

good storyteller, and that's power."

And what is Trump's story that swayed a majority of American voters? I ask. "The physiocratic story of, 'I have something and others are taking it away, and we should just keep it to ourselves,'" he says. "It's a very natural story."

The word, which sends me to the dictionary later, is a reference to an 18th-century school of economic thought. The philosophy predated Adam Smith's work on the benefits of free trade or David Ricardo's theory of comparative advantage — the notion that nations can prosper by producing what they can most efficiently — and, like Trump, makes no allowance for them.

"He just strips it out — it's almost physical," Banerjee says of the president-elect's rhetoric on trade. "Your body, they're taking your blood out."

Economists need to counter claims like these by telling their own, better stories. "To make a world where good ideas win, we have to tell them in ways that are intelligible."

I ask whether he thinks Trump voters are economically illiterate, but Banerjee resists the label. "At some deep level it's rational," he says, speaking about the stagnation of real wages for many workers since the early 1970s, despite a more than doubling in GDP. He lays much of the blame on the Reagan revolution.

"Where your workers used to be paid one-60th of the boss and now they're paid one-60,000th of the boss," he says. "There were norms in society about what's reasonable and what is not . . . I think there was a shift in norms."

I ask Banerjee whether he considers

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