

On Tue, Sep 17, 2019 at 2:17 PM Alice Dreger wrote:

Hi, John,

Thanks for talking earlier today.

You may have seen Katie's new piece, just up:

<https://www.thestranger.com/slog/2019/09/17/41416013/cancel-culture-what-exactly-is-this-thing>

I previously sent you a link with an essay that explains my decision to leave Northwestern and generally take be wary of academia, and I have the sense you haven't read it and may be under a misunderstanding with regard to my history. So here it is again:

<https://www.chronicle.com/article/Take-Back-the-Ivory-Tower/241304>

It's short so it won't take you long to read.

To be frank, I'm hoping not to have the same experience with you that I had with Bari Weiss, when I was lumped into an alleged secret society about which I knew very little if anything. Here's my cheeky piece on that:

<https://www.chronicle.com/article/Why-I-Escaped-the/243399>

But in all seriousness, I'm concerned you've come to this story with an assumption that isn't playing out, and you're determined to make it the story — that there is a secret peer support group of people who have been "cancelled." I do not think of people like me, Katie, or Jesse as cancelled in any way — we all have vibrant careers — nor do I think of them as extraordinary work friends. They're work friends like so many others in my life.

Yes, being attacked sucks. It always has. (Ask Socrates.) But I think Katie's piece really captures why she and I (and many others) get what the motivations are behind people who seek to call out people in power nowadays. That motivation is justified and reasonable, even if it sometimes takes problematic approaches.

I realize you don't have time to read "Galileo's Middle Finger" right now, but I would appreciate if you have some more concept of my bio before I become a model for social media ruin porn. If you frame me and others as "The Cancelled," you're basically joining the mob in the misrepresentation.

Thanks for listening.

Alice

On Sep 17, 2019, at 6:19 PM, John McDermott wrote:

I think you're wrong about that. I understand your exception with the word "canceled" (which literally everyone I've talked to has expressed to me). But this "informal peer support network," as you put it, is a great way to describe it and very real.

On Tue, Sep 17, 2019 at 7:40 PM Alice Dreger wrote:

John,

Let me know if you want to write about my other fascinating informal support networks. Like the one for people who are non-celiac gluten intolerant (it's about shit). Or the one for my fellow ex Catholics friends whose parents also voted for Trump (it's about shit). Or the one for working intellectual mothers (it's about shit).

I'm a goldmine for the New York Times Style journos! Tell Bari I said hey and that I still want to see my IDW playing card. People say it's the most valuable one because it was never released.

Alice

On Sep 17, 2019, John McDermott wrote:

Haha I sense you still calling bullshit on the premise of my piece, but again, I have to disagree. So many people who have found themselves on the wrong end of a Twitter pile on lose all their support, from both their social and professional connections, so it's interesting and sensible they turn to each other.

I mean, to your own point, you've counseled about 100 different people through this experience. Is that not significant?

On Tue, Sep 17, 2019 at 7:56 PM wrote:

I'm just glad Michigan gives me the right to record interviews.

Good night.

Alice

On Tue, Sep 17, 2019 at 7:58 PM John McDermott wrote:

Ha. I'm not worried.

On Sep 18, 2019, John McDermott wrote:

Alice, I just checked out [Bari's piece on the IDW](#) and it looks like your name isn't mentioned.

On Wed, Sep 18, 2019 Alice Dreger wrote:
John,

I take it this means you still haven't looked at the two links I send you, twice.

This is definitely going in my next book (about journalism). It's too funny.

Best,

Alice

On Sep 18, 2019 John McDermott wrote:

You're right, I haven't. I've had back-to-back interviews for this piece, and some other deadlines, so I've had time to read the dozens of links I've been sent for this piece.

On Wed, Sep 18, 2019 Alice Dreger wrote:

You might want to see my response to Bari's piece. I'm still getting fan mail from it.

Alice

On Sep 18, 2019 John McDermott wrote:

Haven't had time** (just to clarify)

I absolutely plan to read it, especially since I enjoyed speaking with you yesterday so much.

On Wed, Sep 18, 2019 Alice Dreger wrote:

I'm so old. I remember when journalists used to prepare before they called you for an interview.

Doing journalism myself, knowing the economy, I try to make sure to give reporters not more than 15 minutes of reading for advance work. That's what I did with you.

It's good we talked on the phone yesterday. Otherwise your emails would have me worried that I'm actually being beta-tested by a new bot from Gannett. I'm going to get one helluva funny piece out of this, regardless.

Alice

On Sep 18, 2019, at 12:23 PM, John McDermott wrote:

Lol