

THE ASPEN INSTITUTE

ASPEN IDEAS FESTIVAL WELCOME AND CONVERSATIONS 2016

DAVID BRADLEY

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

David Bradley  
Proprietor, *Atlantic Media*

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DAVID BRADLEY

MR. ISAACSON: It is now, as it has been for 40 years or so, my great pleasure to introduce my friend, our partner David Bradley, the proprietor of Atlantic Media Company.

(Applause)

MR. BRADLEY: Good afternoon. I'm David Bradley. I'm the owner of The Atlantic. On behalf of our editors and our writers, I join Walter in saying that we really welcome you to the Ideas Festival. With the privilege of having Christine Lagarde, and Susan Rice with us, we are trying to shorten our opening remarks this year. So forgive me for reading. To a degree I've not seen before, Walter and I are tightly scripted. My role is to read a few administrative announcements --

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: And I'm -- I'm -- just stay on script. But doesn't that feel wrong?

(Laughter)

(Applause)

MR. BRADLEY: That's not how you honor friendship. By now aren't we friends? How many of you have been here for the opening sessions before? Oh, so it's friends. And the right way for me to honor you as friends is to just take my time and open up and tell you about myself and my last year.

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: Thank you so much for asking.

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: I'm just freighted with insecurity when I stand up here each year thinking about never becoming the cunning businessman that I intended. I have

you here, I have Red Mountain behind me. Sixteen years ago I bought The Atlantic from Mort Zuckerman for \$11.5 million. In an unrelated transaction Mort bought a residence on Red Mountain for \$11.5 million.

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: So now Mort owns a piece of Aspen real estate and I own a mid-19th century long form literary print magazine.

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: I just worry maybe he got the best -- maybe he's up there now looking at the tent saying to himself, you know, I bet David would buy some London real estate.

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: Anyway I'll go back to script. Let me just do -- and we've got five announcements. I'm reluctant to begin with an indelicate matter, but since we met last April, Aspen has gotten caught up in the whole transgender bathroom issue. The city council in Aspen has voted an ordinance which requires public facilities to offer the option of a transgender facility. Meanwhile the voters of Colorado have passed a referendum that goes the other direction that says bathrooms shall be for the gender of your birth and then the Superior Court of Colorado put a temporary stay on the referendum and the governor tried to -- in any event and I'm really sorry to tell this to you, but for those of you here for the time that you're in Colorado we need to ask all of you to refrain from going to the bathroom.

(Laughter)

(Applause)

MR. BRADLEY: If this presents a hardship for you, there's an exception to the rule for private residents of course. I only know the address of one private residence, it's back here in Red Mountain.

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: So if any of you would like to -- that address, I'd be happy to show it and I'm sure he would be happy to see you at his door and welcome you to use his bathroom.

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: I have another indelicate topic. May I ask how many of you have been impregnated in Brazil or by a Brazilian man in the last 3 months?

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: For reasons of epidemiology, we are going to need to put you in a special Brazil section at all of our programs. For those of you who would like to be impregnated by a Brazilian man --

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: -- there's a gentleman here in the front row with a clipboard, he's doing a sign-up, he'd love to see you. Third announcement, for the first time we are experimenting with driverless cars here on campus. Google has provided what are called bubble cars. These are small vehicles which have sealed windows and they go from building to building. We began the experiment yesterday with our speakers. Unfortunately the cars have picked up the speakers, but in a software glitch have not yet discharged the speakers.

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: We have about 20 speakers motoring silently around campus.

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: So if you happen to see Francis Fukuyama or Madeleine Albright, you might mouth some words of encouragement.

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: There's one piece of bad news I'm afraid. For reasons of economics we are having to adjust the Festival pricing. We've been able to keep the price for the passes the same, but we're going to have to charge for the amenities. So I notice that many of you when you arrived in the tent this afternoon were not carrying your luggage. Presumably you left it checked at the hotel or whatever. Beginning tomorrow we -- there is going to be a surcharge of \$20 per bag per day for piece of luggage that you left at the hotel.

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: For those of you who would like to economize, we recommend that you bring your luggage with you to these sessions.

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: You're welcome to bring up to two bags without charge, and if you need a skycap or someone to help you, we have arranged for a team of New Yorker Riders to carry your baggage.

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: We suggest you pay them at the rate of \$1 per article of clothing. They are used to being paid on a per-work basis.

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: To close I have a piece of happy news. Finally happy news for the Hotel Jerome. The Jerome has been chosen for one of those nation top 10 list. It is the eighth most haunted place in the United States.

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: And the problem for the Jerome is

ghosts, many ghosts and I want to tell you about just one ghost. This is the ghost of Katie Kerrigan. So back in the 1890s, the hotel employed a 16-year-old chambermaid uncommonly beautiful. She was so beautiful that though she was the favorite of the guests, she created great envy among the other chambermaids. So one day in the winter of 1892, one of those chambermaids told Katie that her beloved kitten had gotten outside, had gone out on to the ice in a pond and had fallen into the water. God had bestowed many gifts on Katie, so that you can forgive him for forgetting intelligence. Katie went running out on to the ice and fell in. She was rescued, but she died of pneumonia 7 days later. So that's the historical fact that's in the record. Now the ghost of Katie, scores of guests at the hotel have said over the years that they have seen Katie Kerrigan cleaning rooms on the third floor. Maids talk about going into rooms that needed cleaning and finding that the linen had been changed or the turn-down service had already been done. There are maids to this day who will not work on the third floor.

What is sad of course is it's been 100 years, it's been 100 years, and Katie Kerrigan is still doing the same entry-level work she did when she arrived --

(Laughter)

MR. BRADLEY: -- at the hotel. Katie is old, she's very old. She's white, she's not college-educated, she has been squeezed out of the American Dream. She is the archetypal tea party member. So when those of you who are liberal look at each other (inaudible) that is because they are ghosts like Katie Kerrigan.

(Laughter)

(Applause)

MR. BRADLEY: I have a closing privilege here each time which is to just tell you my high regard for Walter Isaacson. He is the greatest best-selling biographer in the world. He is a member or a fellow or an honorary of the Royal Society of the Arts, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Philosophical

Society, the National Endowment for the Humanities. He's the president and CEO here, but he's also the originator, he's the idea creator for the Ideas Festival. So the week ahead is a Walter Isaacson creation. Thank you very much Walter Isaacson.

(Applause)

MR. BRADLEY: So we need to change the set and I need to change my role. It's my privilege to welcome the President's National Security Advisor Ambassador Susan Rice, and we'll do a conversation up here.

(Applause)

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