1972 TO THE YEAR 2000.

28 EVENT-PACKED YEARS.

WE STRUGGLE
TO MAKE SENSE OF THIS PERIOD.

WE'RE HISTORIANS.

WE'RE PAST-HAUNTED CREATURES,
YOU KNOW?

AND WE KEEP LOOKING BACK.

DO WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY
TO IMMEDIATELY ASSESS
ALMOST LIKE A REPORTER DOES,
THE SWIRLING EVENTS OF OUR TIME?

THEY SAY JOURNALISTS WRITE
THE FIRST DRAFT OF HISTORY
WHICH THERE'S SOME TRUTH TO THAT
MEANING THE NEWSPAPER REPORTS.

I THINK HISTORIANS--
CONTEMPORARY HISTORIANS--
DO THE NEXT DRAFT.

ALTHOUGH I WRITE SOMETIMES
ON CONTEMPORARY ISSUES
THAT HAVE A HISTORICAL
DIMENSION
I DON'T FIND WHAT
IS CALLED
"CONTEMPORARY HISTORY"
VERY INTERESTING.

THE MOST INTERESTING KIND
OF HISTORY IS THE HISTORY
THAT DOES GET AT THE PAIN
AND VALUE OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE.

AND EXPLAINS
NOT JUST WHAT HAPPENED
BUT WHAT PEOPLE DO
WITH WHAT HAPPENS.

THE FUNDAMENTAL ISSUE IN HISTORY
IS TO PROVIDE HISTORICAL
PERSPECTIVE, TO PROVIDE CONTEXT
TO PROVIDE A CERTAIN
KIND OF UNDERSTANDING.

HISTORIANS LOOK AT THE LAST
QUARTER OF THE 20th CENTURY.

TODAY ON
A BIOGRAPHY OF AMERICA.

ON JULY 4, 1976, AMERICA
COMMEMORATED ITS BICENTENNIAL.

IT WAS AN AUSPICIOUS
ANNIVERSARY.

ALTHOUGH FEW PEOPLE
KNEW IT AT THE TIME
THE VERY CHARACTER
OF THE COUNTRY WAS CHANGING.

GERALD FORD WAS PRESIDENT.
HE HAD TAKEN OFFICE THREE YEARS EARLIER

WHEN A DISCREDITED PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON

RESIGNED RATHER THAN FACE IMPEACHMENT.

I SHALL RESIGN THE PRESIDENCY...

AT THE TIME OF THIS POLITICAL CRISIS

AMERICA WAS ALSO IN THE GRIP OF THE ENERGY CRISIS.

IN 1972, YOU COULD BUY GAS FOR 40 CENTS A GALLON.

A YEAR LATER, YOU'D BE PAYING DOUBLE THAT.

AND THE ENERGY CRISIS TRIGGERED A LONG-TERM RECESSION.

SOME OF THE COUNTRY'S BIGGEST INDUSTRIES LIKE THE AUTO INDUSTRY AND STEEL INDUSTRY, WERE HIT HARD.

PLANTS LAID OFF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF WORKERS.

AND ONCE-PROSPEROUS INDUSTRIAL CITIES LIKE PITTSBURGH AND DETROIT WERE IN TERRIBLE TROUBLE.

THE COLD WAR PERSISTED WITH TENSIONS AND DEFENSE BUDGETS RUNNING HIGH.

THIS IS WHERE AMERICA WAS IN 1980.

THE ECONOMY IS BOOMING.

THE COLD WAR IS OVER.

AMERICA'S RIDING HIGH AS THE LEADER OF A GLOBAL ECONOMY AND A GLOBAL CULTURE.

THESE CHANGES OCCURRED WITH DRAMATIC, HEAD-TURNING SUDDENNESS.

AND IT'S HARD TO MAKE SENSE OF THEM.

TO PUT THEM INTO HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE.

WE'RE TOO CLOSE TO WHAT HAPPENED.

YET, WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY AS HISTORIANS TO MAKE SENSE OF THE HISTORY OF OUR OWN TIMES.

NEITHER GERALD FORD, NOR JIMMY CARTER--WHO TOOK OFFICE AS PRESIDENT IN 1977--COULD REVERSE AMERICA'S ECONOMIC DECLINE.

CARTER WARNED THAT THERE WERE LIMITS TO GROWTH THAT AMERICANS HAD TO REDUCE THEIR EXPECTATIONS.

TONIGHT I WANT TO HAVE AN UNPLEASANT TALK WITH YOU ABOUT A PROBLEM THAT'S UNPRECEDENTED IN OUR HISTORY.

IT WAS A SOBER TIME.

IN 1979, A NUCLEAR ACCIDENT AT THREE MILE ISLAND IN PENNSYLVANIA THREATENED A MELTDOWN OF THE PLANT AND RAISED FEARS ABOUT THE CATASTROPHIC POTENTIAL OF ALL NUCLEAR POWER.

AT THE END OF THE JIMMY CARTER PRESIDENCY 52 AMERICANS HAD BEEN TAKEN HOSTAGE BY IRANIAN TERRORISTS.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA WILL NOT YIELD TO INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM.

THEY WERE RELEASED IN 1981.

THE DAY RONALD REAGAN TOOK OFFICE.

BY THE TIME REAGAN BECAME PRESIDENT THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS SEEMED TO BE ENTRENCHED.

THE INTEREST ON THE PUBLIC DEBT THIS YEAR WE KNOW WILL BE OVER 90 BILLION.

REagan AND THE REPUBLICAN CONGRESS MOVED QUICKLY TO INSTITUTE TAX CUTS AND CUT GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS.

STILL, ECONOMIC RECESSION CONTINUED.

UNEMPLOYMENT REACHED TEN PERCENT
IN 1982.

WE HAVEN'T SEEN THE BOTTOM.

IT HASN'T BOTTOMED OUT YET.

PRESIDENT REAGAN INCREASED
THE DEFENSE BUDGET DRAMATICALLY
ATTACKING THE SOVIET UNION
AS THE "EVIL EMPIRE."

TO IGNORE THE FACTS OF HISTORY
AND THE AGGRESSIVE IMPULSES
OF AN EVIL EMPIRE...

REAGAN CALLED FOR
A SUPERCHARGED AMERICAN EFFORT
TO DEFEAT THE ENEMY.

THE SOVIET UNION, HOWEVER
WAS BEGINNING
ITS OWN TRANSFORMATION
UNDER MIKHAIL GORBACHEV
A PRESIDENT COMMITTED
TO DEMOCRATIC REFORMS.

IN 1989, THE BERLIN WALL
LONG THE SYMBOL OF THE COLD WAR,
collapsed.

ALONG WITH IT, WITHIN
SEVERAL YEARS, THE SOVIET UNION.

THE FIRST CASES OF AIDS
APPEARED IN AMERICA IN 1981.

BY 1988, THE DISEASE THREATENED
TO BECOME AN EPIDEMIC.

THE AIDS QUILT EXPRESSED THE
GRIEF OF THOUSANDS OF AMERICANS
FOR THE EPIDEMIC'S VICTIMS.

IN THE 1980s, CONCERN
ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT GREW
ESPECIALLY IN RESPONSE
TO THE EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
IN ALASKA'S
PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND.

MORE THAN
TEN MILLION BARRELS OF OIL
CONTAMINATED
HUNDREDS OF MILES OF SHORELINE
AND SHATTERED
THE LOCAL ECOSYSTEM.

IN 1983, SALLY RIDE BECAME THE
FIRST AMERICAN WOMAN IN SPACE
SPENDING SIX DAYS IN ORBIT.

SHE WAS AMONG THE MANY WOMEN
WHOSE PLACE IN SOCIETY
HAD CHANGED DRAMATICALLY
IN THE LAST QUARTER
OF THE 20th CENTURY.

THIS WAS A PERIOD OF FABULOUS
TECHNOLOGICAL ACHIEVEMENT.

IN THE BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES, RECOMBINANT DNA TECHNOLOGY WAS DEVELOPED, A FIRST STEP IN CLONING.

IN THE EARLY 1980s, RECOMBINANT DNA TECHNOLOGY A FIRST STEP IN CLONING, WAS DEVELOPED.

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OF THE THIRD MILLENNIUM.

THE TORCH IS PASSED...

TO A NEW CENTURY
OF YOUNG AMERICANS.

THESE ARE THE HEADLINES.

THEY'RE RAW DATA.

AND IT'S AN INCOMPLETE SET
OF DATA AT THAT.

I ASKED OUR TEAM
OF HISTORIANS TO INTERPRET
TO SHED SOME LIGHT
ON THESE EVENTS.

AT FIRST, THEY RESISTED.

HOW DO YOU WRITE ABOUT A PERIOD
THROUGH WHICH YOU LIVED?

BECAUSE THAT SHAPES
OUR PERSPECTIVE

AS TO WHAT IS IMPORTANT,
WHAT ISN'T IMPORTANT--

OUR OWN EXPERIENCES.

AND THE RECENT PAST
ISN'T JUST WRITING
ABOUT THE 1990s
OR THE 1980s.

SOME OF US HAVE
MEMORIES
OF THE '70s, THE '60s
AND THE '50s.

WELL, THAT'S HALF A CENTURY
OF HISTORY

ABOUT WHICH
WE HAVE PERSONAL MEMORIES.

OUR OWN IDENTITIES
WERE SHAPED BY THESE MEMORIES.

WELL, WHEN WE GO TO CHOOSE
WHAT'S IMPORTANT

HOW MUCH ARE WE DRAWN TO THOSE
NOT BECAUSE OF OUR DETACHED ROLE
AS HISTORIANS

BUT BECAUSE WE'RE ENGAGED--
WE'RE ENGAGED PERSONALLY
WITH THE PAST.

IT RAISES QUESTIONS
ABOUT THE TENSION
BETWEEN THE ROLE
AS HISTORIAN
AND THE ROLE
AS PARTICIPANT.

OH, HISTORIANS
HAVEN'T ALWAYS HAD AGENDAS
THEY'VE ALWAYS HAD EMOTIONAL
AND IDEOLOGICAL AGENDAS.

I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT IT AS
AN AGENDA IN A NEGATIVE SENSE.

I'M TALKING ABOUT IT AS A SET
OF ISSUES THAT BECOMES RAISED

THAT COMES TO THE VERY QUESTION

OF A TENDENCY TO IDENTIFY THINGS
AS BEING IMPORTANT

NOT AS A PREDICTIVE VALUE,
BUT WHICH LATER DOWN THE LINE

YOU'RE NOT
GOING TO FEEL ARE IMPORTANT.

WHY ARE YOU
GOING TO PREDICT THEM

OR PRETEND
THAT THEY'RE IMPORTANT?

BECAUSE YOU LIVED THROUGH THEM,
YOU EXPERIENCED THEM, RIGHT?

WE ALL WOULD HAVE THOUGHT
THAT NEWT GINGRICH

AND THE REPUBLICAN ASCENDANCY

WOULD HAVE BEEN
THIS MOMENTOUS MOMENT

AND LOOK HOW QUICKLY IT PASSED.

AT THE MOMENT,
LIVING THROUGH IT

WE WOULD HAVE OFFERED
ONE INTERPRETATION.

TWO YEARS LATER,
WE WOULD HAVE
OFFERED ANOTHER.

Maier:
AND THE OTHER
THING IS THAT

WHEN YOU WORK
FROM NEWSPAPERS

THE PERIOD YOU
LIVE THROUGH

EVERY DAY HAS AN
EQUAL HEADLINE.

WE CAN'T YET SEE THE FUTURE
OF THE LAST 25 YEARS
OF THE CENTURY.

BUT WE DO HAVE SOME PERSPECTIVE
ON THE FIRST 75 YEARS.

I ASKED OUR HISTORIANS TO LOOK
AT THE HISTORY OF RECENT TIMES

IN LIGHT OF THE 20th CENTURY AS A WHOLE.

AMERICA IN 1900

WAS SEEN AS A...

A CONFIDENT PLACE.

IT WAS A PLACE WHERE CRISIS WAS SEEN AS AN OPPORTUNITY.

AND IT WAS A NATION-- WE WERE NATION KNOWN FOR MAKING THINGS.

WE WERE A NATION KNOWN FOR OUR CEASELESS CHANGE;

THE MATERIAL CHANGE;

THE CHANGE IN NATIONALITIES;

IT'S A COUNTRY IN CONSTANT TURMOIL.

BUT WE SEEMED TO HAVE THIS...

CONFIDENCE THAT WE COULD SOLVE THESE KINDS OF--

ANY PROBLEM THAT PRESENTED ITSELF.

WHAT KIND OF COUNTRY ARE WE NOW?

HOW HAVE WE CHANGED?

THIS HAS BEEN A RAUCOUS CENTURY, AN UNBELIEVABLE CENTURY.

I THINK PEOPLE WOULD FIND THAT DEMOCRACY HAS PREVAILED IN THIS CENTURY IN VERY MANY FUNDAMENTAL WAYS.

IT'S BEEN A BLOODY CENTURY.

WE'VE HAD TO FIGHT THE KAISER;

WE'VE HAD TO FIGHT NAZISM, TOTALITARIANISM, COMMUNISM

AND AT THE END OF THE CENTURY, DEMOCRACY--

OR AMERICAN-STYLE DEMOCRACY--

SEEMS TO BE STRONGER AND MORE VIGOROUS THAN EVER.

AT THE SAME TIME, IT'S BEEN THE CENTURY OF A STRUGGLE

TO BRING MORE PEOPLE INTO THAT DEMOCRACY.

THE WOMEN'S RIGHTS MOVEMENT

THE RIGHT TO VOTE IN 1920, AND ON AND ON FOR EQUAL RIGHTS

EQUAL PAY, HAS BEEN PRONOUNCED AND SOMETHING POSITIVE.

AND I THINK IN CIVIL RIGHTS

THERE HAVE BEEN EXTRAORDINARY
BREAKTHROUGHS

BEGINNING IN 1950s, AND INTO THE '60s WITH THE SIGNING OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACTS WITH LYNDON JOHNSON, THAT PEOPLE COULD START SEEING OUR DEMOCRATIC EXPERIMENT IS MOVING FORWARD THAT MORE PEOPLE ARE TAKING PART OF IT. I THINK THERE’S THIS EXTRAORDINARY MOMENTUM IN THE '50s AND THE '60s WHERE THROUGH CIVIL RIGHTS AND THROUGH A WHOLE RANGE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS PEOPLE FELT THEY COULD TAKE CONTROL OVER THEIR LIVES. I THINK THERE’S THIS EXTRAORDINARY MOMENTUM IN THE '50s AND THE '60s WHERE THROUGH CIVIL RIGHTS AND THROUGH A WHOLE RANGE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS PEOPLE FELT THEY COULD TAKE CONTROL OVER THEIR LIVES. I THINK THERE’S THIS EXTRAORDINARY MOMENTUM IN THE '50s AND THE '60s WHERE THROUGH CIVIL RIGHTS AND THROUGH A WHOLE RANGE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS PEOPLE FELT THEY COULD TAKE CONTROL OVER THEIR LIVES. I THINK THERE’S THIS EXTRAORDINARY MOMENTUM IN THE '50s AND THE '60s WHERE THROUGH CIVIL RIGHTS AND THROUGH A WHOLE RANGE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS PEOPLE FELT THEY COULD TAKE CONTROL OVER THEIR LIVES. I THINK THERE’S THIS EXTRAORDINARY MOMENTUM IN THE '50s AND THE '60s WHERE THROUGH CIVIL RIGHTS AND THROUGH A WHOLE RANGE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS PEOPLE FELT THEY COULD TAKE CONTROL OVER THEIR LIVES. I THINK THERE’S THIS EXTRAORDINARY MOMENTUM IN THE '50s AND THE '60s WHERE THROUGH CIVIL RIGHTS AND THROUGH A WHOLE RANGE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS PEOPLE FELT THEY COULD TAKE CONTROL OVER THEIR LIVES. I THINK THERE’S THIS EXTRAORDINARY MOMENTUM IN THE '50s AND THE '60s WHERE THROUGH CIVIL RIGHTS AND THROUGH A WHOLE RANGE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS PEOPLE FELT THEY COULD TAKE CONTROL OVER THEIR LIVES.
AND FAMILY LIVES
OF EVERYONE

THAT PEOPLE NOW, I THINK, ARE, ARE
MAKING THOSE CHANGES

WHILE COPING WITH
ENORMOUS CHANGE.

SINCE THE 1970s

WE'VE HAD AN
INCREDIBLE
REVOLUTION

IN FAMILY LIFE
IN THIS COUNTRY.

MOST CHILDREN UNDER
THE AGE OF FIVE

IN THE UNITED STATES
HAVE MOTHERS WHO WORK

AND IN 1970, THAT WASN'T TRUE.

THAT WAS AN ENORMOUS
REVOLUTION

AVAILABLE IN THE
WORK FORCE

IN TERMS OF WHAT THE
LANDSCAPE LOOKS LIKE.

IT CHANGES EVERYTHING.

IT CHANGED SO DRAMATICALLY

I SUSPECT IT'S VERY DIFFICULT
TO IMAGINE, FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

HOW MUCH IT WAS ASSUMED

THAT A WOMAN WOULD STAY AT HOME
WITH HER CHILDREN, IN THE '50s

AND EVEN THE '60s.

PEOPLE WHO WERE GOING
THE OTHER DIRECTION

WERE SWIMMING
AGAINST THE STREAM.

IT'S A HUGE CHANGE.

WHEN YOU THINK, IN 1900

IN NEW YORK

WOMEN WORKED

BUT ITALIAN WOMEN
THAT WORKED
IN THAT INDUSTRY

WERE SINGLE
ITALIAN WOMEN.

THE MINUTE
THEY MARRIED

AS MUCH AS THEY
NEEDED THE MONEY,
THEY WENT HOME.

AND THINK OF HOW DIFFICULT
It was for school teachers. You could teach when you were single but as soon as you married, you lost your job. A lot of those school teachers didn't tell. They didn't tell, they kept their marriages secret through the depression because they were the first ones fired.

You wouldn't think that a woman would have to quit her job when she's married and in fact mostly you want to keep your job so that if you can have that kind of ideal two-income family that will bring the benefits of the mushrooming consumer economy to your entire family.

If you look at the fact that the fastest-growing family type in the United States by the end of the 20th century was a single woman and her children and that those were families disproportionately below the poverty line then you have a problem that maybe the government ought to do something about.

One of the themes of this century if you take the long look that's changed dramatically. I mean, Americans have always had
AN ON AGAIN, OFF AGAIN RELATIONSHIP

WITH RESPECT TO THE ROLE THAT THEY THINK GOVERNMENT SHOULD PLAY IN THEIR LIVES.

AND WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE STRIKING TRANSFORMATION OF THIS CENTURY

WHERE THIS ARGUMENT HAS BEEN THAT GOVERNMENT IS TOO BIG

LET'S GET GOVERNMENT OFF OF THE BACKS OF PEOPLE

LET'S RETURN POWER BACK TO THE STATES

THE KIND OF NEW STATES' RIGHTS THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE

MARKS A TREMENDOUS SHIFT AT THE END OF THE CENTURY

FROM EARLIER IN THE CENTURY

WHEN, OF COURSE, DURING THE GREAT DEPRESSION

DURING OTHER PERIODS

THE WHOLE IDEA WAS THAT THAT WAS THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT.

IT WAS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT

TO PLAY AN INTEGRAL ROLE IN PEOPLE'S LIVES.

I THINK THIS IS A CRUCIAL THEME FOR THE SWEEP OF THE CENTURY.

I THINK THAT ONE OF THE FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT

IS TO MAKE LIFE FOR THOSE AT THE BOTTOM BETTER.

AND I DON'T THINK YOU CAN THINK ABOUT A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

JUST SORT OF, LIKE, MAKING SURE

THAT THE POT DOESN'T BOIL OVER.

I THINK THE GOVERNMENT HAS TO HAVE SOME SORT OF A WAY

TO DEAL AND TO SUSTAIN TO SUPPORT, AND TO MAKE LIFE BETTER FOR THOSE AT THE BOTTOM.

IT STRIKES ME THAT IF YOU DON'T DEAL

WITH THE KINDS OF ISSUES
THAT INEQUALITY PRODUCES
THEN THIS SOCIETY
WON'T CONTINUE TO EXIST.
I DON'T THINK THAT JUST
BECAUSE WE'RE WEALTHY
AND WE ARE DOMINANT
THAT WE WILL
ALWAYS BE.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "CONTINUE TO EXIST?"
WE'RE GOING TO DISAPPEAR?
CONTINUE TO EXIST
AS SORT OF THE
DOMINANT POWER
THAT WILL ALWAYS
CONTROL EVERYTHING.
YOU KNOW, EMPIRES RISE AND FALL
AND I DON'T SEE ANY REASON
TO THINK THAT THE UNITED STATES
WILL ALWAYS BE DOMINANT.
AND IT STRIKES ME
TO DEAL WITH
ARE THE CORE ISSUES
UNDERMINING
THE DEMOCRACY.
BUT THERE ARE FOREIGN
POLICY ISSUES
AND I THINK THAT WHAT
YOU'RE SAYING'S TRUE.
BUT FROM 1945 TO, REALLY, 2000
THE KEY WAS DEALING
WITH THE EXTERNAL WORLD
DEALING WITH
THE SOVIET UNION.
WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE
OF A COLD WAR.
ALL THAT MONEY
YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT
WHO SHOULD GET IT
FROM THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT
THREE-QUARTERS OF IT
WAS GOING TO FIGHT
THE COLD WAR.
BUT THIS IS PART OF THE PROBLEM
THAT WALDO IS TALKING ABOUT...
WHEN WE HAVE ON THE ONE HAND
THIS IDEAL OF DEMOCRACY
AND ON THE OTHER HAND
THIS DISSONANCE
THIS TENSION WITH THE REALITIES
OF GROWING INEQUALITY.
I MEAN, THE STATISTICS
ABOUT INEQUALITY IN AMERICA
AT THE END OF THE 20th CENTURY
ARE STAGGERING.

420 01:17:43:18 01:17:46:03 I MEAN, IT'S JUST GROWING AND GROWING AND GROWING.

421 01:17:46:05 01:17:48:01 YOU TALK ABOUT PEOPLE BEING ALIENATED

422 01:17:48:03 01:17:50:05 AND DISAFFECTED FROM THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

423 01:17:50:07 01:17:51:20 WELL, WHEN YOU'RE POOR

424 01:17:51:22 01:17:53:28 AND YOU HAVE A SYSTEM THAT NO LONGER IS PROVIDING

425 01:17:54:00 01:17:55:21 OR AN IDEOLOGY THAT NO LONGER SAYS

426 01:17:55:23 01:17:58:09 IT'S THE RESPONSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT TO HELP YOU

427 01:17:58:11 01:18:00:06 WE'RE BACK TO THAT OLD INDIVIDUALISM--

428 01:18:00:08 01:18:01:24 DO YOU HAVE TO HELP YOURSELF?

429 01:18:01:26 01:18:04:14 AND BY WHAT MEANS CAN YOU HELP YOURSELF?

430 01:18:04:16 01:18:08:05 WELL, MY FRIENDS, SELF-HELP IS THE CAPITALISM OF FOOLS.

431 01:18:08:07 01:18:10:11 IF YOU DON'T HAVE THE WHEREWITHAL

432 01:18:10:13 01:18:13:27 TO HELP YOURSELF, HOW ARE YOU GOING TO HELP YOURSELF?


434 01:18:15:27 01:18:17:09 YOU GET A PERSPECTIVE ON THINGS

435 01:18:17:11 01:18:18:23 THAT CAN AFFECT PUBLIC POLICY.

436 01:18:18:25 01:18:21:04 FOR EXAMPLE, POVERTY IS DIFFERENT TODAY


438 01:18:22:20 01:18:25:18 THERE WERE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNSKILLED PEOPLE


440 01:18:28:21 01:18:31:18 TO TAKE UNSKILLED PEOPLE FROM GHETTO TO FACTORY.

441 01:18:31:20 01:18:33:17 AND TODAY YOU TAKE A LARGE CITY...

442 01:18:33:19 01:18:35:21 THERE'S A TREMENDOUS CONCENTRATION

443 01:18:35:23 01:18:37:23 OF MINORITIES IN THAT LARGE CITY.


445 01:18:40:00 01:18:41:27 AND A TYPICAL CITY LIKE DETROIT

446 01:18:41:29 01:18:45:20 A THIRD OF THE BLACK HOUSEHOLDS IN DETROIT DO NOT HAVE CARS.

447 01:18:45:22 01:18:47:25 THERE'S NO WAY TO GET TO THOSE JOBS.

448 01:18:47:27 01:18:50:02 Martin: BUT I THINK
THE QUESTION
449 01:18:50:04 01:18:53:00 WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT ALL THESE URBAN...
450 01:18:53:02 01:18:56:10 IT STRIKES ME THAT ANY OF THE MAJOR CITIES, L.A.
451 01:18:56:12 01:18:57:20 PLACES LIKE THAT
452 01:18:57:22 01:19:00:19 THESE ARE FUNDAMENTALLY THIRD-WORLD CITIES.
453 01:19:00:21 01:19:04:00 YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT CITIES WHERE THE POPULATION
454 01:19:04:02 01:19:06:12 AS WE GO FORWARD, ARE SORT OF LIKE
455 01:19:06:14 01:19:09:24 RINGED BY WHITE AND INCREASINGLY DIVERSE SUBURBS
456 01:19:09:26 01:19:13:04 BUT THEY'RE FUNCTIONALLY THIRD-WORLD COUNTRIES.
457 01:19:13:06 01:19:15:20 Brinkley: LOS ANGELES IS NOT A THIRD-WORLD CITY.
458 01:19:15:22 01:19:17:05 I THINK IT FUNCTIONALLY IS.
459 01:19:17:07 01:19:18:14 I DON'T THINK SO.
460 01:19:18:16 01:19:20:19 I THINK IT'S ONE OF THE CAPITALS OF THE WORLD.
461 01:19:20:21 01:19:23:10 BUT WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT THE PEOPLE...
462 01:19:23:12 01:19:24:18 WHAT IS POWERING L.A.
463 01:19:24:20 01:19:26:22 IN THE DIRECTION THAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT?
464 01:19:26:24 01:19:28:26 YOU'VE GOT TO UNDERSTAND WHAT CAUSED IT
465 01:19:28:28 01:19:30:20 TO BECOME WHAT IT IS
466 01:19:30:22 01:19:34:09 IF YOU'RE GOING TO CONTINUE IT OR STOP IT.
467 01:19:34:11 01:19:37:10 WE'RE TALKING ABOUT PATTERNS OF IMMIGRATION.
468 01:19:37:12 01:19:40:03 AND SINCE 1965, YOU'VE HAD ENORMOUS SHIFTS
469 01:19:40:05 01:19:42:10 IN TERMS OF COMMUNITIES OF COLORS
470 01:19:42:12 01:19:44:16 AND POPULATION STREAMS OF COLOR
471 01:19:44:18 01:19:48:10 ASIANS, LATIN AMERICANS, AFRICANS COMING TO THIS COUNTRY
472 01:19:48:12 01:19:51:20 REALLY TRANSFORMING A LOT OF POPULATION CENTERS.
473 01:19:51:22 01:19:54:13 WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH THE HISTORY THING?
474 01:19:54:15 01:19:56:02 IT HAS EVERYTHING TO DO WITH IT
475 01:19:56:04 01:19:58:22 BECAUSE I THINK ONE OF THE PROBLEMS THAT WE CONFRONT
476 01:19:58:24 01:20:01:09 AS WE GO TOWARD WHEREVER WE'RE GOING, IS WHO WE ARE
477 01:20:01:11 01:20:04:16 AND IT STRIKES ME THAT WE ARE NO LONGER WHO WE THOUGHT WE WERE.
WE ARE A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY.

IF WE HAVEN'T MELTED INTO
THE MELTING POT METAPHOR.

WE'RE CERTAINLY INTERACTING
IN DIFFERENT WAYS.

THE INFLUX OF ASIAN IMMIGRANTS
AND HISPANIC IMMIGRANTS

TO THE POINT THAT
IN THE 21st CENTURY

YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE AN AMERICA
THAT'S CLOSE TO 50% NON-WHITE

WHICH IS, I THINK, SOMETHING
EXTRAORDINARY.

IN THE '50s, YOU COULD
REPRESENT THIS NATION
AS WHITE, ANGLO-Saxon,
PROTESTANT AND MALE

AND WE CAN NO
LONGER THINK ABOUT
OURSelves LIKE THAT.

WHAT WE ARE HAS BEEN CREATED ON
THE BACK OF A LOT OF OPPRESSION
A LOT OF DIFFICULT TIMES
FOR A LOT OF WORKING PEOPLE
OF COLOR, AND WOMEN

AND WHAT I THINK
WE NEED TO DO IS
FOCUS ON
THE STRUGGLE
AT LEAST AS PART
OF A DUAL NARRATIVE.

IT STRIKES ME THAT YOU CAN'T
JUST HAVE AMERICA TRIUMPHANT;
THAT YOU ALSO HAVE TO HAVE
SORT OF, LIKE...

WHAT HAS INFORMED THAT TRIUMPH.
AS WE TALKED, I COULD SEE
MY COLLEAGUES STRUGGLING
WITH THEIR OWN
PASSIONATELY HELD PERSPECTIVES.

EACH OF US HAS TO COME
TO TERMS WITH THE PAST
BOTH AS HISTORIANS
AND AS THE MEMORY-HAUNTED
CREATURES WE ARE.

DON, LIKE YOU,
I CAME TO HISTORY

THROUGH NEWSPAPERS.

BUT I HAVE TO SAY,
AS A HISTORIAN

ALTHOUGH I WRITE
SOMETIMES ON
CONTEMPORARY ISSUES
That have a historical dimension, I don't find what is called "contemporary history" very interesting. It doesn't have the complexity of an earlier period.

But more than that, I've always thought of history as having a humanistic dimension. It was to understand what it is to be somebody else and it isn't at all challenging to know what it is to be somebody I am, or where I've known other people.

It's less of a challenge.

You know, Pauline, I want to stand up for the contemporary historians among us here for a minute because I don't feel like when I write about the United States at this point I'm writing about who I am. I feel like I'm writing about the kind of diverse array of people that Waldo is talking about here and trying to take account of those experiences.

And the kind of rapid change that we have bespeaks a complexity that's every bit as compelling and every bit as difficult to get your head around as the kind of complexity that comes into play.
WHEN YOU TRY TO MAKE A COUNTRY OUT OF 13 COLONIES.

Masur: PART OF THE PROCESS, RIGHT IS TO RECOVER THESE STORIES.

BUT IT'S NOT ENOUGH JUST TO TELL THEM. BECAUSE IF ALL WE DO IS TELL THEM WE'RE NOT HISTORIANS, WE'RE ANTIQUARIANS AND WE'RE JUST CHRONICLING EVENTS WITHOUT PUTTING THEM INTO ANY ORDER OR LENDING ANY INTERPRETATION TO THEM.

THE MOST INTERESTING KIND OF HISTORY IS THE HISTORY THAT DOES GET AT THE PAIN AND VALUE OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE AND IT EXPLAINS NOT JUST WHAT HAPPENED BUT WHAT PEOPLE DO WITH WHAT HAPPENS, WHAT IT MEANS.

HISTORY CAN BE JUST AS GOOD AS GREAT FICTION IN THAT REGARD, IN ILLUMINATING CHARACTER IN ILLUMINATING THE TRAGEDY OF THE HUMAN CONDITION AND WHAT IT'S LIKE JUST TO BE ALIVE ON THIS EARTH.

THERE'S AN APHORISM THAT I THINK SAYS A LOT ABOUT WHAT WE DO AND THE APHORISM IS THAT THE ONLY THING THAT'S CERTAIN IS THE FUTURE BECAUSE THE PAST IS CONSTANTLY CHANGING.

ONCE OUR HISTORY WAS WHAT WHITE MEN DID IN THE DAYLIGHT.

NOW IT'S WHAT HAPPENS TO OTHER PEOPLE WHILE WE WATCH.

WE ARE AT TIMES JUST CURIOUS--AN OSCAR, OR A SUPER BOWL.

WE ARE AT TIMES COMPelled--A WATERGATE OR BERLIN WALL.

WE MAY HOPE AT ExALTED MOMENTS LIKE A MOON SHOT AND ON DREADFUL OCCASIONS
LIKE AN ASSASSINATION
560 01:23:33:12 01:23:36:09 TO EXPERIENCE COMMUNITY
AS A NATION.
561 01:23:36:11 01:23:41:00 BUT MOSTLY, WE JUST SIT THERE,
HUNGRY, ANGRY, LONELY OR TIRED
562 01:23:41:02 01:23:44:05 NEEDING NOVELTY OR DISTRACTION,
GOSSIP OR LAUGHS
563 01:23:44:07 01:23:46:27 REMEDIAL SERIOUSNESS,
OR VULGAR CELEBRITY
564 01:23:46:29 01:23:49:18 A PLACE TO CELEBRATE,
AND A PLACE TO MOURN
568 01:23:55:22 01:23:58:09 WE ARE PRIVILEGED WITH
THE BEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE
569 01:23:58:11 01:24:00:09 FOR CORONATIONS
AND IMPEACHMENTS
570 01:24:00:11 01:24:05:03 CIVIL RIGHTS AND CIVIL RIOTS,
EARTHQUAKES, O.J. AND VIETNAM.
571 01:24:05:05 01:24:06:25 AS IF LOOKING DOWN
FROM A ZEPPELIN
572 01:24:06:27 01:24:09:08 OUR VANTAGE IS SUPERIOR
TO THE FIXED POSITIONS
573 01:24:09:10 01:24:12:13 OF OFFICIAL PARTICIPANTS
AND COURT HISTORIANS
574 01:24:12:15 01:24:14:09 WITH MULTIPLE VIEWS
OF THE ACTION
575 01:24:14:11 01:24:16:12 IN INTIMATE FOCUS OR BROAD SCAN
AND EXPERT CHIT-CHAT ON DEMAND
577 01:24:20:23 01:24:22:11 BY ROYAL WHIM.
578 01:24:22:13 01:24:26:14 ON THE OTHER HAND, TV HAS STOLEN
OUR MEMORY, YOURS AND MINE.
579 01:24:26:16 01:24:28:17 IT'S GONE TO ANOTHER BANK.
580 01:24:28:19 01:24:30:28 I WAS A STUDENT AT BERKELEY
IN THE EARLY '60s
581 01:24:31:00 01:24:33:23 BUT THE IMAGES IN MY HEAD
ARE MARIO SAVIO'S
582 01:24:33:25 01:24:36:05 AND RONALD REAGAN'S, NOT MY OWN.
583 01:24:36:07 01:24:40:04 I REPORTED FROM CHICAGO ON THE
DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION OF 1968
584 01:24:40:06 01:24:42:29 BUT THE CASSETTE IN MY HAND
IS ABBIE HOFFMAN'S.
585 01:24:43:01 01:24:46:00 I MARCHED IN FAVOR
OF INTEGRATION AND AGAINST WAR
586 01:24:46:02 01:24:49:09 BUT THE TAPES IN MY HEAD
ARE "EYES ON THE PRIZE."
587 01:24:49:11 01:24:52:16 ON THE THIRD HAND,
AND THERE'S ALWAYS A THIRD HAND
588 01:24:52:18 01:24:55:09 WE ARE AGNOSTICS
ABOUT REALITY ITSELF.
589 01:24:55:11 01:24:57:26 WE'VE BEEN "DOCUDRAMATIZED"
AND DUTCHED
590 01:24:57:28 01:25:00:14 AS IF EVERY NARRATIVE,
HOWEVER PROBLEMATIC
HAD BEEN DUMBED DOWN TO LOVE GONE WRONG

AND WHILE TV SELLS US CARS BY PROMISING ADVENTURE

AND SELLS US BEER BY PROMISING FRIENDSHIP

IT ALSO ROBS US OF CHRONOLOGY.

WITH CHANNELS FOR WEATHER, FOOD, HISTORY, NOSTALGIA

CARTOONS AND PORN

WE SEE EVERYTHING THAT EVER WAS, ALL AT THE SAME TIME

AND INCREASINGLY REMOTE.

TO BE NICER TO WOMEN, CHILDREN, MINORITIES, IMMIGRANTS

POOR PEOPLE, SICK PEOPLE, OLD PEOPLE, ODD PEOPLE AND STRANGERS

THE NATION GOT SO MEAN?