

A Conversation with LEON and AMY KASS

Amy and Leon Kass met at the University of Chicago in the 1950s. Leon R. Kass, M.D., is the Madden-Jewett Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, and Harding Professor Emeritus in the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago. Amy A. Kass is a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, Senior Lecturer Emerita in the humanities at the University of Chicago. From 2001 to 2005, Leon was chairman of the President's Council on Bioethics. Amy was the founding director of the nationwide Tocqueville Seminars on Civic Leadership, and, more recently, the nationwide Dialogues on Civic Philanthropy. The Kassses are co-editors of the literary anthology, [*What So Proudly We Hail: The American Soul in Story, Speech, and Song.*](#)

In their conversation with Bill Kristol, this teaching duo and long-time married couple discuss the course of the liberal arts education, dating, love and friendship and their years at the University of Chicago.

On teaching, Amy Kass says: *"I've never met a young person who didn't take himself or herself seriously. And if you reciprocate that, if you take them as seriously as they do and ask questions that they can understand and about things are urgent for them, they rise to the occasion. And in many cases, they're better than even they thought they could be."*

On his early days at the University of Chicago, Leon Kass notes: *"We regarded ourselves as the defenders of the faith against the barbarians who had taken over and who wanted to turn the University of Chicago into a place that would be a home for brawn and beauty as well as brains, as one of the deans then put it."*

Chapter Links to AMY and LEON KASS Conversation

[Memories of the University of Chicago](#)

[Towards Liberal Education](#)

[Teaching Great Books](#)

[Men, Women, Courtship](#)

[Dating, Love, Friendship](#)

[What So Proudly We Hail](#)