing interests and ideologies fostered by different sections of the United States will be discussed.

### **Packer and Brooks diagnosis of the Ills of the US**

George Packer's essay on the four America's denotes a competing vision of the United States purpose and meaning that are tearing it apart.

He identifies the characteristics of four Americas'-Free America, Smart America, Real America and Just America. He offers a narrative of each within the context of America's failure to **SUSTAIN** and enlarge the middle-class democracy of the post war years.

Free America celebrates the energy of the unencumbered individual. Smart America respects intelligence and welcomes change. Real America commits itself to a place and a sense of limits. Just America demands a confrontation with what others want to avoid. They rise from a single society and even in one polarized as they continually shape, absorb and morph into one another, but their tendency is to divide us putting tribe against tribe. These divisions impoverish each narrative and even demonstrate more extreme versions of itself (Packer, 2021).

David Brooks wrote an essay "-Blame the Bobos" (2021) denoting that the creative class was to foster progressive values and economic growth. Instead, we got resentment, alienation, and endless political dysfunction. He identified the "Bobos" as a group that have progressive values and metropolitan tastes. George Packer's essay on the four America's denotes a competing vision of the United States purpose and meaning that are tearing it apart.

According to Brooks, the class structure has gotten mixed up over the past decades. In the past it was more straight forward: you had the rich, who joined country clubs and voted Republican; the working class who worked in factories and voted Democratic. And in between was the middle-class suburbanites.

We knew what middle class conflict looked like. Members of the working class would align with progressive intellectuals to take on the capitalist elite. Things changed around 2015-16. Conservative parties (mainly White Republican) became the champions as the warriors of the working class and conversely the left wing parties (multicultural and democratic) were identified with the super-educated urban elite.

So, your education level and your political values are as important in defining your class status as your income is. Because of this, the US has polarized into two separate class hierarchies one red and one blue. Class struggles not only up and down against richer and poorer groups on their own ladder, but against their partisan opposite across the ideological divide (Brooks, 2021).

Both essays in my view offer narratives that speak to how America has become polarized along ideological and cultural lines.

In addition, I will offer a broader view that encompasses economic, and social issues that have had an impact on the social fabric of the Country, Namely the economic crisis of 2008, and Racial and social injustices.

### **Events and circumstances that have had an impact on the political, economic, and social fabric of the country**

Andrew Bacevich, a professor at Boston University, in his book, “The Limits of Power”, (2014) examines the decline of the influence of the United States as a world power and the diminishing of American Exceptionalism. He States, “that our foreign policy has for decades provided an outward manifestation of domestic ambition, urges and fears”. In other words, we have brought this situation upon ourselves.

A position of apparent preeminence placed the US under the most grievous temptations to self-adulation. To satisfy these demands of cheap oil, easy credit and the availability of cheap consumer goods has driven our foreign policy that looks beyond our borders. In our pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness, we have indebted ourselves nationally and individually.

Thomas Friedman, a journalist, characterized the American population in the following terms as a diet coke culture. in an article in the New York Times (2014) “We want the sweetness without the calories, the consumption without the savings and the safety net without the taxes”.

#### *3.1 Globalization*

Globalization is a process by which businesses develop international influence on product operations on an international scale. It developed into the growing interdependence of the World’s economics, cultures and populations brought about by cross border trading in goods and services, technology and

flows of investment for people and information. It decreased the cost of manufacturing, which means that companies can offer goods at a lower price to consumers (Wikipedia).

As part of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) The US located many manufacturing companies outside the US Which resulted the in the closing of factories in many states and facilitated unemployment. Factory employment was the bread and butter of working- class Americans, (Wikipedia).

### *3.2 Economic Crisis of 2008*

In 2007-8 the real estate market crashed as **GREED** became the predominant reasons behind the financial transactions that led to the crisis as banks engaged in a practice termed as “Predatory Lending”.

Predatory Lending is the practice of giving loans to people who could not afford to repay them resulting in foreclosures. These mortgages were packed with other financial instruments in a financial portfolio termed a CDO (Collateralized Debt Obligation) and sold to investors. When these instruments failed, the market crashed and investors bailed out causing the crisis. Banks maximized their profits at the expense of the poorest Americans and the government bailed out the banks and nobody went to jail. This situation heightened the distrust of the country in government, and it also caused a reality between the haves and have nots (Wikipedia).

### *3.3 Race Relations*

The issue of race relations has always been an issue in the country. The African American Experience Slavery, segregation, and racism in the United States has generally been omitted in public school text books and limited discourse in political and social circles which has contributed to “Historical Illiteracy” for the general population.

The legacy of slavery, institutional racism, and the break- down of minority neighborhood, economic inequality, the lack of educational opportunity and a host of other factors have impeded African American’s quest for the American Dream.

To maintain power The Republican Party is engaged in passing voter suppression laws to limit the votes of African Americans. Why is this happening? **One reason can be characterize as “the browning of America”.**

Michael Morell, former Deputy Director of the CIA (Charlie Rose TV Program, 2016) spoke to this issue facing America and indicated that he was struct by the discourse pertaining to the racial attitudes that were prevalent in the presidential campaign (2016) given by the candidate Donald Trump. There was a segment of the population who feared the browning of America which would result in the growth of minorities and their influence on political progress as manifested by the election of Barack Obama. This fear was validated by the number of states changing voting procedures that are aimed to suppress their voting power.

### *3.4 Senator Mitch McConnell*

Senator McConnell and a group of Republican politicians met just after President Obama was elected to formulate a plan as to how they were going to deal with this elected black President.

He is noted for a statement he made on TV, “that the Republican Party was going to be the party of NO and he was going to do everything in his Power to make him a one term President”.

During President Obama’s tenure. Obama approached Senator Orin Hatch, a Republican Senator from Utah to ask for recommendations for a replacement on the US Supreme Court as a result of the death of Justice Antonin Scalia. Obama indicated that he would like a Republican nominee in an effort to foster bipartisanship. Hatch recommended judge Merrick Garland who is a Republican. McConnell wouldn’t give the nominee the courtesy of a meeting (Hartmann, 2021).

McConnell’s actions proved that he was an obstructionist to Obama’s initiatives. Wouldn’t the country be in a better position if this man had been a collaborator rather than an obstructionist.

## **4. Summary of Part II**

George Packer’s Essay depicts a competing vision of the US’s purpose and meaning that are tearing it apart. He identifies the characteristics of Four America’s based on the failure to sustain and enlarge the middle-class democracy of the past War years. While David Brooks observes what he calls the creative class which has failed to foster progressive values and economic growth.

The class structure has changed over the past decades as the conservatives have turned their attention to The White working-class Americans. Left wing parties are identified with the super-educated elite.

Education levels and your political values are important in defining your class status which are as important in defining your class, according to Brooks.

Globalization has had a major impact on the manufacturing jobs that were the bread and butter of the middle-class working population coupled with the neutering of the unions that was a major factor in the growth of wages heretofore.

The issue of race relations has always been an issue in the United States. With the election of Barack Obama, the country’s white majority particularly white working men is threatened with the loss of power in the voting booth as the country is becoming more “Black and Brown”.

Over the past five decades the number of working class and conservative voices in universities, the main-stream media, and other institutions of elite culture has diminished. When you tell a large segment of the country that their voices are not worth hearing, they are going to react badly, and they have.

Enter Donald Trump with his campaign slogan of “Draining the Swamp” in Washington DC, aimed at the Media and Liberals in particular. He intimated that the government is not working for working class people. So, the Working- class people embraced him and became his political base.

## 5. Concluding Remarks

Democracy is on the Brink as a result of the government's failure to sustain and enlarge the middle-class democracy. A number of factors are the reasons why. Chief among these factors is the power of the oligarchs.

The oligarch's initiatives to take over the institutions of government to foster their interests is paramount.

The decimation of the manufacturing industries that were the bread and butter of the working middle-class coupled with the neutering of unions that spurred economic growth for the working-class through policies like Globalization and treaties such as NAFTA exacerbated this decline.

The perceived threat of the minorities taking over the political power structure has conservatives initiating voting suppression laws in many states.

Thom Hartmann was asked what he would recommend to address some of these issues and he replied, "repeal Citizens United as money is not free speech and corporations are not people".

I close with a narrative expressed by Bill Moyer about the oligarchs.

"They have brought a political system making change from within impossible. The plutocracy, get tax breaks, loop-holes in legislation, and are rewarded contracts. They fix the system so multi-nationals, hedge fund managers, and private equity firms pay less taxes than the average worker. They get subsidies. Rich corporate firms and banks get bailed out by the taxpayers when they get into trouble. They fight regulation (Dodd/ Franklin Bill), prolong tax havens for multi-nationals and stick it to consumers as we pay at the pump, at the grocery store, and we pay the taxes they write off. Is it any wonder that the government is referred to as the "**Wall Street Government**".

As Anand Giridharadas quoted in his book, "Winners' Take All" to close the income gap between rich and poor, "**THE WINNERS' HAVE TO TAKE LESSS**".

## Acknowledgments

I wish to acknowledge the contributions of Professors Will Collins and Edward Brewington to this Manuscript.

## References

- Bacevich, A. (2008). *The Limits of Power*.
- Brooks, D. (2021). "Blame the Bobos". *Atlantic Magazine*.
- Carnes, N. (2013). *White Collar Government*.
- Friedman, T. (2014). Diet Coke Culture. *New York Times*.
- Gilene, M., & Page, B. (1981). *Policy Initiatives Study*.
- Giridharadas, A. (2018). *Winners Take All*.
- Hartmann, T. (2021). *The Hidden History of the American Oligarchy*.
- Kennedy, R. (2013). *TV Interview on the Tavis Smiley TV Show*.

- Kirk, R. (1953). *Conservative Mind*.
- Lackoff, G. (2014). *The Little Blue Book*.
- Matthews, D. (2013). *Carnes Book*. White Collar Government.
- McClanahan, S. & Sawhill, Isabel's Report. (2006). *Opportunity in America*.
- Morell, M. (2014). *TV Interview on the Charlie Rose TV Show*.
- Moyers, B. (2014). *How to Save Democracy From the Plutocracy*. Alternet News Letter (9/14/16) and his TV Journal Show.
- Packer, G. (2021). The Four America's. *Atlantic Magazine*.
- Powell, Lewis, & Memo. (1971). *Attack on the American Free Enterprise System*.
- Vander Heuvel, K. (2014). *The Nation*.
- Wikipedia as referenced in the text.
- Zuckerman, G., & Werezek, G. (7/11/21). *Shut Down the Tax Havens*.