

File Name: IGX_032317_PPL5
Event Date: March 23, 2017
Location: Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA
Participants:
BETH GRABOWSKI
LAXMI HUMMEL
JALEA MORRIS
MARK KATZ
CORTLAND GILLIAM
LAURA DUQUE
Length: 00:35:33

Preface

The following conversation was hosted at UNC-Chapel Hill, supported by the Institute for the Arts and Humanities, as part of jina valentine (with artist Heather Hart) and Hồng-Ân Trương's (with artist Hương Ngô) community-based social justice performance series, All Rise. This table was facilitated by jina valentine. Consent was given by the participants to have their conversation recorded and transcribed.

Readers should keep in mind that they are reading a transcript of the spoken word and are encouraged to refer directly to the original audio if possible as some interactions and utterances may not have been transcribed due to the nature of unscripted group conversations. The views, thoughts, and opinions expressed in the text belong solely to the roundtable participants and do not necessarily reflect the views of Black Lunch Table.

START OF RECORDING

JM: (inaudible - 00:00:03)

JINA VALENTINE: So, can you just--.

MK: Okay, are we ready?

JV: Oh, yeah, so this is table number five.

BG: Mm-hmm.

JV: Um, and-and-and--.

LH: [Whispers] She's going first.

MK: So, say your--? (inaudible - 00:00:16)

BG: Oh, we're going--? I'm going first again?

MK: We're just saying names, right? [Laughs]

BETH GRABOWSKI: Okay. [Laughs] Sorry. My name is Beth Grabowski.

JALEA MORRIS: Jalea.

LAXMI HUMMEL: Laxmi Hummel.

MARK KATZ: Mark Katz.

CORTLAND GILLIAM: Cortland Gilliam.

BG: So, Jalea was- has to go right now, but she had a really cool, like, observation.

JM: Yeah, I just had, um, something quick to say. I would say, um, the first thing that I noticed was that the questions were very intrusive, um, to the point where I was getting frustrated as a bystander. Um, and me being an African American diaspora studies major, um, I tend to relate a lot of things to things that I see on a day to day basis. Um, historically, with the slave markets, they were --or I should say, auction blocks-- they were intrusive in themselves sort of like these questions were, but while the questions were intrusive in a personal life manner --I mean, it's obviously different than a physical intrusion-- but still, um, with that intrusion, I feel like is dehumanization. And so--. Yeah, that's the main thing that I saw that was very interesting to me.

Unknown: Mm-hmm.

MK: Well, thank you for--. [Coughs]

JM: [Laughs]

MK: So, who wants to start?

LH: Oh, I don't- I think we should--.

MK: You pick a card.

KH: Debrief the thing first.

MK: Well, they- she said that we should look at the cards and-and we could do that, too. But, uh, I actually have to go in a little bit [Clears throat]. Just waiting for my ride.

LH: Okay. Oh, these are about the same, okay.

MK: Yeah.

BG: Yeah. Should we read 'em out?

LH: Yeah.

MK: Well, I think we just pick.

BG: Um, *Are there questions in the citizenship interrogation that you would have lied about?*

LH: Hell yeah.

[Laughter]

BG: Which ones? Which ones, it says.

LH: I don't know. I mean, like--.

JM: [Laughs]

BG: I might have lied--.

LH: Just the way that they were worded was really aggressive.

BG: I might've lied about the drugs.

[Laughter]

JM: Yeah.

LH: Yeah.

JM: High key.

[Laughter]

BG: I grew up in the 60s, so.

[Laughter]

BG: What does inhale mean? Or how it- how did he say that? [Laughs]

MK: Well, some of the questions were so vague that [Clears throat] it would be safer just to say, 'No.' You know, 'Have you been associated with--?'

LH: Yeah.

MK: And that could mean anything, so.

LH: I know, right?

MK: I would've- I would've lied. [Clears throat]

JM: [Laughs]

BG: Lied purposefully or lied by just omission because you couldn't remember?

MK: Well, probably both.

BG: [Laughs]

MK: Um, I know the hard thing for me is, uh, [Clears throat] would you fight--?
Would you take arms?

BG: Mm.

LH: Mm-hmm.

MK: Because I'm inclined to say no, but, um, but I don't know if-if it came to it, whether I'd actually be a pacifist and refuse.

BG: Well, and then the-the, um, oath you have to read out and affirm at the end says that you'll--.

MK: Says you would, yeah.

BG: You know, protect the-the United States of America. [Pause] So, that's hard. But I was thinking about that one, too, I would- probably would have said yes, that I would serve in a civilian capacity, because that could be like-like being a nurse or-or-or teaching students, or, you know, or-or caring for people. Um, so I probably would have said yes to that. [Whispers] Oh, I'm freezing.

MK: I know, me too.

JM: I know. [Laugh]

MK: Do you want to pick- someone pick one? 'Cause I need to get something more quickly.

JM: Get a random one. *What does U.S. citizenship mean at this moment? What could it possibly mean?*

[Speakers intermittently agree]

CG: Um, I think for anybody responding to this is, like, to whom, you know? 'What does U.S. citizenship mean to whom?' Um, I would say doesn't mean a whole lot I-in a- in the sense of, like, other than, like, you living here benefiting from, you know, being a citizen of this country, so, you know, tax benefits, you know, benefits of the

government and stuff like that. But I would say, outside of that in the way that, um, the interview questions were set up, I don't think it means all that, you know, the wri- the author of those interview questions to me le-, you know, um, meant it- meant for it to mean. Um, like, you don't have to be this pure person who doesn't do drugs or who hasn't seen the world or visited certain countries, even countries with Sharia law, y-you don't have to--.

LH: You don't?

CG: Meet all those requirements or criteria--.

JM: [Laughs]

CG: Um, to be a citizen or to be loyal to this country or whatever that means.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

BG: I still thi--. It means a-a certain amount of privilege. Um, because, I mean, there's so many countries that I've flown into where Americans just kind of walked through the immigration line and everybody else is questioned and stalled and, um, people with American passports tend to, um, fly through things, but I don't know how tha- how or if that's changed, um, with the current administration. I would say it, American citizenship to me right now means embarrassment. I mean, just to--. I had so many friends that are not American that are, you know, look over here and say, 'I'm so sorry for you.' But that's coming from a very liberal perspective.

JM: That's true.

BG: But, uh, I think that's--.

JM: Yeah, no, that's, that's really real. [Laughs] Um, really real. But, I would say when--. [Sighs] It was one question that was asking about allegiance to, um, [Clears

throat] America, like, to the country and things like that. And I feel like if you were to ask any person that's, you know, a natural born citizen, those type of questions, you know, somebody might- like me, might be on the fence a little bit, like, 'You know, America is a great country, but, you know, uh, I don't know about that whole,' you know.

MK: We have our issues.

JM: Right. For sure. Like everyone el- everywhere else does. But, um, I don't know, just kind of having to come in with a blind faith and, like, devotion to being an American citizen.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

LH: Yeah, it's hard when you are born a citizen to realize all the privilege that comes with that, you just take it for granted. And, like, there are people who are just dying to be here and to have what we have. And, you know, sometimes we can't even wrap our heads around that. Um, and people who are leaving situations that are just far worse than the things that we're upset about here, you know. Um--.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

BG: Right. Like I-I remember when some friends of mine came from China, and they looked at- just walking into an American grocery store, just not anything even special. They were just wide eyed at-at how much was on the shelves, how much choice we have to- in terms of the way we lived our lives. And even the fact that we can say things out loud that are against the government and not be arrested for it. That's- we do take that kind of stuff for granted. Actually, when they ask the question about, um, how have you exercised your-y--.

LH: Right to democracy?

BG: Yeah, I was gonna- [Laughs] I wanted to say, 'I've exercised my freedom of speech to-to--.' [Laughs]

MK: Right, every day.

BG: 'To resist,' you know?

MK: Yeah.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

LH: Yeah, that's true. I felt like some of the questions were contradictory, or hypocritical, of things that the government does, you know, like, vi- like violence against people. I'm like--.

JM: Interrogation.

LH: 'Y'all do that shit and you don't want me--? Like, you're gonna discriminate against me if I did it in my past? You know, and serve my time or whatever,' you know? Like--.

BG: Right.

LH: [Laughs] Like, they're just--.

JM: [Laughs]

LH: Not the pillars of morality.

CG: Right.

MK: (inaudible - 00:08:48)

CG: (inaudible - 00:08:49) wrong once then, like, you're damned, you know what I mean? Like--.

LH: Mm-hmm.

CG: If you answered in the affirmative to any of those, like, negatively framed questions.

BG: No second chances.

[Crosstalk]

CG: Then you don't really have a second chance.

JM: Yeah--.

CG: (inaudible - 00:08:59)

JM: That's sorta what we talked about.

LH: Mm-hmm.

[Crosstalk ends]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

LH: Yeah, I mean, if you are really wanting to stay in this country, then, like, you're gonna lie to stuff or--. But you also don't know if they have a file on you, like, look back through your history and know if you're lying.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

BG: Well, and if anybody was being- wanting to get in for sinister reasons, they would lie their way through that kinda thing even if they didn't ha- you know, if you didn't have a file--. I mean, what does the questionnaire there really prove any--? Does it prove anything?

LH: Yeah. Yeah, I know.

MK: Makes me wonder if--. [Clears throat] I mean, it did suggest with the first one that the--.

JM: Mm?

MK: What's that?

LD: Hey.

MK: Oh.

LD: I--. Sorry.

MK: Um.

LD: (inaudible - 00:09:51)

LH: You have to say your name.

MK: Oh, yes. So, we ha- you have to say your name. Uh--.

LD: [Laughs] Oh, you do?

CG: Mm-hmm.

LD: Oh, okay.

MK: Yes, it's so- so it can be transcribed.

LAURA DUQUE: Oh, perfect. Okay. Uh, Laura Duque, like Carolina Duque.

MK: Oh, I was- I was just saying that my sense was that they had already decided [Clears throat] whether they were going to let people in or not right?

CG: Right.

MK: Like what you say will probably only hurt you.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

CG: Mm. Very good point, very good point.

[inaudible - 00:10:22 to 00:10:26]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

CG: Right. I think brevity is for the best in this situation because as I was listening to, um, you know, the interviews, they would, like, start with, like, 'Maybe,' 'I think,' and then, like, elaborate and possibly say some, like, incriminating things or things that would get them further from the answer.

BG: It's-it's interesting, though, that the presumption is that the government is suspicious or something.

CG: [Laughs] Up to something?

BG: Yeah.

CG: Right. That's a good point.

BG: That they're- that we don't- we aren't just (inaudible - 00:10:54) folks, you know.

CG: Right. Mm-hmm.

MK: Should we pick another?

JM: Yeah.

Unknown: Sure.

BG: Yeah, I think I'm--.

MK: *How have you been affected by the Muslim ban?* Or I guess it should mean the proposed Muslim ban.

BG: Um, I've had students come cry in my office.

CG: Mm-hmm.

MK: What are they--? What are their concerns?

BG: Just being afraid, mostly for their family, and-and being afraid be--. Well, they-they- one had, uh, a child who was harassed on the school bus.

MK: Oh, wow.

BG: They got the, 'Go back to where you came from.' And they were American actually. So (inaudible - 00:11:45). I mean, that-that kind of normalizing of-of hate in our country has-has been the most egregious offense of that I think,

CG: Mm-hmm.

MK: Hasn't affected me directly, because I'm not coming from another country and I'm not Muslim, but I was just, um, I was just in Algeria and Tunisia, and --right after it was proposed-- and I talked to a lot of people about this and they said --it was interesting-- they said, 'We love America, but what's wrong with Trump?'

[Laughter]

MK: Or, 'Your president is crazy,' and, 'You can't do this. It doesn't make sense. It's-it's offensive.' So it was- it was, you know, mortifying to be associated with the- this country.

BG: I mean, it just certainly makes you angry on a daily basis.

MK: Yeah.

BG: The hypocrisy of it all.

CG: Yeah, and that's been interesting for me, since all this has come up is that I feel like I've been embarrassed and critical of this country in-in some of the ideolo-ideology it espouses for like, a long time, um--.

[Laughter]

CG: And so, for a lot of--. There's like a lot of newness — or at least like the discussion is, like, reemerged in, like, a fresh way, I guess, um, where people are becoming embarrassed. Um, but I'm like --I don't know what this says about me as, like, a citizen-- but, like, I've never been, like, super ecstatic about--. I-I definitely recognize my privilege and, like, this is- this whole answer is steeped in privilege-- um, but you know, I've-I've been critical of this country and the way it's treated particularly by people, um, for centuries. And so, I think with this Muslim ban, if anything how it's affected me is it's kind of- it's allowed me to kind of, I guess --I don't know how to say this-- it's-it's affirmed some-some certain things within me, but then also it's-it's-it's expanded, um, my thinking about the different ways that this country oppresses, like, a lot of people and not just particularly, you know, um, not just parti-particularly among racial, uh, racial lines, but like, how that's conflated with religion and, um, just being, like, probably, I guess, Protesta- in this country comes with Protestant background, and how that's, like, conflated with, I guess, um, European ancestry, I guess, or with colonialism and how that's like kind of had an impact on its stance against, um, Islam and Muslim- people of the Muslim faith (inaudible - 00:14:22).

BG: It's a- I'm hearing it- in what you're saying that it's, uh, part of it is, like, this n-newly expressed--.

CG: Mm-hmm. Frustration, yeah.

BG: Embarrassment or frustration, it's like, 'Where the hell have y'all been?

CG: Yeah, it- pretty much. [Laughs] Um--.

MK: My ride is here, so--.

[Laughter]

CG: Great talk--. Great talking with you, yeah.

[CG intermittently agrees]

BG: Yeah, get that. I mean, living on a university campus, you can't--. I mean, on this campus are-are there often like, 'Where-where've y'all been?' kind of situation, but it-it is frustrating. It's like you- we're blind. We've been sold the story of America's greatness and all the stuff that we've done, and-and then we are faced with this kind of craziness right now. And-and yet it's been there all along. You know, I was just listening to a podcast about the Trail of Tears and it's like, okay, there was a major, major sin.

CG: Sure.

LH: (inaudible - 00:15:19)

CG: That was a pretty good question.

BG: How'd you feel being an interviewer?

CG: Yeah.

[CG intermittently agrees]

LD: Oh, it was really interesting because, I mean, I-I've been on the other side. Um, so, it got- it just, like, this whole persona, like, [Laughs] took over. And I kind of, like, saw it as a way for me to--. I was thinking about all the times that, like, I've had to talk to immigration officers. And, um, it just, I wanted to, um, recreate that experience. But now I'm just, like, still, like, processing it all, because, um, I mean, I-I just I--. That's not me, you know? Um, I felt- I feel like, 'Oh, my God. I need to go apologize.'

[Laughter]

LD: You know, um, because--. Er, but-but that's the way the questions were set up, also, gave you so much power. Like, I-I found myself, like, slipping into that pattern of--.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

BG: W-watching you made me think of those psychology experiences where they separate people, and they make some people the guards and some people the prisoners, that pow- that sense of power, just really stoo--. You take on that identity no matter where you started before.

LD: Yes, like the--. Wasn't that a famous experiment?

BG: Yeah. You'd like to think, 'I would never do that.' But, you know, we do. We-we take advantage of whatever power is given to us, right?

LD: Yeah. And I was just telling her that I feel like now I know so much about I mean, we all do. And it's like, I wonder what these people do with, like, after you're telling them everything. It's so, ugh.

LH: I know (inaudible - 00:17:01)

LD: Yeah. Um, it's just so intimidating. And they don't respond, because--. I mean, when I've been there, it's like--. Um, so, I was telling her that, um, I was telling her that, uh, recently, I, um, like, I was invited to the White House as part of a group, uh, of people like, um, for National, um, H.I.V., um, um, recognition- Awareness Day. Um, and, um, it was because I volunteered for this organization and they just invited the volunteers. And, um, I didn't know that, um, if you were permanent residents, which I am, um, so I- so I'm gonna have to go to- uh, through this, um, sometime. Um, but if you're a permanent resident and not a citizen you would get--. It's basically like they

give you tags- different tags, so the citizens get green tags, and all the non-citizens get pink tags, so you stand out. Um. (inaudible - 00:18:03)

BG: (inaudible - 00:18:03)

LD: Yeah. Um, and so I we- I went with two other U.N.C. students, and they were both citizens, and, um, and all of a sudden, they stopped me, because they saw that I had--. I- I f- I noticed that something was wrong, because they gave me a pink one and I was like, 'Well, that's probably 'cause I'm a permanent resident, that makes sense.' And then, they stopped me, they were like, 'All of you can go except for you.' And I was like, 'Okay, but why?' And it was like, 'I can't tell you, you should know why.' And I was like, 'Excuse me, I'm just here, like, with Advocates For Youth. We're, like, a non-profit--.'

BG: 'I was invited.' [Laughs]

LD: Yeah. [Laughs] And the- and they were like, uh, 'Who, um, is your part-your-your contact, um, at the White House?' And like, 'I'm with Advocates For Youth. Like, this is my, like, this is my invitation.' Like, like, and, they were like, um, 'No.' Uh, it's just the guy was super rude. Just super mean, and would not let me, like, when I--. When she was asking me, like, 'What does that mean?' I did exactly what he did to me in that situation: 'I don't know. You should know. Like, I-I can't say.' You know? And it was intimidating and I was like, 'Well--.' I wanted to cry. I was just, like--. And all my friends were inside and this was supposed to be such an amazing day.

LH: But it was humiliating.

LD: And it was just humiliating. Um, and I was like, 'Okay, well, I don't know what to do.' And he just kept asking me, 'What's your party? What's your- what's your contact at the White House?' And I was, like, 'I'm with this organization.' 'No. Someone- Do you

know someone within the White House?' I was like, 'I don't. Like I'm here with a group.' And then, I eventually told him--. Like, I asked him if I could, um, take out my phone to see, like, if there was anything, like, from the email that I got with any information and he let me do that, thankfully. Otherwise, I don't know what I would have done. I think I would have just, like, asked to leave and I don't know, like, what I would've done 'cause all my friends were inside and--. Um, and, yeah. And so then I called the person in like, uh, they were like, 'Oh, it must- It must have been that like you're--. They messed up your- they messed up your information or something.' And so the guy made me --like, on the phone-- he made me, like, go over, like, all my information, like, my social security number, like, my name- my full name, and where I was born and everything. And the guard stood there listening to me talking on the phone. And then, I was like, 'Okay, they just sent the application back, and he was like, 'That's not what I asked you. I asked you, like, what was your point of contact. You- we already have your information inside, you just need to be escorted by someone.' So he, like, he tricked me into doing all this. And he watched me, like, talk to the person. And so I had to call the person again and finally like, 'Oh, that's what you need. Okay, we'll have someone come and get you.'

BG: Rather than being helpful.

LD: Yeah. And then the guy took, like, thirty minutes to come. So, I was there waiting with this guy, in a tiny room, alone. Yeah, and so it was just a--. I mean, it was just, like, such a traumatic experience. And then-then, finally the guy came. And it was, like, the guy that was, like, leading the whole entire, um, session that we were part of, and he escorted me into the room that we were in. And he was like, 'I'm technically

supposed to stand next to you at all times, but I'm not going to do that because no one's here to check on that.' And he was like, 'Um, but you're not allowed to, like, leave the room alone.' Um, and so, I was like, 'Okay,' and--.

LH: Did he apologize? (inaudible - 00:21:33)

LD: Yeah, he apologized, because he didn't think that no--. Like, the reason why the whole mix up happened was because they didn't know that they were going to be non-citizens at the event. They just assumed everyone was going to be a citizen.

CG: Mm.

LH: Yeah.

LD: Um--.

LH: Well, you would think that they would be able to send a memo by now.

BG: Yeah, if they had--. If they had all your information--.

LH: (inaudible - 00:21:57)

LD: Right? Yeah, they, I mean, they--.

LH: (inaudible - 00:21:59)

LD: Yeah. And I sent them my information, they should have told me. Like, they didn't tell me, and so, that just ruined the whole experience. And I wanted to enjoy it so badly, but I just felt like I didn't feel welcomed and, like, the pictures--.

CG: And then, like, the surveillance, I feel you felt like you had this eye on you. Like, the guy had to stay in the room even though you did it.

LD: Sorry, I just like--. Sorry to take so long.

CG: No, no. Yeah.

LH: Why is a non-permanent resident a threat? You've already been vetted. You had to fill out so many paperwork, pay so many fees, do, you know, all this stuff to be able to be a non-permanent resident.

CG: Mm-hmm.

LH: Moreso than a citizen.

CG: Right?

LH: Like, why are--? You know, like, why are they targeting you?

[CG intermittently agrees]

BG: Well, yeah, and you think of the violence that's done in this country. The incidence of violence by citizens is astronomically more than that of anybody from the outside. Every time those- the protesters start talking about, you know, whatever, the most recent thing that has a Muslim name attached to it, I just want to say, 'Okay. Dylann Roof.'

LD: [Laughs]

CG: Right.

LD: Yeah.

CG: Yeah, we're always looking externally for, like, threats and violence and--.

BG: Right. I mean--. But just the- just the list of gun- of gun, you know, all the school shootings, everything else. All--. I mean, the list is so much longer, and yet, that doesn't surface as the--.

[CG intermittently agrees]

LD: And that's not considered terrorism. Like it has to be done by a person of color to be considered terrorism. It's just frustrating and, yeah, like-like you were saying, like, where have people been? Like, people are now complaining about it? It's been going on for forever, so.

CG: This is a long one: *A GEO Group*--. Oh, did anybody else have any--? I didn't want to (inaudible - 00:23:56).

BG: No, go for it.

CG: (inaudible - 00:23:57) say? Okay. *A GEO Group, a for profit prison that operates* main- uh, *mini ICE detention centers is under investigation for violating U.S. anti slavery laws by-by forcing detained immigrants to work as unpaid prison laborers.*

BG: Right.

CG: Um, so--.

BG: That's not--.

CG: That's not (inaudible - 00:24:17) there.

[CG intermittently agrees]

BG: That-that's modern day slavery. We have--. We are third in the world behind Somalia and North Korea in terms of per capita incarceration. It's like, great company, right? And-and the fact that--. I mean, if you're in jail, that's your punishment, to have forced labor on top of that. [Pause] Yeah, and actually there was a- there was an art project that somebody did recently where they, um, they commissioned all the pieces of their project that they were doing by the prison labor just as a way to make it visible. Um, it-it was controversial because people were --I'm forgetting the artist's name-- is

controversial, though, because people were saying, 'Well, you're exploiting this labor for your art practice and that's- you know, 'that's not--.'

CG: Ah, true (inaudible - 00:25:21)

BG: 'Not quite right.'

CG: 'Good,' right?

BG: [Laughs] It's not solving any problem there because you're just part of the system. Um, uh- um, I mean that-that kind of con-conflicted relationship to the-the bad stuff in our country, I mean, we're all complicit in some way, right? Um, but where do you draw your own personal lines, I guess that's the question.

LD: And I feel like that's something that you do see a lot, is people who are under this label of being criminals or also with immigrants being illegal, being outside of the law, how that's, like, a precondition that justifies, like, inhumane treatment. And I think that that's, like, one of the biggest problems that people who just commit, like, maybe a petty crime or make a mistake, and there's just no way to come back from that. Like, once you're labeled, it's like, no one sees any issue with the way that you're treated.

CG: Right.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

BG: I mean, yeah. And d-definitely that changes depending upon your demographics, too, you know, 'cause second chances are- third chances and fifth chances are, you know, you can buy those if you have the means, um, or the right skin color. Um, yeah. Yeah, if you're at all, outside the mythical norm.

CG: Yeah, I think one of the questions from the interview was like--. I-I don't know. Something like--. I think it was with your interviewing. Something about, like--. Yeah.

LD: [Laughs]

CG: Uh, one of the questers were asking something about like what-what practice of, you know, government or what practice of this country, like, you disagree with? Or something like that? And I think there's a question, in my mind was like (inaudible - 00:27:16) pretty, like, big one in this country (inaudible - 00:27:21) wouldn't cross that line, you know what I mean? Um, and that just goes to your point (inaudible - 00:27:28) whether you've-you've committed a petty crime or even if you aren't guilty of something like murder, you're-you're not red- you're not redeemable. Um, r-or you're not va-valid or have value as a person --still, even a person who's done something egregious-- um, you still have no value as a person. And that's, like, pretty fun- --sadly-- fundamentally, like tied to, like, this country. And...

BG: It--.

CG: I don't know.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

BG: It seems to me that the crimes of --economic crimes-- are not- are not seen as egregious as other kinds of crimes, right? But they're equally, if not more, damaging to the people they affect.

CG: Definitely.

[inaudible - 00:28:13 to 00:28:29]

CG: *Discuss U.N.C. administration's response to the Muslim ban* (inaudible - 00:28:34) *local, regal resources for immigrants.*

Unknown: Oh.

CG: Do you wanna just do another one?

BG: (inaudible - 00:28:40)

[Crosstalk]

LD: This one. Oh. I have a lot to say about this.

LH: (inaudible - 00:28:41)

CG: (inaudible - 00:28:42) Go in.

BG: Go for it.

[Crosstalk ends]

[Laughter]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

LD: Oh, my goodness, um, I'm just really disappointed. Uh, I- when, uh, Chancellor Folt sent out that email, um, there was a focus on addressing international students. And, uh, I was like, what about students that grew up here their whole lives who are undocumented, you know? Who are out of state students or in-state students. I mean, I'm an in-state student, but I'm an immigrant. I'm not an international student. It was almost like only those who are here legally get to have support. And even then, what she said was so--.

BG: Empty

LD: Vague.

LH: (inaudible - 00:29:36)

LD: Yeah.

CG: Yeah (inaudible - 00:29:38)

LD: And it just, and then she addressed the whole- the--. Did you see how she addressed another issue, um, the issue of, like, the poster that was saying that we should kill, um--.

CG: Trump supporters or something.

LD: Trump supporters and she--.

CG: And she went all in.

LD: Went all in on that.

CG: Yeah. It's like a very emotional response.

LD: Yeah.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

JM: Yeah. And I would say, um, as a Black student here, I know last year when she allowed, um, K.K.K. members to come and protest on campus. The email that was sent out that morning, um, was, [Sigh] 'Right to protest.' Blah, blah, blah. 'We- Oh, we, um, are accepting of all viewpoints.' And being a part of the Black Student Movement, we had- we had a time with that, because we were like, 'How dare you? Like, we are students here and you allow these people to come here on our campus and have Confederate flags, and, you know, like, kind of protest and yell their beliefs at us.' And it was just li- you know, like a slap in the face. So, I definitely kind of attest, because, um,

when she sent that statement about the Muslim ban, um, like I said, I felt it was very lackluster. [Laughs] We could have done without that. Thank you.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

BG: There were so many other administrators around the country who had really righteous, um, you know, resistance to that and said, 'We don't believe this. It's not our values. We're--,' you know, whatever. Um, and to not- to not come out with that kind of comments really strongly just... Yeah, it was very frustrating.

LD: It just shows who's in power here.

BG: Well, it's a--. I mean, I read that a lot from, you know, timid administrations, it's a little C.Y.A., you know. Uh, it's just whatever the- whatever you need to do to not bring more scrutiny to you, but what the hell, we're here, you know, let's, like, bring it home. That's what we're here for, we're here to talk it out.

LD: Yeah, and at the end of the day, like, your job is to make sure that everybody feels welcome on campus and to create a welcoming environment for everyone, I mean--.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

BG: But even to talk about it, and to, you know, we can take- we can take it on. We can have civil conversations about things, but we can have heated and-and protests kinds of conversations. But- and, you know, there's a certain value of the liberal arts institution that UNC- the, uh, you know, the UNC's mission statement is actually quite noble. And that- and we don't- we don't- we don't live up to that. I mean, it's kind of like those questions about the government in-in general, we don't live up to the promise of our ideal, you know?

CG: Right, right.

JM: (inaudible - 00:32:30) to go.

CG: Thanks.

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Bye.

BG: Bye, Jalea.

JM: Bye.

BG: I'm going to have to go soon myself, too.

LD: Yeah, it's really cold.

[Laughter]

CG: The weather is about to end it. [Laughs] For all of us.

BG: We're all shivering.

LH: Thanks for a great conversation, y'all.

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Yeah.

LH: I enjoyed your story, too.

CG: Yeah, no, definitely.

LD: Thanks.

LH: Did you write about it or complain to the White House?

LD: No, um--.

BG: Was it--?

LD: Because, I mean, I'm scared to do that.

BG: Was it--?

LH: Yeah.

LD: Um, just because, um, if I do want to become a citizen--.

LH: Well, if you did it now--.

CG: Right.

LD: No, I mean--.

BG: Was it this administration?

LD: No, it was with Obama.

BG: Wow.

LD: Actually, yeah.

LH: But I wouldn't do it now in a Trump administration. [Laughs]

LD: No. Yeah, no. And actually, I-I mean, we, um, we just became permanent residents. So, [Sighs] it just, like, I- when I saw when I heard about this, I was like, I need to get involved. I mean, they reached out to me, because I-I'm a-a committee of the Campus Y, like SUIE. I don't know if you know about Students United for Immigrant Equality. When I heard about this, I was like, 'Oh my gosh, that's incredible and I want to be a part of it.' And then, it was like for me to be on the other side, it was interesting.

LH: Yeah.

CG: Mm-hmm.

BG: You know, that-that idea of, um, who can say what it's — I mean, as a white person, I s-sometimes struggle with what my role is, and, you know, I want to be an ally, but I a- I don't- I want to be somebody who can opera--. It's a- it's a- it's a fine line, you know, I want to operate in a space that's respectful of everybody I feel like I want to

support, um, but I want to, of course, set my bounds. But just in situations like that, when somebody is vulnerable without speaking for you, or for anybody else, I want to be part of the voice that says, 'This is wrong.' So it's-it's an interesting kind of conundrum for, you know--. It's the- it's the- it's the position that I occupy, that I struggle with, but, um, it's an interesting problem.

LD: Well, I'm just glad for, um, opportunities like this where I am able to share my perspective.

LH: Yeah.

CG: Yeah.

BG: Yeah, no.

CG: Definitely.

LH: Yeah.

LD: I don't get to do that as often, so I feel like I'm--. This is weird for me. Like, I feel like I'm overstepping boundaries.

CG: No.

BG: No, not at all.

CG: No.

LH: This is your space.

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Yeah.

BG: So, like--.

CG: And I think that story, like, elevates the whole purpose of this discussion. It's one thing to have people who are not directly impacted or people who've only seen it

through the news or the media talking about these issues and furthering their conscience and actually have actual stories and experiences, I think. It's definitely, like, part of the focus of this and the mission. Um...

LD: Thank you.

CG: Cool, cool. I don't think I'll make it these last ten minutes, I don't know.

[Laughs]

LD: Yeah, yeah.

[inaudible - 00:35:24 to 00:35:33]

END OF RECORDING

Transcribed by Miwa Lee 10/03/2021

To be copyedited.