



**UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE  
NATIONAL AGENDA 2022**

**“Politics by the Numbers”**

Paul Kane

**HOSTED BY**

University of Delaware –  
Center for Political Communication  
and  
The College of Arts and Sciences

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Paul Kane

University Alumnus and *Washington Post* journalist Paul Kane covers news about American politics. He is a senior congressional correspondent and columnist (@PKCapitol). He covered response to the global pandemic, the January 6th attack on the nation’s Capitol Building, two impeachments of President Trump, and now writes about the current administration’s legislative agenda on Capitol Hill. Kane received the Everett McKinley Dirksen Award for Distinguished Coverage of Congress.

Transcript of Event

Date:

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Place:

Gore Recital Hall  
Newark, DE

[Musical interlude to 0:00:42.4]

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Please welcome, your host for this evening, Dr. Lindsay Hoffman.

[Applause]

DR. HOFFMAN: Good evening, everyone. It's great to welcome you to the Twelfth National Agenda Speaker Series. It's the first time that we've been all in person since 2019. So, I'm so happy to see you here. We are here thanks to the University of Delaware's Center for Political Communication as well as The College of Arts and Sciences. This year's theme, as you might have seen in the preview, is "Politics by the Numbers". When it comes to elections, especially high stakes elections like the midterms, the numbers matter from understanding our states voter registration laws to public opinion polling to gerrymandering ; your; it's important to know just how your vote matters. So, this year's "Politics by the Numbers" National Agenda Speaker Series will help keep you informed. So, please look at our website and come back for our subsequent events. As usual, pre-pandemic, we'll be inviting audience participation. You'll see there's some microphones in the front of the room. At the end of the talk we'll have an open Q&A and two of my student volunteers will be walking to the center of each aisle with microphones. So if you have a question make sure to raise your hand and they will direct you to ask that question. But, I'd like to remind our audience that civil dialogue is critical to the success of National Agenda. We've been doing this for 12 years and we always want to be courteous, and civil while also being courageous in asking difficult questions. So this is a space where we can



call a brave space where we ask questions that may be difficult but are also critical to the success of our democracy. So, tonight, I'm very excited to welcome a UD alum. Veteran capital reporter, Paul Kane is senior congressional correspondent and columnist with the *Washington Post*. He has covered Washington's response to the global pandemic, the January 6th attack where he was at the Capitol that day, two impeachments, the 2008 financial crisis and now writes about the Biden administration's legislative agenda on Capitol Hill. Kane became part of the story on January 6th, 2021 (sic). He was covering the joint session to certify the 2020 election results when the attack on the U.S. Capitol began. Tonight he'll talk about what that day was like from a journalist's perspective. Kane got his start at the congressional news outlet *Roll Call* in 2000. And he joined the *Washington Post* in 2007. In his column "@ PK Capitol" he reports on Congress and its interactions with different presidential administrations. He's also a recipient of the Everett McKinley Dirksen Award for distinguished coverage of Congress. Please welcome back Blue Hen Paul Kane. [Applause]

DR. HOFFMAN: Thank you, Paul. I understand you'd like to give some remarks about what that experience was like on January 6th.

PAUL KANE: Yeah, we, we did a little bit of a pre-game late last week and, you know, and I've done discussions like this before. I usually try to explain sort of a, a day in the life of Congress and what it's like, how the modern media works and, and then I said, well, I could also just go straight to ripping the Band-Aid off and go to January 6th because I'm sure there will be a lot of questions and, you said, yeah. So, January 6th in a lot of ways is a day that was, lasted somewhere around like 40 hours. It wasn't a 24-hour day; it was; it started the night of

January 5th when all of us in the political media world were focused on the state of Georgia where there were these two Senate elections that were deciding the majority for the Senate. So, like late that night, probably about 2:00 a.m. or so, it became clear that the Democrats were going to pull off this upset and they were going to win. And I, I realized that I had to write a quick column about Chuck Schumer, the Senate Democratic Leader, who had just been chasing this, this car of being the majority leader for years and years and years and kept coming up short and all of a sudden he was going to be the, the Leader. And I made my plan for the 6th and it would be that I'd get up early, around 7:00, and I would start writing and Chuck Schumer was going to do a press conference in the Capitol around 11:45 and then I would be there for that to get the last quotes and drop them into this column that would, you know, be incredibly well read because the only thing that people were really, really focused on was the Senate majority. At least that's what I thought. There was a phone call with my girlfriend probably around 2:00 a.m. She works in media for a different news organization but she covers Congress. And the, one of the last things we talked about was she would park somewhere different in case there was violence and that we would both walk up into the Capitol in like, sort of, regular man's clothes. We didn't want to look like we were reporters or members of Congress walking into the Capitol. So I got there that day about 11:30, 11:45 just in time for this Chuck Schumer valedictory press conference; sat down, plugged in the last quotes, filed my column to my editor. He was excited. He figured it would take him an hour or two to edit and we'd post it online. And then my job was just to monitor the debate in the Senate over the challenging of the Electoral College certificates. We knew, we expected in advance there would be six different states that would

be challenged and there were lots of Covid restrictions at that time. Everybody was wearing masks. And we set up a rotation where I was going to take the first shift from like 1:00, noon or 1:00 till 6:00, a coworker would come in from 6:00 to midnight, and then somebody would do the midnight to 6:00 shift and we were going to try and cover it. We thought this would go for a day or so. The Senate broke apart from the House around 1:30 to come back and debate the challenge to the state of Arizona and I was one of two reporters that was inside the gallery. There's sort of the Senate floor sits on the second floor of the Capitol and up above is a ring of the sort of public galleries. Now they've been closed for, ever since the pandemic started. The only people; it was me, another reporter for the Congressional Quarterly and the Pence family were the sort of only people sitting in the galleries watching this debate. And, I could see down on the floor the, the oldest longest serving, the longest serving senator, Pat Leahy started looking at his phone and tapping other people and showing them. And he was doing it this way [gesture]. So I knew he was looking at video.

DR. HOFFMAN: And you didn't have your phone at this point?

PAUL KANE: I did no; the, the senators are allowed to have their own electronics but reporters inside the Senate, this old staid Chamber, you're not allowed to. So, I went out and I looked out the windows up on the third floor and I could see a lot of people were gathering around and there was Trump flags. And so I didn't think that, anything of it because the Capitol ever since 9/11 they'd spent 700 million dollars building a visitors center and fortifying it for security purposes. I never dreamed that anybody would get into the building. And, then, right after 2:10 p.m. or so I could see Secret Service come on to the back of the Senate Floor and do this motioning [gesture] to Mike Pence who

was, the Vice President was, you know, overseeing the debate in the Senate, and he got pulled out of the chair and left. And so, I bounced up and ran up the steps and I ran, ran through the Press Office telling the other reporters who were not inside the Chamber at the time, Mike Pence had been pulled, Mike Pence had been pulled from the chair because this was probably a security issue. And I ran down to the second floor and only one other reporter, Igor Bobic of the Huffington Post, followed me. And we didn't know whether he just needed a break, if he needed to go to the men's room, or something serious had happened. And that's when we heard a loud clash one floor below. We couldn't see it but it was sort of directly below us. And at that moment I didn't have my phone, I didn't have a notebook, I didn't have anything. I'm not much of a wartime correspondent, by that I mean not at all; covered cops in Chester County for –

DR. HOFFMAN: [chuckling]

PAUL KANE: – about a year.

[Audience laughter]

PAUL KANE: And so, I was like, all right, I'm going to go back upstairs and Igor, thankfully, took his phone, hit record and ran down the steps. I had assumed that, that there would probably be police sort of beating up protestors who, a few protestors who might have gotten in, and instead Igor was there to record with his phone in a great moment of, a terrible moment of history but it was a great service as a reporter to record the clash in which a single U.S. Capitol Police Officer, Eugene Goodman – an African American who grew up, who served in the military, who grew up right outside Washington – was confronting a group of racist domestic terrorists essentially. One guy was

wearing an Auschwitz shirt, pro-Auschwitz, another guy was carrying the Confederate Flag, and Eugene at that moment was diverting them and trying to keep them from getting to the doors of the Senate Chamber because as I realized when I ran up one flight of stairs the, the staff there know, knows me and I've been working in and around the Senate Chamber for 22 years, they pulled me inside and I could see that they were locking and bolting down the doors all throughout the second and third floor inside the Senate. And, as I, as I looked across I could see where the reporters were and I went over to where the reporters were and down on the Senate floor with a, an arm sash over one shoulder that said police and an automatic rifle in the other shoulder was an officer who was, if you looked to his right he would touch Chuck Schumer's shoulder, to his left it would be Mitch McConnell's shoulder and he just kept looking at the three entrances. Because at that moment Eugene Goodman was outside sort of hitting these protestors and moving them away from a door that was as close as here to there [gestures] to getting on to the Senate floor. I'm not sure at that moment if it was locked; the moment that Eugene had his clash. I went, I kept this notebook that day just started fiddling notes around early on that were just, like; MM 1:30 p.m. Mitch McConnell, Greg Pence is in the gallery with Mrs. Pence, some quotes here or there. And then eventually after all of this sort of little stuff is happening by, I, by 2:15 p.m. I write Senate sealed; Officer with orange police badge, assault weapon standing by McConnell and Schumer. And I just started keeping a minute by minute diary of what was going on. It was, you know, I'm not a wartime correspondent. I didn't, you know; it wasn't wartime to us in that moment as such as it was kind of like an active shooter situation, or at least what I think one of those might be like. The Capitol Police took over. There

were, you know, a, an officer, who we all know, claimed the chair of the Senate and was giving orders out. Amy Klobuchar, a Democrat from Minnesota, actually stood up at one point and yelled shots had been fired. It turned out that that was wrong at that particular moment. There were shots fired but it was 20 minutes later and it was over on the House side. They then organized a, essentially an escape route where they set up a wall of police officers on the first floor to have the senators sort of go down a back set of stairs, race across to one corner where they would go down a, a spiral staircase and we were sent from the third floor to the elevators to go straight to the basement. And the last thing I saw on the Senate floor were three or four staffers grabbing the boxes of the Electoral College certificates, which were the things that had to be there that day in order to certify Joe Biden as the victor. If those certificates had been found 15 minutes later by these insurrectionists who got onto the Senate floor they probably would have burned them. They would have eventually sent new certificates and they would have had, probably had to delay the whole process a couple of days if not for the quick thinking of those staff. We went underground and into a hearing room on the, the – there's, the main Capitol itself and across Constitution Avenue on the Senate side are the Senate office buildings where most of the rank and file do their work and where committees are held – and on the House side they went underground underneath Independence Avenue into a hearing room over on the House side. And for the first 15 or so minutes in that room it was both scary, mysterious and then weirdly like life in general. An officer came in, a Captain of the police force, informed this room of senators that they believe the entire complex was going to fall and that they had, they were working on getting a caravan of buses that were going to take senators – the leadership, the very



top leaders had already been taken away by their security detail to a military base about a mile south of the Capitol and they were basically going to abandon the Capitol, and, the entire complex. And then in that moment I'm standing there and Delaware's own Chris Coons walks up to me as I have my laptop out and I'm trying to write up a report for the rest of the press corps about what's happened because this is part of my job that day – I had to, because of Covid limitations part of your task was if you were there witnessing what was happening you had to send reports out to the rest of the press corps – but Chris Coons walks up to me, and I've known him since he got elected in 2010, and he just says, PK, um, I know this might seem odd but you ah, how's your power charge on the, on the laptop [chuckle]. And I said, I do know, a hundred percent. And he goes, do you have a cord? [Chuckle.] I pulled out my cord, I plugged it in and I'm like, go ahead, what are you at? And he's like; I'm only at about five percent right now [chuckle.]

AUDIENCE: [Chuckles]

PAUL KANE: So, for the next ten minutes Chris Coons was charging his phone. A couple of other senators came by and they were like, hey, you got power there? Can I use your [chuckles] –?

AUDIENCE: [Chuckling.]

PAUL KANE: – can I use, can I use your laptop? And then, finally, a brand new senator from Colorado, John Hickenlooper, confessed that he had lost his phone, he had left it in the Senate Chamber, and then somebody said, well, here, I'll give you a phone and you can call your wife. And he said; I don't know her number. [Chuckle]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter]

PAUL KANE: I just have it in contacts.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter]

PAUL KANE: So then his home state senator called his Chief of Staff who called Hickenlooper's Chief of Staff who called Mrs. Hickenlooper to get her number and then they arranged a call.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter]

PAUL KANE: Um, so then, this went on for several hours and there was intermittent things about reporting that you were doing because the world had to know what had happened. Like, I was the only reporter who actually saw that they saved the Electoral College certificates, and I was looking at Twitter and seeing that this was like a big thing as it was happening. And some of it was really deeply personal. My girlfriend was trapped in a small office on the third floor of the, of the Senate side and, you know, protestors, rioters, domestic terrorists whatever you want to call them were banging on the doors threatening the people inside the room. And, you know, there were moments of deep despair and friends who went through pretty bad days much worse than mine. And, finally we got the all clear after 7:00 and we basically had a sort of walking caravan where we went back down underground to go return to the Capitol. And, at one point somebody said make way, make way, clear out, clear out and we, these reporters and staff sort of parted ways and walking with us were the staff from the Senate Parliamentarian Office and other, a few other staff, who were carrying the Electoral College certificates. And it wasn't like a planned thing but we parted the ways and we then lead us back into the Capitol up into the Senate Chamber where at 8:00 they got back to work. And, we'll; I'm going to stop it

there. There's; you know, lots of other; I could go on for hours about that day but it ended around just before 4:00 a.m. and Joe Biden was certified as President and exactly two weeks later he was sworn in.

DR. HOFFMAN: Its, it's an amazing story. Before we jump into the theme of this conversation this semester which is "Politics by the Numbers", let's start with some related breaking news, that the first public official has been charged, convicted of participating in the January 6th events. A Judge in New Mexico yesterday ordered a County Commissioner convicted of participating in the January 6th riot at the Capitol removed from office under the 14th Amendment making him the first public official in more than a century to be barred from serving under a Constitutional ban on insurrectionists holding office. The ruling declared the Capitol assault an insurrection unseated Couy Griffin, a commissioner in New Mexico's Otero County and the founder of Cowboys for Trump. He was convicted earlier this year of trespassing when he breached barricades outside the Capitol during the attack. The Judge's order captured, grabbed the attention of advocates across the country pushing to use the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment to disqualify former President Donald J. Trump and elected officials who worked with him in seeking to overturn the 2020 election from holding office in the future. In his decision, the Judge said, the insurrection included not only the mob violence that unfolded that day, that you just described, but also the surrounding planning, mobilization, and incitement that led to it. He wrote: Mr. Griffin is constitutionally disqualified from serving. What does this imply about other Republican officials who are now realizing there are more of them who participated in those events on January 6th?

PAUL KANE: [Sigh] This has been an issue that a few people had

pursued in the days and weeks after January 6th because there was a small but vocal crowd of Republicans who, oh, you know, to some degree or another were supportive of, of the people that attacked the Capitol. And, they were, you know, and they then also voted against certifying Joe Biden as President. And when the votes came up there were, only ended up being two votes, Arizona and Pennsylvania, not the full six. And so, they've, there are people that believe that they essentially these members of Congress were equivalent to the Confederates of the Civil War and this, this provision of the 14th Amendment was meant in a way to prevent Confederates from serving in Congress from, you know, taking high office. It's been, it, it has so far been unsuccessful in trying to – one of them, of Florida, and there was somebody else from Georgia; it was not Marjorie Taylor Greene – but, and it, it has so far been unsuccessful and they are on the ballot. And generally speaking the Constitution has basically left, you know, aside from age – 25 years old to serve in the House, 30 to serve in the Senate – the Constitution has generally left it up to the body itself to determine the qualifications and whether somebody can serve. And so, so far that has not advanced beyond this particular individual. And this is local office so I don't, you know, it's probably a case that will; I think will stay in the New Mexico courts. You know, we'll see if it goes, I think, you know the Supreme Court new term starts in less than a month. I don't think it's the sort of case that they would take up in this term. Is it possible it could, that if there are enough people financially supporting the case that it could find its way all the way up to the Supreme Court and they might try to further define what the 14th Amendment meant? But so far it has not been applied to anybody in, in Congress from that day.

DR. HOFFMAN: Okay. Well, let's jump to some numbers then. Polls show

that Republicans are less and less inclined to have concern about the January 6th insurrection. Pew Research Center found that few Republicans say it's important for Federal law enforcement to find and prosecute U.S. Capitol rioters, than they said it in March. And that number is the percentage who say it's very important or somewhat important from March of '21 was 79 percent and by September of '21 it was 57 percent. Democrats consistently say same percentage: 95 percent say it's important to prosecute those who broke into the Capitol. So how do you explain the change of heart among Republicans but the consistency of Democrats who say it's important to prosecute those who broke into the Capitol?

PAUL KANE: We're –

DR. HOFFMAN: When this happened it was alarming, I think, to all Americans.

PAUL KANE: Yeah, and, you know, there was a couple of weeks after that where Trump's own standing in the Republican Party was still a bit unclear and, and whether he was, you know, whether the top leaders and, and broad swath of the rank and file would abandon him. I think there was a, there, there was a period here where people weren't sure how it was going to play out. What's happened to, to so much of politics right now especially in Congress and as it, and, and as it applies to voters, a lot of voters almost see things more like a college sports team that they are a part of and, you know, you're the Delaware Blue Hens, you wear blue and gold –

DR. HOFFMAN: [Chuckle]

PAUL KANE: – and, and that's what team you're on. And, you know, the Villanova Wild Cats wear a different shade of blue and they're up the road and

they're the snooty private school and we don't like them. And if they're saying something that we perceive as being critical of Delaware well then we move back into our camp and think, you know, even if that player on the team did something stupid it's our team. And, that's where a lot of politics has gone in the last ten years, especially in the last five years. And, more and more Republicans and Republican voters are – let me back up and say, I was in Wyoming for Liz Cheney's primary about a month ago. And, the way people up there described it to me was there were, you know, a group of Republicans in Wyoming, maybe like 15 or 20 percent, who really did hate Trump and were just tired of him and wanted him gone from the scene. And they believed that Liz Cheney was trying to reestablish the true conservative mantle. And then there were about 50 percent in Wyoming, and Wyoming is as conservative a state as there is, and 50 percent were just really hardcore Trump supporters and, you know, the Republican State Party chairman is an Oath Keeper. He was, he was, there is video of him on the Capitol steps with a walkie-talkie on January 6th.

DR. HOFFMAN: And can you describe what the Oath Keepers are just for the –

PAUL KANE: Oath Keepers are one of these quasi-military pretty white supremacist type of groups that, you know, are, you know, heavily believe in the well-armed militia as in their own type of militia and they, they're national founder is under indictment and will face a seditious conspiracy is this charge that he is facing. And, so the state party chair in Wyoming is a member of this group. And, so basically 50 percent of Wyoming Republicans are really hardcore Trumpers. And then there's that remaining block and the way people explained it to me was, you know, there are a significant number who are just tired of Trump and want to

move beyond Trump but when they hear people criticizing Trump they don't like that because they think you're criticizing them. And now you're, now you're getting into the team aspect of it and wait, you're criticizing my team. You know, I, I don't want to, I don't want Trump to be around but if you're going to sit there and criticize him all of a sudden I'm moving back into my camp. And, I think that's how a lot of Republican voters have viewed January 6th as we get farther away from it. They hear it and they think, ah, they're just being critical of Republicans so I'm not supportive of that anymore. It's not a, a healthy view of the world, you know? I mean, these people attacked the Capitol. There were more than 140 police that were injured, severely injured, you know, one of whom died from injuries that were sustained during the attack; a couple of others took their own lives from the traumatic stress afterward. This was a really violent attack and, you know, they are criminals. Somebody earlier, one of your students, asked, like, why haven't those folks been called terrorists, or domestic terrorists and it was a really good question because, you know, that was pretty close to what you would think of as a definition of domestic terrorism. But when it comes to politics these days people just tend to see things through their teams' uniform more than they do the ideology of, and, and the actions of people.

DR. HOFFMAN: Yeah, I think that's a really acute observation and, and one thing I say to my students as a professor of political science and communication is motivated reasoning is a heck of a drug, you know? If, if you are motivated to believe something you can be motivated to believe anything. And it's, if it's inconsistent with your viewpoints it's almost like it doesn't matter. I, I want to ask, let's see, the other question here about, about January 6th and I'd like to move on to the midterms and about being a journalist –

PAUL KANE: Sure.

DR. HOFFMAN: – during 2022. But, one question that came up today in class that I think your answer is really interesting and you can share as much as you're, are, are willing to do so is it comes from Anna who asks, what are some of the lasting impacts of that insurrection on the culture within the Capitol –

PAUL KANE: Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: – you've noticed in the Senate and the House?

PAUL KANE: Yeah. So, I'll, I'll pick up sort of where I, as I was telling the story day as of 8:00 the Senate came back into session. Well, the Senate came back into session and Vice President delivered a speech that is incredibly unusual. Joe Biden was vice president for eight years and he presided over the Senate a lot but, you know, it was ceremonial. He never got to deliver a speech. A lot of decorum was broken that day so they said, sure, Pence, you want to deliver a speech, give it. And it was a really stirring bipartisan, nonpartisan call to do their jobs and to do their duty. And, and it provoked a standing ovation from both sides of the aisle. And then Mitch McConnell and Chuck Schumer gave speeches that were wonderful. Either one of them could have delivered the others' speech. The first person to speak was Jim Lankford, a Republican from Oklahoma, who was speaking when everything went to hell a little after 2:15, and he returned to speak and announced that he was not going to support the insurrectionists after what had happened and everything was going well. Mitt Romney gave this stirring speech that got a standing ovation from both sides and it felt like America was coming together in that room similar to the way after 9/11 the Democrats and Republicans, House members, Senators all got on the Capitol steps and sung "God Bless America". And then I walked across the



Capitol to go to the House side and inside the House Chamber it was as if nothing had changed. I, I turned to my girlfriend who was there and a few other reporters and I just said, what's going on, because this is nothing like the Senate? You know, the Republicans were up there screaming about voter fraud and the Democrats were accusing Republicans of trying to kill them and there was literally in the center aisle at one point close to 2:00 a.m. a near brawl with several members and police had to sort of get involved. The House Security sort of separated these people. And that really set the tone for the House of Representatives and is still this way, you know, nearly two years after. They, they live in a completely different universe from the Senate and they are still deeply, deepful (sic), deeply disrespectful from one another. There's a normal tension between the House and Senate and the Senate is the smaller body and they get six year terms, and they're always a bit more clubby. A lot of that stuff that Joe Biden always talks about is, is really kind of true. But over in the House it is now at a level that I've never seen. The Democrats genuinely believe that several of these Republicans, mostly newer younger Republicans, were outright supportive of the insurrectionists and they put up magnetometers, metal detectors, before anyone could walk onto the House floor. And they're not there to protect from random people. It is the members of Congress have to go through these security mags in order to get on the floor to cast their vote because that's how much distrust there is right now in the House of Representatives. There are, there are Democrats, I've, I've spoken to them on the record. This one freshman from Massachusetts has told me that he'll be in committee hearings and he'll hear a Republican say really interesting thoughts and he'll reach over and pull out his phone and just searches to see how that person

voted on the question of certifying Biden's win. And if the person voted no he just, he wipes them off and just will not work with them. I talked to Senator Coons about this almost one year after the Capitol riot and he described – and I should have brought this up at our dinner beforehand talking, we were talking about forgiveness – and this is the Senate. And so the, the Senate is just in a better place. But for about six months, Chris Coons, who is just genuinely, he is constantly being accused of trying to be too nice to people, you know? He went to divinity school, you know? He has all these really nice deep thoughts. But he was furious for months and months. And, he, he told me a story about being at the Prayer Breakfast. He, he's the co-leader of, longtime co-leader of this prayer group of Senators, and he told me a story of just looking out, talking about forgiveness and talking about John Lewis and how John Lewis forgave the police who beat him to near death in Selma. And he was talking about this and he was looking across this room and saw a Republican who he has, who he had refused to talk to and had ignored for seven months and he said, you know, at that moment I realized I, I've got to try to forgive and I'm going to do it. And he went and he started meeting with these Republicans. There only ended up being eight in the Senate who voted not to certify Biden's election. That's another example of how different things were. Only eight Republicans in the Senate which is one out of seven or one out of six just about. Over in the House two-thirds of the House Republicans voted not to certify Biden's election. It's just, you know, Mars and Venus. And, and Coons told me that he went and he has had productive, he's had some discussions with people where it has gone really sour, sideways fast and he's just said, okay, I'm not going to work with her. But, he's found common ground with other, some of these other Republicans. That's just not

really happening over in the House of Representatives right now and Republicans want to win back the majority for a lot of reasons and part of it is they want payback. They want to, they want to go after Democrats and they want to strip Adam Schiff of his position on the House Intel Committee because he was an impeachment manager. You know, they want to go after AOC. They, like they are, you know, they are out for political blood and, you know, without any sense of cooler heads prevailing, like, that is a chamber that is in a spiral. How's that for uplifting?

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter]

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, let's move on to the midterms. [Laugh]

PAUL KANE: [Laugh]

DR. HOFFMAN: So, thank you for by the way throwing a lot of numbers, keeping within theme "Politics by the Numbers". One of my students, Steven, asked a question about an article you, an analysis you wrote in August, August 27th, that, about alums of 2010 and 2018 –

PAUL KANE: Yes.

DR. HOFFMAN: – who say waive, say, say midterms urge caution. So, he, he wrote that you, Democrats still face a challenge to keep the House during the 2022 midterms. Do you think Biden's recent policies such as the forgiveness of student loans, some of the other issues around the environment and climate will significantly change the electoral landscape?

PAUL KANE: Sure. There has been, you know, a, for many first midterms of a presidential cycle going back to 1994 it just tends to be bad for the party in power and usually only gets worse. There are fleeting moments of sugar highs

where they think things are getting a little bit better but otherwise you usually get wiped out. It happened in 1994; it happened in 2010, it happened in 2018. And it looked like that was where Democrats were headed because by mid-June they had inflation running through the roof, gas prices were well over five dollars a gallon and their agenda had basically fallen to pieces. They got some big wins early and they had, they'd, they had done a pretty good job on handling the pandemic and getting vaccinations out but that had long since been forgotten. And, you know, every issue seemed to be breaking against them. And then in the course of the last two and a half months a bunch of things have happened that have definitely shifted the calculus. It really started with those two mass shootings in Buffalo and Uvalde in Texas that were just so horrific; a school and a predominantly African American grocery store in Buffalo. And that created a lot of ground, a, a, a huge groundswell on gun violence and, and safety. And all of a sudden the Republicans realized that the ground was shifting on that issue so much that Mitch McConnell told his Texas Republican Senator John Cornyn, go get a deal on, on a bill on gun violence. We've got to, we, we can't have this issue, we can't look like we're blocking this anymore. Let's get something. And it wasn't a major victory. And for those that want some form, better form of gun control but it was a bill that the NRA opposed full hearted and it got overwhelming support in the Senate, very little Republican support in the House. It's a recurring thing of the last two years. Even Mitch McConnell voted for it. And all of a sudden they had a, a win over the NRA. And then came the Dobbs decision by the Supreme Court at the end of June and all of a sudden this theoretical issue of what would happen if Roe v. Wade was overturned was not longer theoretical. And there were states that had laws that were in place, like; if

Roe v. Wade is overturned our abortion ban kicks in. And all of a sudden the coverage of that wasn't just about a Supreme Court ruling, but there were, there were places, place in Texas and other southern states where essentially abortion rights just disappeared. And all of a sudden that issue started, started galvanizing things. But then the Democrats came together; Joe Manchin out of nowhere finally sat down with Chuck Schumer, agreed to pass a bill that would give six or seven hundred billion in climate change incentives for electric vehicles paired with a whole bunch of tax hikes on businesses and corporations, and also a couple of health provisions. And at the same time they had a couple of bi-partisan deals; one was on helping veterans who have been, for the Iraq and Afghanistan wars who were near these tar pits and several things all started falling into place. And now the liberal activists who have been really kind of PO'd with the first two years of Biden are looking around like wow, the biggest climate bill ever has just passed; we took on the NRA and beat the NRA; and then they took on pharma and beat pharma on prescription drugs. And there was a bunch of different things that came together. And all of this also happened as gas prices finally started to fall. And now you're seeing – there's, Joe Biden's not super popular but he's not where near as unpopular as he was two months ago. There's a lot of polling data that shows this, the generic ballot question: do you expect to vote for a Republican or a Democrat for Congress? And, two or three months ago it would have been like 48, 42 Republican. Now it's like 48, 48, 47 Democrats. And you have a whole different field of play and you really are starting to see the ground shift. And Republicans have, are having these terrible in fights. They've got a bunch of candidates for the Senate race, who are to borrow a local candidate of yours from 2010, a lot of whom are in the Christine

O'Donnell camp of politics. And so you've got bad Republican candidates who aren't raising money and a changing political environment and all of a sudden this is much more of a jump ball midterm election than it is this how bad is the red wave going to be. Still, not a great time to be a Democrat; you're facing a bunch of historical, a bunch of historical trends that always show that, you know, something bad happens in that first midterm. But the one, the one little asterisk in all of that was 2002 when George W. Bush's administration like rode the post 9/11 unity into something that, that helped them win back the Senate and actually pick up some seats in the House. It's still a long stretch for Democrats to pull that off but there's a path to doing it and that didn't exist six weeks ago, certainly not even close two and a half months ago.

DR. HOFFMAN: Hum. So, there's a lot that could change even from now –

PAUL KANE: Yes.

DR. HOFFMAN: – to the midterm?

PAUL KANE: 62, 3 days – I can't remember –

DR. HOFFMAN: [Chuckle]

PAUL KANE: – and each day when another political newsletters has a, a number letting you know how many days till election. So, it's in that 60 range. But, yeah, and which is an eternity in politics.

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, I do want to turn to, open Q and A with the audience in about 10 or 15 minutes, but I really want to talk a little bit about violence against journalists which has been something that has, has come up in, in the January 6th events. I have a couple of slides to, to show if you guys want to pull those up? I have a, a slide of just the, the – if you can see over there on the on the monitor. You guys can look up here. We're looking there. That was what it

looked like. That's, this is the scene that a lot of us saw on January 6th of 2021. But there were also scenes like the, the next slide of people sort of actively damaging journalists equipment and in, in, in The New Times they said that the words murder the media were scratched into a door of the Capitol on January 6th. Members of the news media who are reporting from the streets and squares of Washington were threatened and surrounded, and their colleagues inside the Capitol were forced to shelter in secure locations for hours. There's a brief video clip of a, a, a colleague of you; I'm sorry there is also an image of a noose made out of cable television news cables. There's a lot of animosity toward the press. And I, I have a, a video clip here from a colleague of yours that we'll play really quickly.

[VIDEO CLIP]

DR. HOFFMAN: So that was a different video from your colleagues but it, the one before had been saying, like, your colleague said, I am a reporter for the *Washington Post* and they were like fake news; you're not real news. This is folks terrorizing equipment, saying CNN sucks when I think actually the equipment was owned by the Associated Press. But, how do you feel as a journalist now given your long career in, in journalism in D.C.? Is there a, a real threat against American journalists right now physically and otherwise? And, what does that mean for democracy with journalism historically being this, you know, check on government; this, this, this institution that provides a check on –

PAUL KANE: Yeah. On September 20<sup>th</sup>, it's a little less than two weeks from today; I am doing a daylong security training that has become a mandatory thing for anybody who will be going out into the field to cover midterm elections and going to places. And, you know, I've; you know, we've all done some sort of

training things in the past where you know various policies had to be learned and you'd sit there for an hour or so and I asked, like, okay how long is this? And they're like it's the entire day. And I think it's going to be something similar to like what our war correspondents go through.

DR. HOFFMAN: Um.

PAUL KANE: It's, it's necessary. I personally have not been in many situations where I felt actually, you know like, really threatened and even on the 6th itself I was living inside this bubble of the U.S. Senators and at a certain point we had a small army of, of Federal Police, heavily armed, guarding us. So I wasn't that physically in danger. But, you know, when you're going out to, to campaign sites now and you're going into particularly some conservative areas, you know, there, there is just a, a sense or a threat that is now out there and, and it's being incited from the highest levels by people who are calling the media the enemy of the people and, and much worse. It, you know, we have to keep doing our jobs. We have to go out and cover these races. We have to explain to America what's happening in the elections. But you also have to be safe and you have to think about that. You know, I, you know, they, the colleague Kate Woodson was the person who was outside the Capitol that day, and, you know, she was, you know, threatened and harassed in, in horrifying ways that, you know, that I, when I finally saw the video I was, I felt horrible for her, you know? And she's gone through, you know, a good bit of therapy and talking to trauma specialists about what, what she experienced that day. A lot of reporters from that day have done similar stuff. I, I spoke to a counselor for a couple of hours a couple of weeks after. These are things that, you know, I didn't really think about when I used to cover the Capitol in, you know, more serene times. Like, it, it is a



new thing that you have to understand and you have to be careful but, you know, we're, we're going to keep doing our jobs. We're going to keep being out there and explaining to our readers, our viewers, our, our consumers of our news, what's going on in the world. So, we just have to learn to be more careful. It is, it is not helpful but it's become a reality.

DR. HOFFMAN: If there were something you could say to those folks who believe that traditional media are, are not real, or they're fake news, or they're somehow conspiratorial what would you tell them to say, you know, we're just journalists trying to do our job? We're trying to report on what's happening in America. How would you try to convince them of, of what your objective is as a journalist in D.C.?

PAUL KANE: I try to tell people that, you know, a lot of what I do in terms of covering Congress is explaining which side is winning in debates and which side is losing and why they are losing or winning. I'm not; I'm not an activist for an outcome. I'm here to report on what's happening and to just tell the truth. And there are times, there are stretches when that means – I've written some pieces about Nancy Pelosi that her office absolutely hated. They had a, they had an eight-year stretch where they just kept losing and losing and losing, you know? I, I, I wasn't their favorite person. And, that's, that's life. That is what happens when you're on the losing side. I try to explain to people that that's, you know, what our, our reality is. Now, one of the things that I just would like to people who believe in various conspiracies is just sort of, you know, do they believe that their local Republican congressman won with 82 percent of the vote. And, if they do, why do they believe that he won if they don't believe that the President won. Maybe they're, maybe this is a fraud too. Like, you, you, there's

a, there's no consistency in a lot of what these things are thinking. On the day that the Congress was, new Congress was sworn in January 3rd, three days before the insurrection, there was a Republican from Texas who, who – very conservative – but believed that Joe Biden won and he said he tried to get a, he forced a vote on not allowing the Representatives from Arizona, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Michigan and I'm missing one, Georgia, not in allowing them to be sworn in. And his point was if you all think the presidential race was stolen in those six seats that means there was massive voter fraud and none of you members of Congress [chuckle] I'm sure are duly elected either. We've got to hold a whole do-over election in all your states. And then all of these Republicans who three days later were going to line up and, you know, say that they supported Trump all voted to swear themselves in. And like, yo, no way, man; I, I won my election fair and square [chuckle.] And I was like, oh, I see what he's doing here. This is clever. I'd like to just try and explain that to people, you know? The Republicans won a lot of races that they weren't supposed to win on that election in 2020 but just one guy at the top didn't win and that's basically because a lot people hated him.

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, I think as a professor of communication and political science and a, a journalism undergrad, I admire what journalists do and what they go through and I, I really applaud you for, for trying to bring truth to the American people and I think that, you know, the first amendment and the, the, the role that journalists play in our democracy is so important and I do hope that, that journalists feel less afraid of reporting on things because I think that –

PAUL KANE: Thank you.

DR. HOFFMAN: – becomes problematic. So, let's get some questions in;

let's talk about beginning the open audience Q and A. But before, while you guys are getting ready I'll ask Kate and Millie to get the microphones and get positioned and maybe bring the lights up in the, the audience a little bit. But, speaking of conspiracy theories –

PAUL KANE: [Chuckle]

DR. HOFFMAN: – I've been spending some time on – is anyone here on Tik Tok?

AUDIENCE: [Laughter]

DR. HOFFMAN: I've been –

PAUL KANE: Oh no.

DR. HOFFMAN: – spending some time on Tik Tok for research purposes only, of course. But I've seen some videos of Trump supporters at various rallies over the past couple of years with signs like "Let's go Brandon," and "Trump Won," or "Voter Fraud," "No critical race theory," plus accusations of everything from pedophilia to 9/11 being an inside job. What role do social media play in perpetuating these conspiracy theories and from a journalist's perspective what can or should social media companies do to combat misinformation?

PAUL KANE: [Sigh] Man, this is, you know, this is the, the, one of the bigger sort of existential questions facing, a, a, us as a sort of civil society right now, and, you know, I have to defend the First Amendment, you know? It is, it is what allows me to do what I do. It is an incredible gift to this country and, you know, to me and my news organization especially. So, I, I, you know, I can't; it's really hard to support anything that in, you know, infringes on First Amendment rights. But, at the same time, there's, there's a level of poison that is, you know, pulsating through, through a lot of social media and, and these, and they're their

own sort of curated existences and channels and, you know, you cannot function as a society if people believe that, you know, there's a secret prison underneath a pizza place in D.C. on Connecticut Avenue in which, you know, the Democrats are conducting not just pedophilia but just like, I think it also involved like eating corpses and stuff.

AUDIENCE: [Murmuring]

PAUL KANE: I mean, like, this is not – and a man drove from North Carolina or South Carolina –

DR. HOFFMAN: North Carolina, yeah.

PAUL KANE: – North Carolina, drove up on a Sunday afternoon, walked in with a gun to that pizza place and basically, you know, had a borderline hostage situation for a couple of hours. And, we kind of laughed about it in the media. We, you know, it ended peacefully. He was; nobody was actually injured. The reality is those people that were there with the crazy man holding a gun ended up probably with a lot of trauma that was a lot, quite similar to what people felt on January 6th. But there's a direct line from that lone guy at this pizza place called Comet Ping Pong in late 2016 who has like been fed a, a, a bizarre amount of conspiracy theories. That he believes that, you know, the highest level of people in the Hillary Clinton's campaign are, you know, running pedophilia sex rings in the basement of a pizza place. That one guy, there is a direct line to January 6th, 2021 when five or ten thousand people pushed down the barricades and storm up to the steps of the Capitol and about eight or nine hundred of them break their way into the Capitol, you know, searching for Mike Pence and Nancy Pelosi. And so, you know, from one guy to 10,000 a little more than four years later that just tells you where this, the growth of all of this is headed. And I don't

know how you can police something that is so broad and so wide on social media. But at the same time, I don't know, you've got to try. And it, it's also important to know that, like, you know, Twitter is a private company. You don't; I do not have a right to; my, the First Amendment does not give me the right to say whatever I want on Twitter. And that's where we need to sort of educate our [chuckle] civics. Ed Freel is back there and he; he knows the word civics [chuckle.] You know, I, we have to sort of educate people, young people and older people about like the reality here, you know? You're not, you have the right to say whatever you want but you don't have the right to say it in, in our newspaper. You don't have a right to say in *The New York Times* or on CNN or Fox, and, you know, there's a reason why Fox is in a really big legal hot water right now because they kept having people on their air saying that this voting machine company, Dominion, ran a crazy conspiracy involving the dead Chilean president and a whole bunch of other people – North Korea – and, and it was obviously false. And now they're in a lawsuit over libel and it's because the, the First Amendment doesn't give you that right to maliciously attack somebody, especially when you've been told this is not true. So, we need to educate people more about that, that part of it because I think a lot of people look at the First Amendment and think I can do whatever I want wherever I want and you can't. This is a crowded theater. If somebody yells fire in a crowded theater you're in trouble. You, you; if somebody gets hurt in an unnecessary stampede out of here because I yelled fire, I'm in trouble because that person should not be hurt. I don't have some First Amendment right to do something that causes violence and, and injury. So, I don't know how to do it but we need to start trying.

DR. HOFFMAN: All right. Well, thank you so much. Let's open it up to

questions from the audience. So, if you have a question raise your hand and I will ask either Kate or Millie to come to you. So are there any questions from the audience? Come on. All right, we've got one here. So, Millie, so maybe in the front right here?

Q: Hi, I'm Megan Smith, I'm a part of Political Science 470 no, not 470,447 National Agenda. And my question for you is basically that the riot at the Capitol led to violent altercations between police and the conservative American protestors that were there with people ending up, you know, dead by the end of the day. How do you think American conservatives are reconciling the dissonant relationship between the party members growing distrust of government entities but stall, but stalwart support of government bodies such as law enforcement?

PAUL KANE: [Sigh.] Boy, I think you can even boil it down into something even more basic than that. Two years ago Republicans, like, it was Democrats; more like liberal activists who were saying defund the police, talking about local police. And the Republican response was Back the Blue, Back the Blue and they, they successfully gained over the course of that 2020 year they picked up 12 or 13 seats and a lot of people said that part of it was that, you know, Democrats walked into a trap by saying defund the police. And within an hour of the search warrant being executed in Mar-a-Largo for these classified documents that Trump could not bother to return to the rightful owners, the National Archives, within an hour you had a bunch of Republicans saying defund the FBI. And, it is, when they say defund the FBI they are, they are basically getting into a QAnon level of, of belief in this conspiracy theory that there's a deep state and there are these people who have been burrowed into government entities that

are there to fight Trump. And, the only way to, you know, overcome these deep state people are through completely defunding them and breaking up the FBI. That, that is, you know, 180 degrees different than where they were in 2020 where they were like Back the Blue, Back the Blue. I [sigh]; politicians have gotten so used to being hypocritical in their own decisions. And I've just watched it over the years and the way once one party goes from the minority into the majority and the other in the majority into the minority, they effortlessly begin saying the exact same things that they didn't believe when they were in charge and it is, you know, trying to, you know, circle that square, they don't even both anymore.

DR. HOFFMAN: Um-hum.

PAUL KANE: And so I think that, you know, a, for a lot of these Republicans now it's, it just, it's a great, it's a great hit, you know, if the deep state of the FBI is trying to, you know, crush Trump the same way they did through Muller hoax, Russia hoax and all the rest. So, the reality is a lot of them don't even bother trying to, that, you know, calculate the difference.

DR. HOFFMAN: Which is a shame because it, it's, citizens are losing their confidence in –

PAUL KANE: Um-hum.

DR. HOFFMAN: – their elected representatives because of this kind of inconsistency of opinions.

PAUL KANE: Um-hum.

DR. HOFFMAN: I think there is a question back here? Millie let's go over there too. Thank you.

AUDIENCE Q: Well, hi. First off, thank you for your time today, it's greatly

appreciated. This is my, my question has to do with January 6th as well. So, Donald J. Trump has recently declared in the news that if he were to win reelection for President in 2024 he would consider “very, very seriously to fully pardon all citizens a part of the January 6th breach of the Capitol. Do you think this sends worrying signals to the general public for another surreal act of violence such as January 6th to happen again if Trump just dangles and promises the act of pardoning for anyone involved? And also, what kind of dangers does this language set for, like, justice being served if it can just be taken away?

PAUL KANE: The same day, the same day that Trump said he would, it wasn't a promise, but said he would seriously consider pardoning people, and ex-New York Police Department officer was sentenced to I think it was ten years in prison. The body camera footage from a police officer outside the Capitol that day clearly shows the man – he's, he is at where essentially bike rack and for all of the protests that were around D.C. during the, the post George Floyd time around the Capitol those like bike racks worked. Nobody breached them. On that day this officer was seen like leading a mob up to the edge and, and taking the bike racks and pushing them into the what I think were the Capitol Police – I'm not sure if it was Capitol Police or D.C. Police – breaking, leading the charge, busting open these gates so that they could go through and attacking, knocking an officer down, taking I think it was a flag pole or some sort of pole-type thing and beating an officer with this pole. Again, this person was NYPD and this is what he was doing to another officer who was just trying to uphold the law. If someone like that gets pardoned in 2025 you really are setting a precedent of essential lawlessness that you're, that the judicial code applies only to those who



aren't in line with the president of that time and place. I don't think it will, I don't think Trump would pardon someone like that but I have no reason to think he would not do so. You know, these are actual violent criminals. They are not, you know, they weren't tourists and I think that that is, you know; you're, the, the, there's a, there's a code that his is, that he does to his most violent supporters and it started before election day at a debate. He was getting asked about Oath Keepers and Proud Boys and he had a line, oh my gosh I'm forgetting, stay –

AUDIENCE: Stand down.

PAUL KANE: Stand –

AUDIENCE: [Unintelligible]

PAUL KANE: – down –

AUDIENCE: Standby.

PAUL KANE: Standby.

AUDIENCE: Standby.

PAUL KANE: Stand down with standby. Standby. What the hell did he mean? Standby. And, you know, when you see the whole story come to fruition, you know, I think we know what he meant by standby. So, I think that, what he's doing now with talking about pardons is a very similar type of action as standby.

DR. HOFFMAN: Okay, I think we have time for maybe one or two more questions. There's one –

PAUL KANE: All the way in the back.

DR. HOFFMAN: – in the back. Kate?

PAUL KANE: Two, two all the way in the back.

AUDIENCE Q: Why do you think the response between the House of Representatives and the Senate was so much different after the January 6th

insurrection?

PAUL KANE: I think there are traditionally the Senate is the, you know, they called it the cooling saucer and so it has always been this place that has less fervent views. And the House of Representatives, The People's House, they're elected every two years and they always have to answer to their, to their constituents within every two years. And so, there's been this traditional thing where the House's, the House runs at a hotter temperature than the Senate. But what's really transformed politics, and in the last 10, 15, 20 years more so than just Trump or at least equally as so, is as these Congressional districts in, in House Districts are drawn every ten years – so there's new lines – and they've gotten more and more scientific about knowing how these lines are drawn. My suburban town outside Philadelphia a few years ago before the Pennsylvania Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional –

DR. HOFFMAN: Is that “Goofy Kicking Donald Trump”?

PAUL KANE: its part of “Goofy Kicking Donald Trump” but it, its, I think that's the main district but there was a roadway in which –

DR. HOFFMAN: Donald Duck, I meant.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter]

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter]

PAUL KANE: – there was more, one side of the road, Limekiln Pike, was predominantly Jewish and therefore it was in Democrat Brendon Boyle's district and the other side was more Christian and Catholic and that was in the Republican, I think that Meehan's district, and like that was, they've gotten so scientific that they can break these things down by income levels, and religion, and education levels. And so, these districts in the House have been whittled

down to out of 435 there's really only about 50 that are competitive. And what that means – competitive in the general election – what that means is that in the primary that's the whole game. And so, the Republican primaries – the Democrats have had plenty of primaries as well where they've gotten, they've produced some really far left liberals like Alexandria, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez beating a 20-year incumbent Joe Crowley who was on his way to potentially being Speaker one day – but the Republicans have had more fiery primaries for 12 years at least. We were talking about this early today and Christine O'Donnell here in Delaware was really a precursor to what was happening to the broader national Republican Party and it is the most likely voters in these conservative primaries are the most rabid ideological people. And, they produce candidates who represent those views. And so, there are just many more really almost fringe House Republicans now than there are in the Senate. The Senate, they're elected statewide. It's, it's harder to get elected and, you know, these House primaries, there's usually only about thirty to fifty thousand voters total in one of them. So you can win a race by only getting, you know, fifteen to sixteen thousand to vote for you and all of a sudden you have these districts now that because they had 16,000 people vote for this really firebrand Republican they are now represented by somebody who is just really out there. And it has happened far more in the Republican primaries and its produced a House right now that is filled with several dozen people who, you know, the, the average conservative of 15 years ago would now be a moderate RINO in, in Republican circles. There's this guy, Adam Kinzinger from Illinois who was a star of the 2010 Republican class that won back the majority. He's a really handsome guy. He flew Air Force planes. People called him Top Gun and Maverick, all these things,

he is now part of this Liz Cheney wing that hates Trump and he is just isolated and he's now just considered a RINO and he's retiring. So, I think a lot of this has to do with the way these districts are drawn.

DR. HOFFMAN: RINO meaning Republican in Name Only?

PAUL KANE: Yes. So –

DR. HOFFMAN: And this has to do with gerrymandering is, is –

PAUL KANE: Yes.

DR. HOFFMAN: – I think what you're getting at and if I can plug one of our upcoming speakers. September 28th we will have a graphics editor from *The New York Times* along with an indigenous fine art photographer talk about how to interpret difficult political concepts and through art and through graphic design and creativity. So, Denise Lu actually created a gerrymandering game at *The New York Times* so could, sort of, figure out how to gerrymander your own district because it really is about playing with these numbers, playing with how many Republicans, how many black people, how many white people, how many Christians and it's kind of a little bit scary when you think about how, how much control they can have over that. I think we have time for one more question and they I'll, I'll wrap things up. Kate, there's a, right next to the person with just spoke. It's up to you [laughter.]

KATE: I think he had his hand up for awhile so –

DR. HOFFMAN: Okay, great.

KATE: I'm [indiscernible.]

AUDIENCE Q: You had mentioned, or, I'm, I'm Chris. I'm in Communications 337 and you had mentioned the motivatance (sic) of you and sort of the sports team-like thinking in politics where people are very committed

to one group. Is there a way that either as, you know, journalists and creators of some of this content or as viewers that we can start to get past that?

DR. HOFFMAN: Hum. [Chuckles]

PAUL KANE: I understand the question. Yeah, I know that there's a, there is an exhaustion about, you know, sports metaphors especially in, in journalism –

DR. HOFFMAN: Game framing is –

PAUL KANE: – horse race –

DR. HOFFMAN: Horse race.

PAUL KANE: – horse race, boxing and I don't try to write in sports metaphors. And when I say that what I'm trying to get, to get to is to, to explain the, you know, the outcomes of what has, what is happening or what has happened and to explain why that happened and, you know, tie it to an election and explain here's a way to change that outcome and if this party does this thing better in the next election they'll have enough people to overturn that dumb law or it's, it's not just trying to get to a, you know, like, who's up, who's down. It's trying to, I try to explain it in a broader fashion than, than what we do and also headlines suck times.

DR. HOFFMAN: Um.

PAUL KANE: [Chuckle.] And, and tweets that –

DR. HOFFMAN: And you don't write the headlines, right?

PAUL KANE: We do not. We do not. And tweets which, you know, end up being, you know, that we think of in a sometimes thirty-second window ending up skewing things in really bad ways, I encourage people to always try to click and actually read the story before hating it on Twitter or Facebook, Instagram, whatever.

DR. HOFFMAN: That is excellent advice. And that was a great question. Thank you. Thank you to Kate and Millie. I think we're going to wrap things up here. I really appreciate all of you being here tonight. I hope that you'll join us for our upcoming events. I think we have a couple of more slides if we could show those very quickly. Our next speaker is Pearce Godwin. He was a Republican strategist who in, I believe it was, 2013 realized that Democrats and Republicans were not listening to each other and created this project called the Listen First Project. And the goal is to help people learn how to listen to each other. So often in National Agenda we talk about civil discourse and how to talk to each other in a, a, a way that is more cordial and, and courteous and, you know, open minded but I think we need to apply that to listening as well. So, we're going to talk about the importance of listening. We also have some other initiatives that are coming up including this year being a midterm election year we're encouraging our students to be active citizens at UD. This QR code you can scan as a student if you're interested. UD is home to, we are home to the TurboVote system which means that you can register to vote as well as get signed up for notifications about absentee ballots, about where your polling place is, about how to get to your polling place. They send you texts or emails depending on your preference. I get maybe one or two a year, primaries and, and general elections. It's an incredible useful service that's targeted to you and where you are voting. And for college students a lot of time that's a very hard thing to do because you're not living where you, your district is that you're, so, this makes it very easy and I think that what we're talking about today is that Generation Z and a lot of young people can potentially have a very big outcome on elections particularly in like the midterm. So, I encourage you to, to scan that

code for that purpose. We've also recently partnered with IssueVoter which you can also access through that QR code which basically helps you hold your elected representatives accountable after you've made your vote. And this is, applies for, I believe, all, I think, or maybe it's only UD students. I don't want to speak out, out of place. At least for UD students right now. You can sign up to basically say here are the issues that I'm interested in whether its climate change, or police brutality, or whatever it might be and they will alert you, say hey, your state representative is voting on this bill today. Here's how you can contact his office or her office and let them know what you think. So it's a really great way to hold your elected representatives accountable after they've promised you something to vote for them, to hold them accountable for that. And then, yeah, we also have the next slide is about a Voices of UD Audio Essay Contest. We've been doing this since I believe about 2017. There are cash prizes for students who submit an audio essay. This year I believe the theme is about why do we all – Stephanie, Nancy? What's the theme this year?

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON: It is "Why –

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON: Why are you more than a number?

DR. HOFFMAN: What is it?

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON: "Why are you more than a number?"

DR. HOFFMAN: Why are you more than a number? What a great theme to go along with the theme of National Agenda. So, I encourage you to submit this. There are prizes of two 500 dollars. I believe the, the submission deadline is December 9th or 10th. But [cpc.udel.edu/voices](http://cpc.udel.edu/voices) will take you to the submission page for that. And that's; we encourage students in National Agenda, students in Comm 337, students across the university to submit to that and as well as



students who I'm hoping are watching from home, from the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. We love to hear from our, our senior students as well. We like to hear from all generations about issues that matter to them. I want to point out one quick thing. If you're on UD's campus this semester you might see some of my students holding signs that say Free Intelligent Conversations. If you see those signs walk up to those students. We had some of those conversations over –

PAUL KANE:        They were great.

DR. HOFFMAN:    – tonight which brought up the conversation about forgiveness and the importance of forgiveness. Please walk up to those students and engage with them in conversation. Sometimes we need to step out of like are you red, are you blue, are you a Democrat or Republican, are you pro this or anti this and just get to know each other as human beings [chuckle.] So that's what this initiative is all about. So, I want to thank you so much for joining us. Please visit [cpc.udel.edu](http://cpc.udel.edu), Center for Political Communication, for more of our programming. We have all of our past 11 years of programming including interviews with Chris Christie, Joe Biden, John Kasich, political comedians, artists, you name it. It's all there for you to listen to and enjoy. And be sure to follow us on social media. Thank you so much for being here and goodnight.

AUDIENCE:        [Applause.]

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