THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION
***Democracy in Question* podcast**

"Founders' focus on naturalization and migration echoes today"

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Episode Summary:

The Declaration of Independence accused the British Crown of obstructing naturalization and restricting migration to the colonies, grievances that feel especially relevant today. On this episode of *Democracy in Question*, host Katie Dunn Tenpas sits down with Brookings senior fellows Rashawn Ray and Scott Anderson to trace how American values around immigration and naturalization have evolved since 1776, and what the Founders' concerns tell us about today's debates.

READER: “The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries & usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

“He has endeavored to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.”

[music]

TENPAS: Hi, I’m Katie Dunn Tenpas a visiting fellow in governance studies at the Brookings Institution, and director of the Initiative on Improving Interbranch Relations and Government. And this is season three of Democracy in Question. This season, we’re doing something a little unusual for a policy podcast. We’re going back, 250 years back, to the birth of the Declaration of Independence, the document that outlined exactly why the United States of America came to exist in the first place. Last episode, we discussed what obtaining consent of the governed really looks like today.

Now we’re shifting focus to the largest portion of the Declaration, the grievances. 250 years ago, the founders sat down and listed 27 ways that the British Crown had wronged them, from enforcing taxation without representation and imposing trade restrictions, to interfering with colonists’ self-governance.

Today, we’re starting with grievances that hit especially close to home: " He has endeavored to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; Refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands."

To delve into these specific grievances that align closely with modern debates on immigration policy, I’m joined by two of my expert colleagues, Rashawn Ray and Scott Anderson. Rashawn is a senior fellow in Governance Studies at Brookings, renowned for his expertise in understanding and addressing racial and social inequality. Scott is a senior fellow in Governance Studies at Brookings, and he is the general counsel and senior editor for Lawfare.

So excited to have you both on the podcast. Thank you, Rashawn, and thank you, Scott.

RAY: Thank you for having us.

TENPAS: Yeah.

ANDERSON: Absolutely.

[2:37]

TENPAS: So when the founders wrote about King George III impairing migration and naturalization, what do you think their fears were, or what vision of a new nation were they trying to protect? You want to start, Scott?

[2:48]

ANDERSON: Sure. I mean, for the colonists, a growing population was a source of strength. It was the ability to have a broader economic base, more diversified economic base, bring different skills, different resources to the colonies at the time, and to take advantage of what at the time in particular was seen as very abundant natural resources.

So for them, the restrictions on the ability to bring people to the colonies and attract them to the colonies was itself an effort to keep them repressed because it kept them relatively weak, and it kept them unable to take full advantage of the opportunities that they had available to them, at least in the eyes of the framers.

TENPAS: Right. So inhibiting their independence was sort of a means of control.

ANDERSON: I think that's right.

[3:34]

TENPAS: Yeah. What do you have to say about that, Rashawn?

[3:37]

RAY: Well, I mean, I think Scott hit the nail on the head. I mean, when we start talking about countries flexing their muscles, in a sense it's part of that expansion. And a lot of that expansion deals with property, and we can think about property in in terms of land, obviously, and then we can also think about it in terms of people. And oftentimes countries and nation states want to be able to tax people. That is a way in which they grow. They want to think about that land expansion.

And really viewing these particular resources as utilities. And I think in this regard, being able to corral those utilities meant control. It meant maintaining some sort of way in which they are able to set the stage for what people's lives are gonna become or not.

And so in this regard, if there's gonna be a new country that is gonna disassociate and you are now losing people, that means you are losing power, you are losing resources, and those things end up becoming threats that come out in fear.

[4:32]

TENPAS: Yeah. And with greater expansion comes greater trade, greater resources, and they become a threat.

Interestingly, of all the 56 signers of the Declaration, only eight were born outside of the colonies. What do you make of this in light of these grievances?

[4:46]

ANDERSON: Well, it it's interesting. I mean, it, a core foundational part of English common law that still applied at this point was the principle of *jus soli,* the idea that people born in the colonies or in the broader British Empire, were essentially citizens

of the Crown. Later, I think maybe it's somewhat prevalent at this point, it became even kind of non-voluntary service to the Crown. That's part of the impressment debate that led to the War of 1812, this idea that British citizens are still British citizens even if they don't want to be anymore, and therefore they can be essentially pressed into serving in the British Navy.

It was this concept that distinguished foreign-born residents, but that's why you see this focus in this part of this grievance on naturalizing foreign-born people, because there was a desire to say, "We don't just want babies here. We don't want to be able to grow our population just this one way. We want active immigration." Because lots of foreign nationals bring with them, again, the skills and the resources that we don't inherently have here, and can bring them in a developed, much more usable way than if we were to try to develop them indigenously in a new generation.

[5:50]

TENPAS: Yeah. And I had read that, like, they feared that so many Germans were coming to the United States because they worried about sort of the skills, and they also worried that because they weren't British citizens, they would be sort of less willing to listen to the Crown and more willing to rebel. Anything to add, Rashawn, on that one?

[6:05]

RAY: I mean, I'll just say I I I continuously find it interesting that in in this regard, we're talking about a group of immigrants and yet and still put in place a a document that ended up doing the same thing that was done to them. And I find that to be continuously ironic when we talk about the United States, when we talk about what we supposedly stand for.

I always think, stand for for whom? And who do these sort of things benefit? Who has the ability to be considered natural or naturalized? And I think it sets the context that really links the past 250 years ago to today in terms of how we see some of these same things playing out, that having that British connection meant something, and if a person was German or French or Irish or African, it meant something different.

And I think we continuously seen over time how this particular pattern has played out, and it becomes very clear who is included and who is excluded.

[7:01]

TENPAS: And it's really interesting how in a way they sort of feared the amalgam of all these different people working together because it seems to produce the best outcome, and then there was early fear that that would actually happen. And that's why they... I'm guessing one of the reasons they tried to restrict it.

So at some point in our history, the founders' framing of migration as something to be encouraged got flipped. Can you talk about that sort of reversal in law and policy, Scott, when that occurred?

[7:27]

ANDERSON: Yeah. I mean, we begin to see a focus on immigration becoming more of a problem in the late 19th century, and it gets a lot to the questions of identity and exclusion that Rashawn was just talking about. You began to see both notably like a closing of the frontier, the idea that we've reached the western shore of the continent. We have the idea that there are open frontiers, open territories still available for the taking begins to fade away at this point. You see populations coming in, people from China, people from different corners of Europe, that are seen as changing a particular identity for a more fixed population, a population that has a certain cultural sense of self that is a little more exclusionary, adheres to a particular cultural idea that these people didn't fit with or at least weren't perceived as fitting with, that led to concerns about the expansion of those populations.

These are labor competition as as well. There was this idea that Chinese laborers, Irish laborers were undercutting people who were competing for those same jobs here. A lot of these same rhetoric and concerns, real or exaggerated, that we hear come up in contemporary immigration contexts.

Really, that started happening towards the late 19th century is when we saw those beginning to come to the fore, and we saw the beginning of congressional restrictions on immigration.

[8:40]

TENPAS: And at the point of the Industrial Revolution as well. Right? That really kind of magnified this because there were more and more jobs that were...

[8:45]

ANDERSON: Yes, I think that's probably about right. The Industrial Revolution was proceeding through this whole period. And there was an interest. I mean, the Industrial Revolution ultimately did create many more jobs. It expanded the economy. But there was a concern, though, as you saw industrialization, as you saw adjustments of different practices that labor would become a more volatile experience, and that might shape the availability of different types of opportunities.

[9:10]

TENPAS: And Rashawn, the founders, they weren't just complaining about blocked migration. They specifically called out the restrictions on new appropriations of land. Why do you think they placed migration and land access together?

[9:21]

RAY: Well, in many regards, they're part of the same transaction. When you migrate, you have to migrate to something, and oftentimes that's land. And then you have to end up getting individuals who are going to perform on that land, who are gonna be able to produce something that can be traded, that can actually be used as collateral, that can actually grow the wealth of this new place.

And I think those are some of the things that we saw, and what Scott was just speaking to is what what people oftentimes call troublesome bedfellows, where there, there were these advertisements that were going on in the 1800s into the 1900s. So they would show stereotypical caricatures of people of different racial groups kind of being in a bed together, and it's suggesting that they are in cahoots, that they are trading together, that they are working together. And Uncle Sam would kind of be either with them or kind of, kind of off at a distance. Then there would be other people somewhere else.

And I think what that speaks to is the way that what has become the United States has participated in sort of a global process of, of the economy, of commerce. And when we talk about land usage in particular, that is part of what it is, is who can get that land, what can they produce on it, tobacco, cotton, these sort of things, sugar. And we saw that manifest in the U.S.

And of course, we can't talk about land usage and property and people without talking about enslavement. Like, that was the biggest form of the free labor that helped the United States become what it actually became.

And then we've seen over time the way that land usage has been utilized to be restricted from other people, whether that be through restrictive covenants, redlining, gentrification. The way that our country was founded, we still see those direct remnants to this day. They are not disconnected. In some ways, we might call it something different. They're in a different form. Maybe we didn't have a term for it then. But we still see the manifestations of it.

And one thing that we know about property is that property is one of the few things that actually appreciates. You buy a vehicle, you drive it off the lot, it is depreciated, like, the second you step off. Right? You, you buy a new pair of shoes, like, good luck with that unless it's, like, Michael Jordan or LeBron James shoes or something. But overall, property is the thing that nothing can be on the property. It can be a dilapidated home, but it is valuable. And I think that is why land usage is intricately tied to how we think about the Declaration of Independence and the founding of our country.

[11:45]

TENPAS: Yeah. And I I'm pretty sure that they were really concerned about sort of the expansion would make it more difficult for them to control the colonists. And colonizers don't like that. They don't like that lack of control.

Scott, the 14th Amendment in the Constitution established birthright citizenship after the Civil War. Now the Supreme Court is revisiting it, prompted by President Trump's executive order entitled "Protecting the Meaning and Value of American Citizenship." What does it mean for a policy constitutionally protected that's been law for over 150 years to be revisited? And what's at stake? Can you talk about that?

[12:19]

ANDERSON: Sure. You know, we are in an era now where some of the accepted understanding of the Constitution are being revisited, and that in, to some extent,

what originalism, one of the schools of interpretation of the Constitution that has a lot of supporters on the current Supreme Court, leans into. It's the idea that we need to go back to how the original framers understood the Constitution or the original authors in this case — this is the 14th Amendment, uh, which was adopted after the Civil War, so not the framers, but the framers of this particular amendment — what they meant at the time, and that may depart from subsequent meanings that people have adopted.

That said, in this case, specifically about birthright citizenship, that's a harder argument to make. And I think we saw it in oral arguments that happened in the case around this principle, Trump v. Barbara, a few weeks ago, where we saw the court be fairly skeptical of the government's arguments.

And a big part of that is because this language in the 14th Amendment didn't come out of whole cloth. It wasn't inventing this idea of birthright citizenship. It was constitutionalizing it. It was overriding a Supreme Court decision, the Dred Scott decision, which limited its application to freed slaves, and other people in the United States that after the Civil War people wanted to enfranchise, Congress wanted to enfranchise in an enduring fashion that couldn't be taken away by subsequent legislature, so through a constitutional amendment.

But the principle it's applying is one that's been in, had been in British common law since before the colonies, back to the 17th century, early 17th century, if I recall correctly. And that is the principle, that *jus soli* principle, the idea that when you are born somewhere, you inherited citizenship, is a background understanding that by the kind of most historians very clearly informed what people are talking about.

Here, the government is really arguing for a departure from that principle, something that is in some ways even stronger than what the authors of the Declaration of Independence were complaining about in the context of Britain. In Britain, they were complaining about it making it too hard to transfer property or too hard to nationalize people who were foreign citizens and were born outside the country.

But the core question of *jus soli,* of people born there, wasn't part of the core contestation because the Crown wasn't really challenging, at least not that I'm aware of. Here, that is what the government's challenging. They're saying no, to be considered eligible for birthright citizenship, you don't have to be born there; you have to be born there in a context where the government has authorized you to be there and has permitted it.

It's a narrower conception than certainly was prevalent at the time of the Declaration or at the time of the 14th Amendment. And again, that's why it's, I think, facing such an uphill battle with justices that otherwise might be sympathetic to either this administration or to originalist type arguments, because it's not actually originalist. It has a lot of trouble rooting itself in that history and that context informing what this language actually meant.

[15:04]

TENPAS: Yeah. Interesting. And, Rashawn, changing gears just a little bit, what key moments come to mind that reveal the tension between federal enforcement power and the rights of of people on American soil?

[15:16]

RAY: Yeah, well, look, I, I think, let me be blunt. I mean, when we're talking about the 14th Amendment, when we're talking about key historical moments, and even presently, what they reveal is a constitutional crisis dressed in policy language. And when we look throughout history, we could think about the Dred Scott decision, we could even think about the way that enslaved Black people were even put into these documents to begin with, the three-fifths of a slave. We could think about COINTELPRO and the way that individuals were being surveilled. And we could think about that link to today when we talk about who is being surveilled, who is allowed to come into our country, who is not, based on where they're coming from.

So when I think about these key historical moments, they have really shaped what America has become. And really put us in, I think, a larger crisis because we never truly resolved that fundamental issue that is in the Declaration. And we tried with these amendments, when we talk about the 14th Amendment, the 15th Amendment, I mean, obviously 13th Amendment. We tried, but we have never truly reconciled it.

And then part of it goes back to what it means to be a US citizen. Actually, who has the right to claim it, even if they have proper paperwork, even if they are born here. That we have to be honest with ourselves that it's not only about where people are from, it also has to do with what their name is, it has to do with what they look, and it has to do with their ability to actually be here and thrive and truly take advantage of this democratic experiment.

[16:50]

TENPAS: Yeah. Wow. That's a powerful answer. Scott, just changing gears a little and sort of bringing us up to the present day, from a national security and law perspective, has further securing the border and the crackdown on illegal immigration made us more or less faithful to what the founders may have intended when they included migration and naturalization in their grievances?

[17:11]

ANDERSON: You know, it is hard to put it quite in the same context. The contexts are very different. Clearly, the authors of the Declaration of Independence had a vision that we want to be able to bring people in and allow people to come here fairly liberally, provide them land, provide them citizenship and naturalization, and let them the ability to join our country. And that is the original vision of the framers at this point.

They didn't build all that into the Constitution. A lot of that was left for Congress to regulate. And it's fair to say, I think to some extent, we are in a different historical moment. We're not at the edge of an, a continent of unknown expanse with widely

available natural resources. Although we also shouldn't understate the extent to which we are, continue to be blessed with natural and other resources of which there is an abundance here.

So it is a very, very different context that's drifted away from. In some ways, drifting from that vision is understandable. There are different policy problems presented today than the framers, and we shouldn't expect that the Declaration of Independence could translate one-to-one to what might be the right or desirable policy at this particular moment.

At the same time, there is a clear tension there. And when you are wrapping these broader policy debates and it intersects with efforts to understand what the framers meant when they adopted the language of the Constitution or of the 14th Amendment, then all of a sudden those old perspectives become much more relevant.

So whatever the policy justification may be, the logic behind it, the legal dimensions, really still hinge on the fact that they are embedded in this context that strongly suggests a very, very open vision and a much more open vision than at least this administration has been interested in advancing.

[18:48]

TENPAS: Yeah. And Rashawn, in regards to immigration enforcement in this administration, I know you've done a lot of research on police training and things of that that nature. What should accountability look like when immigration enforcement has been spread across so many agencies? So you've got ICE, DHS, FBI, DEA, ATF, military lawyers, local police units sometimes, all with different training protocols and expectations. Can you talk about that, please?

[19:17]

RAY: Yeah. I mean, given the work that I've done for years on this topic, I think there are a few things that have become fundamentally clear. The first thing is that there's an over-reliance on a narrative about training. Training is very, very important. But however, if the inputs they give to training are not held accountable, and are not up to par and are rigorous, we're gonna continuously have these same issues.

So I think first we have to start with who is hired. One of the biggest things is we need federal standards. One of the biggest things that people don't realize about law enforcement in the U.S. is that there are over 18,000 law enforcement agencies, and in many respects, they do things differently. You know the the old saying where people say, Oh, if you've seen one police department, you've only seen one police department. And we say that about other things, but that's how law enforcement functions.

We don't view it that way because people see a badge and they make associations, but they might be encountering a security guard. They might be encountering a ICE agent. They might be encountering a a sheriff's deputy. These are all different entities.

And so part of what we first need are federal standards that are linked to certifications.

TENPAS: Wait, so we don't have that?

RAY: No

TENPAS: Wow.

RAY: No, like, it's, it's one word, no. Like, like, we don't. Like, it... And we should.

TENPAS: And we don't have anything resembling that, any special sort of-

[20:33]

RAY: So what we have is if an individual is going to be a federal law enforcement officer, we definitely have a set of federal guidelines for individuals at the federal level. The issue, however, and this is the issue that has always functioned in the U.S., is that you often have oftentimes have these federal agencies, say in this case ICE, working with local law enforcement, and that is where you get into issues. And they have all different sorts of agreements that allow them to work together and partner together.

But that makes things very fuzzy. Right? And in many respects, it makes things slippery, and in many respects it's blurry and it maybe doesn't even exist. Right? I mean, in military bases, for example, we have detention centers there. All across the United States, we have facilities that are being put up that are detaining individuals who supposedly don't have proper paperwork to be in the United States, when really, one of the key issues there is just the backup and the stopgap of people being able to process information through the bureaucracy of the federal government. So we need those federal standards. We need to think about how people are hired. We need to make sure that that is above reproach.

And then we also need to ensure that we are collecting good data. One of the key issues is that we are not collecting good data. And my research has shown that when you start talking about comprehensive data reporting, that is one of the best ways to increase accountability, not just because someone is watching, like, their big brother or big sister, but because a lot of law enforcement actually want to know what is going on.

And so we currently have, and I think it's always been this way, so I don't even want to say currently, it has always been the case that there is slippage, and I will argue a nonexistent barrier that seems to exist between, say, law enforcement, the military, and the enforcement of our laws and the enactment of that, that that is, that has always been blurry, and it's something that oftentimes the military, like we've seen the National Guard being deployed, to ICE being where what they used to do was to really guard our borders.

And again, people have to recognize ICE isn't old. It's, like, post 9/11 stuff. So people gotta recognize this isn't going back 250 years, but they are remnants of that. And even though I think ICE started being in a a very good place in terms of thinking about borders, we have seen an encroachment in the way that our laws and our

policies are being interpreted to now use ICE to go into local communities, to over-police communities that might not necessarily need that policing.

[23:01]

TENPAS: So now it, the current situation is sort of the boldest illustration of what happens when you don't have standards, and that's when you see sort of the most kind of maybe inappropriate behavior and outcomes.

[23:12]

RAY: That's exactly right, and and it's, and it's unfortunate because it doesn't just happen to individuals who are supposedly illegal here in the United States. It is also happening to U.S. citizens, and I think that is the thing that people don't realize, that throughout American history, the 250 years and even before that as the founding of our country was taking shape, is that part of what people don't realize is that that slippage has always existed where people become casualties of the Constitution, in a sense, in terms of who has the ability to be above reproach, who doesn't. And whenever a person, regardless of their status, stands in the way of that enforcement, they also get treated oftentimes similar to how other individuals are being treated based on some sort of marginalized status that they have or people think they have.

[24:01]

TENPAS: Yeah. It's fascinating. Both of you, I just want to pick your brains. I'm just really curious, given your respective areas of expertise, is there a specific policy or action that you're keeping tabs on, one that you think has sent a particular signal to the rest of the world about where the U.S. stands on immigration, national security, and ultimately who belongs here? Scott, you want to start?

[24:23]

ANDERSON: Yeah, I mean, we've seen this administration push on a lot of different policy fronts, a lot of which are quite notable. I think the one that we have to follow is maybe less a policy front, but more a reaction, which is the degree to which we see them fulsomely complying with judicial orders. There's been a point of tension within the administration on a number of different fronts, where we've seen them in a number of cases, for example, arguably disregard or narrowly interpret a judicial order to allow flights of detainees to continue on to El Salvador, or then plea either constitutional barriers or diplomatic barriers to actually engaging in diplomatic conduct to return those people, or some of those people.

Those are points of real concern, because they suggest whatever the legal limits that Congress puts out on immigration and that the courts interpret and the executive branch interprets, if the executive branch doesn't ultimately align and follow judicial directives on that regard, then they're in lawless territory. They're acting in a way that really pushes it beyond what we understand as the rule of law.

And I think that's the real point of concern here. If there's one thing we understand about the issue set in this area from the Constitution, it is that really this is matters of national policy that Congress sets the lines on, and the executive branch generally is

understood while it has a lot of authority given to it by Congress in this space, it isn't supposed to come in and be able to kick down the doors and do exactly what it wants. It has to persuade Congress and engage in the democratic process to arrive at new laws.

This administration's pushed the envelope on that, both in terms of its actions and to some extent in terms of its view of the Constitution. At various points, the president suggested that in fact the president has a lot more authority to act in this space where Congress doesn't in a way that if the administration ultimately starts invoking and relying on those arguments would be a pretty substantial shift in the separation of powers in this space.

So that's what I look at. It is —

TENPAS: — like a constitutional crisis —

[26:13]

ANDERSON: — it certainly could be. If we get to the point where you don't see executive branch compliance with judicial orders, or where the executive branch starts dramatically asserting and relying upon interpretation of the Constitution that aren't vetted by the courts and that really upset the traditional separation of powers, those would qualify as a constitutional crisis.

I don't know if we're at the scale or frequency to be there quite yet in regards to those fronts, but that's what makes them fronts worth watching.

[26:36]

TENPAS: Right, and that's why you're watching it. Yeah. What about you, Rashawn?

[26:40]

RAY: I'm really paying attention to 287g agreements,

TENPAS: Tell us about those, the, just a quick definition.

RAY: So these agreements are agreements between essentially the federal government or a federal law enforcement agency and local agencies, and that could be, like, a local police department. They also have agreements with universities. And part of what this is is an agreement that says that oftentimes the local agency is gonna turn over information. That information could be everything from a list of names to actual people.

And so I'm really paying attention to the expansion of that, which is part of what's happening now. And I should also add that Tonantzin Carmona, one of our colleagues here at Brookings, is leaning in heavy on this in terms of thinking about where we see these agreements pop up at, where where we don't see them pop up at, and and the ways that they're actually being put into practice. Because it's one thing to have a policy or an agreement, and it's another thing to see it enacted.

And we're really paying attention to the ways that different local agencies, counties, and states are leaning in, which actually tracks with how we're seeing ICE enforcement. Not just tracking how many people are stopped or how many people are arrested, but also how many people have force used against them.

And I think that is where we see that overreach, and that is where we see that slippery slope and that connection between what the federal government is doing and what's happening locally.

And I find it ironic sometimes based on people's political party, based on their political ideologies, about how much they support the feds coming in at a local level when oftentimes people want to see power and responsibility given back to the states, and it's interesting when people choose to pull out that trope.

[28:19]

TENPAS: So let's, I'm gonna end by asking you just one takeaway regarding the Declaration's relevance today from both of you. You want to go first, Scott?

[28:27]

ANDERSON: Sure. You know, the Declaration is an important milestone to understand what motivated the fundamental decision, the foundation of our republic. It doesn't define the republic for us or what it means, either in a positive way or a negative way.

It's a useful point of reference for understanding the historical context in which they arose. And that becomes important particularly in the legal context because you then look at the Constitution, which unlike the Declaration, has the force of law, and the amendments, and subsequent statutes, some of which still have relevance today, and begin to understand that sort of context.

The statement of principles, there's maybe reasons you've moved away from them, some of them, or reasons why they aren't applied as directly today or in the same way today as they may have at the time of the Declaration. But if you don't track that trajectory, you're also going to lose an understanding of why we may have come where we have come from that starting point, and where a lot of the other milestones, the more directly relevant ones to us, how they have helped shape that trajectory and may yet shape it moving forward.

[29:28]

TENPAS: Great. That's great. Rashawn, what about you?

[29:30]

RAY: I mean, I've been thinking a lot about this portion of the Declaration that we're talking about here today, is it's a grievance. And when I think about this grievance, I think about the irony that our founding fathers were claiming a grievance with Great Britain, and still in one generation they turned around and did the same thing to other people.

And I find what's interesting about that is what it speaks to power, is that in many respects, the Declaration of Independence, like the Constitution, like other documents, is about power. It's about trying to obtain it, and then it is about trying to maintain it. And we think about the different threats that come about when there are threats to that particular power. And I think that people will turn around and do the exact thing that has been done to them.

And so I think that there is a lot to learn with what the Founding Fathers did, with the generations immediately after that, and what we're currently doing in the period that we're in. And I think we really have to think about that the Declaration of Independence is a mirror that has been put up against us. And oftentimes, one thing I know as a sociologist, there is a key concept called the looking glass self, where people look in the mirror and they don't necessarily see what other people see. And I think that in the United States, we do that a lot. We put up a looking glass self to ourselves, and it justifies what we're doing and the way things are going, and I think we have to be careful.

TENPAS: Yeah. And I think you started the conversation talking about ironies, and you sort of ended, a bit talking about how even in one generation, they sort of went back on many of the things they were grieving about, so to speak.

But I want to thank you both very much for your time, and it was an absolute pleasure to be able to sort of pick your brain for the past half hour. So thank you so much.

And thanks to our listeners. In the next episode, we'll dive further into the grievances. Stay tuned.

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I'm Katie Dunn Tenpas. Thank you for listening.