

Center for Strategic and International Studies

**Bob Schieffer's "About the News" with H. Andrew Schwartz
Podcast**

Subject: "Chris Wallace and the Fox Firewall"

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(Music plays.)

BOB SCHIEFFER: I'm Bob Schieffer.

H. ANDREW SCHWARTZ: And I'm Andrew Schwartz.

MR. SCHIEFFER: And these are conversations about the news. We are in the midst of a communications revolution. We have access to more information than any people in history. But are we more informed, or just overwhelmed by so much information we can't process it?

MR. SCHWARTZ: These conversations are a year-long collaboration of the Bob Schieffer College of Communication at Texas Christian University and the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

(Music plays.)

MR. SCHIEFFER: Our guest this time is Chris Wallace, the moderator of "Fox News Sunday" and to say Chris and I go back a ways is an understatement. His dad, the late Mike Wallace, was my friend and colleague of many years. His stepfather, Bill Leonard, was my boss for many years when he ran CBS News. I would also add that his mom, Kappy, was a friend of mine and my wife, Pat.

Chris is the only person I know who has anchored Sunday talk shows at two networks. He anchored "Meet the Press" for a couple of the 14 years he worked at NBC, he also spent 14 years at ABC.

In 2016, Chris was the first Fox journalist to be asked to moderate a presidential debate. Chris, were you surprised by that?

CHRIS WALLACE: Yeah, I was surprised just because I had been trying in 2008 and 2012, you know, in the way that one does to sort of gently lobby the Commission on Presidential Debates. "Lobby" is probably too strong, but, you know, make a phone call or two and say, gee, I sure would be interested in this. And they sure weren't interested in this. And finally, in 2016, I got word first from Frank Fahrenkopf, one of the co-chairs, and then later from Mike McCurry that they were very seriously considering it.

And I think two factors played into it. One is the fact that Fox had never had a moderator in, at that point, the 20-year history of Fox and we were part of the pool. We were producing presidential debates, but we never had a moderator. And I think also they looked at the work that I had done and Fox had done in the Republican primaries taking on all the candidates but, in addition, or especially Donald Trump and thought that we were fair and would treat both sides fairly.

MR. SCHIEFFER: Well, I know how I felt when I moderated my first one. What was the experience like for you?

MR. WALLACE: Well, it's interesting. First of all, I was thrilled, you know, absolutely thrilled to get the call from them and then the official call from Janet Brown who is the executive producer, executive director, I guess, of the Commission on Presidential Debates. And there was, like, a formal, like, induction ceremony where she said, now, do you understand and do you accept and I do and yes. And I was absolutely thrilled. That was the good news.

The bad news was that while I was told this, as everybody else was, in early September, I didn't moderate until the last debate, which was on the 19th of October, not that I specifically remember the date, which will be etched in my heart forever, which meant I had six weeks to sweat about it and worry about it. And as you know, it is – and, you know, I like to think we've done everything in this business, but you haven't done everything until you've done a presidential debate, so I was quite excited and quite anxious, both.

And at a certain point early on I realized there was nothing I could do until the second of the presidential debates because I didn't know what questions would have been asked, I didn't know what the issues were going to be in the campaign and in the world, so I really did nothing for a month until the 9th of October when the second debate, the town hall ended, and then I had 10 days and worked my tail off with my researcher to prepare for the debate.

And I will say, as I was standing in the wings waiting to go on, the Commission officials were talking, I know you famously say you were shaking like a leaf. I don't know if was shaking like a leaf, but I remember thinking I have never done anything like this and I have never felt the anxiety that I felt there.

MR. SCHIEFFER: And there would be about, what, how many million people?

MR. WALLACE: Well, again, not to put too fine a point on it, but as it turned out 72 million people watching. It was the third-most-watched debate in history.

MR. SCHIEFFER: And the most-watched third debate.

MR. WALLACE: Yes.

MR. SCHIEFFER: And I say that as one who moderated three of those sort of debates.

MR. WALLACE: Well, I'm sorry that I took that – (laughter) – from you. But it's, I have to say – and actually, it's changed my life in a funny way because I tend to have a little bit, and I think I inherited this from my father, of anxiety. When you get a big, you know, you think, well, he's been on the air for 40 years, nothing sweats him, I tend to get anxious if I've got a big interview. But now I have a default position whenever I have that, which is, well, whatever it is it's not going to be as tough as a presidential debate. And it kind of is an automatic anxiety reliever.

MR. SCHIEFFER: You know, there was obviously, and you know about this, a concern in some quarters when it became known that a Fox reporter had been picked. But I have to say,

you got probably the best reviews of any of the moderators during that election season, and you had that huge audience that we talked about. What do you think about that? (Laughter.)

MR. WALLACE: Well, it wasn't bad. I have to say, that going in – and there was a lot of pressure. I mean, I felt, as anybody would, a lot of personal pressure. I felt a lot of corporate pressure, not from Fox, but towards Fox, because I knew that – I mean, look, I don't know that this ever happened to you, but some of the Clinton support groups immediately sent letters to the Commission saying I should be banned and, you know, not permitted to do the debate. So, you know, there was a lot going on. I was representing myself, I was representing Fox.

My greatest hope, you know, my fondest dream was that I would be equally criticized by both sides. And I remember – so I did the debate. And as you well know, you're the worst judge in the world of how the debate went and how you did after something like that. It is so intense, you are so involved in it. And I remember the next day I was on Southwest Airlines and reading the emails that were coming in. I was somewhere over Kansas. And I suddenly realized I wasn't getting criticized by both sides, I was being praised by both sides. And I turned to my wife, Lorraine, who was in the middle seat in Southwest coach flying back, and said this turned out pretty well, honey. (Laughs.)

And I was stunned. I was actually quite surprised, obviously happily so. But I was not prepared for that.

MR. SCHIEFFER: Well, that's very interesting. And as someone who has gone through this, the scrutiny, I have to say, is unlike anything that I had ever done in television –

MR. WALLACE: Absolutely.

MR. SCHIEFFER: – and, you know, some of those things that people are saying about you. And one of the things that I always felt – and when I served on the debate commission a little bit before these debates, and then I resigned when CBS asked me to come back and do some commentary and so forth on the debates, one of the things I stressed, I said this is not where you put rookies. You want to put somebody in that seat who has been through something like this before.

You had done debates, you had done the Sunday talk show every Sunday. Unless you have seen and gotten those emails that – I got one that said, you know, you've been there long enough, why don't you go back to Texas and take a long dirt nap? (Laughter.)

MR. WALLACE: I didn't get that one, but I'm not a Texan. (Laughter.)

MR. SCHIEFFER: But until you have kind of been through that, you have no idea what this is like.

MR. WALLACE: Yeah. I think, even though more important than taking the attacks, because I think almost anybody in our business now, the Internet, the social media world is

pretty cruel and people will vary and with their own names attached say things to you or about you that they would never dream of saying in public.

But I completely agree about the rookie side of it. And it isn't just, you know, that you've been in TV a while. I think, frankly, some of our colleagues who are just anchors, who mostly read teleprompter, are not prepared for it. There is something about debates, but even about just doing a Sunday show where you're used to interrupting and two people fighting with each other. And unless you've had that experience, I don't know how you could do this.

Just one last quick thing about my experience in the debate. So I am in the wings just before the debate starts and, I mean, it's high – you know, it's – as our colleague, and I guess the king of debates, Jim Lehrer, wrote a book called "Tension City," which is a pretty good description of the feeling, I remember thinking to myself I am never going to – if I get through this, I will never do this again.

And as soon as it was over it was, like, boy, I hope they pick me in four years because I would love to do it again. It is – if you come out the other end relatively unscathed, it is an experience like no other and you want to do it again.

MR. SCHIEFFER: You know, this was quite a year for Fox. Your boss and creator, Roger Ailes, was sacked in a nasty sexual harassment. Megyn Kelly, one of your most popular anchors, left for NBC. But in spite of all that, Fox had cable's highest ratings, daytime and primetime. I'm told it was probably Fox's best year since 2003. How's everybody feeling over there these days.

MR. WALLACE: Fine. I mean, it has been a rough year. You know, the ratings are good and, yes, when – and I want to just make the point you're making. It isn't that we had the best or the top ratings in cable news; we had the best ratings in cable. That means we beat ESPN, we beat TNT and TBS. We were the highest-rated cable network, entertainment, sports, news, for 2016, so that feels good.

The Roger thing was awfully tough. Look, he was an enormously – he's a terrifically inventive guy. He was one of the best bosses I ever had. He did great things for my career. He never – I know people think, well, you all have to follow a party line, he never once, in the 13 years that we were there together, ever second-guessed me or gave me any direction in a guest I booked or a question I asked.

I was obviously, like most people, completely unaware of these actions, allegations, whatever it was. They're unacceptable, they're horrifying. Clearly, Fox felt he had to leave. And assuming they're true, he did have to leave.

So on the one hand, you know, you can be upset with that, but that wasn't my experience with him. And so I feel a personal sense of loss that he's not there anymore. He was a very good boss to me and I know that an awful lot of people felt the same way at Fox.

MR. SCHIEFFER: Will Megyn Kelly be missed?

MR. WALLACE: Sure. I mean, she was a big talent, but, you know, we're, like, you know, it's happened at CBS, it's happened at all the networks, we all ultimately have to do what's best for our family. And I think family had a lot to do with it in Megyn's case because she – you know, being live at 9:00 at night is not a good way when you have three small kids who are, I think, 7, 5 and 4, something like that. And she clearly – I think this was less about money and more about lifestyle and she wanted to be home at night to have dinner with her husband and her kids. Can't fault that.

MR. SCHIEFFER: Your primetime is clearly aimed at conservatives. Bill O'Reilly is your most popular host. Sean Hannity became Donald Trump's strongest booster. But your show on Sunday seems to be more down the middle. Is that by design or do you come from a certain point of view?

MR. WALLACE: Well, I come from certainly a certain point of view, as you know. I mean, I worked at CBS local and at ABC and NBC and I had, as you pointed out, the father and stepfather that I had, so I'm, I think, in that sense, a straight-down-the-middle journalist.

When I had my first meeting with Roger in 2003, and I very much wanted to come over there, among other reasons, because I saw cable as the wave of the future and broadcast news as the wave of the past, you know. At one point, and it was really the only political conversation we ever had in terms of my own personal politics, I said, Roger, I just want to make it clear I really would like to work for you and I think I could do a good job on the Sunday show, but I'm not going to push an agenda and I'm not going to either pull my punches. And he said I don't want you to, the only thing is, can you get up every morning without thinking America is responsible for the problems in the world? And I said absolutely, you know, I think we're the good guys, not always, but mostly. And he said, that's all I want. And then, can you treat both sides the same, be equally tough on Republicans and Democrats? And I said absolutely. And we've gone on from there, as I say, for 13 years plus and never been second-guessed.

MR. SCHIEFFER: Andrew?

MR. SCHWARTZ: Thank you, Bob.

Chris, I wanted to ask this. I started out at Fox when it was actually a startup. I was one of the first employees there. And I left right around the time you came.

MR. WALLACE: I hope that it's just coincidental.

MR. SCHWARTZ: It was just coincidental, absolutely. (Laughter.) And I know, you know, Brit Hume and Tony Snow are two of my mentors. Tony was so grateful that you took over the show because he wanted someone thoughtful to come into this position.

One of the things that we often hear these days in the news business and just in general and information is that people aren't just watching the news to gather the news anymore, they're watching the news to gather ammunition to support their own points of views. And Fox is

squarely in that debate, because even though your show is down the middle and if you look at daytime coverage during Fox it's, you know, it's hard news in Washington, it's hard news, but, as Bob pointed out, the evening does have its share of pundits. MSNBC has the same thing. CNN is a whole different animal altogether. But what do you think about this notion of how Americans are now gathering their news as ammunition?

MR. WALLACE: Well, first of all, I don't think it's new. I remember back in the '60s or '70s, my first job out of college was working at The Boston Globe starting in 1969 and I was a political reporter there for four years. And I remember seeing a study at one point that said that – on the op-ed page, the columns, that people read the columnists who agree with them. That if you're a conservative you read the conservative columnists and if you're a liberal you read the liberal columnists and people tend not to read the other side, so I don't think that's particularly new. Clearly, television news has become more politically polarized than it has been.

Look, we at Fox feel that the primetime, and let's not make any bones about it, it does tilt conservative and it is the biggest moneymaker for Fox, so it's not like this is just something, but Fox does treat it somewhat differently. It is the op-ed page of Fox.

And one of the things, and I'll make a contrast here with MSNBC, Fox has always had something of a firewall in its news coverage. When you get to conventions, when you get to election night, when you get to debates, it isn't, and I'm not knocking them at all, but it isn't Bill O'Reilly and it isn't Sean Hannity who have been anchoring that coverage. It's always been people like Brit Hume and Bret Baier and Chris Wallace. And frankly, that's different than MSNBC where you have people like Rachel Maddow or Chris Matthews giving opinion, or Keith Olbermann back in the day, giving opinion every night, but then also being the news anchors for big events. So we've always been sensitive to that and I think had more, as I say, of a firewall between opinion and news.

MR. SCHWARTZ: Do you think in general, though, there's too much of a mixture of opinion and hard news these days and across the spectrum?

MR. WALLACE: Well, and this is where I may rub up against Mr. Schieffer here a little bit. Clearly when they started Fox News, Rupert Murdoch and Roger Ailes back in 1996, their feeling was, although nobody said it, that there was a mixture of news and opinion on the broadcast networks and mainstream news and that there was an audience there that felt that CBS and NBC and ABC tilted left and that if they provided not to say a right-wing network, although I'm sure some people will say that Fox is a right-wing network, but a network that presented both sides, not just the other side, but both sides of the news, that there would be an audience for it and that it would be – people would notice the difference.

And, you know, as we see 20 years later, Fox has been an enormous, enormous success because people felt there was something missing in the coverage of the broadcast networks, mainstream networks that Fox provided.

MR. SCHIEFFER: Were you surprised by the election results?

MR. WALLACE: Well, it sort of depends on when you say. I'm quite proud of the fact that after I did an interview, my first interview with Donald Trump in October of 2015 – and, you know, this isn't talked about a lot, but after the big first debate, which I think has often been called the Megyn Kelly debate because of the woman question, he was equally ticked off at me because I asked him about the four bankruptcies the Trump companies had had and went after me, so it took me several months from August until October to get him to sit down.

But after that interview on a Saturday in October of 2015, I went on the show the next day and I said I could see this guy getting elected president because I heard a message, a populist message about, you know, pro America, keeping jobs in America, that there was an elite in Washington, in the media that was out of touch with what a lot of folks were thinking. And I thought, you know, whether you agreed or not, that isn't our job, that it was a message that would have resonance.

Now, were there plenty of times between then an Election Day when he went after, you know, both before and after, when he went after various people or, you know, insulted John McCain or the "Access Hollywood" tape when I thought he was a dead duck? Absolutely.

I will say that on election night itself, we went into, at 5:15, we went into the exit poll meeting. And, you know, that's always couched, as you know, Bob, in various phrases. They never say, well, so-and-so is going to win. But when they say things like, you know, there's a 60 percent chance we'll be able to call the election for Clinton between 11 and 11:30, as Bob Dylan said, you don't have to be a weatherman to know which way the wind blows. (Laughs.)

But around 9:00 on election night, I looked at, you know, suddenly states like Florida that we had heard there was going to be this big Hispanic vote, it was too close to call; North Carolina, too close to call. And you were starting to see the blue wall, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, too close to call. I went on the air, and apparently somebody did a study and I was the first person to say, look, Trump might win this.

So the answer is, when I work up election morning, was I – did I expect Trump to win? No. But as the night went on and at various points during the campaign, I thought, yeah, maybe.

MR. SCHIEFFER: You know, I was doing a fellowship up at Harvard last year and I remember going up and, boy, did I make some eyes roll and there was a lot of coughing in the audience when I spoke. But I said I think Donald Trump may get the Republican nomination because I had, you know, been, you know, to some of these rallies, I had been interviewing him for years, like you, and I understood how really mad a lot of people were. But I'll have to say this, I did not think he was going to win the general election, just as you did. Once he insulted John McCain, once he said what he said about Megyn Kelly, once he made fun of that person –

MR. WALLACE: The reporter.

MR. SCHIEFFER: – the reporter –

MR. WALLACE: At The New York Times, yeah.

MR. SCHIEFFER: – the challenged reporter at The New York Times, every – I thought those were losers. I thought every time he did that, that was – he was breaking another rule in politics. You can't win if you do that.

MR. WALLACE: Right.

MR. SCHIEFFER: And so I was surprised on election night. But like you, as the evening wore on and we didn't see a quick call in Florida, we didn't see the quick calls that we thought we were going to see in some of those states, I began to think that he was going to win. But I did not see his victory coming until then.

MR. WALLACE: There are two things I would say about this. One of the things that Roger always used to say to us, I remember – and look, there were a lot of – there was a conservative tilt to Fox, no question about it, at least in some parts of it. And I remember on election night, and I guess this was in 2008 when, or maybe it was 2012 when – but it was one of the times that Obama won. And, you know, it was clear from the exit polls. And he went out, and this is – Andrew, you'll know, this will sound familiar to you. He was such a good producer. He said, look, however this turns out we want to be bright, we want to be happy, this is a celebration of democracy and don't look like your dog just died. And, you know, and that was very much of feeling of his that, just as television professionals, you didn't go out and show you were rooting for a side.

The reason I say that is because of the fact that when I turned on the TV on the day after the election, on Wednesday the 9th of November, this time on the broadcast networks, I'm not going to name names, I saw some people whose dogs had just died. They were – and frankly, this is one of the reasons I think Fox has succeeded because the mainstream media sometimes shows its bias or where it's leaning so much that I think it's – it can be off-putting to people who wanted it to be played straight.

The only other thing I'd say is, for people like you and me, you know, we've been around so long and we've seen it all so much and you kind of know how it's going to play. And one of the things that's so invigorating about President Trump and this transition is I feel like a cub reporter because I've never seen anything like this before. I mean, I've been covering transitions since Ronald Reagan in 1980. And, you know, this is all – it's not only new to most people, not only new to you, it's new to me and it's like I'm along for the ride.

MR. SCHWARTZ: You know, there's kids all over America who have invented a drinking game that every time Bob Schieffer says "I've never seen anything like this" on the air, they actually have to do a shot. (Laughter.)

MR. SCHIEFFER: Did this start just with this campaign?

MR. SCHWARTZ: Just started with this campaign.

MR. WALLACE: Well, we could all – you could do it with all of us and get really drunk. We say it routinely.

MR. SCHWARTZ: Sure.

MR. WALLACE: I mean, the tweets. You know, I think the tweets actually are a pretty smart idea and there are plenty that he does. You know, it's a great tool. He sits there and he puts something out on Twitter and 20 million people see it and it's a way to dominate the debate. But, you know, smart tweets are good. Dumb tweets are dumb.

And, you know, it's just like we're doing this interview, I'll date it, we're doing it the day after the Golden Globe Awards. Meryl Streep took his bark off. So what? You know, she's a Hollywood star, she's a liberal and she criticized him. But he has to go on Twitter and say the "overrated" Meryl Streep and she's a "Hillary flunky." And you think, why on earth would the president of the United States dignify this, raise it to that level and only make it a bigger story?

MR. SCHWARTZ: And maybe he knows best, you know? We'll have to see.

MR. WALLACE: Well, we'll have to see. But as I say, we're cub reporters, we've never seen this before.

MR. SCHIEFFER: So how do we cover this?

MR. WALLACE: I think you cover it straight, you don't look like your dog died if you don't like the guy. You cover it straight. I think, you know, there are some people who say, well, we're not going to cover Twitter. Ridiculous. It's a way that he makes a comment. I mean

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MR. SCHIEFFER: It's a press release.

MR. WALLACE: Yeah. And look, if it's a silly press release about something that doesn't matter, we ignore a lot of press releases, too. But when he's sitting there saying we should have good relations with Russia or he starts calling the Democratic minority leader in the Senate "head clown Schumer" that's news and I don't know how you can say it's not news.

But whether it's that or however he wants to deal with it, I don't think we can sit there and tell – he's got a – you know, some people are saying, well, if he doesn't hold news conferences, we shouldn't cover Twitter. No, that's not the way you do it. You cover the news however he chooses to make it. And you can certainly say he hasn't had a press conference in 240 days or whatever and put it in context and put the tweets in context and anything else he does, but you've got to cover him.

MR. SCHIEFFER: Did we give him, television, cable and networks, did we give him too much time?

MR. WALLACE: Absolutely, and I can think of two particular cases of that. One was the rallies and, you know, the fact – I mean, frankly, I thought CNN was worse than we were, but we were plenty bad at Fox, where they would have the camera on the empty podium and say “waiting for Trump rally.” People said, well, we made Trump. No, we didn’t make Trump; Trump was a phenomenon and we were chasing the ratings of Trump, you know, we were following the crowd, not leading the crowd. But, you know, that was unfair, we shouldn’t have given him that kind of coverage.

And the other thing, and I’m very proud of myself in this regard, is that a lot of my colleagues on the Sunday shows started putting him on doing phoners. And you go back further than I do, but I’ve got to say, in my history, which goes back pretty far now, I had never seen a presidential candidate do a phone interview with a Sunday talk show where the emphasis is supposed to be on in-depth interviews, not breaking news. And I was really proud of the fact that I just said right from the start, and we were the only ones who said it, and we took a hit because we did, even as a phoner he got better ratings. I said we are not putting a presidential candidate on a telephone call.

MR. SCHIEFFER: Why did you? I mean, because some people said, you know, that he got a free pass in those phone interviews. Now, I don’t agree with that, there was pushback. But what happened was he did so many interviews that just the exposure overwhelmed the pushback.

I mean, he – you know, I asked Mika Brzezinski and Joe Scarborough, why do you put him on, you know, so much? I said, why don’t you put Hillary Clinton on on the phone? And Mika said to me getting an interview with Hillary Clinton is like getting an interview with Mother Teresa. (Laughter.)

MR. WALLACE: I thought you were going to say the Pope. But Mother Teresa, she’s – Mother Teresa is dead, yes.

MR. SCHWARTZ: Yeah, even harder. (Laughter.)

MR. WALLACE: No, it was brutal. I don’t know if that was so true on the Republican side. You know, people said in the primaries, well, it was hard to get interviews. Look, I think you could have gotten interviews with Ted Cruz or Marco Rubio or Jeb Bush or something. But I wouldn’t have done phone interviews with anybody. I just – I mean, let me ask you a question. When you were the host of “Face the Nation,” would you have done phone interviews with a presidential candidate?

MR. SCHIEFFER: I’m not sure that I would, but I might have if that was the only way – if that was the only way to hear from him. And I’ve – I judge the phone interviews the same way I do the tweets. I think when you can’t get somebody in person, you know, you try to get them any way you can if you think that’s important to the story. Now, maybe we did that too much, I don’t know, but it’s the same way with the tweets. They’re like electronic press releases. And you just made the point, you know, there are a lot of handouts that come from the White House that we don’t put on CBS.

MR. SCHWARTZ: Right, but there –

MR. SCHIEFFER: But if there is one, if there's one that's newsy, well, of course we do. I mean, like, you know, you had situations where you had the Republican candidate, or the leading candidate at that point, criticizing the most previous, the most recent Republican president and saying that he lied about leading people into war in Iraq. Well, that's news. And if it's news, I think you have to cover it and I think you have to cover it in any way you can.

I mean, there's a lot of talk now about, is he going to have regular press conferences at the White House? I don't know if he is or not, but I think we've still got to cover him.

MR. WALLACE: Absolutely.

MR. SCHIEFFER: And if we have to stand out on Pennsylvania Avenue and cover him from there, then that's what we have to do.

MR. WALLACE: No, I agree with that totally. And, yes, you know, I think you can make a stink about the fact that he doesn't hold, assuming, that he doesn't hold as many press conferences as he should. Look, we did that with Reagan and we've done that with presidents all along. It's been six months since the last press conference. But that doesn't mean – we can't be in the embargo business. We can't be in the business of sitting there saying if he doesn't play by our rules, we're going to – because in the end, our duty is, our service is not to him, it's to the public. And who are we hurting by cutting off, you know, embargoing information about what the president of the United States has to say?

MR. SCHWARTZ: Well, I'm like a kid in the candy store here, gentlemen, so I have to ask you, is the – you know, the art of the Sunday show has certainly endured. And I'm sitting here with two people who have a lot of experience doing Sunday shows. Why has the Sunday show endured? It's almost exactly the same as when it began in terms of the format.

MR. SCHIEFFER: Go ahead.

MR. WALLACE: Well, I will say that, first of all, I'm honored to be included in the same breath with Bob Schieffer. And I remember, at various times there's been talk about changing the format. And as various people have gone through anchoring, and I'm sure Bob knows this far better than I do, and they're going to reinvent the wheel and they're going to add more guests and they're going to have more segments and shorter interviews.

And I remember a few years ago when there was a lot of talk about this, I was reading an interview with Bob who said, well, you know what we try and do? We try and get the most interesting people we can every Sunday and put them on the air and ask them the best questions we have the wit to come up with. And I just went, you know, hallelujah, brother, because I completely agree with that. There's so many places in the broadcast and cable landscape where you can get other stuff, but this is the one place where you can get in-depth, well-researched, pointed interviews, questions, follow ups, follow ups to the follow ups, and, you know, there's an audience for it. In fact, our ratings have never been higher. Part of that obviously was the

campaign and the excitement, but it has stayed on since the election and there's a real audience for it.

And is a mass audience? No, but it's – when you add all the shows together, it's over 10 million people, well-over 10 million people, and that's an audience well worth serving.

MR. SCHIEFFER: Chris Wallace, we want to thank you for joining us on this podcast and wish you the very best. Like the rest of us, you're going to have plenty to do this year.

MR. WALLACE: As I say, cub reporter at my age. (Laughter.)

MR. SCHIEFFER: For Andrew Schwartz, this is Bob Schieffer. Thanks for listening.

MR. SCHWARTZ: But that's not all, Bob. At the top of this podcast, we gave you just a tease of the great music from my friend Aaron Neville's new record "Apache." Let's hear some more from Aaron Neville.

(Music plays.)

(END)