

UNEDITED TRANSCRIPT

H A R V A R D U N I V E R S I T Y

JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

JOAN SHORENSTEIN CENTER ON THE PRESS, POLITICS AND PUBLIC POLICY

Richard S. Salant Lecture on Freedom of the Press**By: Anne-Marie Slaughter****“Open v. Closed: Media, Government and Social Organization in the Information Age”**

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John F. Kennedy Jr. Forum

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(6:06 p.m.)

MR. ELLWOOD: Good evening, everyone. My name is David Ellwood. I am the Dean here at the Harvard Kennedy School and welcome to the John F. Kennedy, Jr. Forum. Tonight is a really special night. The Salant Lecture is one of the great lectures we have every year, so it is always special, but it's doubly special tonight because of our special guest who, if there's not enough specials in that intro so far let me know, who as all of you know is a remarkable woman. She has had many different elements and strengths in the career she has done, most of which is going to be explained by Alex. I would just say a couple of things.

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The first is here is someone who has been an extraordinary foreign policy expert, who has then served in government at very high levels, has gone on to think about the role of technology, both in foreign policy and the in the media and press and so forth. And somewhere along the way she wrote some article that I've heard something about.

(Laughter)

MR. ELLWOOD: And of course she has also been Dean of the Woodrow Wilson School, another School of Public Policy in New Jersey, I think. And it does raise the obvious question why Princeton gets all the really good deans.

(Laughter)

MR. ELLWOOD: But nonetheless it's my great honor to welcome Anne-Marie Slaughter here. We conspire in various ways and have over the years. My job now is to introduce Alex Jones. Alex is the head of the Shorenstein Center which of course does itself remarkable work on a whole variety of issues having to do with press, politics and public policy. He himself has been awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1987. He covered the press for *The New York Times* between '83 and '92. He's written many, many books, the most recent being *Losing the News: The Future of the News that Feeds Democracy*.

But the one thing I would also like to emphasize besides the fact that he is a remarkably thoughtful and terrific leader is that he has been one of the real leaders in the Shorenstein Center and around the country in trying to think about not just what is going wrong or how frustrating it is that newspapers are seemingly dying, but what does the future hold in this for the state. How do we think about a democracy and how do we make democracy work in a world where we don't have the same kind of accountability and coverage that we used to and maybe we have it in a different form and so forth.

So, without further ado, let me give you Alex Jones and welcome. Thank you, very much.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Thank you. And welcome again from me. This is a night when we honor press

freedom and look at the challenges it faces in these tumultuous times. Those challenges can come in many forms. In just a moment you will hear from Anne-Marie Slaughter, the Bert G. Kerstetter University Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton, one of the nation's most interesting thinkers, as well as one of the most outspoken ones. But before I speak about Anne-Marie I want first to spend a moment on the two men who make tonight's lecture possible and whose contributions to a free press were enormous.

This is the fifth annual Richard Salant Lecture on Freedom of the Press. Richard Salant was considered the greatest ever head of a network news division for his tenure at CBS during the time when CBS was truly the television news leader in the 1960's and '70's. When Richard Salant became president of CBS, the president of CBS News, I should say, the keystone nightly news program was fifteen minutes long. There was no 60 Minutes, no full time unit assigned to covering elections, no CBS Morning News. He changed all that and made CBS the leader in raising television news to something respected journalistically in a way it never had been before.

He stood for high quality news and a willingness to fight for that high quality. But I think it is important that I also mention another great CBS icon. I speak, of course, of Frank Stanton. He was a great friend of the Shorenstein Center and of the Kennedy School and it is from a bequest in his will that the Salant Lecture was born. Frank Stanton was not a newsman in the literal sense. To the best of my knowledge he never covered a story. But as president of the CBS Network he was a champion of news and press freedom.

For one thing, he was Dick Salant's ally and champion. He made it possible for Dick Salant to win the reputation of being the world's greatest news division chief and made it possible for CBS to become respected as the nation's Tiffany Network for news. The point is that this lecture could have been called the Frank N. Stanton Lecture on Freedom of the Press. That it is named for his friend Richard Salant was the decision of Dr. Stanton, who, among other things, was remarkably modest.

Anne-Marie Slaughter, though not a journalist, would have been a woman that Dick Salant and Frank Stanton would have admired, and more important would have listened to. They were both

ferocious advocates of what was in their time the new thing, television news. But they also worried about news and technology, about where it was going and what the consequences, some unintended and largely unforeseen, would be of the innovations in news that were happening with what seemed then like breakneck speed.

The difference between the worries of Dick Salant and Frank Stanton and Anne-Marie Slaughter is that the CBS guys were focused on broadcasting. Anne-Marie's focus is something very different. Indeed, Anne-Marie is almost *sui generis*. She is a warm, lovely woman who has said that 'being a mother for me is the most important thing in my life.' As David said, she famously underscored those words by resigning as the first woman to be Director of Policy Planning at the U.S. State Department and writing a cover story for *The Atlantic* with the headline, "Why Women Still Can't Have It All."

Her reason for resigning was that she had concluded that it wasn't possible for her to be both the mother her teenage sons needed and in a senior policy position in the United States Government. It was by far the most read article ever published in *The Atlantic*. And in the months since the article appeared last summer she has become an iconic voice in the area of juggling career and motherhood. And if a choice must be made, coming down in favor of motherhood. I should add that she strongly argues that it is a false choice that should not have to be made. But within the boundaries for herself that she has established she was and remains a dynamo.

Reviewing her history can create a bit of vertigo, like standing too close to the tracks when an Acela is roaring by. She has a Belgian mother and American father, grew up in Charlottesville, Virginia, and graduated magna cum laude from Princeton. She also has Masters and PhD degrees from Oxford and a JD from Harvard Law. Her career has included positions on the faculty of the University of Chicago Law School, Harvard Law School and the Kennedy School. She has been Dean of Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. She has written or co-written four books, including *The Idea That Is America: Keeping Faith With Our Values In a Dangerous World*.

She is on the advisory board of a host of nonprofit organizations ranging from the Council on

Foreign Relations to the National Endowment for Democracy. She speaks widely, appears frequently on television and through the pages of the nation's most important newspapers. And *Foreign Policy Magazine* has named her to their annual list of top 100 global thinkers for the past three years. I could go on, but you get the idea. Actually, perhaps you don't. What I have described are professional achievements and titles, recognition and glory. There have been a number of honorary degrees and other prizes in there as well.

What is most important about Anne-Marie Slaughter is what she has done with those titles and opportunities. She is a thinker. She is a reflector and she acts. For instance, it states she was chief architect of the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, which provided a blueprint for using development as a pillar of American foreign policy and leading through civilian rather than military power. She received the Secretary's Distinguished Service Award for Exceptional Leadership and Professional Competence, the highest honor conferred by the State Department. But the reason I wanted Anne-Marie Slaughter to deliver this year's Salant Lecture on Freedom of the Press is because of another of her crusading interests.

She has emerged as one of the most powerful voices raising alarm at the information moor now quietly and not so quietly raging around the world. On one side, Anne-Marie's side, are governments that regard the free flow of information and the ability to access it to be a matter of fundamental human rights. On the other side, on China's side and Russia's side, for instance, it is the view that official control of information is a fundamental element of sovereign, which is to say government power. This divide has been termed the new cold war and the guerilla fighters on free flow side are the upstart new media and social media vanguard that are deigning to express their views, challenge authority and hold governments accountable.

Among the unlikely tools for waging this digital combat are a device first created as a way to meet girls at Harvard, also known as Facebook, and a mechanism with a silly name devised to make possible cryptic chats with friends, also known as Twitter. Anne-Marie has described Twitter as utterly essential. She uses it to learn and she uses it to disseminate and most important she thinks about what it is and what it means and how it could be used for democracy and how much danger

it is in. She thinks about freedom of speech in the press as facilitated by new media and how that freedom or lack of it is apt to affect the world.

It is freedom of the press, 21st Century style, that she is here to speak about. The title of her lecture is “Open versus Closed: Media, Government and Social Organization in the Information Age.” Our Salant lecturer, Anne-Marie Slaughter.

(Applause)

MS. SLAUGHTER: Thank you. That was truly lovely. It’s great to be back. I see many, many friends in the audience and I have tremendous affection for the Kennedy School, for Cambridge, for being back. I was e-mailing my husband to say only that it feels odd to be back here without him as we lived here for almost twenty years. We met here. We had both our children here. And it is very nice. I also want to say hello to everybody who is out there on the web and everybody on Twitter. This has to have been the best advertized talk, at least according to my Twitter feed, than I think I’ve ever seen.

So let me set the scene. In August of 2011, about two months before the President’s speech at the U.N. General Assembly, the White House convened a meeting and I won’t divulge any confidentiality, but essentially a group of people sat there talking about what to highlight in the President’s speech. And this is still the dog days of summer where there is some certain amount of brainstorming going on. And one of the participants said, you know, the real divide between governments in the 21st Century is not between democracies and non-democracies, it’s between open versus closed. Open governments versus closed governments. That’s the axis of difference.

Now, that has a lot to do with democracies versus non-democracies, but it is much less judgmental, at least in the context of American foreign policy, and it is not exactly the same. Out of that meeting grew, that was the seed that bore fruit in the President’s speech at the U.N. General Assembly in September of 2011. At that speech he launched the open government partnership which started with eight nations. They were the U.S., Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Norway, the United Kingdom, the Philippines and South Africa, so eight nations.

Two years later that partnership has added 47 additional participants and, indeed, most of the most active nations have not been the United States. It has been Brazil and South Africa, the United Kingdom. So we have 55 nations who are participating. Participants sign the Open Government Partnership Charter. There's a set of principles, which I am going to talk about. They sign that charter, they pledge publicly to a set of actions to fulfill those principles around open government.

So what I want to do this evening is to explore that basic idea, that the axis of difference is now open versus closed. And I want to talk about open versus closed means with respect to governments and I will talk more about the Open Government Partnership with respect to media and with respect to social organization more broadly. I should say that I think in many ways this dichotomy is one that we are revisiting in many different settings and these are very much thoughts to open a conversation. These are things that I have been thinking about a great deal. I have been drawing on the work of others, but I fully expect something this major to be fleshed out with lots of different voices. Indeed that is part of what open means.

So I guess the first thing to say is if I say open versus closed and I'm here in the Kennedy School and the Shorenstein Center giving the Salant lecture, most people are going to say, well, open if I give you a choice. Open is better than closed. Open is good. Open means making information available for press to access, to digest, to analyze, to critique, to disseminate. Open means access. It means freedom of information. That's the foundation of an educated democracy. The source of the press's ability to be a check on a democratically elected government, or on any government. It has to have access to information. Things have to be open.

But what about protection of sources? Then suddenly open is not so good. We like closed when we think about that. Think about key national security secrets. Here last year in the Shorenstein Center I heard Clay Shirky give a wonderful talk about how national security is still deeply nationalized. The U.S. Government can go to *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* and ask them to hold a story. They won't always, but they often will if it's a matter of our national security. Then suddenly we want closed. His point was the U.S. Government cannot go to *The*

Guardian or *The London Times*, so it's still very national. But it's very much a place where you still want things to be closed.

Any situation like that where we might be putting individuals at risk, we again don't want to be disseminating that information, we want it to be closed. So just to start with I want to problematize what open versus closed means and I'm going to suggest, in talking about government and media and social organization, that we shouldn't be too quick to rush to open. That actually in this process of far greater openness than ever before a large part of what we have to do is to rediscover the value of closed and figure out when we need it and how to protect it.

So let's go back to the Open Government Partnership. Open governments versus closed governments. So what do we mean by open government? Well, the first thing in this charter of principles we mean is transparent government. So if you look at the statement of principles, they talk about increasing the availability of information about governmental activities, making what government does open to as many people as possible. It means giving citizens a right to seek information, FOIA, right? Freedom of Information Act. Other governments are committing to do that. It means promoting access to information. So it isn't just you put the law on the books, you actually make it easy for people to do and you tell them they have that right to do that and you commit to doing that at every level of government.

It means increasing government's efforts systematically to collect data. Government can say we'll make all the information we have available and then not collect data on what it does. This actually requires government to collect data on what it does systematically and to publish it. And it mean to publish it, and this is very important, in useable form. You could do a huge data dump on every grant that a government gave and you can do it in a way that it's there but nobody can actually use it. So a commitment to transparency means publishing it and publishing it in useable form. It means even further than that. It says a form that the public can locate, understand and use and in interoperable format so you can compare what one government is doing to another government.

It actually commits further to providing access to effective remedies if people have been denied information. And recognizing the importance of open standards so that when government puts

out data and it makes it useable it uses a standard that others can use so again you can aggregate information and compare it. So it's much more than just sort of pulling back the curtain on what government does. It is a commitment to transparency that is a commitment to make information visible, but also useable. So that's the first point about open government. You're actually making information visible, but useable in a way that invites a conversation.

And indeed the second principle of open government is participatory. So open means visible. It means participatory and participatory means these governments are pledging to support civic participation. Valuing the public participation of all people equally without discrimination. Public engagement, including the full participation of women. That's actually in the Charter, the Open Government Charter. It means it's a commitment to make policy formulation and decision making more transparent, something that everybody in this room who has been in government would appreciate even in government since the where the decision is actually being made is not always transparent.

It means deepening public participation in actually developing, monitoring and evaluating government activity. So you've got to make it easy for your critics to get at you, effectively. You have to make it easy for them to access, but not just to access, but to critique, respond and come back at you. So this part of the commitment, that it means a commitment to transparency, which means usability, but to participation, it isn't just saying we're going to allow citizens to participate, it says we're going to create a process that is going to make it easy for them to participate, easy for them to engage in a conversation with us and we're going to enable them to act on that information. So we're going to enable them to hold us to account.

That also means fundamentally that the commitment to being a participatory government is a commitment to being a responsive government. And if you're going to be a responsive government, then you actually have to be even more, you have to be persuadable. If you're saying to your citizens we want you to participate and you're giving them the process by which to participate, but if once they participate you simply say that's nice, it's like comments on a blog. If I get those comments but I don't respond to those comments, that's not actually meaningful

participation. That is formal participation but not substantive participation. So if a government says I believe in, I'm committing to a participatory citizenry, it's saying I'm going to respond. And if I respond I have to be willing to change my mind because otherwise I'm not really engaging in any kind of meaningful conversation.

And the third and last major principle that open government means is accountability. But here again, it's interesting. Accountability in the Open Government Partnership actually means integrity. It actually means honesty. You might think, I expected, that it would mean you can hold us to account, but what it means is implement the highest standards of professional integrity. It means having robust anti-corruption policies, transparency in the management of public finances. It means having a legal framework where you make transparent the income and assets of all high government officials and it means actually putting in place a whole set of deterrents against bribery. So that's kind of interesting.

You might not have thought that open government meant a commitment to honesty and integrity in your government officials, at least it's not the first thing I think you would think about if you thought about open government. So in that sense the way I think about it is they're committing to no secret channels of influence. In other words they are committing to you, have influence through the established channels that we've just told you about and enabled you to use. You do not have influence through money, through connections, through private channels. So it is accountability in the sense that everybody has an equal chance to hold government to account.

I have to say when I was thinking about that I was thinking about our own government and how we fare on that particular measure of no secret channels of influence. Every fund raiser I have been asked to attend this fall has been in the order of \$20,000 to \$30,000 to even shake the hand of a candidate, given Citizens United. I don't think we fare very well on open government if open government means the highest standards of professional integrity and established channels of influence.

Indeed Larry Lessig here at Harvard has this wonderful project on institutionalized corruption. This is not individuals taking bribes, it's money washing through the system as a whole, but it

means secret channels of influence that are not equally distributed. So given that the United States signed the Open Government Partnership we have work to do.

The last thing to say about what open versus closed means in government is interestingly a commitment to technology. And here I think we shouldn't think of technology just as information technology or communication technology, electronic technology. Technology is whatever it takes to actually implement these pledges. But actually there's a commitment to continually upgrade the technology that enables citizens to participate, to have access to information and to insist on standards of integrity.

So just to summarize this first part, what does open versus closed mean if we're thinking about government? Well, open means transparent and beyond transparent it means providing useable information. It means participatory and participatory in the sense of actually enabling your citizens to engage with you equally and it means honest in the sense that you have no secret channels of influence and you allow your citizens to visibly see what their officials are being paid.

So then what is closed? How do we think about closed? All these governments, they've all signed on to the Open Government Partnership. They are all committing. They all have action plans as to how they are going to improve their behavior on one or more of these dimensions. Well, closed means secret. It means small and a non-expandable number of decision makers. It means being non-responsive to citizenry. It means officials who are non-answerable for wrongdoing, all things we don't like, which is why we championed the Open Government Partnership. By that standard, if you apply it, you actually get a different measure than democracy and non-democracy. If you think what I said was, if it's secret, there's a non-expandable number of decision makers non-responsive to the citizenry.

Think about China for a minute. China actually is responsive to its citizenry in all sorts of ways, certainly not evenly, certainly not in ways that we champion, but it's not fair to say it's non-responsive. When there are protests there are responses. When I have talked to mayors in Shanghai and of course a mayor of a district in Shanghai is a mayor of two million people, one district in Shanghai. They talk about protests if they want to put a rail line through or they want to

condemn some particular property. There is a sense of responding to citizen protests, citizen engagement. If you apply these labels you will get different measures of governments that we are accustomed to categorizing in one way or another. Doesn't mean they don't need change, but it is a different measure.

But just to end in terms of thinking about closed for a minute, I just told you all the bad things that closed is. But then if we think about government and we think about government decision making, if you can't keep secrets, at least some secrets, you can't get anything done. You cannot make any decisions. Try chairing a government commission that is subject to the full Transparent Procedure Act, nothing ever gets discussed or decided because no one will actually talk in a way that allows you to make some kinds of progress. If you have too many formal decision makers, if it's this sort of steadily expanding number of decision makers, well then, secret channels, back channels will immediately open up. If too many people are in the room then people simply make decisions outside the room and you're right back to where you started.

And finally, if it's too participatory, in some ways if you make all this information available and you enable everyone to use it, what will happen -- I'm teaching Politics of Public Policy this fall and we're teaching the very basics of politics anywhere, certainly Americans' politics, small concentrated groups have far more incentive to track down that information and use it relentlessly. That is not necessarily representative. That is participatory, but it is not equally participatory and you are empowering some groups to have far more influence than others.

I'm not arguing for closed government. It doesn't have nearly the same attractive ring, but I am suggesting that if you put down all those different definitions of what open government means we're going to have to reclaim some of that space for closed decision making for secrecy, for limited participation.

So let me talk now about media. Again, sort of thinking about what does open versus closed mean in media. And start with a spectrum. Think about open and closed. Well, actually closed versus open and I won't do the left-right thing. So on one end of the spectrum you would maybe start with *The New York Times* or *The Wall Street Journal* -- I'm sorry, *The Wall Street Journal* or the

Financial Times. Why? Why do I put them over here on closed? Well, they are still behind a paywall. Just try linking to an article on either one. You will get howls of protest from people on Twitter saying I can't access that paper, because it's behind a paywall. I don't pay, I don't subscribe.

So in that sense you would put them there. You would put *The New York Times* in the center. You can get today's paper, but there's lots of stuff you can't get unless you actually subscribe. And then you would put something like the Huff Post or any of the completely free and open news sources all the way over on open. So that's one way of thinking about closed versus open, just reader access. How open are you to reader access? Do you have to pay? Do you have to pay for some of it or is it all open to you?

Then think about another spectrum. Now think about not how news is consumed, but how news is produced. And here I put *The New York Times* over on closed. You have to be asked to produce news for *The New York Times*. *The New York Times* does not just take my sense of what is important in a given day. And every single person in this room and no matter how powerful is at the mercy of *The New York Times* op ed editor. And all of us have had the experience of begging the op ed editor, with some dignity one hopes, but to take your incredibly valuable opinion. So it's closed. You have to be hired, you are paid, you have to be given *The New York Times* imprimatur to actually put out news on behalf of *The New York Times*. Huff Post is somewhere in the middle where actually anybody can post on Huff Post but the stories that get the most attention, every now and then somebody gets lucky, writes something and lots and lots of other people see it and it goes to the front, but most of the stories are commissioned and either paid for or at least hired in the middle. Similarly, you could say, so, that's sort of a mixed bag.

Then go over to something like CNN iReports or even better, CNN iReports anybody can send in, there is still selection as to what they show, but anybody can send it in, or go to something like Al Jazeera Stream. So Al Jazeera Stream is actually, it defines itself as a social media community with its own daily TV show on Al Jazeera. And if you go on the site, social media community with its own TV show, you'll see a map. And on the map there are lots of little flags that show you where

videos have been produced and it says record your own video here and there is a link, where if you click it -- I have never recorded a video, but I would believe if you click it you can record your video. And it says record your own video and then we will show it on the TV show.

So this is now -- this is completely open in terms of production. Although I have to believe again there is some actual editing and selection as to what goes into the TV show, but the invitation is completely open. And Al Jazeera English as a whole, as a whole, not just Al Jazeera Stream, but the entire site defines itself as a community. And it has rules of the community. If you look down it says these are the rules, we value thoughtful constructive discussion, we don't want comments that smear an organization or attack an author. We want these kinds of participation. We want information or clarifications on breaking news stories. If there are complaints, here is where you send them and a bunch of other rules.

This is kind of interesting. I don't think *The New York Times* defines itself as a community. It defines itself as something that puts out the news, that broadcasts the news, but that's moving, as you move to open discussion, participation becomes an increasing part of the very identity. And at the very far end of the spectrum there is what ever any one of us want to create as a newspaper. There's an app that will allow you to take all the stories that you have collected on Twitter that day and they will then be put into the format of a newspaper front page. It's all nicely spaced, it's got all the capitals and it says, and you see this on Twitter all the time, the Brussels Embassy Daily News and it will say with stories by Slaughter AM if they got one of my stories and they thought that -- I didn't write the story, I just chose the story. They assembled the story and they put it out.

So now you're getting to the point. You have exactly people who the news is out there being collected by everyone, generated by everyone and then produced by anyone. It is completely open with respect to consumers and producers. And indeed Twitter, more generally, Alex said I spend a lot of time on it, but I do spend a lot of time thinking about it because it has allowed me to customize my own daily newspaper. That's what I do. I now get articles from lots of wonderful reporters. They write for *The New York Times*, but they write for the *Financial Times*, they write for *The Guardian*, they write for newspapers in Pakistan and India and China. You follow them,

you customize your daily paper. And of course you don't just follow reporters, you follow people on the ground. You are then the consumer who is customizing your own product.

So if that's our spectrum, we had open versus closed in terms of reader access, but then we had open versus closed in terms of who produces the news. And you have *The New York Times* all the way to any Twitter user's decision to put out their daily news. So let's just reflect on that for a minute, open versus closed in media. The first thing that jumps out is open is not synonymous with free. This is a lecture on freedom of the press. But when we talk about a free press we are thinking about the producer is free to publish whatever it wants. So readers are able to get whatever it wants to put out. There is no censorship. It is free to publish what it wants.

We are not talking about the freedom of anyone to be a newspaper. I mean in some sense we are, in the sense that government censorship could say no, only certain people can publish a newspaper, but we're not generally thinking of the citizenry as a whole participating in the production of the news. It also means that open can mean very low quality, seriously low quality. Spend a couple of hours on Twitter. Go back to your favorite newspaper site and you will want to hug the reporters and editors that produce this fine product. The sophistication, the editing, the quality of the writing, the actual logic of what is produced. So I love Twitter but there are a lot of very bad newspapers out there and the fact that you can put out a story does not make you a reporter. So open can mean very low quality.

And finally open in this sense really means no more media. And in what I just described where I take all the stories that I have found interesting and I make a newspaper out of them and I send that out to however many people want to read it and people do, there is no intermediary. There is just the people and the people putting out, I mean, you could say I'm an intermediary but I'm a consumer and a producer simultaneously. So if you really go all the way to open you've lost the media in the sense of the intermediary that channels what we say, that selects and that broadcasts back out.

So from that perspective too, closed starts looking pretty good. I'm going to make a case. There's a lot of reason to have a relatively closed shop in producing the news and what you're increasingly

seeing is organizations falling somewhere in between. And here I want to suggest that the future of a lot of traditionally closed media, and obviously they're looking for a business model and if I had one I don't think I'd be just giving this lecture, I would be counseling many major newspapers. But one of the in-betweens is curation. I was just invited to the Museum of Modern Art's seminar on curation, which I thought was particularly interesting. Obviously they are a museum so they know about curation, but that's not what they were talking about. They were talking about curation of news, curation of ideas, curation of thoughts.

Give you an example and if you haven't been on it, I recommend there is a woman in Brooklyn who runs a site called Brain Pickings. Brain Pickings is described as a human powered discovery engine for interestingness, calling and curating cross disciplinary curiosity quenchers and separating the signal from the noise to bring you things you didn't know you were interested in until you are. She is fabulous. The things she sends out, once a week you get a newsletter on Sunday mornings when you have some time, amazingly interesting, diverse, fabulous ideas, stories and reviews of various kinds. That idea of curating where you are reaching from a much, much broader pool, but somebody's individual sensibility, like the reporter and the editor traditionally is deciding what of that news you should see. It links to the individual people so they are not mushed in, they are not like sources, they are still independent. But it is a bringing together that is a midway point between here are the stories you must read and you're on your own in the wilderness of information.

Final note before talking about social organization. There's an interesting link between the ways in which open government and open media intersect and Alex referred to it in his introduction where he talked about a cold war between broadcast media outlets and social media. The phrase is not mine. I would have liked it to be, but I still believe in certainly giving credit. And Philip Howard is interestingly enough a professor of communication, information in international studies, something that we didn't used to have, a professor of communication, information in international studies. He's at the University of Washington. And he describes the ways in which broadcast media and social media assume very different organizational models.

Broadcast media requires funding. And thus it can be much more easily controlled, which is to say closed governments favor broadcast media. Social media, of course, does not require funding. All it requires, it does require access to the internet, but it essentially requires only an account and it is not susceptible to state control. You can control it, but only often by bringing down the entire internet or doing things that otherwise will really anger many of your citizens in ways that you don't want to. So he has looked at the media culture of countries like Russia, Syria and Saudi Arabia and concludes that even though each of those countries has a very different media culture, one thing that the closed governments like broadcast media. Open governments, far more comfortable with social media.

Last question. So what does open versus closed mean for social organization? Now, that's a big question to ask at the end of my lecture and I could give a whole lecture just defining social organization and I will not, I promise. But again the answer is not as obvious as you might think initially.

So start with just the definition of open versus closed systems. And this is something we actually thought about quite a lot in the government, in the premise that we are now, we the country, are in an open international system. So what's the difference? A closed system has no external shocks. It is closed to outside. It is totally within the boundaries of the system. It can thus be predicted. It can be commanded. It can be controlled. An open system is a system open to outside shocks, outside events, outside stimuli. It cannot be predicted because you never know when one of those things is going to disrupt what's within the system. And it cannot be controlled. It can be influenced. And we thought a lot about if you think the United States is operating in a world that's an open system, it means command and control doesn't work, never did really, but at least there was the illusion of it.

Credible influence is the best way to go. So you can think about that. That makes a lot of sense if we think about open versus closed countries, we think North Korea is closed, the United States is open, Luxembourg is the most open. It means whatever, the smaller the country, the more the boundaries, the more susceptible you are to outside shocks. Or think about Karl Popper's

definition of open society, actually building on the work of Henri Bergson and I'll just say right now I am not going to answer questions on Karl Popper, it's been a long time since I worked my way through the original text. But essentially there the idea was an open society was a society that you could -- where you could change the government without bloodshed. There were ways of turning the government open and a closed society was one where the only way to change the government was through violence, through a coup, through a revolution.

And he also talked about open society in terms of individual choice. An open society is one where an individual has a range of choices rather than being part of some group, could be a family, could be a tribe, could be an ideology, a party, but where your decisions are made for you. And if you look now at the Open Society foundations, of course, George Soros' foundations directly influenced by the work of Karl Popper, you would not be surprised that the values of Open Society, it's human rights, dignity and rule of law. It's holding those in power accountable, empowering people in communities to make change themselves, but it's also the freedom of all people, again, like open government, to participate equally in civic, economic and cultural life.

So it's not just that people have choices. It's that their choices have to be allowed to influence what happens in the government. They have to be able to equally participate in civic, economic and cultural life. There again, the difference between an open society and a liberal democracy. Why use the term open society as we use the term open government? You could debate this for a long time, the precise distinctions between what we mean by democracy, what we mean by open society, but I want to again suggest that open here captures a quality of direct interaction, of engagement, of conversation between the government and its citizens. That citizens don't just elect their government, they continue actively engaging with it in a continual responsive learning cycle. That, I think, is again a more useful way of thinking about societies and governments than labeling them any kind of -cracy, whether it's democracy, autocracy, plutocracy or anything in between.

I want to close by looking to one final definition of open. And this one comes from the leader of the social justice movement in Israel, a 26 year old woman named Stav Shaffir who gave a riveting

talk at the Personal Democracy Forum in June. You can find it on the Personal Democracy Forum website. And she talked about the open source movement. And at the Personal Democracy Forum there is a lot about the open source movement, the ability, if you think of Lennox versus Microsoft, open code, anybody can add onto it, improve it. It is the power of the collective because it is open. And she talked about how you apply those principles to a protest. And she said there are three basic ideas. One is that you start small and simple. You start very small. You talk about a housing protest. You don't talk about a protest against social injustice. You start small and let it grow.

You trust people to be smart and to create. So you do your housing protest, but if somebody wants to do a related protest over the cost of rent in the next street over, that's fine. You let them do that. You let people contribute in their own way. Mind you, these protests had 300,000 people on the streets of Tel Aviv. It was a very large deal. It was the equivalent of Occupy Wall Street in Israel. And finally she says no logos or identifying marks. No T-shirts, no buttons. She said it is very important for the protest to seem like an organic development and not an organized rebellion. Note that's exactly the criticism of Occupy Wall Street, that they were not organized, that they were not a movement. She says this is a deliberate effort to be organic, to let people come together, to be spontaneous and creative.

That had all sorts of problems when it came to a town meeting, as we saw, those meetings in Zuccotti Park. But it worked to assemble a protest and to get people to mimic that protest across the country, which happened here and did change the national conversation. We'd be having a different election rhetoric if we had not had Occupy Wall Street. But what interests me the most is that for her and for Occupy Wall Street, for the open source movement, open means equal. It means equal. They did everything they could to make sure there is no hierarchy, that everybody is on the same footing, that everybody can contribute in their own way, that nobody is even identified. And she talked about when politicians wanted to come talk to them they couldn't address them, they had to be part of the group.

Now that kind of organization works a lot better online than in a meeting, because online you can

take your own time. It is asynchronous. You can take your bit of code and work on it and put it back and everybody doesn't have to sit there and watch you. But if it were a meeting like this and we were all open everybody would get up and everybody would have their say and we would have to listen to them. So it is a form of organization that definitely works better in some contexts than others. But it is a notion of open that means leveling, that means flat, that means sort of a vast plain where nobody can raise themselves above others and everyone has an equal right to participate.

Now I actually think, of course, everything that is open needs some part that is closed. Every network needs some hierarchy and every hierarchy needs some network. There is not one or the other end of the spectrum. But I do want to say that if open means equal, then unequal means closed. And if unequal means closed, then the United States is becoming more and more a closed society. That what we write about in terms of economic inequality actually means being politically closed. It means moving on that spectrum closer to those countries that we are asking to pledge to be more open. Because when you try to make a society more open the first thing you do and throughout all my examples tonight you make people more equal, more able to participate. When people are as unequal as this society is now they cannot participate in their government and we are increasingly a closed society.

However, we have the press. And we do have a free press and it is a free press that can point that out relentlessly, day after day, and hold us to our own professed values, whether they be of democracy or open government or any other principles you choose to use. It is a free press. May it stay a free press. I could not be more honored to have delivered the Richard Salant Lecture on Freedom of the Press. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Smart, reflective, thoughtful, I think we would all agree. Anne-Marie has agreed to answer some questions. There are microphones here, here, here and over here. The rules are make it a question, make it short with one thought and make it as brief as you can. Alex.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hi. Thank you very much for coming. My name is Alex Remington. I'm a second year MPP. I wanted to ask you, I know that you spoke tonight really about the choices that are made at a state level, but I wanted to ask about the implications of those choices and some possible solutions for questions of privacy and cyber security. Many of the tools that you've mentioned, including open source and the leveling and equality that comes from openness place an increased amount of power in the hands of non-state actors. So what can states do on a policy level to account for the fact that whether they choose open or closed, it's not ultimately entirely up to them?

MS. SLAUGHTER: Do you have time for a whole other lecture?

(Laughter)

MS. SLAUGHTER: It's a great question and it is again, it's exactly in an area where closed starts looking better as governments realize they really can't control their environment. And indeed, even at the level of teaching an ambassador to use Twitter, you have to say, you know, you can't control it. You can't control it. You just jump in and sort of let it go. So some of my answer is you just have to kind of let go the illusion of control and work in ways that accept a certain amount of indeterminacy and uncertainty and constant change, which is exactly what corporations are learning to do. But in other ways, that's why I emphasize we do have to find some much higher protections. Joe Nye sitting in the front row has done a lot of work on cyber security. That is absolutely critical.

I mean we do need to find ways where we can protect and where there are, even in an open internet that I'm completely for, that there are ways to put up some walls to protect both people and governments and organizations in various ways. That's a whole agenda and I don't have the answers, but I do think that's exactly where we now have to head as much as we want open.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hi. Thank you so much for your remarks. So with open media—

MR. JONES: Would you identify yourself?

FROM THE FLOOR: Sorry. I'm Elsa, I'm a student at the college. So with open media and social

media and the ability to self-curate also comes the ability to select, to hear from opinions that confirm our own beliefs or that agree with us. And I think that has really contributed to polarization in politics today. I was hoping you could talk about ways of overcoming that, so we are living in different media universes as a country.

MS. SLAUGHTER: You know, it is such an important question. I always have a hard time believing this, because I actually find that social media exposes you to far more difference than you are accustomed to. I frequently say that once you become a dean and your day job, few people tell you you really aren't making sense or that was really stupid or that was dead wrong. David is saying no, actually here at the Kennedy School I guess so, but nobody hesitates to tell me that on Twitter, loudly, clearly. And I actually find that I engage with a wide range of people I wouldn't. It has become apparent to me and I know the research, that in part that's because as academics we welcome that kind of debate. That's actually what we're trained to do. Most people do not and I accept the idea that it does lead to a certain self-reinforcement.

I think in some ways this isn't something that can be solved in cyberspace. I think the deeper problem is actually at the community level, the idea that you don't have to associate with anybody that you don't want to and that you can't legislate it in cyberspace. I do think we can do a much better job, and again, I would start at the local level, I would start at schools, of encouraging, really inculcating the idea that it's through debate with those who disagree with you that you actually grow.

And I'll just give you a very silly example. When we were watching the debate last week my son was on Facebook during the whole debate debating with the president of the Republican Club as the debate unfolded, asking us for ammunition, I have to say.

(Laughter)

MS. SLAUGHTER: But my point is for him that was both a fun activity and something where he thought he benefitted. And I actually think we have to start at that level, not by regulating cyberspace.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hi. Thank you so much. My name is Lyra Faulk. I'm a second year MPP student and a journalist. My question is about traditional media. In an open society or moving towards an open society does traditional media have a responsibility in terms of either the content that they publish, *The New York Times*, for example, has been criticized for publishing stories about tree houses that cost hundreds of thousands of dollars for the very rich or in terms of -- so our responsibility in terms of content or in terms of orientation, is there a role for traditional media in encouraging civic participation and the engagement with the government that you were talking about?

MS. SLAUGHTER: It's a great question. I do think so in the sense that, to the extent even traditional media starts thinking of itself as a community as opposed to a product that you put out and people read. In general, I mean, I wouldn't say everybody, but in general they value a diversity of voices in the community. If you think about it, it's my product, then you decide this is what I'm going to produce. But if you think about it as a conversation, if you are a newspaper, you don't want to be just speaking to the people that you talk to.

Every panel, every conference, you try to get some kind of diversity. So to the extent *The New York Times* and other traditional newspapers start thinking of at least part of what they do as the cultivation of different conversational communities, expert communities, one example I didn't give is the things like *The Atlantic* increasingly creating channels. They are creating information channels. Those channels are then creating what you would call a community of like minded people, a community of practice. And there, I think actually there is a role then for bringing people into dialogue and if government is alive to that, actually creating more participation.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hi. I'm Autumn Lawrence. I'm a freshman at the college and I would like to ask you the following question on behalf of the JFK, Jr. Forum Committee. So has the media contributed positively to the dialogue about democracy movements throughout the world or has there, like the Arab Spring, has there been any sort of media bias that may have helped to counteract conflict resolution?

MS. SLAUGHTER: I definitely think social media has played a positive role in the Arab revolutions. I don't think it's the causal role but it was a facilitating role that was very important in various key moments. And the best way that I heard this put was an Egyptian blogger who said before social media, by the time you got a factory organized or a university organized the government was already there. You couldn't move fast enough to stay ahead of them and the speed of social media changed that.

So there, I think without question, I also think again the fact that Facebook or Twitter allows you to create smaller clubs of like minded people is very important for giving you courage. If you know your friends are out there with you, a whole lot easier than going out on your own.

On the other hand, if you look at Syria right now and I've written this, imagine if the United Nations had a website where anybody could upload videos and they'd be verified in the way they sort of are by curators on Twitter, but where you have somebody who knows different Syrian accents, somebody who can tell was this footage shot before, somebody who can say yes, this is the right date. If you had a verified source of alternate information dynamics within Syria could be very different. Because obviously the control of the satellite media is very important for the Syrian Government. And I don't think we thought nearly enough how to use information that is professionally curated and verified as a tool in preventing conflict or resolving conflict.

FROM THE FLOOR: Thank you, Ricardo Trottia. I'm a Fellow at Weatherhead Center. Hugo Chavez, I want to take you to the international arena now. Hugo Chavez won the election last Sunday and he will govern at least for twenty years. The Castros brothers surpassed fifty years in power. Both governments are close and getting worse in the case of Venezuela right now.

Since John Kennedy government the U.S. tried different methodologies for information. Somebody will call it propaganda in Latin America. So you say to open those societies, but I believe we were not successful. Perhaps because those governments foresee those programs as propaganda and interference. Do you think it's a better way that the U.S. can implement communication in freedom of the press programs to open those governments and others around the world?

MS. SLAUGHTER: It's a good question. I do. To begin with, I think both cell phones are much more valuable in Cuba than any amount of beaming in government information and in general I think creating channels so that the citizens of those populations can see not what our government thinks they should see, even though I am on the board of the NED, but not even what an organization does, but just the diversity of our own conversation.

I mean, even in Radio Liberty or our various channels we get the highest ratings when we critique ourselves. After a Watergate, after a scandal, we get much higher ratings when suddenly other people see us not telling them how great we are, but actually criticizing our own government and holding it to account. So the first thing I would say is it's much more important to create people to people channels to the extent you can.

But the second thing I would say is for some governments it's just a function of time. I mean the demographics do ultimately make a difference. We knew that there was going to be upheaval in the Arab world, we just didn't know exactly when, but there were plenty of memos that said you've got seventy percent of the population under thirty and they're unemployed, this is not going to last. And ultimately old leaders do die. So I think there is much better we can do. I'm not convinced that there is anything we could actually do at this point that would overturn the Castros any faster than they would otherwise be overturned. And, yes, Chavez won, but I still think the signs are looking better in Venezuela than they've looked in a long time.

MR. JONES: Two more questions. Here and then over here.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hello, my name is Ava Rogers. I'm a mid-career student here at the Kennedy School and I'm also a career Foreign Service Officer. But my question actually pertains to domestic context. At the state and local government here in the United States, what are ways and ideas that you have for strengthening the link between participation and actual influence?

MS. SLAUGHTER: Participation in government, in the federal government?

FROM THE FLOOR: Participation in terms of using the open government system, but having that translate into actual influence in terms of decisions in policies.

MS. SLAUGHTER: As you probably know, Secretary Clinton created an Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and when I first heard that I thought we were the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs. I mean, what else are we doing? And what she was doing was outreach to mayors, outreach to governors in ways that could both get ideas from them, but integrate them into a much broader foreign policy, a concept of foreign policy so that there are lots of sister cities already, but there are actually many more ways in which networks of cities, groups of governors I think can make a big difference.

A lot of that, I mean, some of that has to change at the local level. And it's really about giving them the channels of access. She created an office. There's far more I think that you could do. I actually think getting individual embassies to be able to connect the countries that they are in to different cities, to different states. The Army has done this with partnerships with the National Guard, would make a big difference. So a lot of it's creating channels, but the rest of it is really education, going to lots and lots of -- we're not allowed to recruit domestically or lobby domestically, but actually we need all of those actors as part of our foreign affairs arsenal and there have got to be ways to spend more time within the country in a way that is not breaking the law but does engage them. And I think we're just at the outset of that.

FROM THE FLOOR: I'm a student at the college and it's been a privilege to listen to you. Doesn't confining the limiting terms of open and closed oversimplify the reality of the age of information and lend itself to hypocrisy in some sense?

MS. SLAUGHTER: Well, definitely simplifies. I appreciate your question in the spirit of dialogue that I have welcomed. Absolutely. It does and I guess what I would say is I think it may be a better simplification than democracy or non-democracy. I think it is less judgmental but it may also invite more reflective scrutiny and obviously where I ended was the United States created the Open Government Partnership and that's great. And we've got all these other governments doing it and that's wonderful. But if we really look at what it means we're not nearly as open as we think we are. We're very convinced where democracy -- I actually think we have an awful lot of reform to do there too, but I'm suggesting it is an over-simplification that may be more useful.

MR. JONES: Anne-Marie, you have given us a Salant Lecture that I heard and now I'm going to go back and read. And I mean that as a great compliment. Thank you. Thank you for being with us. Thank you all and thank you Ann-Marie.

(Applause)

(Whereupon, at 7:15 p.m., the lecture was concluded.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the preceding transcript is an accurate record based on the recordings of the proceedings taken:

Before: ALEX JONES, Moderator

In the Matter of:

RICHARD S. SALANT LECTURE ON FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Date: October 10, 2012

Place: Cambridge, Massachusetts

— 10/15/12

Allyson Farley

Date

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