

Philosophy Bakes Bread, Episode Forty-Four, with Eric Thomas Weber

On Philosophy, Leadership, and SOPHIA

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Weber: Welcome to WRFL Lexington 88.1 FM all the way to the left on your radio dial. Thank you for listening. This is Dr. Eric Weber. I hope you enjoy this episode, reach out to us, we'd love to hear from you. And keep your radio locked to 88.1 FM. Here is episode 44.

[music]

Weber: Hello, and welcome to Philosophy Bakes Bread, food for thought about life and leadership. A production of the Society of Philosophers in America, a.k.a. SOPHIA. I'm Dr. Eric Thomas Weber.

Cashio: And I'm Dr. Anthony Cashio. A famous phrase says that philosophy bakes no bread, that it's not practical. But we in SOPHIA and on this show aim to correct that misperception.

Weber: Philosophy Bakes Bread airs on WRFL Lexington 88.1 FM and is distributed as a podcast next. Listeners can find us online at philosophybakesbread.com. And we hope you'll reach out to us on Twitter and @philosophybb, on Facebook @philosophybakesbread, or by email at philosophybakesbread@gmail.com.

Cashio: Reach out to us people. You can also leave us a short, recorded message with a question or comment or bountiful praise that we may be able to play on the show at 859-257-1849. That's 859-257-1849.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have a special treat for you today. On today's show we're going to do something a little different.

Weber: Oh?

<https://www.philosophersinamerica.com/2017/10/06/048-ep44-on-philosophy-leadership-sophia/>

Cashio: Oh yeah. Hey turnaround is fair play, right?

Weber: Maybe.

Cashio: Well, on episode one of Philosophy Bakes Bread, I was the guest. And you interviewed me, right?

Weber: That was fun. The [inaudible 00:02:35] in Plato's cave. Go check it out, folks. Episode one.

Cashio: Boy, it feels like a long time ago when we were just [inaudible 00:02:41].

Weber: It does feel like a long time ago.

Cashio: The audio is, eh, it's not good. Well, on today's show ...

Weber: Uh oh.

Cashio: We're going to have Eric as a guest. I guess that turnaround is fair play.

Weber: That is what we decided. Sounds like fun.

Cashio: Boy, you don't sound like you're excited about that at all. Anyway.

Weber: The tables have turned.

Cashio: Sounds like fun. No, this will be fun. On Philosophy Bakes Bread, we offer food for thought about life and leadership. And we sometimes touch on leadership, but more often we focus on life and other specific philosophical issues, because that's fun too. Today, we're going to focus on, at least in our second segment, on the philosophy of leadership, especially as it relates to Eric's book, Democracy in Leadership. So, we'll talk about both of those things, hopefully.

In the third section, we're going to talk a little bit more about SOPHIA, which is the Society of Philosophers in America. You hear us talk about it every episode. So, we thought we'd get into a little bit more detail. This program is a production of SOPHIA and Eric serves as the executive director, if you didn't know.

Weber: That's right.

Cashio: So, you ready to get started, Eric?

Weber: I guess so. The tables have turned, and it is funny how different it is being the guest versus being the interviewer.

Cashio: Well, this is the best part. We're going to butter you up. We're going to sing your praises. So, let's do this proper. Who is Eric? Well, Eric Thomas Weber is a visiting associate professor of philosophy at the University of Kentucky, and the author of four books as well as numerous articles and book chapters. His latest books are Democracy in Leadership published in 2013, and Uniting Mississippi, which came out in 2015. Going to talk a little bit about both of

those. Before moving to Kentucky, he was associate professor of public policy leadership at the University of Mississippi, where he was an affiliated faculty member in the department of philosophy and in the School of Law. Double appointment, huh?

Cashio: In Mississippi he was honored with the Cora Lee Graham award for outstanding teaching, the Thomas F. Frist award for student service, and the Mississippi Humanities Council's Humanities Scholar Award. Awesome job, Eric. Awesome job.

Weber: This university was good to me.

Cashio: It was good to you.

Weber: Yeah.

Cashio: Right? Last but not least, Eric works with SOPHIA, and just this year the American Philosophical Association, which our philosophers just call the APA, has recognized SOPHIA with the Philosophy Documentation Center's prize for excellence in innovation in philosophy programs. So, congratulations Eric and to SOPHIA -

Weber: To SOPHIA.

Cashio: And I guess I'm part of it, so to me too.

Weber: That's right.

Cashio: So, this is just really exciting stuff. And I would like to personally say that Eric is one of the nicest, kindest human beings you're ever going to meet. He works hard, and he's an inspiration to everyone he works with. So, it is my privilege today -

Weber: Anthony's just generally a jerk, by the way, in case you didn't know about him.

Cashio: Taking away all my secrets. I try to be nice on the air.

Weber: Thank you. It's nice of you to say.

Cashio: All right, Eric. You ready for it?

Weber: Well, I'll tell you one thing. It's awesome to see SOPHIA get recognition. It's a lot of good people, and they're doing cool things together. And that means a lot for the APA and for all our organizations, right? Like, given the history of SOPHIA, it's pretty cool. Really, it means a lot that the APA said something nice about SOPHIA.

Cashio: It's fantastic, and I know that I speak for everyone in SOPHIA and we really appreciate it and we love the work that you're doing too, Eric. All right.

Weber: I appreciate it.

Cashio: You know how we start this off. You ready? I'm going to grill you. Trying to rake you over the coals. Ready? Everyone, if you've listened to this show before, we start with a segment

called know thyself. So, Eric, tell us about yourself. Do you know thyself? And tell us how you got into, we'll get into how you got into philosophy and what philosophy means to you, and all those important questions. So.

Weber: Yeah, and it may sound like it's starting a little early in the story to say something about who my parents are. But it's really actually quite important to me that my father is the son of an Iowa farmer, and that my mother is the daughter of Parisians, right? My grandfather was a kind of engineer.

Cashio: Are you French, then?

Weber: Yeah, I have dual citizenship. I'm American and French. That's right. And I think that has informed a lot about who I am in many ways. I've always loved think big questions. I've loved to argue. A lot of people told me I should be a lawyer. And I thought maybe that's the direction I'd go. I thought I'd be a doctor like my dad because I really loved the idea of helping people and doing that in a career that means a lot to people. That makes a difference, and yet is also respected and treated as such, right? As important.

Cashio: Right.

Weber: And those things, I think really did a lot to inform who I am. And I think about a lot of people I know, for instance, my wife grew up in Ohio, she had a very strong identity as an Ohioan. And in early years, I mostly grew up in New Jersey and New York City area. I didn't particularly so strongly thinking of myself as New Jersian, you know what I mean? Or a little bit maybe as a New Yorker, because they have a particularly strong sense of -

Cashio: Did you go to France a lot when you were growing up?

Weber: Good question. I'd go from time to time, because obviously we had a French family. But especially early on, my mother had me attend a French-speaking school, the Lycee Francais De New York is a really wonderful school in New York City. I went there from early on until I started high school, which I didn't, my folks moved to Atlanta at that point, and I went to an American high school in Atlanta. But for those many years, I was educated in the French baccalaureate system. Of course, didn't go all the way in that.

Cashio: Right.

Weber: But I was an American, clearly American. Whenever there was a sort of a need for an example in the classroom for someone who's American, and who eats hamburgers and hot dogs, they would refer to Weber.

Cashio: You're known for your hamburger and hot dog eating skills, [inaudible 00:08:58].

Weber: I guess so, right? Because think about it, it was New York City and when you think about the population who would put their kids in that school, a lot of it was people who's parents worked in the U.N., right? And they wanted an international baccalaureate for their kids which is kind of a, a special kind of high school diploma basically. And so, my friends were from all over the world. My experience of the world was having friends who were from China, Japan, Nigeria, from France obviously as well as Spain. Like all over. My friends were from all over. And so, when I think of some of my perhaps cosmopolitan tendencies, they started from the very

beginning. Like, I was in a world surrounded by all these different kinds of people. It was pointed out to me later that a good point to note is that the population was not particularly diverse when it came to economics. Right? There weren't a lot of poor kids in the Lycee Francais De New York, that's true.

Cashio: You don't say.

Weber: Right, exactly. But there was incredible diversity nationally, right in terms of ethnicities and national origin, yeah. And on top of that, I was raised learning two languages, English and French. So, those are the, everyone had to be educated in those two languages. So, when you did a foreign language, you were adding a third language at that French school.

Cashio: Awesome. So, you had this great cosmopolitan bilingual education. You're on your way to becoming maybe a lawyer. You've got those kind of a lot of philosophers here that maybe could have been a lawyer.

Weber: Or a doctor, right?

Cashio: Or annoying with their questions. Well, did you think this kind of fed into your interest to philosophy? How did you get into doing philosophy?

Weber: Yeah, well for one thing, I think it's important to note the connection where the French are very proud of philosophers, right? French culture is one in which philosophy is prized, right? People are really proud that Descartes was French. Think about Americans, if you ask someone who's a famous American philosopher, when you ask George Bush who's your favorite philosopher, he said Jesus Christ. Which was an artful answer, I have to give him that, right? In a sense, it's a kind of a beautiful answer. On the other hand, who's an American philosopher that anyone knows of? Right? And you and I because we studied this stuff know of plenty, sure.

Cashio: Right.

Weber: But I think the general public would have a hard time with that question, right? They would say things about the Federalist Papers being fairly philosophical, I think, if they really thought about it. The founders were very philosophical, if you really push people to think about that question. But the French, they're really proud of philosophy, and so there was some philosophy a little bit that I got even before high school, believe it or not. Just a touch before I left the Lycée.

Weber: But so what got me into philosophy, I was struggling with figuring out what I wanted to do, because the attractiveness of the kinds of things that my dad did was wonderful because I liked the idea of helping people. And doctors do that, sure. But I was struggling with is the way of helping people really the right one for me? And I love to argue, but I don't know that being an attorney is necessarily really the right, so I struggled really a lot with what I wanted to do. And I think so many young people these days do struggle with exactly that, especially when they're trying to pick a major or something like that in college. And so, what I found was most helpful was to think about the question, what does it mean to be happy? Right? And the people I've found who were really those kinds of questions were the philosophers. And so, I just found myself sucked in by the kinds of questions and the sorts of theories people would answer.

Weber: One of the fascinating things to me about my philosophy teachers when I finally got some, was how you'd ask a question, or you'd push them in a certain direction, and I just had this sense that someone would answer this way or that way. You think like a Republican or a Democrat would answer this or what answer that, and so forth. But philosophers always had a way of surprising me with their subtle, thoughtful, and nonstandard answer. And I loved that, especially when it came to things like what's happiness? Right? They seemed to not just be door hanger thinkers like so many people tend to be in the public, and the people who can rattle off their famous phrases from their party or what have you. Philosophers, in so many ways, are much more independent thinking, and I love that about my teachers, right? They surprise me every time I ask them a question with the ways that they would respond.

Cashio: Did you ever find an answer that you found satisfying to the question about happiness?

Weber: Oh sure. I definitely think Aristotle gave some of the best answers about that. Aristotle thought that happiness, first of all, was something to be measured over a whole life. We've talked about that before on this show.

Cashio: Right.

Weber: And I think that's definitely right. You shouldn't just think about temporary activity, just like for instance, if you could shoot up on some sort of drugs, well you'll feel a serious high for a very short period of time, but you got to think about the full picture, or you're definitely not really thinking about happiness. I think that's important. That really tells you why to focus on your family, right? Why to focus on certain things, when you can just be focusing on your career or this or that stuff. Right? Or material. And so, I think that part of Aristotle is very helpful. The other thing he would say is that he would point to virtuous activity.

Weber: And I love this line he has in the Nicomachean Ethics, in the ethics he wrote for his son Nichomachus, where he says that the activity in which you lose your sense of time is really something that is joyful and part of happiness. Right? And when I engage in certain kinds of activities, I am someone who in certain kinds of activities, will totally lose sense of time. I'll really be sucked in and doing lots of something. And I'm not working hard at it in the sense of making myself toil. I'm just absolutely loving whatever it is I'm doing.

Cashio: What is something you like to do that you?

Weber: When I was in high school, I played an awful lot of guitar, and I taught myself how to play guitar. That was something I used to lose myself in. I love to argue and to think with others. And that's really what has come to be what I love to do most. So, that can be reading, that could be talking and arguing with others, that could be writing. I lose myself in writing sometimes, and that's really wonderful, good experience. And not always. I mean, you kind of have to sort of be ready to write this or that project, right? But when you are, it's sort of a blissful activity and it's not so much forcing myself. But I love to make things, creating things. So, that's one of the reasons I love music. Here's a weird fact about me that people wouldn't know me, is that I really always loved how to books. How to do things, right?

Cashio: Oh, really?

Weber: So, I mean, who loves this or that for dummies, like web design for dummies? Nobody like that stuff. I love how to books like that. So, for music stuff, I got all kinds of how to play

music for the web design that I did for my little music business that I started many years ago. I got all kinds of how to books for web design. For audio recording, when I started recording music and stuff, and a lot of my background for how I know how to do this audio stuff really through the show. It was all kinds of fantastic books about how to do audio recording and stuff and editing. And now I'm translating that into a new hobby. I love to make things. So, I've got a hobby of woodworking right now, and so on.

Weber: So, I love to make things. I love to sort of demystify, right, and to make things. And the things I get lost in include arguing with others, thinking with others about big questions, thinking about how to be happy. And I translate that in teaching in thinking with someone else about what might make them happy. So, that's one of the reasons I love teaching.

Cashio: Awesome. Well, we're running out of time for this segment. But, we have to ask you this question in a minute or less. We ask this every time. What is philosophy, Eric? What do you take it to be?

Weber: Well, we had Larry Hickman on recently, and his answer from John Dewey is one of my favorites. It's critiquing our culture, thinking about our culture. And our culture means our beliefs, the language we use, right? Our practices and so forth. Philosophy is thinking critically about our culture so that our beliefs and habits and practices can be better than they might otherwise be.

Cashio: I like it. Critique away. That's in other words, getting into the how to of our culture.

Weber: That's right.

Cashio: Right? How does a culture work? All right, well thank you so much, Eric, for joining me today and letting me grill you and being the guest today. We're going to take a short break and in a few moments, we'll talk to Eric a little bit more about his book on democracy and leadership. This is Philosophy Bakes Bread.

Cashio: [music]

Cashio: Welcome back to Philosophy Bakes Bread. This is Anthony Cashio here talking today with our very own Eric Weber. Oh, I'm so excited. In this segment we're going to focus on his 2013 book, Democracy in Leadership. And in the next segment, we'll talk about the Society of Philosophers in America, which we've been calling SOPHIA. You might hear us say that quite a bit. So, let's get into it. Eric, why don't you start telling us about the background of your book? What led you to write it? Why democracy? Why leadership? And we'll go from there. How about that?

Weber: Sure, right on. So, as a philosopher, my first job out of my Ph.D program was in a program called Public Policy Leadership. And so I was teaching ethics and public policy, and I had opportunities to develop certain courses, and one of the ones I was excited to develop was called Philosophy of Leadership. And as I was looking for good resources that are recent to draw on for that class, I was really astonished by how almost no philosophers write about leadership in particular.

Cashio: Really?

Weber: Yeah, I mean and when people do talk about leadership, a lot of folks, a lot of scholars especially, put it down as being silly stuff, like there may be some bad research out there on leadership, and in fact, I will be one of the people to say there is quite a bit of not so good literature on leadership. But, that doesn't mean there couldn't be good scholarship on it anyway, so, what I found was there was an incredible dearth at least in recent work on leadership. There's some really exciting stuff going on at the University of Richmond's Jepson School of Leadership Studies. There're a few scholars there, because they've got a program in leadership. And they do some good work, no doubt about that. But there are very few philosophers, right? And so, if you're looking for a variety of kind of materials and things to draw on, I was really astonished.

Weber: And so, I'm a big fan of John Dewey's work and writing, and he has a passage that has struck me at a moment when, where he said-

Cashio: That's American philosopher John Dewey.

Weber: That's right, American philosopher John Dewey. He had a moment where he says that if philosophers aren't talking about certain things that are important right now, and this was in, I started teaching in that program in 2007. In 2007 and 2008, there were a number of polls that had come out talking about a crisis in leadership, where people weren't trusting leaders. They wanted better leaders badly. And there was just such a dearth of good leadership, at least according to polls of Americans at the time. And so, I thought to myself, well where are the philosophers talking about leadership? And so, this is what Dewey was talking about when he's say, if philosophers aren't addressing issues of the day that matter, that are pressing, or aren't being practical about them, aren't applying them and being engaged with the public. What we need is a back to Plato movement.

Cashio: What does that mean? Back to Plato movement?

Weber: Well, what you need to do is to go back to the fact that so many of our origins in Western philosophy come from Plato. And Plato was deeply engaged with the public, right? He was out in the agora. The agora is the forum, the outdoor play space where you would talk with people in the streets and so forth.

Cashio: Right.

Weber: Socrates was out talking with people. He wasn't just isolated in some ivory tower. Right? Socrates had no Ph.D. Right? He was talking with people who were known to know stuff like -

Cashio: He didn't even write anything.

Weber: He didn't even write anything, exactly. He wouldn't get tenure. All right, and so the point is that Dewey was saying when you're looking for places to go to get reinvigorated in philosophy about things that matter, go back to Plato. And so I did. And lo and behold, surprise, surprise, right? Plato had a awful lot to say about leadership, and a lot of really interesting things, and some very troubling things also. We can come back to that point. But Socrates was deeply engaged in Plato's dialogues with issues of leadership, and the most famous and obvious place to look is in Plato's Republic. And we've talked about Plato's Republic before. And so, one of the crucial things he talks about is what kind of leaders do you want and what characteristics

do they have? And in the process of course, here's the thing about thinking about Plato, is that he's enormously critical of democracy. Right?

Cashio: Yeah, so I was wondering how you got democracy and leadership out of Plato? How do you draw that connection? Because he's not pro-democracy.

Weber: Well, for one thing, you don't only draw on Plato, right? And at the same time, when you think about why he was critical about democracy though, there are some lasting good reasons to worry and be careful about democracy, and in fact, modern democratic societies or societies that aspire to be democracies, have to make all kinds of efforts in order to kind of address and worry about the sorts of worries that Plato had. For instance, when we had the first U.S. Constitution, it's so easy to forget that there was no Bill of Rights in the U.S. Constitution.

Cashio: Right.

Weber: There was no protection of your speech. And there is no U.S. Constitution.

Cashio: They are in fact amendments. Right?

Weber: What's that?

Cashio: They're amendments for a reason.

Weber: Yeah, and amendments is the change. We often forget an amendment is a change. The Constitution lacked the protection of your freedom of speech, right? And so, why should we protect the individual in these kinds of ways? And one answer is that otherwise the majority can be tyrannical over the individual. Right? And so the U.S. Constitution is, with some flaws obviously, right, talking about three-fifths of a person in reference to slaves and so forth. Well, but with obvious flaws, nevertheless the U.S. Constitution made serious efforts to control some of the ways in which the majority can tyrannize the minority.

Cashio: Right.

Weber: And those are great examples of the sorts of things that Plato was worried about, the ways in which the majority can trample justice, can trample the individual, can trample people, right? And so, some of the worries we get from Plato are ones that we need to remember. And then at the same time, he goes way overboard in some other ways, and so the question is, what can we draw from Plato and what can we leave behind? And that's where modern scholars can really help us out. So, especially John Dewey and Cornell West and a number of modern contemporary philosophers to sort of update.

Cashio: So, this is exactly what your book's about, sort of updating Plato for contemporary readers?

Weber: Yeah, exactly. It's basically trying to draw out what are some of the lasting lessons for thinking about leadership that we can get out of Plato as well as modern scholars, but updating Plato's insights for the contemporary world. Thinking about democracy today, are there still insights from Plato that we can maintain? It seems to me, we teach Plato all the time, right?

There's got to be something that we say that's of lasting value in Plato. And there are many things I think we can learn. I mean, so we, just the one -

Cashio: Can you give us an example?

Weber: Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. So, for instance, Plato thought that wisdom is essential, is perhaps the most important virtue for leadership in the Republic. In fact, the other aspects of, go ahead.

Cashio: The philosopher king, is what he kind of pushed for.

Weber: Exactly. So, the question is though, is wisdom not important in the democratic society? Or rather, is the issue how he was characterizing wisdom that was the problem? And if you don't think of a philosopher king as the way to think about wisdom, basically the question is if you think about wisdom, is there a way to characterize that democratically? And I think that the answer is definitely yes. Right? When you think about this in the practical context of a business, you can imagine for instance the business owner thinking he usually, or she, has all the answers and doesn't need to listen to these idiots who work for him or her.

Weber: But, and sometimes someone can be a real genius or brilliant person, for instance, but in so many contexts, you could be drawing on all of the intelligence of the people who work for you or with you, versus only one person's intelligence. And so, in a democratic society, and in fact lots of good generals, military generals, have had all kinds of clever lines about the ways in which to make sure you don't just think about wisdom as only at the top. Rather, you want to listen to people. There's actually a movement in the business world right now pushing CEOs to begin by listening. Don't come into a room and tell people this. Sit down and listen, a lot, before you say anything. And that's a new democratic kind of norm.

Cashio: So, you would make a big distinction between leadership in a democracy versus leadership in a monarchy? Right?

Weber: Absolutely.

Cashio: It is a major, but you prefer one kind of leadership over another? I mean, does it have to be Democratic leadership, or is the other one just as fine and we just happen to be in a Democracy, so that's what we care about?

Weber: Good question. So, the first thing to say is that we can talk about leadership just descriptively, right? Like this car was leading that one. We can talk about the momma duck as leading the baby ducks, right? It's just this is in front of that, is a way of saying that this is leading that. Right? We can speak descriptively of someone who's in a position of authority and power, we can call that person the leader, that doesn't mean that person is a good leader, a desirable leader, or doing the things we want leaders to do. Right? And so, that's just being descriptive about leadership, versus being what you might call prescriptive, or another big ugly word, normative. Right? Think about what kind of leader you want. What's a good leader? So.

Cashio: Yeah. So, when you used a word here, normative.

Weber: Right.

Cashio: Can you kind of say what that means very briefly, and before we go forward?

Weber: Yeah, I think it came up in the sports fandom episode, right? So, normative refers to some things that are norms, and by norms we mean sort of rules for behavior. Right? And it's that things ought to be the case. It's not that things are this or that way. Like, if I'm talking about for instance, a good pen. A pen is a writing implement, right? A good pen does it well in certain ways, and you want it to have certain features. Like for me, I like a little heft in my pen, for instance. And I like it to have a certain way it lays out the ink, right? And so, the ways you want things to be, the way things ought to be, the way they're better, that's the normative.

Cashio: Right.

Weber: Versus just being descriptive and saying, it's a writing implement that fits in your hand.

Cashio: So, when you're talking about leadership normatively, you're saying, well this would be the ideal leader or best kind of leader? So, this is kind of what Plato was doing when he was talking about wisdom and the philosopher kings. And this is kind of where you're going with [inaudible 00:29:13]

Weber: That's right.

Cashio: Very good.

Weber: Right. And so what I focus on is especially the kind of leaders we want. And I usually try and distinguish people, I refer to people who are in public office without calling them leaders, it's not that you can't call them leaders. I mean, in everyday language we do this. But I want to differentiate focusing on the kind of leader we want, good leadership, has certain characteristics. And I say all this to point to the fact that there are certain values that work in a democratic society versus in a for instance, a monarchy, or an autocratic society. And at the same time, it seems to me that you can, for instance, have a queen, like in England, and yet live according to democratic values, where you care about each individual. It's not like people are going to lay down and give up their lives so that the queen can have this organ to live a little bit longer. I mean, some people may donate things, but the point is it's not like compulsion. It's not like the monarch is the important thing about the British society.

Cashio: It's not a dictatorship, right?

Weber: Right. It's a remnant of history in some ways, and some people, I don't know, I'll let people decide whether or not they like having a queen over there. That's up to them, I suppose.

Cashio: My understanding is they quite like it.

Weber: Well, that's up to them. But the point is as a society in terms of how the values which govern what they do, they're far more democratic than Saddam Hussein or something like that, or a Kim Jong Un.

Cashio: Well, let me ask you a question sort of, and put it in more contemporary terms. We're recording this just a few days after the events in Charlottesville, Virginia, right?

Weber: Right.

Cashio: So, we have white supremacists, I think it was called the Unite the Right rally.

Weber: Right.

Cashio: Someone died. There was violence. It was not good. The President has been criticized about his response to the violence between these sorts of the white supremacists and the counter protestors, saying well this problem's on both sides and just a lot of, right now everyone's more upset about the response than not. So, setting aside whether or not these criticism are fair, how do you see a good leader responding to this kind of crisis? What could the President have done differently that would have fit within this sort of democratic leadership that you're talking about?

Weber: Yeah. This is especially a good question for someone who's drawing from Plato. So, I see one of the virtues that Plato espouses is moderation. Right? The city that tears itself apart too much won't be one city anymore. It's going to be two cities. And you see this on all kinds of churches, for instance, that you get divergences and they split too far and they can't reconcile. All of a sudden, now you've got the reformist this versus the traditional that and so forth. Right? They don't stay one. And so, it's crucial, Plato argued, to have moderation, to have people remain one, not become too extreme. And so, if you think that what the President was doing was trying to sort of reconcile differences, the problem is moderation isn't just trying to find the middle between crazies. Right?

Weber: If someone can be doing terrible wrong, if someone's murdering ten people and someone else is murdering 25 people, that doesn't mean that we should find the right number of murders in between. Right? Moderation is about justice and about these other virtues as well, right? It's about moderating towards the right. You want to bend the stick back to straight, right? If you've got a stick that's bent, Aristotle said, that you got to bend it back beyond straight if you're got to straighten it out. And we've got a stick that's bent towards injustice in so many ways. And that is a great example of how this is being shown is the fact that the President is equating white supremacists with people who are calling for equality of treatment for all citizens.

Cashio: Yeah.

Weber: That's not, the middle between those two things is not justice. The white supremacists can't pull us, that's not how this works. Right? It's not just the middle of two extremes. Right? Because one of these is reasonable, it's much more moderate. Right? And so, what the President has done has effectively split us further apart and embraced, treated an extraordinarily terrible extreme of white supremacy as though it were the same as the moderate.

Cashio: Right.

Weber: And so, this is what's going on in I think the recent case, and I think it's devastating and tragic. And the man is a public official in public office, but he's not the kind of person I would call a good leader.

Cashio: All right, well there you have it, ladies and gentlemen. And for those of you following along, this concern about division and unity is exactly why Plato was opposed to democracy. He

thought it would almost always lead to this exact division. A demi gauge would always step in and we'd fall into tyranny. But, we're getting a little too far off the path here. I want to thank everyone for listening to Philosophy Bakes Bread. I'm Anthony Cashio and I've been talking with our own Eric Weber. And we'll be back in just a minute with Philosophy Bakes Bread.

Cashio: [music]

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[music]

Cashio: Welcome back to Philosophy Bakes Bread. This is Anthony Cashio, and today we have a very special guest, our own Eric Weber. Whoo-hoo! In the last segment, we talked with Eric about his work and insight into leadership. Speaking of leadership, Eric is also the executive director of the Society of Philosophers in America, which we have just been calling SOPHIA for short because it's nicer to say that. It is convenient, and it means wisdom in Greek, and it just really works out well. So, as we mentioned at the top of the show, the American Philosophical Association recognized SOPHIA with the APA's and the Philosophy Documentation Center's prize for excellence and innovation in philosophy programs.

Cashio: So, I think it would be great this segment for Eric to talk to us about SOPHIA. And we've been talking about it enough on the show. We mention it every episode at the beginning, at the end. We're a production of SOPHIA. So, let's get into it. What is SOPHIA? How did it come to be founded, Eric?

Weber: Yeah, so the Society of Philosophers in America is a group that originated in the 1980s. So, it was sort of motivated at the end of the 70s. It was a group of philosophers who were really frustrated by how things were going in the profession of philosophy. How were things going? Well, there were people who were really pushing to only focus on questions about how we know this, which we call epistemology. Or questions about the nature of things, which we call metaphysics, even though that was not as often talked about. But less and less anything about ethics, about things that matter, about applied philosophy. And on top of that, there were certain traditions that were taken seriously and others that were not. Right.

Weber: And so, there was a group of people who called themselves pluralists.

Cashio: What's a pluralist?

Weber: And a pluralist is basically, it's a person who likes drawing from any number of different traditions in philosophy, like for instance Confucius or thinking about Martin Luther King Jr., as a philosopher. Right? Or certain people basically who's open to thinking about all kinds of people as philosophers. What's so funny?

Cashio: I just, you're naming two of my favorite philosophers, so I guess I'm a pluralist, huh?

Weber: Hey, you're definitely a pluralist, right? And so, American pragmatists, right, would be in the group. And at a certain point in time, there were not many continental philosophers who

had much of a say in the APA, and those were people who like for instance, Martin Heidegger or Jean Paul Sartre, or right, a lot of those kinds of continental figures.

Cashio: That would be the European continent being?

Weber: That's right. The European continent, right. And so, there's certain traditions that were not getting much attention or opportunity in the American Philosophical Association. In fact, those people often would lead group meetings, and as a little slight in the program for the APA meetings apparently, the main program stuff was in one font, and the group sessions were in a smaller, more italicized font.

Cashio: Are you serious?

Weber: I'm not kidding. They'll tell you about this.

Cashio: I want to see how the sausage is made sometime.

Weber: It's really funny. Anyway, so on top of that, the APA was really closed and the sort of, the leadership was chosen behind smoky doors. Closed, smokey doors, or whatever the metaphor is for that. And so, there wasn't a lot of accountability and it was really frustrating for people. So, there was a group of people that got together that wanted to change philosophy. They wanted sort of to recognize, first of all that the majority of philosophers are probably in the pluralist camp, right? But there were some people who'd sort of taken over, and people who for instance, would work with scholars from other fields were getting short shrift and not many opportunities. Kind of pushed out of things. And so, they wanted to make things more open-minded for different kinds of traditions of philosophy. They wanted to address issues that mattered to the public and not just that are of esoteric interest to a few scholars, and so forth.

Weber: And so, the group got together, and they founded SOPHIA to be sort of this organization and body that would push the APA towards better practices and push philosophers to sort of be more engaged and to think to the future and so forth.

Cashio: So -

Weber: And, go ahead.

Cashio: I was going to say, so these were the values driving the organization early on?

Weber: Early on, that's right.

Cashio: All right. Are they the same today? How has SOPHIA changed?

Weber: Good questions. So, basically the issue is that a lot of the goals of some of those goals that I mentioned have in fact changed significantly, not the least of which examples is the fact that SOPHIA has been recognized by the APA with this award, right? Here's just one little example, but it was a very nice one. But so, we've got people, we've got a much more pluralistic APA. There's much more transparency. There are far more women in philosophy today is one of the developments that has made things better. And so, some of the matters that had to do with the profession have significantly changed. I will say that I believe the population of African

American philosophers in the American Philosophical Association is not above two percent. It's somewhere in the avenue of one percent, I think. And there's one example of something that really needs a lot of work over the next few years.

Weber: But beyond some of those examples like that, there have been a lot of changes for the better in the APA. And so, some members of SOPHIA sort of dropped out. They felt as though the things that they were concerned about have changed. And so, they weren't so concerned about SOPHIA anymore. But there remained a number of people in SOPHIA who are still concerned about how a lot of philosophers only talk to each other. Right? About how the way that philosophy was engaged in would be that some either senior scholar or whippersnapper would present a paper, and that someone else in the room would try and knock it down with a devastating critique and no kind of encouragement and people were mean -

Cashio: Philosophy as combat, it was death sport. Yeah, it was -

Weber: Combat sports, that's right. And everyone trying to one-up each other to look better, and so forth. And that's not really the spirit where you listen to Socrates having conversations with people in the symposium or something. Right? Where is that anymore? Where do people engage in fun conversation that's philosophical? Right? That's sort of what was missing. And on top of that, where's the practical? Where's the relevance? Right? And those are the values that remain in SOPHIA. And so, there was a period of transition where sort of SOPHIA needed reinventing. And I was sort of roped into this to participate. I think originally I was just the treasurer for SOPHIA. And I was encouraged to think about SOPHIA as this organization that wanted to emphasize relevant philosophy, that wanted to emphasize having conversations with people, not just paper presentations. And to talk with scholars from other fields, not just philosophers, and among philosophers it should be pluralistic. And then, last but not least, why don't we talk with people from beyond the academy as well? Sort of not just scholars from other fields. Like this is relevant stuff, then let's talk to people.

Weber: And so, that's the direction that SOPHIA took and had begun taking anyway, when I got on board. And I started working with SOPHIA in about 2007 and 2008.

Cashio: Right.

Weber: And eventually I became the executive director. But in, over the next let's say eight or so years, eight or nine years, SOPHIA put on a bunch of little conversational events around the country. And in fact, one of the cool things was that the American Philosophical Association generously gave us a number of grants. Right? Grants that we then divided up and distributed to a number of different groups that would then hold local meetings. That seed money from the APA would help get further money locally. And then there'd be some sort of event that's conversational in these different parts of the country. And so, we did that for a number of years and it was a lot of fun. But at the end of the day sort of, we were left wondering all right, what do we take away from this really nice meeting we had? It was a lot of work, and now what? Right? Well, now we can apply for another grant and try to do another conversational meeting in a year. That was kind of frustrating. And not every year did you get the grant, right?

Cashio: Right.

Weber: But if you're going to have a conversation, how much money do you need? Right? You don't necessarily need to have big money to do these things. And on top of that, these were only

once a year. So, what we did was, in 2015, we got together, and we had an opportunity because a very smart woman who's been on this show before in our episode on assessing assessment.

Cashio: Ah.

Weber: Dr. Annie Davis Weber was teaching in a class.

Cashio: No relation.

Weber: Well, yeah there's some relation. A very proud relation.

Cashio: This is Eric's wife.

Weber: Dr. Annie Davis Weber.

Cashio: Yeah. I guess the smarter of the Webers.

Weber: That's right. And she was teaching a class at the time on strategic planning, and said, "You know what? We should do a project and apply this and have a guinea pig for my class." I said, "Annie, please let it be SOPHIA." And the answer came back yes, and SOPHIA got volunteer strategic planning to serve for her class as an example where really smart graduate students at the University of Mississippi, led by a very smart instructor of that course, led a strategic planning effort for SOPHIA, and it was awesome.

Weber: So, prior to that, consider that the eastern meeting of the American Philosophical Association was the place where everyone would do hiring. And that means lots of people would go to that meeting. But as Anthony and I know, and a lot of the philosophers know, now meetings begin by Skype.

Cashio: All right.

Weber: Right. And in fact, that's how Anthony and I are talking right now is partly with Skype. And so, people don't go to the eastern APA so much. So, the leadership of SOPHIA was rarely meeting as that change had taken effect. So, it was so refreshing and wonderful to get all these trustees of SOPHIA and officers together to have conversation about what we needed for the future of SOPHIA. And what we found was missing, the missing component, was community. We were not focusing at the time on building community. We were just putting on events and trying to get grants for it and struggling because grant money is tighter and tighter all the time. Right?

Weber: And so, if you build community though, right, you've got lasting value from your meetings. You can divvy up the work to be done on holding more regular meetings, frankly. You can just have more casual meetings that something really formal and such.

Cashio: And people might actually look forward to coming to the meetings if they feel a sense of community when they go.

Weber: Exactly. And perhaps most importantly, how you decide what the meetings should be about ideally should be driven by your community.

Cashio: Right.

Weber: But instead, we were doing it backwards, which was the scholar and someplace would pick, right? And sometimes you have to start that way. But when you got a community together, you can ask them what the meetings should be about, and then when they've participants in that and picked what they really want to hear about, lo and behold, you get bigger turnout, you get more contributions. You make it easier to let people know about the event because lots of people are spreading the word for you and so on. So, all in all, that was the key that we hadn't seen before.

Cashio: All right, SOPHIA seems then, like a great place for professional philosophers interested in public philosophy and community getting together. But does it have a space or anything to offer anyone outside of the academy that are listening to this awesome radio show and thinking, I'd like to be involved in that, but I'm not in the academy. I'm not a philosopher by training.

Weber: Right. And the answer is absolutely. Right? So, the first thing to say is that even at our traditional meetings before our strategic planning changes, we were able to offer continuing education credits to doctors, nurses, lawyers, hospice care workers, teachers, a lot of these professionals out there who need continuing education credits. And we were able to offer them especially in ethics, but sometimes not only, right?

Cashio: Right.

Weber: And so, that's been a service to the public that's been useful. But on top of that, the fundamental issue is people really love to think and ask questions. And so, the problem is, you get so much opportunity to do that in school, but you're thinking about sort of the next thing in your career or whatever. And then you're out of school, and you have these questions still, but you don't have the place in which to bring them up. Now some people do, but I think what SOPHIA can offer to people is a forum, a format, a method for talking with other people about questions that are weighting on them, they're worrying about. Right? And SOPHIA offers a network, it offers an opportunity, a place, some resources, and so forth for people to get together.

Cashio: Well that's good. Well, so say someone is listening to this show or the podcast and they want to join SOPHIA, how do they go about doing it?

Weber: Yeah, well we have a fancy new website which is part of our strategic planning goals, right? And it's philosophersinamerica.com. If you head to that website, you can go, there's a page about the benefits of membership and there's also a page which is just labeled "join." Right? And so if you want to you can go join, and we would be very grateful. But go learn about it, and that's where I can do that, philosophersinamerica.com. And then look at the join button.

Cashio: Awesome. Well, thank you everyone for listening to Philosophy Bakes Bread. I'm Anthony Cashio here talking with my cohost Eric Weber. He's our guest today. And we'll be back in just a few with more Philosophy Bakes Bread.

[music]

Cashio: Welcome back everyone to Philosophy Bakes Bread. I'm Anthony Cashio and today we're recording a very special episode. In fact, I need a little sound there. Very special episode.

Weber: Dun dun dun.

Cashio: We're talking with our very own Eric Weber. And now, like we always do, we're going to have some final big picture questions for Eric, and as well as some light-hearted thoughts, and we'll end with a pressing philosophical question for you, our listeners, as well as info about how to get a hold of us.

Cashio: All right, Eric. We've been talking about leadership. We've been talking about your sort of visions for SOPHIA and your leadership there. So, I'm actually going to back it up to leadership for our final big picture question or questions. We talked about sort of this normative idea of leadership, like what maybe is your vision of a good leader? What a leader ought to be. So, we don't really get to it. How would you define good leadership?

Weber: Well, so Plato offered four key virtues to think about the good city. And he wanted to see those virtues in the leadership, right? And those virtues were wisdom, courage, moderation, and justice. And so -

Cashio: Wisdom, courage, moderation, and justice.

Weber: Wisdom, courage, moderation, and justice. That's right. And of course, how you spell those out matters a lot. But until you sort of specify, he goes very authoritarian with it. He's very heavy-handed in thinking about leadership, unlike democratic values. If you don't yet specify whether you're being heavy-handed or not, I like to just sort of focus on those virtues in themselves as ideas, and then to distill from that a definition of good leadership. So, the slightly longer version just encompasses those, and then I've got a shorter bumper sticker version.

Weber: So, the long one says that good leadership is the application of wisdom and justice with courage and moderation to the guidance of human conduct.

Cashio: The applications, can you give that to us again?

Weber: Yeah, sure. It's the application of wisdom and justice with courage and moderation to the guidance of human conduct. Now, that's why I feel like I have to have a bumper sticker version, because it's long, right? So, my thought is that you can distill the notion of wisdom, of moderation, and of justice with the notion of being judicious. And so, if you need a bumper sticker version, I think that good leadership is judicious, yet is a judicious guidance, but it needs one more virtue that was the remaining one. Courage, right? So, good leadership is judicious, yet courageous guidance.

Cashio: Judicious but courageous guidance.

Weber: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Cashio: I like it. What do you do if you find yourself in a situation without any real leadership, this judicious creative guidance? Right? To be clear, not that there's not someone in charge, right? You may have someone in charge, but they're just not a good leader. Right?

Weber: Right.

Cashio: They don't have any of the qualities. You got like a general who's just not leading. Commander who fails to command. What can you do if you find yourself in that position.

Weber: Right. Good question. There's a number of things one could say. But basically, within each person's purview, there's certain things over which you have control. Right? And so, those things that you cannot control, there's only so much that you ought to be worrying about that, says the stoic, right, that we've talked about before. But there's an awful lot an individual can do. And I remember for instance, someone was in a particular context talking to me about how the boss didn't want to engage in a recycling program. Right? And so thus the boss didn't make this or that happen. But you as an individual can start certain behaviors. You can, for instance, this was a woman in a workplace and I was talking about how you can start sort of sorting your own materials and having certain boxes and so forth. And other people start to participate. Lo and behold, lots of people are participating in this, and then A, you may not need the boss' help, and B, you may finally inspire, "Okay, let's get the relevant materials we need to have a recycling system here, right?"

Weber: Or, and that sounds like a small mundane sort of thing, but my point fundamentally about democracy and leadership is that we should not forget that we are all supposed to be participating to whatever degree we can and are inclined to do in the leadership of our society. We lead our own lives, that's one version of leadership, but we also participate in all kinds of ways. And I like to think for instance, even the little guy or gal who is a child and can point out that that federal building, there isn't a way for a wheelchair to get into this facility here. Right. And they've never been asked for access, for instance, and so they've never updated it. But a child can point out a flaw, right, that ought to render a space more accessible to all people. That's kind of amazing when you think about how a child can contribute to wise leadership, at least insofar as there's an insight that can be brought to bear on a situation. And so, speaking up is one thing. When we can speak for the newspaper or we can act as individuals but also encourage other people to participate with us.

Weber: And so, what can we do for instance if there isn't good leadership about the terrible things going on in Virginia? We can speak up. We can, and we're much more powerful and able to do that than ever before with things like Facebook and social media and so forth. If you only have 300 friends, that's still 30 people who can hear from you. That's not nothing. And the way you change a culture is by having an awful lot of individuals think differently.

Cashio: Speak up, speak up. So, in a democracy, we all kind of need to participate in the leadership of that community.

Weber: And to the extent that we can, right? So, my daughter is nonverbal, for instance. And so, there are certain things that she won't too easily be able to contribute to. But when you think about it, just physical presence can be a show of support for something. There was this demonstration I remember where persons with disabilities didn't feel they were getting heard in court, and so they went and they started trying to climb the stairs of the Supreme Court building. Because if you look at the Supreme Court building, the front entrance is inaccessible.

Cashio: No.

Weber: Right? And it was a powerful moment for photographs and so forth just literally being there can make a difference. Even if you're nonverbal, that doesn't mean you can't have contributed valuably to influencing how others think. And that's crucial for what we mean by leadership.

Cashio: Well, I really like this idea, Eric. As leader of SOPHIA, right, we'll bring it back to this, we'll ask a big picture question about this, what's your craziest vision for SOPHIA in the future? What would SOPHIA become if you could just lead it all the way into your craziest vision? What would it become?

Weber: If I'm going to be democratic about these things, I'm going to say I'm a leader in SOPHIA. I think a lot of people have led valuably and invaluablely in the organization. That's part of my point. But I do have a crazy idea for the future of SOPHIA. I'm glad you ask, Anthony. And it has to do with the fact that there are other organizations out there that are hugely successful at the kind of thing that SOPHIA could be. And by that I mean that one of the things when we're thinking about the future of SOPHIA as far as building community, if that's our new vision, one of the things we're going to do is to build chapters for SOPHIA. Right? And how many chapters are we going to get? Right now we've only got a handful of chapter sort of that are budding.

Weber: And at the same time, what could SOPHIA be? Well, first of all, think about how many book clubs there are in the world. And some of them, I know, are just opportunities for people to get together and drink wine. But some of them, and many of them -

Cashio: Not that there's anything wrong with that, by the way.

Weber: Not that there's anything wrong with that. But there's a lot of book clubs out there where people do talk about ideas and things together.

Cashio: And drink wine.

Weber: And drink wine. And there's Bible study groups. And on top of that, think about something that people are terrified of. Public speaking. Toastmasters International is a public speaking organization with chapters, there are 11,000 chapters of Toastmasters in the world. Toastmasters International is the group of public speaking folks, right, who get together and they practice public speaking together, something most Americans are terrified of actually in the polls, if you look.

Cashio: Yes, it's very scary.

Weber: Right? But when you think about the fact that there's something that people are very scared of, 11,000 chapters of people getting together to practice this stuff and to enjoy themselves together, talking to each other, that suggests to me a potential crazy vision of the future of SOPHIA. I'd love to say, first of all, it'll be awesome to have 100 chapters. But why couldn't we have, I don't know, 1,000 chapters, 5,000 chapters one day soon?

Weber: Anyway, so this is the crazy vision that there could be lots of chapters everywhere of SOPHIA, people getting together to talk about ideas, having a space and really enjoying themselves.

Cashio: Awesome. All right, well I hope you guys are listening, maybe thinking about opening your own chapter of SOPHIA or come joining our organization. We'd love to have you. All right Eric, we got a few final questions. We got to ask it to you. It's the questions that we ask every one of our guests is whether or not Philosophy Bakes Bread is the name of the show. Now, I'm going to add a little twist to this one though. I mean, we kind of got a pretty good idea that you think Philosophy Bakes Bread, maybe you say how it does, but I came out of this project pretty close to the beginning, but you'd already put out a few pilot episodes of a little podcast called Philosophy Bakes Bread. How did you get this idea for this title? Why did you name this show Philosophy Bakes Bread? Get you on the record here.

Weber: Well, I appreciate the Mississippi Humanities Council very recognized the work I was doing, actually most of it with SOPHIA in Mississippi. And I had the opportunity to give a speech. This was their major award in 2015, the Humanities Scholar Award in their public humanities programs, and they invited me to give a speech in Jackson, Mississippi, the capital. And I thought about what is worth saying. And the answer is that there's this traditional saying as we point out that philosophy bakes no bread. And et, my goodness, there's so many insights that have made such a big difference in people's lives in philosophy that I thought this is what I titled the speech I gave. In fact, it is the first pilot episode of this show, if anybody wants to listen to that.

Weber: It was recorded, by the way, with my cell phone in my suit pocket. That's why it sounds so weird. But in any event, the point was that was the speech I gave in Jackson, Mississippi because I wanted people who were in that room, and lots of humanists, they love the humanities of course, but they'll even make jokes about philosophy being silly or being impractical, what have you. Everybody seem to say that they respect the importance of knowing your history, but very few people will say it's important to know your philosophy, right? And so, I wanted to remind people and emphasize and argue that it's vital to remember that philosophy makes a difference in our lives.

Weber: And so that's where the idea of the show came from, as I had recorded this and I thought, maybe that should be the name of a podcast. And so, I gave it a go and made that first speech, the first pilot episode.

Cashio: Awesome.

Weber: Yeah.

Cashio: That's really great, so know your philosophy just as much as you know your history. All right Eric, you want to hit them with some jokes?

Weber: Yeah, let's do it.

Cashio: We're going to turn to some philosophunnies. As you know, Eric, we want people to know that there's a lighter side to philosophy as well as a serious side. So, in our next segment which we call philosophunnies.

Cashio: Say philosophunnies.

Pre-recorded Sam (young boy): Philosophunnies.

Cashio: Say philosophunnies.

Pre-recorded Sam (young boy): Philosophunnies.

Cashio: All right Eric, all the pressure's on you now. Make me laugh.

Weber: Well, we've been talking about leadership, and that reminded me of a great joke from Reagan when we was joking about Communism. He would often tell these jokes.

Cashio: A Ronald?

Weber: And so he told a joke, like a Ronald, exactly.

Cashio: Like a Ronald, yeah.

Weber: The Ronald Reagan, that's right. So, here's his joke about Communism. There's ten-year delay in the Soviet Union for the delivery of an automobile. And only one out of seven families in the Soviet Union own automobiles. There's ten-year wait, and you go through quite a process when you're ready to buy, and then you put up the money in advance. Alexei laid down the money, and the fellow in charge of car sales said to him, "Come back in ten years and get your car." And Alexei answered, "Morning or afternoon?" And the car bureaucrat said, "Ten years from now. What difference does it make?" And Alexei answered, "Well, the plumber's coming in the morning."

Cashio: Oh. Let's see. Here's a little story about four people named everybody, somebody, anybody, and nobody. This is an attempt at a leadership joke guys. There was an important job to be done and everybody was asked to do it. Everybody was sure somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that because it was everybody's job and everybody thought anybody could do it, but nobody realized that everybody wouldn't do it. Ended up that everybody blamed somebody when nobody did what anybody could have done. I like that one. It goes back to your answer earlier, right?

Weber: Who's on first? [inaudible 01:03:11]. It's kind of a who's on first, isn't it?

Cashio: Right.

Cashio: [applause and cheers]

Cashio: Last but not least, we want to take advantage of the fact that we have powerful social media that allow for two-way communications for programs like radio shows, so we want to invite our listeners to send us their thoughts and questions that we raise on the show. So given that, Eric, I'm going to ask you now, right, for our segment called You Tell Me, do you have a question to propose to our listeners?

Weber: Yeah. So, I mean, the people who are listening to this show generally are going to be people who are interested in deep thoughts and questions. So, my question for you all is if you're not in school, do you have spaces and communities where you can think and talk deeply with people about issues that you care about? Do you have a community of philosophical conversation already? And if not, do you want in?

Cashio: Yeah. You might not even realize it is a philosophical space, as we're calling it. It might just be, you like to go on a walk with your friends and have deep conversations. That's a great space to do it, I think.

Weber: That's right.

Cashio: All right. Well, I like that question. Tell us about the spaces and communities where you can talk about deeper and important philosophical questions. All right, Eric, I'm going to call on you to help me wrap this up. How are we supposed to do it without some banter back and forth? It doesn't work. So, thanks everyone for listening to Philosophy Breaks bread, food for thought about life and leadership. Your hosts, Dr. Anthony Cashio and Dr. Eric Weber are glad that you could join us today, and I am glad that Eric has let me grill him and talk about leadership and about SOPHIA. And so, thank you for joining me today, Eric.

Weber: It has been my pleasure. Remember everyone that you can catch us on Twitter, Facebook and on our website at philosophybakesbread.com, and there you'll find transcripts for many of our episodes thanks to Drake Bolling, an undergraduate philosophy student at the University of Kentucky. Thank you so much, Drake.

Cashio: Yes Drake, thank you. It's really great to go onto the pages where we have the transcripts done so far. They're all coming, and you can kind of read through it and go, "Oh, did I really say that? Oh, I don't have to hear myself say that."

Weber: It's on record.

Cashio: It's on a record, but you can print it out, copy it, it's all there recorded. So, thank you, Drake.

Weber: That's right. And one more thing, folks. If you want to support the show or be more involved in the Society of Philosophers in America, SOPHIA, the easiest thing to do is to go learn about joining and consider doing so at philosophersinamerica.com.

Cashio: If you're enjoying the show, take a second to rate and review us on iTunes, Google Play, your favorite podcasting app. The algorithms work out in such a way that if you give us a positive review which, of course you're going to.

Weber: Right.

Cashio: It works out. More people get to hear us and more people get to learn, and we build community. So, it would mean a lot to us if you could do us that favor. And you of course, can always email us with your questions, concerns and complaints, we'll take complaints. No, Eric's saying no, we're not taking complaints. Only praise. You can reach us at philosophybakesbread@gmail.com. And you can also call us and leave a short recorded message with a question or a comment that we may be able to play on the show, probably one of our awesome breadcrumb episodes. You can reach us at 859-257-1849. That's 859-257-1849. I hope you'll join us again next time on Philosophy Bakes Bread, food for thought about life and leadership.

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