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Kieryn:

I'm Kieryn.

Eve:

I'm Hannah. This is Kitchen Table Cult.

Kieryn:

Where two Quiverfull escapees talk about our experiences in the cultish underbelly of the religious right.

Kieryn:

Hey, Hannah.

Eve:

Hey, Kieryn.

Kieryn:

How are you?

Eve:

I'm pretty good. It's a gorgeous day here. It's peak fall.

Kieryn:

That sounds lovely.

Eve:

How are you?

Kieryn:

I am not sick right now, so I'm happy.

Eve:

You're living in a campaign office, I see.

Kieryn:

I am living in a campaign office right now. The California Dems and the Measure AA campaign and other organizers are out here phone banking, doing get out the vote stuff so there might be some background noise from that.

Eve:

Yeah, that's really important. All of this closing in, I can't believe we're going to actually have some resolution on all these things that we've been obsessing over for the last two years in three days.

Kieryn:

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Yeah. Hopefully. I'm still nervous about it. I'm still traumatized from 2016.

Eve:

Let's introduce our guests and let's talk about that. This week, we have with us our friend, Jeremiah Warren.

Jeremiah Warren:

Hello.

Eve:

Jeremiah, where the hell are you on this podcast today?

Jeremiah Warren:

I was homeschooled. I grew up in a very politically active conservative Homeschool circles. I did not attend as a student, but I was at, now I'm blanking on the name.

Eve:

Patriot Academy.

Jeremiah Warren:

Patriot Academy. I attended Patriot Academy. I-

Eve:

Congratulations on forgetting your traumatic past.

Jeremiah Warren:

I have so many friends who are heavily involved with speech and faith. I am very familiar with the evangelical conservative political world as it relates to the youth of America.

Eve:

I'm assuming you got out. When did you get out?

Jeremiah Warren:

I did get out. I am definitely, definitely not of that world anymore.

Eve:

All right, blue wave hitting the Homeschool nation.

Kieryn:

[inaudible 00:02:37].

Jeremiah Warren:

I would be called a very, very liberal person.

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Kieryn:

Oh, yeah. Same.

Eve:

Yeah. My childhood self would be very intrigued and terrified.

Jeremiah Warren:

Call me liberal communist.

Kieryn:

My childhood self would be like, "That makes sense," but also, "You're evil."

Eve:

The dark timeline has overtaken us.

Kieryn:

Yeah.

Eve:

So we are talking today about Election Day and what is probably happening in the fundamentalist Christian, politically active world of the religious right right now, how they're probably seeing things and taking action, and what you should know going into Tuesday?

Kieryn:

Where do you want to start? Because that's a whole thing.

Eve:

Yeah. Let's start with talking about Election Day 2016 and what that meant for each of us when Donald Trump got elected and Mike Pence was vice president. I know we've covered this before. Sorry if we're belaboring this, but I think it's important.

Kieryn:

It helps give context. You were not even in the country, Hannah.

Eve:

Yeah, I was in Kyrgyzstan serving in the Peace Corps which meant I was 12 hours ahead of you guys.

Eve:

I had a morning meeting with my counterpart to plan lessons for school. This is the local teacher I was helping support with her English language lessons for secondary school students and she had the day before told me that she had just applied for the green card lottery with her husband and she was really excited about the election. She was like, "What's the news? I haven't been online." We're sitting there, writing our lesson plan, talking about this.

Eve:

I come back home and I start getting on Twitter and I've got an hour before class and the last results are coming in and it's really clear that Trump has won and there's probably another state or two left, but it's a done deal. I texted her and I was just like, "I feel sick now. I can't come to class."

Eve:

Because I knew that this meant that I was no longer going to be able to pretend everything from my childhood was just a time capsule or a closed off little world that didn't matter. Now, it was going to be relevant because Mike Pence is basically what we had been working for my entire life and dreaming of. Everything about how I grew up was suddenly politically relevant.

Kieryn:

Where were you, Jeremiah?

Jeremiah Warren:

I was in Nashville. I'm trying to think back to that day. I remember waking up and going through Twitter and I think that's how I found out that he had won, but I remember scrolling back and just seeing the progression of people being hopeful and then becoming less hopeful because it looks like Trump is going to win. I can't really remember exactly what I was thinking but I feel like that was a day where I was like, "This couldn't possibly be what the majority of America feels like."

Jeremiah Warren:

I think the other thing was also it probably was a mark in completely divorcing me from any lingering thoughts of, "Is there anything from my past that..." This is the way you should live your life. All of the stuff they've instilled in us growing up and realizing that everyone in your life, they're totally like, "This is how you should live your life. These are things about God." All those people have just elected someone that is the antithesis of that.

Jeremiah Warren:

That just completely removed me with any lingering worries or fears that I was doing something wrong and I felt like, "You can't tell me that this is 'God's candidate,' and this is who God wants," and also told me the stuff when you raised me.

Eve:

There's literally nothing left for us in the church now that you guys have elected a racist, white supremacist [inaudible 00:06:57] in chief.

Kieryn:

I was a poll worker on Election Day. I was in a precinct-

Eve:

In San Francisco or...

Kieryn:

In Oakland.

Eve:

In Oakland.

Kieryn:

Yeah. I was at this church in Adams Point, somewhere. I got there in the afternoon. I was on call. Around 7:00, people started coming in and they looked visibly shook. They were coming in and they were already horrified and they would try to tell me what was happening and I was like, "I have to close. Don't tell me what's going on."

Kieryn:

For two hours, I just had people vote and I didn't let them tell us what was happening because we were all already nervous. The poll's closed at 8:00 then we cleaned up. At that point, the last person to vote was like, "He's winning." And I was like, "We haven't even got our votes in yet." California is pretty big. There's still hope, and I held on to that.

Kieryn:

We packed up and I tried not to think about it too much. We didn't get home but we packed up and I called a Lyft over and I was talking with someone who was also helping pack up and was going to bring the ballots over to the courthouse and he was like, "If Trump gets elected, it won't be so bad. It probably won't impact me," and I'm like, "My dude, you're cishet man. I am queer, trans, and olive. This directly impacts me if he is elected."

Kieryn:

I got in the Lyft and Lyft driver was playing soothing, peaceful music and I was like, "I appreciate you so much right now." I got home and I came in and all the lights were off and I just heard my partner crying on the couch. It was at that point I was like, "Oh, we are fucked." I had been scrolling through Twitter on the ride and I saw the numbers and stuff and we just watched the rest of it in horror as it came in live and just cried ourselves to sleep.

Kieryn:

At that point, that was also when I realized that everything that I hoped to leave behind, it wasn't left behind and suddenly, it mattered and suddenly, I had all of this insight that I needed to tell people because suddenly everything that I had worked for as a child was coming to fruition more so than when the Tea Party came into power.

Eve:

Did you feel like you're complicit at all because of that?

Kieryn:

Yeah, I did. I did feel complicit and I felt guilty. And I felt angry. I felt really angry that it hadn't stopped when I left, which it makes sense because it was bigger than me. I wasn't a crucial part of it but I was still like, "I did the work. I left." A bunch of my friends did the work and left and we all decided that like that is bad.

Kieryn:

But more people stayed and more people kept doing the thing that we were trained to do, and suddenly it mattered and now I'm in a position where I'm like, "I know where this is going and I know the playbook and here, let me tell you, and that's why we're here."

Eve:

Right. I think part of the reason we started this podcast is both of us feel like. We know the other side and we know how serious they are. So we have to share what knowledge we've got.

Kieryn:

Yeah. Which is why I immediately started writing that posts for Autostraddle the next day and I just took a month and a half and worked on writing it.

Eve:

That's what I was going to say was.

Eve:

I had a similar conversation with a white dude who I had been good friends with for a while. He grew up in the same community as I did. He wasn't Quiverfull but he was fundamentalist Christian, had gone to Liberty University.

Eve:

And then he got married and got divorced in a similar way that I did. We had really bonded on a whole lot of like, "We were super young and newly divorced and our entire Fundamentalist community is rejecting us because suddenly we're the bad guy." His wife moved out in the middle of the night to date someone else. It was really weird. He was one of those rare Fundamentalist dudes who wasn't abusive and his marriage...

Eve:

So I thought he understood and we've been commiserating all the way through the elections lead up and then, he said something about like, "Yeah, it's really not going to be that big of a deal. Just wait four years, it'll be fine." And I was just like-

Kieryn:

No.

Eve:

"Hell no." I just was like, "I want to block you and everything. You don't understand." I felt so betrayed because I was like, "We've been talking about this stuff for so long. And you are a cishet white dude, you're not going to be affected by this. This is not going to hurt you. But I thought you cared about other people."

Eve:

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I think he does but I think his privilege was blinding him in that moment and he was getting stressed out by all the fervor and wasn't prepared to deal with that because toxic masculinity teaches you to be freaked out by emotion and everybody who had been suffering under the racism and abuses of power in generations past was freaking out online being like, "This is going to get worse."

Kieryn:

Yeah, that was Election Day 2016 and now, we're here and we're at midterms and everyone is working really hard. There is a bunch of stuff.

Eve:

And it is getting worse.

Kieryn:

It is. Oh my God. It's getting worse.

Eve:

There're shootings multiple times a day, every day, because people are racists.

Kieryn:

We found more fucking bombs.

Jeremiah Warren:

Oh, my God.

Kieryn:

They were intercepted again. There's so much.

Eve:

Okay, so what are you guys thinking as you watch these headlines go past? What are you seeing? What are you looking at? What are your reactions?

Jeremiah Warren:

You're talking about bomb. I just remembered. The Austin bomber was in my friend's Homeschool circles.

Eve:

Oh, yeah.

Kieryn:

Yeah.

Eve:

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Kieryn and I tracked the information for Homeschooling's Invisible Children database in terms of abuses and deaths in the Homeschool community and we were tracking that, too, because the Austin bomber is a quintessential fundamentalist Christian boy.

Jeremiah Warren:

Literally, I was in a Facebook thread conversation with his father a week before they found out who the bomber was.

Kieryn:

Oh, my God.

Eve:

Oh, shit. Break that down, what's your interpretation there about that kind of community these guys do these things?

Jeremiah Warren:

I don't know how to necessarily put all this into words but I think back at 9/11 and what happened on 9/11 and everyone's reaction of, "Oh, Muslims and bombing and extremism." It's almost like that Christian world is not... It's like they're doing the exact same thing as the thing that they-

Eve:

They're replicating the methods.

Jeremiah Warren:

Yeah. Our homeschooled [inaudible 00:14:34] have literally birthed someone has gone around bombing innocent people. I'm trying to figure out how to put that into a thesis idea but it's so wild to me. Me vividly remembering 9/11, now, it's like we have our own terrorists.

Eve:

This is what happens when you get fundamentalism that thrives on othering people that you're afraid of. You systemically dehumanize them so that you can incite violence against them and feel justified doing it.

Kieryn:

And it's just right.

Eve:

This happens every single time you get fundamentalist extremism and we're just seeing a new version of it here in the States with all of, basically, these white boys who feel disenfranchised because they're losing a tiny fraction of their massive privilege as America gets-

Kieryn:

And they're not even losing it. It's just other people want to share it.

Jeremiah Warren:

Exactly.

Kieryn:

It's not a loss.

Eve:

But because our society has been built on this structure that is essentially imperialist white capitalist patriarchy which is designed to teach you that in order to thrive, you have to assume that anyone who doesn't look like you or fuck like you is not a real person. And then you get scared of them getting any kind of power and immediately, violence is the answer because you happen to have an AK-47 in your closet.

Jeremiah Warren:

They come up with these things like they feel why they're being discriminated. They are being hurt or whatever. You have these white people. They're taking out their anger on... You have everything going for you. You have so many advantages, you have so many privileges, and you feel this desire to actually hurt people even further.

Eve:

Let's keep going. We wanted to talk a little bit about key races that we're watching that are important. This is stuff that's been covered better by more professional political pundits. But in terms of what we're seeing with each of these races, we'd like to give a little bit of a perspective in terms of because of our background in these politically active fundamentalist groups, what the other side is up to right now and how this race is being viewed from that world's perspective.

Kieryn:

I've been watching vaguely Stacey Abrams because she's rad and I did a little bit of looking into camp, who's her opponent, and he's terrible.

Eve:

Set this up for us. Because Georgia is where TeenPact is. Give us that background.

Kieryn:

Georgia is where TeenPact was founded. Tim Echols is the insurance policy commissioner or something right now, but he founded TeenPact. He brought TeenPact to actually Kemp's office earlier this year when they were doing their statewide convention thing.

Eve:

Now, what does that mean when they do that?

Kieryn:

It's a person who is in line with TeenPact's values so when they take you to someone's office and introduce you to them as a legislator that they support or whatever it means that they're in line with TeenPact's values. Oftentimes, it results in student action teams going out and campaigning for them.

Eve:

How big are those teams?

Kieryn:

It depends. When I did it in 2006, I went with a group and we campaigned for Roy Moore in Alabama and they were about 50 of us. I'm pretty sure it's student or child labor violations.

Eve:

Probably.

Kieryn:

It's 10 plus hour days and it's all high schoolers, all homeschoolers, going around knocking on doors, making phone calls for free. No one's getting paid for it. We actually had to pay to go.

Eve:

Wait, why did you have to pay to go?

Kieryn:

Because we had to pay for the gas to get there.

Eve:

TeenPact doesn't pay for that stuff?

Kieryn:

No. You collectively pool your money with everybody.

Eve:

That's disgusting.

Kieryn:

Yeah, I know, it's really gross. Actually, the AJC, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, has actually looked into it before and did a bit a couple years ago about TeenPact and Tim Echols and they're campaigning and how just very sketchy it is and it doesn't blatantly violate anything, at least not enough to catch, but they walk that line. And in practice, I think they do violate a lot of stuff.

Kieryn:

But they're probably activating a lot of homeschoolers on the ground in Georgia for Kemp is my hypothesis.

Eve:

If they're campaigning for Kemp, what do you imagine they're talking about? How are they seeing Stacey and her campaign?

Kieryn:

Well, first of all, she is a woman and women can't be leaders.

Eve:

She's also black.

Kieryn:

And she's black. Yeah. There's all of that racism. I don't know how blatant they are being right now.

Eve:

Were there any black kids who were in TeenPact with you? Were there any people of color besides yourself?

Kieryn:

There were one or two.

Eve:

And Jeremiah in Patriot Academy?

Jeremiah Warren:

I'm trying to remember. I remember there was one, the sister.

Eve:

So basically not really?

Jeremiah Warren:

There're probably two or three.

Kieryn:

We always had a token person of color-

Jeremiah Warren:

No. Literally.

Kieryn:

But it was one. There was one person who was an intern during my time with TeenPact. He was the one black dude. Gotcha.

Eve:

What are they going to be talking about when they are campaigning against Stacey? How are they seeing her?

Kieryn:

They're going to frame her as a liberal man-hating feminazi internally. I don't know exactly what they're talking, so I'm sorry.

Eve:

Which, by the way, is such a great joke because she writes, I don't know if anybody knows this, but she's written award winning romance novels.

Kieryn:

No, but that's amazing.

Eve:

Very, very heterosexual. This woman does not hate men.

Kieryn:

But she's a woman running against a man. Obviously, she thinks she's better than men because otherwise she wouldn't be running.

Eve:

We know that to be a fact, but they don't.

Eve:

Yeah. I can imagine that they're very scared of her. She's got a really fantastic presence and power and she is unflappable. Her parents are ministers. She comes from-

Kieryn:

And also, Atlanta has a huge black community. If she can activate the black community in Atlanta and in Georgia, they have a reason to be scared because the only reason they've won so long is because they have suppressed black people from voting.

Eve:

Right. And her entire campaign, when it started was based off of this. She was pretty much looking at the numbers and she's like, "There's a population here that is a majority that could run this state if they were allowed to vote." That's how she's centered herself in terms campaign strategy.

Kieryn:

The other one that's really scary is Cruz and Beto.

Eve:

Can we just take a second and be like, "Ted Cruz had to tweet out on Halloween-

Kieryn:

Oh, my God.

Eve:

A Zodiac killer joke-

Jeremiah Warren:

The Zodiac killer.

Eve:

To make himself seem more relatable. A serial killer is more relatable than your real self, Ted. You got a problem, hun.

Kieryn:

Right. Oh, my God.

Jeremiah Warren:

I feel like that was probably the same intern that [inaudible 00:23:04].

Eve:

Probably. So Jeremiah, you're from Texas originally.

Jeremiah Warren:

I'm from Texas.

Eve:

Talk to us about Ted Cruz.

Jeremiah Warren:

As we're talking, I was researching something to make sure that it was true. Gateway Church... For those that are listening that are not familiar with Gateway Church, Gateway Church is one of the largest, mega church in Texas and they have at least eight to 13 campuses in addition to their main one, but they had sent out this pamphlet that was basically encouraging people to vote for Cruz and talking about all these things related to Beto.

Eve:

It's sketchy for a nonprofit organization to be campaigning. But that's something that we've seen all the time growing up as pastors using the pulpit illegally as a campaign platform.

Jeremiah Warren:

These are the headlines. They said, "Ted Cruz supports Kavanaugh." "Ted Cruz opposes men and women's bathrooms." "Ted Cruz is in favor of gun laws, [inaudible 00:24:14]. All of these things where it's...

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Eve:

It's like what we were saying before. This is the antithesis of everything Jesus taught, we're fucked.

Jeremiah Warren:

I trailed off the original question but I started with that because that just came to mind.

Jeremiah Warren:

I have a lot of friends that were from that Patriot Academy world that I'm still friends with on Facebook. They're still very politically active. They're still campaigning. One of them is in the Georgia Senate, I think. This one that I'm talking about specifically is in Texas, but their thing is basically like, "Ted Cruz could literally be the Zodiac Killer," but because he's "pro-life" and pro children, they will vote for him.

Eve:

Wait, did the Zodiac Killer kill a lot of children?

Jeremiah Warren:

He didn't, so it's fine.

Kieryn:

Right. It only matters if they're unborn anyway.

Eve:

That's right. We never really explained what Patriot Academy is. Do you mind getting into that real fast to catch us up?

Jeremiah Warren:

Patriot Academy was actually very educational in regards to how the Texas legislation works and the Texas government works. You basically go in and you spend a week there and you're in the actual Texas Capitol and you're in the rooms where they're putting laws together, where they're voting laws. I'm trying to remember the process. It's been a number of years since I've been there. But then you actually-

Eve:

Clearly, wasn't that education.

Jeremiah Warren:

Then if your law makes it, whatever the process is, if you get to a certain point and your law was voted out, you actually present your law on the Senate floor and everyone votes on it.

Kieryn:

Ah, yeah.

Jeremiah Warren:

It's essentially a very accurate replica.

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Eve:

It's like a mock [inaudible 00:26:00]?

Jeremiah Warren:

Yeah.

Kieryn:

That's exactly what TeenPact does, too.

Eve:

A mock legislative experience.

Jeremiah Warren:

The only thing is the entire time, they're drilling into you about how the liberals are bad and Jesus was Republican, they didn't actually say that but...

Kieryn:

Obviously.

Jeremiah Warren:

No, no. It literally was this phrase that one of them would say which was, "Communism is bad. Very, very, very bad." That was literally a phrase that they would all chant every once in a while.

Kieryn:

Oh my God.

Eve:

That's actually interesting. This is a total rabbit trail. But my father had one of his stock dad jokes would be like, "That's communism," if he didn't like something. That was his go-to. "That person is a communist."

Eve:

I'm thinking about this now and I'm like...

Kieryn:

And?

Eve:

"What if I'm a communist, guys? I think I might be."

Eve:

You have a problem with everybody having equal access to things. I can see why that would be offensive to you, but I benefit from that system more than your system.

Kieryn:

Right.

Jeremiah Warren:

Based on what I've seen in Facebook posts from my still conservative friends, the only real reason... There's [inaudible 00:27:27] stuff that people support Cruz for, but the main driving thing that they still have is that he's "pro-life." That's really the only [inaudible 00:27:38]. I haven't seen a lot of posts about Cruz but from all the ones I've seen, it's because he's pro-life. That's the reason why they're like, "You have to vote for him."

Eve:

Yeah, I can imagine they'd be really threatened by Beto just on all of his charisma. I think the way he comes across-

Kieryn:

As not a serial killer?

Eve:

Is so disarming. He's basically the charismatic megachurch pastor and he's using all the same tricks that they would want to be using, but he's for the other side.

Kieryn:

Yeah.

Jeremiah Warren:

He actually has sympathy and compassion for people.

Eve:

Right.

Kieryn:

Right. Which are damning traits really.

Kieryn:

What terrifies me is the voting problems Texas is having.

Eve:

Georgia, too.

Kieryn:

Yeah, that's true.

Eve:

The voter suppression is insane.

Kieryn:

I was thinking of the voting machines that keeps switching the votes. If you're in Texas, ask for a paper ballot. Ask for paper. Just do it. It's better. Safer.

Eve:

All of the tech experts that I know are basically like, "Do not use anything electronic. Always use paper." Because-

Kieryn:

Always use paper.

Eve:

It's so much safer.

Jeremiah Warren:

One thing I remember going back to Patriot Academy was they had, I don't remember what the organization is, but they had this person come on to speak about, "voter fraud." Their whole thing was basically insinuating that the Democrats were having people go in and vote multiple times. They were using names of dead people and keeping the immigrants-

Kieryn:

I remember that.

Jeremiah Warren:

It was all very, "Oh, yeah. The Democrats are using these nefarious means to get their candidates in."

Kieryn:

And what's hilarious is every time there's a case of voter fraud, it's always for a Republican.

Eve:

The problem with this is that it's that sociological thing that happens when you know that you've done something wrong, and so when you look around the room, feeling guilty, you start seeing your own crimes in other people. You assume that-

Jeremiah Warren:

[crosstalk 00:29:58].

Eve:

Because you would do this, they're going to do this. The joke is on you. They're not doing that, you're doing that.

Jeremiah Warren:

I forgot to mention one of the people I know from Patriot Academy went on to... I can't remember his name but there was this guy in San Antonio, that was the key digital strategist for Donald Trump. That guy, I know, actually worked on basically all the stuff that Trump's campaign did, like with Facebook advertising. The guy that I know was directly involved with that.

Eve:

This is why we're talking about these issues. These feel very distant from your Homeschool mom and kids and denim jumper shopping at Costco, but this is where her kids grow up, this is what they become because that's what the whole world is grooming them for. This is why this is so relevant.

Eve:

Florida, our friend, Kathryn Brightbill, she was the guest on here before. She's going to be tweeting a lot about the Florida governor's race because she's there and she's involved. You'll get good coverage from the perspective of our background on her Twitter feed. But what else are you seeing when you look at that? Kiernyn, you used to live there.

Kiernyn:

I used to live there. I haven't followed the Florida race so much because I haven't lived there in ages. But it's Florida, so it doesn't surprise me. I don't actually know much about what's happening besides the normal.

Eve:

It's important that Bill Nelson is also running for reelection and he's in a precarious-

Kiernyn:

He's been there forever.

Eve:

Right, but he's also in a precarious position, I think, because this governor's race is so close. His race is also at risk. I imagine there's homeschoolers campaigning for DeSantis, too.

Kiernyn:

Oh, yeah. I feel like all of these races definitely have homeschoolers campaigning for them especially the big ones. I'm not in any of the groups or emails anymore so I don't have access to all of the planning stuff that I used to when I was a teenager.

Kiernyn:

I feel confident that there is a lot of homeschoolers campaigning in all of these states getting out the vote because that's something that we're trained for and that's something that I saw some discussion about on Twitter where people are talking about how the youth, the millennials, don't vote and don't feel like there is an importance to voting except for all of the people who grew up conservative where that was drilled into our heads every single day, every single election. I wanted to pre-register.

Eve:

Why did your mother give you life if you're not going to vote?

Kieryn:

Right. And if you're a woman, then you're supposed to vote in accordance with your father or your husband and you're supposed to vote basically as a family block.

Jeremiah Warren:

Yeah.

Eve:

Right.

Eve:

Kieryn, someone at some point was talking about how they knew families having more kids with the rhetoric of it is to produce more voters.

Kieryn:

Yeah. That's one of the things we talked about in TeenPact, I think it was during one of the sessions that I was there or it was either during the girls only talk or during a joint session, I think it was a joint session. I think it was a speech by Tim Echols and he was talking about how our generation needs to grow up, get married, be politically engaged. All the women need to have children who then grow up to vote the same way and follow in their father's footsteps. That was how we were going to win is by having a bunch of kids and raising people who vote and campaign and do all that.

Eve:

This is why you and your ex-spouse being a TeenPact couple were like, "Man, we're celebrities for a second," when you got together because it was so excited for all of the Republican babies you're going to have.

Kieryn:

Right, that we never had.

Eve:

Psych.

Jeremiah Warren:

I think going back to-

Kieryn:

You thought so.

Jeremiah Warren:

Going back to the whole Vision Forum thing and their ideology literally is have a shit ton of kids so your kids will have a shit ton of kids and those kids will have tons of kids so that eventually... There's literally a

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video the Vision Forum produced where they had this little kid pointing out if you have 10 kids and each of those 10 kids have 10 kids and so on and so on and so on.

Kieryn:

Then you have 200.

Jeremiah Warren:

Yeah, by the fourth generation, there will be however many hundred thousand people that in their minds are voting or believing [inaudible 00:34:55].

Eve:

Right.

Kieryn:

And because the Bible says if you train a child up in the way he should go, he won't depart from it. All of those kids are going to remain Christian conservative voters just like you want them to be, none of them are going to grow up to be queer transwitches.

Eve:

Oh, but in reality, "Hey, guys, guess what?"

Kieryn:

I'm here to tell you.

Eve:

"I'm sorry. Proverbs lied."

Jeremiah Warren:

Unfortunately, they didn't realize that [inaudible 00:35:19] you have the higher change that there will be queer.

Kieryn:

Yeah there're some math and statistics we can run on this.

Eve:

Yeah, but homeschoolers are bad at math.

Kieryn:

There is documentation of this even.

Eve:

That's just Quiverfull ideology. Where it comes from in Vision Forum is a particularly political strain of it and they were one of the groups that was the most overt and open about getting there.

Kieryn:

And there is a lot of overlap between Vision Forum, TeenPact, Generation Joshua, Patriot Academy, all of these are really, really closely connected and overlapping.

Eve:

I think another race that's important to watch is the Rosen-Heller race in Nevada for Senate. Heller has historically voted in accordance with Pence and his ilk's fundamentalist political agendas all along. Jacky Rosen running to overturn that seat as a Democrat and as a woman would both be very important for numbers of women in the Senate, but also to eliminate someone who is really sketchy in terms of his voting record.

Eve:

I think we have a similar situation in Arizona where Kyrsten Sinema is running to take the seat that McCain has left open.

Kieryn:

Oh, yeah.

Eve:

And so Kyrsten Sinema is, again, a liberal Democrat, progressive, very well educated, very smart, very well spoken. I've heard her speak on a couple occasions and again, taking over that seat and trying to basically turn the majority in the Senate to blue. These are races that are significant. They're not getting as much coverage, but they are just as important and there's probably less voter fraud and voter suppression and tampering in Nevada and Arizona. But then you still have all of the problems with immigrants trying to get good access to voting into the polls. So I'm sure that's part of the reality there, too.

Kieryn:

Yeah, there're still red states. There're still racist.

Eve:

Yep. These are the races that we're all watching. There's obviously more that are important, but these are the ones that feel the most critical.

Kieryn:

Yeah.

Jeremiah Warren:

I know you already mentioned Roy Moore and that election passed but I still have Facebook friends who were directly involved with that campaign.

Eve:

Who cares if he's a child molester? He's pro-life.

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Kieryn:

Sure.

Eve:

He just wants them to be alive so that he can rape them later. That's fine.

Kieryn:

That's fine. That's chill. He's a godly man, Hannah.

Jeremiah Warren:

It was nice to feel that vindicated when he did not get elected.

Eve:

Yeah, it was a breadcrumb of hope.

Kieryn:

When all of that went down, I just remembered campaigning for him and meeting him and he was creepy. I stayed away. They told all the girls to stay away because he was weird.

Eve:

Wait, you're basically saying that it was an open secret?

Kieryn:

Yeah.

Eve:

Everybody knew that he was...

Kieryn:

Yeah, he was sketch.

Eve:

... going to be [inaudible 00:39:01].

Kieryn:

Don't be alone with him. Yep.

Eve:

I think one thing to address that we have been included in all of this but haven't really directly talked about is the white supremacy underlying all of these movements and all of the homeschoolers campaigning for these super conservative people and why that's relevant. Obviously, it's becoming a lot more public and we're seeing people being more open racist.

Kieryn:

They're not being as shy about it.

Eve:

They're being more openly racist. But this is not new. We mentioned this in terms of the demographics that we observed when we're in these circles and how rare it was to run into people of color.

Kieryn:

The whole premise for these people is basically, "Since the white European pilgrims came over on the Mayflower as ordained by God, America is ours and only for people who look like us and if people who don't look like us come over here, they have to assimilate or they're demonized." Everything else is just run around that and now we have this awesome, not awesome-

Eve:

In their mind, awesome.

Kieryn:

Racist system. Yeah. They'll say they're not racist. They're like, "No, if only this stereotype that I have of you weren't true, then we would accept you. If only you were more like me, then we would accept you." That is so racist. But they're like, "No, we care," and they're just putting different faces on it.

Eve:

I think there's also this sense of when it comes to the reconstructionist eschatology, this sense of like, "America is God's chosen nation, New Covenant, we replaced..." I hate that this is the rhetoric but the rhetoric is, "The Israelites were unfaithful and the Christians are God's new people. We're going to recreate a Christian society in the United States and when we get a theocratic law in place, then Jesus will return because we have fulfilled those prophecies."

Eve:

This is why we want to do this episode on the antisemitism, of fundamentalists. At some point, we're trying to get this together, but having Pence pull out a Messianic Jew after the Pittsburgh shooting is incredibly insensitive because it's basically saying, "We don't need a real Jew to do this. We don't need a real rabbi because the Jews are irrelevant and should be erased." That's basically what Pence is saying by doing that. That's a dog whistle. It's an antisemitic racist, white supremacist dog whistle.

Kieryn:

Yeah, it's so frustrating.

Jeremiah Warren:

I don't know if I'm pronouncing this right but in those conservative circles, there are a lot of people that are using Kinism, K-I-N-I... It's the same word they believe that going back to talking about... I'm thinking of the story in the Bible when one of the sons was cursed. Cain. Whatever that theology was.

Eve:

Oh, yeah, it's absolutely going back to that.

Jeremiah Warren:

There's people that, like I said I don't know if it's the right word, but I think it's Kinism where they... I don't think I have any Facebook friends like this, but I have another friend who was commenting and how he didn't realize he had that and he is very liberal, very [inaudible 00:42:53] liberal and he came from that [inaudible 00:42:56] and he was like, "I didn't realize I had so many friends in my circles that literally believe that this line of people has been cursed by God."

Eve:

It goes back to the whole story of Noah getting drunk after the flood and two of his sons covered him up because he was running around naked and they put him to bed and covered him up and his other son laughed.

Eve:

The idea is that the sons of Ham are cursed because he mocked his father, he disrespected his father, therefore, he's cursed forever and his descendants are cursed forever and the assumption is anyone brown is coming from that son. This mythology of white supremacy that's read into these Bible stories to reinforce the prejudice that are already in place in these systems.

Eve:

It's horrifying and reinforces the paternalism of the white supremacy. It's-

Kieryn:

It bothered my mom to no end that all of the pictures of Jesus were fair skinned and blue eyed because Jesus is from the Middle East so he would have looked like me, which would have been olive skin, dark brown eyes, dark hair, and that always, always, always angered my mom and my family. But they never went further than that. They never tried to examine why that was so. They didn't examine the white supremacy behind that or the racism behind the image of Jesus as an Anglo European dude when he was born in the Middle East. Obviously, that's not what he would look like.

Jeremiah Warren:

[inaudible 00:44:39].

Eve:

It's systemically entrenched in all these systems and I think the whole burn it all down impulse is maybe the only way to fix this stuff because these systems cannot exist without the white supremacy and racism that's-

Kieryn:

No, that's crucial to their existence. That's all that it's built on is maintaining that and perpetuating it and growing it.

Eve:

All right, I want to take a quick break and then let's talk about how people can interact with the Homeschool kids who are campaigning for these Republicans or these conservative teenagers who are sold on these ideas. How can you help them broaden their horizons? And how can you try to counter some of their arguments?

Kieryn:

Welcome back.

Eve:

Welcome back.

Kieryn:

How do we talk to people?

Eve:

What would help us if somebody wanted to help us deconvert from racist, conservative, fundamentalist theology and policy back when we were in the game?

Kieryn:

I think the first thing to do is realize that you're not going to deconvert someone in one conversation but you can plant that seed of doubt and questioning and something different. Don't try to approach it from, "I'm going to witness to you about why you're wrong on this politics thing," because that won't get you anywhere.

Kieryn:

One of the things that I remember the most about campaigning when I was a teenager was this one time, it was while I was campaigning for Roy Moore and we were going door to door and we knock on this one dude's door and he's this burly dude and has multiple barking dogs.

Kieryn:

We knock on his door and we're like, "We're here campaigning for Roy Moore." he just loses his shit and starts yelling at us, and then chases us up the hill with his dogs. We're three teenage girls wearing long skirts. He's just yelling at us about how awful we are for campaigning with these dogs barking in the background. It was terrifying.

Eve:

What you're saying is don't be abusive and intimidating?

Kieryn:

Yes, don't do that. They don't need that. They probably already get it at home. Don't replicate it. Don't duplicate it. Don't add that to their life. They're already scared. They're kids. Keep in mind, if you see a teenager at your door campaigning, they are teenager campaigning, so treat them as such.

Eve:

I think one of the things that was always the wedge for me between me and Republican politics was the issue of immigration and how refugees were treated.

Eve:

Growing up in the Central Valley of California, I was around migrant workers and migrant worker communities all the time. I grew up interacting with people who had fled to America to find a better life, to find a better job, to avoid genocide or war or something. I was already aware of the human rights issues at stake in these questions. So whenever immigration came up, I hardcore deviated from all my peers every single time.

Eve:

Being in Virginia after that was really weird because I was running into all this overt racism against immigrants, especially right around 9/11 because... We moved to Virginia in 2000, so 2001 and 9/11 happened and everybody was anti-immigrant and I was sitting there being like, "But you don't understand what their lives are like. You don't know these people. You don't know what they're fleeing. They're not terrorists. You're idiots." I was already hardcore on that train because these people were people to me. They weren't others.

Eve:

When you can de-other the conversation, I think that has a lot of power when you make it personal, when you make it... Right before we started recording, Kiernyn was saying like, "Talk to them about like, I had this abortion for these reasons." Make it your story.

Kiernyn:

Get into your story.

Eve:

Get into your story and make it personal so that they cannot other you.

Kiernyn:

It's so much harder, or at least it was for me, to be able to stand by conservative views of queer people after I knew queer people and after my friends came out and I realized, "Wait, I know this person. They're not evil." And then suddenly it was like, "Oh, well..." That starts you thinking about things when you can humanize the idea that you've been taught to hate and you realized that what you've been taught to hate doesn't line up to the reality.

Jeremiah Warren:

For me, I have a friend of mine and he grew up in Portland but a very conservative and he talked about, this is, I guess, the first time Obama was elected and how he was a huge fan of the artist, Moby. Moby was very supportive and very vocal of Obama. For my friend, he was like, "Man, I can't believe that this person that I really like is supporting this candidate that I think is wrong," but that was the first crack in that armor and this realization of removing that other [inaudible 00:51:00].

Jeremiah Warren:

I think for me just looking back hearing other people's stories and realizing that not everyone has the same privilege, not everyone has the same advantages, and a lot of my conservative right wing Republican views benefited people that had certain status or fit a certain mold or look. I think probably the biggest thing for me that started moving me away from the right was mainly with healthcare realizing that if you had...

Jeremiah Warren:

I had so many friends that have had cancer or had needed things that cost upwards of 90, 100, 200, \$300,000 and I think it was the first one just realizing that there's so many people that do not have the same healthy able body as I do and here we are, the whole thing with healthcare was such a huge cornerstone of the white Republican platform and it's like, "Oh my God." There're so many people in America that they can't afford healthcare and for me, that was a really big part.

Jeremiah Warren:

And then also, I think with immigration. For me, growing up in Texas, there are a lot of migrant workers. I remember back then joking about how the rhetoric was they're going to take our job and you see them working outside in heat and no white person wants that job.

Eve:

There's a farm worker shortage in Central California right now and white people are not lining up for those jobs, so what the hell.

Kieryn:

No.

Jeremiah Warren:

I don't think there was ever anything I was super with in regards to [inaudible 00:52:46] but I think healthcare. Guns were another thing. I grew up owning. My family own guns. I hunted a lot. I have so many memories from them that we're really good like going out with my dad and hunting and bonding with him growing up. I literally am a degree or two away from, I want to say, it's now nine mass shootings that have happened since Columbine. Columbine is one of them.

Jeremiah Warren:

Either I know someone that was at the shooting or there's someone that was actually shot at the shooting. [inaudible 00:53:19] I know two or three people that were in Las Vegas. I know one guy that was actually at Columbine. He was going to school when that shooting happened. The nightclub shooting that happened in Florida, I know two people that were-

Eve:

At Pulse.

Jeremiah Warren:

Off of a block away from that. There're so many shootings that have happened.

Jeremiah Warren:

This is that realization of, "Wow." This is starting to become a problem. This isn't just like, "Oh, one random shooting happens." This is a reoccurring thing.

Eve:

You can feel the violence closing in on you.

Jeremiah Warren:

And me realizing that all these things that I had advocated for, they actually impacted other people, but also some of them I was like, "Wow, these are..." In regards to gun violence, a lot of Republicans will try to minimize that. I was like, "No, this is a really big deal, a really big problem."

Jeremiah Warren:

I guess to summarize it, I would say, you've already said, this sharing story and I think that's why I am now. I think for me because I saw a lot of conservative Facebook friends and when I see an article... I never purposely really try to create arguments. Also, I'm enneagram 9 so I avoid arguments. For me, since I still have those people that have not unfriended me yet, I try to use that as a way to share stories of other people that have lived different lives and other experiences than what my right wing, conservative, evangelical Republican friends have.

Jeremiah Warren:

For me, it was a process of multiple years. There is never one thing that... Like you said you're never going to argue someone into different sides.

Eve:

Just starting to make little inroads, little fissures into that foundation by personalizing it and making the other real.

Kieryn:

Something that questions or contradicts the narrative they've been told. It doesn't have to be significant but just a little something that's like, "Wait, that doesn't fit."

Jeremiah Warren:

Like the rhetoric that people that are on food stamps are just lazy and don't take care of themselves. No, stories like that go a really long ways and stories counteract that. That mentality goes a long ways and bringing humanity and to the other side.

Kieryn:

Talk to literally anyone on food stamps and they will tell you how much work it is.

Eve:

To be on food stamps.

Jeremiah Warren:

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[crosstalk 00:55:49] unemployment. I had a friend of mine. She lost her job. It was basically a full time job for her to stay on unemployment between jobs.

Kieryn:

Yeah, it is. It's ridiculous.

Jeremiah Warren:

It's something that government's throwing money out.

Eve:

Let's wrap this up here. We run out of time.

Eve:

Jeremiah, thank you for joining us.

Jeremiah Warren:

Thank you for having me.

Eve:

Where can people find you?

Jeremiah Warren:

Oh, boy, I am on the internet on Twitter @jeremiahjw. That's where I talk the most. That's probably the best place to find me.

Eve:

For our regular listeners, if you want to support our work and what we're doing here and help fund our coffee habits, you can join our Patreon which is Kitchen Table Cult pod and sign up and you'll get some perks of early access to material, some after dark/inebriated episodes or hangouts with us. You can follow us @kitchencultpod-

Kieryn:

On the Twitter.

Eve:

Yeah, on Twitter. I'm @haettinger on Twitter.

Kieryn:

And I'm @mxdarkwater. Our music is by The Heavens. And shout out to Aaron for putting this together.

Eve:

Thanks, Aaron.

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Kieryn:

And all of the gaps that need to be edited out.

Eve:

Thanks, Aaron. Kieryn, if people want to send you coffee money directly, where do they send it to?

Kieryn:

I have Square Cash, cash.me/\$kieryn, K-I-E-R-Y-N.

Eve:

All right. And then mine is the same as my Twitter handle, but on Venmo, haettinger.

Eve:

Thank you for joining us. We'll put up some links to some of the things we've mentioned here. Go and donate to some of these campaigns if you can. You can also sign up to text and call for any of these campaigns even if you don't live in the states where they're happening. They would be glad to have any extra people joining them over the weekend before Election Day.

Kieryn:

Yeah, we're recording this the weekend of election. It is get out the vote time. If this goes up before the election, or if you listen to it before the election, go volunteer on a campaign. They need you right now. If you're listening to this after the election and good people won, congratulate them. If bad people won-

Eve:

Start calling their office and haranguing them.

Kieryn:

Yes. Do that.

Eve:

All right. Thank you for joining us this week.

Kieryn:

We'll see you next week. Bye.

Eve:

Bye.