

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

The Axe Files - Ep. 159: Dana Bash

Released June 26, 2017

Axelrod: [00:00:18] I've worked with many fine reporters over the years but right at the top of the list as my CNN colleague Dana Bash who is at once a great reporter with wonderful sources smart analyst and a very good person. Donna just did a web series called bad ass women of Washington which is really a great watch. I sat down with her the other day to talk about her career how Congress has changed over the years and the current debate over health care.

Axelrod: [00:00:55] Dana Bash. Always good to see you.

Bash: [00:00:57] It's such an honor to be here.

Axelrod: [00:00:59] You know you come by this journalism thing honestly.

Bash: [00:01:04] Thank you.

Axelrod: [00:01:04] Your dad and now your dad was a really highly decorated television news producer for four decades so you grew up around all of that.

Bash: [00:01:16] I did. I grew up in control rooms very much so.

Axelrod: [00:01:19] And did you think to yourself. I read somewhere that you wanted to be a rock star.

Bash: [00:01:22] I did there's only one problem.

Axelrod: [00:01:24] Can't sing?

Bash: [00:01:25] At all. I can't carry a tune. Just ask my son.

Axelrod: [00:01:30] So but when did you start thinking. Yeah I'd like to do this this would be really interesting.

Bash: [00:01:37] What's so interesting is that I fought against what's really my DNA for my whole childhood even as I got into college. I always said to myself I don't want to do this like the pope dies you got to go home from your vacation. The hours are crazy you know because I so my eyes were wide open about the downsides of this business. But I. And then I just stopped fighting my DNA as soon as I went to college because my my dad ended up working in TV news. But both my parents went to Northwestern and studied journalism and my parents actually met at the local ABC station in Chicago.

Axelrod: [00:02:15] Oh yeah.

Bash: [00:02:17] Yup. And in fact my mom basically got my dad the job because she was working there as a secretary which is what you did when you were a woman then and she was very good at ironing her boss's pants. I'm not making it up. Really. Huh. And my father I think had been doing basic training it was during the Vietnam era he was in the National Guard but he came in for an interview and my mom said to the boss Oh I remember him from school. He he's a really good writer and he you know. And so she helped get him hired. And six months later.

Axelrod: [00:02:50] And his pants were nicely creased.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

Bash: [00:02:52] Yes exactly six months later they were engaged. And the rule was at the time that he was going to work for the network they were moving to New York to work for ABC News and the rule was you couldn't be married and work for the same network even if it was in the affiliate. So of course it was my mom.

Axelrod: [00:03:09] That's grossly unfair.

Bash: [00:03:11] Totally. And it was my mom who decided that she and she went on a completely different path after that.

Axelrod: [00:03:16] This DNA thing is powerful you know always embarrassed to concede that my mother who was one of the first women in a newsroom in New York she worked for a paper called p.m. in the 1940s you know that that's how she was a freelance journalist after that magazine writer and she named my sister and me she said because she thought our names would look good in bylines.

Bash: [00:03:36] That is awesome.

Axelrod: [00:03:37] Yeah. So it's embarrassing because I ended up becoming a newspaper reporter. And it's like you don't want to feel like those tracks were laid for you. But yeah it's powerful when you grow up around it and your mom. She she had a big influence on you as well because she later in life she dove into into Jewish studies and yes faith is is is big enough for her and your family. Tell me about that.

Bash: [00:04:07] Yeah so she you know left journalism she did so many different things when I was growing up. I mean I was a latchkey child but I guess by today's standards you would call it that and looking back I'm it was great for me that my mom was always working even though she was doing the field that she studied but she worked in publishing she actually worked. You know when we were here in D.C. when my dad was working in D.C. She was working at a place that was lobbying a whole bunch of different stuff but her passion was always and her love was always Jewish learning. And so I you know I think it's probably what lots of reasons my grandfather her father was. He was definitely smartest person I ever met but mostly self-taught. He escaped the Nazis along with my grandmother He was Austrian and he was going to go to law school and then that just didn't happen for him because they were trying to figure out how to stay alive. And then ultimately get to the United States. But he always he was always fascinated with learning always. And so he he was most of his focus his day job was kind of a sideshow for him. How he made his money. And he was always very into sort of the intellectual part of Judaism. He was spiritual but it was more about kind of that. Tom you're a part of it. I am. And that definitely kind of was part of my mother's upbringing and it was always where she had her interest. And so I just remember growing up again. She also had her day job and she had us my brother and me. But she loved going to going to temple and being on boards and being a particularly in the crafting of education within the temple and you know not just kids but mostly adult educate. And so when my brother and I were out of the house she said I'm going to go back to school and she went to get her masters in Judaic studies. She was actually the first person to get that degree from the reformed seminary everybody else who was going to school with her there were actually my age at the time going to be rabbis and she got her masters and then she went on to help try to you know devise a curriculum for adults sort of when they dropped her kids at Hebrew school to keep them engaged and keep them involved which is a big challenge in the reform movement a big one. And so she wrote a couple of books with her with her hero one of her borrowers who was one of her professors. And so she kind of found her home there.

Axelrod: [00:06:39] And one of them was called Jewish Moral Virtues.

Bash: [00:06:41] You did your homework David Axelrod.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

Axelrod: [00:06:43] People do homework for me. I read it--I read it voraciously but it interested me because I mean I will confess. I mean I'm Jewish I was barmitvah'd my family my grandfather was orthodox he was an immigrant. And but it seemed all that seemed very compulsory to me. And when I look back now with regret is that the sort of deeper meaning and lessons of the faith that went more to character morality and so on. Those weren't stressed it was it was more of a triumph of form over content. So for you what did it mean did you internalize things from from faith that inform you.

Bash: [00:07:32] Know the answer should be yes based on what my mother did and does but certainly not in a conscious way at all. But I think looking back probably in a subconscious way because I've followed the lead of my life my parents even though I still don't believe that they actually talk to me because I was such a rotten teenager but I did finally come back home. And and I think that that all just kind of part of who I am and who I was just by osmosis living in the house that I did.

Axelrod: [00:08:05] So you know one of the things that has struck me lately with all of this discussion about immigrants about refugees and so on is my father was a refugee from Eastern Europe. And so you know it does it does kind of formulate my thinking on this because I know what America meant to him and his family. And and I was and I'm always proud of the fact that America is a country that's been sort of a beacon to people all over the world who are looking for freedom and opportunity and so on. I ask you if it's a question really about how you separate out your own personal experience from your role as a very fine political reporter who's expected to be objective.

Bash: [00:08:59] It's so funny that you are so good that you hit on that because this was one of the toughest ones. There's no question because my grandfather passed away in 2009. He was 95. And so I got a lot of time with him that I treasure. And one of the things that we did as a family in the 90s the mid-90s like Pingu was 1996 is my my brother who's two years younger than me and I and my parents and my mom's sister my aunt and my grandfather the six of us did what my grandfather called his sentimental journey and we spent two weeks in Europe. We went to Vienna to that to the city where he was born and raised. We went to Prague the city where he and my grandmother were married on the run where he was stateless he had to give up his papers. He showed us the mountains that he escaped on and from with gypsies helping him along the way we went to the tower My grandmother was from Hungary Kosice which I don't even think is Hungary anymore. And it was leveled. So he couldn't even figure out what was what or where was where and who was very upset about it. But the whole time the whole trip what he just drilled into us over and over again was when he was there and he didn't get out till 1941 Columbus Day of 1941 which is really late. Is. Hitler and the Nazis for so long they didn't want to kill us. They just wanted us out. And there was nowhere for us to go. We had no place to go. He even trained with his Zionist cousins to go to Israel and they didn't go only because the Danube froze. And that's the only reason why he came to America. And you know I am here. But over and over again that was his whole message. We didn't have anywhere to go. And he was the biggest American patriot. I mean he loved this country loved loved loved Fourth of July was his favorite holiday. I mean and so he rings in my ears David and I Alma. And during that whole the whole Syrian debate I was actually I mean certainly not glad that my grandfather wasn't with us he would have been over 100 but still thinking I'm glad he's he would have just been so sickened just to hear the back and forth about it.

Axelrod: [00:11:10] Yeah well you know two years after my father arrived in 1924 that passed Congress passed a very an anti immigration bill that's set up very hard quota on various groups including Jews and that prevented Jewish immigrants from come to this country throughout the 30s and helped compound this. You know what. What is a monumental--

Bash: [00:11:41] That's exactly right.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

Axelrod: [00:11:42] --disaster in the Holocaust.

Bash: [00:11:43] Yeah he always said you know FDR was such a great president for so many reasons. But this was a big a big blind spot that he allowed to happen keeping those quotas in place. You know absolutely. He only got he and my grandmother only got to this country because his brother was a chemist they had his father owned paint factories. They did very well which of course were all burned to the ground by the Nazis. But he was a chemist who came to Chicago to work and he had a boss who loved him. Loved my uncle my great uncle and he agreed to sign an affidavit which you had to do was like the bare minimum to get somebody over here. And it was like \$20000 a person which was a lot of money.

Axelrod: [00:12:24] Yeah in today's dollars that's astounding.

Bash: [00:12:28] Astounding.

Axelrod: [00:12:29] Yeah yeah. So you you went to George Washington University and.

Bash: [00:12:33] I did. Go Colonials.

Axelrod: [00:12:35] You said that you that's when you really get into being a reporter. I wrote a story about you and your roommate going to see George Stephanopoulos when he spoke there. Tell that story.

Bash: [00:12:52] OK so I was I graduated from GW in 1993 so it was I was there. It was here in Washington as a student and you know kind of the the climax of the Clinton Gore craze which it really was I mean it was at the time it was the next generation it was all the things that you saw. You know so many years later with you and your candidate with Barack Obama but it was and at that and also the people who worked for him were really really young people who we as students could relate to because they were only a few years older than we were.

Axelrod: [00:13:24] And George was just about beginning to look his age right now.

Bash: [00:13:28] I mean it's about time. And so my roommate in college was Molina Zacharapolis and I decided that she should marry George Stephanopoulos because why shouldn't she. And she was drop dead gorgeous.

Axelrod: [00:13:42] Can you imagine what a big fat Greek wedding that would have been?

Bash: [00:13:44] Exactly. Exactly. And you know drop dead gorgeous super super smart she was majoring in philosophy. I mean she was the full--the full package so we went to hear him speak. It was after the election they had won and he was a superstar, a real superstar. And I was trying to figure out ways to--And I didn't know him from a hole in the wall. He didn't know me from the hole in the wall. So I trying to devise ways for them to bump into each other because I knew as soon as he bumped into Molina's Zacharapolis. He would decide that she was the one for him. But I didn't figure it out.

Axelrod: [00:14:16] Didn't happen, no?

Bash: [00:14:17] His loss, although Ali is a great person.

Axelrod: [00:14:21] How did your roommate do?

Bash: [00:14:23] She did great. [crosstalk] She did great. She's very happily married, three kids, great life.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

Axelrod: [00:14:28] So you did a lot of interning and stringing and when you were in college. Talk about that experience and how much did that--how formative was that for you?

Bash: [00:14:41] It was incredibly formative because I really so I--My sophomore year I applied to and got into a program at GW called political communication which was tremendous. It was all about it was political science journalism communications and then it was government and kind of how they all interact which was kind of a great training ground for what we do now. But but even even though I got in there and I was doing that I wasn't sure where I wanted to go. I wasn't sure if I wanted to work in public relations I wasn't sure if I wanted to work in politics. And so because I was here in D.C. I had so many opportunities to work not just in the summertime but during the school year and in turn and I and I took advantage of it. I did. I interned for capital cities the parent company for ABC in their corporate communications department I worked with the best people but I realized I did not. It was not for me. So I actually think and I tell this young people all the time interning is as much about figuring out what you don't want to do as it is what you do want to do. So I figure that out. And then I was on the Hill for I did a couple of days a week one semester for Don Riegle. So again I'm a former senator former senator from Michigan who had no connection to it was just somebody who was a professor. Knew that they needed somebody and I did a little bit of volunteering answering phones in the press shop in the White House, my second semester my senior year and I got an after I had done internships at CBS News here in Washington at NBC News on the desk in New York actually during the '92 campaign I was able to go to the convention in New York in '92 which was really cool. And and then my last semester of my senior year when I was here I at the time internships weren't paid. Now most of them are but they weren't. I thought you know would be nice if I actually made some money doing this. So I had like a three person deep connection here at CNN and I just happened to call on a day where this person whose name was Bill Cazarbra who ran the newsroom at the time was getting an earful from the person who works in the feeds room because there were only two people who could do it.

Axelrod: [00:16:57] Explain what the feeds room is.

Bash: [00:16:57] Well, the feeds room doesn't really exist right anymore.

Axelrod: [00:17:01] Right.

Bash: [00:17:01] But at the time, the feed's room was it was actually a little closet where you had Visi bars for young people. VCR was this thing where you put an actual tape in anyway and you would actually--

Axelrod: [00:17:11] And then explain what newspapers are--

Bash: [00:17:12] Exactly. I know when I'm done with this. And so there were probably eight VCRs. And you're responsible for literally pressing play and record to make sure you get the Senate floor the House floor the stakeout at the White House the House the White House briefing. And if you don't record it you're kind of host because the network doesn't have it. I mean you can get a copy from C-Span or somebody but it wasn't digital I mean it was a big deal to get a videotape copy. So that and then when Pete when the reporters did package's reports it was all put together on a videotape and you had to take the videotape and put it in the VCR and press play and send it down to Atlanta so it could get on the air. Again none of this exists anymore. It's all old technology. But there were only two people who did it. And when one person would take a vacation or was sick that person at work from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. So there were this guy Bill because Barbara was getting an earful like I need help. And I just happened to call that day and he said OK you want to come in. Come learn the Phaedra. I said OK. I had no idea what that meant but I came in and worked with somebody who was also still at CNN. She's an editor now who who taught me the feed room and I came in and learned that. And then what was the that was 1993. And when I graduated from college there was a job open in the tape library another place that doesn't exist anymore

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

because there's no tapes and there's no library. But that was really the only way to get in and there were no real entry level jobs here at CNN and the Washington bureau the tape library and the receptionist in the front hall there were the only entry level jobs and then you could kind of work your way up from there. So it was lucky that there was a job open which didn't happen very often. And I and I applied and I got it. So I got it on my 22nd birthday and I've been here ever since.

Axelrod: [00:18:56] I heard that you had it interesting and initiation to feeding scripts into the teleprompter machine.

Bash: [00:19:06] You know even to this day when you mention it my stomach gets a little queasy. It was so horrible. What happened was at the time that teleprompter was like a conveyor belt. And so the scripts were printed. And if the script was long you had like script number one was one a b c and d and you had to actually tape with a piece of scotch tape taped them together in order. It's the right way to do it. Put in an order and put it on the conveyor belt so that the anchors reading and there's a little camera that when the conveyor belt went into the teleprompter well as part of my duties in the feed's room nobody told me that. It also included being basically the production assistant for a show that was like three or three o'clock in the afternoon. I had no idea what I was doing. None. And there were because there were no real entry level jobs. The people who really didn't know what they were doing were the actual interns the people who weren't getting paid who were in school who had a little bit more experience doing it. Long story short. It got totally messed up and it was like one day one day one. And the anchor was reading who ended up being my boss and a mentor to me. But the thing I can do. Frank Sesno, but he denies this and I want to say that he is the nicest guy. But what happened understandably was he was hung out to dry came into the control room after the show was very upset and was talking to the producer about it and he looked at me and said Who are you. And I said my name is Dana. It's my first day and he goes oh yeah well it's going to be our last, like out of a movie! And I went to the bathroom and threw up.

Axelrod: [00:20:51] That seems like the right way to do it.

Bash: [00:20:52] Exactly.

Axelrod: [00:20:53] We're going to take a short break. We'll be right back with Dana Bash.

Axelrod: [00:21:13] So you know I did a podcast with Joe Maddon who's the manager of the Chicago Cubs. And then I actually wrote a piece for The New Yorker about the Cubs and I talked to people about Joe and the thing that he said in that they said was one of the things that has served him well was that he's done everything in baseball. He had been a hitting instructor. He had been you know a minor league coach and manager and scout and and he understood all of these different roles. And reading your history it strikes me that you're a little bit the same. I mean you've done everything but you spent a lot of time for CNN when you finally got out of the end of all of those jobs that those menial jobs but important jobs and you were a producer on the Hill for years.

Bash: [00:22:02] I was. I was and you know the thing about I will say the thing about CNN is particularly when I started is that there were so few people and at the time there was no Fox there was no MSNBC. So we were kind of we were relieved that the little engine that could still and because there were so few people if you wanted to do it if you frankly had a pulse and interest you could go do it. So I got a lot of a lot more experience than I probably would have otherwise. At a different place. But I did work my way through the weekend shows I was an associate producer and a producer which again got me so much experience and and booking and writing and in package producing and figuring out how to get a satellite how to get satellite time things like that. But then I wanted to go to news gathering. I made a conscious decision that I wanted to see what it was like to actually report news not as a reporter I didn't think I want to be a reporter but I wanted to be where the action was I wasn't sure. I genuinely wasn't sure that wasn't

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

my goal. I wasn't I wasn't one of those people who said I want to be an on air reporter. And if I were I probably would have done the more traditional route and gone out to a local station. But I just loved this story. I loved politics. I loved Washington. It was--

Axelrod: [00:23:16] And you did a lot of reporting in the producer role.

Bash: [00:23:18] I did a lot of reporting. Exactly. And that's exactly what happened so I was lucky in that I went to the assignment desk and I was doing some you know story some news gathering in terms of helping reporters on stories that the NEWSROOM was set up in a in a different way that it is now. But at the end of the day I ended up on Capitol Hill just helping out during the impeachment trial of Bill Clinton. And Candy Crowley was a correspondent there her producer Mike rosily and they just that was it. And they needed help. And so it was all hands on deck. But I fell in love with it. I thought this is so cool. You got to walk around and talk to actual senators and their actual aides and and House members and and have conversations with them and really learn it's still to me the best beat in Washington because of the access that you have. They went on to cover the 2000 presidential election I got the job as Senate producer which is effectively and still is my colleague Ted Barrett as has been in that job for a long time and he's one of the best reporters reporters you know on Capitol Hill because it's news gathering and it's source building.

Axelrod: [00:24:21] I mean I think one of your strengths and I'd say this behind your back is that you you have good sources and you know how to work them. And the essence of good journalism is going out not assuming you know but going out and asking questions and asking questions of people who actually do know what's going on. So but that is the product of years of relationship building.

Bash: [00:24:48] Right. Right. Years. Years and being present just being is not sitting in the booth. There's a little you know booth where CNN has a little office space and all the networks and the print people have the same but just just literally roaming the halls and just and then you never know what you find when you roam the halls you see Senator X going into the office of Senator Y and you know that Senator X is working on you know a certain piece of legislation in him. Wow. Senator why maybe. And so you kind of learn how to piece things together just by being present.

Axelrod: [00:25:20] And if you do if you develop relationships and they know that they can trust you not to burn sources and so on. Generally people in public life are can be more forthcoming than absolutely you'd think because they often aren't forthcoming when they're in front of the camera no question no question.

Bash: [00:25:40] And and you probably had this experience when you were a reporter. I've I've gotten scooped on a lot of things that I was told off the record but because I kept it off the record and I didn't feel that I could even go elsewhere to try to confirm it because that would burn that person. I got scooped. And it stinks at the time.

Axelrod: [00:25:59] But it pays off later.

Bash: [00:26:00] Exactly because you build relationships and that trust factor is something that you can't. You know you can't put a value on.

Axelrod: [00:26:10] One of the stories that you covered when you were there was the 9/11 attack and talk about that day.

Bash: [00:26:21] You know I still to this day really go into the--into the rotunda of the Capitol and I look up and I may I put my arms out which is a ridiculous thing but it just kind of helps me and I think OK if a plane actually did hit Flight 93 which the 9/11 Commission said was heading for the Capitol, did hit the

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

Capitol. How far like the wingspan how far out what would it mean. And those are the things that still go through my mind thinking about that day of 9/11. And I was when the plane--the second plane hit the towers I was still on my way to the Capitol. I was a producer at the time and it was such a different mindset that we could still park right on the capitol grounds. Even reporters, the cops did kind of do a perfunctory look in your trunk to make sure nothing was in there. But when they saw me coming they were helping me get in because they knew that you know we all know each other it's like a family and they were trying to help me get things they knew I had to go work. And as I was coming up the the east front of the Capitol, the plane was hit and the Pentagon which they could see the people in the offices on the West Front could see out the window. They could see the smoke. And so the second I actually got into the first onto the first floor of the Capitol I pressed the button for the elevator and then the cops started screaming everybody run get out get out we're being evacuated. So I ran out. Somehow miraculously a CNN camera guy was sort of right there it was before live views or the technology was such that you could pretty much go live with with the cell phone. You couldn't do that there. So he plugged into a fiber drop which allowed us to go live which was right across from the Senate chamber and we were about to just even put up a live picture. Already the cell phones were not working because everything was just jammed up. And then this is probably one of the scariest moments I'll never forget that the police officers started to scream run run for your lives. Wow. And so we were all gathered across the plaza kind of on the grass across in the Senate and people started running. I remember seeing shoes just kind of on the lawn because women were running out of their shoes and to hear you realize doesn't sound like the right way to go [crosstalk]. Exactly. And and and it was because they didn't know where Flight 93 was.

Axelrod: [00:28:41] Right.

Bash: [00:28:42] And they thought it was coming and at the end of the day they were right. But but but the other thing that was not in place at the time were the basic kind of continuity of government things that we now know. Robert Byrd who was president pro tem, he was third in line to be president of the United States was was wandering around. He didn't have any staff with him, he didn't know where to go. He was just kind of wandering around over by the Supreme Court. I mean it was it was mayhem. It was absolute mayhem.

Axelrod: [00:29:12] Yeah. And you know I know that you covered just recently this shooting over in Virginia of Steve Scalise, the shootings the targeting of the Republican members of Congress. What does that do? You hang around there a lot. These are friends as well as people you cover. I guess it's OK to say but I mean--

Bash: [00:29:38] Well, they're human. I mean you have human relationships and that's and that's normal and natural and I think actually good especially in towns like Washington.

Axelrod: [00:29:45] But my question is I mean we saw the great outpouring in the aftermath of that and this great hope that somehow this would create a new spirit of comedy with a T button but that's not really what happens is it?

Bash: [00:30:02] It's not. I mean I remember from Gabby Giffords, I was talking to Gabby Giffords just off the House floor Thursday or Friday before she was shot and I remember her telling me all about this great trip she and her family had taken to the Vatican and we were just you know kibitzing. I wasn't doing that actual I wasn't trying to get information from her and then she was shocked she almost didn't make it. And after that you remember you were I think you were working at the White House.

Bash: [00:30:31] Yeah. There was again this burst of comedy of of the need to dial it back and the knee and everybody started sitting together at the State of the Union addresses and Republicans--Democrats

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

mixed together --[crosstalk] you know yeah and you know it we're at it's nice for a little while but then it wears off. And the reality of the very harsh political discourse comes back.

Axelrod: [00:31:00] How have things changed in the years that you've been covering Congress? I mean I have my own feelings about this because I've been around a few more years than you but you've been here quite a few by now. And how is the environment of the Congress and this town changed over the course of your tenure as a reporter?

Bash: [00:31:20] Bipartisanship did not used to be a dirty word compromise did not used to be a dirty word. I can't tell you how many blisters I ended up getting on my feet from standing in hallways outside of meetings where Democrats Republicans representatives from the White House Democrat and Republican White Houses were behind closed doors having genuine discussions about really important legislation and how to do it in a bipartisan way. And the question wasn't Are they going to come out with you know a compromise or are they just is this just going to die. It was what is that compromise going to be. There was so much faith in the system and in the grownups in the room frankly that that was a given that there would be something that would be that would come out. You know might not have been perfect but you know it was the days of Ted Kennedy and Orrin Hatch and John Warner and I mean Orrin Hatch is still there but it just doesn't work for him. The system is a work for him the way it did. And and it's just not like that anymore and it's really too bad.

Axelrod: [00:32:29] Who were--Who are some of the most impactful people that you dealt with who are the people who impressed you the most?

Bash: [00:32:35] Definitely Ted Kennedy is one of them. I mean by far. On the Democratic side because for so many reasons but because his dreams of becoming president didn't happen and he poured his heart and soul into learning the art of legislating and what it takes to be really impactful in the United States Senate and he did it to some great great thing.

Axelrod: [00:32:58] What's interesting about him is that he became a target for Republican campaigns, he was always the poster child in the way that Nancy Pelosi is now. And yet he was well-liked by people on both sides of the aisle within that that were within the walls of the Senate. He was as popular as anyone.

Bash: [00:33:16] No question no question. He I mean Orrin Hatch was was one of his very good friends--

Axelrod: [00:33:20] Spoke at his memorial service as did John McCain.

Bash: [00:33:23] As did John McCain. I remember being invited to emcee a charity with Catholic Charities that was co-founded by Ted Kennedy and John Boehner and they worked very closely together.

Axelrod: [00:33:38] Right, they are both on the education committees.

Bash: [00:33:39] Exactly. So yes there's no question he was very well liked and on the Republican side people like John Warner who was kind of the senator from Virginia from Virginia that the ultimate Virginia gentleman. And you know like all of these guys they they make their enemies. But he wanted to do right. And he and he knew that he was going to get hammered at home a lot for working on bipartisan legislation and he didn't always do it, just like Ted Kennedy didn't always do it but he did it enough and he did it where he thought it really would be most impactful to the people who needed it.

Axelrod: [00:34:17] How do how do we navigate around this period just as someone who observes politics closely? And just let me ask you--Well we'll answer that and then I have a kind of a harder question. That seems like a hard question, but I got even harder question.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

Bash: [00:34:31] Well, it is a hard question because it used to be the answer used to be you know fund raising and so much of the time and energy that these politicians spent especially in the house where they're basically always running because they are on the ballot every two years having to go across the street because you can't raise money in the Capitol and dial for dollars or go to fundraisers at night and times where they could and probably should be having a drink with somebody across the aisle. The way it used to be it's not that simple anymore because now a person can win with with grassroots fervor and soap and a social media and an internet presence with almost no money at all.

Axelrod: [00:35:13] So they also mostly don't have to worry about a general election in most cases they're only worried about some right wing challenge, or left wing challenge.

Bash: [00:35:21] And that's the look at the end of the day that's the real answer the real answer is and I use I've seen the gerrymandering is horrendous. It's absolutely horrendous. And I've had Republicans when I said gerrymandering I mean that the only challenge that most Republicans have to worry about is from the right. So their interest is always to be drawn to the right less so among Democrats but a lot of Democratic districts are drawn very heavily Democratic sometimes by Republican legislatures to get all Democrats does. Exactly exactly. But that and so that's the I remember covering Congress when there were moderate Republicans from the north in New England Republicans who who was in their interest to represent their constituents to work with Democrats because there were those were the people who ran and conservative Democrats from the south and conservative. [crosstalk] Blue dog Democrats in the south. Exactly right. And that was a lot of the basis for compromise which doesn't exist anymore. And I've had really conservative Republicans say to me in the halls of Congress even a couple of weeks ago that there's more and more quiet talk about how it's not fun anymore and that they're also worried about a challenge from the right. They feel like they can't make a move without doing you know with that without the right being OK with it and that maybe more Republicans and more conservatives are going to be interesting interested in redistricting and that those kinds of reforms certainly would throw Boehner out of this. No question.

Axelrod: [00:36:52] The harder question I wanted to ask you is what role--And I include myself in this now because I'm I'm over here at CNN as well. But the modern media environment the whole breaking news mentality the need to get eyeballs and and therefore to take what may not be the most cataclysmic story and assign great importance to it so that people have a reason to come back 24/7 and watch. Conflict is more interesting than comedy with a T again.

Bash: [00:37:25] Yeah. No, that's true. That's absolutely true. I think it was probably always the case in in journalism. But but the conflict historically has been about ideas which is what this country is supposed to be about a conflict of ideas and trying to figure out what the best idea is. I think that it's it's been it's it's not just cable news I think it's even across the board even the gray lady has to deal with this that it's not--

Axelrod: [00:37:52] New York Times.

Bash: [00:37:52] New York Times that it's that it's the conflict. The notion of conflict is taken on a life of its own.

Axelrod: [00:38:01] And I think it has to do also with competitive pressures. I mean the news business is very competitive now with social media the Internet and you know I know I never had to file every hour to exactly when I was a reporter but that is now.

Bash: [00:38:16] Do you see it differently? I mean since you've been a reporter obviously you say you have to fill every hour or two that they didn't have to worry about the Internet.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

Axelrod: [00:38:23] I was just reporting after the--the Gutenberg press came out. But no it would look you had time to edit or you had time to report and editors had time to ask questions and you know we had what were called news cycles you know where you were filing by 9:00 o'clock at night for the next morning's paper. And so you had a whole day to report out your story and that that's a luxury that most reporters don't have anymore. I think it and there is this competitive pressure to be first and first used to mean to get it in the morning paper now it means within the next 10 minutes. And I think that that you know reporting suffers in that under those kinds of pressures a lot of great works being done. But also a lot of stories aren't put in the proper context context is key.

Bash: [00:39:10] That's exactly right. And you know especially when you know if you if you're able to get a story out and get it out first it's usually with a link on Twitter to the broader piece which has context. That doesn't always happen and you're limited to what is Twitter--140, 140 characters does which as we've learned from the guy who's in the White House doesn't always allow you the space to give enough context to what you're trying to say.

Axelrod: [00:39:36] There are times when zero characters would better be better for him in the country if he abided by that limitation. Let me ask you about a couple of figures who you've covered over the years. Nancy Pelosi has come under fire recently from some of her own troops after the result in Georgia I thought kind of unfairly I agree. Because that was always going to be a difficult district and I think they would have depicted John Asaf as a liberal were there Nancy Pelosi--

Bash: [00:40:07] It would have helped if he lived in the district where he was running.

Axelrod: [00:40:09] Well, he had no roots he was an unknown basically to the district and yet he came awfully close to winning a district that had been in Republican hands for 40 years. But there is this disc consternation among younger members because you've got a bunch of generic ones who in the leadership including Pelosi. My experience with her is that she is an extraordinary tough smart canny person and she was unbelievably helpful to Barack Obama when he was president. But do the younger members have a point about the need for new leadership?

Bash: [00:40:45] Yes I think they do. But I think I think they all have points and that's that's the problem. I think that the younger members do see there's Nancy Pelosi there Steny Hoyer. They're about the same age. There's Clyburn who's not that far behind. Maybe even a few years older. And and those are the leaders in their party. They do have younger people who they bring to the table for that exact reason. But listen I am someone I've observed Nancy Pelosi for years. And yeah she's been there for a long time. But you correct me if I'm wrong because you were in the White House. I do not think Obamacare would have got a chance if she were change. She knows her caucus. She is. Here's here's why she is a leader that's going to be very hard to talk to parallel to to compare with. She knows her caucus hundreds of people so well. I mean and not just their kids names their grandkids birthdays their sign their favorite color. You know what they had for breakfast but kind of what makes them tick and it's because of that that she can hold them and she can get things done. And I think that the fact that she pushed back when back during the Obamacare fight the very lengthy one where when the Senate lost the 60th vote when Scott Brown won in Massachusetts. And tell me if this these stories are wrong. But from everything we hear she said she was one of the people who stood up and said no this is our chance. We've got to do this. And she willed, so--

Axelrod: [00:42:21] I think there were two people who took that position. One was Barack Obama and the other was Nancy Pelosi. And it wouldn't have happened otherwise. She. Well let me take a short break and I'll be right back with Dana Bash.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

Axelrod: [00:42:51] Well my favorite Pelosi stories was that I was not in this meeting but it was reported to me that one of her members from a more conservative district was unhappy about a vote or something that she was asking them to take. And she was walking out of the room and the members said easy for her to say she's from San Francisco. And she turned around and came back to this memory and pointed her finger in his chest and said listen I can I spend every weekend away from my grandchildren to raise money from liberals for people like you. She said so don't give me that. And she walked out of the room and then all the members turned on that and said You owe her an apology. That goes to your point exactly.

Bash: [00:43:32] And look she's she's I mean talk about bad ass women. She is the we are going to do well because she is the ultimate bad ass because she--look, she rules--Maybe bad ass isn't even what it is, she's old school. She rules like a lot that.

Axelrod: [00:43:47] People forget she is the daughter of the mayor of Baltimore.

Bash: [00:43:50] And her job when she was a little girl was to help make the index cards for her father about whose favors that they owe or who owes him favors. And that's that's the knee that she learned. Right. And she still--

Axelrod: [00:44:04] She's not in a feat San Francisco liberal. It all comes to politics [crosstalk]. Let me ask you about Mitch McConnell who you know I think I have to give him credit for diabolical cleverness. He made a decision back in 2009 that bipartisan cooperation was not in his interest in terms of winning back seats for the Senate in the Congress generally. And you know he was the first resist movement. He won and he enforced that discipline on his members. We tried when I was in the White House to get cooperation on the health bill. I kept it open as you remember for months and months and months as Democratic members tried to get Republicans to come along president met with them. They said we can't you know it's a policy being enforced here on Stratego a strategy being enforced. And that's the way the eight years went and he forced President Obama to become more and more of a partisan I think and undercut one of his core credentials. And then we had the garland the Garland situation where he held the Supreme Court open seat open and now you have health care. And we have a health care bill that may come to the floor this week never having had a public hearing to 20 hours of amendments and then a vote on something of enormous magnitude. Talk about McConnell as a personality in the context of the history--I just.

Bash: [00:45:42] Well it's it's funny because if you look at McConnell and Pelosi we were talking about and Harry Reid who was ruled with the same kind of iron fist but a very different approach to it. They all have one thing in common that I've been thinking about a lot lately is that they have the thickest skin known to mankind. They just they make a decision and they are willing to take the hits and to be the poster children for it and you know for right or wrong and that's just the way it goes. Mitch McConnell. You know what. For a year on the Supreme Court decision decision the decision not to give America Ireland a vote. Hoping and praying that there would be a Republican in the White House and that would be it would be moot. And you know it paid off. It was right or wrong it was just a very a very intense political decision. And so that is Mitch McConnell in a nutshell. He's not Mr. backslap or he's not a he's certainly not a public speaker and he's not a policy guy and he's not a policy guy. He is the ultimate insider tactician political chess player. And I think that in so many ways in the opposition that helped him because of what you were just describing to how he positioned or forced the president President Obama to position himself in a way that he didn't want to be. But it's the jury's still out on what it means now that he's in charge with the guy in the White House. Because I mean just one example that really surprised that would be Donald Trump for those who aren't following along with the lawyers who are on planet Mars. But the the the the just the rollout of their health care bill. Never mind that they were doing it behind closed doors. Whatever OK that's that's that's. That happens on both sides of the aisle. But when it was time to unveil it it was just

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

thrown on line. There was nobody who came out and did as much as a press conference and said here's why this is good for America. So what it did was it left a giant vacuum and Chuck Schumer smartly jumped right into that vacuum and all of the opponents to try to define this bill as negative. And that's that was a very big mistake I thought from the perspective of Mitch McConnell in that he let that vacuum happen. However let's just get into like the real conspiracy talk unless it is that those who say that he just doesn't care and he wants his off his plate and he didn't want to fight for it and maybe he's kind of OK with all this.

Bash: [00:48:14] There is a there is a there is a theory here that this is a terrible bill from a political standpoint. Your take. You're giving the base what they want in the short run but in the long run you know when you're giving a billion dollars of tax cuts primarily to very rich people and taking away health care from tens of millions of people that elderly people with disabilities. That's a like--those are negative ads, ready made.

Bash: [00:48:41] Exactly and let's just say that this does become law just as you said and let's just say the policy works and people their health care and their health insurance situation is better in the short term. There's no way that's going to happen because it's not even written that way. So in the short term they're definitely going to take a political hit. But you're saying that your theory is that that [crosstalk].

Axelrod: [00:49:04] I think he does not want to be accused by the base of being the guy who stopped this repeal and replace. I also do think--

Bash: [00:49:13] But he doesn't want to sell you to the point where he realizes it's actually in the long term.

Axelrod: [00:49:17] I mean there's a theory [crosstalk]. I mean look tax breaks for the wealthy and cutting back the welfare state and sticking it to Barack Obama are three of the favorite things of Republicans. So I don't want to discount that possibility but but strategically because he does think strategically and not being the guy who's caught out of the chair in a game of musical chairs on this thing and yet not having it succeed might be the best of all worlds. So where does this health care bill go. McConnell has made a big big time gamble to throw it out there it's clear he doesn't have the votes yet. There's a ton of pressure on these senators although they get more if they recessed and went home.

Bash: [00:50:02] I agree.

Axelrod: [00:50:04] What's your bet on whether he gets these votes?

[00:50:07] You know pretty much every five minutes if you ask me I have a different kind of feeling on it at this moment. I would say it's more likely than not that it dies that it doesn't pass. You know on that just on the moderate side Dean Heller is out there and it's very hard to imagine them putting enough money in there for Medicaid and figuring out a way to magically make the CBO show that the premiums are going to go down for people.

Axelrod: [00:50:37] And if they did to hold the--the right wing.

Bash: [00:50:41] That's exactly right. That's exactly right. So I'm guessing that he's going to be hard to get. Susan Collins another moderate seems hard to get. She is. She also has another. There are a lot of things weighing on her like is she going to run for governor which is a whole different set of kind of political considerations and constituent considerations. So they can only lose two. Right. So there you have two and then. OK. Well what about Rand Paul who is pretty much consistently in the hell no category but he's also the junior senator from Kentucky where Mitch McConnell is. So does he feel

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

enough of a kind of allegiance to Mitch McConnell.

Axelrod: [00:51:18] Well their relationship has been stormy over the years. [crosstalk] Mitch McConnell didn't support him when he ran, originally. For president, or maybe he did, I don't know. [crosstalk]

Bash: [00:51:28] Well he he basically said he was going to pretty much stay out. But but by the time that Rand Paul ran for president they had come together because Rand Paul saved Mitch McConnell's. You know what Rand Paul really worked very hard when Mitch McConnell had a tough primary fight in Kentucky.

Axelrod: [00:51:44] Yes.

Bash: [00:51:45] And to help him win.

Axelrod: [00:51:46] Yes, he did.

Bash: [00:51:47] And so they have they have a kind of a marriage of convenience.

Axelrod: [00:51:51] Maybe he feels he's paid his debt.

Bash: [00:51:53] Maybe, and that's the other thing. I mean you know Rand Paul is regardless of what you think about his convictions he is truly a million bucks and you know you know so. So if that's three Yeah and like you said it's hard to imagine even if they do try to appease and appeal to those moderates.

Axelrod: [00:52:12] There's not enough wrapping paper to cover the package.

Bash: [00:52:15] I don't think so. I don't think so.

Axelrod: [00:52:17] What about the guy in the White House? What are you hearing from Republicans on the Hill about him? Privately, we know what they say publicly.

Bash: [00:52:25] He's incredibly communicative. He loves to be on that phone on his cell phone. By the way I still did. Did President Obama use his cell phone in the Oval Office?

Axelrod: [00:52:35] No. In fact I don't think he was able to use his cell phone for anything but e-mail.

Bash: [00:52:39] Well that changed.

Axelrod: [00:52:41] Yes, but he didn't want the Russians to know what he was saying so it's different.

Bash: [00:52:46] So anyway he he's on a cell phone all the time. I wonder if it's going to change now that his family is actually in the residence. But I'm not so sure because he was kind of rattling around in the White House from 6 p.m. to 8 a.m. And so he talks to people all the time even people you would not suspect that he would talk to who he doesn't have along wonderful warm history with a lot of it. He does a lot of ruminating about do you think I should get rid of Wright's Priebus or do you think I should. What do you think I should do?

Axelrod: [00:53:18] There's a lot of ruminating and sometimes some fulminating too.

Bash: [00:53:22] Yes but. But there is still a sliver of hope among even his sharpest Republican critics that on some issues maybe maybe not any domestic issues frankly but on some national security and

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

international issues putting Russia aside, Iraq, Afghanistan, that they can still get he's still a kind of a blank slate that they can help form.

Axelrod: [00:53:46] Well they have Madis who they all like.

Bash: [00:53:48] [crosstalk] But they're--but there--by the way. But at the end of the day this whole tweeting thing is it causes such heartburn. It's I mean you can imagine you're a member of Congress and you're walking through the hallways and you're going to cast a vote on whatever issue is that you said you wanted and all you're done. The only thing that happens is you're asked by reporters about the latest tweet that the president said and it's not because we're obsessed with a random tweet it's because it has consequential a consequential impact.

Axelrod: [00:54:19] He's not tweeting about the weather.

Bash: [00:54:20] He's not.

Axelrod: [00:54:21] No. So no I think it's difficult for them. I think it's difficult for the White House staff. I asked Sean Spicer when he was at the University of Chicago at my institute of politics whether he knew what the president was going to be tweeting and he said no and I said well how do you sleep at night. He said no I sleep okay but I wake up really and look at my--my phone. First thing to see what I'm going to be dealing with today.

Bash: [00:54:44] And the rest of the world. You know it's--everybody's first and it's certainly in this town, the first thing you do is you wake up and you look at the president's Twitter feed to see what the day's going to bring.

Axelrod: [00:54:54] And real really fast because I want to talk about this great Web series that you've done. Where do you think this probe story's going at least from the congressional end? I mean how how committed do you think the Congress is to actually looking at these issues?

Bash: [00:55:11] I think the Senate Intelligence Committee is really genuinely committed in a bipartisan way. Richard Bourke to this moment has stepped up in a way that frankly that he's the chairman Senate chairman of the right of chairman of the Intelligence Committee also not running for re-election. He just won which you know kind of takes the shackles the political shackles off of anybody. And I think even his Democratic colleagues are surprised at how seriously he's taking this so you know where it goes and what the end result will be. Who knows. But I think that's legit. The house is a mess. The House intelligence probe is a mess even though there are a lot of people who have really good intentions. It just the whole the chairman Devon Nunez and the weird bizarre stuff that happened with him in the White House and that just set that off and I don't think there's really a way for it to come back.

Bash: [00:55:59] So only 20 percent of the Congress are women. That's about the same percentage as it hold executive offices in the States. And it seems to be pretty consistent in our politics. But you have taken a look at some sort of iconic women in this wonderful web series bad ass women of Washington. Tell me about why you decided to do this and what did you learn?

Bash: [00:56:25] We decided to do it after Hillary Clinton lost. And I was having lunch with a couple of colleagues and talking about kind of the prospect for another female who could could and would be in the running to be the party's nominee never mind actually winning the presidency. And I said wait a minute you guys there are so many women who we cover every day who are already making incredible strides and broke a barrier after barrier after barrier and it just kind of took off from there. And so what I wanted to do was talk to a cross-section of women when it comes to their politics generation geography and and it

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

was fascinating to actually spend time like you and I are doing now away from the you know 15 second sound bites and to really get to know their stories and where they came from. And you know whether it's Dianne Feinstein who has this--

Axelrod: [00:57:19] I recommend that episode to anyone because she has such an extraordinary story.

Bash: [00:57:25] She does.

Axelrod: [00:57:26] 80, almost 85 years old.

Bash: [00:57:28] She just turned 84.

Axelrod: [00:57:29] She just delivers in so so well and so strongly.

Bash: [00:57:36] And she says she yes she was the first woman president of the board of supervisors in San Francisco which is a huge deal and because of a double murder she became the mayor then became the first female mayor and one in her own right for 10 years she was there for 10 years and then became the first woman elected from California to the United States.

Axelrod: [00:57:55] Lost the race for governor--for governor.

Bash: [00:57:58] Yeah and that's the one that's there so many lessons from her. Her discussion but the key for me was actually how I ended the piece was her advice to younger women. You're going to get defeated and you take defeat after defeat after defeat. You stand up you brush yourself off and you do it again.

Axelrod: [00:58:15] Yeah. She's she's she's tough. And that comes across in that she manages to be tough without being acerbic.

Bash: [00:58:24] Yes.

Axelrod: [00:58:25] Which is a great quality.

Bash: [00:58:26] It is and it's frankly it's not it's not easy for women even in today's today's day and age.

Axelrod: [00:58:31] What do you what do you think the women in Washington particularly the Congress bring? When I when I started in politics I think you know I was around when Barbara Mikulski moved up from the house to the Senate she was the first Democratic woman. So now you know you have a much larger number but still not nearly a majority what do they bring to the debate here and would things be different if say half the members were women?

Bash: [00:59:04] I do think it would be different if half the members were women. I genuinely am not just saying this. I think that we probably would have more things that get done because then just this is by by example the women who were who were there tend to look women are problem solvers. It's what we do we multitask and we problem solve. You know whether it's figuring out how to get your kid from point A to Point B or you know creating policy as they are now for some of the most important parts of American society. And so just seeing the way that Barbara Mikulski and Kay Bailey Hutchison on the Republican side she retired as well. Both of them started this dinner club in the Senate and they meet once a month off the record. No notes little bit of wine and they get to know each other as people and so many pieces of bipartisan legislation have come from that because they get to know each other it's old school like I was talking about with you know Ted Kennedy and the people who used to get try to get things done across

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

party lines. And so there's a lot of that. And you know look women also just have different perspectives and come come just like different people of various walks of life gender gender neutral way. It's just the approaches is different.

Axelrod: [01:00:26] Yeah. I also I mean I want to say this in such a way that I know. But I think that there's a temperament element here there's not fighting for fighting say--

Bash: [01:00:37] Exactly.

Axelrod: [01:00:39] You know.

Bash: [01:00:40] It's not that women don't have egos. Women have egos but it's not the same.

Axelrod: [01:00:43] You have to have egos to be in politics.

Bash: [01:00:44] Yeah. Yeah.

Axelrod: [01:00:45] But, you don't the testosterone issue which too often intrudes in our politics.

Bash: [01:00:52] Jeanne Shaheen said, she's a senator from New Hampshire. Again, first female governor.

Axelrod: [01:00:57] I remember when she was running New Hampshire for Gary Hart.

Bash: [01:01:01] Exactly. Exactly!

Axelrod: [01:01:02] Back in 1984.

Bash: [01:01:03] Exactly so she she is the first governor female governor in New Hampshire first female senator from New Hampshire. But one of the reasons I wanted to talk to her is exactly that. She started out as a staffer and as a campaign you know campaign aide and a strategist and and she jokes that she decided to run because all the men she was working for couldn't win. But but she talks about the fact that in her experience she she she actually she's another person who lost the first time she ran for the Senate she went to the Harvard Institute of Politics and that her her experience was that women obviously this is a generalization but women for the most part want to run because they want to actually accomplish something and get something done there's something that really burned them up on a local level or something that they saw on a national level. And sometimes men just want to be Senator.

Axelrod: [01:01:50] Patty Murray is a great example perfect example started off on school issues. And wound up--

Bash: [01:01:56] A mom in tennis shoes.

Axelrod: [01:01:56] And actually the leading Democrats in the Senate.

Bash: [01:02:01] And she did one of the few pieces of real bipartisan legislation that we've seen in the last five years she did it with Paul Ryan but she worked really hard across party lines and to get it done.

Axelrod: [01:02:10] Well for my money, you Dana Bash you're one of the bad ass and that's.

Bash: [01:02:15] Aw, you say that to all the girls.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & CNN PRESENT

THE AXE FILES

Axelrod: [01:02:15] I do not. And and a great colleague and I feel lucky to work with you and thank you so much.

Bash: [01:02:23] Thank you, it's my honor

Unidentified Speaker: [01:02:28] Thank you for listening to the X Files part of the CNN Podcast Network for more episodes of The X-Files visit CNN.com/podcast and subscribe on iTunes, Stitcher, or your favorite app. And for more programming from the University of Chicago, Institute of Politics visit politics.uchicago.edu.