What's the Public Got to Do with it?

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[Intro music]

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[Theme music]

Weber: Hey everybody. You are listening to WRFL Lexington, 88.1FM, all the way to the left on your radio dial. This is Dr. Eric Thomas Weber, and I am here every Tuesday at noon, to play for you another episode, sometimes a mini-episode afterwards, of *Philosophy Bakes Bread*. I want to give two shout-outs at the top of the show. One is to Jason Fultz. Jason Fultz, thank you for calling in. You left us a fantastic voicemail message. My co-host, Dr. Anthony Cashio, and I are going to talk about that message in an upcoming episode, or perhaps just a breadcrumb. It was a great question and a fun question to ask. Jason happens to have called back again, and I was able to talk with him. It was a terrific conversation. I hope you have done some more thinking about that chat we had, and consider at any point in time sending us another question, comment on Twitter, review on iTunes, or just call again. It was great talking with you. The other shout out I want to give is to Kris, who is here in Lexington, who is with a group of listeners over in the federal prison here in town.

We love the feedback that you give us, and we really appreciate all of your energy, your thoughts, and the encouragement and appreciation you and others have expressed for what we are doing here. We are doing this because we believe in the mission of bringing philosophy out of the classroom and talking with people about these deep and important questions. Thank you for your feedback, emails, and I hope you enjoy a couple of the books that we have talked about reading. Without further ado, we have got episode 29 of *Philosophy Bakes Bread*. Hard to believe. Episode 29. We started just in early January, and already it has been 29 weeks of episodes. I hope you have enjoyed them. If you have missed any, head over to philosophybakesbread.com, where we have an archive of our past episodes. We are a few weeks behind in posting our episodes. There is logistics involved in getting what is on the air into podcast form, but it is coming. I promise. I hope you all are enjoying the episodes, and if you are

just catching this for the first time, I hope you enjoy this time, this episode of *Philosophy Bakes Bread*. Without further ado, here is the show.

[Theme 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, AKA 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. 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 We hope you'll reach out to us on Twitter @PhilosophyBB, on Facebook at Philosophy Bakes Bread, or by email at philosophybakesbread@gmail.com

Cashio: Last but not least, you can call us and leave a short, recorded message with a question, or a comment, or, as always, bountiful praise that we may be able to play on the show. You can reach us at 859-257-1849. That's 859-257-1849. On today's show, we are very fortunate to be joined by two guests: Dr. Amanda Fulford and Dr. Naomi Hodgson, who are working together at the 2017 Public Philosophy Journal's Creative Writing Workshop in Hickory Corner's Michigan. That is a big sentence. I should say, Eric and Amanda and Naomi are all together and I'm at my house. They are having an awesome time, and I am at my house.

Weber: And Anthony has his wonderful kids there with him. How are you doing today, both of you?

Hodgson: thanks for having us. We are doing good. Really enjoying the Michigan sunshine.

Cashio: It's beautiful up there. On today's show we are going to explore what the concept of 'the public' means, especially in the context of public philosophy. We are going to be putting the public in philosophy today. Both Amanda and Naomi are philosophers of education, so in their work together, at their writing workshop, they have been writing together abuot philosophy as education and they have been writing their project in Michigan in dialogue form. That's exciting. Dialogue form, we will talk about what that is, but rather than a standard formal paper, which is what people usually do in philosophy, we will want to talk to them about that, but first, let us tell our listeners a bit more about our guests.

Weber: Thank you so much, Amanda and Naomi, for joining us on the show. Dr. Fulford is reader in the Philosophy of Education at Leeds Trinity University at Leeds in the United Kingdom. Her work is informed by thinkers including Stanley Cavell and his reading of the 19th century essayists Henry David Thoreau, and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Dr. Naomi Hodgson is lecturer in education studies at Liverpool Hope university, also in the UK, where she teaches also in the philosophy of education. Her work is focused on the relationship between education, government and subjectivity. She is the author of *Citizenship for the Learning Society,* which came out by Wiley in 2016, and she co-authored, with Amanda, *Philosophy in Theory and Educational Research,* which came out in 2016 with Routledge press. Congratulations. That is a lot of stuff coming out.

Cashio: Yeah, that's really great. Alright Amanda and Naomi. We like to spend the first few minutes of this show getting to know you guys. Who you are as people, who you are as thinkers,

and as philosophers. We call the first segment "Know Thyself!" We want to see how well you know yourselves. It's a bit of a test. Do you know yourself? You should, hopefully. Tell us about yourself, how you came into philosophy...

Fulford: It was all a bit of an accident, really. I was doing some studying for a doctorate, and I was doing nothing like philosophy. I just happened to meet an academic at the university where I was studying, and I was telling him about my project, and I was really excited about it, and he said, "You know, I don't think you are the remotest bit interested in that. (laughter). You are a presumptuous soul, a philosopher as well." He said, "I want you to go and read this book," and he gave me a copy of *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau. I went and I read this book, and it was about a guy who goes to live by a pond, and goes home again. I thought that this was nothing to do with what I was interested in, which was literacy, literacy teaching to adults, so I went back and said to him, "I went back and read this book, but I'm not sure how significant it is." He said, "Now I want you to read this book." He gave me Stanley Cavell's book *The Senses of Walden*. I started reading it, and I really didn't know what it was about, but I knew it was profoundly important. I suppose you can say I was drawn in to philosophy, I was seduced by it. That's how I got started.

Weber: Well there is certainly love in philosophy, and in the love of wisdom, so I guess there can be seduction as well. Tell me about yourself, Naomi.

Hodgson: I also got into philosophy of education by accident.

Cashio: You just tripped and fell into it? (laughter).

Hodgson: I'm still rubbing my head, wondering how it happened. My undergraduate degree was in anthropology and communications. Towards the end of that, I was getting interested in developments that were happening in Europe, the promotion of European citizenship, and the UK was just introducing citizenship education into schools. I had always assumed that schools produced citizens anyway, that all education is citizenship education. Clearly, there is a belief among policymakers that we are not producing the right kinds of citizens. I was really intrigued by what kind of citizenship this kind of new curriculum was trying to produce. I went on to do my MA in educational research, because I wanted to look at educational policy. When I got there, having come from anthropology, I found this instrumental understanding of what research was for, and most of my questions I then realized were more conceptual, and had to do with language and discourse. During my degree, I had become very interested in the work of Foucault, and I was fortunate enough to find the same PHD advisor that Amanda had, who was a philosopher of education working at that institution who was interested in working on that project. I became a philosopher of education through that route. It's all his fault really. Paul Standish from the UK, if you are listening, it is all your fault.

Weber: We are going to ask you a little bit more about philosophy, but if you would, if you came from anthropology, can you give our listeners a very simple sense of the answer to the question: What is anthropology exactly?

Hodgson: Anthropology, essentially, is the study of man, but it has some specific methods for doing that. It is the field where you have methods like ethnography, where a researcher will go and live with a community or group for an extended period of time, and try to really understand the rituals and the culture of that particular place. Traditionally, coming out of the late 18th, early 19th century, it would be kind of wealthy western explorers going and studying people on

tropical islands and basically telling us about how weird and wonderful and exotic these people are. Obviously, the field has changed since that time, although some of those thinkers are still very influential. Anthropology happens in all sorts of places. The anthropology I became interested in was the anthropology of Europe. A lot of the people who had influenced me had gone and done ethnography of the European Commission, spending months and months in those offices working out how the whole thing worked. It's really trying to get at that detail of how our societies function.

Weber: There is a saying that to understand a person you have to walk a mile in his or her shoes. I guess you go and you put on their shoes for a while, is the metaphor. Amanda, you mentioned that you were pursuing a PHD in another field. What field was that again, before you moved into philosophy?

Fulford: It was in literacy. I started out, many years ago, a teacher of adult literacy. I got into it because I had a neighbor who was looking after my children one day and I had to take one of my children to a doctor, and I said to my neighbor, "Will you listen to my other daughter read while I take my younger one to the doctor?" She broke down and got very emotional, and said, "I can't read. Can you help me?" I thought that I didn't know how to do this. I can teach my children to read, but im not sure how to do it with you. I went to my local college, I learned a lot about teaching adults to read and write. I started off teaching adult literacy and then teaching other teachers to be involved in adult literacy provision. It was such a rewarding and privileged field to work in. I wanted to research it more. I was really interested in the time and how different countries across Europe thought of what literacy was and therefore how it trained its literacy teachers. I suppose that when I had that conversation with a chap who eventually became my PHD supervisor, I think he saw that I was interested in other things as opposed to just how we train literacy teachers, and I think he saw in me an interest in language and concepts around language, and what it was to be literate, which is a deeply philosophical question. He was obviously bright enough to see that in me, to help me to bring that to fruition.

Weber: That's very interesting. I hear some overlap in terms of the importance of cultural understanding of other people, which is sort of anthropological, insofar as for instance, you don't want to teach an adult how to read when D is for Diaper, or something like that when they are treated like children when they are learning to read. It's kind of insulting. I imagine there is gobs more to it, but that's something that comes to mind.

Cashio: My favorite question to ask everyone is: What is philosophy to you? What does philosophy mean to you? We always ask our guests to give us their take on what this funky little discipline is.

Weber: We have a couple minutes left, so we though we would ask you a little question.

Fulford: What I like about philosophy, and what I think it is, is the ability to look at things differently, to turn things on their head, to actually make you bolt upright and think, "Actually I hadn't thought of it that was before", or, "I need to think about this differently." For me, it is the way of bringing to my attention things that otherwise I wouldn't have thought of. Those can come from texts, those can come from books. Those can come from other colleagues, like Naomi. That, to me, is what philosophy is. It's that ability, the means by which we actually look at concepts and ideas in our world differently.

Hodgson: I think I'd echo that to some extent. Obviously, the kind of questions an anthropologist might pursue would be different from the kind of questions that a philosopher might pursue. For me, the best anthropology and the best philosophy do very similar things. As Mandy says, you look at things differently, look at how things work, and enable us to question ourselves and unsettle our fixed assumptions about how things are, how they ought to be. Philosophy comes in many different forms. For me, there is a lot of overlap between philosophy and literature, or philosophy and film. It is articulating the world in a particular way that goes against our common-sense understanding of it.

Weber: So, in other words, we shouldn't get stuck on certain beliefs that we have, or habits of thinking that we have come to have. We should actually think about those. We should actually decide, and think more about whether or not we should hold those views.

Hodgson: That's absolutely right. It's something which is an attitude which we continually develop throughout our lives, an attitude of openness to others and other peoples' ideas. That's really important and central to philosophy.

Weber: I love that you brought that up. So few people attend to the attitudinal aspect of philosophy. You have to have a certain kind of attitude in order to be open-minded enough to think. It takes a certain courage, also, because we are comfortable with what we are used to.

Hodgson: It's a courage, but it is also making yourself vulnerable to other ideas. That's scary sometimes.

Fulford: That's where the educational aspect of educational philosophy comes in. It's not just abut what is going on in schools in colleges and universities, but that actual transformation of ourselves, change in ourselves that takes place through our encounter with other people, with other texts, or our day-to-day experiences, even.

Cashio: Being brave enough to be humble.

Fulford: Indeed. It is the kind of thing that we have been doing at the writing workshop, which I have been privileged to be invited to this year. We have been challenging each other to change our thinking, as we might say a little bit more later on, about changing the way we write as well.

Weber: That is terrific. We are so glad to have you both on the show, Naomi and Amanda. This is Dr. Eric Weber with my co-host Dr. Anthony Cashio. We are going to come back after a short break with the next segment of *Philosophy Bakes Bread*.

Cashio: Welcome back everyone, to *Philosophy Bakes Bread*. This is Dr. Anthony Cashio and Dr. Eric Weber, and we are here talking with the doctors, Amanda Fulford and Naomi Hodgson. In this segment, we are going to talk with our guests about what is so important about understanding the concept of the public, and then in our next segment we will ask them what they mean by public philosophy, and thinking of philosophy as education. Let's put the public back into philosophy today.

Weber: That's right. Amanda and Naomi, you are both at the Public Philosophy Journal's Collaborative Writing Workshop. What brought you here, and what were you planning to write together? Let's start there, a bit more broadly, and then we will focus on the public specifically.

Fulford: Amanda speaking. I was watching my emails one day, and an email popped through from a guy called Chris Long, and it said, "I've read a paper that you have published..." And I didn't read much further, because I thought it was one of those things that academics get regularly, where people are trying to get you to publish in their journals, and I nearly hit delete. I read a little bit further, and Chris was telling us about this writing workshop he was organizing here in Michigan, and it was about collaboration in public life. He had seen that I had been publishing in that field, and he asked me if I was interested in coming along. I'm glad I didn't hit delete. He kindly said, "If you have got somebody with whom you are collaborating on your work, then perhaps they would like to come along too,". Naomi and I have published both journal articles, and a book last year for Routledge, so we thought it would be a great opportunity to continue writing together. Here we are.

Weber: That's wonderful. You want to add anything, Naomi?

Hodgson: I was just really glad to get the invitation. I thought there must be some sort of a catch. When do academics get invited to a beautiful location to write for two days?

Weber: Not often.

Cashio: I'm still waiting for my invitation. (laughter).

Weber: It got lost in the mail, Anthony.

Hodgson: Not just the opportunity to write for two days, but the particular topic of the workshop was really relevant to the work I had been doing, and the work Mandy and I have been doing together, but also the model that Chris was developing in the Public Philosophy Journal was really interesting as well. It has been really rewarding.

Weber: Wouldn't you say that it is pretty uncommon for philosophers to co-author? What brought you to that? What got you started? Obviously, you have been doing that since before this workshop.

Fulford: It's true that the single author paper is far and away the most common way of publishing, but I started to co-author when I was doing my doctorate, actually. There were some things that my supervisor particularly, just because opportunities came up and he was very busy and didn't necessarily have time to write the whole thing by himself. I enjoyed that process because I wasn't always working within an institution. I was often working independently from home. That collaboration really helps you to feel like you are part of an academic community, and to challenge your own thinking, and forces you to write something that you wouldn't have been able to do on your own. I have always enjoyed that process. Naomi and I started to write together because Naomi had suggested that what we had been doing on our doctoral theses had some overlaps. I was a bit skeptical at first, because Naomi had written about European citizenship, I had written about adult literacy education and being literate. It didn't seem to be an obvious connection straight away. We started to talk together, and we decided to write a paper together about the overlaps between a kind of governance of citizenship and the governance of literacy curricula for adults. We started writing because we saw these real overlaps with our interests.

Weber: I am fascinated, and I have never thought about this question before, but I wonder whether persons who are not literate are vastly less likely to vote. I don't know that, but I wonder.

Fulford: I would imagine there are statistics.

Weber: You have to read the ballot, right?

Hodgson: Maybe that is the case, but I think there is something more in the idea that there are real tensions between what we want to do as citizens and what we want to do as literate people, and what governments expect of citizens and literate people. We were really trying to explore the overlaps between the governance of citizenship and the pressure that brings, and the similar governance and pressures that it brings to adult literacy education.

Fulford: What we had seen in both of our separate pieces of research, we see the language of policy, and looked at the ways in which citizenship and literacy were measured to some extent. There was this instrumentalization, almost technologization of these complex human phenomena. It was trying to get away from this idea that citizenship was a set of skills and competencies that you could perform and measure and compare between different countries, and likewise for literacy. This is purely a means of communication, rather than something that connects you in a very profound way, with the world.

Weber: For one thing, if you get fined for not doing something that you could only have learned about by reading it, that would be a pretty bad system, right? There are people who are not literate.

Cashio: This seems like it would connect really nicely with the idea of the public, the writing and thinking about how we relate to the public, and what the public is. This is what you are working on. Maybe you could talk to us about why we need to understand what public means? Seems like an obvious idea? If you do philosophy, is it sometimes private? What do you mean by public in public philosophy? Do we need that extra added signifier?

Hodgson: That's a really good question. It's one that we have tried to grapple with this week. The more we heard people say the term, 'public philosophy', we were less and less clear about what 'public' added to our understanding of what philosophy is or can be. We have really tried to articulate a conception of philosophy that doesn't necessarily need that signifier. The distinction is something between academic philosophy and communicating something or speaking about things, issues, and ideas in the public sphere. In educational philosophy, the idea of the public has been really under scrutiny in recent years because of the increasing privatization of education. There is a lot of work going on to try to defend the idea of educational institutions as public institutions and what that might mean. To what extent are they public? How can they perform that role? It's a difficult thing to do, because you are working against all of the time, the individualization, and the need to gain skills and competencies in privatizing ways of understanding the value of education that go against the idea of a public space. We have been trying to work through he different inflections that the term has, and trying to see how that bears on our understanding of not just what philosophy is, but how we do it as academics.

Weber: What I'm hearing, and correct me if I'm wrong, is that when you think about education as private, then it might suggest the task of that education is not to cultivate citizenship, or it might not be, in that sphere. If you have your own private ends, are you getting the kind of education we ought to expect for people to be good and engaged citizens? Is that an element of what you are talking about?

Hodgson: To some extent. There are two ways of thinking about privatizing. One would be the privatization of public schools, when they are run by private businesses, or as private businesses,

or are taking funding from private or commercial organizations. The other one is the idea that we become increasingly concerned with our individual skills and competencies, and our relationships to others and our activities as citizens become part of, or measurable indicators of good citizenship. Having good citizenship skills is in itself a private good.

Weber: Interesting. Do you want to jump in, Amanda, about why we need to understand the public in public philosophy?

Fulford: It really comes from some practical work with which I was involved back in Leeds in the UK, where the education department was invited to go do some public philosophy, for want of a better word, in the central library. We ran a number of sessions where we were talking with the general public with issues such as: happiness, what makes us happy, friendship and loneliness, do we need friends? What are friends for? We talked about money. Does money make the world go round? Those kind of issues, which were of real importance to the general public. Doing that work raised the issue of, well, what is public philosophy? Is if philosophy for the community in the sense that we, as philosophers are going in and telling the public how or what to think. I don't believe that. That's not what we were trying to do, but that is a thought some people have when they think about public philosophy, that this is purely philosophers going and trying to educate to help people and tell the public how and what to think. Then we might contrast that idea of philosophy for the community with an idea of philosophy with the community, that our role as academic philosophers is maybe to go out and facilitate philosophical thinking with the community.

We were grappling with these issues. What is public philosophy? Is it philosophy for the community? Is it philosophy with the community? Is it philosophy in the community? Those kind of questions raised bigger ones about the nature of the public, the nature of community, and the nature of society. It comes back to what I was saying earlier when you asked me about what is philosophy, about trying to work out those concepts and think about those concepts differently. We have been trying to not undermine what the writing workshop has been trying to do, but really trying to ask the question of ourselves and our colleagues here: What is the public in public philosophy? What is it for and why is it important?

Cashio: That's good. Is it for? Is it with? Is it in? Can it be all three at some level?

Fulford: In some ways, it's all of those things. I suppose I want to try to move away from an idea of philosophy for the public, because I think that brings with it those kind of notions that there is some kind of authority that the philosopher has, that we want to do things in a particular way, and get the public to think in a particular way. I suppose I even want to move beyond the idea of philosophy with the community to an idea of philosophy as education, or as educative. That's really important to the work that both Naomi and I do as philosophers of education. I would like to think that when we are thinking about public philosophy, we are also thinking about philosophy as education.

Weber: That's bringing us very nicely to the point where we need to transition to the next segment, where that is exactly what we are going to be asking you about. For a moment I'm going to make a shameless plug for the fact that *Philosophy Bakes Bread* is a production of the Society of Philosophers in America, SOPHIA. The mission of that society is very much in line with what you are talking about, about engaging with the public and doing philosophy together, and the notion of descending on the masses from the tower, with the wisdom that we confer onto them, is not the picture for SOPHIA of what we take philosophy to be. I do think it is

important to think about this question about whether the public is a matter of location or a setting, or is it the subject matter as being public, in terms of being publicly relevant. As you have just said nicely, it can be some of both of those things, or individual elements of that. That's terrific. That is a wonderful understanding, and that is very much in the spirit of what we have been doing at this collaborative writing workshop. We are going to take a short break, everybody. Thank you so much for listening. We have been talking with Dr. Naomi Hodgson and Dr. Amanda Fulford, and this is Dr. Eric Thomas Weber, with my co-host Dr. Anthony Cashio. Thank you all for listening to *Philosophy Bakes Bread.* We will be right back.

Cashio: Welcome back, everyone to *Philosophy Bakes Bread*. This is Dr. Anthony Cashio and Dr. Eric Weber and today we are talking with Dr. Amanda Fulford, say hello Amanda.

Fulford: Hi!

Cashio: And Dr. Naomi Hodgson.

Hodgson: Hello.

Cashio: So the listeners can get your voices. In this segment, we are going to focus on their experience with public philosophy, and a little bit more about what they mean by it, which we touched on last segment, as well as what they mean when they see philosophy as education. Amanda ended the last segment talking about some awesome things about that. We will have a lot of follow-up conversation there. You guys are up in Michigan, in a writing workshop. You are all together right now, and I am in my house in Virginia. It's actually really beautiful today, so it's not that bad. But I understand the workshop you two decided to write in dialogue form. You talked about this earlier. I want to hear more about this. Why did you make this decision? Plato wrote in dialogues, and is famous for that. Very few philosophers, Hume, Bishop Berkeley, and...

Weber: I want to add one precursor question. How do scholars normally write? For the person who doesn't have any acquaintance with what we are talking about. How do scholars normally write, and why are you doing this in reference to Anthony's question?

Hodgson: Ordinarily, when we set out writing, we are looking at writing something that is around 6000 words long. It will come with an abstract, which is like a brief preview of what the whole thing is about and what it is going to say. Normally, introduction, some interesting stuff in the middle, and then a conclusion with thorough references to cite the sources that you have used.

Cashio: But not too interesting. That won't get published.

Hodgson: Everyone has their different style of writing, but typically academic writing is a particular genre you might say. Part of the purpose of this workshop and the Public Philosophy Journal is to try to make philosophy accessible in some way, to engage what we are doing and the questions we are asking with what is going on publicly. Our default, I suppose, when we started to raise questions about what public means and what community means and what philosophy is was to immediately construct this article-length argument in our heads with all of the references and the proper format. The idea that we would then strip out the interesting bit to make it accessible in some way seemed a little bit dishonest and would not be that interesting to any member of the public. We thought that we were going to have to challenge ourselves here and just write it differently. The reason why we chose a dialogue was because dialogue has a fantastically long history in philosophy, starting with Socrates and the way that he engaged the

public in dialogue. We wanted to take on that idea of just talking, conversation or dialogue, whatever we want to call it, because that is what the public is familiar with. That's what we all are familiar with. That's what we do every day. We talk to each other just like we are talking to each other now. What better way of trying to talk about really complex issues than in dialogue with each other. It comes back to the idea that I mentioned earlier about philosophy as education. We are hoping that if we present this dialogue in a really accessible way, then it is educative to people thinking about matters about the public and society and community. What is also really important about that dialogue is that it is really educative for us in writing it together too.

Weber: That's fascinating. One of the things about reading dialogues in my experiences it kind of feels like you are sitting near a really good conversation and listening in.

Cashio: You mean like a podcast? Or a radio show?

(laughter).

Weber: Like that. Every now and then you get very lucky and you hear a conversation and it catches you and you can't stop listening and it is fascinating. A really good dialogue does exactly that. It pulls you in, and you hear each other's explanations, and you are able to interrupt with a question or something.

Hodgson: There was something that we thought about earlier today, when we were writing the dialogue. It reminded us of the Roman philosopher Seneca. He wrote some letters to his friend Lucilius. The title of those letters is called The Moral Letters. In one of the letters, I think is letter 38, I can't remember exactly, but he writes to Lucilius, and he says something like this: "We need to keep writing more of these letters to each other, because there is something really special about conversation, about talking to each other. It creeps like degrees into your cell." I think that is a beautiful way of articulating what we are trying to get at, that there is something really special and important about dialogue, and its educative and its tranformatory potential.

Fulford: I think that is very different from using a text to try to teach somebody something, putting yourself in the position of the expert who knows this thing that you don't know, that you wouldn't be able to find out for yourself. There is something very different in the style of philosophy we are trying to do in a dialogue. It's not a debate where one of us is trying to win out in the end. We are testing each other's ideas and trying to come to a richer conception than we started with. When we tried to write this, we had to come up with a different starting point than if we were writing an academic article. We aren't going to give everybody an overview of what has already been said in the field. That wasn't really a way of engaging the public, we felt. We had to find a way that would make what we were about to say relevant to current issues. We actually stole an idea, which is a very academic thing to do.

Weber: You borrowed it. You can give it back later.

Cashio: If you cited it, it's not stealing.

Fulford: we appropriated it from the *Cross-Examined Life* podcast, basically starting off with a controversial position, or a radical position, and then having the conversations start from that point. The way it worked, Naomi started out with the position that there is no such thing as community. From that starting point, I then was asking her questions and she responded and

we literally just typed up what we said. We think what we have got at the end is really something quite interesting.

Weber: Did you respond by saying, "Nuh-uh!" (laughter).

Fulford: It was a very short conversation. (laughter).

Cashio: Easiest writing day ever. Nope you are wrong.

Weber: This is a really nice explanation, and a carrying forward, it seems to me, of what we were talking about earlier, where there is this notion of experience with public philosophy as dialogue and communication, and so I wonder if you would tell us a little bit more about the experience you had in engaging the public with the programming that you are referring to, Amanda.

Fulford: The one in Leeds? It was invited as part of a social science series of talks in the library. When I first heard that, I thought, "Goodness, I don't really want to go and take part in a social science series. That doesn't sound too interesting." (laughter). I searched the library. OK. I'll come and do philosophy. They said, "Oh, can you call it something else than philosophy?"

Weber: Ow! That hurts!

Fulford: They asked, "What are you going to come and talk about?" I said, that I was not going to come and talk about anything, because the public are going to do the talking. It was interesting for the library staff, because they weren't too sure what was going to happen. We asked the people who used the library regularly what are the issues facing them today that they would like to talk about. It was coming up to Christmas, so money was an important one. Friendship and loneliness, because Christmas vacations can be a difficult time for some people. We started off with those kind of issues, and we went into the library, we had just something to get people thinking to begin with, maybe a short video clip, an artwork, a short piece of text, and then we got the community just to generate their own questions about the material they had seen, and we just tried to interrogate those concepts of friendship, of money, of happiness, and what was absolutely staggering was the questions that the public were able to ask. They were actually really adept to doing philosophy. That was quite surprising. They were just brilliant. It was really educative for me as well, engaging with them and doing that work.

Weber: That is terrific, but at the same time, the library must have advertised the event, and therefore my question is: What did they say to people to come and do and listen to you or what have you?

Fulford: They advertised it as a philosophical inquiry. Some people said they came just because heating is quite expensive, and they wanted free heating in the library in the afternoon. Some people said they weren't quite sure what philosophy was and they wanted to find out. Some people were just waiting to pick their children up from school. A whole range of reasons why people came. There was one really lovely thing somebody said to me at the end. She came up to me and said, "I didn't really want to come to this. I came with my sister because she wanted to come, but thank you. For the first time in my life I feel like I've been woken up." That really demonstrates the power of what we were trying to do.

Weber: When you have a bad day, you're going to hold onto that memory to pick yourself up a little bit.

Fulford: We think doing this kind of work and engaging in these debates about public philosophy and what it should be and what we are trying to do is really important.

Weber: Terrific. What did you come to? What did you find in your dialogue? Since it is a dialogue, it isn't your traditional paper having a thesis arguing this point throughout. What would you say you learned or conveyed in the conversation, if you can distill key points?

Hodgson: The starting point, as Mandy said, was that there is no such thing as community. That came out of two things really. One was a particular conception of community that seemed to be being used in discussion that we were hearing, and in our general understanding of what community is, a common-sense understanding of what community is. We wanted to tackle that bit. This particular notion is one we have explored in relation to the work of Stanley Cavell. We wanted to bring his ideas to bear on this more common-sense notion of community. Mandy was trying to challenge this idea, to justify that position. Two main things came out of it. In our discussion, we were trying to get across this idea that community is not a pre-existing thing. It is something that is continually created and re-created. A lot of the policy language, I don't know if it is the same in the U.S., but certainly in the UK, a lot of community-oriented policy, community has become a particular focus for government policies. Local communities have become increasingly made responsible for local services and the sustainability of those services. There is this kind of assumption, this idea that what we are really striving for is cohesion, consensus, and everyone getting along together. This kind of overlooks the fact that that is not how human life goes on. We do disagree with one another.

We do come up against things that make us question opposition in that community, whether we can be or want to be part of that community. We are trying to bring in recent examples. The recent election of Donald Trump in the US and the referendum in the UK about Brexit, which I would rather not talk about... (laughter). These things have really revealed how divided we are. Often the policy response to that is that we need these programs that create cohesion and these kind of things. There is this assumption that we are separate groups. We gave some examples of how we use the term community. We talk about the black community, the LGBT community, the Spanish-speaking community, and these are all things that exist and are really important for the identity of those groups who are seeking recognition and justice and equality, but we are trying to unpack this idea, that these are understandings of community that are based on what makes us different. We are trying to articulate as in as clear as possible terms, this more encompassing notion of community as being created in the fact that we share the ability for language, and we have far more in common than what separates us. Coming up against possible critiques of that might be, well that's all well and good, but these differences do exist. There is inequality. These struggles in the community-based advocacy still needs to go on. We are trying to get away from this more divisive idea of community, which perhaps entrenches that in equality by keeping these distinct group identities towards this more abstract...

Weber: ...dynamic conception of community.

Hodgson: Yeah, and something that we continually have to work at.

Cashio: Community as a process.

Hodgson: Yeah, but without some end goal. If you are working towards equality, if you assume that we can't get along properly together until we achieve equality for everybody, then you are

working towards something you are never going to acheive. There is a permanent deferral of that end state.

Weber: Or you may be focused on something that isn't the essential problem.

Hodgson: Exactly. This idea of assuming equality from the outset, assume that we can speak together from the outset, acknowledge the fact that we do live together. We do get along with each other. It's not always pretty, but we do it. These were the kind of ideas that we were trying to pull out and articulate.

Fulford: Putting into a sound byte, we decided that there was community, but not in the way that we think we know it.

Cashio: I'm excited. I'm looking forward to reading it.

Weber: You have to have the long version and the bumper sticker version. Plato did that often. Justified true belief is a nugget, and he had a lot longer explanation. I let myself have the long-winded version and the abbreviated version. It's important. I certainly was sucked in. I think this was terrific, and I hope everybody has enjoyed listening to this. This is Dr. Eric Weber, with my co-host Dr. Anthony Cashio, and we have been talking with Dr. Amanda Fulford and Dr. Naomi Hodgson. Thank you, everybody, for listening to *Philosophy Bakes Bread*. We will be back with one more segment in just a moment.

Cashio: Welcome back, everyone, to *Philosophy Bakes Bread*. It is your privilege this evening to be listening to Dr. Anthony Cashio and Dr. Eric Weber. It is our privilege to have been talking with doctors Amanda Fulford and Naomi Hodgson. In this last segment, we are going to end with some final big-picture questions, some lighthearted thoughts, and we will end with a pressing philosophical question for you, our listeners, as well as some info about how to get a hold of us. Eric seemed very eager to ask a question, so I'm going to toss it over to them.

Weber: I have a comment, and maybe I'll ask if this is capturing or relevant to what you are saying about community, where we were just ending in the last segment. You were talking about the ways in which community can be treated sometimes in the policy world as this static thing, which is perhaps treated as unchanging, and that causes certain problems, because communities change. There is this metaphor in the field of philosophy that refers to the ship of Theseus. This is a ship in which, long ago, each board in the ship had to be replaced. You would have a ship with all of these boards, and after a certain period, you had come to replace all of the boards on the ship. The question is, is it still the same ship afterwards, when none of the boards are original as when you had the first ship, before you had ever changed any boards? My real life version of this is to think about the elderly community. In a given year, you have a whole bunch of people in the elderly community, as just one example of a community that we think of, with certain special needs or interests, and over the years people die. Other people get older and become elderly. Over time, you have a different group of elderly. There is a sense in which they are still the elderly, and yet of course they are a different group. IS that a helpful metaphor? Does that capture, or did I miss crucial things about how you are conceiving of the dynamism of community?

Hodgson: Calling something the elderly community tries to identify something as a thing, as a group, that doesn't necessarily exist. It creates the reality, it doesn't reflect the reality. I guess

the same would be true about a number of those examples. We talk about the school community. We talk abuot the school community. It is something that is continually worked to be maintained, but who is in that community is changing all of the time. It works to some extent, but it is this kind of bracketing of a group as a community for some purpose other than recognizing them. I don't know if the elderly think of themselves as a community.

Weber: I would give perhaps one counter-example, which would be people who go live in what we call retirement homes or retirement communities, or people who, through coming in to old age and not having family that can care for them, have to move into assisted living for elderly persons. There are people who have some shared experiences, you might say. Of course they are different people in a different generation. The notion that everyone over 75 or 80 has lived in the same conditions is nonsense. So I guess you are talking about the variability of usefulness of these categories. Is that right?

Hodgson: Yeah, and if you think about the retirement community, if you call something a community, does that make it a community?

Cashio: No. That's the point. Just calling it a community is not a community, but if you have a retirement home, like Shady Acres retirement home, everyone living there, interacting, talking with each other, laughing together, crying together, suffering together, that becomes a community through the constant dynamic interaction.

Hodgson: To some extent, but at the same time it's not an island or by itself. It exists within a set of wider understandings of how we treat the elderly, or what it means to live a full and healthy retirement. These wide uses of these terms are a matter of cultural convention. It's part of our form of life. We agree with this as a way to go on together, so that retirement community is part of the community. These are two different registers of the word community there.

Fulford: We were trying to explain this in the dialogue we were writing, and these are difficult concepts that we are dealing with, and they are difficult concepts for philosophers to deal with. These problems, that have recurred for centuries and millennia and will keep on recurring, that deal with these kind of concepts. So if philosophers find it difficult to navigate and negotiate these terms, it's going to be much more difficult for the general public, who wouldn't have necessarily had any philosophical training to really get a handle on some of these concepts. We were trying to think how to say this in our dialogue, and we came up with the idea of a community which exists just because we are human people. The community of mankind was a way that we wanted to try and describe the idea that we were thinking of, In terms of this fluid, dynamic, ever-changing community. Within that community of mankind, of course there are all sorts of different groupings, including those elderly people who live in Maple Tree retirement home. Or Shady Acres. That's one way we were trying to think of this and put words to a concept, which is really difficult.

Cashio: This is really fantastic stuff. I'm really excited about reading what you come up with. We want to give you guys a chance to do last big thoughts for our listeners. Any last thing you want to leave people with?

Hodgson: In the way we try to round off our dialogue, Mandy came back with a question like, "OK, so we have gone into quite a lot of detail about these quite difficult concepts. How does Cavell help us in our current context with how we go on from here, how we go on together.

Weber: This is Stanley Cavell, a scholar that we were referring to in the first segment.

Fulford: He is a philosopher who has influenced both our works and we have written about.

Hodgson: It is from his work that we take this particular idea of community and how this relates to our language. We came up with some examples of the ways in which the current context reveal these great division between different groups in society, different political groups really give us a sense of a need to re-think how we understand community and what it means to live together in a society. He has this idea of criteria, the things that allow us to agree with each other enough to carry on as a culture with some shared conventions. In our current context, we are seeing 'post-truth', people not knowing what is true and what is false. People are not trusting the media as a source of information, preferring to just go with what they know. The ideas of left and right in politics don't necessarily mean what they did 10, 20, 30 years ago. There is a sense in which we need to try out our language again and make the world make sense to us again. That was one way in which we found Cavell's unsettling of our standard notions of community to be quite helpful. There was a really nice quote with each other. What that means is taking the time to actually believe in the prejudices that we see in other people, because it is through doing that, that perhaps we are exposed to the prejudices in our own thinking. I think that is a really nice way of saying, "We need to continually expose ourselves to others' ideas in order to really find out how to go on together.

Weber: Talk about making yourself feel vulnerable. Trying to make yourself appreciate or understand someone else's' prejudices, it feels uncomfortable thinking about that idea, and yet, obviously that would reveal a lot about oneself. This is powerful stuff.

Cashio: One of our final questions that we ask everyone on this show: Would you, Amanda or Naomi, say that philosophy bakes no bread, as the saying goes, or that it does? Why and how and what do you say to people, if you think it does bake bread, what do you say to people who disagree with you, such as the librarian?

Hodgson: It definitely bakes bread. I'm going to put something out there that is a little provocative. I think it bakes bread rolls. (laughter).

Cashio: Please explain.

Weber: It bakes hot buns?

Hodgson: If you think of a loaf of bread, it is one thing. It is a unified, whole thing. But bread rolls can be all sorts of different things. It can be little white ones, ones stuck together, ones with seeds on top, ones without on top, ones that are a little bit browner than the ones in the middle. It does all sorts of things. I want to say that philosophy doesn't just do one thing, philosophy can do all sorts of little things.

Fulford: My response would be slightly different, because I was thinking about this earlier. I don't think that philosophy does bake bread. It doesn't produce anything, and that is no bad thing. It's essential uselessness is not a criticism. However, academic philosophers are having to learn to bake bread. They are having to learn to show how there is some added value to what they do. They have to start producing stuff. That was my, slightly more cynical response.

Hodgson: The lady in the library was one of those bread-bums. (laughter).

Fulford: She was a bread bum?

Hodgson: The lady in the library who said, “I have been woken up,” that was her bread bum. She had a bread roll that day.

Weber: Then philosophy can produce some bread rolls maybe.

Cashio: It can, but it doesn’t have to. Is that what we are getting at?

Weber: This is great, because it captures some of the important nuances that we uncover when we ask this question, where people will say something like, “Philosophy can be tremendously valuable inherently. It is wonderful to be curious and all these things.” At the same time, in a hospital, you have to have a sense of what consent means. That is a difficult philosophical issue. Getting better understanding of that is incredibly important. When philosophers can help, maybe there is a bread roll there. Yet, when we ponder the nature of time for fun, maybe there is no particular bread baked in that moment.

Cashio: Private bread roll, not public.

Weber: That’s still baking bread though, and Naomi said not necessarily.

Cashio: We are torturing this metaphor. (laughter).

Weber: We may be torturing the metaphor, but philosophy can scratch an itch, for instance. Philosophy begins in curiosity and wonder, and when you wonder, it’s kind of like having an irritation or an itch, and it helps you scratch that, maybe.

Cashio: I like the seduction of philosophy.

Weber: We did hear about the seduction. Very provocative. Alright. That’s terrific. Thank you so much for that. As you know, Naomi and Amanda, we want to make sure people see both the serious side of philosophy as well as the lighter side. Therefore, we have a mini-segment in this concluding moment of the show that we call “philosophunnies.”

Weber: Say 'philosophunnies'

Sam: Philosophunnies!

(laughter)

Weber: Say 'philosophunnies'

Sam: Philosophunnies!

(child's laughter)

Fulford: The bread rolls were not enough?

Weber: We need more. We would love to know if you have a favorite joke, or funniest fact or story about either philosophy, or public philosophy, or education, or any of these things we have been talking about. Do you have a funny story or jokes for us?

Fulford: I know we have really tired out the bread metaphor, but I did wander whether you would be interested in some philosophy bread-related puns.

Hodgson: These are truly terrible, folks.

Cashio: I’m a sucker for a bad pun.

Fulford: I would like to put a disclaimer that I did not create these puns by myself. Carl Popper-seed rolls, Plato's Loaf... I'm going to stop there, because you're going to switch off the microphone in a minute.

Hodgson: I don't have any bread-related puns, but I do have a funny story about philosophy. I'll try and keep it short. I met somebody a few weeks ago who didn't know me very well, and he said to me, "Do you work?" I said Yes. I work in a university. He said, "What do you do there?" I said, "I'm a philosopher." "A philosopher?" He said, "They do philosophy in universities?" I said, "Yes, it's really quite popular in a lot of universities." He said, "Oh, well maybe you could help me. Do you have access to any special collections?" I said, "Pardon?" He said, "Special collections." "Special collections of what?" "I'm really really wanting a penny black." I said, "Ah, you think I am a philatelist, not a philosopher." I am afraid I didn't do any stamp collecting.

Hodgson: Should I treat you to my joke? This is worse than the bread-related puns, I'm afraid. You're going to love it. What was Neitzche's least favorite thing about Egypt?

Weber: I don't know, what was Nietzche's least favorite thing about Egypt?

Hodgson: It was too Nile-istic. (laughter).

Fulford: You can't see, but Naomi is laughing at her own joke. She has lost it for a moment.

Hodgson: Until today, I only ever knew one joke, so a whole new world has been opened.

Weber: We are just here to open people's minds to greater happiness.

Cashio: Laughter builds community.

Weber: Anthony, you want to tell one each?

Cashio: Our jokes are about teaching and education. I happen to think teachers deserve a lot of credit. Of course, if we paid them more, they wouldn't need it.

Weber: This is about the fact that we don't always pay attention in public philosophy to those that need it the most. Here is a little joke in that spirit. A man walks into a bar with a duck on his head. The bartender says, "Can I help you?" The duck says, "Yeah, can you get this guy off my ass?" (laughter).

[rimshot, applause]

Cashio: Last but not least, we do like to take advantage of the fact that we have access to all of you with powerful two-way communication with our listeners. We want to invite our listeners to send us their thoughts about these big questions that we raise on the show.

Weber: Given that, we would love to hear from you, Naomi and Amanda, whether you have a question that you propose we ask our listeners for a segment that we call, "You Tell Me!"

Fulford: It's based around the Theseus example we heard earlier. The ship had everything replaced, was it the same ship? I want to ask your listeners, if things change about you, you cut your hair, you dye your hair, you have a tattoo, maybe you sadly lose a limb, are you the same person now as you were before those things happened?

Weber: good question. This can transfer on a social level to a community. You have these people move to town. Are you the same community? You have people move away from town, are you the same?

Hodgson: My question is broader, I guess it relates to the conversation we have been having about public philosophy. It would be really interesting to hear from the public: What is philosophy for?

Cashio: Those are both great questions. I'm excited to see what people say about this. What is philosophy for?

Weber: Here and there we have gotten some voicemails, and we have prepared some recordings of responses to those, and we get tweets and emails. We hope everybody will reach out to us about these terrific questions. Thank you for those.

Cashio: Thanks for listening to this episode of Philosophy Bakes Bread: food for thought about life and leadership. We your hosts, Dr. Anthony Cashio and Dr. Eric Weber, are really grateful today to have been joined today by Dr. Amanda Fulford and Dr. Naomi Hodgson. Thank you guys so much. So many doctors. Not one of us could stitch a wound, probably. Consider sending your thought about anything that you've heard today that you would like to hear about in the future, or about the specific questions that we have raised for you.

Weber: Indeed. Once again, you can reach us in a number of ways. We're on twitter @PhilosophyBB.

Cashio: What does that stand for, Eric?

Weber: Oh, let me think. Oh it stands for Philosophy Bakes Bread. We're also on Facebook at Philosophy Bakes Bread, and check out our SOPHIA's Facebook page while you're there, at Philosophers in America.

Cashio: You can of course, email 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, reach us at 859-257-1849. That's 859-257-1849. Join us again next time on *Philosophy Bakes Bread*: food for thought about life and leadership.

[Outro music]