



TWENTY-FIRST SEMI-ANNUAL MUNK DEBATE ANNOUNCED

IS DONALD TRUMP TO BLAME FOR THE CRISIS OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY?

Newt Gingrich, Kimberley Strassel, E.J. Dionne, and Andrew Sullivan convene in Toronto to debate the state and future of American democracy.

September 7, 2017 – Toronto, Canada

The Munk Debates announced today the resolution for the 21st semi-annual event, to be held in Toronto on Thursday, October 12, 2017. To better understand the issues shaping an extraordinary moment in American politics, the Autumn 2017 Munk Debate will move the motion: ***Be it resolved, American democracy is in its worst crisis in a generation and Donald J. Trump is to blame.***

Those that emphatically concur, believe that Trump's disregard for the institutions and political norms of U.S. democracy is imperiling the Republic. The sooner his presidency collapses the sooner the healing can begin and the ship of state righted.

For others, Trump is not the villain in this drama. Rather, his young presidency is the conduit of Americans' longstanding and deep-seated anger with a privileged and self-dealing Washington elite. Trump's disruption of politics as usual is what America needs to start the process of restoring democracy by the people, for the people.

Arguing **for the resolution** will be senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and a syndicated columnist with *The Washington Post*, **E.J. Dionne, Jr.** Dionne is the recipient of the American Political Science Association's Carey McWilliams Award, and is recognized "as one of Washington's finest journalistic thinkers. ... His tireless efforts uplift the public ... in a time that cries for reasoned debate." He will be joined by **Andrew Sullivan**, *New York* magazine editor and blogger. For his provocative and astute political commentary, the *New York Times* said, "Sullivan might deserve to be remembered as the most influential political writer of his generation."

Speaking **against the resolution** will be former Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, **Newt Gingrich**. Mr. Gingrich has been called "the indispensable leader" by the *Washington Times*, is a *New York Times* bestselling author, and *TIME* magazine Man of the Year. Also speaking against the resolution will be **Kimberley Strassel**, senior editorial writer and member of the editorial board for the *Wall Street Journal*. Throughout

her career, she has won multiple awards, including the Bradley Prize in 2014 for providing “important analyses on issues of the day [strengthening] the American fabric.”

Rudyard Griffiths, director and moderator of the Munk Debates, says: “The future and fate of American democracy concerns everyone. This debate promises to bring into sharp contrast the critical issues driving a tumultuous moment in American politics.”

The Munk Debates are Canada’s preeminent forum for leading thinkers to discuss the pressing issues of our time. Two debates are held each year in Toronto, one in the spring and one in the autumn. Previous Munk Debate participants include former British prime minister Tony Blair, Henry Kissinger, Christopher Hitchens, Samantha Power, Paul Krugman, Fareed Zakaria, Dambisa Moyo, Mia Farrow, Malcolm Gladwell, Nigel Farage, Simon Schama, Louse Arbour and Glenn Greenwald.

The Munk Debates are a signature initiative of the Aurea Foundation, founded in 2006 by Peter and Melanie Munk to support Canadian institutions involved in the study and development of public policy.

“Our philanthropy is aimed primarily at improving the quality and vitality of public debate in Canada,” said **Peter Munk**, speaking about the rationale for the Munk Debates. “Whether it is the support we provide to the Munk School at the University of Toronto or the creation of the Munk Debates through our Aurea Foundation, Melanie and I are committed to broadening public knowledge, education, and informed discourse.”

At the landmark twentieth semi-annual Munk Debate in April 2017, Peter Munk pledged that the Aurea Foundation would provide a foundation-level grant, an additional \$5 million to sustain the Munk Debates. “I want to give back to this country, which has given the Munk Family so many opportunities, by cultivating forums for public discussion on issues affecting Canadian society – its people and its attitudes,” said Mr. Munk

The Munk Debates are open to the public. The Debate on American Democracy will take place in Toronto at Roy Thomson Hall on **Thursday, October 12, 2017** at 7:00 p.m. EDT. **Tickets go on sale to Munk Debate Premium Members at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 12. Any remaining tickets will go on sale to the public at 12:00 noon on Thursday, September 14.** For information on purchasing tickets, or premium membership, please visit www.munkdebates.com. Seating is limited.

The debate will also be broadcast live over the Internet for global viewing audiences. For more information on the livestream of the Munk Debate on American Democracy, visit www.munkdebates.com.

Our archive of commercial-free, HD videos of past Munk Debates is now free for unlimited viewing to all Munk Debate members. For a free membership, and to view past debates, visit www.munkdebates.com.

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