

Anthony Comegna ([00:20](#)):

A little under a year ago, we began *Ideas in Progress* with our very first guest, IHS's president and CEO, Dr. Emily Chamlee-Wright. And I'm absolutely delighted that she's back on the show for yet another debrief of a recent faculty discussion colloquium. Longtime listeners will recall that Emily spoke with us before about her experience of leading a discussion of women in the classical liberal tradition. And relatively shortly after that event, we began building what came to be called the Discourse Initiative, which is an attempt to bring liberal scholars together from across the ideological landscape around our shared values and ideas in order to more effectively combat the creep toward downright illiberalism that we've all been observing in action over the past few decades.

To that end, Emily and I put together this program on toleration and pluralism in a global society, which was held last month. And as I've come to expect from IHS by now, the participants and quality of the discussion were just absolutely top-notch, but that's enough from me. Let's get to it. It's economist, Emily Chamlee-Wright, on another week of *Ideas in Progress*.

Right. So Emily, I think this was a very, very important program because it was part of an initiative that IHS is doing called the Discourse Initiative that is still relatively new, but we have been doing all sorts of things related to it. We've had all sorts of funding opportunities available to scholars working within the subject umbrella of the Discourse Initiative. And we've had, I think you said, 17 programs so far that are within the initiative, so that's just amazing to me.

I'm wondering first off, can you tell us just what the Discourse Initiative is, what are its purposes and how was it sort of conceived and implemented?

Emily Chamlee-Wright ([02:25](#)):

Thanks, Anthony. And thanks for having me on the podcast. It's great to be with you again. And I'd love to talk about the Discourse Initiative, which if you turn back the clock about a year ago, we started thinking about this. What we were seeing in the world and within the Academy was a really troubling rise of illiberalism. And we saw that in several respects.

At the political and cultural extremes out there in the world, there is a rising illiberalism on both ends of the spectrum, and that's certainly troubling. Also, we're seeing within the Academy serious critiques of liberalism. It had already become fashionable by last year, this time, that liberalism reportedly amongst according to some had failed and that it was a failed experiment. And we're seeing these kinds of critiques on both, again, the left and right end of the ideological spectrum.

And so, the Discourse Initiative is recognizing that liberalism needs more attention. There was a moment perhaps in the sort of just aftermath of the Cold War, some serious scholars were saying it was the end of history. And what they meant by that is that liberalism, liberal democracy, basically open liberalism across trade boundaries and national, international trade, that economic liberalism and political liberalism had just sort of won out the battle of ideas. And so, there was a reason to perhaps for those of us who consider ourselves to be within the liberal tradition to feel somewhat sanguine in the mid 90s, to say, "Yeah, maybe these ideas have won the so-called battle of ideas."

I think in the wake of that, we became liberals, broadly speaking became a little lazy. We didn't feel the need to have a robust defense of liberal ideas because it had sort of become the common ground on which we were all standing. So just like when we jump out of bed in the morning, we don't think, well, will the ground that meets my feet, will it still be there? No, we don't think about that. We just jump out of bed and we get on with our day. And I think that liberalism had kind of gotten to that point where it was like the common ground that we always assumed would be there. But with these rising critiques, both within the Academy, scholarly critiques, as well as illiberalism in their more

extreme forms, it challenged us to ask the question, whether that ground was crumbling and that common ground was crumbling.

And so, the Discourse Initiative is a call to all scholars who still have roots within the liberal tradition, whether they're left of center or right of center, whether they're classical liberals, those who still see that their ideas are grounded within the liberal tradition, we want to call those scholars back home to the conversations that we believe are foundational to the good society.

And so, emphasis like on themes of this program that we're talking about today, like toleration, pluralism, for example, those are core themes of liberalism that we want to draw greater scholarly attention back to those themes.

Anthony Comegna ([06:11](#)):

So of course, this program was called Toleration and Pluralism in a Global Society, and you just mentioned toleration and pluralism being key components of the vision of the Discourse Initiative. What are some other main sort of topic headings that you would say are included there?

Emily Chamlee-Wright ([06:28](#)):

Some of the other topics that we're engaging in the Discourse Initiative is, one is what are the critiques and challenges of, contemporary challenges to liberalism? And so, one of the questions that we want to be asking, and I think that one of the authors we're going to talk about today is Jacob Levy's work on rationalism, pluralism, and freedom. One of the things that he asks, one of the questions he asks, is how do we manage pluralism when that presents both the upside of liberalism? Because it is part of the liberal ideal, I believe, that we are able to live peacefully and productively together with people who believe very different things than we believe. That's part of the liberal promise.

And also that is the source of the real challenge within a liberal society. And how do we manage those tensions in a way that's productive and positive and leads to peaceful outcomes? So those are some of the other challenges that we're taking on.

One of the real challenges that we also see is that a liberal society is a dynamic society. When we have a lot of economic liberalism, for example, that means that there's a lot of economic change. If we have cultural liberalism, there's a lot of cultural change. And that rate of change, that pace of change, can be a challenge to some, how do we manage those challenges? And I think that perhaps we have not done as good a job as we need to have done as liberals, as classical liberals, for really taking on those challenges and taking those challenges seriously and responding to them in a way that says, "Yes, we don't want to just dismiss them as being sort of a relic of a bygone era," no, we recognize that these kinds of cultural and economic changes and disruptions that come with them can have real effects that people care about. And so, we need to be a part of the conversation that responds to those challenges.

Anthony Comegna ([08:43](#)):

And now this program was, really, I'd say, this was your program, this was your baby. It was your idea to start us off with one of these early programs being on toleration and pluralism. So I'm wondering if you could say a little bit about the specific reason you chose those topics to do an early program on for the Discourse Initiative and why you chose this subject in particular?

Emily Chamlee-Wright ([09:10](#)):

Well, it was a joint program. You and I worked on this, and it was a great partnership. And I want to get you talking also later in the program about some of the reasons why you chose the historical readings

that were so much a central part of this program, but for my own purposes, for those in the audience who know something about my work, they know that my focus has throughout my career been on the intersection between economics and culture.

And so, what that means in part is that I'm really interested in what the cultural foundations are of a free society. One link for example would be institutions like private property rights are important to a free society, but those institutions, institutions like private property rights, institutions like rules of contract, they are embedded within deep, rich, thick, cultural contexts.

And so, in the places where institutional, the institutional framework of liberalism works best it's because there's this cultural foundation that supports the ethos that underlies those institutions. So if you've got a strong cultural ethos towards respect of other people's sphere, private sphere, respect for toleration for and respect for freedom of conscience of others, a deep respect for keeping one's promises, all of that supports the liberal institutional environment. So that's my background that I come into this with.

And so, on a comparative advantage standpoint, like a lot of other liberals, I am focused on institutions, but I'm very much focused on what are the cultural norms that support those liberal institutions? And so, toleration is a key, one of those. A respect for difference and a kind of welcoming of a pluralistic ethos, a cosmopolitan ethos, is part of the cultural framework that supports liberalism more broadly. And so, that was the impulse that I wanted to come in with. But also as an economist, it is oftentimes it's that soft or cultural, the cultural norms that underlie these institutions that oftentimes gets short shrift by economists. So that's what I wanted to bring to the table.

Anthony Comegna ([11:52](#)):

And now, I guess let's get our obligatory, a COVID related discussion in here, because we were originally planning this, of course, to be an in-person event, but we had to quickly adjust the circumstances and switch it to an online event. And you were very graciously our discussion leader. And boy, was it a rapid-fire queue?

Emily Chamlee-Wright ([12:14](#)):

It was.

Anthony Comegna ([12:14](#)):

I was following along in the Google Doc that you were keeping, and my gosh, it was loaded up the whole time. What were your general impressions of how the event went online and how was it as the discussion leader trying to keep up with that constant flurry of participation?

Emily Chamlee-Wright ([12:32](#)):

So much harder, first of all, to be a discussion leader in this kind of context, because there's, if you are practiced at it in person, you realize how much you're reading the room all the time, just by kind of giving the scan, the gaze, and you're anticipating, you're able to anticipate who really wants to jump in even before they give you the clear signal. So you kind of hold your gaze on them, they give you the nod that lets them know that they're ready to jump in.

And so, none of that is available to you, or it's much more limited in an online space. Even though you can see their faces on the screen, it's not the same thing as being able to read the fullness of someone's body language. You now, I'm a recovering dancer from my previous days. And so, I realize how kinetic, how there's a sort of like kinetic energy when you're in the room with someone and must

feed off of that. So it was much harder in that respect, but that being said, it was such a pleasure to connect with this diverse group of scholars, many of whom knew each other really well, and then many of whom had never really been in a part of an IHS program before. And that sense of connection around the ideas that drew us to the life of the mind in this moment was particularly special.

So on the one hand, while there are constraints that are built into a remote convening, there's also something really powerful about human connection especially around conversation and ideas. And that sense was palpable. It was really in the room.

Anthony Comegna ([14:21](#)):

You know, it's funny you say that. Because I feel like whenever I go to a Liberty Fund, I'm one of those people who's just constantly like shifting around in my seat and starting and moving up and like getting ready to talk. And the discussion leader always kind of takes notice of me before I even raise my hand, but I can't help it. I wear it all over my face.

Emily Chamlee-Wright ([14:41](#)):

Exactly. And that's how we are. We're in a classroom. It's so great to read the body language of students to know when you need to engage people. And so, I think that's part of the art of teaching. So we bring that to our discussion leadership responsibilities too.

Anthony Comegna ([15:00](#)):

Let's shift to talk about the readings a bit, because as you mentioned earlier, it was sort of a collaborative effort here between you and I just sort of like in the mental health program we covered a few weeks ago. Sean Rife and I kind of put the reading list together half and half. And I think that's great. That makes for a really robust set of readings and coverage of different topic areas.

For the most part, you chose the more philosophical political theory readings, and I of course picked out the more historical readings. So if you could, can you tell us a bit about the Chandran Kukathas, right? Kukathas?

Emily Chamlee-Wright ([15:38](#)):

Yes.

Anthony Comegna ([15:40](#)):

The Jacob Levy and the Pete Becky readings that you chose for us?

Emily Chamlee-Wright ([15:44](#)):

Sure. And let me start by saying, I completely agree. I think that collaboration is really helpful and the discussants really noticed that, that there was the same folks who were super excited about the... there was a difference in some sense between the kind of energy you get by deep philosophical work like Chandran Kukathas's *Liberal Archipelago* and Jacob Levy's work and Pete's work. There's that sort of like that focus of the deep philosophical work, but that can feel really abstract, especially without the sight of kind of grounding with at least the readings that we selected did not have the grounding in a historical context. And so, your choices for the historical readings were really powerful because they help to animate how these principles play out in the world. And so, I loved that juxtaposition.

But the Kukathas's work, the *Liberal Archipelago*, in this Chandran asks the question as really the central question of the book, but it's also a central question of liberalism is how does a society of diverse

human beings live together peacefully and productively, especially, and this is the real point about this being a program on toleration and pluralism, how do we live together peacefully and productively, especially when we have very different attachments to one another? So... Sorry, very different attachments to particular allegiances. Some people are very connected to their national identity, some connected very much to the religious identity or cultural identity. So how do we navigate those questions of the free society in that context of difference? And so, this is the animating question, the central question for Kukathas.

And so, his focus is on liberalism to be sure, but his emphasis is one on the freedom of association and disassociation, the basic, the very basic, moral commitment to toleration and the freedom of conscience that's embedded within that. And that sounds all like, well, that's mom and apple pie. Of course, that's we're all committed. If you're a liberal, you're committed to that, right? Of course, we want freedom of association, tolerance and freedom of conscience, but he's... the point of differentiation is that he's saying that the common commitment to a particular concept of justice, you say that that's not necessary for free society. Instead, what he wants to focus in on is a common commitment to toleration, but that's a very minimalist requirement. It doesn't require much from us. We don't have to, for example, commit to having any unified vision of what the good life is.

And so, on the one hand, I see that in a positive way, very much in a positive way, because this is where the Archipelago metaphor comes in, where each island in the Archipelago can self-determine what its own norms and cultural ethos are without the intervention of the other islands in the Archipelago. And so, that seems to be a recipe for peace. But the concern with that is that some of these little islands in the chain of islands can have a very illiberal ethos. And so, there's a real tension there that he raises and was the source of a good part of the discussion.

Now, Jacob Levy's work has a similar sort of scope, in that he's, in rationalism, pluralism and freedom, he's painting for us this distinction between rational liberalism and pluralistic liberalism. Rational liberalism worries most about the illiberalism that can come from sort of parochial group affiliation. So it's in groups that we can sometimes we can entertain our worst prejudices, for example, it's in our groups. I think the John Stuart Mill critique is alive and well in this way of thinking about it, it's that that's where irrationalism steps in. The irrationalism of the crowd is what we want to push against these liberals, right? We might say.

The problem with that is that oftentimes our freedom is exercised within groups. So again, think of religious freedom. We want freedom to be able to associate with a group, even if it doesn't pass the test of scientific rationalism. On the other side of the... well, I should finish that thought. So in that view of the rationalistic notion of liberalism, the greatest threat to liberalism, the greatest threat to freedom, is the illiberalism that can be embedded within groups.

Now, the pluralistic liberalism on the other hand says that the greatest concern that liberals ought to have is the illiberalism that can come from the state. That we need private groups, we need the freedom of association, so that it can act as a bulwark against state tyranny. Because the state is a source of the greatest threat to Liberty.

So what Jacob Levy is doing in this book is he's helping us to understand this tension. He doesn't want to try and resolve that tension, in fact, he says that it is irresolvable, but he wants us to understand that groups themselves can be the source of an emancipating source of Liberty, but they can also be a source of illiberalism and then opens that project up with that tension.

Let me pause there because I think that Becky's piece is a little bit apart from these two. Because I see Kukathas and Levy's projects as in some ways in the same conversation more closely. So let me pause there and see where else we might want to go with it.

Anthony Comegna ([22:46](#)):

Yeah. Well, I'm glad you mentioned. Because there was one participant who said, "Well, wait a second now. If we're going to be so concerned about not only freedom of association, but freedom of disassociation, that could include practices like segregation and how are you going to deal with that?" Clearly, that leads us to an ugly sort of society and it would be a blot on the page if liberals said, "Well, we're just fine with that." So how should we handle that challenge?

Emily Chamlee-Wright ([23:18](#)):

Yeah, no, I like that, because it actually does give a great segue to Peter Beck's piece that we did read, which is actually titled *The Reconstruction of the Liberal Project*. And in that piece, he is very much focused because he is a political economist because he is steeped in the tradition of Austrian Economics, Public Choice Theory and Bloomington School understanding of how societies work. He's a 100% focused in on the question, what's the institutional framework that is the source of the good society, the free society?

With that being said, though, he has this phrase in this piece on the reconstruction of the liberal project, has a couple of phrases that lead us to look beyond just a very narrow economic notion or political economic notion of institutions. For example, one of the refrains that he has in this piece is, we've got to remember that above all else, liberalism is liberal. Liberalism is liberal. So this is his mantra in this piece.

And what he means by that is that it's not just a bare bones, hold your nose notion of toleration that is the source of the good society, that there's something about the human experience that when we venture beyond the familiar, that typically when we engage people who are different from us, they believe different things, they perhaps have a different lifestyle, so long as they are respecting the basic liberties of others, that the more we are exposed to difference, the more we realize that we can go beyond an arm's length toleration. Instead, toleration can be to the point where we're welcoming the fact that there is robust difference in our midst. That it's pleasurable and joyful to be a part of a pluralistic society.

Yes, it has tensions in it too, but what we learned through experience is that there's real joy in being a part of a society that allows for this sort of differentiation of the human outlook and that allows us to be in a place where we gain all the benefits of those differences, all the benefits of cultural linguistic religiosity, the differences of religiosity, that allows us to like get into a sort of moral gymnasium where we exercise the muscles that allow us to say, "You know what? We are encountering significant worldviews here, and yet we can be living together side by side peacefully and productively." That's an important lesson. And the more lessons we get, like we get in this fashion, the more open our society can be and the more open to differences we can be.

And so, to me I think that there is an important dimension of the contemporary conversation around liberalism to entertain what Beck calls, the mature moral intuitions of liberalism. And I'm curious about what those mature moral intuitions really are, and I've spent a little time unpacking that myself, because that isn't just hard-nosed institutional analysis, it's not just cost benefit incentives oriented analysis, it's also about asking the questions, what are the norms of the free society? And that gets us into this cultural realm.

Anthony Comegna ([27:28](#)):

Yeah. You know, I like that contribution a lot. By the way, this is chapter 10 from Pete Beck's book from 2018, *F. A. Hayek: Economics, Political Economy and Social Philosophy*, just for listeners edification. I like

that point because sometimes I feel like we too often get hyperfocused on the state and the legal realm and we forget that that actually plays a fairly small role in people's everyday lives and there is much more to our decision-making than what the law says, you know? So it's up to you liberals to be liberal.

Emily Chamlee-Wright ([28:08](#)):

Yeah. And this is why I love Levy's point is that... James Buchanan's famous, one of his many famous phrases in advancing public choice analysis was that he wanted politics without romance. We wanted to have a clear-eyed understanding of how political dynamics worked, not assuming, without assuming that political leaders are universally benevolent or omniscient, but instead are human beings just like the rest of us.

I think Levy's making a similar kind of move in it. He wants us to see pluralism, he's an advocate of pluralism, but he wants us to see it with very clear eyes. He offers us an understanding of pluralism without romance, but by looking at what the dynamics are of groups. And some of those dynamics can lead to illiberalism. And we need to be clear-eyed about that. We can't just assume that if it's in the cultural space, it's always good, or that the only form of tyranny comes from states, this is I think the richness of the conversation that when we have a sort of pluralism without romance.

Anthony Comegna ([29:24](#)):

Let's shift now to some of the historical readings which were all, generally speaking, all clustered around Tom Paine and his era. And just to put it briefly, I kind of chose those because I think of Tom Paine as sort of the quintessentially cosmopolitan figure in American history maybe along with his contemporary Ben Franklin. They were perhaps the two, well, the two most well known pure men of letters and learning from America at the time. George Washington and Thomas Jefferson certainly titans too, but they were known for fairly different things, but Paine was just a sensation. And I'm curious to know what some of your reflections on the historical readings were.

Emily Chamlee-Wright ([30:11](#)):

Well, let me turn it back to you for a second here to talk more about Paine, because I think that he was referred to in some of the readings that we had as the Founding Father who wasn't really a Founding Father. And if you wouldn't mind talking a little bit through his life and times so that folks understand the context of why he had an influence, but also why he didn't have as much influence as he might have, I think that that would be valuable context.

Anthony Comegna ([30:49](#)):

Sure. Yeah. Well, there's... Barbara Clark Smith is a historian who writes about what she calls the First Patriot Coalition, which is focused on in the chapter from Rediker and Linebaugh's, *Many-Headed Hydra*, that we read for this program too. And in that chapter they spoke about the importance of sailors and what they call the motley crew. Sailing ships at the time were made up of people from all national backgrounds, all racial backgrounds, of course they were all men, so it's not as motley as it could have been, but there was relatively little holding these people together except their common interests as sailors and their common labor aboard ship.

And many of the places that they lived were port towns like Boston and Charleston and other cities like that, Liverpool, and they really seeded these kinds of cosmopolitan cultures in these very important hub areas for many decades before the American Revolution, before people like Tom Paine were even born. And part of what Rediker and Linebaugh are trying to do is show how the revolutionary ethos and activity and ideas and passion for being free of the Imperial ties that were steadily binding

more and more of the world, all of that came or much of it came from the sailors and their resistance to tyranny on the ship, their resistance to the different controls that the empire put on them in their labor and the divisions that the legal system tried to throw between members of that community.

And part of what you see moving up to the revolution is that there is an early coalition of patriots that are working people, poor people, marginalized people, people without much of a national identity, or even without much of a racial identity, because they're working alongside people of all colors every day doing the exact same labor. And so, you get this really robust response from below to creeping British imperialism in the Americas.

And what happens round about the late 1760s, there are groups like the Sons of Liberty that start popping up and appropriating this revolutionary cause. And I say appropriating because they, the Sons of Liberty types are more... they're decidedly wealthier than their sailing counterparts, people like the Adamses, you know?

Emily Chamlee-Wright ([33:33](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Anthony Comegna ([33:34](#)):

Very well to do leaders. Those are the people that we come to think of as the Founding Fathers who came to the movement much later than the sailors and other working people. And Tom Paine is essentially a lot closer to the motley crew than he is to the people gathering in Philadelphia at the Continental Congresses. He's not very wealthy and he arrives in America as an immigrant right before the revolution starts to kick off really, and of course he plays the critical role perhaps in making it happen when it did.

But it's really the combination of these two coalitions, the so-called first Patriot Coalition of the motley crew and the second Patriot Coalition of the more genteel aristocratic Sons of Liberty types. And they do come together for a bit to make this revolution happen and make it successful. And then immediately in the 1780s, there is a battle between these two coalitions. A famous historian once said that the revolution was about two questions, shall there be home rule? And then who shall rule at home? And the coalitions came together to decide the first question, there definitely will be home rule, but who shall rule at home? Was very much open to fight. And that's exactly what happened throughout the 1780s, eventually leading to a victory, I would say, for the second coalition, the more genteel and aristocratic coalition.

And then once that happens, Tom Paine is kind of not only not forgotten so much as he's driven out of proper, respectable, American life. His heart takes him to the French revolution and like many other Americans of his ideological bent, he wants to see it successful and to topple monarchs all around the globe and he has these very grandiose plans of how people are going to accomplish that, but he's simply put too radical for the people who actually won the revolutionary settlement. And part of his radicalism is exactly that he says, "Look, the world is my country. Wherever people want freedom, wherever they're willing to fight for it, those are my people. And that's where I belong."

And I think as American history is going on, unfortunately, Tom Paine has become a forgotten Founding Father which lots of people have referred to him as, but he's a wonderful, wonderful, fascinating figure.

Emily Chamlee-Wright ([36:09](#)):

And that's really the value to me. The baseline value is to be reminded of that history and also it triggers an exercise of imagination that says, what if the American Revolution had broken in a slightly different path, towards much more of a Painite, the rights of man being the sole focus, would we have gone down the less liberal path identifying human beings as three fifths of human beings embedding slavery within the constitutional order, et cetera. Perhaps might we have avoided that pathway if we had had more of a Painite sensibility that I think was present, perhaps you disagree, but I think it was more present in the Declaration of Independence, but then we seem to take a different term that was not explicitly throwing all of liberalism out, but it certainly made compromises that I think we're still feeling the effects of today.

Anthony Comegna ([37:29](#)):

Yeah. I mean, I'm glad you brought up the declaration because many folks probably are aware the first draft included all kinds of screeds against slavery and the slave trade and called the King of England a pirate. Jefferson called them a Saracen, which was a term for Mediterranean Muslim pirates who would steal Europeans and take them in slave to the Middle East and North Africa. So the King of England is a Saracen pirate for stealing Africans and shipping them to the Americas. And it's interesting to me, I've always argued the American Revolution was in large part a mistake partially because Britain was already moving to abolish slavery, and exactly the combination of these two coalitions I was discussing, that aristocratic genteel coalition refused to allow Jefferson to put those lines in the final draft because they had their own project in mind.

Emily Chamlee-Wright ([38:28](#)):

So you asked me like what these readings led me to start thinking about, it's important to point out that I'm doing these readings right as the protest movement in the summer of 2020 is right at its peak. And so, one of the things that it raised for me, because you talked about the piece, talked about the motley crew who were protesting against impressment, protesting against illiberalism, illiberal treatment by forces that had lost legitimacy, there's such a resonance with that with respect to the loss of legitimacy of law enforcement in the moment in which I'm engaging in these readings. And it struck me that it does raise this question when you have the motley crew did engage in property destruction and violence.

And so, but it's framed as these are really the forerunners to the American Revolution. So it raises, I think, difficult questions like, what is the role of violent protest? What does the role of violent protest play in advancing liberalism? Is there a necessity of that? And if it does, is that a real problem for liberalism? I think it might be, but those are the sorts of questions that this raises.

Additionally, it raises as you are alluding to the question of, who gets to use violence, right? It's one thing if an aristocrat uses violence, it's a different thing if a motley crew uses violence. And who gets read into history and who gets read out of history? I think that those are some real start questions that when we marry those readings to this present moment, I think it's particularly rich.

There's a recent Atlantic article by Kellie Carter Jackson titled *The Double Standard of the American Riot*. And I happen to have read that piece right before reading the Linebaugh and Rediker article or chapter, and it resonates. Because I think we do need to be willing to address that question of what role does violence play in the advancement of liberal ideas? And is that role necessary? And is that problematic for us? And to the extent that there has been a role of violence in the form of the American Revolution, for example, have we somewhat whitewashed our treatment of violence in a way that makes us feel more comfortable with our history so that we can still think of the liberal project as being universally peaceful? Do we need to have some kind of closer examination of that question?

I know for my part, I like that a liberal society is a peaceful society. So if you're talking about value propositions of liberalism, that is a principle value proposition of liberalism, is that the more liberal your society, the more peaceful it is, and yet there is this history of violence and how we have a differentiated approach to who gets to be violent in the advancement towards liberalism, that I think that we, at least for me, personally, I need to examine more.

Anthony Comegna ([42:22](#)):

Thanks all for listening, especially my waxing on about how amazing Tom Paine is, and my nostalgia for the heyday of that first Patriot Coalition. I'm certainly right there with Paine, the world is my country and I truly wish this country had been able to serve as an asylum for all mankind, but things never really seem to go the way we wish.

Once again, my greatest thanks go out to Emily for doing such a bang up job, leading the discussion, it is real yeoman's work and definitely very draining. And it really was a great opportunity to work with her on a reading list like this, but more than that, I want to thank all of you out there who either attended this event or who come to anything IHS sponsors and make each one of those programs so stimulating and genuinely fun.

I don't think I've ever been to a bad IHS event in all, I don't know, eight years or so that I've been involved in them. And given the network of folks who attend, I seriously doubt it's even possible. And how could I close us out without even mentioning that for those of you who are working on projects that seem like a perfect fit for our Discourse Initiative, be sure to check out the website, theihs.org, and search Discourse Initiative for information on all the funding and programming opportunities available to you.

Have at it folks, and in the spirit of both this show and the initiative, keep the progress coming.