

EXCERPT 10: The Color Line (2'49")

Female Host: First, Randall Kennedy joins us from a studio at Harvard University. His new book is called *The Persistence of the Color Line: Racial Politics and the Obama Presidency*. Welcome to *Talk of the Nation*.

Rendall Kennedy: Thanks so much for having me on.

Female Host: So, you describe in the book the pride & the emotion that you felt, standing in the crowd, on Pdt Obama's inauguration day. Do you still feel that?

Rendall Kennedy: Sure, I think that something big & bold did happen when Barack Obama was elected Pdt of the US. I mean, against the backdrop of US history, it was a remarkable event. I mean, after all, in the mid-20th century in many parts... at least in *some* parts of the US (I'm thinking of the Deep South), black people were excluded from electoral politics, either legally or extra-legally, sometimes by just dint of sheer terrorism. So, for him to be elected was a big deal, of course.

Female Host: So do you think that the expectations that the election of our first black president wd mean that the US had moved into some sort of post-racial state – that those expectations were too high? Or is it that the forces that led to that election have not continued the momentum in order to achieve the promise of it?

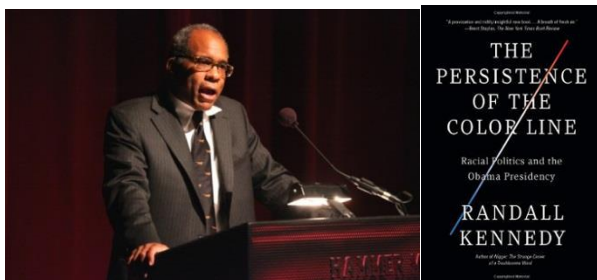
Rendall Kennedy: I think that there was some people who had, you know, a sort of unrealistic view, a millenarian view, as if everything was gonna be different, but racial conflict is deeply embedded in US history, & so it was unrealistic to think that 1 election – or frankly even 2, or 3, or 4 – will erase stg that is so deep, that is so pervasive in US life, namely the race line.

Female Host: Politically, the Pdt has been criticized for – in the words of State Representative Maxine Waters – she says, “The Pdt's gonna have to fight, he's gonna have to fight hard.” She's frustrated that he has not done enough in minority communities about unemployment, & foreclosure* rates, & the wealth gap. What do U think about criticisms that the Pdt has neglected the needs of the black community?

Rendall Kennedy: Well, I don't think that anybody can reasonably say that he's neglected the needs of the black community. I think, U know, the Pdt is an important person, a powerful person. He's certainly not above criticism, & sometimes – at least in my view – I do not think that he has pushed hard enough a progressive agenda that wd be helpful to those further down on the US – you know – socio-economic ladder.

NOTES

* **Foreclosure** : saisie (de biens immobiliers, notamment quand le propriétaire est insolvable)



EXCERPT 11: A Biography of Pauline Kael (2'26")

Female Host (US): Film critic Pauline Kael wasn't afraid to butt* the mainstream. She lambasted *The Sound of Music*, a major hit in her time, with this critique: [quote] "We may become even more aware of the way we have been turned into emotional & aesthetic imbeciles when we hear ourselves humming the sickly goodie goodie songs" [end quote]. Her taste tended toward the more complicated in film & friends, pursuing romances with gay men that strangely...* never worked out. Author & film buff Brian Kellow has written a new biography on Kael. It's called *A Life in the Dark*, & he says although she became 1 of the most famous critics in America, her career didn't really take off until she was in her mid-40s.

Brian Kellow (US): Pauline had a very tough time getting her plane off the ground. Er... she began her writing life thinking she was going to be a creative writer, a playwright, & perhaps a screenwriter. & she made several attempts in that direction & I think she just discovered early on that she wasn't very good at it, & eventually, she found her way to movie criticism, & this was where she found her voice. But even after that, it took an awfully long time for her to reach any level of even sustaining her career, & it was a long, long road to the *New Yorker*, which she joined the staff of in 1968.

Female Host: There is – speaking of a voice – there is a contrarian streak* in her – & in what she pursues, subjects she pursues, & how she attacks them. She goes after widely popular films – *The Sound of Music*, *Star Wars*... I mean, films that now we think of as, you know, being part of the American pantheon of film. Er, why? Was that her nature, or was she seeking out opportunities to distinguish herself that way?

Brian Kellow: I think the answer is probably both. It was very very difficult to pull the wool over* Pauline's eyes. It just really couldn't be done. & she... I don't think she had any issue with popular success of films at all. I think she thought it was wonderful when a terrific movie reached a wide... a wide public. 1 of her ongoing concerns was that the movies that she believed in the most did *not* reach a wide public, & she didn't like a lot of the studio hacks, really, you know, the people who know how to play politics & get their films made, & then –in her opinion–didn't come up with anything terribly interesting.



NOTES

* **butt**: enfoncer (une porte), s'en prendre à qqch; **lambast**: étriller, descendre en flammes

* **strangely** is ironic!

* **contrarian streak**: fibre contestataire, amour de la contradiction, etc.

* **pull the wool over sb's eyes**: conceal one's true motives from, especially by elaborately feigning good intentions so as to gain an end (embobiner, faire prendre des vessies pour des lanternes, etc.)

EXCERPT 12: Space Travel (2'31")

Male Host: Well, the astronauts will get their *last* view from a space shuttle next week, & then they head back to earth. NASA is pulling out of the business of launching humans into space for the foreseeable future, but soon there could be more US space travelers than ever. Several companies are developing spacecrafts* that will take anyone who wants to, provided they can pay for their ride. & as NPR's Joe Palca reports, some of the challenges that lie ahead are as much about the law as they are about technology.

Joe Palca: It used to be that, if you wanted to go into space, you had to convince NASA to make you an astronaut, or shell out* millions of dollars & convince the Russian space program to take you on a Soyuz spacecraft. That's changing.

Commercial snippet: Now, the next step is routine, safe, low-cost, & reliable space flight. For everyone.

Joe Palca: This promotional video has it just about right.

George Nield: I'm convinced that, in the next few years, we're gonna see multiple companies flying several times a week.

Joe Palca: That's George Nield. He's head of the Office of Commercial Space Transportation at the Federal Aviation Administration.

George Nield: & that'll mean hundreds of launches every year, with thousands of people getting a chance to experience space flight 1st hand.

Joe Palca: Several companies are offering trips that will give people a few minutes of weightlessness at the edge of space. Space Adventures, Virgin Galactic, XCOR* are all taking deposits. Other companies are planning to make spacecraft that can take NASA astronauts to the International Space Station. But it won't be NASA's job to regulate the commercial space industry. It will be the FAA's* job to license those flights just as it licenses commercial aircraft flights today. & there'll be some significant differences in how the agency does that. Joanne Irene Gabrynowicz teaches space law at the University of Mississippi. For example, she says, people on commercial space flights will not be called *passengers*.

Joanne Irene Gabrynowicz: If you are a *passenger*, it is understood that your job is to sit in the seat & read your book, or whatever.

Joe Palca: Reading a bad novel or sitting through an extended weather delay is about the worst airline passengers have to worry about. Space is a whole nother* story. No one thinks space travel will be as safe as air travel for quite a while. & participants on these first flights may do more than just sit in their seats.

Joanne Irene Gabrynowicz: There's some thought there that perhaps the participant may need to help the crew in some way. Or they may *want* to.

Joe Palca: It's hardly the Wild West, but human space travel has a bit of Wild West flavor.

NOTES

* on entend bien un "s" ici, à la fin de *spacecraft*. Ceci semble s'entendre de plus en plus, d'après Wiktionary. Voir aussi un site comme [Universe Today](#). En revanche, aucun « s » ne figure à la fin de ce mot lorsque Joe Palca parle...

* *shell out*: *spend* (informal)

* ce sont là 3 **noms de compagnies**.

* **FAA** : *Federal Aviation Administration*.

* aussi orthographié *a whole nuther story* (langue familière).