

## Fueling the far-right fire

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Nancy MacLean's *Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Right's Stealth Plan for America* (Viking/Penguin Random House, 2017) was a National Book Award finalist and one of Oprah Winfrey's top 20 summer reads. It is a compelling, scholarly work with an unambiguous political orientation about ideas that have fueled the rise of a far right that puts financial interests over people at the expense of the majority that requires a variety of government services — from public schools to Social Security. MacLean examined the archives of economist and Nobel laureate James Buchanan (1919-2013), an early libertarian thinker whose beliefs eventually dovetailed with the philosophies and financial resources of the Cato Institute, funded by the brothers Charles and David Koch.

MacLean, the William H. Chafe Professor of History and Public Policy at Duke University, has penned a controversial takedown of conservative ideology that goes down like a tall glass of water for many Democrats and conspiracy-theory aficionados. And she attracted the critical ire of many right-wing academics as well as some from the center and the left, who have accused MacLean of misrepresenting and misquoting her subjects and making inaccurate connections and conclusions.

MacLean appears in discussion with Greg Grandin as part of the Lannan Foundation's Cultural Freedom series at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 7, at the Lensic Performing Arts Center (211 W. San Francisco St.). Grandin is a professor of history at New York University and the author of several books including *Kissinger's Shadow: The Long Reach of America's Most Controversial Statesman* (2015) and the forthcoming *The Wall: The Meaning of the Border in the New America* (MacMillan Publishers). Tickets are \$8 general admission, \$5 students and seniors, available from [ticketssantafe.org](http://ticketssantafe.org) or by calling the Lensic box office at 505-988-1234.