

## The Dream of America

I'm [Adam Klugman](#) and you are listening to [AM 620 KPOJ](#), Portland's only Progressive Talk Station. The numbers here are 1-866-452-060, (503) 248-0620 or #620 on your AT&T wireless phone.

When I'm really despairing about the world, and there is a lot to despair about these days, it helps me to remember that there are a lot of us out there, on all sides of the political spectrum, who have still managed to hold on to our humanity. And I believe that humanity has unlimited potential. Because at the end of the day, when all the posturing is over, when all of political, social, religious, ideological B.S. gets out of the way, it's still all of us here, the same people, thousands of years old, still trying to figure out a way to make the sad, painful miracle of our existence mean something.

[Carl Sagan](#) said that we are matter becoming conscious of itself, the stars looking back and contemplating their own existence, and if that is true, what I don't get, what causes me no end of pain and confusion an unapologetic utopian, is why this is so damn hard for us to comprehend?

Why is it that when we look at ourselves we see divisions and hatred and lack and suffering?

I mean we are these extraordinary beings, with immense complexity and precision and we are alive with such impossibility, on a planet that has given us everything we need to succeed and all we need to do is not screw it up. All we have to do is find a way to love each other just enough to stay alive.

Hell, forget loving each other. How about just liking each other? How about just respecting each other? How about putting all of the B.S. aside long enough to find common cause in staying alive? Because what I can't seem to reconcile is all I know that is beautiful and true about the world we live in, and ourselves, with the way treat it and each other. I mean, what the hell is that about?

And I guess that's where politics comes in for me. This is why I care. This is why I fight. This is why I have a talk radio show. Because what I'm talking about isn't navel gazing or philosophical musings from an undergraduate student, this is about our survival. This is about whether or not the human experiment succeeds or fails, whether we live or die. And I can't but feel that this is being decided right now. With you and me. Right here. That somehow this generation of human beings alive on the planet right now, all of us, are the last line of defense. It's up to us to figure out right now. This is our charge. And so, I keep waiting for that movement of human potential to rise up. The one that buries ancient hatreds and reaches across oceans and religions and corrupt government to declare that we will survive. But even as I say this, I realize that this I precisely my problem.

I'm waiting. And as long I am waiting, I will keep waiting. If I believe in the vague, distant hope that salvation is coming, then that is exactly where it will stay. It will always be on it's way, but never here. Never here. Never now.

We've got to find a way to declare that it is here now. Because it may be true that the meek will inherit the earth, but it won't be because some invisible God handed it over to them. It will be because the meek got off their asses and demanded their world now. And yes, it will be a political force of a magnitude that the world has never seen, but it won't be about politics. It won't be about navigating the political minutiae of a jaded age.

It will be a new day, one about us, the people, who have fundamentally changed our minds about who we are and what we are willing to risk to have a world that works for everyone. And on that day, governments bow down before our will because we they will be reminded about where the center of power really is in the world.  
Right here. With me. Right there. With you.

Impossible you say? Then you're right. Impossible it is.

I'm a dreamer, you say? Well, I'm not the only one. Because I'm tired of every leader for peace being marginalized, and when they can't be marginalized, they get assassinated. So, its time for us utopians to come out of the closet. It's time for us to stop hiding in the shadows of a sick world that keeps telling us that we're impractical and unrealistic and start making demands until there are so damn many of us they can't kill us all. Because the radicals of this age will not be [Che Guevara](#) and the [Fidel Castros](#). They true revolutionaries will be the ordinary men and women, in every continent, who wake up to the immense power they possess as individuals and demand impossibility and impracticality, who demand radical compassion and love, who demand an entirely new set of priorities a greedy, fear-driven world that has made itself toxic with perfectly reasoned madness.

And so, that's why I've given up trying to save the world. I don't want to save this world, do you? The one governed by lies and false divisions and fear and hatred and violence. I want to reveal the world as it really is, the one lurking behind the garbage, the one that is sleeps in the simple, human decency we all possess. And for me, this is promise that our individual liberty affords us. The possibility that we can fulfill our highest potential human beings. And no place represents this better than America. This is the real dream of America, as distinct from the American Dream. The dream of a free people, committed to justice for all, leading the world to peace.

I quoted [Abraham Lincoln](#) last week, but I'm going to do it again because it says it all for me. He said that: "America is the last great hope."

But for what? What did he mean? Why didn't he finish the damn sentence? Well, maybe because he was asking us to finish it. How would you finish it?

If America really is the last great hope...hope for what? What did Lincoln mean by that? And while we're on the subject, what about the America Dream itself? Where is it these days? It seems to be slipping away. And without it, the dream of America seems impossible. So how do we get it back? What does the American dream mean to you? What is your America dream? And what is your dream for America?

When we come back from the break I'm going to read you an email from a listener that broke my heart. He wants to know where is his American dream? And by the way, where is yours?

Like last week, I've got no guests this first hour. Or the second hour. Or even the third. I had so much fun last show, that I've decided you are my guest this week. And I want to hear from you. We've got lots of things to talk about, so stay tuned for all three hours...and let's have at it, shall we?

We'll be right back.  
You're listening to "[Mad as Hell in America](#)," with [Adam Klugman](#) on [KPOJ](#).

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