talk about their book, *Mothers and Others: The Role of Parenthood in Politics* (Thomas and Bittner 2017). They related the great irony of how production of the book was complicated by the birth of a child. Even as they were writing and editing a book about motherhood and politics, this personal experience continued to inform the scholarship on parenting and politics. The podcast offered the opportunity to make this connection clear to the audience and deepen the importance of the research.

One of the most attractive aspects of the *New Books in Political Science Podcast* and working with the New Books Network is that it really is not that difficult to do. The technology and know-how needed to produce a podcast takes little time to master. Trying to schedule across multiple time zones can be one of the more complicated aspects of the podcasting process. Needless to say, we have each forgotten to hit "record" and faced the unpleasant consequence of needing to request a re-record with internationally renowned scholars. They have always been amazingly gracious and understanding, and it happens less today than in the earliest days of the podcast. Of course, there was the time that the FedEx delivery person rang the doorbell and the dog started barking in the midst of a three-way podcast; thankfully, it was edited out by the good folks who run the New Books Network. Now we simply make sure to ask our authors to keep their pets in another room during the recording.

Technology allows for wide and inexpensive distribution of podcasts to a global audience. It allows the audience to connect with authors and ideas in ways that, in the past, often required a significant travel budget so that political scientists could attend all of the conferences they desired and meet scholars to discuss their work face to face. For scholars outside of the United States and Europe, this problem is magnified. Podcasting does not eliminate this issue, but our podcast does offer a way to learn about new books and to hear about the work itself for little or no direct expense.

In these past five years, it has been the technology that has changed the most—and for the better. In the early days, we used the clunky recording options in Skype. Much of the time, that meant holding our breath, hoping that the internet connection did not cut out, and then erasing half of an excellent conversation. Today, the recording software is more reliable and most guests have a digital microphone to improve sound quality.

We love our blogging colleagues and accept every invitation to write a guest post at the *Monkey Cage*, *Mischiefs of Factions*, *A House Divided*, or other fantastic political science blogs. Podcasting complements the innovations associated with blogging. It also is an avenue, like blogs, to reach an audience that includes our colleagues in the profession but reaches beyond the boundaries of the discipline. It is an opportunity for us and other podcasters to publicize and personalize excellent research. It requires minimal training and few expenditures. The result is a useful contribution to the growing diversity of ways to share political science research and knowledge creation with a wide and eager audience. ∎

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IN DEFENSE OF THE LONG, LONG INTERVIEW

Jeffrey Church 🟢 , *University of Houston*

One of the main virtues, in my view, of the podcast medium is that it can accommodate 60- to 90-minute interviews because listeners like me need stimulation during dull commutes and tedious workouts. Nevertheless, a common reaction to my podcast, *The Political Theory Review*, is "Do the conversations have to be *that* long?" "Yes" tends to be my answer because, as discussed herein, I think long-form conversations benefit authors and the discipline—and also could be a good teaching tool.

Like other podcasts, *The Political Theory Review* consists of conversations with authors about their new books—in particular, books about political theory and social and political philosophy. In these conversations, we discuss the main argument of the book and its broader significance and application, and we work through the evidence that the author marshals in support of the overall claim.

If you have written an academic book, you are accustomed to the usual publishing process. You spend 5–10 years painstakingly researching a topic, writing each chapter with care and rigor, proofreading closely, and then...very little response: a handful of book reviews, perhaps an "Author Meets Critics" panel, or—if you are very lucky—a 30-second interview on the local NPR station. This response is dissatisfying because authors yearn to have the deep, probing engagement over the work they spend so much effort crafting.

The first benefit of a long podcast then—and the reason I began mine—is for the authors. There are several good books published every month in my field and others, and they deserve close attention. The authors I interview consistently express gratitude for closely reading their work and engaging them at length—refreshingly unlike the typical practice in academic life and the short-attention-span media of radio and television.

The second benefit is for the discipline. The audience for most academic podcasts, including mine, is mostly fellow academics. Some (e.g., EconTalk) reach a much broader audience, which is another virtue of the podcast medium. Yet, there is a benefit of the niche podcast for the narrow discipline that is their subject. In most fields, divisions often exist—for example, in my field, political theory, critical-theory scholars rarely engage with analytic-political philosophers. Scholars fail to reach across the divide in part because, in our specialized disciplines, we do not read others' work and therefore do not know the intricacies of their arguments. Indeed, for my 50th episode, I invited two authors, Jeanne Morefield and Ryan Hanley—who have very different backgrounds and approaches—to talk to one another about "What Is Political Theory?"

Thus far, I have interviewed more than 50 scholars across the diverse field of political theory. The long-form conversation affords the time to delve deeply into the argument and background assumptions of each book. This gives the academic audience a fuller understanding of the work produced in their field. My hope is that doing so engenders many more connections that can be drawn across the discipline, bridging the divides and inspiring listeners by ideas from authors whose books they might never have considered reading.

The third benefit is for teaching. Many "innovative-teaching" suggestions involve incorporating podcasts or electronic media to supplement classroom learning. The problem with these suggestions is that there often is little suitable content to supplement classroom work. In my podcast and others like it,

I attempt to ask broad and enduring questions about politics rather than arcane, specialized questions that drive the scholarly world. These questions got me into political theory in the first place and they fuel my love for the conversations in this podcast. Moreover, these questions are accessible and exciting to students as well.

The long-form interview can attract student interest, but it also can assist in teaching political theory by modeling how political theory is done in the academy. We spend significant time studying the classics—Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli—but little time demonstrating to students how to conduct research on these figures. Of course, we can assign secondary works, but a conversation about the primary texts by an intelligent author ignites student interest and also demonstrates what types of questions they should be asking about the text and how to read it closely and well. I invited Michael Walzer to discuss his recent book on the politics of the Hebrew Bible and required my students to listen to it—they had many suggestions of which questions I should have asked!

In the two years since I started this podcast, I have expanded my own horizons as an academic, reading texts from authors whose training was very different than mine. The experience has been extremely enjoyable and also enriching of my own work in that I find myself speaking to a broader imagined audience. I hope that my podcast and others like it can build a forum in which we can escape the academy's often deadening specialization and discuss issues of great significance at the great length they deserve. ∎

THE SCIENCE OF POLITICS PODCAST

Matt Grossmann, *Michigan State University*

In October 2017, I launched a political science podcast under the auspices of the Niskanen Center, a think tank in Washington, DC. The podcast initially was titled *Political Research Digest*, but the name was changed to *The Science of Politics* based on listener feedback.

The podcast is released biweekly, with 54 episodes completed as of this writing. I interview two researchers per episode about two new articles or books that they have published on related topics. Although the tone is conversational, I edit the interviews (with the help of my assistant Alejandro Gillespie) and introduce each statement from the interviewees.

With the support of Kristie Eshelman and Louisa Tavlas at Niskanen, the podcast is widely distributed and promoted. Every episode has had more than 1,000 listeners, with recent episodes averaging more than 2,000. All episodes are transcribed, so there

The podcast is still produced for a niche audience. Although my guests and I strive to make research accessible, the content is data driven and detailed compared to other podcasts. It has been easiest to gain an audience among scholars, but we focus on targeting nonacademics working in or around American national politics and policy making as well. Distribution by Niskanen allows the podcast to reach the rare bipartisan policy-making audience. My impression from listening to many other political podcasts (and being a guest) is that most succeed by taking a clear partisan and ideological point of view and then focusing on punditry over research. *The Science of Politics* does not make this tradeoff.

Most of my guests have never participated in a podcast. I strive to include early-career scholars, including graduate students, to expand the number of publicly engaged scholars and diversify the public voice of political science. I also actively try to achieve gender, ethnic, institutional, and ideological diversity—but I do not always succeed. It is easiest to track gender diversity: 43% of my guests have been women. I reach out to more women than men, but women are thus far more likely to decline. Trying to match two guests who have written recently on a similar topic limits the options but also enables clear criteria.

The podcast focuses on American politics research relevant to current events. Although we use recent news as a hook for listeners, we delve into the broader research (including history). The most popular episodes so far have covered partisan cable news, public opinion on climate change, identity politics in partisanship, genetic attributions for human difference, white identity, partisan asymmetry, rural–urban divides, homeownership and segregation, polarization on Facebook, and philanthropy in social movements. Listeners relate that they are exposed to a broad range of new scholars and research areas through the podcast.

I am most proud of the podcast's role in promoting political science to a broader audience. One of the best paths to influence has turned out to be our audience among reporters. Several new research articles and books have generated wider media interest after the authors' appearance on the podcast. Some guests also have been invited to appear on other podcasts and media. Even reporters who do not listen to the podcast infer that the guests are experts on the topic and are willing to discuss it publicly, which leads to media interviews. The podcast itself also has been featured in *The Washington Post* and *Vox*.

Podcasting can be beneficial even for those without media savvy. I am not especially gifted as a presenter but I try to make up for it with knowledge of the guests' research. It takes two to three hours per week of my time. I connect with many scholars that I did not previously know and generate better connections with those whom I already know. Interviewing incentivizes me to keep up on current research, including topical trends and

> *I also ask that professors consider assigning* The Science of Politics *(or specific episodes) in their courses.*

is a substantial readership to complement the listenership. The podcasts initially were limited to about 20 minutes but have since expanded to 40–60 minutes (based on user suggestions). Average listening time is 35 minutes. We have experimented with advertising on Twitter, Facebook, Google, and other podcasts.

methodological innovations. I have regularly used work highlighted on the podcast in my own research.

I also ask that professors consider assigning *The Science of Politics* (or specific episodes) in their courses. It is useful to read research, but students benefit by hearing directly from