

Center for Humane Technology | Your Undivided Attention Podcast
Episode 58: [They Don't Represent Us with Larry Lessig](#)

Tristan Harris: We often talk about the need to protect American democracy, but perhaps the Americans among us don't currently live in a democracy. As research has shown, there's pretty much no relationship between the percentage of the population that supports a policy and the likelihood of that policy getting enacted. And the strongest determinant of whether a policy gets enacted is how much money is put behind it. So what can we do to not just protect, but shall we say, revive our democracy? What can we do to revive the relationship between the will of the people and the actions of the government?

I'm Tristan Harris, and this is *Your Undivided Attention*, the podcast from the Center for Humane Technology. Today, we're doing something a little bit special as we near the American election and representation of the public is on our minds. We're airing a talk by Harvard Law Professor and Creative Commons co-founder Larry Lessig. This is a talk he gave in 2019 at the Politics and Prose Bookstore in Washington, D.C. about his book, *They Don't Represent Us*.

The title *They Don't Represent Us* actually has two meanings. First, as in our elected representatives don't represent us, and the second, kind of more related to this show, is how we the people don't represent ourselves. This is where social media comes in. We don't represent ourselves because we're shown the most extreme versions of the other side 24/7. And the more we use social media, the more extreme outrage polarized and in a virtual reality we become. We don't represent ourselves on social media.

Now, Larry Lessig is considered politically liberal, but his analysis and proposals are refreshingly nonpartisan and ultimately, pro-democracy. Larry's been a personal friend and ally in this work, so I'm really thrilled to share his talk with you in our feed.

I should also mention that Larry's original talk is highly visual, so we edited it lightly for clarity, and sometimes you'll hear me jump in to explain an image or a graph you can't see. But if you prefer to watch this talk, you can find the link on the podcast page for this episode at humanetech.com/podcast.

And now the last thing is *Your Undivided Attention* is about to have its first ever Ask Us Anything episode. If there are questions you'd love to ask me or Aza about the show or about the social dilemma, or more broadly about our work at the Center for Humane Technology, this is your opportunity. Go to humanetech.com/askus. And with that, here we go.

Larry Lessig: Okay, so this book, *They Don't Represent Us*, intentionally ambiguates the claim in the title. So in one sense, by *They Don't Represent Us*, I'm talking about them, meaning the government, meaning the government doesn't represent us. But in addition to the government not representing us, a fight that I've been engaged

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in for the last 12 years, I also want to suggest the way in which focusing on us, as in we the people, we don't represent us.

The way that they are unrepresentative is obvious, I think. The way that we are unrepresentative is not obvious. And my view is as important as it is to solve their problems, our problems are actually worse, so let's start with them.

The framers of our Constitution gave us a republic, as many conservatives will insist again and again when you talk about our democracy. It's not a democracy, they'll say, it's a republic. But by a republic, our framers meant a "representative democracy" and by a representative democracy, it's kind of in the title. What they meant was a democracy that would be representative. But our representative democracy is not representative, and it is unrepresentative because it has rendered us unequal as citizens in any number of ways. So I just want to go through four dimensions of that inequality.

First of all, think about the equality to vote in America. Do we have an equal vote in America, an equal freedom to vote in America? The answer to that is obviously no, because we allow states to set their rules in a way that suppresses the opportunity of the party that happens not to be in power to participate in those elections. Typically that renders in racial terms, so white government officials in Georgia make it harder for black people in Georgia to vote by removing voting machines or changing the voting lists in ways that makes it more difficult to participate. But that may be racially motivated, it may just be politically motivated, but whatever way it's motivated, votes are effectively suppressed because we allow this inequality to reign within our democracy. Charles Stewart in MIT estimates that it's probably 16 million people in the last election who effectively had their vote suppressed by allowing these techniques to occur.

Or do we have an equal freedom to vote for a president? Many people look at the Electoral College and say, obviously not. But the truth is it's not directly the Electoral College, it's the fact that states have adopted something called "winner take all" for allocating the electors in their state. So all but two states say the winner of the popular vote, even by just one, gets all of the electors in that state. The truth is it's swing states America that elects our president. Because in these states, swing states, states that go one way or the other, these are the only states where it makes sense to campaign if you are a presidential candidate because all of the other states are already determined.

So what that means is that, for example, in 2016, 95% of candidates' time and 99% of campaign spending was in these 14 states. These 14 states then are the states our presidential candidates are trying to woo. But the truth is these swing states do not represent America. They are older, they are whiter, their industry is kind of late 19th century industry. There are seven and a half times

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the number of people in America who are in solar energy as mine coal, but you never hear about solar energy in a presidential election because those people live in Texas and California. What you hear about is coal mining because coal miners are in these swing states.

So if you think about the fact that the non-swing states just do not matter, or even the minority in a swing state goes to vote just to have his or her vote thrown away, the aggregate is probably about 85 million people who went to vote in the last election to have their vote just not count.

Or think about the way we gerrymander districts in the House of Representatives, a system whereby politicians pick the voters as opposed to the voters picking the politicians. What we know about the strategy of gerrymandering is that the states who are drawing these districts are trying to make the seats in Congress safe seats so that the representative knows which party is going to prevail.

So there are safe seat Republican districts and safe seat democratic districts. Probably 85% of Congress is properly considered safe seats in this sense. But what this process is, as they draw these districts, Christopher Ingraham calls these crimes against geography, to craft these safe seats is a dynamic that produces a very obvious incentive. If you are a Republican in a safe seat Republican district, you're not worried about any Democrat challenging you and beating you. What you're worried about is a Republican challenging you and beating you in the primary.

But what we know about primaries is they attract the most extreme voters in either party. So you are worried about an even more right wing Republican challenging you and beating you. Or if you're a Democrat in a safe seat Democratic district, you're not worried about a Republican beating you, you're worried about an even more progressive Democrat beating you. Which means that 85% of the seats, what these representatives are doing is focusing to their flanks, focusing to the extremes to make sure they keep the extremes happy.

Now, I'm kind of an extremist so I'm not so upset about that in absolute terms, but the point is the rest of America, the America that is not the extremes, finds their votes systematically underrepresented in a system like this. And if you take those non-extremists and then those who happen to live in a minority district where they happen to be a Republican and a safe seat Democratic district or a Democrat in the safe seat Republican district, this system of empowering the extremes means that in the last election 89 million Americans went to vote to have their vote just not count.

But the most extreme, the most outrageous, the issue which I have spent so much of my time fighting about is the way that we fund campaigns in America.

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We take it for granted that campaigns will be privately funded, which means that candidates for Congress and representatives in Congress have to spend anywhere between 30 and 70% of their time dialing for dollars. Sometimes I have to explain to my students that's a telephone, I'm used to [inaudible 00:09:42]. Dialing for dollars, calling people to raise the money, sucking up to people to raise the money they need to get back to Congress. But who are they calling? They're not calling the average American. They're calling no more than 120,000 Americans who happen to be in the class of people who help them to fund campaigns. 120,000, this tiny fraction of the 1% that they're sucking up to to fund their campaigns.

This dynamic has an effect on them. They develop as they do this, a sixth sense, a constant awareness about how what they do will affect their ability to raise money. They become in the words of The X-Files, shape-shifters, as they constantly adjust their views in light of what they know will help them to raise money, not on issues one to 10, but in issues 11 to 1,000. Leslie Burn, a Democrat from Virginia, describes that when she went to Congress, she was told by a colleague, "Always lean to the green," and then to clarify, she went on, "He was not an environmentalist."

So the point is that the people who are the funders here are the important people in this dimension, which means that about 139.5 million people go to the polls not to have their vote matter. So when you add all these things up, the point is just as obvious as much, they don't represent us because we've allowed this inequality to pervade every dimension of our democratic system, and the consequences are profound.

This study by Princeton political scientists, then Princeton, Martin Gilens and Ben Page, is the largest empirical study of actual decisions of our government in the history of political science, relating those decisions to the economic elite, attitudes of the economic elite, attitudes of organized interest groups and attitudes of the average voter.

Tristan Harris: So now Lessig is going to show three graphs, one for the economic elite, one for organized interest groups, and one for the preferences of the average voter. The graphs will show, on the X axis, the percentage of people in those groups favoring a proposed policy versus, on the Y axis, the predicted probability that that policy will be enacted.

Larry Lessig: And what they found with the economic elite was as the percentage of the elite who supports something goes up, the probability of that being passed goes up as well. That's the way you'd expect it. The more who supports something, the more likely it is it gets passed. So 0%, zero chance it's being passed. 100%, 35% chance it is being passed.

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Here's the graph for organized interest groups. The same dynamic, the more who support it, the more likely it is that it gets passed.

Here's the graph of the average citizens. That's a flat line, literally and figuratively. What that's saying is it doesn't matter the percentage of average citizens who support something, it doesn't change the probability of that thing having been enacted. As they put it when they describe it in English, when the preferences of the economic elites and the stands of organized interest groups are controlled for the preferences of the average American appear to have only a minuscule, near zero, statistically non-significant impact upon public policy in a democracy. The average citizen's views just don't matter.

When I was growing up, we had this image of democracy. There we are, we middle America, we the people driving the bus here-

Tristan Harris: Now Lessig is showing a video of a man driving a bus, but the steering wheel becomes detached.

Larry Lessig: But here's the reality of our democracy, the steering wheel has become detached from this bus because of this systemic inequality we've allowed to grow within our democracy.

Now, the Gilens and Page study has been criticized by some so let's just at least say this, at the very least it is because of this inequality that we can see the rise of what Francis Fukuyama calls a veto-ocracy, a vetocracy. Fukuyama points to our framers and says, "Look, they built a very delicate, almost Swiss watch-like system of government with checks and balances and mechanisms to slow down what our government does to make sure that when our government acts, it really acts in the interest of the people." But these inequalities are like dripping molasses into the mechanisms of that Swiss watch because these inequalities mean that the tiniest number of important elements, whether it's money or extremists or those whose votes are not suppressed, have the capacity to block change. And what that has led to is a reality we need to openly and honestly acknowledge, that in our three branch system of government, there is a failed branch. That failed branch is Congress. You might have views about the president, we can bracket that for a moment, but the branch that does not function, the branch that has lost its capacity to function because of this vetocracy is Congress.

Okay, that's the problem with them. I want to introduce the problem with us in a way that's a little bit focused on the salient issues of our moment.

So the 17th President of the United States, Andrew Johnson, was the first president to be impeached. When he was impeached, media was newspapers, and that public media was fragmented and partisan. Yet, the views of the public

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that was produced by that fragmented and partisan media were invisible. Polling did not exist. People dreamed about it.

James Bryce, in his book, *The American Commonwealth*, in 1888, writes a final stage in the evolution of democracy would be reached, "If the will of the majority of citizens were to become ascertainable at all times, how wonderful it would be to be able to push a button and know what the public thinks." But not yet in 1868 did they have that capacity. In 1868, the public was illegible. And if you stood up and you said, "What do the people think?" It was a kind of laughable question to be presented in any public policy circle. So when Andrew Johnson was impeached, he was impeached with a public that was fragmented and illegible as opposed to a public that would be concentrated and legible.

As the 19th century moved into the 20th century, technology changed. Indeed technologies changed. The first of these changing technologies was the technology of broadcasting, a technology to make it so that many could hear at one time the very same thing. Of course, what they listened to was not always wonderful, but it was sometimes wonderful. FDR used the radio to knit together the nation to tell them the stories, both of the recovery that he was promising and the war that he was trying to wage successfully. 1939, 60% of Americans reported getting their news through the radio. By '44, that number was up to 74%.

Now, in this story, all broadcasting is important, but the most important broadcasting here is television. As Markus Prior of Princeton describes in his extraordinary book, *Broadcast Democracy*, television changed everything, not just because of the concentration in the stations. Even in 1977, 90% report getting their news from just three networks. But also because of the addictiveness of this technology. It's irresistible. The television is turned on and just kept on. But because it's video it's understandable and therefore in an important way, egalitarian across the full range of society. As Prior shows in his data, more citizens become engaged in politics because they are engaged in mainstream trusted sources. There's a daily lesson that they get every night on the news, and the news is on the same time in all three networks, lessons from people like this-

- Tristan Harris: Here, Larry is showing an image of Walter Cronkite, the late host of CBS Evening News.
- Larry Lessig: ... building a common understanding, a thick common understanding. And it's on the basis of that common understanding that there is increased political engagement across the range of American politics and the progress that we associate with that period in American history, whether it's civil rights, or the war in Vietnam, or the impeachment of Richard Nixon, or the environment.

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So this is change one, what Prior calls the change to broadcast democracy between 1950 and 1985. But change two is a coincidence that most theorists miss and most of us are likely to miss. The coincidence is this, at the time that broadcasting is taking off, polling is invented. 1936 is the critical moment in this progress. In that election, the then dominant way of measuring public opinion, a kind of straw poll conducted by The Literary Digest, predicted that Alf Landon was going to beat FDR by 20 points. Now, The Literary Digest had been spot on with the Electoral College results in many elections before and so they were pretty confident that they knew who the new president would be, and it was a man named Alf Landon. Now you know, because you might not even know the name, Alf Landon, they were wrong. But at the time, a man named George Gallup told them they were wrong. George Gallup said, "I've talked to a thousand people," they had collected three million ballots, but he said, "I've talked to a thousand people, and I can tell you, not only will Alf Landon not win, but FDR will win with an extraordinary landslide." And everyone laughed until of course, FDR won with the largest landslide in the history of contested presidential elections in the Republic.

So this idea, which Bryce had fantasized about, the final stage of democracy had been born because we now had a scientific technology with which we could know what the people thought.

Okay, so here's the key to the point I want you to see, when polling was born, it was born to a very special public. It's a happy coincidence that we learned how to read the people just when the people have something smart to say, and the people have something smart to say because they knew a common set of facts. And based on that knowledge, they progressed.

Now, a common set of facts. I don't mean unbiased. I don't mean complete. I don't mean it covered everything it should have been covering. I'm not even saying what it covered was true. I'm just saying it was in common that these facts were understood. And based on that common understanding, there was the progress we see during the age called broadcast democracy. Now, both of these technologies are important, critically important, to the fate of the 37th President of the United States, the almost second impeachment case of Richard Nixon.

Because as ABC, NBC, and CBS told the story of the Watergate hearings, and as shows like 60 Minutes went in depth to unpack exactly what had happened in Watergate, America listened. They couldn't help but listening, that's all that was on. And as they were listening, they learned something. And as they learned something, they were read through polling. The legible public spoke back and told the policy makers what they thought of the facts as they were developing. And the critical thing to notice is the extraordinary correlation between the views of Republicans and views of Democrats as this story develops.

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Tristan Harris: Here, Larry's showing a graph of Nixon approval ratings by party, with both parties rising and falling together.

Larry Lessig: At the top of the red line of the Republican views, as with Donald Trump, it's about an 80% supporting Nixon all the way until about six months before his resignation. And the Democrats are lower, higher than they are with Trump, but lower. But notice how both lines move together and they both fall at the same time, and that's because we were one nation listening to one story, which had one consequence, that this president had to resign. So in the impeachment of Richard Nixon, it is a concentrated media environment with a legible public that produces the influence that drives that president to resign the presidency.

Okay, so the 20th century evolves to the 21st century and of course, technology changes again. First, cable television changes.

Tristan Harris: Here, Larry's showing a graph of three different trends.

Larry Lessig: So this graph tries to capture it. This is dark lines, the market share of the big three, they go from about just under 70% in 1985 to under 40% by 2002. The white lines are the penetration of cable in houses, going from about 44% in 1985 to about 83% by 2002. And then this line shows the average number of channels on each of these cable systems, going from just under 15 in 1985 to over 100 by 2002. So what we know this means is that the audiences become incredibly fragmented as they begin to watch not just the news, but they watch the Home Shopping Network, or C-SPAN, or they watch the History Channel. They watch whatever they want to watch and it turns out, surprise, surprise, not everyone wants to watch the news. And of course, cable is only the beginning.

As the internet begins to spread and the number of sources explodes, what we have is fragmentation again, like the fragmentation in the 19th century. Once again, we have fragmented media that is the way we get access to the truth about the world, and that has a dramatic effect on what people watched. Because those who were forced before to watch the news, forced because that's all that was on, they're not forced anymore. So they don't watch the news now. And those who do watch the news, the so-called news junkies, are partisan junkies, and that changes the business model of the broadcasters. A man like this wouldn't survive a week on modern cable television.

Tristan Harris: He's again showing a picture of Walter Cronkite.

Larry Lessig: Instead, the business model of today supports people like that.

Tristan Harris: Followed by an image of Fox News host, Sean Hannity.

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Larry Lessig: Because partisan pays and more partisan pays even more. I'm going to show you the scariest graph in America today. Hold your seats. So here's the graph.

Tristan Harris: It's a graph showing the ideological overlap between the content of the big three cable networks, Fox, CNN, and MSNBC.

Larry Lessig: What this is saying is that until about the middle 2002, there's no difference between the three when you look at the ideological content of those three networks, but this is what happens after 2002. So the red line up at the top is Fox becoming extraordinarily conservative, MSNBC drops to the bottom and CNN can't decide where in the middle it wants to be. And this is because, as Roger Ailes knew when he started Fox News, the strategy for a news channel in a fragmented media environment is to find your base and play to your base to further reinforce your base, your tribe, to keep them in their corners so you can reliably use them as your advertisers want.

Now of course, the internet only makes this worse. Tristan Harris, who used to work as an engineer at Google, has left Google to start this Center for Humane Technology, and he's obsessed with the science of attention that these digital platforms are exploiting because these digital platforms use this science to engineer our attention, to overcome our natural resistance to what they're trying to give us, to kind of brain hacking, exploiting evolution and the way evolution has made us to force us to watch and consume what they give us. So whether it's the random rewards of the slot machine or the consequence of confronting endless wells of information, which means we cannot stop as with eating popcorn, all of this is with the aim to sell ads.

So we should just think about this for a second, that is the business model, and that business model to sell ads creates an incentive. The incentive is for them to know more about us, not just by watching us the way you could stand outside on a street and watch how many Volkswagens drive by, but by poking us or tweaking us or asking us or rendering us vulnerable, so in our vulnerability, our insecurity, we share more, reaching down the brain stack to leverage our insecurity because the more we share, the more they can learn about us. And the more they can learn about us, the better they can sell adds to us. Zeynep Tufekci writes, "The companies are in the business of monetizing attention and not necessarily in ways that are conducive to health or success of social movements or the public sphere."

Now, it turns out here too, the politics of hate pays because polarized and ignorant publics get riled up really easily. They get really passionately intent on whatever they're being told to do, and all of that helps them to sell ads. This is the point that kind of troubles me in a way that I don't quite know yet how to describe.

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Look, if you told me you were going to destroy democracy to end climate change, I wouldn't be for it, but I would get the trade off. Or if you said, "To end world hunger, we're going to break democracy," I'd be like, "Well, it's too bad we have to break democracy, but I get ending world hunger is an important thing." But when you tell me that we're breaking democracy to make Mark richer-

Tristan Harris: He's talking about Mark Zuckerberg.

Larry Lessig: ... I don't even understand what the idea is. Yet, this is what we have, in effect, allowed to happen, not intended. This is like vaping for our democracy, we wake up and discover, "Oh my God, look at what it's doing to us so that they can sell ads."

About two months ago, Barack Obama said, "If you watch Fox News, you're in one reality. And if you read the New York Times, you're in a different reality." That's our reality. Yet, because we are still legible, because they can still read us, this legible public has a kind of normative effect on our democratic process. "My people say," representatives say, because the polls tell the representatives what the people believe. And whether the representative agrees with the people or not, he or she feels the pressure of what they say. So feel the pain of someone like Ben Sasse.

Tristan Harris: Ben Sasse is a former Republican senator from Nebraska who just recently decided to quit.

Larry Lessig: ... who I don't agree with his politics, but I think he's a very decent senator who cannot be looking at what's going on and think to himself this is the great ideal of either his party or the nation, but who is told every single day by his party what the people in Nebraska think about what's going on. The people in Nebraska who have been formed into these tribes, into these bubbles, into these separate realities and told again and again what they need to think, and that reality constrains him, and he and others say, So what do I do now? All of this is very relevant to the fate of our 45th president-

Tristan Harris: Donald Trump.

Larry Lessig: ... the almost third so far president to be impeached. Of course, the actual second impeached president was President Clinton. This almost third president to be impeached lives in this world where we live in different realities, so we hear different stories. These different stories will have a different effect on us. The idea that this will be what our evolution in this impeachment process will look like is just not true.

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Tristan Harris: And here, Larry's bringing back that graph of Nixon's approval rating by party with the parties rising and falling together. And next he's showing a new graph with Trump approval ratings by party with the parties completely diverged.

Larry Lessig: It'll be something more like this, which is the graph showing the attitude of Republicans towards Donald Trump and the attitude of Democrats towards Donald Trump. These are two separate worlds. Like the President was speaking of when he said and invoked the idea of the civil war where two worlds had no idea of what the other one thought, which led of course to the tragedy of that conflict.

So here in this context, we have, again, a fragmented media, but we have a legible public which constrains what the representatives can do. So you can say that Johnson was impeached by an elite-driven process, whether they got it right or wrong is another question. Nixon was impeached through a people-driven process because we, the people all in some sense we're there and we constrained as one what the Congress does. But I fear this president is going to be impeached in a crazies driven process as these separate worlds that don't understand each other impose their very separate constraints on what our Congress does.

This is the critical point to recognize, we have never been here before. We have never lived in a fragmented and polarized yet heard or legible democracy before. This is just not part of our experience. And it raises a really profound question, how do you do democracy here? How do you do democracy when you cannot account on us all even understanding the same thing anymore? And when you realize we are not going back to the 1970s, that's just not going to happen, how do we construct a democracy when that's a reality?

So when you look at this and you say, can we fix us, that part of the problem I've just described? The fact is I'm not sure. The book has many ideas, but I confess that I'm not sure how far these ideas move us down the road to getting us a democracy we should be confident about, but I am absolutely convinced we can fix them. The extraordinarily inspirational act of the Congress, the House of Representatives in passing H.R. 1, which was the most ambitious package of reforms passed by the House of Representatives since the Voting Rights Act of 1965, that is the model for fixing them.

Tristan Harris: The For the People Act is a bill intended to expand voting rights, limit the influence of money in politics, ban partisan gerrymandering, and create new ethics rules for federal office holders. It was passed in the House along party lines in 2021, but then got stalled in the Senate. What Lessig is saying about H.R. 1 is that-

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Larry Lessig: That bill would fix 80% of the problem with them, and so I think we should be talking about the equivalent in the presidential context, let's call it POTUS 1, a commitment by presidential candidates to pass fundamental reform first. And we at Equal Citizens have been polling and talking to these presidential candidates, and there are at least nine of these candidates, including three of the front runners, who've made the commitment to enact fundamental reform like H.R. 1 or better first.

Tristan Harris: Here, Larry's showing a list of 9 2020 presidential candidates who are willing to sign on something like a POTUS 1, including Andrew Yang, Tulsi Gabbard, and Elizabeth Warren.

Larry Lessig: Now this, I think we must try first, this change of them. I think we need to try a representative democracy first. We've never really had it in the history of America. Let's just try it and see if with a representative democracy we might begin to produce the movement that we need, not just on the endless list of problems that America must address from climate change to healthcare, to a future that will give our kids something to do, but also to the capacity to rebuild something we would feel respects the idea of a democracy.

So about 12 years ago, in April, 2008, candidate Obama spoke in Philadelphia, this is what he said. He said, "We have to take up that fight, the fight to change the way Washington works." He said, "If we're not willing to take up that fight, then real change, change that will make a lasting difference in the lives of ordinary Americans will keep getting blocked by the defenders of the status quo." He told us we must take up that fight.

Now, one of the most exciting moments I've had as a parent is when my 16-year-old said to me, "Okay, Boomer," because I thought, "Wow, this is exactly what we need you people to turn on us, because you people need to realize we have let you down." So when I look at this extraordinary president who was a friend and who I admire endlessly, I need to start by saying, though he told us we must take up the fight. He never took up that fight. He didn't introduce a single piece of legislation to address this deeply corrupted democracy, not even the legislation he promised to make it so presidential candidates could run with public funding. Again, he did not take up that fight. So we need a generation to say to people like him and us, "Okay, Boomer."

My grandfather was of the generation that Tom Brokaw called the Greatest Generation. What we Boomers need to recognize is that we could well be the worst generation because while my grandfather's generation was willing to risk everything to build more for us, we can't even get it together to get a democracy to work again. But if we don't, it's not us who pay the price, it's those kids who say to us, "Okay, Boomer." It's those kids who will suffer the consequences of climate change, those kids who pay endlessly for healthcare that is too

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expensive and delivers too little. Those kids who have no future and an opportunity to work in an economy that has slowed to a stall for middle class. Those kids who pay the price because we can't do what our grandparents did. We must find a way to inspire these politicians to finally pull together the reform necessary to get us a democracy again, or if not again, at least for the first time. Thank you very much.

Tristan Harris:

Larry Lessig's book, *They Don't Represent Us: Reclaiming Our Democracy* was published in 2019 and it's as relevant today as ever. In the book, Lessig elaborates the ways in which Democratic representation is in peril and proposes a number of solutions to revive our democracy from ranked choice voting to nonpartisan open primaries. You can find *They Don't Represent Us* wherever books are sold.

Larry Lessig is an American academic, attorney and political activist. He's a professor of law and leadership at the Harvard Law School and founder of The Creative Commons, which is a nonprofit devoted to expanding the range of creative works available for people to legally build upon and share. And as a political activist, Lessig has been a major proponent of democracy reform throughout his career, including most recently campaign finance reform.

If you enjoyed this talk, check out our episode with Taiwan's Digital Minister Audrey Tang, where we explore the ways that technology can actually strengthen democracy. You can find that episode in our full catalog at humanetech.com/podcast.

And finally, we're sad to share that this episode is going to be the last one for our executive producer Stephanie Lepp. Stephanie has been with *Your Undivided Attention* for about a year and a half and she's just made this an excellent, amazing show, full stop. Stephanie, we will miss you, and we wish you all the best in your next role at the Institute for Cultural Evolution.

I'm Tristan Harris, and thank you for giving us *Your Undivided Attention*.