

## [Transcript] Honestly with Bari Weiss / Get To Know Tim Scott: The GOP's Newest Presidential Hopeful

Hi guys, it's Barry with a really exciting announcement for you. As listeners of the show will know, one of the reasons that this exists in the first place is to embody and promote honest, frank conversations and good faith debates, both of which feel increasingly rare in our polarized country. That is why I'm so excited to announce that the Free Press, along with FIRE, the nation's leading defender of free speech rights, are hosting a live debate on a very sexy and contentious subject on Wednesday, September 13th at 7 p.m. at the historic Ace Theatre in downtown Los Angeles. The proposition? The sexual revolution has failed. Arguing for the proposition is co-host of the podcast Redscare, Anacachian, and author of the case against the sexual revolution, Louise Perry. They're going to be facing off against musician and producer Grimes, and writer and co-host of the podcast A Special Place in Hell, Sarah Hader. I'm going to be the moderator, and I couldn't be more excited. This is going to be an amazing night. It's a chance to meet other people in the real world who also like thinking for themselves and who listen to this show. You can get your tickets now by going to [thefp.com backslash debates](https://thefp.com/backslash/debates). Again, that's [thefp.com slash debates](https://thefp.com/slash/debates). I can't wait to meet some of you guys in person. And now, here's the show. Please give a warm, low-country welcome to the man I am blessed to call Uncle Timmy, your United States Senator, Tim Scott. I'm Barry Weiss, and this is Honestly. Earlier today, South Carolina Senator Tim Scott entered the race for president. Thank you. Wow. Hello, South Carolina. That makes him the sixth Republican candidate to get into the race in an attempt to beat the current front-runner, former president of the United States, Donald Trump. I'm the candidate the far left fears the most. You see, when I cut your taxes, they called me a prop. When I refunded the police, they called me a token. When I pushed back on President Biden, they even called me the n-word. I disrupt their narrative. I threaten their control. The truth of my life disrupts their lives. I will proclaim these truths from the highest mountaintop, and I will proclaim these truths in the deepest valley. Last summer, I had Tim Scott on the podcast, and I want to replay that interview for you today. As you'll hear in our conversation, Tim Scott's approach is fundamentally different than many of his fellow Republicans, in that he's the ultimate optimist. My family went from cotton to Congress in his lifetime.

## [Transcript] Honestly with Bari Weiss / Get To Know Tim Scott: The GOP's Newest Presidential Hopeful

In part, that optimism comes from his family history.  
His grandfather picked cotton in the segregated South,  
and he never learned to read or write.  
And then within two generations,  
his grandson had become a United States senator.  
But my grandfather said to me,  
son, you can be bitter or you can be better, but you can't be both.  
And today throws in his hat to become president of the United States.  
America is the land of opportunity and not a land of oppression.  
In our conversation, Scott said he's frustrated by all the pessimism  
in his party and in the country more generally.  
He takes issue with the fact that many say that America is somehow in decline.  
Though I genuinely hope Tim Scott is right,  
you'll hear that I challenge him on that idea.  
I think there are very good reasons for Americans of every political stripe  
to be fed up with the state of the union  
and to be deeply worried about the future of the country.  
Scott and I also talked about the state of his party,  
about what it's like being the Senate's only black Republican,  
and of course, about Donald Trump.  
Stay with us.  
I believe the next American century starts today.  
Hi, honestly, listeners.  
I'm here to tell you about an alternative investing platform called Masterworks.  
I know investing in finance can be overwhelming,  
especially given our economic climate.  
But there's one thing that will never go in the red,  
and that is a painting from Picasso's Blue Period.  
Masterworks is an exclusive community that invests in blue chip art.  
They buy a piece of art, and then they file that work with the SEC.  
It's almost like filing for an IPO.  
You buy a share representing an investment in the art.  
Then Masterworks holds the piece for three to 10 years,  
and then when they sell it,  
you get a prorated portion of the profit's minus fees.  
Masterworks has sold \$45 million worth of art to date,  
from artists like Andy Warhol, Banksy, and Monet.  
Over 700,000 investors are using Masterworks to get in on the art market.  
So go to masterworks.com slash honestly for priority access.  
That's masterworks.com slash honestly.  
You can also find important regulation A disclosures at masterworks.com slash cd.  
Senator Tim Scott, thank you so much for making the time.  
It's a good be with you.

## [Transcript] Honestly with Bari Weiss / Get To Know Tim Scott: The GOP's Newest Presidential Hopeful

Thank you very much.

Okay, so I just read your book and you write,

America is not fair in the simplistic playground sense of the word.

But you go on, not just in that chapter, but in the whole book

to make the case that not only is America exceptional,

but the American dream, which I think to most people feels like a punchline these days, is still alive.

And reading it, I was just struck by how profoundly out of step your rhetoric is, including with some of the loudest voices in your own party.

So I want to give you a chance to make your case today.

And I think the place to begin is by telling me, who was artists where?

Yeah, well, my grandfather is artists where born in 1921 in a very different world in the south, where a black man steps off the sidewalk, looks down, never has eye contact, because the consequence of doing so could be your life.

He's born into a rural part of South Carolina, Sally, South Carolina, where the opportunities are non-existent, where picking cotton and stopping your education by the third grade is your reality.

And there is no hope for a better future.

This is 45, 40 years or so before the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

and this I have a dream concept would be born and seen on the screens of America.

This is a dark time in Southern history.

And my grandfather walked through that time with great humiliation put on his shoulders, but with a lot of resiliency built into his heart.

And by the time my mother comes along at night, I shouldn't say when she was born, because she would be in trouble for the rest of my life.

But suffice it to say, she was born before Brown v. Board of Education.

Her world was white and colored fountains.

Black folks come to the back of the restaurant to get their food and not eat inside.

Hotels not open to you.

So my grandfather had to help my mother meander through life without getting herself in harms away.

And then think about me entering into their house, broken home that I come from, parents are divorcing when I'm seven, moving with my grandparents.

My grandmother walks more than a mile to work as a maid to come home and clean her own house, feed her own family.

But there was so much dignity in the house.

There was so much love in the house and there was a lot of scarcity everywhere else.

That man made it possible for me to see because he never got bitter and he would not allow anyone to turn him into a victim.

And that was my responsibility as well.

You are not a victim.

You do all you can with what you have.

And then you go the extra mile to prove that you are worthy of the ambitions that you seek.

## **[Transcript] Honestly with Bari Weiss / Get To Know Tim Scott: The GOP's Newest Presidential Hopeful**

So he picked Cotton, your grandfather, artist where got to see you become a United States Senator.

He lived a very, very long life.

He did.

But he never learned how to read and write.

No.

One of the stories I tell in the book is about how my brother and I would sit at the kitchen table, small table that it was, and my grandfather was poured through the newspaper.

And I was always stunned at how much time he took in that newspaper.

Only 15 years or so later to learn that he never learned to read.

But what he did learn to do was to set the table and to set the example of what he expected of his grandkids to become people who really absorbed the knowledge and understood the world events.

It was such a brilliant move on his part that I don't know where he got it from, but he knew it was important.

So you're born to his daughter, Francis, and your father, Ben, who is a Black veteran of Vietnam.

Your mother flees with you and your brother when you're about seven.

And you basically are raised in one room, one bed, with your mother and your brother.

Tell us a little bit about that.

Well, when my parents got separated seven years old, we were on the Air Force base in Michigan. We moved back to the Deep South, North Charleston, South Carolina, and into a very small

home about 700 square feet, with my grandparents having one room, and my brother, my mother, and I sharing the other room in the bed that was in that room. It was a time of great difficulty, and I can't imagine what my mother was going through at that time. The challenges, the fear, intrepidation, the weight of the world on her shoulders, the decision to put us in a better environment. And yet, it was still an environment filled with scarcity. It was an environment not very open to African Americans in 1971, 72, and 73 in Charleston, South Carolina.

But she felt like it was the right move, and I am very thankful that she made the hard decision to move home. And I'm incredibly thankful to my grandparents who opened the door and their hearts to these two new kids moving into their house to raise a lot of ruckus around the house.

What about your upbringing made you a conservative?

I think it was the spirit of optimism and resiliency, and the faith component that was woven in on a daily basis. My grandmother was a praying woman, and she thought that prayer was a key, and faith unlocks the door. And if you keep keeping on, that one day things would be better.

And it's that hope that really aligns me with the Republican Party. And frankly, my dad, while he was my hero, even though he was not there, he was a military man, and the Republican Party stands so strong for our veterans and for our military.

And as my life unfolded over the next few years, my life would intersect with small business owners that would teach me the power of profit versus wages. And that too is a place where the Republican Party is rock solid for our entrepreneurs in this country. And I think those three pieces really made me into a conservative before I even knew what a conservative was. So you weren't talking about politics in your family growing up?

## [Transcript] Honestly with Bari Weiss / Get To Know Tim Scott: The GOP's Newest Presidential Hopeful

I don't remember a single political conversation about red or blue or Republican versus Democrat. I think the default position was that you were voting Democrat without ever talking about it. I was a lifetime member of the NAACP's Youth Chapter in North Charleston. I was a part of the Trident, which is a Charleston area, Urban League. And so these were just default positions. But back in those days, the president of the NAACP, Joe Bryant, he taught me to think for myself. That was a powerful thing I wish we had more of today, but he literally said, don't follow, think, then apply, and then conclude, and then practice it. And so for me, it was a evolution that was already in there. I had to bring it to the surface. So your grandfather, Pic Cotton, you're a South Carolina senator, but it's compelling and moving as your family story is, right? You can hear in your story, look at this, look at one life in which a person from poverty with no connections, no familial wealth could become a senator in the same state where your grandfather couldn't walk down the sidewalk without fear. Isn't that amazing? But there's another way to look at that story and say, look how unjust America is. And not only is it unjust, Tim Scott, as incredible as his story is, is the exception. So I want to talk about that tension between what your story represents. Here's how you characterize the position of the negative, those who look at the injustices of America in your book. You write this, many in our great country point to the bad soil. Many of them want to bury themselves in our messy and sometimes unjust history. I don't believe that the soil of any life determines the potential of the harvest that can be reaped. I choose to believe in the power of the seed. Obviously a very uplifting, optimistic, hopeful message. And yet you also write in your book, Senator Scott, that the American dream is a, as you put it, game of inches, that it's about very small and incremental progress. And I read those two things kind of as a paradox, maybe even as a you struggling to figure out what you really feel, because a game of inches is a pretty low bar. It's not quite saying the soil is rotten to its core, but it's certainly not the same promise that a previous generation had when they thought about the American dream, right? A chicken in every pot, a car in every driveway, home ownership. It feels a little bit frankly to me like the soft bigotry of low expectations just applied to America. And I wonder what you think, have we diminished our concept of what's possible here? That leap that happened between your grandfather's generation and you, is that even possible anymore? That's a fair question and my answer is a resounding yes, it is not only possible. I think it's likely with certain conditions that we have to meet first as individuals and what we have to do as a nation. One of the reasons why I talk about the game of inches is I do think it requires resiliency and tenacity to be successful in any venture. As a small business owner who did poorly and then figured out how to do well, it was a game of inches. As a kid in high school who failed four subjects and then figured out how to end up in my high school's Hall of Fame and to go to Boy State representing my high school, it was a game of inches. I believe that not much greatness is possible if you're not paying attention to the little things. I say sweat the small stuff because the truth is life is a game of inches. Success happens inch by inch. It's a cinch is how I grew up. At the same time your seed germinates and then it goes down before it comes out. You have to first create the root system that's strong enough to support what you see above the soil. That is a painful, miserable process, but we don't see it happening. We just see the fruit of what happens. In life, for us to be

## [Transcript] Honestly with Bari Weiss / Get To Know Tim Scott: The GOP's Newest Presidential Hopeful

successful, and you read about this in my book, of course, *America A Redemption Story*, is how you turn the seed into the plant that produces fruit and feeds a family. It is painful. It is hard, but it's necessarily so. It's the pressure of the ground that helps the soil conditions be perfect for that seed to blossom. It's the pressure in our life and the pain that leads to our success. It's our failure that leads to opportunities and it's the pain of our past that leads to the promise of our future. You can't have one without the other. I think the pressure of the soil in your metaphor is something that many Americans are feeling deeply right now. Yes, ma'am. I love America.

I consider myself patriotic. I'm not embarrassed by that. Yet, when I hear people despairing about the state of our country and cynical about the American dream right now, I am very sympathetic to where they are coming from. I want to just run through quickly a few of the arguments that people, and it's beyond politics, are making right now. First and foremost is the idea of a rigged system that basically there are a group of elites who increasingly determine everything about the way this country functions, about the value of the dollar, about the price of housing, about what people have to teach their children and where those children have to go and fight wars on behalf of that elite. When people talk about a rigged system, I don't hear them as wearing tinfoil hats. I hear them as reflecting on something profoundly real and unjust about the current structure of America that's certainly less about race or gender or all of the fun culture war subjects, but is very deeply about class. I'm wondering if you see what they see. I see the challenges of life. I see the messiness of life. I'm talking about the messiness of a system. Yes. Well, I think in order to understand the messiness of the system, though, you have to actually internalize it as an individual. Most people are mostly concerned about how that system impacts them as individuals, and so the only way to understand the system is really to understand the messiness of life and why the system, by default, could be messy as well, because it's individuals that get together that create the systems that we are now concerned about. But I would simply say that when you think about the rigged system, one of the ways to understand the way to make it work better, to level the playing field, to make sure that the rules of the road work for everyone, is to the power of positive, high-quality education. I would look to no place other than Charleston, South Carolina, and frankly, New York City, to see what happens at Success Academy. Ms. Moskowitz. Even Moskowitz is a school. She's a real deal from my perspective, and she would probably disagree with me politically on 90% of the topics, but she and I both love charter schools. We love educational opportunities, and here's what she says, and I agree with, because I've experienced it, and so has she, that 87% of our kids are African-American or Hispanics, with a household income of around \$30,000, and yet these kids succeed beyond the average student in the city of New York. In Charleston, South Carolina, we have Meeting Street Academy. Average income under \$25,000, 96% free lunch, 95% African-American, and yet within three years, these kids are performing at or above the average in the country. That is unbelievable for Title I schools. So here's what we know, the great equalizer as it relates to the system that feels rigged is education. When you look at the cross tabs in a polling document, so to speak, what you find is that America works really well for the educated and not so well for the uneducated, and so the question we have to answer is how do we make sure that the system's not rigged in education, and it does feel like if you're living in a poor zip code, the game is working against



## [Transcript] Honestly with Bari Weiss / Get To Know Tim Scott: The GOP's Newest Presidential Hopeful

you, and so are the roles. We spend \$760 billion as a country on K through 12 education, and we can't figure out how to provide quality education for every single zip code. In my book, what you'll read about is my failure and challenges in education and how teachers, Mrs. Lynch, a little Jewish lady,

she failed me in English, and she said, I failed you because you didn't do the work, and Mrs. Greenberg, another wonderful Jewish lady, said in Algebra, wow, you're pretty good at this, and so I believe that the system can be level if our education system produces really well.

But how can you look at the teachers unions and not say they are rigging public schools against children? Listen, I do say that our big labor unions impact on education is leading to abysmal failure, and the poor zip codes, most marginalized communities, which in turn turns out to be a factory for incarceration when you look at the statistics that reinforce the fact that the average person who's incarcerated today could only read at the fourth grade level. So we know that, yes, there is a force in education that actually produces poor outcomes that lead to small cells, but does that mean that the entire system is institutionally rigged? It means that too much of our system is controlled by big labor, and those parts of our system that is not controlled by big labor produces exceptional opportunities for kids born and raised on the wrong side of the tracks. Therefore, fixing the system and leveling the playing field is something that you and I can help achieve together, and it's one of the reasons why I've worked with Diane Feinstein and Corey Booker and Ron Johnson on charter schools and opportunity scholarships in the D.C. area. I just wish we were doing that all over the country, because if you can be eligible for a Pell Grant to go to a private school in college, why can't you have some similar option or conduit for those kids going to poor schools, underperforming schools, K-12? So we have to fix that system, but that gives me reason to be hopeful, because I know the results of a system that works in a country that is still exceptional. Well, here's another argument that's made by the people who are saying America's best days are behind us, or they're certainly not now. You know, I live in LA right now for reasons that sometimes are baffling even to me. You walk through LA, and it is very hard not to feel despair at what's going on in the streets of Los Angeles. It is not an exaggeration to say that there are many places in this country, the richest country in the history of the world, that look like the third world. And you layer on top of that crime. Here's just a tiny example. I do not live in a bad neighborhood in Los Angeles. I just received yesterday a crime report from like our Neighborhood Watch Association with almost 10 break-ins within

two blocks of me in broad daylight in the past month. We got a memo from the community group saying

basically, catalytic converters are being stolen. And here was my favorite example. They finally caught

one of the guys who was doing it. He had an extensive criminal history. He was on probation for all of these crimes. He'd just been arrested a couple of days ago. And the detectives attempted to have his probation revoked, but the probation department won't do it. Now, you've been a powerful advocate of police reform. How do you explain what has gone wrong and what's accounting for this crime wave? Well, when you look at the crime wave around our country, the one thing that you will see the nexus of that crime wave is typically a larger blue city with a very weak application of the laws of our country and or our states and even in local jurisdiction.

## [Transcript] Honestly with Bari Weiss / Get To Know Tim Scott: The GOP's Newest Presidential Hopeful

And also you'll find that the policy positions of the leaders are such that they believe that the way that we make up for the errors of our past are the errors of our present. And so you'll see throughout those major blue areas that the fact is that crime and homicide are at a 30-year high. And when you look at the homicide results, a 50% increase since 2019, I believe it is, 85% of that 50% are African Americans and Hispanics. What you've seen is an unjust application of the

legal system, not a just application of the legal system. And when you lose hope that things will get better, all things are off the table. And when you watch on the screens in Los Angeles and around

California and many blue cities, home depots, locking doors, Walmart's question and whether they should be located in certain communities, it's because the cost of crime is an invisible tax on the shoulders of the poorest Americans. That we remedy simply by A, enforcing the laws, B, working on educational outcomes that is a long-term solution for hopelessness, and C, working to bring mentors and better family construct in communities where it's important. Yeah, you're not going to get an argument from me on the fact that blue cities are being managed terribly and that the laws aren't being enforced. Yes, ma'am. I love that you're calling me ma'am. Okay, I feel like I'm Mrs. Greenberg or whoever the algebra teacher was.

I'm a Southern boy still. I apologize. I can't get rid of it. It's just stuck in me.

Let's talk about the GOP. Yes.

This past week has seen more primary victories for candidates backed by Donald Trump, many of them being election deniers. Arizona, the state that gave us John McCain has gone full, I don't know what to call it, MAGA, I guess. You have Kerry Lake winning the gubernatorial primary. You have Blake Masters clobbering the more mainstream candidates in his Senate primary, in Michigan, Peter Mayer, a congressman who voted to impeach Trump, a moderate, beaten by the MAGA candidate, John Gibbs. A lot of people look at those results and say, this is Trump's party still. Reports of his demise have been greatly exaggerated.

Now, others say, hold on, look at Georgia, where Brian Kemp won his primary despite Trump attacking him at every turn. So I guess I'm wondering, what do you think?

Is the Republican Party still the party of Trump or not?

Let me be succinct in my answer before I give you my story.

So first, the answer is yes, the most powerful force in the Republican Party, frankly, in all of politics is still former President Donald Trump.

Second, and most importantly, our party is a party of principles, and if we want to be the party of the future, we are going to have to embed ourselves in a principles-centered approach to living and governing.

As we do that, you will find the American spirit soaring. You'll find that human flourishing, returning, because we cannot succeed on any individual personality, no matter how strong it is. What has made America the greatest country on earth has been principles that are embedded in the consciousness, even the DNA of this nation. And to the extent that we adhere to those principles, we find ourselves flourishing, to the extent that we go to a personality-centric debate around who, as opposed to what and why, it is hard for us to recover that genius that is America. I believe in American exceptionalism, because I believe that our success does come from Washington,



## [Transcript] Honestly with Bari Weiss / Get To Know Tim Scott: The GOP's Newest Presidential Hopeful

and it does come from politicians. It comes from garages and apartments and libraries, where really bright people with just a little opportunity do amazing things.

Well, you believe in American exceptionalism. Trump believes in Trump exceptionalism. And I'm wondering what the cost is to your party of continuing to be the party of Trump, because despite what he says about 2020, he lost. And many of these more extreme candidates who either flirt with election denial or come out right and say it, I believe have a much higher chance of losing against especially a moderate Democrat. So I'm looking at a party that if they were just acting normal, could crush the Democrats right now. And yet they seem to be making a choice that owning the lives is more important than having the chance to win the midterms.

Well, Barry, I'll disagree with you a little bit here. I do believe that the truth is that we're having a conversation about the Republican Party, but we should be having a conversation about parties, plural. Both parties are really important in part of the process. So you look at the progressives on the left, the fact, frankly, the reason why President Biden has lost about 20 points in minority communities is because the policies that they have proposed have been miserable and detrimental to the quality of life, quality experience in those communities.

So we have a real opportunity for pickups around the country. And I think we will see those pickups. But to your original point, however, there's no doubt that the November election cycle will tell us a lot about what the appetite of the American voter really is. We won't have to guess about it much longer. We'll know exactly what it is. Today, the three top issues, by the way, from all the polls I've been reading is the economy, inflation, and gas prices. That's right. People don't seem to care a lot about anything to include President Trump's overwhelming impact on the primaries and or the progressives' failure to knit together some coalition around a, what I believe is a class society that will fix the poorest Americans in a caste system at the bottom of that food chain. So it seems to me that Americans are turning their attention towards their own pocket books and asking the question, what party will help me be better and have more control over my decisions.

I agree with that. When you talk about the potential for pickups, never before have I seen more politically homeless people who are like, give me someone that's going to fix things. I don't care if there's an R or a D next to their name. Just give me someone that is sane, normal, and functional. If Republicans could be that party and really focus on solving those problems, I think it could be an unbelievable red wave. The problem is, they look at people like Kerry Lake in Arizona, but we could name dozens of other people and say, I can't vote for these people. Sounds really nice, Tim Scott. You're talking about principle.

These people are disconnected from reality. Well, Barry, do you see the risk in that extreme edge of your party actually hamstringing the wins that you should otherwise be getting in the midterms and maybe even 2024? There's no doubt that the voters appetite for a conversation that is not exclusively about their kids and their kids future,

I think will reap disaster on both sides of the aisle. And so I do think that this is a prime time for me to have an opportunity to bring in a great opportunity party and a great opportunity party message that is anchored in those principles because I can't make up for the decisions that are being made around the country. But what I can do is present an alternative that I think actually is in our best interest as a country and put partisan politics as a secondary matter. To me, what's most important as a kid who grew up during the Carter years

## [Transcript] Honestly with Bari Weiss / Get To Know Tim Scott: The GOP's Newest Presidential Hopeful

and experienced in 1979 as I was entering into high school, the kind of dejection and the kind of disillusionment that leads to low performance. So I've seen this tape before, so to speak, or this movie, but I believe that by focusing my attention on the solutions and why I believe America is the solution, that we will avoid some of the pitfalls that seem to be coming our way. Not all of them, but many of them. A lot of Americans, and maybe especially political independence like me, look at what politicians spend their time talking about. Look at the fact that basic things like airports and bridges and roads are broken. And it's not surprising to me, then, when I look at the polling and just 16% of the country thinks you guys are doing a good job. I'm wondering if you could speak to what is the root cause of the inability, it seems, to get things done that the rest of us are looking at and wondering how do these guys still have their jobs, frankly? Well, as you might imagine, I want to give you a little pushback on those national polls. Push hard. Come on, don't be such a polite Southern gentleman. Go ahead. Well, it's hard for me not to. I just want us to remember that for every Kerry Lake that we talk about, there are probably 15 Mayer Flores. And so there's a truth about who we are as a nation and what we want out of our country. And we can always find those outliers who seem to be more mainstream than I think they actually are. But long-term, I know they- Maya Flores who won our congressional seat in Texas. Yes, ma'am. Thank you very much. Yes. A wonderful young lady who born in Mexico and has proven that in a very blue district that I think Obama won by 22 and I believe it was Biden won by 16 or 13. She won without question. So there is something in the water that's good news, by the way. So I do think we should not forget that part. But I honestly think that America finding its right track is sometimes a painful long process. And I'm excited that we are heading in that direction. The book, America Redemption Story, really is about much of what we're discussing right now. It's the how pain really opens the door for promise. How misery and a mess creates a message and a messenger. I don't want to think too small. I think you're very masterful at bringing it back to the Reagan-like talking points. But it's- And I don't think they're talking points- For reason though. No, I know. I think they're sincere. But you are sidestepping to me the question of there are people who are winning primaries in your party. The party of, you know, I consider you very principled, right? And they're winning elections basically in part based on a lie. And doesn't that make you uncomfortable? Well, that's a hard question for me to answer because, number one, I've been very clear that 2020 is over. It's done. President Biden is our president, period. Next question. It's not a long conversation because it's not one we can have. Well, some people are really wanting to draw out that conversation. But guess what? Long term, it won't produce the fruit that they think it will. Number one, number two, there are as many challenges and deceptive ads and approaches taken on the left as we're discussing on the right. We're making it as if the voter has only one choice. And the truth is that they have two choices and they're going to make good choices consistently throughout this country. We have survived, by the way, because this is something that I think is so important. We have survived a civil war in the city where I was born. We lost nearly 600,000 American men, 4% of the male population, to set people like me free. We have survived a constitution that made me three-fifths of a person, even though our Declaration of Independence said that all of us are created equal. We survived that and amended our mistake. We have survived, frankly, the Great Recession, not the one in 1987 or 2008, but the one in 1930s. We overcame the challenges of the Jim Crow South. We overcame the 1960s with more Republicans

## [Transcript] Honestly with Bari Weiss / Get To Know Tim Scott: The GOP's Newest Presidential Hopeful

voting

for the civil rights legislation than Democrats. We survived the Rodney King incident. Frankly, my state overcame the Mother Emanuel Church shooting just seven years ago.

We have some breaking news right now in downtown Charleston. Police are responding to a shooting

at the Emanuel AME Church. Someone came inside of the church and fired shots. We were able to determine that there were eight deceased individuals inside of the church. We woke up today and the heart and soul of South Carolina was broken. Parents are having to explain to their kids how they can go to church and feel safe, and that's not something we ever thought we'd deal with. Having said that, we are a strong and faithful state. We did so by coming together.

We ask of God that you will guide and direct and strengthen those families

who have been victimized by that horror. There were more naysayers or more stations around the world that said when a racist killer goes to the place where the civil war starts,

there is a race war coming. And what did we see Charlestonians and South Carolinians do?

We literally joined hands, hands like yours, joining hands like mine, on our ravenel bridge saying not in my town and not on my watch. We took the Confederate flag down as a result and we saw the greatest message of unification in the history of our state.

I got to tell you, yes, there are folks that are naysayers. There are folks who are just wrong and the proof will be in the pudding in the end. But what you and I have done and will continue to do for the rest of this conversation is to agree, to disagree on some things without being disagreeable. We are going to be able to say, you know what, the senator, he's too nice in this topic. And I want to say, actually, I'm just thinking on the other side of the problem because problems are part of our future. But the promise of solutions are more powerful than the problems that we face. We did it through a civil war. We did it through the Great Depression. We did it through the Jim Crow South. We did it through the 1960s. We're going to do it again. I want to tell you a little story that I'm not sure if you know. In 2020, there was a moment after the killing of George Floyd where you were in a very important like pole position to get things done on police reform. And you had this bill that you were proposing and Schumer supported it. I think you even had like Bernie Sanders and Tom Cotton, you'll tell me, but it was like a huge range of people who were supporting this bill at first. And it had things in it like that both sides could get behind things like blocking federal money to police departments that didn't ban chokeholds.

And basically, the bill fell apart because of politics. You could probably tell the story better than I can. Why did the bill fall apart quickly? The Democrats really wanted the issue more than the solution. Well, here's what happened. I was at the New York Times and you or your staff

sent in an op-ed about the bill and why it fell apart. And this is the part I'm not sure if you know. There was a discussion about the piece and whether or not we should run it. And one colleague,

a more senior colleague, said to a more junior colleague who was pushing for the piece, do you think the Republicans really care about minority rights?

Wow. And the more junior colleague said, I think Tim Scott cares about minority rights.

And then, and here's the pretty shocking part, the more senior colleague said,

## [Transcript] Honestly with Bari Weiss / Get To Know Tim Scott: The GOP's Newest Presidential Hopeful

let's check with Senator Schumer before we run it. Wow. And the colleague, the younger one, refused because he said, because that colleague said it wasn't an ethical thing to do. Wow.

Are you surprised to hear that? Or does that story feel kind of representative of the way the media has treated you and maybe some of your colleagues?

I am disappointed to hear that. I am not surprised to hear that. You have to remember that the Washington Post fact-checked my life. And I can't tell you how disrespectful and dishonoring that entire process was for, went on for three or four months as they went through records to find out whether or not my grandfather actually dropped out of school in the third grade. Their record suggested he dropped out in the fourth grade, but still didn't learn to read.

They wanted to know if I had somehow hidden my silver spoon and just was using a plastic spoon instead. And the more they dug, the more they realized that there was no evidence that disproved the fact that I am who I say I am and that I experienced what I said I've experienced. So there is something in national media that wants to frame any conservatives, particularly black conservatives, as being disingenuous or insincere or a tool for the conservatives, when in fact the black community is consistently as conservative as any community. That my black experience that I write about is one fraught with challenges, driving while black, being stopped more than 20 times, not able to get into the Senate chambers, even with my Senate pen on. But I'm not a pessimist in a, and I'm not a negative person when it comes to overcoming my challenges and understanding that they are real. I talked about sitting down with the families who had lost loved ones at the hands of police officers, with President Trump being there with me and AG Barr.

I can't tell you how painful it is for national media to be overly connected to the caricature of what I need to be to sell more ads or provide the same narrative that reinforces their negative image of conservatives who happen to be black. I can just tell you, Barry, that my commitment is to what is best for Americans and not what is best for Republicans. That my commitment is to remember who I was at seven years old and make sure that that kid growing up in 2022 or 24 or 26 or 2030 has more opportunities than I had in 1972. If we remain committed in spite of the absolute onslaught of negativity rooted in the myth that they want to present to the American people,

count me in. I was moved by this political profile of you from a few years back where you say, I'm not pretending that this earth suit I'm in, as in your skin, isn't being evaluated. I just don't want to play a game with it. Yes. I've heard you talk a lot about the trust gap or the deep divide between the black community and law enforcement in this country. Yes. You've talked powerfully about being stopped by the cops seven times in one year. You just shared with me that you were profiled by cops on Capitol Hill as a senator. I want to be with you in not playing the race game, but you've admitted, given your own personal experience, that there are still many problems in this country around race. Given all of that, I wonder how you think about the question of systemic racism. Do you think it's real? I think it was real. I do not think it is real now.

I think the systems of our country or the institutions in our country are no longer racist.

I think America is not a racist country while we still struggle with the issue of race.

One of the things I believe is that what we suffer from today, Barry, especially in the area of race, is an accounting on both sides of the ledger. I am painfully clear and honest about the reasons that so many African Americans distrust the police, but I'm also clear and optimistic about the reasons why we should. While we have had more as a race, more negative experiences

## [Transcript] Honestly with Bari Weiss / Get To Know Tim Scott: The GOP's Newest Presidential Hopeful

with

the police, I think than any other racial group, it is also 81% of African Americans who want the same level of policing or more policing. What we honestly need is honesty, which means that you have

to tell the good side and the bad side. And one of the things I'm committed to is making sure that people get the whole picture of my black experience as you read through my book. And at the same time,

come to your own conclusions by how are you being treated as an individual when you walk into a restaurant or when you walk into a retail shop or when you're hanging out with your friends.

Can you actually go into a restaurant that my grandfather and my mother cannot go into?

Can you have a job to include being president of the United States or vice president of the United States if you look like me? Can you rise the ranks in Fortune 500 companies like Ken Chinope did and become the president CEO of American Express? And are you all just aberrations and not real? Or is there progress that is measurable? The answer is the latter, not the former. People accuse you of many things for the sin of being black and conservative.

Yes. You've been called unspeakable things, a house and word, an Uncle Tom, a prop of Trump.

Is the racism worse from liberals or from conservatives?

Without question from liberals. There is a hierarchy that exists within the liberal doctrine and black conservatives must be at the bottom of that pit.

Why is that?

You know, I think it's because we're a threat to their notion of reality as opposed to the actual reality itself. I was writing just last night in my journal and one of the things I was writing about in my journal was how my mother and other African Americans were treated in the 60s and frankly in the 80s as well when I was a kid. There were certain friends who could not have me over to their house because I was black. It didn't matter my grades. It didn't matter as being president of the Sunni government. Nothing mattered except for the color of my skin. And today what you would hear is don't bring that rhino into my house, Republican in name only. What you would hear is you're dating a blue voting card and not a red one. What you would hear is that two-thirds of Republicans and two-thirds of Democrats have no friends who aren't partisan warriors. That means that the black and white that I experienced is now red and blue and I am experiencing more from people who look like me than I am those who do not like me. And I'll be honest with you I think that's actually worse. The hypocrisy or the stench that comes from those who have experienced the pain and the misery of being discriminated against now at the top of the mantle looking down provides the same level of discrimination just in a different form. Unconscionable.

Okay one quick break and then a lightning round with Senator Tim Scott. Stay with us.

You ready for a lightning round? Yes ma'am I'll go faster. Favorite movie? Favorite movie of all time is Rocky 3. There's no doubt that Sylvester Stallone deserved an Emmy for Rocky 3. What do you think of Lindsey Graham? Lindsey Graham is a hilarious politician, effective, controversial and he is comfortable in his own skin. What do you think of Andrew Yang and the prospects for a third party in America? 30 years too soon and hopefully never. I think our country operates really well under a two-party system. Ron DeSantis. Ron DeSantis is very similar to Trump and is today riding on a very high wave of popularity. Who's your hero? My hero is Francis



## [Transcript] Honestly with Bari Weiss / Get To Know Tim Scott: The GOP's Newest Presidential Hopeful

Scott and artists where my mother really paid such a heavy price to deliver hope for me and my brother and I'll spend the rest of my life being thankful and trying to make sure that she spends the rest of her life in as much comfort as possible. Who's your enemy? I have none. I'm a big believer in Matthew 544. You have to love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. What's the most

disappointing part of being in public office? Probably the caricature made of me by people who don't know me. Should Facebook and Twitter be treated as common carriers as Clarence Thomas

recently hinted in a Supreme Court dissent? I don't know the answers to that question because I'm not familiar with the decision but I will say that their two-thirty exemption should be in jeopardy based on the fact that they are inconsistent with the concept of fairness. Have you ever broken

a law? I probably cheated on the test at some point when I was failing out my freshman year. What's something you've changed your mind about? I've changed my mind on the fact that I cheated on a test in my freshman year. What's a conspiracy theory that you believe is real?

That's a good question. I don't know the answer to that one. UFOs? What do you think?

No. What do you mean no? Oh, I thought that was a simple answer. Apologize. Let me give you a little color today. Are UFOs real? No, that was my answer. Yes. Listen, I don't think so. I believe angels are real but I don't think UFOs are. You believe angels are real. Have they had an impact on your life? Absolutely. When I had my car accident in 1982, I literally rolled through all the lanes of traffic going east, hit the median, coming back west, flipped over cars, nicked the car, coming down, went through the windshield, came back in the car, no seat belt, and I walked away from that accident with just shards of glass in my back and my back side.

I yelled for help, which was yelling for God, and supernaturally, according to the officers and all the emergency responders, it was impossible for me to be alive.

You're a deeply religious person. What's your most common prayer?

To treat others as God has treated me. I've been the beneficiary of unmerited grace and favor. I think being born in America is a blessing beyond recognition.

And my most common prayer is just thank you, Lord, that I have been blessed with such an amazing opportunity. Final question. You write a lot in your book about how your goal is to have a positive impact on the lives of billions of people. Yes. Most people just don't have that kind of appetite. Seems like you do. So are you running for president?

I am only running for reelection in 2022, and I look forward to being successful.

And if the good Lord blesses me and the people of South Carolina does, maybe we can have another interview where we talk about more topics.

So diplomatic. Senator Tim Scott, thank you so much for joining me.

Yes, ma'am. Thank you for your time and thank you for the willingness to have a real conversation and dialogue about some of the most important issues that our country's ever faced in our lifetime.

Thanks for listening. If you liked this conversation, if it provoked you, if it made you change your mind, if you never heard of Tim Scott and want to learn more, or you never heard of Tim Scott and now think, eh, that's enough, all of it's great.

Share this conversation with your friends, your family, and your community, and use it to have an honest conversation of your own. And if you want to hear from another



## **[Transcript] Honestly with Bari Weiss / Get To Know Tim Scott: The GOP's Newest Presidential Hopeful**

presidential hopeful, check out our conversation on Honestly with Nikki Haley and stay tuned for future conversations with candidates right here on the podcast.

Last, if you want to support Honestly, there's just one way to do it.

Go to thefp.com, T-H-E-F-P, like freepress.com, and become a subscriber today. We'll see you next time.