President McCulloh:

Good evening and welcome to this very special event. It is our sincere privilege to provide an opportunity for our students, and for the citizens in and around Spokane to listen to and to learn from a talented cultural commentator and author. Our guest tonight is the third of our Annual Presidential Speaker Series, and without question will provide a provocative start to celebrating Gonzaga University’s 125th Anniversary, as well as the Centennial of our School of Law this Fall. Our program tonight is possible due to the efforts of many Gonzaga colleagues and supporters. There are actually too many of them to mention here, but I do owe them a debt of gratitude. Please join me in thanking those who have contributed to the success of our coming together this evening.

Our speaker tonight has asked me to mention a quick housekeeping item for you. As has already been indicated, there can be no photography or recording, but he’s also asked if people could silence the cell phones so that he may be able to present to us.

Every morning in Africa, a gazelle wakes up. It knows it must run faster than the fastest lion or it will be killed. Every morning, a lion wakes up. It knows it must outrun the fastest—or the slowest—gazelle or it will starve to death. It doesn’t matter whether you’re a lion or a gazelle. When the sun comes up, you better start running. This is from our speaker’s, perhaps arguably, most popular book today, *The World is Flat*, and it’s attributed to an African proverb in Chapter 2 of the second edition of that book. Our speaker tonight is an author, a presenter, and a three-time Pulitzer Prize winning journalist with *The New York Times*. Beginning with his early work in and focusing upon the politics of the Middle East, he has spent his career traveling the world and observing the forces at work within and between cultures. He is an insightful and astute observer of human industry and creativity, and his writings reveal a tremendous capacity to understand and describe important social phenomena. In 2005, he published the work for which he is perhaps best known, *The World is Flat*, which won many awards and has now sold over 4 million copies. This renowned author, speaker and resource on economic, political and foreign affairs will tonight present his prescription for America as related in his latest book, *That Used to Be Us*, which in part points to the role education must play for a healthier and more prosperous country. Mr. Friedman’s perspective on the topics he covers is especially provocative in the context of two very present realities with influence upon us. First, we are in the midst of a significant national election year, and second, for those of us here at Gonzaga, we are celebrating the 125th Anniversary of the institution and the centennial of the School of Law. As some of you know, our theme for this special anniversary year is tradition and transformation. However, this is much more than a theme, particularly for those who are within the Gonzaga University community, I call on each of us as we listen to our guest this evening to reflect on our past, the history of this country, the history of Gonzaga, and to contemplate why and how we must pay attention to the significant cultural agents of change that inform
our lives and our work as an institution. To everyone here, we are so honored that you've come tonight to hear our distinguished speaker and to share as well in celebrating the work that Gonzaga continues after 125 years. Ladies and gentlemen, will you please join me in welcoming tonight's Presidential Speaker, Mr. Thomas L. Friedman.

Mr. Friedman:

Thank you all for coming out this evening. It’s a treat to be here at Gonzaga. We had a little dinner beforehand and Father Frank Case gave a beautiful benediction and I was sitting there thinking, “Where in the world can a little Jewish guy from Minneapolis whose great grandparents came from Russia, get invited to the 125th Anniversary of a Jesuit University?” Is this a great country or what?

As Thayne said, I’m going to speak this evening about this book co-authored with my friend, Michael Mandelbaum, *That Used To Be Us*. We just revised it. It’s just out in paperback. Whenever we tell people the title of the book, *That Used To Be Us: How America Lost its Way in the World It Invented and How We Can Come Back*, their first question always is, “but, but, does it have a happy ending?” And we tell everybody, “It does!” It does, really. We just don’t know, though, whether it’s fiction or nonfiction. We’re still working on that. Now, you may wonder: I’m the Foreign Affairs’ columnist for *The New York Times*. My co-author is the Chair professor of International Relations at Johns Hopkins. How did two foreign policy geeks end up writing a book about domestic American politics? And the answer is very simple: we’re actually very old friends and next-door neighbors and we speak almost every morning—much to our wives’ chagrin. We start every day talking about the world, and we noticed something in recent years: we would start every day talking about the world, but we’d end every day talking about America. And it became evident to us that America, its fate, future, vigor and vitality, was really the biggest foreign policy issue in the world.

And the reason is that our growth, our ability to pass on the American dream one generation to the next has been so vital for not only maintaining our own strength, our own solidarity, our own ability to play the role we play in international affairs, providing all these global common goods—whether it’s patrolling the sea lanes in the Pacific or monitoring world trade agreements. If we go weak as a country, your kids won’t just grow up in a different America, they will grow up in a fundamentally different world. We make a lot of mistakes in the world every year like any power, but on the whole, Michael and I are sort of old fashioned American nationalists. We do believe that America plays a hugely constructive role, unbalanced in the world. If we can’t play that role, your kids will grow up not just in a different America, but in a different world. So, there is a lot at stake right now as we speak of our ability to pass on the American dream to another generation.

Now, we’re both movie buffs, so the book is built around several different movie themes. One of our favorites and one that sort of captures the kind of dilemma and concerns we have today is a scene from Orson Welles’ 1958 classic, *Touch of Evil*. I’m sure some of you have seen it—a movie about murder, kidnapping, conspiracy, and corruption in a town on the Mexican-American border. Orson Welles plays a crooked cop who tries to frame his Mexican counterpart for a murder. At one point, Welles stumbles into a brothel and finds the proprietor, Marlene Dietrich who is also a fortune teller, with cards spread out in front of her. “Read my future for me,” Welles says. “You haven’t got any’” she replies, “Your future is all used up.”

Is that us? Is that America? Is our future all used up? Well, we don’t think so. We don’t think so at all. But we know one thing, we’re not going to pass on the American dream to another generation by default. We’re only going to be able to do that if we get back to doing a lot of very hard, big things together. That’s really what this book is about. I want to begin by sharing with you just the first few paragraphs of the book because it will, I think give you a sense of where we’re going and then, we’ll talk about in particular the issue of education. The core of my discussion tonight will be about what all this means for education, jobs and the American economy.

This is a book about America that begins in China. In September 2010, I attended the World Economic Forum Summer Conference in Tianjin, China. Five years earlier, getting to Tianjin had involved a three
and a half hour car ride from Beijing to a polluted crowded Chinese version of Detroit, but things have changed. Now, to get to Tianjin, you head to the Beijing South Railway Station, an ultra modern flying saucer of a building, with glass walls and roof covered with 3,246 solar panels. You buy tickets from an electronic kiosk offering choices in Chinese and English. You board a world class high speed train that goes right to another roomy, modern train station in downtown Tianjin. Said to be the fastest in the world when it began operating in 2008, the Chinese bullet train covers a 115 kilometers, 72 miles in 29 minutes. The conference took place at the Tianjin, Meijiang Convention and Exhibition Center, a massive, beautifully appointed structure, the like of which exists in few American cities. As if the convention center wasn’t impressive enough, the conference’s co-sponsors gave some helpful facts and figures. They said the building contained a total floor area of 2.5 million square feet and that for the construction of the Meijiang Convention Center started in September 15th, 2009 and was completed in May 2010. Within that in mind, I walked around my hotel room, counting: September, October, November, December..., a total of eight and a half months. Returning home to Maryland from that trip, I was describing the Tianjin complex and how quickly it was built to my co-author Michael and his wife, Anne. At one point, Anne interrupted, said, “Excuse me Tom, have you been to our subway stop lately?” We all live in Bethesda, Maryland and often use the Washington Metrorail to get to work. I had just been at the Bethesda Subway station and knew exactly what Anne was talking about. The two short escalators there had been under repair for nearly six months. While the one being fixed is closed, the other had to be shut off and converted into a two-way staircase. At rush hour this created a huge mess. Everyone trying to get on and up the platform, had to squeeze single file up and down one frozen escalator. It sometimes took 10 minutes just to get out of the station. As sign on the closed escalator said that its repairs were part of a massive escalator modernization.

We are two frustrated optimists. The title of the opening chapter of this book is, “If You See Something, Say Something.” You know where that’s from. That’s actually the mantra of the Department of Homeland Security. It plays over and over in loud speakers in airports, in bus stations, in railroad stations around our country, where we have seen and heard something and millions of Americans have, too. What we are seeing is not a suspicious package left under a stairwell. What we are seeing is hiding in plain sight. We are seeing something that poses a greater threat to our national security and well-being than anything al-Qaeda does. We’ve seen a country with enormous potential falling into the worst sort of decline—a slow decline, just slow enough for us not to drop everything and pull together to fix what needs fixing. This book is our way of saying something about what is wrong, why things have gone wrong, what we can and must do to make them right. That is what this book is about. Now what we basically argue is that America today faces three great challenges: The first, you’re very familiar with, is a challenge of debt, deficit and entitlements—how we get our fiscal house back in order (I’m not going to talk about that tonight); second is energy and climate—how we power our future as a country, but do it in a way that doesn’t tip our planet into disruptive climate change (maybe we’ll talk about that a little in the Q and A). I want to talk tonight about the third great challenge we face, and that’s how we, as a country, respond to what we believe is the biggest thing happening in the world today. And that is the merger of globalization and the information technology revolution. What we argue in this book is that the merger of globalization and IT—more IT leads to more globalization, more globalization leading to more IT, is in fact the biggest thing happening on the planet today affecting more other things. Basically what has happened in the last ten years is that the world has gone from connected to hyper-connected and it is changing everything but this move has been disguised and obfuscated by the sub-prime crisis and post 9/11.

Now, as Thayne said I know a little bit about this because back in 2004, I wrote a book called The World is Flat, saying the world’s getting connected. When I sat down to write this book with Michael, the first thing I did was get the first edition of The World is Flat off my bookshelf, cracked it open to the index, looked under A, B, C, D, E, F, Fa—Facebook. Facebook wasn’t
in it. When I was out there writing *The World is Flat*, Facebook didn’t exist, Twitter was still a sound, the Cloud was still in the sky, 4G was a parking place, LinkedIn was a prison, application is what you sent to college, and for most people, Skype was a typo! All of that happened after I wrote *The World is Flat*. What that tells me is that we’ve actually gone from a connected world to a hyper-connected world and that is changing everything. For instance, when I wrote *The World is Flat*, I said we’ve connected Boston and Bangalore, India’s outsourcing capital. We have now actually connected Boston, Bangalore and Cerise. Where is Cerise? That’s a town 90 miles to the interior with 90,000 people, many of whom have these web-enabled cellphones and are on the grid with your kids online. When I wrote *The World is Flat* I said we’ve connected Detroit and Damascus in Syria. We’ve now connected Detroit, Damascus and Dero. Where’s Dero? Dero is the small Syrian border town where the Syrian Revolution began which—thanks to web enabled cell phones with cameras and flip cams, and the wireless internet, Syrians has been broadcasting pictures and stories of their revolution. Despite the fact that the Syrian government has banned every international news organization from Syria. We are watching the Syrian revolution live, despite the fact that their government has banned news organizations, because Syrian revolutionaries have basically created their own YouTube station, called SNN Shaam News Network, where they dump in all this video, and news organizations around the world share it and use it. The fifteen people in the front row here have in their wallets right now, enough money to start Shaam News Network. That’s not connected, that’s hyper-connected.

When I travel, I love to look for small items in the newspaper. You always find strange things, interesting things. In October 2010, I was in New Delhi, reading the Hindustan Times, and there was a small item on the front page that really caught my eye—it said that a new poly telecommunications firm had just started providing third generation mobile network service, 3G, at the summit of Mount Everest, the world’s tallest mountain. The story said this would allow thousands of climbers and trekkers who throng the region every year, access to high speed internet and video calls using their mobile phones. Do you know how many phone calls are now being made from the top of Mount Everest that begin, “Mom, you’ll never guess where I’m calling you from!” That’s a hyperconnected world.

Here’s also a hyper-connected world: I’m from Minnesota, my wife is from Iowa. Iowa’s got a great liberal arts college, about like Gonzaga, Grinnell College in Central Iowa. Wonderful school. My mother-in-law went there, and later became chairman of the board. Great school. About 1600 students. Last year, almost ten percent of applications to Grinnell College came from China. Of those 43% had perfect 800s on their math SATs. You want your kid to go to Grinnell? I got my B.A. from Brandeis. I think we had one exchange student—he taught us all how to eat with chopsticks. Well, get that out of your mind. If you approach your kids to go to Grinnell, they will be competing against 250 applicants from China, 43% of which last year had perfect 800s on their Math SATs. That’s also the hyper-connected world. Now, what’s going on? Basically, when the world gets this hyper-connected, what it means is that if the whole world were a single math class at Gonzaga, the whole global curve just rose. The whole global curve just rose because every boss now has cheaper, easier, faster access to above average software, above average automation, above average robotics, above average cheap labor, and above average cheap genius in a hyper-connected world. Cheap genius. We’ve had to deal with a lot of cheap labor. The new challenge is cheap genius, and what this means the single most important socio-economic fact of our time is that Average is Over. Average is officially over in a hyper-connected world. That old saying in Texas, “If all you ever do is all you’ve ever done, and all you ever get is all you ever got?” That is officially N/A, no longer applicable. If all you ever do is all you’ve ever done. All you’ll ever get now is not all you ever got, you will get less. Woody Allen’s dictum that 90 percent of life is just showing up, also N/A. If you just show up for your job today, you will not earn an average wage to lead to an average lifestyle. Average is officially over. We all now need to find our extra—that unique value contribution we can make that will differentiate us. And we need to find it every day.
I know what you are thinking. You are thinking, “Very easy for you to say, Mr. Smartypants, New York Times columnist.” I know what you are thinking. Now let me tell you about my job. I became the foreign affairs columnist of The New York Times in January 1995 and I inherited James Reston's office in the Washington Bureau of The New York Times. What a thrilling honor to inherit the office of this great editor and columnist of the 60s and 70s of The New York Times! Now I suspect, Mr. Reston used to come to the office back, in the 60s and 70s, and say to himself every morning, “I wonder what my seven competitors are going to write today?” And he personally knew all seven: Walter Lippmann, Stewart Alsop, Joe Kraft, Mary McGrory, Tony Lewis. I do the same thing. I come to the office every morning and I say, “I wonder what my 70 million competitors are going to write today?” I have 70 million competitors! I'll tell you a story: I was in India last year ago, October. And I went down to IIT Jabalpur, one of their MITs in Jabalpur. And I went there because the president there invited me to come down. They had invented a $39 iPad. By the way one of the features of a hyper-connected world will be radical breaking of price points, where things don't go just from 400 to 350 to 300. They go from 400 to 39.95, with people using the cloud and all kinds of new open source tools. Now this new machine had nothing to compare to with the Apple iPad. It’s a simple device, but a simple learning tablet which they hope to use in schools all over India, that if you made a contribution of 100 rupees a month you could afford. It was quite an interesting device. I was very impressed and I came home and wrote my Sunday column about it. My Sunday New York Times column moves on to the internet at 8 PM, Eastern Standard Time. Sometime between 8pm Eastern Standard Time, and 8am in the morning when you might have read it, here in Spokane, someone in India went into the comment section under my column, online, and posted a laboratory stress test of the device I was writing about. Now, if you don’t think that keeps me on my toes, okay. The fact that before you even read the column someone in India had posted a lab stress test of the device I was writing about, which thank God backed up my column. And I have to tell you when I was in Beirut in the summer 1982, I could write whatever I wanted about Yasser Arafat, believe me. In the odd chance that somebody got a long distance phone call from New York to Beirut through to Arafat asking: “Did you see what Friedman wrote about you? Who? Freeman? No, Friedman. Who does he work for? The New York Times. The New York Post? No, The New York….” It took 6 weeks for the physical New York Times to get to Beirut by ship. Today, you write a column from India, and before your readers have read it, somebody has already got the lab results up. That’s what’s going on in my world. And it’s actually going on in everyone’s world and forcing me to always be thinking about and looking for my extra. That’s why I tell my girls, “Girls, I’m an old Fuddy Duddy. I was lucky. When I graduated college I got to find a job. You will have to invent a job.” That’s the big change between us and our kids. I got to find a job, they will have to invent one. But it may not be their first job, they may get lucky. My daughters, one went into teaching, one went to journalism. They got a first job but if they want to keep that job they are going to have to invent, reinvent and reengineer that job as they do it. Constantly. For proving their own unique value contribution. The old days, where you graduate from Gonzaga, show up and say, “I’m here, train me.” Now those days are over. We all have to find our extra.

And you know where you learn this? You just talk to employers today. So we have a chapter in the book called help wanted. We interviewed 4 generic employers: High end, white collar, the head of the National Law Firm in Washington DC, a National Law Firm in Washington DC Nixon Peabody; A low end white collar, the head of the outsourcing firm in India where we actually started The World is Flat; Blue collar, Dupont, Allan Coleman; and the world’s biggest green color firm, the United States Army. And what’s really interesting when you sit down and talk to employers and ask who they are looking for today. What was so interesting is, even though these were four totally different industries, they all were looking for the same employee. What were they looking for? They were looking for people who could do critical reasoning and problem solving, dot dot dot, in order to get an interview. The critical reasoning and problem solving, that’s table-steaks now. They assume you can do that. They assume that was part of your Gonzaga degree. What they really want to know
is: can you invent, reinvent, and reengineer your job while you are doing it? Because in a hyper-connected world, the pace of change is so fast in every job. The big boss up there, he or she can’t possibly be keeping up with it. Therefore, they need employees who, as Allan Coleman said to us, employees who are always present, who are always thinking about how this job can be improved, engineered and reengineered. I’ll give you a couple of examples: The head of that Washington law firm is a young man, not a young man—my age. I’m sort of young! He happens to be a family friend, Jeff Lask. And we were having dinner, 2008, the height of the sub-prime crisis. Lehman Brothers had just melted down. And at dinner I said to Jeff, “What’s happening in your law firm? And he said, “Oh, Tom, business is off.” I said, “What are you doing?” He said, “We’re laying people off.” I said, “well that’s interesting. At a law firm who gets laid off first? Because you are a partnership, is it last in first out?” And he said, “It was, but not anymore.” A lawyer is considered a non-routine skill. We all want to be non-routine, or want to be a journalist, an artist, a singer, an engineer, designer, teacher. Non-routine work is work that cannot be described by an algorithm and therefore easily automated, outsourced and digitized. You all want your kids to be doing non-routine work. Middle level is routine work. That’s work that is repetitive, can be described by an algorithm, can be easily outsourced, automated and digitized in a hyper-connected world. And of course the last category is non-routine local work. That’s work that has to be done face to face. So butcher, baker, candlestick maker, a nurse, a massage therapist, and your divorce lawyer: All things that have to be done in a specific location, face to face. We all want to be doing non-routine work. But here’s what’s new. Just doing non-routine work is not enough anymore. You’ve got to be creative, non-routine. I got to be a creative journalist now. I can’t just be a columnist. You need to be a creative lawyer. You can’t just be a non-routine lawyer. You need to be a creative accountant. Well, not a creative accountant, but you know what I mean, right? We got enough of those. We all have to find that extra, even if we’re doing non-routine work. So back to Jeff, I said, “What’s happening with your lawyers?” Well he said, “Those lawyers who when were in the bubble, we had a pile of work and we gave it to them. If they did it in a routine-non-routine way, some of them are gone. The ones we are keeping are those who came to us and said we could do this old work in a new, more efficient and effective way, or we could do new work in a totally new way. Those are the ones we’re keeping.” His interview in the book ends with him announcing that his law firm just hired a chief innovation officer. How many law firms do you know with a chief innovation officer? I guarantee you in 10 years, every law firm will have a chief innovation officer. That will be part of the work.

Really interesting is the guy who heads that green collar firm, the US Army. His name is General Martin Dempsey. Now, you may have heard of him, because he is now chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. What was interesting is when we interviewed General Dempsey, he was actually head of the US Army Education Corps. That’s why I went to see him. But even more interesting is General Dempsey became a famous figure of the military because in 2003, General Martin Dempsey commanded the first ID that took Baghdad from Saddam Hussein in 2003. Five years later he found himself as the commander of Central Command, or overall Middle East command. And he tells the story in the book in that job, five years later, he went to Afghanistan and visited a far flung base near the Hindu Kush commanded by a US Army captain. He spent 2 hours with that captain, walked out and realized that that captain, out there in the Hindu Kush, had access to more fire power and more intelligence at both the national and tactical level than he—General Martin Dempsey, had when he commanded the troops that took Baghdad give years earlier. That’s how much had changed in a hyper-connected world. So he came home. When he took over the US Army Education Corps, he completely revamped it. One of the things he did was a program that gave new recruits iPhones as soon as they arrived at Boot Camp. You were told that in three weeks download the lesson. You’re going to teach the course and the drill instructor is going to sit in the front row. Because when a captain that far flung has access to that much power, how we recruit that captain, how we train that captain, how we promote that captain, has to fundamentally change. And how that captain finds his or her extra becomes a real challenge for the US military.
Now I know something else you are thinking, hey we all can't be Stever Jobs. Friedman, we’re all are not going to invent iPods. That’s true. That’s very true. And that’s why everyone can find their extra in different ways. My mom was in a nursing home for 10 years with Alzheimer’s. What I would pay, and did sometimes, for the one nurse who looked after my mom to put a smile on her face, because that nurse didn’t just show up. She came with her extra every day. Oh, what I’d pay for that! What would you pay for going into the wine store and have the person the counter not just ring you up but I say, I’ve just become an expert on Washington State wines, maybe I can help you? There’s a lot of ways to find your extra. A lot of them will be interpersonal and face to face. We all can’t be and can’t be expected to be Steve Jobs. But we all can think about how we don’t just show up every day, but bring something truly extra to whatever it is we do, because this process of hyper-connectivity marching on.

You’ve heard the joke that the modern factory of the future is just 2 people: a man and a dog. The man is there to feed the dog, and the dog is there to keep the man away from the machines. It isn’t that bad, but it’s going in that direction. So what do you tell your kids? That’s the question I get all the time. What do you tell your kids? I tell my kids 4 things and they’re so tired of hearing me say this. You want to thrive in the hyper-connected world? Think like an immigrant. Think like a new immigrant every day because, friends, we are all actually new immigrants to this hyperconnected world.

Second, think like an artisan. Who is the artist - and this is an idea of Larry Katz at Harvard. The artisan was a person in the middle ages who made every item individually: every item, one of—every saddle, every piece of furniture, every pair of shoes, every item of clothing, every utensil. The artisan made each one individually. What did the best artisans do? They took such pride in their work. They carve their initials into it at the end of the day. Do your job everyday as if you wanted to carve your initials into it at the end of the day. Think like an artisan.

Third, think like a starter upper. I got this idea from Reid Hoffman, the founder of LinkedIn. Reid always likes to say, you know, in Silicon Valley, there’s only one 4 letter word. It’s not the one you’re thinking of. But it does start with an F, and that word is finish. If you ever think you’ve arrived and you’re finished in Silicon Valley you are soon to be finished. Everyone should always try to be in permanent beta. What is beta? Beta is that stage in software development or technology development where products are about 7/8 or 9/10 done. It’s not quite done and you throw it over the wall into the market and the market deals with it and they fix it and they find the holes and they throw it back and you throw it over the wall again. Always be in beta. Always be engineering, reengineering and redesigning yourself. There’s a quote from Alvin Toffler, the sociologist and the futurist which I really like it. It’s attributed to him, no one is even sure he said it but it’s an awfully good quote. And what Toffler says is that the new literacy today. The new literacy is not reading and writing. The new literacy is the ability to learn and relearn in a lifelong way. If you graduate from Gonzaga with the ability to relearn and learn for the rest of your life, you have the most valuable degree possible. That is the new literacy.

Lastly, think like waitress at Perkins Pancake House in Minneapolis. When I was working on this book, I was having breakfast on a Sunday morning with my best friend, Ken, at Perkins Pancake House off highway 100. 7 AM, I ordered three butter milk pancakes and scrambled eggs. Ken ordered three butter milk pancakes and fruit. After 15 minutes the waitress
came, put our plates down and all she said to Ken was, “I gave you extra fruit.” That’s all she said. She got a 50 percent tip. Why? Because that waitress—God bless her, she didn’t control much but she controlled the fruit spoon. And that was her extra. What was that waitress doing? She was thinking entrepreneurially. She was thinking entrepreneurially. In her own little way, in her own little universe. Always think entrepreneurially.

So friends, in this hyper-connected world, think like an immigrant. Stay hungry. Think like an artisan. Take pride. Think like a starter upper and always be in beta, and think like a waitress at Perkins Pancake House, and always be entrepreneurial, because we all now truly do live in Garrison Keillor’s Lake Wobegon where all the men are strong. All the women are beautiful and all the children need to be above average.

Now this poses a real educational challenge for us. We have two educational challenges today. We need to bring our bottom to our average so much faster, because we have so many young people in disadvantaged neighborhoods that are below average. And if you are below average, say if you do not have a high school degree at a minimum, a high school degree that can get you into some form of post-secondary education without remediation, there is nothing for you down there. There is simply no livelihood that will sustain a decent living. We need to get our bottom to our average so much quicker, and that’s the challenge of the three Rs: reading, ‘riting and ‘rithmetic. But at the same time, we need to get our average up to the global heights so much faster where you find, define your extra. And that’s a challenge of the three Cs: creativity, collaboration and communication—the things that enable people to find their extra. That’s the big educational challenge we have today. You’ve got it at Gonzaga. We’ve got it in Washington DC. I live in Bethesda, Maryland. Down the road is Baltimore. 50 years ago in Baltimore, who is the biggest employer? Bethlehem Steel Company. You could get a job at the steel plant at Bethlehem Steel. You could actually drop out of high school, or just have a high school degree. Join the steel union. Get a job at Bethlehem steel. Actually earn a good wage. Buy an average house with an average yard. Have 2.2 average kids and average dog. Have an average career retire with an average retirement and live a good American life. The biggest employer in Baltimore today is Johns Hopkins University Medical Center. Bethlehem Steel is long gone. They don’t let you cut the grass at Johns Hopkins without a BA. Well, they do but, you know what I mean. That is the challenge today. And of course, if we were having a real elect—if we were actually having an election now, that’s what we’d be talking about. What we’d be talking about is four numbers. The unemployment rate for people with four-year college degrees in America today is 4.1%. The unemployment rate for people with two years is about is 6%. The unemployment rate for people with just high school degrees is around 11% and the unemployment rate for people who don’t graduate high school is about 13.7%. Those four numbers are the jobs crisis in a nutshell. What does it tell you? It tells you that every job today, every good job that will lead to a good standard of living requires more education. And to me, if we were having an election, that’s what we would be talking about. How we get every young person in America access to some form of post-secondary education. Be it vocational school, technical school, two year community college, or four year college. That is to me the jobs crisis. It’s the America crisis. It should be the center of our public debate today, if we were having an election. We are having an election.

So what’s wrong? How do we get so off track? Well, it’s a couple of things. It’s never a one thing. From 30,000 feet, we made a couple of really big mistakes at the end of the Cold War. First mistake we made was interpreting the Cold War and its end as an American victory, oh, and it was a huge victory for freedom and for this country and the men and women who brought that victory about. But unfortunately, in parentheses or in inverted commas, that victory unleashed two billion people just like us, two billion people with enormous pent-up aspirations to live like us. And in a hyper-connected world, they could do that more and more. So the end of the Cold War which we thought was a victory that allowed us to put our feet up, we completely misread that. It was actually a moment when we actually needed to re-lace up our shoes to run the race faster. It was as if somebody came to us
and said, “Well you've won the American marathon now for 50 years, from now on and forever more, you will only race in the Olympics. No more just American marathon.” Then we compounded that unfortunately, tragically, and maybe even necessarily by spending the next 10 years after the Cold War, chasing the losers from globalization called al-Qaeda rather than the winners called India, China, and Brazil. You put those two together and you can explain a lot about where we are today because what we did was rather than get our growth the old fashioned way, we borrowed it. We borrowed it from the future, we borrowed it from China. So where are we now? The reason I joke that if we were having an election, where we now is that our OODA loop is completely broken. What’s an OODA loop? In the US air force, there’s a concept that our fighter pilots use called, called the OODA loop, O-O-D-A.

If you’re in an OODA loop, in a dog fight with another pilot and faster than the other pilot, you will shoot them out of the sky. If your ability to observe, orient, decide and act is faster the other pilot, you will shoot them out of the sky. Unfortunately, if their OODA loop is faster than yours, they’ll shoot you out of the sky. Right now, our national OODA loop is completely discombobulated. We do not wake up in this country every day, observing, orienting, deciding, and acting. Basically, we wake up in this country—at least at the political level with one party, saying, how do I take this crowbar, and stick in the wheel of the other party, so I can win this 24-hour new cycle? Our OODA loop is completely broken, and the reason our OODA loop is broken is that our politics is broken. Our political system is completely dysfunctional. Our congress has become a forum for legalized bribery. It is nothing short of it, okay?

I wish people didn’t feel like clapping, but I feel like clapping. And my industry is part of this. Not only is the political system more and more polarized, thanks to the gerrymandering of political districts down to the atomic level now. So I can get someone in east Spokane who is a democrat in one district, and someone who is in west Spokane in the republican district. So you end up with a congress where basically very few seats are contested. They are automatically a republican or a democratic district. What does that mean? It means the primary is the real election, when two republican or two democrats face off because a district is automatically one or the other. And when the primary is the real election, it means the democrat can only be beaten by someone to his left, so he goes even farther left, and the republican can only be beaten by somebody from his right. So she goes farther to the right, and we end up with a congress where a hundred people sleep in their offices, don’t talk to each other, go home every weekend, and is utterly polarized. Then you got my industry. I’ve got liberal TV and conservative TV. And you go to the internet now and get your news. Forget the New York Times, go to that website that would give the news that exactly reinforces your bias. So, you never have to read anybody else’s point of view, reflect on it or take it into account. And, we end up with the political system we’ve got today.

There was a famous saying about America that Churchill said, “In the end America will always do the right thing, after they exhaust all the other possibilities.” People said that we’ll get over this problem when we have a crisis. We had a crisis. We have the biggest financial crisis since the depression. And what worries me, is that the system cannot respond. It is so broken. How do we get out of that? How do we change this? Well if you follow my writing, and what we argue in the book, I think we need a third party. I’m a big believer that life is about incentives. Life is about incentives, and what’s going in our politics now is that all the incentives are wrong. All the incentives are to be as polarized as possible. The money incentives, the media incentives. Politicians are rational people. They’re going where they think the incentives are. They wouldn’t be behaving this way if they didn’t feel the incentives were there. The only way to change that is to change the incentives. I’m a big believer: Move the cheese, you move the mouse. Don’t move the cheese, the mouse doesn’t move. We have to move the cheese. And to move the cheese, you need a third party whose position is the only position that is sustainable.

We need to do three things, friends. We need to cut spending because we’ve made promises to our kids
we cannot possibly keep. We need to raise revenue because if we just cut spending, if we try to do is all with spending cuts, we will cut into real bone and meat. And thirdly, we need to invest. We need to invest in the sources of our strength, whether it's infrastructure or research or education. We need to do all three of those things at once. That's the third party position. Unfortunately we have one party that just wants to cut, we have one party that just wants to tax more, and we have no party right now whose position is all three at the scale we really need. This is why we advocated in the book for the third party. Ask Teddy Roosevelt about that in 1912. He redefined American politics. George Wallace did it in '68. Not in the way I like, but he had a huge impact on politics. Ross Perot in 1992. People forget Ross Perot, who at one point had 40% of the vote on his single-issue-deficit-reduction ticket. He eventually won almost 20%, and he was nuts! So imagine if a Michael Bloomberg or someone had run on a third party ticket of: cut, raise revenue, and invest. Because unless you move the cheese, I tell you it doesn't matter who get selected. We're going to be in the same situation: sitting around and waiting for the market or Mother Nature or both to really give us a whack. 'Cause that's really what we're doing, now. We're taunting the two most powerful and emotionless forces on the planet: the market and Mother Nature. We're basically saying to both of them, "What you got baby? What you got? What you got?" One day we're going to wake up.

Oh yeah, I've talked long enough. Let me conclude. By now you're saying, "Hey, Friedman, when you started you said you were an optimist, a frustrated optimist. We get the frustration, but where from comes your optimism?" Now I'm going to be really honest with you—drugs, I use a lot of drugs. [Laughter] No, it's just a joke. Nobody tweet that, okay? It's just a joke. Now my optimism actually comes from that fact that in this job, I get to travel all over the country. And what I learn from those travels—and it's the title of the third to last chapter in this book, is that thank God, this country is still full of people who just didn't get the word. Thank God, they didn't get the word that China is going to eat our breakfast. They didn't get the word that Germany is going to eat our lunch. And they just go out and they invent stuff and they start stuff and they collaborate on stuff. Thank God they just didn't get the word. One of my favorite quotes in this book is from a Marine colonel, who when we asked him "Why did you guys surge in Iraq?" He said "Tom, we were just too dumb to quit." And thank God, this country is still full of people just too dumb to quit. And, I know this from my travels. I show up here and Thayne gives me a tour around the campus and drives me over here and says, "That's our new medical school going in over there at that building near our campus." I’m thinking to myself, you're building a new medical school? Didn’t you people get the word? We’re in a recession! Bless you for that. But the reason I know is that I do get to travel a lot around the country. In my previous book, a book about energy, "Hot, Flat, and Crowded," I went all over America talking about energy, clean energy, new technologies. It was amazing to me. At the end of every talk, I do a book signing and people would come up and say, "Mr. Friedman, I've got to tell you about my invention, I've got a clean energy invention, I've got a rocket, it pedals a wheel, blows up a balloon, issues methane, turns a turbine." I heard the craziest stuff. But what it told me is the country is actually exploding with innovation from the bottom up. You want to be an optimist about America? Stand on your head! This country looks so much better from the bottom up. It's still alive down there. It's really alive. I meet young people everywhere, starting things, thank God. I would do these energy talks and afterwards, I'd go back to my hotel room and empty my pockets of business cards from energy innovators. Rock stars get room keys, I get business cards. But they're really exciting in their own way 'cause they not only tell me that the country is alive, they tell me: What should we be talking about in this election? What should be the platform one of these two men is running on? And to me, that platform is obvious: How do we make America for the world? What Cape Canaveral was for America. What was Cape Canaveral for America? That was the place we'd launched our one-moon shot. We had one launching pad, we had one big national moon shot. We're not going to have one big national moon shot again. What do I want? I want America, America, to be the launching pad where everyone in the world wants to come to launch their moon shot—to start
something, to show off their extra. Why? Because we have the best schools, the best universities, the best government-funded research, the smartest tax policy, the best infrastructure, the fastest internet, the best rule of law, the best intellectual property protection. Let’s make America the launching pad for the world. We do that, good things will happen. There’ll not only be plenty of jobs for the software writer and the engineer, but plenty of jobs for the butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker. And that’s why whenever you want to know why I’m an optimist, it’s because, thank God, even the politics in this country can’t kill the energy coming up from below. If I were to draw a picture of America today, it would be a picture of the space shuttle taking off. You’ve seen the space shuttle take off. Where we are still doing the space shuttle? All of that incredible thrust coming from below, that’s all that energy down there. That’s still there. Unfortunately, right now, our space shuttle, our country, the fuselage’s cracked and leaking energy and the pilot and the copilot are fighting over the flight plan. That’s what we need to fix. That fuselage, it’s all the things we do: education, infrastructure, the right rules, government-funded research, immigration, etc. We need to fix that fuselage and get back to all the things that made us great, and we need to find a way to get the pilots to stop fighting over the flight plan. If we do that, we are like three big decisions away from actually a melt up in this country. A melt up in the stock market. Just get that fiscal thing in order, get our energy policy in order, get our immigration policy in order, make some good long-term decisions on education. And all that energy, I tell you, it will just explode. We did this before. It’s why our book has a backward-looking title, “That Used to be Us,” but a forward-looking theme. It’s because we didn’t get here by accident, we did this before. The history books we need to read, friends, are our own. The country we need to rediscover is America. That used to be us, and it can be again. Thank you very much.

Question and Answer Segment

>> President McCulloh: Ordinarily with this series what we have done is take the opportunity after the formal presentation to pose some questions submitted by students and so, we’ll do that. For those of you who are interested, following this segment, we’ll take a brief break and then Mr. Friedman will be available for those who wish to meet him, and have an autograph signed. That will happen on the upper level on this south corridor. So, a few questions for you, if we could.

>> Mr. Friedman: Please. I was just on Meet the Press. I got a lot of trouble too. [Laughter]

>> President McCulloh: So, starting with a press related question. In the current national climate where biased news organizations are in some cases the loudest voices, where is the opportunity for objective, some would say traditional, journalism to exist and to reach concerned citizens?

>> Mr. Friedman: Well, you know, that is a very good question. It’s one I get from a lot of people. I met with Gonzaga students earlier, and that was one of the things we discussed—some young people from your journalism program. You know, all I can tell you is that I’m very proud of the newspaper I work for. We have very high standards. We make mistakes. We correct them, hopefully. I start my day by reading what I would call branded news. I start my day by reading the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Wall Street Journal, the Financial Times. I still like to get my news from edited news organizations where I know their values and their ethics. I have to think there are some wonderful, new, online news organizations that are doing great work as well and it is work I trust and I value, but it’s really something that you have to tiptoe through. You’ve got to be selective and you’ve got to find people you trust, organizations that you trust. And the thing to always look for is not don’t they make mistakes, we all make mistakes, but how do they handle those mistakes? Do they correct them? Do they take responsibility? That’s all that you can do these days. You have to be very, very careful about what you read. I think there are some wonderful online news organizations now working. I think there’s some great mainstream media, but I think you have to be selective.

>> President McCulloh: Who in this flat and increasingly hyper-connected world is responsible for ensuring that our youth are learning what they need to learn in school to be successful?
Mr. Friedman: Who is responsible that we get the education we need? I think more and more, we’re all responsible. I’d like to say you’re responsible. I’d like to say your professors are responsible. I’d like to say the parents here are responsible. And that’s all true. But, more and more, I think I go back to that OODA loop thing. You have got to know what world you’re living in, and that’s really the responsibility of all of us. And in terms of learning, I’d like to tell you about my own career. I got my BA in Arabic and Middle East History. It’s where I started. I later became a diplomatic correspondent for the New York Times, so I learned a lot about diplomacy. I then became the treasury correspondent, so I covered and learned about global finance. I then became a columnist and got interested in the environment and I’ve always tried to just constantly be reinventing myself and giving myself more things to write about and therefore, more things to kind of mesh together. Students were asking me earlier, where does creativity come from? I tell you, for me, my favorite columns are when I take my globalization perspective and apply it to Egypt. Where does creativity come from? I think it comes when you have two different specialties and you mesh the two together because it gives you a perspective that nobody else has. One of my favorite columns on the Arab spring was—and one of the columns that probably got the most reaction, was the column I wrote about how climate change was an important driver of the Syrian uprising because Syria was just coming out of a ten-year drought. One of the worst in its history that had driven a million people off the land, agriculture and cattle-raising and husbandry into urban areas, with huge pressure on urban infrastructure. It is one of the things that really drove the Syrian uprising. And if I didn’t have that other perspective, if I just stayed as someone who studied Arabic and Middle East history, I never would have really been able to bring that there. Go back to that Alvin Toffler quote, “The new literacy is not reading and writing arithmetic. It’s the ability to learn and relearn.” That really is the survival skill.

President McCulloh: In our rapidly changing world, what are America’s best prospects for finding a balance between the maintenance of itself as a competitive world power and the legitimate engagement of critical issues that are the subject of international law, especially issues of global health, human rights and the environment?

Mr. Friedman: This is actually the subject of my column for tomorrow. Let me give you a broader answer for that if I could. I’m going to go back to hyper-connectivity. We’ve actually gone from a connected world to an interconnected world to an interdependent world. That’s really the biggest change. We’re all really trying to adjust to that. So, what does that mean, an interdependent world? What does that mean for America? What it means, first of all, in an interdependent world your allies can hurt you as much as your enemies. If Greece announces tomorrow, Greece—a member of NATO and the European Union, that it is leaving the euro, it could trigger a global economic crisis that you will feel here in Spokane. So, in the interdependent world, your allies can hurt you as much as your enemies. In an interdependent world, countries can hurt you, your rivals can hurt you, as much by collapsing as by rising. If you pick up the paper tomorrow and read that China announced that its growth rate this month was just 1 percent, go to the bank, get in line, put a few dollars in your mattress. In other words, we’re all afraid of China rising. It’s actually China’s falling in an interdependent world that’s really scary. Our biggest headache, geostrategic headache in Latin America is Venezuela. It’s also one of our biggest providers of crude oil. We’re really fighting against Russia, not militarily but diplomatically, over Syria. At the same time we just got Russia into the World Trade Organization and the Chamber of Commerce is lobbying congress to lift Cold War restrictions on U.S. trade with Russia so business people from Spokane to Sacramento can take advantage of Russia joining the WTA. So, in this interdependent world, how do you lead as America? The way you lead, is work for healthy interdependencies, so we all can rise together as opposed to unhealthy interdependencies where we all fall together. When we ignore global climate deals, that’s an unhealthy interdependency and we all fall together. When we work together, whether to solve the AIDS problem in Africa or anywhere else, or on world trade to promote growth and market access around the world; that’s a healthy interdependency.
But to the question that Thayne asked, this is very important that the way America has to lead in a more interdependent world has to be by example. It has to be by, first of all, getting our own house in order. A lot of people rightfully complained about China manipulating its currency. Romney says, on day one, he is going to slap them with new tariffs for currency manipulations. That will make a very interesting day two, when China announces that it is not attending this week’s treasury auction of U.S. Treasury Bills, and your interest rates in Spokane go up 2 percent in one day. So, there’s been a lot of criticism for President Obama for leading from behind. Well, you can lead from behind, you can lead from in front, you can lead from above, and you can lead from below. But, if you don’t lead by example, if you don’t lead by getting your own savings rate in line, getting your own banking system in line, getting your own energy policy in line, there is nobody in the world that’s going to follow us. Not in an interdependent world.

>> President McCulloh: In October 2011 in the midst of social protests that were erupting from Tunisia to Tel Aviv to Wall Street, you wrote a column comparing two theories on what was happening in the world. One was pessimistic and one was optimistic. As you look at global unrest today, what are you, pessimistic or optimistic?

>> Mr. Friedman: Well, I’m from Minnesota, so I’m naturally optimistic. Here’s a story I always tell people, About six, seven years ago when Israeli-Palestinian peace talks were still working, I was in Israel having dinner at the home of the editor of the Haaretz Newspaper, which is really Israel’s finest paper. They get the New York Times service. They run my column twice a week. I was saying to the editor of Haaretz, “Why do you run my column?” This is an Israeli columnist. He said, “Tom, you’re the only optimist we have.” There was an Israeli general at the dinner. We sit down and we’re getting up to go to the table and he said, “Tom, I know why you’re an optimist. It’s because you’re short, and you can only see that part of the glass that’s half full.” So, it’s true, I am short, but I am not that short, okay? You know Thayne, really it’s a good question and really it comes down to one thing. It’s going to come down to leadership. I really believe what I said in my talk. We are just a few big decisions away from a really, really good turn in this country. If we could get a deal, a grand bargain, on taxes and spending, that would change the trajectory. If we could get a bargain on how to exploit this incredible natural gas bounty in an environmentally safe and sustainable way, and it is possible without that much cost, if we could get just some basic understandings on educational reform, I just think the country would take off. I think there’s just huge energy down there.

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that we haven’t had the political leadership ready to step out and tell us the truth. We don’t know the truth and when your leaders don’t trust you with the truth, that’s a really bad thing because when people don’t trust you with the truth, you know what you do? You don’t trust them back. And when people don’t trust you with the truth, do you know what you do? I do. I get really anxious. I get really worried. I don’t know what President Obama is going to say on Thursday, but well, if I got to write his speech, I would just start by throwing it overboard, and look at the camera and say, folks, I’m just going to tell you the truth. Here’s where we are. Here’s what we need to do to get out of this. Here’s what I’m ready to do. Here’s where I’m ready to meet the other party, and by the way, we don’t have to go through this campaign. I’ll meet them here in Charlotte tomorrow morning. Why wait until we come to the edge of the fiscal cliff? You’d think one guy would just say, what the heck, give it a try. It’s not like the hundred million dollars each of them have already spent on campaign advertising to produce the poll that says they’re both tied, which has made a lot of TV and radio stations rich, is working for them. But, you know, until that happens, after all we elect them, we vote for them, we put up with them. Until we stop doing that, until we change the incentives, they’re not going to change.

>> President McCulloh: One last question. I have a Twitter account and we invited students to tweet, so there is a tweet question for you. It’s a pretty short one, but I think it tells us that some people are paying attention. The student says, what do we students tell our parents when we say we have to invent the job?

>> Mr. Friedman: You know, it’s the last question that always gets you. No, it’s a very good question. It’s a very important question and you can’t throw it out the way I did without being asked that. I think young people have a right to look my generation in the eye and say, are you the first generation that isn’t going to pass on the American dream to his kids? We’re in danger of that. We’re in real danger of that. When I say you have to invent the job, I’m obviously exaggerating in a sense. As I said, I don’t expect everyone to be Steve Jobs. I certainly couldn’t be. We’re all not going to invent iPhones and iPods and write code. What we can expect? What the market will expect is that everyone in every job will always be thinking about their extra because somebody is inventing a piece of software, automation, or access to someone else around the world that can challenge that job. I used to always go to the checkout counter at the CVS Drugstore around the block from my office, until two years ago. They got rid of most of the checkout people. I now checkout and bag my own Tylenol at CVS. I had flown from San Francisco a couple of weeks ago, and I was in the Premier section, and I went to check-in and there were exactly two people behind the counter and one contractor and about a hundred people trying to check in, basically all using the machines with one woman walking by. I kept saying, “There are only two people here.” That’s where it’s going. That’s what’s scary, but on the other side, if I showed you the email I get almost every day from young people telling me some new website they’re starting, some new company idea they had, and would I please write it up in my column. If I can leave you with one message, it’s this: The very same system that’s putting pressure on you from one side is making it cheaper and easier to start things from the other. My daughter was a Teach For America teacher in DC and then taught for three years more in DC. She wanted to go to business school. She wants to start a school. As part of her business school preparation, they told her she needed to brush up on her calculus. I just talked to her yesterday. I said, “Well, have you done that?” She said, “Yeah Dad, I have been going to Khan Academy every night. I’ll be taking their online exam tomorrow, just to see how I’m doing.” That cost her zero cents. I wrote earlier this year about Coursera, this program started by three Stanford professors, each of whom had 100,000 students in their online class for machine learning at Stanford. They started a program, Coursera where you can take their course, take the weekly study guide, take the weekly exams, take the final exam at the end of the course from Stanford Computer Science professors. And if you pass it at the end of the course—they haven’t priced it yet, but it will be somewhere around $50. You don’t get a Stanford degree, but you’ll get a diploma saying that you took this course. So, your ability to find your extra now, to get Stanford quality education for $50, is bigger than ever. That’s the thing everybody’s got to keep in mind.
The same system that's putting pressure on you over here is giving you more and more opportunities over there. And that's why at the end of the day it really is just about your attitude. You can sit, look at that and complain, or you could say, hey, I'm short, I can only see part of the glass that's half full. Thank you very much.

>> President McCulloh: As I indicated for those of you who would like to have an opportunity to have a book signed by Mr. Friedman, please feel free to meet us in a few minutes up on the South Concourse. Thank you so much for coming this evening.