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Mayor Emanuel Interviews Columnist and Author Thomas Friedman on “Chicago Stories” Podcast

On this week's episode of “[Chicago Stories](#)” podcast, Mayor Emanuel was joined by Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist and author Thomas Friedman for a spirited conversation about the complex forces shaping our world, where they came from, and how to sustainably navigate where they're going.

As Friedman told Mayor Emanuel, it's an absolutely unique moment to be alive—not just in human history, but for global history as well.

“This is the ‘new-new,’” Friedman said. “We're in a moment of three non-linear accelerations, all at the same time, with the three largest forces on the planet, which I call the Market, Mother Nature, and Moore's Law.”

The “Market,” as Friedman outlined, is digital globalization which is both tying the world together in some ways, while isolating it in others. “Mother Nature,” meanwhile, is the confluence of climate change, biodiversity loss, and population growth in the developing world. And finally Moore's Law, which is the exponential acceleration of technological development coined by Intel co-founder Gordon Moore over 50 years ago.

It's these three simultaneous events, Friedman said, which are moving everything from “later” to “now.”

“The way I think about it is that we're in the middle of three climate changes at once,” Friedman told Mayor Emanuel. “The city, the company, the school, the community that most closely mirrors Mother Nature's strategies for building resilience and propulsion when the climate changes is the one that will thrive in this age of acceleration.”

But that's not to say that going faster is the key to surviving, or even thriving. In fact, Friedman argues it's just the opposite.

“I believe the faster the world gets, the more everything old and slow matters more than ever—it's all the stuff you can't download,” Friedman said. “Good parenting to good child, good mentor to good

mentee, good government to good citizen, good preacher to good flock. It's all the old stuff that I think matters more."

The evidence of that is all around us. As Friedman noted to Mayor Emanuel, while the public has become besotted with the ethos of companies—particularly in the tech space—to “move fast and break things,” those companies that showed that while break things they did, they also didn't have any ideas on how to fix things.

“When you press the pause button on a computer, it stops, but when you press the pause button on a human, it starts,” Friedman said. “That's when it starts to connect, reflect, reimagine.”

Be sure to listen to the rest of the conversation as Friedman and Mayor Emanuel talk about the clash between the worlds of “order” and “disorder,” some of the big things the American elite missed after the end of the Cold War, and what Friedman has on his new business card.

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