

CONVERSATIONS

WITH BILL KRISTOL

Conversations with Bill Kristol

Guest: Christina Hoff Sommers, Resident Scholar, American Enterprise Institute

Taped August 16, 2017

Table of Contents

[I: Free Speech and Corporate America 0:15 – 35:48](#)

[II. Gamergate and Online Trolling 35:48 – 1:01:45](#)

I: Free Speech and Corporate America (0:15 – 35:48)

KRISTOL: Hi, I'm Bill Kristol. Welcome to CONVERSATIONS. I'm very glad to be joined, again, by Christina Sommers, a resident scholar – is that right? Yes. At the American Enterprise Institute. I can't keep all those fancy think-tank titles straight, you know? We talked two years ago. It was a fascinating conversation, as I trust this will be.

You're, of course, well known for many serious scholarly works, for your "Factual Feminist" videos. You might say a word about those and where people can find them. Also a very prominent tweeter. We could have a whole separate conversation about whether Twitter is good or bad for the country –

SOMMERS: For our mental health and for our –

KRISTOL: – For our minds. Yes. You can follow Christina on Twitter as well. But thank you for joining me today.

SOMMERS: Delighted to be here.

KRISTOL: And it's the summer of 2017, and you've been a student of political correctness on campuses and the victim of political – or, they've tried to make you a victim of political correctness on campuses.

And then, about a month ago, we have this big incident at Google and this fellow is fired for his politically incorrect memo. What's going on? I mean, should people like me be alarmed that it began on the campuses and now it's spreading to the largest corporations in America? Is that true? Too simple?

SOMMERS: Yeah, it is alarming if what we are seeing is, you know, the campus callout culture – trigger warnings and safe spaces – should that move into Silicon Valley, worrisome, indeed. But now that I've thought about it more carefully, I can sort of understand both sides. I understand why people are horrified that anyone was offended by a memo that seemed to be telling the truth.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: On the other hand, I can see why some at Google would have been offended by it. I don't think he should have been fired. I think it would have been a good occasion for them to talk to one another. So, I'm not yet sure that it means that Google is going to go the way of Tumblr, with Tumblr feminists running the show with all of their indignation and hyper, you know, grievance collecting and, you know, carrying on. I don't think that's happened, but it might.

KRISTOL: So, stepping back: I mean, how worried should we be about freedom of speech, freedom of thought in America as whole? I mean, is it a –

SOMMERS: Definitely worried. We should be worried, because as I said, what's happened on campus is that, in many ways, the cultural left has been able to shut down conservative debate.

KRISTOL: And has that gotten worse, do you think, over the last couple of years since –

SOMMERS: Oh, yes. It's right now at crisis levels. I mean, first of all, you bring in a speaker. You have no idea, well, even if you're *allowed* to bring them in. And secondly, will there be demonstrators that will silence them? What we saw with [Charles Murray](#), at Claremont, and – I mean at Middlebury, and at Claremont it was Heather Mac Donald.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: And I'm worried that this year it's going to be even worse.

KRISTOL: Is that right?

SOMMERS: Because yes, you know, people are more and more polarized and angry. And that's why, with the Google situation, initially I just, you know, was outraged and was tweeting about it, and said, "Oh, it's the pink police state, and it's moved into Google." But I've had some second thoughts. And I'll tell you why.

KRISTOL: Yeah, tell me.

SOMMERS: I'll tell you what I think of the best – the concerns for both sides. The young man, James Damore, in his memo, it was an internal memo, for a site at Google where you debate policies, and that's what he was doing. So, from his point of view it was totally legitimate.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: Apparently he had attended some kind of diversity seminar and had heard a lot of what he judged to be pseudoscience. I don't know exactly what he heard there, but it is typical that you do get a lot of pseudoscience. They treat the research on "implicit bias" as though it's settled science. It's not. In fact, it's discredited in many quarters. And maybe there were false statistics; maybe it was just simplistic. It annoyed him. And he didn't think it was the way to go, so he wrote a memo, objected to it, and it was completely civil.

And he did refer to a large body of evidence that shows, on average, men and women are *not* the same. You will find far more women than men in caring and helping professions. You'll find more men in the people-free zones, you know. It was petroleum engineers or metallurgists or naval architects, far more men. You look at graduates, you know, there are more women in college, but women are far more likely to major in psychology: something over 70 percent of the majors. But men got 82 percent of the degrees in computer science last year, and years before. So –

KRISTOL: And these colleges are not run by people who would not be interested in having more women in those fields, right?

SOMMERS: No. And this is after years and years of, you know, workshops and all sorts of programs to get more women into the sciences. So, it's pretty good evidence that, maybe, women are less interested – and he said so. And then he speculated on some biological underpinnings of male/female differences and the configuration of men and women in the workplace.

So to a lot of people, it was just outrageous. It looked as though Google was punishing him for telling the truth.

Now, where I have some sympathy for the women at Google is this: If you look at – let's take, you know, there were 82 percent of the majors were males. Well, 18 percent were female. So there are women who are computer-science majors. And there's something called *statistical discrimination*, where you will take, you know, you'll take aggregate group differences and then apply them to an individual. And that's often unfair. What might be true, you know, across a population is not true in an individual. And it's probably the case that these young women, because they are outliers overall, maybe all their lives they've been, you know, sometimes underestimated or denigrated.

I just read about a competition that Google runs every year. I think they've been doing it since 2005. And it's a competition in coding. And every year thousands of people compete to be, you know, and the problems are inconceivably hard. And they do about four rounds, and they get it down to 25 or 30 people and then they fly them to a city and they have the finals of this "Google code jam."

Well, someone had written that oh, only men have ever been finalists. And I thought to myself, it just seemed implausible. There must have been a girl. And I found a young woman who had, one, I think, who had been a finalist, not the winner. It's always been a male winner, and it's almost all men. It is – as far as I can see, there's only been one woman. What was her name? Natalie, Natalia – oh, I'm forgetting her name, but she's from Russia.

Now, imagine that you are this young woman and you've won this, and let's suppose you get – she doesn't have a job at Google, but she could have. But then you exist in the sort of milieu of suspicion where people are applying categories of, you know, the average *when you're so far above average*. And these women at Google are so far above average when it comes to their math skills and their spatial reasoning. I mean, they're not typical. So they may have read this and felt like he was, in some ways, encouraging a sort of belittling attitude towards them. Now, some of them are probably, you know, impervious to it. They know they're different and they're used to, you know.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: And they may get some favoritism, too – but others will be very sensitive to it. And if you have men that work there and they have, you know, a brilliant woman like this Natalia from Russia and they see people underestimating her, it can be infuriating.

So I think that was all about that. They know that there are these stereotypes and women have been harmed by them.

Having said that, and now seeing both sides, because it's Google and because it's not the campus and, you know, these are reasonable people, well, I'm just not sure why it wouldn't have been better to sort of talk about it and explain to James Damore *why* they reacted that way. And he seems like a nice young man. He doesn't have a lot of ill will. He doesn't seem to have any ill will. I don't think he expected this. So it could have been handled better.

KRISTOL: And whatever the merits on this individual case, I do think the big message that went out and, having followed on all kinds of other things that have happened in the corporate world, and maybe especially in Silicon Valley, I would say, with Mozilla – was it the Firefox or Mozilla? I can't remember anymore.

SOMMERS: Oh, yeah. Yes. Eric –

KRISTOL: Yeah. Brendan Eich, or Eric Eich or whatever.

SOMMERS: Brendan. Brendan. Whatever.

KRISTOL: I think we know someone else named Eric Eich, but whatever. Yeah. I mean –

SOMMERS: Oh, yeah, Eric.

KRISTOL: People seem – yeah, I mean, I think there's a sense of, gee, can you say what you think and –

SOMMERS: Well, you know, I would be worried about that because what may happen. And this is where Google has to be very careful right now because they did make a mistake, I think, in firing him and not taking a more judicious and, you know, just open-minded approach while being protective of the women.

Because they didn't do that, now, they might be tempted to go overboard. And this is what happened on the campus: they just throw lots of money, you know, sort of denying a reality. The reality is that you're not going to get 50 percent; it's very unlikely. There's just no evidence that you're going to suddenly change the preferences of vast numbers of women in the country, and suddenly there will be 50 percent of the pool of applicants to be engineers at Google. It's very unlikely. And to pretend otherwise is ridiculous.

So they can't bury reality, and we especially don't want them doing, you know, in Silicon Valley and they have this power. And then, if it becomes politicized, with that kind of power, you worry – are they going to start shaping, you know, when people search for things and edit out opinions they deem troublesome or dangerous? I mean, I'm not saying they're doing that or going to do that, but I think they have to be careful.

KRISTOL: How much has it become sort of unrespectable to say, "We should have equal opportunity; we should have antidiscrimination laws, and so forth. We maybe should have extra recruitment for groups that have historically been underrepresented. But, at the end of the day, it's not required or even expected that every group will be equally distributed, and especially, the two genders." I mean, that does seem to be the heart of it, isn't it?

SOMMERS: That's the heart of it.

KRISTOL: Feminism seems to, you know – I mean, there are occasional issues with alleged discrimination or insensitivity to gays or transgender or, of course, racial minorities, Latinos, but I do think the woman issue is kind of the –

SOMMERS: With the women there appear to be genuine differences. At the mean, you know, you will find, you know, as I said, that there are characteristics – he brought them up in his memo – of women being, you know, more nurturing and more prone to, you know, certain personalities. There are just personality differences on average. And in fact, it's quite interesting that, the freer and more egalitarian the society, the more sort of people embody the stereotypes.

KRISTOL: Yeah, that's funny.

SOMMERS: In some part because they're free to be who they are and there's just higher levels –

KRISTOL: Whereas in Eastern Europe or Russia, the Soviet Union, they sort of forced women to do that.

SOMMERS: Yeah. People say, oh, there are more coders, or more, you know. Or there are more, you know, women engineers in Mexico and Malaysia than there are in the United States. Well, it may be because, in a wealthier country, people are freer to do what they truly wanted, what's, you know, in their heart.

KRISTOL: Yeah.

SOMMERS: And an interesting thing about women who are math prodigies is they are often also verbal prodigies. And so they have – and it's not true of males. The males who, you know, will score off the charts, just freakishly high IQs, but we have very good studies by David Lubinski. He's at Vanderbilt. They studied these child prodigies and they find that the boys who were math geniuses, they almost all go into math or math-related fields.

Whereas the women are all over the charts, because they can end up being – short story [writer], you know, writing children's stories or become doctors or become journalists. They do all sorts of things. They're less predictable. And so, it's not necessarily discrimination that's holding women back. There are differences between the sexes that explain a lot of the difference.

But, I will say, there is the statistical discrimination where people do apply stereotypes to people they don't apply to, and that's something we should be aware of, too.

KRISTOL: But I guess the question is will we, going forward – I mean, will it be respectable to say look, it's okay, you know, in 20 years – There's not much discrimination going on. We've kind of taken care of the "traditional discrimination," you might say; that those people have aged out. And let the chips fall where they may, and we're not going to have a heart attack if this particular industry is 80 percent male.

SOMMERS: Right.

KRISTOL: And this particular industry is 65 percent female.

SOMMERS: You said it before –

KRISTOL: But do you think that's possible? I mean, do you think the culture will permit that kind of, let's say, relaxed attitude towards the chips falling where they may? Or are we going to have a country where we're going to spend endlessly chasing our tail to kind of –

SOMMERS: We'll all be in workshops where we have to learn not to say what we know is true.

It worries me because there is a kind of gender-bias industry. And I have watched it for years. And they almost always – well, I don't want to – well, yeah, almost always exaggerate – they'll exaggerate women's victimization or how unfair women are [treated]. And they'll have advocacy studies; they have – there's just been, you know, an avalanche of these sort of faux studies. The American Association of University Women is behind many of them.

And they're very poorly done; they're always pushing an agenda. So again, people in Silicon Valley can think they're right not only for a good reason – that they are aware of statistical discrimination – but for the bad reason that they've been influenced by this propaganda that comes from gender studies or gender-activist groups. And there are hundreds and maybe thousands of these groups. I mean, not just women studies, but different centers and little committees within all of the sciences.

And you tend to get very, you know, sort of activist scholars, or just activists, who are really wanting to push an agenda rather than to find out the truth and be reasonable. So, I think they have to be careful not to give in to these groups. And if they have a workshop, bring in people, reasonable people from both sides, not only within the gender-equity industry but responsible critics.

KRISTOL: And do they? I mean, it's corporate America. What's your experience been?

SOMMERS: I haven't seen it. You know, I haven't really paid that much attention.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: Because I've largely focused on the campus, but if they're going to start – if what's happened on the campus is going to happen in corporate America, then we do have to pay very close attention and do what we can.

But sometimes I think, I just throw up my arms and say, you know, we just have to let itself play itself out.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: Because I thought years ago that a lot of the excesses of political correctness – not all political correctness is bad. Some of it is just good manners.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: I think we'd be better if we tried to promote good manners and stopped being politically correct and scolding and, you know people.

But I noticed a long time ago that, when I was doing the battles on the campus – just the other day I was looking at a book by – what's his – I think it's Richard Bernstein. He worked for the *New York Times*.

KRISTOL: Yeah, yeah.

SOMMERS: Called *The Tyranny of Virtue*.

KRISTOL: Yeah, I remember that.

SOMMERS: And I remember reading that book and thinking, "That's it; he's got them." You know, he was looking at a lot of the extreme, you know, extreme multiculturalism, extreme political correctness. He had a very good analysis and good, you know, just – if anything could have stopped it, I thought this is going to soar to the top of the best seller list; it's going to change the culture. It didn't make any difference.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: We had the arguments and we had a lot of, you know, good people on our side. I think we lost the war because – well, I've said this before – because they had the assistant professors, and they had the schools of education, and they –so, it's almost as if it doesn't matter that truth and logic is on your side. They had other advantages.

KRISTOL: I mean, I've tended to the view, which I guess is what you're sort of implying, that, in the real world, reality matters. And therefore, you know, you can have a fair amount of, what I would regard – maybe you would – as annoying political correctness, and sometimes really unfair and damaging to people's careers, but at the end of the day, someone else will start a business.

SOMMERS: Yeah.

KRISTOL: And if they're good at it, they'll sell their product. And as long as – they obviously shouldn't break laws and discriminate. But I mean, they're not going to be, it's not going to be like campuses somehow; that there is something so artificial about the modern university, a combination of tenure and

the way people are recruited, I suppose – and I’m sure many other things I haven’t thought of – the way the disciplines work, that, presumably, makes what happens in the universities somewhat *sui generis*. I don’t know. I mean that would be, I guess, the question. The universities have been utterly, as you say, kind of amazingly resistant, wouldn’t you say, to reform?

SOMMERS: Reform.

KRISTOL: To reform. Generally.

SOMMERS: Well, again, it’s certain departments. I think it’s still possible a student – a friend of mine’s son just started Yale, and he’s a conservative, and he was prepared, you know, to take to the – and he said it’s kind of normal and he doesn’t really see these people that he saw in the videos, you know.

KRISTOL: Is that right?

SOMMERS: They don’t seem to – so I think, you know, we can overstate how bad it is, but in certain departments I know how bad it is.

I mean, in gender studies there is *no* intellectual diversity. They tend to discredit critics, and I think they’ve given over to conspiracy theories. In ethnic studies, gender studies, American studies, those “area” studies. They’re just not accountable to reality and don’t accept any criticism outside their own, little, elite circle.

So that is a problem. But can that come into mainstream society? I think in this way it could, with free speech. Which is, if you go to the HR – let’s take microaggression alerts. It was alarming to me that they have microaggression lists at Google and workshops, because this is a theory which came largely from a professor at Columbia University, I think Teachers College, Derald Sue, who claimed that slights, not overt insults. We all know overt insults can be upsetting, if you use a racial epithet or something. But he said there are all these kind of hidden putdowns. And he suggests that these are terribly damaging. They’re undermining the confidence. He thinks it’s even, you know, compromising the life expectancy of minority groups on campus, and women, when people will say things, you know –

Let’s suppose you’re a Hispanic family or Asian and people, an American, will say, “Where are you from?” even though you’re from Arizona. So they have some things; they have lists. And some of them we would all agree would be so rude to say to someone. Of course, I do ask – I ask everyone where they’re from because I’m curious; and if they have an accent, I want to know where they’re from, because maybe I was there. Because I think it’s friendly. So I’m not going to stop doing it. But if someone is an American –

KRISTOL: Right. Right.

SOMMERS: [inaudible] But anyway, they have these lists. But then, of course, Derald Sue, you look at his lists, some of it makes sense. But then he’ll say speaking about America as “a melting pot,” that’s a microaggression. Or even talking about “the American dream.”

So then you begin to see them imposing their political views, the kind of far-left agenda, and calling it, you know, you’re creating a hostile work environment if you – An example is calling women “you guys.” “Hey, you guys,” you know? Well, recently, some scholars just, you know, looked into the research to see what does this mean.

They found – basically, Scott Lilienfeld at Emory University did an excellent critique, and he said they haven’t defined what a microaggression is, so it’s sort of anything they want it to be; they haven’t shown that the majority of the group that supposedly is affected is insulted. I mean, I’m a woman. I don’t mind being called “you guys.” So, who wrote that? And they haven’t shown that it really does any harm.

Yet we're suddenly – but if you have someone in HR, it's their full – You know, you can see a company bringing in one of these “experts” on microaggressions and suddenly there's a list of forbidden words. So they're words you can't say.

And, if it's whole political ideas – and here's another thing that worries me about Google: It's possible that the reason they fired him wasn't because they wanted to but because they're afraid of a lawsuit.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: Not just for wage discrimination, but there could be a hostile-environment lawsuit because people can use Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and claim that by, you know, cite all of the, people's microaggressions, and they could call this memo, that it made them feel uncomfortable; it made them feel they weren't wanted.

And if Google did nothing, that would maybe show that they had fallen down and created a hostile environment. So now it worries me that, in corporate America, if they keep going this way, they're going to privilege left-wing views, because those don't violate, you know – you can say anything you want and “microaggress” against conservatives or men or, you know, whatever group. But suddenly, these groups, these arguments of the far left, the far, sort of, gender activists, they become sacrosanct.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: And then the company has to protect them. And if you say anything – imagine going to one of these workshops and someone gives you a list of words. I'd want to stand up, you know. But if you're a guy? So then, you have to be quiet.

So there's where you see, we begin to be very cautious and people are going to hold back and not say what they think, and that makes us a less-free country. The self-censorship that's going to be necessary.

KRISTOL: Yeah, that's what strikes me. I hope your friend's son at Yale does well and doesn't encounter these problems. But, I've been struck – I teach a little bit – sometimes a week, but even just one class or even a kind of guest, you know, lunch with students, some of these summer programs in Washington, especially. And I've always tried to ask them, and they're mostly – they're not mostly conservative, but they're mostly not-left wing, I guess, if they're in these programs. They're sort of more traditional, great books, and so they tend to attract a certain kind of student.

And I try to ask them, “What's it like on campus?” And I would say, I would usually preface this by saying, “Am I right that the political” – I mean I'm against political correctness, and I'm against, obviously, infringing on free speech and, especially, on free thought. But, you know, “Is the problem overstated?” I would say five, eight, 10 years ago. And people would often say, “Yeah. I mean, there are pockets that are crazy, and I wouldn't major” – these people would say, women would say – “in women studies, or – there are certain classes which are notorious.” But, basically, it seemed like a respectable, something like liberal education.

I was a little struck the last two or three years that people said, “No, no. We don't say – until we know about a certain professor, or until we know the other students in the class, there are things we won't say and sometimes we just won't say them at all.”

The risk is so great, you know. One person in the class is offended by one question you ask in a class on sociology or political philosophy or psychology, about gender differences or something, and suddenly you're hauled before some tribunal, and your name is in this college paper and god knows what's happening. And what's the point of the risk?

But then you really are dealing with a, you know, curtailing of both free speech and, at some level, free *thought*, almost. Because –

SOMMERS: Yeah. No. And there's a kind of almost criminalization of conservative thought. Suppose you have dissident views on immigration. You don't think that having sanctuary cities makes any sense and you want – Or on affirmative action. So that's what I'm saying is they're sort of treating sort of standard positions, conservative positions as if they are toxic and against the law.

So I, you know, I didn't want to say I don't think it's a problem on campus.

Although, I do think if you're in certain departments – in the overall, you might not run into it. But boy, *I do* run into it, because last year I spoke at several campuses and, wow. The faculty would come to spar and debate, and they are farther to the left than ever.

And they don't just treat me as, in the past was just, you know, oh, someone who's misguided and please, you know, you're wrong. Now it's almost as if I'm the incarnation of evil.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: And just having – I'm a moderate feminist, and I try to show them we don't need to go all the way to radicalism, and what's wrong with that and bring back to reality.

And, you know, there are demonstrations and there are furious people. And it's clear to me that there's no place in the curriculum on certain topics. You're just not – they're not getting standard information. There's a lot of propaganda. And not only in gender studies. I worry even the way history is taught.

KRISTOL: Right. And the whole safe spaces stuff – I mean, does encourage a way of thinking about intellectual discourse, and in a way, about life, that seems to be deeply misguided.

SOMMERS: This culture of fragility.

KRISTOL: I mean, right. You don't really want people to have the attitude, if I'm offended, based on my 19-year-old, you know, beliefs and sensitivities, that somehow something can't be raised. No one would ever learn anything, it seems to me?

SOMMERS: No. But they can now control everyone by saying they're offended. And again, what you were saying before is we might not even see it. But you're a kid in a dorm, you don't know. You know, you say something that's completely normal and then someone is, "I'm offended by that." You said "you guys," or you said another thing. Okay. So what do you do? And I think more and more you're going to find students just kind of retreating and will only be themselves with some trusted friends.

What worries me on campus now is this *intersectionality*. It's all the rage.

KRISTOL: Yeah, yeah. So, explain that. I've never quite understood that. It's too complicated a word for me.

SOMMERS: Oh, god. It's –

KRISTOL: Or maybe it's not worth--

SOMMERS: Oh, no, no. I'll explain it. It's an idea. And it has a surface plausibility.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: But it's the idea that when you are, you know, if you're working in social policy or even an activist and you're addressing the problems of women or any group, you know, the disabled, African Americans, Asian, you have to consider people's identities.

And, in some cases, these are very complex and might be lost. Oh, I want a good policy for women. Well, what if it's an African American woman? Or an older woman who's also disabled and who's a lesbian? They might need different policies. So, you have to be sensitive to differences and, especially, to multiply oppressed people.

So then what happened – so okay, fine. What do you do after that? And there are psychologists that do intersectional analysis, and that's fine. You just consider people's complicated identities.

But now it's become a full-fledged movement on campus, where everyone is sort of divided, and it's very tribalistic. And so you have hierarchies: The more oppressed you are, the more complex your identity, the more you're valorized.

And then those who are, you know, at the bottom of this hierarchy now are, you know, white male. And this white male is told to keep quiet and listen, because the theory is – and this is Patricia Collins, one of the theorists of intersectional theory, feminist – intersectional feminism. She says that – she has a textbook and, lots of books – and she says that there is something called *subordinated knowledge*. I guess she got it from Foucault.

But this subordinated knowledge is this wisdom of the oppressed. And it's hidden even from the oppressed. They can have false consciousness and not know it. But if they have clarity in a safe space where they can talk to one another, then an oppressed group will get to this "true knowledge" about their oppression, and they're not going to be – they can easily be misled by, especially by men, masculinist hegemony who are going to use logic and reason to talk them out of it. So they're suspicious of logic and reason. They prefer lived experience and narratives, tell stories. So you'll find a lot of classrooms now where they're, you know, you're listening to people from oppressed groups tell their stories, and this is supposed to be a source of knowledge and, you know, a supreme kind of enlightenment.

Well, what is this? I mean, there are a lot of stories out there, and there are a lot of identities. And if we keep dividing, you know, it will continue. All of us are, you know, a collision of many, many different identities.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: But they have these hierarchies, and it's now very punishing because, as I said, those who, you know, those who are above get to tell you to shut up and you have to listen to them. And they are calling each other out, and they're all being triggered and, you know, wanting their safe space.

So it's this metaphysics of oppression that has nothing to do with reality. And it's a conspiracy theory. There's no way to prove it. If you challenge it, that just shows you don't understand it or you're part of the problem it's trying to solve. So you can't challenge it. I've tried. I go to the campus and try to challenge it and, "You're speaking as a white, middle-class woman," you know.

And then I'll say, "Well, I am a woman of age, and I'm Jewish." That gives me – well, I don't know. Judaism now, actually –

KRISTOL: Does that give you credit now? The opposite, I think. Yeah.

SOMMERS: No. You know what gives you credit is being a Muslim, you know, is higher than anything. So you'll find the women's movement is now sort of, you know, not going after radical Islam but embracing people like Linda Sarsour.

KRISTOL: Yeah.

SOMMERS: Who's, you know, said some pretty harsh things about people like Ayaan Hirsi Ali and some very illiberal things, seeming to endorse sharia law.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: But somehow she's moved to the top of this kind of, you know, these privilege hierarchies. She's on top.

So it's a dysfunctional theory. It's tearing us apart when we should be coming together. And students on campus, they should be finding what they have in common as individuals, but this is a – I think it's regressive, too, because it has a notion of collective guilt.

KRISTOL: Yeah.

SOMMERS: And as I said, not viewing people as individuals but members of a group and you bear the impress – you know, every bad thing that group did and the worst things they've done, you're responsible for.

So, you know, you get kids going to the campus – I do think it's, you know, very unhealthy and confusing. And I hope it stops soon, but I don't see any sign of it.

KRISTOL: One point you made in our last conversation that very much struck me and I hadn't really thought about it as much before was, one sees from outside the political correctness and it seems to go on and get a little worse, but there was a key inflection point when the weight of the law was brought to bear.

SOMMERS: Yes.

KRISTOL: In a sense, and Title IX, I guess, in 2011, was it?

SOMMERS: The "Dear Colleague" letter.

KRISTOL: The "Dear Colleague" letter from the Obama administration. And I guess, in corporate America Title VII has some of the same issues.

SOMMERS: They're going to use Title VII the same way. They're activist lawyers.

KRISTOL: That's something, I guess, those of us who are on the side of freedom here should – that's fixable by legislation or by executive action. The Title IX stuff is entirely executive branch, right? There was no – Congress didn't change the law. They just, the Education Department under President Obama decided to send that letter out. So, I mean, how much would it help to have serious attempts at the federal level to make sure the law wasn't backing up attempts to suppress free speech?

SOMMERS: It's good but it's not good enough, and I'll tell you why. Right now I think that the activists have come so far with Title IX and with these new definitions of assault and lowering the standards of proof, I'm afraid some state legislatures are going to pass the equivalent because they've done such a good job presenting their side.

So I think where conservatives have fallen down is, you know, we don't have the intellectuals. We've got to have – of course, you know, it's hard if you don't have any chance at being the professors, but they have the scholars; they have these institutes that work night and day doing nothing else but trying to

figure out – I mean, there was a conscious effort. Once they didn't, the feminist groups, didn't win the ERA, they did see that Title IX was another means to bring it about, for better or worse.

And with, you know, a lot of consequences that just are not making us a more just or happier country because when it's pushed by ideologues. There needs to be a challenge from conservatives, and we need more, you know – but there aren't that many conservative gender scholars or conservative ethnic scholars.

But this critical theory and now this intersectionality, which is a sort of, you know, it's derived from that; it's a very simplistic version. But there it is, and it's a kind of warmed-over Marxism, I guess.

But someone needs to push back. So you have liberals on the campus, I'm hoping they will. There's some signs they don't want their campus to break apart into warring tribes and where knowledge is – you know, "masculinist Western knowledge" – is discredited because of this, "you know, we only want this subordinated knowledge."

I mean, that *can* happen, but somebody's got to do the hard work of organizing conferences, challenging these people and this scholarship. And it's in the textbooks. It's, you know, students are reading about intersectionality as if it's, you know, this settled view of the world.

II. Gamergate and Online Trolling (35:48 – 1:01:45)

KRISTOL: I think when we had this conversation, or when we had our conversation two years ago, we were somewhat optimistic. I mean, I was at least, because you had been so involved in the fight over #Gamergate, the fight over the games, and there had been this kind of grassroots, sort of libertarian uprising against the attempt to impose political correctness, and you had been part of that fight and a heroine of the gamers and all that.

And one thought well, okay, society is kind of fighting back, you might say. Where do you think – were we wrong to be cheered up? Where does that stand now? What lessons do you take, two years later?

SOMMERS: Yes. Well, I mean, originally I was very optimistic because the gamers did fight back. There were these cultural critics who were, you know, implicating their games in all of these pathologies of racism and sexism and homophobia, and the gamers just wanted to play games. And the gamers were pretty diverse, the ones I was hearing from, the ones I would meet.

And there were some trolls among them. I mean, it was a hashtag. Who knows who associates with a hashtag? But the core of people – there were crazies on the periphery, as there are in any movement, and some dangerous characters – but it was kind of a populist uprising of gamers from all around the world who were just tired of the scolds and the schoolmarms, you know, telling them what was wrong with them.

And, you know, if you're a gamer, you probably had a mother that didn't approve of it and, you know, your teachers, and then you get blamed every school shooting. They start, "Oh, the video-game players." And they were tired of it.

However, what happened is that once the, with the Trump presidency, there were some people – I mean a lot, the movement, the gamer movement sort of went away – but there were some trolls. And anybody who was anti-Trump, you know, and was online or something, they would go after you. Media people. #Gamergate was blamed for this, but I think #Gamergate in the media has just come to mean, you know, anybody that we really don't like on social media. And that's unfair, because the original movement was something quite different.

But you did get these trolls. And Ben Shapiro was just ruthlessly subject to anti-Semitic slurs. And I had a little bit of it, myself. I signed a petition – just some friend of mine, I guess Christine Rosen sent a petition about – and others had signed because this, Corey Lewandowski had pushed this reporter.

KRISTOL: Right. Right.

SOMMERS: And I saw it. I thought it was outrageous and I signed a petition against him. And then I started getting this anti-Semitic – and I got a glimpse. It was very ugly. And then I thought what, you know, this is awful. Who are these people? And I don't blame it on gamers, but there is this element. And now, maybe, they're called the "alt-right." They're included.

But a lot of them – I've seen some pretty good analysis. There's a woman, Angela Nagle, has just written a book about internet trolls and 4chan and so forth. And her theory is that there are a lot of young men, and they're very tech savvy – they can be hackers; they can do all sorts of things – but they were, they are just sick of the politically correct, especially on the internet like Tumblr feminists, you know, who are like so chronically outraged, and "I can't even"; everything is "problematic."

They're pushing back against that. And they go too far, because they are pranksters and they're internet shit-posters, if I can say that. And so they think it's funny when they upset people. But she wrote the other day that she thinks that movement is now in decline because of what happened in Charlottesville. That there, you've got the face of hardcore, you know, Nazi, white supremacy, and it's not so funny when you see it in real life. Someone died. It's real.

So she thinks it might shock them out of that and they'll do something else. But it's her view that there isn't a hardcore commitment to deranged right-wing fantasies. But, so we'll see what happens with that.

But again, I don't think – people are trying to say "This is #Gamergate." #Gamergate was something else, and it came and went. And then, you know, maybe – again, some of the trolls moved on, because they were in #Gamergate, too.

KRISTOL: But one hoped that this kind of populist uprising would, you know, set back political correctness some, but then the people involved in the uprising would go about their business and everything would be better. But, in a way, it seemed almost the opposite happened.

SOMMERS: No. They sort of feed on each other. Because what happened –

KRISTOL: There's a vicious cycle, right?

SOMMERS: Yes, because then they act out more.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: Then, the Tumblr feminists and others – and the journalists never help because they never really – they rarely; I don't want to say never – they rarely look into it.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: She did. In this case, Angela really looked into it, and I hope people read her. But now, so they're more and more vilified. And they'll go underground and get angrier and angrier.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: And I agree with her that they are not the same, a lot of these – they're young and they're not affiliated, the majority of them, with the people that'll go out with the guns and that we saw marching.

And this will push them somewhere; they'll do something else. I don't know what that will – she doesn't know what that will be, either.

But the political correctness, it is going to create – I think it did help, certainly helped get Trump elected.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: Because a lot of people were just *fed up*. And here was this candidate who just didn't care. He'd say whatever was on his mind. And I think people were just – and that was why, you know, the more terrible things he said –

Now here's where I wanted to come in and say "Stop!" Because you've got to be polite. You can be funny; you can be mischievous, but don't be mean. And when I saw him imitating a handicapped man, that was already like, what is this? This is crossing a line. This is not amusing. But here we are, anyway.

KRISTOL: Yeah. I mean the norms of constitutional government and liberal democracy and civil discourse got conflated into – political correctness sort of discredited all of that, or it was easy to conflate them into political correctness, and then Trump gets credit for, "Oh, he doesn't listen to the politically correct," you know?

SOMMERS: And then you could be – the ruder you were and the more uncivil and saying hateful things – it was almost as if they were given permission to do it.

And there's where I just think there's so many causes around which fair-minded liberals and conservatives could come together: On free speech. Also on political correctness, and try to move it more towards civility and away from policing and being like schoolmarmish and hyper-puritanical, calling people out for some little lapse. I mean, just take it easy.

And then I think there could be opportunities. And I'm hoping that of this tragedy in Charlottesville that maybe people will be shocked and realize – there's something wrong, I think, with civics education. I think a lot of young people don't know much about our government and our history and what it meant to have, what it means to have a constitutional democracy and those traditions of liberty.

You just don't – I see from the kids on the left, they're ready to give them up. They have a very negative view of American history, entirely negative, and they don't seem to be protective at all of our traditions of a democracy and liberty. On the other hand, you have the kids on the right who seem to be clueless, too, and they've gone off in another direction.

And I do think, again, that's something that maybe conservatives and liberals could come together about restoring civics education – put the First Amendment at the center and the Bill of Rights, democracy, and even American exceptionalism. Well, acknowledging many ways in which we were not exceptional at all. We were horrible.

But there's so much that – I mean, you can't make the perfect the enemy of the good, and overall, you know, America has been pretty good. But you don't get the sense of that in the history books. The students don't know about it, and it's creating – it's feeding extremes on both sides.

KRISTOL: Yeah. That is the problem, I think, that the political correctness and that kind of extremism certainly strengthened Trump and Trumpism, which in turn, I think we'll see this this fall on campus, is going to make it easier for the left to sort of try to –

SOMMERS: It's empowering the –

KRISTOL: – tar every –

SOMMERS: They're saying, "I told you so."

KRISTOL: Right. So if you say there might be gender differences, now you're the equivalent of Trump and the Access Hollywood tape. That's not –

SOMMERS: No. Already I saw people equating James Damore with the Nazis in Charlottesville. It's ridiculous.

But if they're thinking that way and this group, you know, willingness to libel entire groups – and, you know, someone who is Jewish, there's antisemitism now on the campus. I view a lot of these anti-Israel tirades and policies, whole departments, whole – the American studies, women studies. So, you know, they voted to boycott Israel. What's that about?

But then you see on the far right. And again, a lot of misinformation and myths and, you know, it's all too familiar, historically. So people need to realize there are dangers on both sides, and just for the long-term sanity of the country, we've got to do something about the way American history is taught.

And both sides should have some input. I'm not saying we want to whitewash it, but on the other hand, there's – it's healthy for students to have sort of a positive identification with their country. And if not America, where? I mean what country? What do they have in mind that's real on this planet that's done better? All right, maybe Iceland. But that's a small, homogenous country; it's easier to be, you know, have a good record when you're Iceland than it is – and they probably don't if you go back a few decades.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: But anyway, we need a more sensible approach to American history.

KRISTOL: And the tribalism is shocking, I find. And the degree to which, now, left and right are both tribal. And you see this especially in social media, I suppose, but even in the real world. The degree to which people are just forgetting stuff they've written and known about for decades. And picking sides, in a stupid way, as if you can't be against certain things on the left but also repudiate certain things on the right.

I mean, is that really *that* hard? I mean, no one has ever had that thought before? Didn't we go through this in much of the twentieth century?

SOMMERS: And you look at the campus right now, it's separating, and they're having like special dorms for people of color, and they're having, you know, special – and separating the kids. And then they get this intersectional theory, which is, it's a bit extreme to say it's cultic, *but it's cultic*, and simplistic and, you know. And it enrages people and it gives them permission to do to others what they say was done to them. So they otherize and dehumanize and stereotype and impute guilt to people, as they say was done to them. No. If it was done to you, then don't do it to others, and make sure it's not done to you and don't do it to others and come together.

And it used to be the ideal was that you see one another as individuals and that we have shared humanity. Where is that?

KRISTOL: And so what do you think about the future, in that respect? I mean, it doesn't seem to me that anyone has intellectually made a more convincing case against, let's just call it, classic liberalism or liberal democracy or constitutional democracy, or whatever everyone wants to call it. There haven't been

any knockdown arguments that showed up in the last 10 or 20 years that people haven't thought of 50 or 80 or 100 years ago.

Maybe it's just that suddenly, somehow liberal democracy, you know, doesn't seem to have strong adherence, or it's, you know, getting – on both sides you see real erosion, I think. I guess that's happened before, but not with very happy outcomes, right?

SOMMERS: No. So we need to have – I mean, now you're getting new coalitions forming.

KRISTOL: Right. So maybe that's helpful.

SOMMERS: And I think more scholars are going to speak out. But someone – who would have thought, in 2017, we've got to make the case for liberal democracy?

KRISTOL: Yeah.

SOMMERS: And for a free market. You know, I don't know. Again, I'm suspicious of a lot of studies, but I've read that, you know, a huge percentage, a large percentage of the millennials think socialism – they believe in, you know, state, a command economy.

Well, do they know any history? And do they know that capitalism – they say, okay. So capitalism is there now with racism and white supremacy and imperialism. No. Capitalism means economic freedom. And history shows that if you don't have economic freedom, you will be poor. Your society will be poor and probably authoritarian. And so what are they talking about?

So we have to make the case for free enterprise again. We have to make the case for free speech again. But I think – one historian I like is Paul Johnson, the British historian, partly because he likes us.

KRISTOL: Yeah, right.

SOMMERS: He calls America "the greatest of all human adventures."

And he once wrote that Americans are terrible at creating problems for themselves. They create problems that are so serious they take them almost to the brink, almost, you know, courting their own destruction. But, he said, they're also the world's greatest problem solvers, and they come through and they're saved. So, I'm thinking that we're going to get out of this.

KRISTOL: I hope so. But I do think, institutionally it's – I guess, what I've come to know is a more urgency about sort of the structures, the institutions, the checks and balances that make a liberal democracy work. In addition to sound beliefs and sound civic education and sound character, which I suppose, ultimately, are probably the most important. But there really is just, in a more practical way than I would have thought a quarter century ago – maybe this is just my deficiency of imagination – I think the case for decentralization and the case for federalism, the case for a limited government. I don't mean in some fancy theoretical sense, but I mean really, practically limited in the sense that Trump does not have as much power as a European president would have, let alone a dictatorial president, and that's good. And the government doesn't have as much power as governments in most of the world have, and the federal government doesn't have all the power because there are states and localities, and there's a private sector and, you know, these institutions that are pretty deeply embedded.

SOMMERS: Yeah.

KRISTOL: I guess I've come much more to an appreciation of how important that is. If things go off the rails in the culture, which happens, as we've seen, and can happen on both sides, you need something else to, some bulwarks, you know, to –

SOMMERS: But you also need young people who believe in it, and who are proud of it and who understand it.

And I'm almost afraid to look what's going on in schools of education where they train the teachers. I'm worried to look at the textbooks in schools of education. And it seems like a lot of it is informed by Paulo Freire, this sort of Marxist from South America with these, you know, completely chaotic, unhinged views about education. But they're widely believed. And it's almost as though there's this sort of pseudo - Marxism.

Actually, I've gone back – I'm so concerned that I've kind of gone back to see where it all came from and I'm reading the critical theorists from the Frankfurt School. I'm actually coming to like them. They were very intellectual and learned and –

KRISTOL: Yeah. They had higher-quality bad thinking in the past –

SOMMERS: Yeah. With higher-quality bad thinking.

KRISTOL: – than we have – than we have today. That's for sure.

SOMMERS: Yeah.

KRISTOL: But even that, that's a good example. So one response is to say let's fix the ed schools, which would be great, or have better textbooks.

But the other response would be, also institutionally, are there things we can do to decentralize and break up the monopolies so that would lead to, you know, educational decentralization and using the internet to educate people and not having –

SOMMERS: Yeah, the internet, but now Google won't let us.

KRISTOL: Well, that is a question, right? I mean, that's why the Google thing is a little alarming, honestly, for me, or not – as an example, let's say. I mean, I wanted to assume that, okay, some of these institutions are pretty hard to fix in the short term, but one could end-run them. We can go around them.

SOMMERS: And I also think – I think it's got to happen, that reasonable – first of all, conservatives can't fix this because we are not in the, you know, positions of power in academia, in the media. So, it's going to have to be liberals who are in academia who are going – And maybe it will be led by them and then they might influence the journalists, who, maybe, will influence, you know, Hollywood and so forth.

But they've got to start telling the American story in a more balanced and generous way, not be so poised against everything, just a history of crimes, and engender some pride in the country in younger people. And I think they will when they actually acknowledge what's going on, but I don't know. Do they have a history of –

KRISTOL: Well, *Hamilton* is a very popular musical, you know?

SOMMERS: Yeah.

KRISTOL: I've been cheered up by that, and by the fact that, over the last 20, 30 years, you know, all these popular biographies of the Founding Fathers came out, most of them not from academic historians but from some popular historians. And that made me think, well, again, you kind of sort end-run the academy. You could have a civically educated populous even if the professors of history aren't particularly good.

And that may have been too much, too hopeful. I mean, everyone does go through school and college, and even if you decentralize it a lot and have a lot of, you know, charter schools and a lot of home schooling and stuff, it's still, at the end of the day –

I guess if you control these, you know, these major institutions, it's pretty hard to – it does a lot of damage.

SOMMERS: But then again, I will say there are groups like FIRE, the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education. It's a sort of civil libertarian group. For education. They're doing a great job and garnering a lot more support. Don't give money to your college. Give it to FIRE or Heterodox Academy.

KRISTOL: Yeah, that's –

SOMMERS: It's professors, liberal and conservative, who care about classical-liberal values.

They have formed. And also I think the Federalist Society is one of the great organizations. And they have – what I like about the Federalists, they're constantly having debates. They bring in, you know, smart liberals to debate smart conservative scholars. So that's a very healthy thing. So we have to nurture those organizations. And then, I think it's people like Robbie George at Princeton and that center. You want to make sure you have *some* young conservative intellectuals, because conservatism isn't talk radio, and it isn't, you know, some kind of nationalist populism. It's a real tradition of serious ideas, going back to Aristotle.

KRISTOL: How much damage does Trump do, in your judgment, to that? That's what I've sort of been wrestling with. How much does the term almost have to be abandoned and maybe we go back to being “classical liberals” or something like that? Because I don't know, if you're 20 years old, don't you think, I don't know, with conservatism – “I haven't read Aristotle yet. All I know is Trump is the most famous conservative in America.”

SOMMERS: Right.

KRISTOL: I mean, I wonder about that, really.

SOMMERS: I wonder if we're not sort of living through one of these – you know, you don't know it when you're living through it, but it's this inflection point. And it may be the end of the Republican Party.

KRISTOL: Yeah.

SOMMERS: And we're going to get the Democratic Party split in two, and you'll get sort of the radical, Identitarian wing and a more mainstream wing.

I find when I hear people like Van John – is it Van John – not Van –

KRISTOL: Van Jones.

SOMMERS: Van Jones, Van Johnson. Van Jones, you know, he's spoken out so beautifully against identity politics and against safe spaces. And even when – I don't agree with everything, but it just seems to me that someone like that, I could see being in a political party with him.

So you may have, you know, the Van Jones Party versus the – I don't know? Who do we want to put there, as a – the Rachel Maddow Party.

KRISTOL: It takes a long time. I mean especially – so I, of course, was a kid during the sixties and, you know, my parents were involved, and then, of course, I read – I saw it happening a little bit and read about it so much later. But I underappreciated, I guess, how hard it is to abandon old – I mean, I now see why people who went through it really found it a shocking and, in some cases, almost a shattering experience.

I mean, my parents didn't; they were fine. But, you know, other people – just, you know, friends they had for 25 years they split with and, you know? But I do feel now that I'm not sure we're going through something quite like that, but I wouldn't be surprised if we look back five or 10 years from now and this is a moment where – I mean

SOMMERS: Certainly new, you know, realignment.

KRISTOL: A few days ago I was reading some of the, you know, people I *literally* worked with, I mean, in government, in politics, friends, colleagues, and reading, mostly on Twitter, of course, but occasionally even reading longer things they were writing, and thinking not just I don't agree with them, I think they're *radically* wrong on Trump. I can't believe they're saying this.

But could I like work with them again? I mean, I don't mean from some fastidious, moral point of view but just in a practical sense: Do I trust their judgment enough to sort of think that – and once you've been so wrong on such a major thing – and "I can't condemn what happened in Charlottesville" and so forth – I mean, that's why I think that is where you get to a kind of sixties – it's like liberals who saw people they had known for 20 years *not* condemning New Left violence and saying, "How could this be?"

SOMMERS: Right.

KRISTOL: But really, you end up five, 10 years later not, you know, being on the other side of those people, so to speak. And I really wonder if we're going through a moment like that. I guess it's very hard to tell when you're in the middle of it. I mean, do you have a sense? Are you struck by it as much as I am? I mean –

SOMMERS: I'm sort of agitated all the time, maybe largely because what's, you know, what did he do now? What did he tweet now? So it's dismaying. And then as I see – I do see all these realignments.

There's a young man in Los Angeles, Dave Rubin, who has a video podcast. He's bringing together free-speech liberals and conservatives.

KRISTOL: Yeah.

SOMMERS: And so that's where I sort of place my hope, because I think – he has a very young audience. And then I kind of like, as a – I'm not even really that conservative, but Ben Shapiro is very conservative.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: But he's anti-Trump. But he does a very good job sort of explaining conservative positions, and he's very funny in the way he can debate the left. So, I think – he has a huge following of young people. But I think he's a good role model, as a conservative.

KRISTOL: And do you find young people, you know, emailing you and trying to get in touch on Twitter and stuff, who aren't happy with the choices they're facing?

SOMMERS: I have like millions of views on the Factual Feminist, and I think – I looked and my demographic is very young. I mean –

KRISTOL: Is that right? That's interesting.

SOMMERS: Yeah. Well, that's where –

KRISTOL: Mostly women?

SOMMERS: No, a mix. Probably mostly guys. But no, I think it's half and half. But I haven't checked lately.

KRISTOL: If I were a young woman – not that I can put myself in those shoes very easily – I would sort of think, is this really the way society should be organized? I mean, all these doctrines, fighting.

SOMMERS: Told how oppressed I am when I have all these freedoms.

KRISTOL: Yeah. On one hand, told I'm oppressed and have to be like a tiny, you know, a snowflake and can never have safe spaces.

SOMMERS: Yeah. Have to have a safe space.

KRISTOL: And then, on the other hand, have a bunch of Trumpy-creeps who, you know, do treat women in bad ways.

SOMMERS: Do and say terrible things, yeah.

KRISTOL: Is that really kind of the choice I face here as a 20-year-old American? I'd be pretty – looking for something different, I'm sure.

SOMMERS: But I say, they're on YouTube. Younger people aren't watching CNN.

KRISTOL: Right.

SOMMERS: It's, you know, my mom is in her nineties and she watches CNN, and she may be their target demographic, their primary demographic. But they get their news on YouTube.

KRISTOL: Yeah. Well, we have these conversations, the viewership is quite young, actually; which is the point of it, so that's good. And I'm sure that's true of your feminist video.

SOMMERS: Yeah, Factual Feminist; it's a young population.

KRISTOL: Factual Feminist.

SOMMERS: And probably my Twitter feed. Although, I don't know. I'm beginning to think Twitter is just a bunch of journalists arguing at each other.

KRISTOL: Not to minimize the utility of it, of course.

SOMMERS: No. And the fun.

KRISTOL: Okay. Well, I'm cheered up now. If we think the young people are looking for a new way. But it's going to be an interesting few years, don't you think? I mean you're a student of history and of culture. These things are so unpredictable when you get in the middle of this degree of turbulence.

SOMMERS: It's unpredictable, but here's the hope: So let's say the millennials are, you know, going to be the safe-space generation. The kids coming around after them apparently are in full rebellion against it and laughing at all of the, you know, the snowflake elements. So there could be hope there, too.

KRISTOL: Well, that's a great note to end on. Christina Sommers, thanks very much for joining me today. And thank you for joining us on CONVERSATIONS.

[END]