



The December 15 'MHP' Syllabus

12/14/13

The American people are no strangers to crippling bipartisan Congressional bickering. We've even become immune to intra-party mudslinging. What we don't often have the opportunity to see is a leader of a major party throwing his hands up in exasperation at the unending criticism from his own party's interest groups.

We saw just that this week when House Speaker John Boehner had enough with outside conservative groups like the Club for Growth, the Cato Institute, and Heritage Action for America criticizing the new budget deal. But are the naysayers standing up against big government or just infuriating their allies? On Sunday's *Melissa Harris-Perry*, our host will hash out the [ridiculous](#) Republican rumble and also touch on some drama within the Democrats when it comes to Senator [Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts](#).

The holidays aren't just a time to add peppermint and tinsel to everything; they are a time of self-reflection, a time to appreciate the things we have, and a time to give to those who are less fortunate. One of the easier ways to give back this time of year is to drop a dollar or some coins into a red tin swinging next to a hand-bell wielding Santa.

But giving money to a charity only goes so far. On Sunday, host Melissa Harris-Perry will examine a new type of charity. Coined as "venture philanthropy," donors give money to those trying to start their own businesses instead of giving money to a single charity.

Harris-Perry will also welcome Shannon Watts, a concerned mom and founder of [Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America](#), to discuss the outside influence visited on communities and states by the gun-rights lobby. Read [this Mother Jones report](#) on the Second Amendment Foundation, whose video on "equal gun rights" you can view [here](#).

We thought this week couldn't get any better after Beyoncé dropped a brand-new secret album in the middle of the night. Well, it turns out it can, because award-winning poet Nikki Giovanni will be live in #nerdland to talk about her new book [Chasing Utopia: A Hybrid](#).