

NATIONAL AGENDA SPEAKER SERIES

CHRIS GARCIA

HOSTED BY Center for Political Communication,
University of Delaware with support from the
Office of the Provost and the College of Arts and
Sciences
Cosponsored by the Center for Black Culture

PARTICIPANTS

Dr. Lindsay Hoffman Director of National Agenda and Associate Director
of the Center for Political Communication,
University of Delaware

Chris Garcia Los Angeles, California native and first-generation
Cuban American, Chris Garcia is a comedian and
writer based in Los Angeles, California. He was
named “A Comic To Watch” by the *Mercury News*
in San Jose, California, “One of the 7 Funniest
People in San Francisco” by *7x7 Magazine*, and a
“Rising Comedic Star” by the *SF Weekly*.

Transcript of Event

Date: November 15, 2017 Place: Mitchell Hall, University of Delaware,
Newark, DE

DR. HOFFMAN: Good evening everyone. Thank you for joining us at the Seventh Annual National Agenda Program brought to you by the University of Delaware's Center for Political Communication with support from the Office of the Provost as well as the College of Arts and Sciences. Tonight's event is also cosponsored by the Center for Black Culture. Thank you. I am Dr. Lindsay Hoffman. I'm the Director of National Agenda and the Associate Director of the CPC. This year we've delved into the many divides facing Americans in 2017. Tonight is our final event of the year and we're going to examine cultural divides and how humor plays a role in crossing some of those divides. If you've been following us you know we've hosted a variety of nationally known speakers including former Vice President Joe Biden and the Governor of Ohio John Kasich. We've heard from Brianna Wu, a congressional candidate who has suffered from her experience with online harassment and used that to run for her campaign. We've heard from David Joy; he's an Appalachian novelist who talked to us and gave us a unique perspective on the American south in 2017. Asma Khalid, a Muslim reporter told us about her experience covering the 2016 Presidential campaign, and former Congressman Mike Castle and David Bonior gave us a look at how politicians have and can communicate across the aisle and work across the aisle. You can watch all of these talks at cpc.udel.edu/nationalagenda. They're well worth it. I promise. And if you appreciate these events please sign up for the Center for Political Communication email list which is located in the foyer outside before you leave and consider supporting the CPC so we can continue to bring you this high quality programming. Just go to cpc.udel.edu/support. Tonight's event is free

and open to the public like all of our National Agenda events to create an open space for thoughtful dialogue. I encourage audience participation both from the audience here in Mitchell Hall and via Twitter. Just tweet at the account @udelagenda to join the conversation. And we are live streaming so I'm hoping to hear from some folks live streaming as well. But, as always before we get started I'd like to remind the audience that civil and courteous dialogue is expected and is vital to the success of this program. It may seem like we're more divided today than at any time in recent memory but are still bound together as Americans and as human beings. 2017 brings us into an era of discord, racism, violence, and the seeming inability to communicate across differences. But it is possible. My students have shown me this semester that it is possible. That's what we do here. We demonstrate civil dialogue so you can see that politics isn't just cable news pundits on a split screen yelling at each other. We can communicate with each other. We can temper down the heat. We can abate the anger, and we can recede from hate. We can inspire curiosity. We can foster compassion. And we can offer real communication, real solutions for constructive communication. So, let's all agree to be candid but also respectful of each other's views. If you've been to our previous programs you know that we're a little more interactive this year. We're using a catch box, a microphone that we're literally going to toss back and forth throughout the audience and we'll have two students to facilitate that conversation. This year is also new for our Voices of the Divide Audio Essay Contest. It's examining the impact of a nation divided on UD students. Do you, as UD students, think America has become even more polarized? This is your opportunity to reflect on your personal experience of living in a divided society. Join the campus-wide conversation and

submit your essay by December 1st. That's coming up. Added bonus: cash prizes. So tonight our speaker is a standup comedian and writer who was born and raised in Los Angeles, California. Chris Garcia started his comedy career in the San Francisco Bay Area where he was named "A Comic to Watch" by the San Jose Mercury News, "One of the 7 Funniest People in San Francisco" by 7x7 Magazine, and a "Rising Comedic Star" by the *SF Weekly*. He's also the first American-born son of Cuban refugees. He moved back to LA in the summer of 2012 and he has appeared on numerous shows and podcasts including Comedy Central's "At Midnight", NBC's "Last Call with Carson Daily", NPR's "This American Life", the WTF podcast with Marc Maron, and one of my favorites, "2 Dope Queens". Most recently Chris was a new face at the 2016 Montreal Just for Laughs Comedy Festival where he was bestowed the honor of "Best of the Fest." As a writer Chris has worked as the editor for RooftopComedy.com, he's written for the 2015 CBS Diversity Sketch Showcase, he's contributed to numerous shows including the Comedy Central Roast of Justin Bieber, the MTV Movie Awards and the list goes on and on. Chris has also written and recorded music and he recently completed the National Hispanic Media Coalition's television writers program for the second time, as intensive scriptwriters' workshop that prepares Latino writers for success in network television. So, please join me on our last National Agenda night in welcoming Chris Garcia with a big Blue Hen welcome.

AUDIENCE: [Applause.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Hello, everybody. Hi, thanks for, thank you Dr. Hoffman. Well how about a round of applause for Dr. Hoffman, everybody? It's a pleasure to be here. You've had John Kasich, Joe Biden, and now me. Thank you. I love

this set. I feel like I'm about to give a TED talk about furniture.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: So, its chairs, we sit in them.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Why? Okay, no, here we go.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Um, thank you for the nice intro. I am -- my parents are from Cuba. One of my Cuban's aunt in Florida, okay. Are you Cuban? That's great. That's awesome. Do you guys know Cuba?

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Have you been? You've got to go.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: You got to go. Everyone's going. You got to go. Ride around in an old car. Smoke a cigar. Come on. Um. Gross, just kidding. Okay, ah --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: My parents are from Cuba and a lot of standup comics these days they get on stage and they make fun of their immigrant parents. You know what I mean? You always see that and you'll see someone just like kind of making fun of their parents like, my dad calls it a yamba use [sp.], isn't that funny. Ha, ha, ha, ha. My mom can't roll her; my mom can't say anything in English. Isn't that great? And, I think it's -- I don't like it. I think it's overdone. I think it's very rude. It's very hackneyed at this point and I think it's unfair. Because my dad has never gotten on stage and shit on me, you know?

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: My dad never once has travelled; he has not travelled the country and performed to half empty theaters --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- to make fun of me publically. My dad never once got on stage and he wasn't like, hey Rice, anybody have an American-born kid? Heh? No? Okay. I'm going to talk about it. Oh, my.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: My son Christian, he goes by Chris. Okay, what a bitch, you guys.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: You believe this guy getting on stage. Ooh, I'm Cuban. Wow. He doesn't look Cuban. He looks like he works at Trader Joe's or something.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: He a little skinny. He's worth a piece of crap, you know what I mean? Me and his mom, Martika [sp.], we're refugees from Cuba. Okay? In our 30s we moved to the United States. A year later, boop, Chris popped out, you know? I'm so excited. I'm so excited. He's my only American-born kid, my only son. He's my second chance. I'm like, oh, man, this is, he's going to be an astronaut one day, you know? And I am so excited I do everything for this boy. I sacrifice my life for this boy. I work blue-collar jobs, graveyard shift. I put him in a escuela privada [sp.], a private school. I had to get him tutors because he's stupid.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: He's a slow kid. You know, he came out a little under

cooked. You know what I mean?

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: You know, mom didn't heat, preheat the oven enough. But what are you going to do? He's my son, I love him. I say Christian, this is America. This is the land of opportunity. You can do for whatever you want. You can do forever you want. You're a good person. You pay your taxes. You don't mess around. You can do it. You can do it, you can do it, you can do it, you can do it. Chris goes to UC Berkeley for college. One of the best public universities in the United States and you want to know what he studied?

Anybody want to take a gander?

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: On what this dumb motherfucker studied? He studied poetry.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Poetry. Are you telling me I floated through shark-infested waters on a hump so this motherfucker can read Haiku's?

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: My dad never did that.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: He could've and he should've but he didn't.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: He's a good man. I was; my parents raised me in Los Angeles. A rough neighborhood. I lived on the corner of go raiders and fuck haters. I don't know if you know where that is.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: There's going to be some cussing here, guys. Ha, ha, ha.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: I went to a rough school. Our mascot was Cypress Hill and -
-

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: And, one day I got in one little fight and my mom got scared -
-

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- and she sent me to school in Manhattan Beach, California. I think you guys are familiar with Manhattan Beach. It's a very affluent beach, like a surfer town. It's all flip-flops and Adam's apples as far as the eye can see. It is just, just, Daniel Tosh everywhere.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: I call it Toshstralia [sp.] He could just -- and it was such a culture shock and it was a crazy part of my life because I was a sophomore in high school and my dad was out of a job and he couldn't, he; we went to like a cheap private school. He couldn't afford it anymore so he lied about where we lived so I could go to school in the good district because in LA it's not a great school district. So, and we had to lie about going to, living in Manhattan Beach. I don't know how we found another family with the last name Garcia in Southern California but we did it. And --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- I, ah, and so we lied about that. And to make matters worse -- this was tough -- my, my dad had to, my dad was convinced he lost his job because his English was not good so he went, he enrolled in the adult

English as a second language program at my new school during the day --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- when I went there.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: So I went to school with my dad and the, at this rich surf school where the most popular guy in my class was named Brogan Donohoe [sp.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Can you believe it? Brogan Donohoe. He ran for class president. His poster said, Brogan that's my slogan. Ha, ha, ha.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: He just walked around, he just like, he would just walk like this all the time. He just looked like, he looked like a, like if C3PO was holding like an invisible surfboard. He's just like, what, ha, ha, ha, ha. Just like, like the, like, his name was Brogan; Bro is the first syllable of his name. Hoe is the last one. Technically his name is Bros before Hoes. That's how much of a bro --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- this guy was. So it was just me, my dad, and a bunch of Brogans. My dad was not shy about the situation. Hey Chris. Hey stupid. You forgot your lunch. You don't forget your lunch, dummy.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Okay? You're not one of these rich kids. Don't forget where you come from.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Manhattan Beach. You come from Manhattan Beach.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: 1807 Matthews Avenue --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- Manhattan Beach, California. Also vote for Brogan.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: He has a very good slogan and you can't vote in Cuba so take advantage [indiscernible].

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: That's right. That's just something you kind of have to get used to or where I grew up I grew up -- where you grow up kind of determines; the zip code you grew up in kind of determines the rest of your life. My parents are very aware of that. They've always been very aware of that. When I was a little boy we had to lie about where we live so I could go to another school, a, a Catholic school. We're not Catholic. So we had to lie about living in another neighborhood to go to this school. I had to get baptized and at my baptism my parents not being Catholic but they have, they're like I guess we're supposed to bring your Godparents. And I was like, cool. And they're like you don't have Godparents.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: And I was like, word. And they're like, you're older sister and our mechanic are your Godparents.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: So my dad brought my 17-year-old sister and a 40-year-old grown mechanic man to church pretty much to lie to God for me to get a better education. And, ah, I was talking, I was telling some of these stories about

growing up and I was performing in Minneapolis recently, which is a lovely place. It's not very diverse. I was the only black guy there.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: I was the only black guy they'd ever seen. They're like, are you BJ Armstrong -- who's like from the '93 Bulls. Read a book.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: But, I was performing there and I was talking about some of these stories and growing up and everything that I've been through and I got heckled. And this is right before the election and I knew the climate was a little; the waters were a little murky. And I was talking about this stuff and this gentleman, I'll call him, he's kind of like a Trump-ass dude. That's right. He kind of looked like; he looked like, kind of like Santa Claus if he was wearing all cammo. You know?

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Just wearing cammo all of the time. Just wearing cammo. He wears cammo to Thanksgiving like he's hiding from gravy or something and --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- so this guy gets up and hears my, my jokes I'm talking about and he, he, he gets up and he's like, he's like shut up. Shut up you Mexican faggot. Wow. What-oh. Triggered. You know?

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: What is; this guy; what, I, what? Calling me a Mexican fag -- I had been talking about being Cuban and married for 35 minutes at this point. And this gentleman calls me that and he's like, you snowflake. You're a snowflake. And then he says where do you put the burrito? In your mouth or in

your butt? What? What is this guy talking about? He's not in his right mind and, you know, he got kicked out by security and I was so, what is wrong with someone to be, become so, what is wrong with someone to become so emboldened to yell some, that, just yell that to someone. This is my childhood dream to be a comedian. I grew up in a shitty situation. I've tried my best to live a good life. You know? To be called that? My parents are refugees from Cuba, okay? In real life. My father, while he was there he was studying to become a physicist to, to, and he was in the university and he was not a communist and because of that he was taken out of the university and he was put in a camp where he was put in solitary confinement and he pulled sugarcane with his bare hands for two years. He was beaten, he was spit at, he was tortured, he was given electroshock therapy. People would yell, the guards there would tell him, they're like, hey there's no Papa Dios, there's no God. There's only Papa Che and Papa Fidel. And they would spit on him. And he survived on dirty water and moldy food for two years. He is; he was 20 or 21 years old. He'd been, been married to my mom for like a year or two. My sister was two years old. And, by the time my dad got out he came home -- my mom has told me this story -- my dad came home and knocked on the door and my sister opened the door and didn't recognize who it was because he was unrecognizable at this point. After that my dad flees, he goes to Spain where for two years -- and he wasn't allowed to bring my mom or my sister -- he worked and he, he did any job he could. He worked on a tow truck. He worked as a handyman. He did some, he worked as a machinist. He did all of these things for two years to make enough money to get my family over to Spain where they lived for a couple of years. Then they made the jump -- they're like we're going to do this, we're going to come to the

United States. My dad came to America, right -- this was in the 70s -- and he was so excited. He was like, all right -- because he grew up in Cuba always looking at the, he was sit on his roof and listen to baseball games or he'd look up at the stars and he was like, I -- and it was just around the time where the space shuttle and like all of the NASA stuff was going on -- and he was like I'm going to work in aerospace. So he comes to Los Angeles where all the big aerospace companies are. He's a smart guy. He doesn't have the biggest degree. He got pulled out of school but he's like, I can be a machinist which is a decent blue-collar good job and he's looking for work in a machinist. He can't find any work. He tries to kill himself because he was so distraught that the dream was a nightmare immediately. Right? Shortly after that I'm born. He gets all pumped up. He's like, I got a second chance. Let's do this. He, you know, he finally gets jobs in Aerosmith -- Aerosmith, my dad was the lead singer of Aerosmith --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: My dad was Steven Tyler -- did I leave that out. My dad is Steven Tyler?

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: You know, he kind of looks like a hippy mom with a seven scarves on. And I left that part out of the story. That's not [indiscernible]. Okay. So --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- in aerospace and he gets a job. My mom gets situated. He comes to America and doesn't know anybody. He's poor. He's got nothing. We grew up in Englewood. Not the best place. He, very quickly somehow works hard, buys a house within five years. I don't know how you do that. I can't buy a

house ever I think. And, he works his ass off and he gets me in a school that's better than the area that we lived in and I wasn't the brightest kid when I was little. I had like learning disabilities and stuff like that, and I couldn't write the number two until like second or third grade and so my, I remember my dad took me to a, like a learning center -- not like a Kumon, do you guys know Kumon? It's like some Asian guy will throw chess pieces at your face until you get a perfect score on the SAT. Not one of those. We; Kumon was not in the budget. So, my dad took me to this place where this guy, and there was like some old, some guy in a lab coat sat me down on a Lazy Susan and spun me around for like a couple of minutes and then he would stop me and he would show me flashcards and I was supposed to like identify the things on the flashcards. I don't know why. I don't know why. And, like he was supposed to like reverse the poles of time or something and make me do the number two right or whatever but this place was too expensive and my dad was so hell bent on making me be good at school that he couldn't afford the learning center but this motherfucker my dad went to Home Depot and he made a Lazy Susan for me to sit on --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- and I was a fat kid. And we had a carpet. I was like; I was like a bag of leaves with little stick legs. I was like a little fat kid. So he made the stupid thing for me and I was so fat that it got stuck in the carpet. It couldn't even spin.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: So then my dad, and rather than taking me, I was like, he took me into the garage -- isn't that hilarious? This is the lengths that this man went for me that he made this Lazy Susan and then he took it out to the garage

and I always thought why didn't he do it in the backyard, you know, he could have done it in the backyard, it's like oh because we had like a fence you could see through and he, he was like a neighbor's going to call child protective services if they see like just spinning like I'm a Guantanamo detainee. Just like, where's the number two or whatever.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Anyway, he made this thing for me and I think, I don't know if it helped me to remember the number two but it, it helped me put a lot of things in perspective like the depth that my parents would go for me to be good at school. And I became better at school just so that my dad made like a Lazy Susan that's a thing that you put soy sauce on at the restaurant.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: He made this and I remember becoming like most improved in school. You know how they had that for like this spacey kid, like that would get that at the like, and so I like didn't, like I, I didn't get Honor Roll but I got most improved. And then I got most improved again. And I got most improved again which is not a real sign of improvement if we think about it --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- if you always have to improve. And so, eventually I became a good student but I always think about this. And so, when we, I went to, I was supposed to go to this, I went to this school that we lied about to, in a fancy neighborhood. I went there. I was really tough and it was, you know, I, I felt poor and dumb and you're a sophomore. It's a terrible time to transfer. But eventually I was like, okay, I found Model United Nations which I really loved. I really loved public speaking. I really loved talking about politics. I was like the

funny kid in Model UN where I'd dress up like Mr. Rogers and I'd change my clothes when I got to the podium and then spoke. I was an idiot. And --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- so, I'd do that and then I was like, oh, I'm good at school. I'm taking -- I started with Honor's Spanish class which was a breeze. I was a sophomore --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- in AP Spanish 5 and I was like, pfff, this is, I'm a genius. And then I started take, slowly I was like, oh, I'm in another Honor's class and another Honor's class and I was just around other kids that were thriving. They had all -- this was normal for them. This was very new for me. Until Model UN I didn't even know that, that I could go to college and it took for me to go to, I went to Georgetown on a trip to do Modeling UN. I went to Berkeley on a trip to the Model UN. I was like I can do this. And I was so excited to go to a big college and I found out that I couldn't because when I transferred schools to this new school for some reason -- that I chock it up to maybe my parents, you know, speaking with funny accents and coming to take me to the school to the adviser and dressed in like smocks from working in a factory and us being in a school that's not in a good neighborhood -- that I was put in remedial Special Ed classes the first year I was there and I didn't know it. The first year at, at this school I thought I was like a super genius. I was like I'm the smartest kid in the world but it just turns out that I was put in the slower classes. And because of that I couldn't go to a four-year college. So, I went to, I went to a local community college. I went there and I kicked ass for two years. I was like, I'm not going to stay, I'm not going to live this close to my parents. I'm outta [sic] here. I love

them but I'm outta [sic] here. And I studied and I got straight A's for two years. Did the Honors Program. I wrote about that shitty experience with being put in a remedial classes and I got into UC Berkeley. And at Berkeley I studied there and it was harder than I thought, ha, ha, and, but I was up for the, the challenge. I worked really hard and I had to drop out for a little while because my parents needed money and I got a job doing improv about the human brain for little kids. I would dress up in a brain costume and perform for like elementary school kids. And, I, I finally graduated after seven years of school. And, my father was so proud that he, you know when you graduate and you get like a fake diploma? You get like a, when, oh you guys don't know yet but you get up there they'll give you like a holding place diploma, just like a fake one --

DR. HOFFMAN: It's true.

CHRIS GARCIA: -- and, it's true right? Yeah, you get this fake diploma and then they'll send you a real one. You have to pay for it. It's kind of a rip-off.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: But, my dad took this fake diploma and he kept it. He folded it up and he kept it in his wallet for as long as I can remember and he was so proud and he would take it out and he would show it to people. And he would say here is my son. He studied science or something -- like he would change my major --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: But he, but he was very proud that I went to school. And, so this guy in Minneapolis has the gall to call me a snowflake? Like, maybe because I'm unique and I'm beautiful and I have ice running through my fucking veins.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: And this guy, where I put the burrito? In my butt or in my mouth? In my mouth, dude. Who puts a burrito in their butt?

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: I don't want to burrito butt-shame anybody. Don't get me wrong, after a couple of cocktails I'll put a [indiscernible] down there. But --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- certainly not -- ha, ha, ha -- but I eat the burrito in my mouth.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: That's all I want to say up top. Thank you for listening. Yeah.

AUDIENCE: [Applause.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: Thank you. Thank you so much, Chris.

CHRIS GARCIA: You're welcome.

DR. HOFFMAN: Um, pardon me. So I want to remind the audience and those who are watching live stream on udel.edu/udlive that you can tweet at us @udelagenda and your question could end up in the conversation tonight. But, I think one, pardon me, one of the most compelling things about you that, that really drew me to, to invite you to this conversation was not just the comedy, I love the comedy -- comedy is a great way to, to bridge some of these divides -- but you had a very unique relationship with your parents and particularly with your father and I'm, this is a tweet you posted last week that you were on This American Life with your father four years ago about a week ago and you said his

laugh at the end is how I will always remember him. I was wondering if you could tell us a little bit about your parents, what they were like, and especially your dad and your experience with him.

CHRIS GARCIA: Okay. I'm like, I'm going to cry. Ah --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: No, ah, thanks. Yeah, my dad is a great, just a real fighter. Just like very full of life, very smart man that was just like hell-bent on our family. Like he couldn't have cared about us more. He couldn't have fought for us more. Like, he was always like, I remember he was like an intellectual, like he could tell you about Celtic folklore, or figure out, he would do my science projects when I was a kid and I went to like the LA County Science Fair three years in a row for stuff I did not understand.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Like, he was just like, ah, he; there, there was an Exxon Valdez oil spill when I was a kid and my dad did a science fair, I think I was in third grade, and he was like, ah, it wouldn't have happened if the boat had an extra hull. And so he designed a boat that wouldn't have like leaked like that. And he was like; let's pretend you did it, or whatever.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: But he was like very caring like that. Also very tough. I remember; just full of; one time my, we were walking down the street on Thanksgiving and someone catcalled my sister and this guy was like just, it's like saying gross things in Spanish to my sister and he, there was like a fence between, there's like a, it was like his front lawn and there was a fence and my dad tried to get through the fence to like talk to the guy and the fence was locked

so my dad jumped over the fence and just clocked the guy and the guy fell. And my dad was like happy Thanksgiving and just like --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- kept on walking. So he was just like, he was a very loving, sweet man. And so this is in reference to my dad had Alzheimer's disease and one time early when he had it I was driving around with him and he started acting weird. And we knew, I knew that he had, he was a little loopy and that came with the disease. I didn't know the full scope of it. But, you know, he would forget his keys or sometimes he'd call me by my mom's name. Just stuff that happens at the beginning. But, I was on this drive that I've done a lot, many times with my dad driving from the beach to where we lived and he was acting very strangely and he just forgot who I was. And it was the first time he ever forgot who I was and I, it was so weird that I just, I don't know why, but I was like I need to record this for some reason. And I just recorded it and like a year or so later someone from This American Life had heard me, or had heard me on this WTF with Marc Maron podcast and they're like we, do you, we would like to do something with you and your dad and Alzheimer's and I was, do you have like the, and I told them stories and I was like, oh, yeah and then I have this tape. And so there's a segment on This American Life where I walk through the story of my dad forgetting who I was for the first time and it's like a very meaningful piece that, it's the thing I'm most proud of but my, like people from all -- I didn't know the scope to which this would become popular -- but people from all over the world like Australia, and China, everywhere were just like so moved by it and at the end -- so the story is that I'm driving around with my dad, he doesn't know who I am, we drive by my baseball field where I played baseball in like high school and he's

like, hey what's that thing? And I was like, oh, it's a baseball field. He's like, oh yeah, you play baseball? And I was like, yeah I played baseball. Like when you're a Cuban kid and your dad's Cuban, that's like what you got, you know?

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Its like baseball and mangoes basically, or whatever.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: And, so he was like, I was like, yeah remember I played.

And he was like, oh really? What position? And I was like, first base. And he's like, oh, wow. Lefty or righty? And like, he just totally forgot who I was and at the end of the drive I dropped him off at our house -- he didn't even know how to get to our house -- and he was like, wow, and he was just like thank you young man. Thank you so much. This is something I'll never forget for the rest of my life or something like that. And, then I'm like, Dad, it's, Dad it's me. It's me, Dad. And he was like; oh it's been you this whole time? Ha, ha, ha and he has this like cackle with me. And that's how the segment ends and it's just such a beautiful memory to have with someone. Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, so, you grew up in a Cuban American home with Cuban parents. When did you first realize that you were culturally very different from them?

CHRIS GARCIA: Oh, from them? Well, I didn't know, well, you know, you go to school and it just changes. Like, when I was a kid, like, you're like, you just grow up. And you're like, oh, I'm just living with my parents and stuff and then I remember the first time I realized I was Cuban was, like I didn't know, I just thought everyone was Cuban or that everyone's like the same thing. And, I was like a very blond child. I was like super blond if you can believe it. I was blond

until I was like five or six. And then going to school or being out at the park and people thinking my mom was my nanny. They're like is that Latino woman your nanny? And I was like nanny? What's that? They're like, that lady; it was like the Latino lady. And I was like, oh, what's, like, I basically did not know who I was. And then I went, oh yeah, I'm a, I guess I'm Latina or whatever. I'm Latino. And, and then going to school I just -- you know, your parents, my parents generation they want everyone to grow up to be like a macho kid, you know? And I, I use the word journal as a verb, you know? I'm not like --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- the most masculine person and my mom wants me to be Pitbull.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Like, she doesn't like how I dress. She's like I don't like how you dress. You dress like a teacher that no one respects.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: I'm like, Jesus. She's like you need to dress more Cuban. I was like what's more Cuban? She was like, like Pitbull.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: I was like, oh cool. A penis with sunglasses on.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: You want me to dress up like a bald cap in a tuxedo, you know? And, but I, I was just always, I was always a sensitive kid and then I just got, and I was like a crybaby kind of like my mom. And I was just emotional and my dad really hated it. And he was accepting of me but I was just not, I was just not the tough kid he wanted. I wasn't into using tools and stuff. And, but I guess

in high school when I got really into like performing and stuff like that I was like, oh I'm not like what they want me to be exactly. You know? Like I'm, they, they accept me but they, they don't want me to be a poet. I was talking earlier that I went to Cuba last year and I met my family for the first time. Like a lot, I have a lot of family in Cuba and my, my, my aunt was like your mother is so proud of you. She says you're a very successful journalist.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: And I've been doing standup comedy for 12 straight years.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: So, now she, she, I mean, they understand it more but there is like quite a divide between their expectations of me and what I chose to do with my life.

DR. HOFFMAN: Do you feel like your experience growing up as, as an American influenced them at all or did they kind of retain that Cuban identity?

CHRIS GARCIA: They've retained it. Yeah.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: They're older and you just can't, I feel like I can't change their generation. But I think they are more, I think a lot of it starts with food, you know? I'm like, Mom, do you want some Pho? She was like what's Pho?

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: I was like its like Vietnamese soup and she'll be like, no thanks.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: I'm like, Mom, it's delicious. And she's like, all right. And then she'll be, and she's like that was delicious.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: And it's, I feel like that's how it always was, like Mom, you want some Indian food and she's like, I heard it's spicy and it's like, it doesn't have to be spicy. And I feel like in my family that's like the gateway to get my mom to be more accepting of any culture or situation.

DR. HOFFMAN: But that makes a lot of sense.

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: Food.

CHRIS GARCIA: You're like, oh; my mom loves food so, yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: That unites us I think.

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.] I'm going to pull up another tweet. This is from last year after Fidel Castro, Cuba's revolutionary leader, died at age 90 on November 25th of last year. And you tweeted that you were dancing in the streets. What did his death mean for Cubans and for Cuban Americans?

CHRIS GARCIA: Well I can't speak for all Cubans.

DR. HOFFMAN: Of course.

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah. But for this Cuban and for my family I think, you know, my parents, there's, it's interesting. I was talking earlier that, like every five to ten years there's a different diaspora that comes from Cuba for different reasons. Every five or ten years there's like a whole different, you know, like, there's like, it's very different from generation to generation. I think my dad's generation had a really tough time where they were, you know, to be taken and put in the sugarcane field and abused and stuff like that. And like, I remember there's a story where my grandma, like, when my sister was like three they

changed the rules in like the rationing of how much milk you can get, give to a child and my sister, and my mom and sister, my whole family had been going to this bodega their whole lives and all of a sudden like the bodega guy was just like, he kind of, he knew it was in his best interest to be like a communist guy. And so he telling my grandma that they couldn't have milk anymore and just my grandma, my sister was like a little girl and she still remembers the force with which she destroyed that place. She just like threw everything around and just like when my sister was a little girl she, like my parents refused, in her generation they, you, you, to show your support for communism you had to wear like a red ribbon in your hair and my parents refused to let my sister wear a red ribbon in her hair. And so they would give candies, candy to the other kids and not my sister and like make fun of her and stuff like that. So, that generation, my parents suffered a lot. And when I went to Cuba they, they've all had different experiences in different generations but they suffered a lot as a result because of Fidel. So, because of that I felt like I was like oh, what a relief.

DR. HOFFMAN: Hum. Well, in the wake of, we've seen many mass shootings this year and in the past decade or so, and we see that a lot people are quick to blame immigrants, quick to blame Muslims, quick to blame foreigners. What goes through your mind every time you hear about a mass shooting?

CHRIS GARCIA: I first, I, I, this is maybe not cool to say but I want to know if it's a white guy or not. I'm like is it a white guy or not. I mean, I'm always like sad and I'm always like this is terrible but like if it's one of us it's crazy. It's like we have to get them all out of the country. And, of course, first I get sad for the people and I want to make sure everyone's safe and I think it's such a tragedy

but I think it'll, it'll like, we'll all get swept together if we're, people of color always, like, oh, you know, you can't, we got to close the doors.

DR. HOFFMAN: Why do you think people make assumptions like that? What, what is going on in America today that, that people are quick to make that kind of judgment?

CHRIS GARCIA: I think maybe for some people they don't get to experience what it's like to live around those people. You know? Maybe the only time they see a Latino or something is on the news and, or like on TV where they're always like a criminal. You know? It's never, we were talking earlier today, it's like never anything aspirational. It's never like a, a, hey you, you remember that Latino doctor sitcom? No.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Like, it's always like it's a drug dealer that chops up bodies or like it's a mechanic that also sells drugs or something. Like, it's never in a positive light and I think that would give some people a kneejerk reaction to just like associate bad things with our cultures, yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: That's interesting. Well, you know, I can't go without talking about the, the many allegations of sexual misconduct that we've been hearing about in the entertainment and comedy industries and, and a lot of my students have been asking questions about this. I'm curious if you've witnessed any, this kind of discrimination and is this --

CHRIS GARCIA: What do you mean witness what type of discrimination? Sorry.

DR. HOFFMAN: Sexual assault, sexual discrimination in comedy and if this is something unique to comedy and would, would certain comedians be, I guess,

would it change comedy if we sort of brought to light all of these issues that, that many men have engaged in?

CHRIS GARCIA: Well, I think that it's really unfortunate the way men in general and in comedy have treated women for years. And, whether it's something that's blatant like its sexual harassment and stuff or sexual abuse but also in these like smaller versions like just a comedy lineup like if you watch a show, if you go to any comedy show it's like ten dudes and maybe a lady, you know? And so, there's all sorts of discrimination from top to bottom whether it's of the sexual nature or just any, when it comes to inclusion. And I think, I mean ratting these guys out that they're doing terrible things is correct. It's like you can't do that. Like, what are you doing? It's like morally not cool.

DR. HOFFMAN: Do you think it's unique to comedy and the entertainment industry or is it something more widespread?

CHRIS GARCIA: No, I think it's everywhere. Like I talk to my wife who, you know, she has an office job and it's just like the small, even the micro aggressions have to go. There's like these small latent things where like hey you should smile more. They're like why don't you wear makeup? You look nice. And there's not a real place for it I don't think. I think it just, even that just assumes a, a power dynamic that shouldn't exist anymore. Like, you know? You just shouldn't be able to talk about how someone looks in a place. Or tell them how to act --

DR. HOFFMAN: Um-hum.

CHRIS GARCIA: -- and behave like you want them to and you, you can't have that power on people.

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, this brings something else up about comedy is that

there's sort of this myth that comedians sort of come from this dark childhood. That in order to be a successful comedian you have this like dark background. Is that true and are you defying that myth because you seem to have grown up in a very happy household? Are you proof that it's a myth that you have to come from a dark childhood to be good at comedy?

CHRIS GARCIA: No, I wouldn't say I came from like the, I had like loving parents and stuff but I was like a latchkey kid. Like I spent a lot of time alone. I was like, my sister moved out when I was a little boy and I was real sad about it. I was like a sad kind of lonely scaredy-cat kid and so, and like, since my sister was older and moved out I became like an only child and all of this stuff. And I think if I think about it I was like oh, of course I want to get in front of people and feel adoration and attention. Like it comes from a source and I feel like that is like, I could see why people with dark childhoods or sad childhoods aspire to be a comedian. But I don't think it's necessary. Like I think with some of these like recent things that have happened like, you know, Louis C.K. I, I used to really like his standup and stuff but a lot of comics are just like maybe gross losers, you know --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- that never got, like, were just kind of in the corners, in the periphery area of everything and then they become popular and rich and the center of attention and finally they get around women or anything like that and they totally abuse it. And I think that's, you can't do that. I think that's really shitty. Or you're just like, just this gross guy urrrgh. This is how you treat girls, baah. It's like grow up man, that's not, that's not cool.

DR. HOFFMAN: All right. I agree. That's not cool.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: So, we've been doing some polling, public opinion polling around our National Agenda issues this semester and so we just released some polling yesterday about American's perceptions of things like Donald Trump's support for the wall, or wanting to build the wall between the United States and Mexico and unsurprisingly if you look, take a look at the graph here Democrats and Republicans differ dramatically in their support for this, this wall. How, how do you communicate to both Democrats and Republicans who are seemingly so divided about the issues facing immigrants and refugees in this country? How do you help them understand some of the common issues that, that are faced by immigrants and refugees?

CHRIS GARCIA: Oh, well, that is so crazy to me. Like, first of all, it just doesn't make a, it's more of a symbol of hatred. I feel like that. Like, people will get around anyway. It's just like, just like stay out Mexico and it's like such crap. I think, I don't know how people are going to change. Maybe an open dialogue. I don't know if that'll help but I think people are set in their ways and it's really unfortunate in this country and some people just scapegoat the new guy. Like my family, say you're someone and you live in the middle of the country, you're, you know, your job doesn't exist anymore, like, you're frustrated, you're poor, you're broke and you're like well let's take it out on the Mexicans. You know? And I don't think that's exactly fair. Like, we're all trying to support our families. We're all, like my dad worked in an industry where he, his job became obsolete. I feel like they're, they have more in common. Like a coal miner and my dad have more in common than like sometimes a coal miner and his own neighbor, you know? Like we're just people that are trying to make due for our families and

I don't know if it's a, a, a better leadership from the top to open these types of discussions or what. But, I mean, I don't have a solution for this but I think its, its dark times but I, I hope we can swing it around. On my end what I could do is, like I was talking about it earlier, is to create entertainment and content that is more aspirational, that humanizes and normalizes what it's like to be Latino personally, to you know have a, a leading role or write, to drive the narrative more. Because so far the narrative has just been we're just the help. You know? We're just here to help you. We're a nuisance. We're illegal, a term you shouldn't use to describe a person. It's a term that should be described an action, you know? And, just to, more shows like we were talking about it earlier like the Mindy Project or Master of None --

DR. HOFFMAN: [Indiscernible].

CHRIS GARCIA: -- Insecure --

DR. HOFFMAN: Yeah.

CHRIS GARCIA: -- Atlanta, stuff like that where it just normalizes our experiences and shows us just like regular people, not just pests on society.

DR. HOFFMAN: I think that's a really good point. I do have one other poll finding from our recent research and then we'll jump into a couple of quick rapid-fire questions and then some questions from the audience. So, this a chart demonstrating, and this poll was just conducted over the past few days, age differences in perceptions of trust or distrust towards different types of foreign people in the United States, documented immigrants, undocumented immigrants, and refugees or those seeking asylum in the United States. And, I was surprised and interested to see that there's a really clear relationship between age group and trust of these other people. You know, when you ask about trust it's, it's

really about seeing the humanity in another person or in another group of people and what we see here is that young people 18 to 29-year-olds are much more likely to say they trust these groups of people of course documented immigrants trusted more than others but, but we're seeing young people trusting refugees --

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: -- like, like your parents, and, and illegal or undocumented immigrants more so than older generations. So, what do you predict is going to happen from here on out? We now have millennials as the largest voting bloc in the country. Are we going to begin to see some change in perceptions of refugees and immigrants and, and people who come from foreign countries?

CHRIS GARCIA: I certainly hope so. I think it would be nice. I think younger people are more open to situations, more open and hopeful and, yeah, it would be like, we're not the devil, you know? And we're, like in, you know, at universities you get to be around people that are different than you and like in big cities and stuff in like Los Angeles -- I lived in the Bay Area and it's so diverse as is New York is so diverse and just like people that are open to that diversity and not just -- yeah, I think, I, I mean I hope. There, there's a lot of millennials here, it's like a lot of college kids, you know? You know, and like you're all --

DR. HOFFMAN: Yeah.

CHRIS GARCIA: -- stay --

DR. HOFFMAN: College kids.

CHRIS GARCIA: -- stay hopeful and bushy-eyed --

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- or bushytailed. Like, it's important, yeah. Um. Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: Okay. So I think that's, that's an interesting finding there in

terms of how young people perceive people coming from different countries. You know, I'm a great granddaughter of immigrants. I know a lot of people in the audience, we come from immigrant families and that's part of what makes up the fabric of the United States and so, I, you know, I think the dialogue could change if, if millennials are sort of open to thinking about these things in different ways. Okay. So, we have a few minutes. I'm going to do a couple of rapid-fire questions.

CHRIS GARCIA: Sure.

DR. HOFFMAN: So, give me maybe two or three words in response to some of these. Maybe expand on them if you feel you need to. Some of your favorite things about comedy? I'm a big comedy nerd, I love comedy. I always bring a comedian into these conversations. Who was your favorite comedian growing up?

CHRIS GARCIA: Eddie Murphy.

DR. HOFFMAN: Eddie Murphy.

CHRIS GARCIA: Um-hum.

DR. HOFFMAN: Why?

CHRIS GARCIA: He's wild.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: He's wild. When you're a little kid and you see a guy in a purple jumpsuit and you're like what the hell is this? And, you know, some of his material hasn't aged as well as others but I just really love the energy that he had. Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: What was the first comedy album you ever bought?

CHRIS GARCIA: Um, it was a, well my parents have these Cuban albums of this guy Alvarez Guedes who was a great comedian, over 40 albums, and but as a kid I had my sister's Wild and Crazy Guy by Steve Martin --

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- which I really liked.

DR. HOFFMAN: Did you listen to George Carlin growing up?

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah, but not until like junior high and high school. When I was a little kid I was like Steve Martin, you play a banjo and you put an arrow through your head and that's comedy. Yeah.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: Did, did George Carlin influence you at all?

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah, I think so. He's --

DR. HOFFMAN: Because you like the cursing.

CHRIS GARCIA: I, yeah, I guess I curse --

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- I don't know. Yeah, I liked, you know, when I started reading more and getting more into school and studying English and stuff like that I loved -- you know, Carlin has an obsession with language and picking it apart and word, wordplay like that and I think that influenced me too. Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, and so I'll go to, I'll jump ahead then because you have a background in poetry and creative writing. What is your best metaphor for where we're at in 2017 right now?

CHRIS GARCIA: Ugh, gosh.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: That's and easy one. You mean like a garbage fire or something?

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: [Laughter.] A garbage fire?

DR. HOFFMAN: A dumpster fire?

CHRIS GARCIA: A dumpster fire, yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: Yeah. Well, what's the funniest thing about what's happening in the United States right now in 2017?

CHRIS GARCIA: These are very tough questions. Let's see. Oh, man, I, I can't stop loving a, like a just a terrible typo.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Like if someone gets really mad and they're like, ugh they're idiots and they spell they're wrong. It still cracks me up every time.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Like, ah hah, and just, I don't know why it's such a mean catty thing but just, yeah, that really gets me.

DR. HOFFMAN: I saw something on Facebook today that was, was making fun of people, it said, oh people on social media they'll never be in a spelling bee and it was like they misplaced a comma --

CHRIS GARCIA: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: -- and then it was like or a grammar bee or like, you know? So, yeah, no I get it. So, the final question before I, I toss it to the audience,

literally I'll toss it to the audience -- and I'm going to ask Katie and Sirandou if you're ready to go back and get the, the catch box -- Robin Williams actually called your comedy fearless, funny, straight and from the heart. Can you tell me a little bit about what that was like? Did you meet him? Did you talk with him? How did he, how did he interact with you? How did he know what your comedy was like?

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah, I did a going, when I lived in San Francisco I did a big going away show because I was moving to Los Angeles and my home club is the San Francisco Punch Line which is a club that I, I really loved. It's my favorite club in the whole world. And, I invited a bunch of friends to do it and I, I'm friends with -- do you know Bobcat Goldthwait?

DR. HOFFMAN: Um-hum.

CHRIS GARCIA: We're like friends --

DR. HOFFMAN: I love him.

CHRIS GARCIA: And Bobcat was in town so I texted Bobcat and I was like, hey will you do my show as a surprise guest? And he was like of course. So it's before the show and I'm standing like in the back, like behind the, the club and Bobcat walks up with Robin Williams because they're best friends. So, and I, he didn't tell me and I was just like oh, hi. And, Robin, I just jokingly, I was like do you want, want me, want me to give you some time like five or ten minutes and he was like that would be great. And I was like woo, Robin Williams is going to do a set like on my show. And so, we go back, we're like in the green room and I'm talking and I talked about how it was my big going away show and all of this stuff and he was like cool and I look out into the crowd and my therapist --

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- is like sitting in the front row.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: My therapist has never seen me do comedy. I'm like, I'm like, I turn around and I go, huh, and Robin's like what's going on? I do a terrible impersonation. But he's like what's going on and I'm like my therapist is in the front row and he goes oh shit. [Laughter.] And he was like what are you going to do? And I was like I don't know. And he was like, well figure it out. And, so I was just like thinking about it and then Robin before his set was just like puttering back and forth and he was like nervous before his set. And, he's like, he has this like sweet thing that he does sometimes, like, if you've seen him in movies like sometimes he'll like he'll do this thing where he rocks back and forth and it's like really endearing. And he was like rocking back and forth and he like walked and I was like, I was are you all right and he's like it never goes away. It's like the jitters never go away. And I was like, whoa, this is like a comedy legend and he's nervous and he's like pacing in this small area and he's like, you know what's really good I could pace in the smallest of areas. And then he just started like --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- he like starts pacing like behind this little thing and then it was really cool. And so, he was like I don't know how end and then Bobcat was just like end with a dirty joke.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: And so he started his set and then he ended with a dirty joke and it was really fun. And then I was going to follow him but I was like I'm not going to follow Robin Williams. So I pulled one of my friends out of the crowd and I was like can you do five minutes please? I am like not a superhero. I'd like

a comedian friend of mine to take the bullet. He did. And then I did the set. It was a very emotional set where I talked about living in San Francisco and why I was moving, it was to help out my dad who had dementia and all of this stuff. It was very heartfelt and I felt like it was one of the first times I actually -- it was seven years into it but I felt like it was the first time I just let it all really fly. And it was really, it felt cathartic and great. It felt like everything I had worked for, for seven years, and doing standup. And I leave the stage and like Robin's right there and he like, he's like that's, and then he said that quote, he was like that was beautiful and, and --

DR. HOFFMAN: He said that to you?

CHRIS GARCIA: He said that to me and then I gave him a hug and it was like one of the, just probably the coolest moments in my whole life. And for someone like that who was like such a real, just a comedian, a comedy legend, but also a good person. It was really incredible. Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, thank you for sharing that.

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: All right. So, have I got my catch box people? My special handy assistants. We've got Katie and Sirandou. So --

CHRIS GARCIA: I've been dying to see this thing in action.

DR. HOFFMAN: Yeah. This is pretty cool. So --

CHRIS GARCIA: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: -- what's going to happen is you just raise your hand and one of my trusty assistants will toss the box to you. It's a microphone so you can just speak right into it and ask your question and you can toss it right back to one of my two assistants here at the front. I sound like a magician, like, oh my two

assistants with the magic box. [Laughter.] So, first question for our esteemed guest? Yeah, right in the front here.

CHRIS GARCIA: [Laughter.]

Q: All right, so --

CHRIS GARCIA: [Laughter.] That's really, that's really funny.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

Q: Wow, that's pretty loud. But --

CHRIS GARCIA: [Laughter.]

Q: -- I guess a lot of TV now, especially like political comedy, like some people say like affects people or actually reaches them sometimes on a like deeper point than some of the news does and in some ways they do a better job of calling out like lies and falsehoods and stuff. So I just was wondering what you thought about that.

CHRIS GARCIA: And I think its true when it's done, like, there's ha, ha, that's so funny.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Ah, ha, ha, ha. There's a great, great serious question and then you're like --

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- you take the beach ball.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: I think it's true if it's well done. I think some people make

hackneyed jokes about Trump and be like you know he looks like a mango or whatever or, or like --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- just make fun of how he looks. But then there's people like Samantha Bee and John Oliver and stuff that are like really incredible satirists that think about things on a deep level and kind of just like, they'll make about, they'll make you think about stuff in a different way and also their, some of their pieces are so thoroughly researched, it's incredible. And to be able to come at something with like facts and a strong point of view like that I think is important and, you know, could very well educate. Sometimes when I watch John Oliver -- I don't know if you guys watch This Week Tonight -- or like I'll look through like HBO and like I'll flip through HBO Go and see if I've missed a bunch of John Oliver shows and I'll be like what do I want to learn about today because I always feel like he's doing some sort of expose or something. On a different level there's that show like Adam Ruins Everything --

DR. HOFFMAN: Um-hum.

CHRIS GARCIA: -- that I think is a really good show that's very thoroughly researched and it'll kind of make you, yeah, think about things that you've assumed for a long time. Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: Do you think that people are beginning to turn to a comedy, late night comedy, and other things to learn something rather than just be entertained?

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah, I think with certain shows like the Daily Show and stuff like that for sure. There's other shows where you're like okay it's just like another late night show. But I think there's people that, you know, if there's especially if

it's a good speaker or stuff like I'll always turn in to the Daily Show and watch it.
Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, you and I both grew up -- we discovered we're the same age -- we both grew up with a very different media environment. I mean, I feel like now none of my students are watching the same programming. They're all watching entirely, they're living entirely different media lives.

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: They're understanding of what's happening, not just in the news but more broadly is, is just so disparate from each other and I wonder how comedy might bring some of those ideas together. Like is there -- I feel, to me, again, comedy nerd that, that comedy has this way of putting us all in the same room, on the same page together and I just wonder if there's, there's something that, if you think we're at a kind of like a turning point where comedy could play a really important role in uniting people in this period where we feel so divided from each other?

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah. There is a bunch of like mixed media, the media is all over the place and people aren't always in the same thing but the stuff, the real, like the bangs some people but it will like will always bubble to the surface.

You'll, it'll always reach people whether it's like, even if it starts like as a video and then it turns into a meme --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Like it'll get to you somehow. Or like through hearsay and like that Trump tweet from last week where he goes after Kim Jong-un --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: You know? And I think it has like 500,000 likes or

something.

DR. HOFFMAN: The short and fat one?

CHRIS GARCIA: The short and fat one. I forgot the exact tweet where he's like --

DR. HOFFMAN: Short and fat.

CHRIS GARCIA: -- he's calling me old but I'm not calling him short and fat but he does. But I feel like even liberal people were like, ooooh bah bah bah. Like --

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: That was a good one. You're an idiot but that was a good one. And --

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- I think that was a way that he almost reached across the aisle. And you're like, I thought it was terrible but like, people were like, oh that's funny. But, I think so. I mean, I mean, it's tough because it also kind of backfires. When people are like, oh well Jon Stewart and John Oliver and Colbert were coming together and then they're like well the coastal elites feel this way but what about us in the middle of the country, or whatever. Like, it kind of, it's hard to tell because like there's a back, you just, it's such a yin and yang. It goes both ways so hard.

DR. HOFFMAN: Yeah.

CHRIS GARCIA: But I think, I, you know, when I see Elizabeth Warren tell a joke I always crackup and I love it, you know? I'm always like, oh what a cute, that's such a cute joke.

DR. HOFFMAN: She tells jokes?

CHRIS GARCIA: Sometimes she'll have like --

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- a nice little like, she's like riffing up top and --

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- I'm always like ah, that's so funny.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: But if she punched it up I think she could really --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: So maybe we need more not just more comedy about politics but more comedy in --

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: -- our politics.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Well it's already, I mean it's a big joke right now so -- ha, ha, ha.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: All right. Another question from the audience please. Raise your hand.

ASSISTANT: [Indiscernible.]

Q: Nice. A little loud, that's weird. Okay. So, you use comedy to talk about serious topics and like political aspects and all of that. This is slightly morbid, but like by the time your career is over --

CHRIS GARCIA: Humph.

Q: -- what do you hope to like have accomplished with your career? Like, do you hope to reach greater, like, do you want the rich and the fame of just like the comedy, or like are you trying to like reach people more in terms of like the political aspects and like all -- like what -- yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: What legacy do you --

Q: Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: -- want to leave?

Q: Like at your funeral. What do you want people --

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

Q: -- to say about you?

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: [Laughter.] I want people to laugh. I want people to go nuts at my -- I want my funeral to be a party.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: But, I think, you know, I don't have a huge political agenda. I'm actually; I'm not a big political comedian as you could tell by my very caveman answers that I have. I'm like, Trump's a bad guy. Ah. Like I'm not an expert but I would like to impart something to people like me that grew up on the fringes marginalized parts of society. I would love to leave a legacy where they feel a sense of belonging. I think that would be like a great gift to be able to give people. So I'd be like, you have parents that you know maybe they speak funny

or they eat funny food or whatever and it's like who your, you belong to. I think that's an important thing that I would like to pass on. Yeah.

AUDIENCE: [Applause.]

DR. HOFFMAN: Thank you.

CHRIS GARCIA: Well, thank you.

AUDIENCE: [Applause.]

DR. HOFFMAN: I think that's well deserved.

CHRIS GARCIA: Thank you.

DR. HOFFMAN: Um, um, I have a, a daughter and I'm sure she thinks I'm weird in many ways. So, I'm hoping she still feels like she belongs in, in many ways.

CHRIS GARCIA: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: I've gotten a few questions and this one comes from Twitter about performing on college campuses. So a lot of standup comedians have said nope, not doing it, it's too PC, it's too politically correct. Are audiences too sensitive or are they right to call out performers on in, on offensive jokes or potentially racist jokes?

CHRIS GARCIA: Um, you know, I think a lot of this, the problem that like comedians like Seinfeld's come out and talked about and how colleges are too PC and stuff like that and I think that's not it. I think there's just such an age gap between us that sometimes it falls on deaf ears and it's a little frustrating. And like, like, like kids today maybe don't know what Alf is. Like I knew Alf or something. So, you have a joke about Alf, no one laughs, you know?

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: You're like who, who's Alf? You know? And it's like

frustrating and sometimes you perform in --

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- see you're trying to explain Alf to, you're like --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: 70, yeah.

CHRIS GARCIA: Alf was like this Muppet with a, from another planet. It was the 80s. It --

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- was stupid.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: But there's like, there's an age gap and it's just weird when an old man comes to talk to you about Alf or has gross sex jokes or something.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: It's just like not always the time and place for it. Like, in the comedy club you're like okay people are of all ages and stuff and maybe drinking and stuff but on a college campus its like read the room. Don't --

DR. HOFFMAN: There's no drinking --

CHRIS GARCIA: -- be a weirdo.

DR. HOFFMAN: -- on a college campus.

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah. There's not.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: That's what I've heard about this school.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: The driest school --

DR. HOFFMAN: So it's --

CHRIS GARCIA: So --

DR. HOFFMAN: -- it's a tougher crowd?

CHRIS GARCIA: I, well sometimes. Sometimes when you're performing at a college -- I've performed at a college before where you're like you perform at noon and it's in the middle, it's like five hours north of Minneapolis, it's at noon, there's 15 kids there and there's like that's it. And then you're like this is not ideal and your standing on top of like a lunch table --

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- as a stage.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: And it sucks. You know? And it's not cool. And it's not a full room. And so it's frustrating to go to a college sometimes if it's not like well attended or people don't know who you are and stuff like that it could be difficult. In terms of being PC and stuff, it's just like you know it's like what I was talking about, like I really liked Eddie Murphy and, and but I would go back and I look at his act the stuff that was acceptable in the 80s people have progressed and it's not, you know, like it's pretty homophobic, it could be like low key racist sometimes and I think we're beyond that. And so comedy, some comics from an older guard that ascribed to that will come and try to present that to the next generation and it's falling on deaf ears,. And it's, you know, that's correct.

DR. HOFFMAN: Are there some really outstanding up and coming millennial comics that you think have really got a feel for what this generation is, is

witnessing and what they're feeling?

CHRIS GARCIA: Oh yeah. There's a really great comic, comedy coming right now. There is I think Solomon Georgio [sp.] -- I don't know if you know him -- but he's out of Los Angeles. He's really funny. He happens to be gay and Ethiopian. He's really good and Jo Firestone out of New York.

DR. HOFFMAN: Right.

CHRIS GARCIA: Oh, you're right in this -- you're a real comedy nerd.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- out of New York. She's --

DR. HOFFMAN: You have ideas for next [indiscernible] --

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah. Oh, you should --

DR. HOFFMAN: I've heard of Jo Firestone, yeah.

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah, Joe Firestone so good. Aparna Nancherla if you --

DR. HOFFMAN: Yes.

CHRIS GARCIA: -- know her. She's so good. John, John Mulaney is not a millennial but he's great.

DR. HOFFMAN: They like him though --

CHRIS GARCIA: You like John --

DR. HOFFMAN: -- they ask me --

CHRIS GARCIA: -- Mulaney. Oh, he's --

Q: [Indiscernible.]

DR. HOFFMAN: Oh, he is.

Q: Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: He's going to be here?

Q: [Indiscernible.]

DR. HOFFMAN: All right. Well --

Q: [Indiscernible.]

DR. HOFFMAN: Stephanie at CPC will have to post that when he's going to be here. [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah, Jo Firestone, Ramón Rivas. There's like a --

DR. HOFFMAN: Do you --

CHRIS GARCIA: -- or Hari Kondabolu. Do --

DR. HOFFMAN: Um-hum.

DR. HOFFMAN: -- you know him? He's really great.

DR. HOFFMAN: All right. I'm taking too many notes. Another question from the audience. Maybe over on this side of the room? Anyone want to tell a joke to see how well it goes over?

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Oh you've got a question back there.

DR. HOFFMAN: We've got one way in the back here, Sirandou. Oh my goodness. Are you going to try it?

CHRIS GARCIA: Are you going to do it. I think you should

ASSISTANT: [Indiscernible.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- I think you should just try it.

DR. HOFFMAN: You want to try it?

ASSISTANT: I'll try it.

CHRIS GARCIA: Oh.

DR. HOFFMAN: Nice.

AUDIENCE: [Applause.]

Q: I just want to know what you're doing for Thanksgiving.

CHRIS GARCIA: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Ah, I'm going to Japan with my wife. Tomorrow we leave --

DR. HOFFMAN: Oh.

CHRIS GARCIA: -- and we're going to spend a couple, like a week in Tokyo.
Yeah.

Q: Cool.

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: It's very patriotic.

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah, very patriotic. [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Just like the original.

DR. HOFFMAN: Yeah. The original Thanksgiving.

CHRIS GARCIA: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: It's very, you know --

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.] Thank you. You can, you can, can you toss it
all the way back?

Q: Can you catch it?

ASSISTANT: I'll try.

DR. HOFFMAN: All right.

CHRIS GARCIA: Oooh.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: Come on folks, other questions? Yes, right here in the

middle. Sirandou, it looks like you're up again.

ASSISTANT: Oh, okay. Okay, let's try.

DR. HOFFMAN: You can do it. You can do it. See?

CHRIS GARCIA: [Laughter.]

Q: I got it.

CHRIS GARCIA: [Laughter.]

Q: Um, okay, so this is more of like a gross, well it's not really like a personal question but I'm also an immigrant. I was born in Ecuador. I came here like 11 years ago. My parents did, my dad is the same story as yours. Like the story with your dad. The hardworking, did everything, don't know how the hell he managed to do all that but did it. And so, you know, I struggle a lot with a lot of like the rhetoric that's going on right now in the political and social climate regarding immigrants whether its undocumented, illegal or documented immigrants. So I was just wondering if you have any advice on how to cope with that or how to handle a situation like that where you're, where you have somebody you know saying racist or troubling remarks at you or around you and like what in your opinion is a good way to diffuse that in that situation but also cope with it in your own like self?

CHRIS GARCIA: Um, well I cope with things with humor. So, if that happened to happen, the thing that happened in that set happened to me in the comedy club so I just like made fun of the guy, you know. And that's how I dealt with it. But I think humor in general. Also, kind of being proactive, you know? I just, I've just been more active. Like, I just, I, I don't have a ton of money but where I can I contribute to causes that I believe in. Um, I'll just like I'll listen to my wife more. Like, not that I don't listen to her --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- but like the, conversations that we've never had. Like, and I was like do you, do people hit on you at work? Like, in a way that's not like me being jealous -- it was like who hits -- it's just like --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- just listening to her stories and stuff like that and just like on like a very micro level and people in my life and just like having these types of discussions and listening to her and just having in terms of, I, I also cope with it, yeah I put it in my work but also to just have the, the confidence to work on it that I am a contributing member of society and I'm living my life in a way that I think is special and unique. And to kind of, and I am, um, pushing my parents legacy forward and their, you know, my family's legacy in this country and just keeping my eyes on that and just like shining on the other crap. You know? You know?

DR. HOFFMAN: I think it's a common theme that we've heard throughout this semester is just being open to listen to other people's stories and to not be so judgmental right off the bat. Um, I think that so many of us are so protective and defensive right now in a period of, of great divides that we're facing in this country. And sometimes you just need to hear a good story and listen to another person's story. So just ask them about themselves. So, let's open it up to another question from the audience. Come on. All right, there's one way over here. Okay, first over here and then we'll hop way over to the other side, Katie.

ASSISTANT: Okay, I'm going to [indiscernible.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Wow.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.] Sirandou's getting a workout.

CHRIS GARCIA: [Indiscernible] its [indiscernible].

Q: You are [indiscernible]. How do you see comedy changing? You talked about being politically correct. There's some issues, politics for [indiscernible] have a pretty good run on political jokes, things like that. In your writing and in your comedy how do you see you progressing? Do you kind of follow a trend of we have a, a president we can kind of pick at and we're going to run that until he's not there anymore and then pickup something else? Or do you try to lead your, your writings and your, your standup act by picking other issues? You know, your, you, you pick on, well I don't say, I don't mean pick on, but, you know, you use your family, you use your background. Do you see your political or you see your writings and your comedy starting to evolve into another direction? And do you see other comedians doing the same thing?

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah, I, I think so. I think it's just, it comes with the times and I was talking to a class, a class earlier about when I first started I would do kind of like hackneyed jokes about my family. And I would actually make fun of how they talked. Like I would joke about like my parents learned English through watching TV and movies so after they watched Jurassic Park I was like what'd you think Dad and he was like welcome to Jurassic Park. And --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- what'd you think Mom and she was like awwwk. And then, I like make fun of them, but it was like, in a way it was like punching down. I was punching down at my parents who had done all this stuff to me. Do you know what I mean? All, all this stuff for me and I just matured as I went along and I realized, oh it's my, I should actually lift them up. And I'm the one that they should be making fun of. And I think as you mature personally as an adult and

stuff like that you realize the sacrifices that your family has made for you. And then in terms of like my own comedy, like a lot of, a lot of jokes have been done and a lot of the same types of jokes have been done and, you know, to make fun of marginalized groups. It's been done to make fun of everyone's make done [sic]. So I kind of mostly focus on my own life and family and I try to do it in a way that, you know, just doesn't make fun of them in a cheap way. I, I'm trying to bring dignity to my family and my personal experience through humor and always just trying to find a new take on that like the joke where my dad does standup about me. That's a new take on making like your, bringing up your parents on stage. And, as a writer and a creative person I'm just always looking for that new take and times are changing and people are becoming more open and people are realizing the right way to do things and people that should be included and that more people should be included in the dialogue and stuff like that. And, I think comedy is start, starting to change in that direction where you do something with crappy people are, we'll just call you out, you know? And, even, I don't know, sometimes even when a joke is messed up they can still be funny. But, it's got to be not, but at what cost. You know? And I don't know where that line is but there definitely is a line somewhere and sometimes the point of personal preference, you know? What's okay for you? But I think in general that line is like it's rising up, its, its moving in a way that it wasn't before. Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: It just occurred to me. This is kind of a fun thought exercise to think of your parent, one of your parents doing a standup routine about you. [Laughter.] What would they say? I'm just curious.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: Hum. Food for thought. All right, we had one question over

here. Sirandou, if you want to give it to Katie and Katie can toss it over and then we have one in the middle here after that. Thank you.

ASSISTANT: Okay, ready?

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.] Yes.

Q: Ah, and my question is how do you think, or what role has social media played in the material that comedians can use and reach at different audiences. You know, like politically how has that affected the material that you can use in, in different areas of the country?

CHRIS GARCIA: I think it's been -- that's a great question -- I think it's been, like Twitter has been like the most effective way so far to bring a, a voice to people that usually don't have a voice to like a big audience. Like we were talking about DeRay earlier --

DR. HOFFMAN: Um-hum.

CHRIS GARCIA: -- and there's like just people killing on Twitter so hard, you know? And, like, there's been just, there's so, like Twitter I feel like it's like women, African Americans, like kill it on Twitter so hard. And it's been two voices that haven't been around like in the mainstream for a long time and so social media has given them a platform. They can just tweet from anywhere and anywhere, anywhere at any time someone could read it. You know? And, the people that are really good at it like DeRay have like, just like blown up through it and given voice to like their platforms which I think is, yeah, which are great.

DR. HOFFMAN: And so I'll just refer you to in 2015 on this stand we had DeRay Mckesson who is a Black Lives Matter activist and he has since become very well know in the twitter sphere and beyond. So he didn't necessarily have a vocal presence but Twitter sort of allowed him to have that. So if you want to go

back and watch that program cpc.udel --

CHRIS GARCIA: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: -- .edu/nationalagenda.

CHRIS GARCIA: Do you guys know DeRay? Have you read --

DR. HOFFMAN: Its, it was a pretty fascinating --

CHRIS GARCIA: So, it's so --

DR. HOFFMAN: -- conversation.

CHRIS GARCIA: -- tight. It is so good. You're like ooh. Like every day I feel like I'm learning and cracking up. It's so good. Twitter --

DR. HOFFMAN: Yes.

CHRIS GARCIA: -- is like so fun.

DR. HOFFMAN: Well and you know podcasting too has just exploded you know --

CHRIS GARCIA: Oh yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: -- like in the past year and he does the Pod Save America I think.

CHRIS GARCIA: Oh, yeah, yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: Um, so there's a lot of podcasts that are really also I think exploding in the same way that social media has. But it's offering sort of more of a long form forum for --

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: -- [indiscernible.]

CHRIS GARCIA: It's just not like short form joke, joke, joke. You actually get to know someone with depth. Like you got to know me through WTF and 2 Dope Queens --

DR. HOFFMAN: This is true.

CHRIS GARCIA: -- which are podcasts which you would have never heard of me otherwise unless you tuned into those --

DR. HOFFMAN: That's probably true.

CHRIS GARCIA: -- podcasts. Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: But now I know you and now we're BFF's.

CHRIS GARCIA: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: All right. We had a question right in the middle here, Katie.

Q: Hi. Um, so first I want to say I really respect and appreciate what you do and --

CHRIS GARCIA: Finally. No, I'm just kidding. Oh, I'm sorry.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Thank you though.

Q: So my question is, so there was some protesting on campus today and --

DR. HOFFMAN: Thank you. Yeah.

Q: -- a lot of students had some very serious --

DR. HOFFMAN: We saw that when we were on campus.

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah I saw it.

Q: A lot of students had some serious things on posters and then others had very humorous posters. Some were offensive humor and some were just humorous in general and I wanted to know what was your thoughts and

opinions on using humor in protests in this way?

CHRIS GARCIA: I mean, a good protest sign rules.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Like my, oh, like my wife and friends will get together and we'll go to protests and stuff and we'll have like dinner the night before and someone will bring over markers. Like we all bring stuff and it'll be like brainstorm like who could out joke each other. Like who has, but they're from truth, like not just like spicy food hurts my tummy, or something like --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: -- or random stuff. But the person that beat the joke of the night is always, oh, it's so good. I can't think of any right now but I think, I, you know, it's effective. And then someone takes a picture of it and it ends up on Twitter and then more people like it. Like, I don't know, I love a good sign. I think a good funny sign -- unbeatable.

DR. HOFFMAN: I, I totally agree. I was delighted to have gone to, a lot of you guys might not remember this but in 2010 there was the Daily Show and Colbert Report rally to restore sanity and or fear. Do you remember this --

CHRIS GARCIA: Yeah.

DR. HOFFMAN: -- in D.C.? [Laughter.] And, I think one of my favorite signs from that, which is kind of ironic now but I saw someone with a sign that said show us your birth certificate so we know when to get you a birthday present. [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: yeah, oh it's so funny.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: That was a good one. So, yeah, I think that it's, it can be

productive. I think it can, you know, part of what I'm doing here is to try to tamper down that, that, that hate and aggression. Like, you know, signs of, showing you know fetuses and, and things like this they might generate anger, they might generate passion but are they going to generate the kind of dialogue that a funny sign might. Like, you might just go like hey that was pretty funny. I get it.

CHRIS GARCIA: A well thought out articulate sign beats a, you know, scandalous picture any day. Hum.

DR. HOFFMAN: I agree. All right, I think we have time for one more question before I wrap things up.

ASSISTANT: Ready?

DR. HOFFMAN: Nice.

Q: Hi.

CHRIS GARCIA: [Laughter.]

Q: Do you ever feel like uncomfortable being asked to provide political commentary on like just about anything related to social justice or -- because it's like, it, it doesn't seem like that was necessarily your choice of career path because you're a comedian.

CHRIS GARCIA: Oh, yeah, totally. It is like I, I hate it. [Laughter.] And I'm just going to -- no, but sometimes I feel like, you know, I'm just, I'm just a guy that happens to be Cuban that has my own personal experiences. I am not a voice for the, all the disenfranchised. I am not a scholar. I have some opinions on things. Some that are well formed, some that are not, and I've got some strong feelings but I'm not always the person to bring out. I'm always very flattered but sometimes it can be frustrating because you're like okay now let's go to the Latino guy.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: And it's like oh, just because, it's because I'm Latino isn't it. And it almost feels as backwards as not being asked, you know? And it's almost like you almost sometimes you could feel like a token, you know? Not in this situation.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

CHRIS GARCIA: I've had a very nice and meaningful day with you and your students. I think the students are here, yeah? It was so fun --

DR. HOFFMAN: Um-hum.

CHRIS GARCIA: -- talking on such a deep level about some things and being so funny. This has been a very pleasant experience for me.

DR. HOFFMAN: I'm so pleased.

CHRIS GARCIA: Um, and you provided a very nice day for me and your students I thought. Like, it was so fun.

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, and I think that, that, you know, what you do in your comedy and what we're doing here is again personal stories, sharing our own personal experiences. I think that sometimes, you know, that's going to get us to a place where we can understand each other better and it just comes down to listening and being open to others. So, I -- before I want to thank Chris for being here tonight. I do have a, a couple of closing remarks. I want to remind students in the audience about our Audio Essay Contest, The Voices of the Divide. You can visit cpc.udel.edu -- you should know that website by now -- to find out more and before the December 3rd, December 1st -- sorry -- December 1st deadline. There are cash prizes for this. We've already gotten some incredible personal entries that are moving and we're very excited to hear what the students have to

say about their experiences with polarization and divides in their lives whether they witness them or experience them and how we can sort of begin to overcome those. So, wow, this is our concluding event for 2017. If you've been at our other events some of these speakers may have made you smile, some may have made you cry, others could have inspired anger or fear or excitement or passion. And these are all inherently and uniquely human instincts. Our emotions bind us together as a society and they provide the connective tissue that lets us see each other not as adversaries but as fellow human beings with the same desires and flaws who want the best for ourselves, for our families, and for our children. Let's take away from this semester's program that it is possible to communicate about difficult issues even when we seem more divides than ever before because if we don't we risk deepening these fissures making it all the harder to come back together. So go out there after this, find someone, tell them that they matter, ask them about their story, listen and understand that their perspective matters, your perspective matters, and let's engage in a positive constructive dialogue about it. Thank you so much for being here this series. Be sure to check out Chris's comedy on iTunes and on YouTube and elsewhere. And let's give a big thank you to Chris Garcia.

AUDIENCE: [Applause.]

CHRIS GARCIA: Thank you everybody. Thank you. Thank you.

#