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Kieryn:

I am Kieryn.

Eve:

I'm Eve. This is Kitchen Table Cult.

Kieryn:

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

Eve:

Hey, Kieryn. How are you?

Kieryn:

I am exhausted, but my midterms are over.

Eve:

Yay.

Kieryn:

So spring break is coming. You're almost going to be in town.

Eve:

Whoop, whoop, whoop. So, East Bay, Oakland, Northern California, do you want to hang out? Let me know. I'm going to be in town.

Kieryn:

Yes. We're still thinking about doing a live recording, I think, on the 23rd.

Eve:

Yeah. We'll throw up a link when we put it live on some social media of some kind. You can do a full-on proper hangouts while we shoot this shit.

Kieryn:

If you live in the Bay Area, then hop on board and get off at 19th Street and come to my office and you can watch.

Eve:

Yay, it's going to be so fun.

Kieryn:

Yay.

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Eve:

I'm really excited.

Kieryn:

I'm so excited to show you pepper o'clock. You will understand why I have this tattoo on my arm.

Eve:

Well, I feel like I do understand it because I've been there proper, but my aunt lives in the area and she works the night shift in one of the hospitals in San Francisco. She lives pretty close to there, and so she's over by Lake Merritt walking her dogs.

Kieryn:

So you get it.

Eve:

I've been there with her. I haven't been there at pepper o'clock proper, but I've been there with her and her dogs at other hours.

Kieryn:

Nice. Well, pepper o'clock is like a wave of time between 4:00 and 7:00.

Eve:

I'm going to get really homesick for brunch.

Kieryn:

You've probably been there.

Eve:

It's going to be nice. The other thing I want to say, guys, is I am going to be at AWP in Portland the following weekend. So, if you are coming to AWP, come find me and say hi. I'll be at the booth for Hollins University's MFA program with the Jackson Center for Creative Writing. I will also be taking a couple shifts at The Rumpus's table since I'm now a features editor over there.

Kieryn:

Congrats.

Eve:

Which, by the way, if you have nonfiction essays that are baller, please submit them to The Rumpus and I will eventually find my way to them. Go through the regular submittable thing and let me know you're submitting so I can take a peek and see if I love it.

Kieryn:

That sounds awesome.

Eve:

Yeah, super. I'm having a lot of fun with it. It's really good. That's a good little crew there once they ousted the predatory patriarch who founded it. Marisa says it's the rumpus matriarchy and I am enjoying being part of that.

Kieryn:

That's great.

Eve:

That's great. Speaking of matriarchy and patriarchy, we have with us this week a special guest, Robert from the Behind the Bastards Pod, a good friend of mine and a conflict journalist. We're going to hear a lot about that stuff. Another conflict journalist later in this episode, but Robert's been covering the Christchurch shooting, which I think is particularly relevant to what we want to talk about here. So, take it away.

Robert:

Yeah. You guys wanted me to explain the term dog whistling. If you've ever actually had a dog whistler or blown one, you know that you can't hear it, but dogs can. So, that's what the term is. It's a signal that can go without being heard by most people, but is heard by the right people. The Christchurch shooter's manifesto was filled with that stuff. The only way to recognize it would be if you spent a lot of time in the same weird corners of the internet that I did when I was age 14 through 22, 23 or so, starting places like Something Awful and 4chan and eventually 8chan.

So, he had a number of different little in jokes in there, references to memes, like the remove kebab meme. It started out as basically a joke music video made by a bunch of Serb nationalists celebrating a Serbian war criminal who massacred Muslims during the Yugoslavian Civil War in the '90s. Then it went viral again on 4chan and 8chan in the mid-2000s and most recently, a couple of years ago. It's a dog whistle for kill Muslims. Remove kebab because Muslims like kebab. Kill Muslims.

Eve:

So it's basically all of the chivalry code stuff about kill infidels.

Robert:

Yeah, yeah, exactly. It's that thing, but it's updated for a modern age and an internet savvy audience. The guy literally wrote remove kebab on his gun.

Eve:

Oh, God.

Kieryn:

Oh, my God.

Robert:

It's subtle in that an average 45-year-old journalist from the New York Times trying to make sense of all this would look at that and be like, "What the hell does that mean?" But somebody on 8chan will look at

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that and laugh and be like, "Oh, my God. He made a funny meme joke. He made a reference to this meme that we all joke about."

Eve:

If our listeners don't know what 8chan is, is that where just the badness gets multiplied by two?

Robert:

Yeah. Let me explain a little bit of that history, because it's important. So, you've got Something Awful, which is the nexus point of all of internet culture really. It's where a lot of it started out, starting in the late '90s. Goatse really got started off on Something Awful. That's where it spread a lot. A goon, which is Something Awful people, members of those forums called their members. Something Awful forums were the largest early forums on the internet or one of them at least where a lot of early memes spread, but they were very heavily moderated. It cost \$10 to be a member. So, if you got banned, there was an actual cost and the mods would ban you for racism and talking about Nazi stuff.

Eve:

Man. So, it sounds like Twitter when it was actually good.

Robert:

Yea, it was. Something Awful is still around. It's still a fun site. You can find a lot of good there. But one member of Something Awful, a guy named Moot broke away to create 4chan, which had no moderation and no limitations on free speech. Then around the time Gamergate kicked off, 4chan was obviously the nexus point for Gamergate. When that got too hateful and too violent for the people in charge of 4chan to stand, they banned the Gamergaters from 4chan and that's where we get 8chan.

So, at this point, just explicitly, I would call it a neo-Nazi reactionary message board on the internet. This is not the first shooting that has happened from a person on 8chan. It's not the first shooting that come out of the Chans either. In fact, it wasn't the first shooting this week to come out of the Chans, because in Brazil-

Kieryn:

Oh, my gosh.

Robert:

... the same week as the Christchurch shooting, a couple of kids shot up a school in Brazil and they posted it on a Brazilian 4chan board.

Eve:

Right. This stuff is insidious. This stuff is viral. The homeschoolers got the super highfalutin flowery version of it.

Kieryn:

We had more elaborate vocabulary.

Eve:

So his manifesto is full of dog whistles that originated from these online forums and these memes.

Robert:

Yeah. He very much is making himself into a White savior narrative too, which I know you all will talk about. That's very much a part of this. There's a lot of I know that one day, I'll be let out of prison and seen as a revolutionary rather than as a criminal.

Eve:

I'll get a White virgin to fall in love with me.

Robert:

Yeah, yeah. I mean, it's not quite that explicit, but I don't know much about this guy's sexual history, but I'm going to guess it was not stunningly successful in that realm of life.

Eve:

Well, I mean, a lot of these guys, a lot of the rhetoric, they steal from each other. It's an imitation culture. It's aspirational. A lot of the rhetoric is really repetitive. If you've watched the Elsa Vista shooter's little video chant or rants, it's a lot of the same language. It says a lot of the same stuff that drove the Austin Bomber and Columbine. All these things are very, very, very interconnected.

Robert:

Yeah. There's a surprising vein of prudishness within 8chan, because obviously, it's some of the most vile humor, most racist humor, most sexist humor you'll ever come across. But a lot of it is in service of an ideology that is weirdly close in certain ways to the one you all grew up with, close in certain ways for its belief of what women ought to be doing, for its belief of what is appropriate sexually. For a bunch of guys who to by their own admissions spent all of their time masturbating to bizarre anime porn, there's a weird vein of prudishness in a lot of what they have to say.

Eve:

They are the guys who are going to open the door at 30 places for you.

Robert:

Yeah. Some of them wouldn't open the door for you because you'd be a whore for wearing a T-shirt.

Eve:

Oh, right.

Kieryn:

That's also a thing now.

Eve:

Because I showed that I had boobs. They were like the modesty checklist I grew up with.

Kieryn:

They might have participated in it-

Eve:

Yeah, they might have participated.

Kieryn:

... to be honest.

Eve:

... in that modesty survey that Harris has created.

Robert:

I'm going to guess most of them grew up like I did in a moderately conservative houses or perhaps even liberal houses in the suburbs where their parents did not understand the internet and their internet time was not at all regulated. I got lucky that when I found the internet, I found Something Awful where for all of the weird and gross shit that wound up on that site, the people in charge made a real point of being like, "There's some fucking lines. We're not okay with racism. We're not okay with Nazism. We'll let a six-year-old or whoever's watching pull up a picture of the Goatse guy opening up his bleeding rectum to the world, whatever. We think that's funny. But you start throwing the N word around and you'll get banned."

Kieryn:

There are lines.

Robert:

Yeah.

Eve:

I'll just go on my little soapbox here. If you're a parent whose kids are unsupervised on the internet, do what you will, but my one hard line that I would recommend you not do is YouTube, because its recommended, watch this next, autoplay feature will lead you into some real cesspools that promote this stuff. It will have different voices for familiar cartoons talking about stuff that's dog whistley, indoctrinating these kids.

You can look at this video and be like, "Oh, look, it's the Teletubbies." It seems fine, but what they're saying is totally not. There's some really good articles about that. I think Vox has one from last year or the year before. But what else would you recommend our listeners look into if they want to learn how to recognize dog whistles and learn how to appropriately watch what their kids are absorbing on online?

Robert:

I mean, that's a great question. Some of it is just you have to watch what they're watching on YouTube and pay attention to what they're actually consuming, because the way the algorithm works is it can very subtly start with more and more extreme content and you just have to be monitoring it yourself. It's one of those things where when I was a kid, I just couldn't watch certain things. I think most kids were like that, but it was always like if you watch something you weren't supposed to, you were

watching a movie with more bloody gunfights or more naked tits. My parents were worried that I might see a naked lady too early.

Now kids are being exposed to Nazism too early. So, it's just a matter of they can't be looking at this shit completely unmonitored. To be honest, the best thing you can do is apply pressure as a parent to these companies, to the advertisers who put money into YouTube, because that's the only thing YouTube cares about is their bottom line. It's one of those things, we talk about monitoring their online time, but every kid seems to have a smartphone these days. I don't know how much you really can. I don't know how possible that is. It's something that needs to be fought.

Eve:

So recently, one of my mom friends from CRAG, who is a good advocate for children's rights and some stuff that's really important to us, she was finding herself shadow banned by Facebook for talking about anti-vaxxers in a negative light. I think she fell into the algorithm of Facebook's rolled out some new limitations on what they're allowing to be posted on the site in terms of vaccines being related to autism and anti-vaxxer myths. But I think there's also some stuff that they're trying to roll out in terms of limiting Nazi propaganda. Do you think that stuff's successful? Do you think that they even know what to look for or what they're doing?

Kieryn:

Didn't they partner with Fox News? So I have serious questions.

Eve:

I mean, I have a lot of questions too. I'm just opening it up.

Robert:

Their partnership with journalists to attempt to curb the spread of fake news and monitor this stuff better has been pretty garbage. You talked to Brooke Kinsky and some of the other people who did work with them, and they were not good at it. Part of it's because they're not willing to put any money into it. It's not the thing where you can just have somebody viewing a thousand things a minute and pay them \$9 an hour and give them no mental healthcare. It breaks people. It radicalizes them. There was a good article on that recently.

Eve:

There's a good podcast on that I listened to recently too, about the content monitors, the farms.

Robert:

It's so tough to figure out what ought to be done. I do think them attempting to purge anti-vaxx content is a positive thing. Just like them banning some of these people has been a positive. Alex Jones getting banned from a bunch of these sites is a good thing. It reduced his reach. It has hurt his bottom line. People like Milo Yiannopoulos being platformed has hurt his ability to reach people, and now he's \$2 million in debt.

Eve:

Being platformed means having your platform eliminated across social media outlets.

Robert:

The problem with that is that they want this solution to be algorithmic. I don't know that I've seen any evidence of that really helping, but when they ban the bad actors, that works, because then those people-

Kieryn:

They want a technical solution to a social problem, but it doesn't exist. Yeah.

Robert:

The fact of the matter is that what they really need to do, if they want to make the problem better, is spend half a billion dollars creating a sizable fact checking and vetting operation like a news magazine or an organization would have to do. My article on the Christchurch shooting went viral. So, I've been on the BBC World News and NBC and CBC and all these other fucking-

Eve:

We'll put a link up to that so you guys can read it. It's on Bellingcat.

Robert:

So I've been talking to a lot of journalists about this who are older school journalists. One thing I will talk about when I try to explain the problem of these algorithmic solutions is, look, if you working for NPR or the BBC were to publish something objectively false, you would suffer significant professional consequences. Your platform, your outlet would suffer significant consequences. People would trust it less. It would be a problem. If YouTube leads 10 million people to Holocaust denial documentaries, they just make money.

Eve:

Yeah. There's no pain. Yeah.

Robert:

That's the big problem. That's the thing that any solution parents could deal with in their own lives outside of boycotting these companies and trying to hurt their bottom line is just a Band-Aid, because this world is still out there. There will always be more parents who won't watch what their kid sees, and some of them will go down that rabbit hole and wind up buying an AR-15 and some body armor and painting a bunch of shit on it and live streaming themselves murder a bunch of people. That's just where we are.

Eve:

So calling congressman can probably help a little bit with this, but probably just writing letters about this, letting your friends and family know, and asking them to write a letter about this complaining directly to the company is probably the best thing that people can be doing. Yeah.

Robert:

That's one of them. Complaining to politicians is good. Elizabeth Warren just announced that she wants to break up a lot of the big Silicon Valley companies. I think that's a great step.

Eve:

Yeah, I think Liz is a terribly disrespectful way to reference her. Senator Warren and Senator Sherrod Brown, both of them are very up on this. I think there's a couple of their senators who are very aware of the significance of this stuff. The senators from Hawaii, Hirono and Schatz are really up on this.

Kieryn:

That's good. Don't underestimate your state politics or even your local politics. Get a local ordinance passed, get a state ordinance passed. Everything starts local. So, start there.

Eve:

Yeah. I think there's a lot of good work being done on that level that could be replicated elsewhere in terms of how people have been responding to Nazi presence in Charlottesville and White supremacists in Charlottesville. I mean, it's not perfect, but there's been a lot of activism and heat put on the city council people. Activists are showing up to city council meetings. You see that in Sacramento too after that shooting last year. People are still putting heat on them. So, that's the stuff that you can do throughout your state and your municipality in terms of showing up and demanding some action, some referendum, or something to be done about these sorts of uncontrolled access to propaganda that's going to be really dangerous.

Kieryn:

There are probably already organizations plugged into the high schools or something that are advocating for this.

Robert:

Yeah.

Eve:

Well, Robert, thank you so much for joining us. Do you have anything else you want to throw out before we let you go?

Robert:

Nope, that's pretty much it.

Eve:

Awesome. Thank you for the work that you're doing.

Robert:

Yeah. Yeah.

Eve:

Where can people find you and support you?

Robert:

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You can find me on Twitter, @IwriteOK. You can find my articles on Bellingcat, which is a great investigative platform that you ought to be reading. I have a podcast called Behind the Bastards.

Eve:

All right. You recently threw up a Kickstarter, right?

Robert:

Oh, a GoFundMe, but that's already made more than enough money.

Eve:

Okay.

Kieryn:

Nice. That's a great problem to have.

Eve:

Dig around and see if you can help them out further. I mean, he's doing really good work researching this stuff, and it's very important and timely.

Robert:

Well, if you've got money that you want to send, send it towards the Rural Organizing Project. They're doing great work in trying to deradicalize rural communities in Oregon. They could sure use your money.

Kieryn:

Oh, awesome.

Robert:

It's important stuff.

Kieryn:

We'll put the link in the notes.

Eve:

Yeah. Sweet. Thank you so much for your time.

Robert:

No problem. All right. See you all.

Eve:

Bye.

Kieryn:

Bye.

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Eve:

So what is chivalry and how is it related to this spate of White supremacist terrorism that we've been seeing everywhere?

Kieryn:

Why is it so popular with certain subgroups?

Eve:

Yeah. These shooters are recognizable. This is the guy from your debate group.

Kieryn:

No, yeah, exactly. That's so many of the questions I ask myself whenever I hear about mass shootings in general is, "Was this dude homeschooled? Was he taught the same thing that I was?"

Eve:

We have a legitimate reason to render about that because Sandy Hook was committed by a homeschooler and the Austin bomber was a homeschooler. There have been others, and a lot of them come back to White boys who are under the belief that they're disenfranchised somehow from some privileged status that they are supposed to have. I think a lot of that comes back to the chivalry teachings, where it's like, if you're a good guy, then you get the girl. If you follow this rule, then there's going to be some prize.

Kieryn:

If you're a gentleman, you will get a lady.

Eve:

If you are Sir Gawain, you're going to find the fucking grail and the ladies are going to all love you.

Kieryn:

Right. And then that doesn't happen and they lose their shit.

Eve:

They get really mad that they didn't get what they were promised.

Kieryn:

Yeah. So, what is chivalry?

Eve:

What is chivalry? I'm going to just describe it in terms of my anecdotal relationship to it. I mean, obviously, I'm a literature person, so I'm very familiar with the history of chivalry as a conceit. But the way it's taught in these communities, I tweeted this out the other day. All these boys at Grove City College who would open these doors that weighed five times their weight into the student union for you when you were a good 30 or 45 seconds down the path. They would just hold those doors open and let the cold air blow into that building and freeze everybody's asses off just so that they could impress you

by making you realize that they were stalking you by walking in front of you. That's a new level of stalking.

I'm sorry. Just the hyperawareness of women in their perimeter and then guys who would just shove into me to try to take shit out of my arms when I was carrying it. I'm pretty strong. I can carry stuff. I'm capable. They would get surprised. They would always be like, "Oh, let me carry your backpack for you." I eye roll because I know I can't win this fight because they're never going to stop bugging me, so I might as well just let them. Then they'd be like, "Oh, that's so heavy." I'd be like, "Hmm, now I'm going to be walking a mile and a half. Let's go."

Kieryn:

Yeah. The way I understood chivalry was also the boys would run and open the door if you were anywhere remotely close to looking like you were wandering towards the door. What my experience a lot of the time is I would be the person who would open doors for people and stuff, because that's just what I do. Then I would be reprimanded for doing it because I was a girl and I should be letting boys do that. I remember that being a thing that people talked about that girls had to work on was not doing the things and letting the boys do the things because they have to learn how to be gentlemen and you have to learn how to respect that.

Eve:

There was this culture of teaching the females, because that's how they would be called by those creatures.

Kieryn:

Just imagine like a Ferengi.

Eve:

Females.

Kieryn:

Females.

Eve:

It was culturing us into backleading. I don't know if you've ever done ballroom dance, but I did a bunch of it. There's a way for the female presenting partner to backlead the follower to actually be the leader and for the audience to never pick up on that. That's how they trained us was all of these little cues that you could do to make men feel like it was their idea to help you out. They make them feel like they were taking charge and responsible. I mean, on the flip side, that's a real weird burden.

I know a lot of the guys that have since come out of that have talked about how much pressure they felt to have their shit figured out when they didn't and to take leadership when they didn't feel comfortable doing that and to be assertive when they knew one of the women around them knew better or what to do when they didn't. There's a lot of pressure to keep this facade of being strong and composed.

Kieryn:

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I remember when I was in high school, the death of chivalry was a huge, huge topic that people were blogging about. It wasn't even just blogging. People were writing books about it. It was in the books we read. GA Henty was super popular, and we can get into him in 10 minutes.

Eve:

Oh, my God. We're going to get there. A lot of men were writing about feminazis, and they're throwing that word around all the time, which I think is super ironic and we'll get to that.

Kieryn:

Yeah, and how feminism is bad. Yes. Oh, my God. Yeah. So, a lot of where I ran into chivalry a lot was in TeenPact and on TheRebellion blog and their eventual forum and all of that thing.

Eve:

If we haven't explained to you what TheRebellion is before, which we definitely have and maybe you weren't paying attention, it is...

Kieryn:

It's Alex and Brett Harris's blog/book/program that teaches teens to rebel against low expectations.

Eve:

The slogan is...

Kieryn:

Do hard things.

Eve:

Fuck dicks. Oh, wait.

Kieryn:

I mean, how is it different? It's not.

Eve:

If I was to take that seriously, I would to have a whole lot more dodos in my house than I do already.

Kieryn:

Same though. Yeah.

Eve:

Okay. We like this particular joke. It's very boring. I'm sorry, guys. It's just really fun for us because we knew these guys in high school.

Kieryn:

We had no idea what it meant in high school. Now I understand.

Eve:

Antonio Tarasas has done in her blackout poetry, I think she did a Do Hard Things one, or was it you?

Kieryn:

I did.

Eve:

You did it. Okay. I'm sorry. I'm mixing you.

Kieryn:

I also just drew dicks in the entire book.

Eve:

Yeah, yeah. You did an erotica version of the book.

Kieryn:

Yeah. It was just anytime there was anything that said anything remotely phallic, I just drew a dick. It was basically every page.

Eve:

I mean, honestly, the entire conceit of chivalry is pretty phallic. If you look at it from a very union analysis of mythology, the concept of chivalry goes back to this romantic... I mean romantic in the literary sense, not The Notebook, but I mean, Sir Gawain had Beowulf quests and heroes and struggle and getting to the woman at the end. We're talking Odysseus coming home to Penelope and being like, "This is my wife. She hasn't had sex for 30 years because she loves me so much. Oh, my God. I'm so hot for her."

Stuff like that is what chivalry is inspired, centered around. It's that very noblesse oblige, duty bound, working hard, suck up your emotions, do right because there's only one way to go. I mean, it's all these things about toxic masculinity and fundamentalism that we've talked about.

Kieryn:

Yeah, that is exactly what it is. Yeah, no, even the guide is basically the 10 commandments of chivalry.

Eve:

Oh, yeah. Well, let's pick that up. Okay. So, Gautier, this is early 1800s. This is this French writer who wrote 10 Commandments of Chivalry. Of course, chivalry is much, much older than that, but he retroactively summed it up. Do you want to read them? They're really bad.

Kieryn:

One, thou shalt believe that the church teaches thou shalt observe all its directions. You will defend the church. You'll respect all weaknesses and constitute thyself the defender of them. You'll love the country in which you were born. You will not recoil before your enemy.

Eve:

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Which basically means when he challenges, you got to fight him. That doesn't mean you can't like yuck his yum. That's not what that means. That means when he says, "Fight me, bitch," you say, "Okay, where?"

Kieryn:

Yeah. Yeah. You're like... I'm missing. It's a glove.

Eve:

Oh, throwing down the gauntlet.

Kieryn:

Thank you. I'm like, "It's daunt something."

Eve:

Not the skinny kind. The kid glove kind.

Kieryn:

Yeah. You'll make war against the infidel without cessation and without mercy.

Eve:

By that, they mean Muslims. This is getting into everything we're talking about later.

Kieryn:

It is not subtle.

Eve:

Oh, God. Or everything we talked about earlier by the time you get this.

Kieryn:

You will perform scrupulously your futile duties if they are not contrary to the laws of God.

Eve:

Which means uphold capitalism or else, you die.

Kieryn:

Yes, basically. Yeah. You will never lie. You must remain faithful to your pledged word.

Eve:

Which means don't unionize. It's the loyalty shit stuff. It's about pledging guilty to your Lord and whoever it is that.

Kieryn:

Your Lord is your employer.

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Eve:

Your Lord is your employer. So, this is number eight, don't unionize.

Kieryn:

Yeah. You'll be generous and give largess to everyone.

Eve:

Okay. I can give you one that.

Kieryn:

You'll be everywhere and always the champion of the right and the good against injustice and evil. If that is not a fucking dog whistle, I don't know what is.

Eve:

That means whatever the Pope says go and/or your boss or whatever arbitrary-

Kieryn:

Whatever White Christian.

Eve:

... White Christian bullshit is the thing.

Kieryn:

Yeah. So, that's a lot of the background of chivalry that I learned was based on, and what a lot of TheRebelution and people who were writing about it at the time that I was in high school were basing it off of as well. TheRebelution did a six, five-part series-

Eve:

Oh, my God. So, many pages.

Kieryn:

... on Modern chivalry in 2006. First of all, the names of them was the modern day gentleman, which starts off with the definition of noblesse oblige.

Eve:

Which by the way, the term noblesse oblige, it comes from the concept of the beneficent landowner, the successful capitalist who is supposed to give healthcare to his employees basically.

Kieryn:

Which is just so kind of them.

Eve:

So kind of them.

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Kieryn:

So kind of them to do.

Eve:

I'm just giving a materialist reading of everything today. Sorry, guys.

Kieryn:

But that's what it is though. That's the entire point of chivalry.

Eve:

So full of White capitalism.

Kieryn:

It is. That is exactly what it is. Yeah. So, the way that TheRebellion described it was a gentleman was a man who took care to serve and protect those who are weaker than him, physically, mentally, or financially. A man who showed respect and consideration for others both by courteous manners and good grooming. For this man or should I say his modern day equivalent that I'm an advocate today. Oh, it is for this man that I'm an advocate today. The gentleman has all that disappeared in our day, and it is high time we brought him back.

Eve:

Which the gentleman, that term always originally implied land ownership, that implied that you had peasants in your service, that implied that you were upper class.

Kieryn:

Oh, yeah, absolutely. How else are you going to be well groomed and as all of the things that you should be?

Eve:

Only rich people shower once a week.

Kieryn:

The entire class of chivalrous knights or whatever, I mean, knights. So, they were well off.

Eve:

Yeah. I mean, not all of the knights were well off, but they were educated and they could get jobs.

Kieryn:

They were able to become knights.

Eve:

Their mothers bribed their way into you.

Kieryn:

Right, exactly.

Eve:

Whether or not they were smart, that's another matter, but they got into USC.

Kieryn:

Yes.

Eve:

Sorry. Go ahead.

Kieryn:

So the one that's called When Lancelot Comes Riding part one has this gray anecdote that is imagine that a princess has been kidnapped by an evil ogre and locked in a dark gloomy castle, but suddenly, a brave knight in shining armor rides up on a white horse swims the castle moat in full armor, wins a hard fought victory over the vicious ogre, finds her cell and calls out, "Stay back. I'm going to break down the door to free you." Wouldn't it ruin the story if she responded, "Oh, don't bother. I wouldn't want to inconvenience you"? Sadly, this is the way many modern day fairy tales end. A gentleman tries to serve a girl. She responds by being embarrassed because she doesn't want to inconvenience him. He's discouraged from acting the part of a man.

Eve:

No, actually, he smells bad and lives in his mom's basement. He's been stalking her online for months, and she's like, "Please go away. I have a restraining order." I got to say though, let's just take a second to acknowledge the fact that Lancelot is the one that Queen Guinevere cheated with. Given the circumstances of that, she thought that her husband sent him to have sex with her. If I remembering this correctly, I could be misremembering it. Sometimes that happens, but Sir Lancelot may have been a rapist. They're just upholding this guy. At the very least, he's a fucking philanderer, which we don't have any problems with consensual philandering, but this was not consensual according to the story. Anyway, just an aside.

Kieryn:

Right. Well, women are just supposed to be there to accept your serving. So, many of the posts that they wrote about this was about what boys should do and how girls should respond. Boys should be doing this thing because it's selfless and good, and girls should be allowing it because feminism is bad. It didn't take into account how this actually works in practice obviously.

Eve:

So I think this is a really good segue into the connection with abortion and pro-life rhetoric. Because a lot of times, I think there's a lot of pathetic White dudes who have never had a significant relationship with a woman who is not their mother, who think that they are pro-life and think that that is the way to be chivalrous and kind to women and really think that they know what's best for our uteruses, those of us who have them. So, it's like this conceit is really dark because I know better than better you about

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what's good for you. Yeah. So, I mean, sure, holding the door is innocuous, but the assumption is I can do it better, so I should do it.

Kieryn:

Yeah. Also, I have to prove to you that I'm some whatever, so I have to do this.

Eve:

Right, exactly. Yeah, it just gets very complicated very quickly when you start peering into it. At first, it looks like, "Oh, that's nice. Yeah, sure. I want flowers. I want some help moving. Cool. I'll use this tool." But this tool is really, really gross. It's been up the assholes of White supremacy for the last 500 years.

Kieryn:

Ever, since it's been invented really.

Eve:

Yeah, longer than that.

Kieryn:

That was the entire point of it.

Eve:

The entire point of it was to be used as a dull over White supremacy. So, anyway, basically, where I'm going with this is if you look at the rhetoric of men at pro-life marches and men who were involved in terrorism, at abortion clinics, we're going to put up a link to a particular story from the New York Times from 1984 in Pensacola, Florida, where there's this really great evil little Christian school that you should look up sometime if you want to be horrified, Pensacola Christian College. But these bombers are these Christian kids who called themselves protectors of the code. According to the New York Times article, their mission was to defend the ideals of chivalry. They bombed an abortion clinic on Christmas.

Kieryn:

Because that's so chivalrous.

Eve:

That's so chivalrous. That's how you help women. You make pipe bombs for Christmas. That's what we want.

Kieryn:

Yeah. So, yeah, you remove their access to healthcare. That's very chivalrous of you and kind. Thank you.

Eve:

Yeah. That's God's work. That's how you protect the code. Thank you very much. This gets into my next big point. A lot of this is centered in the virginity cult.

Kieryn:

Oh, yeah. That's meant to uphold it. That's the enforcement of it.

Eve:

So Sir Lancelot's big deal was he was a virgin and he was saving himself for Queen Guinevere or nobody. On the flip side, this whole chivalry is historically behind a lot of the language of the KKK and of lynching. Well, if you look at how the Confederates talked, a lot of it was this really twisted we have to protect our women and children. They didn't finish the sentence, but if they were going to finish this sentence, it'd be from being raped by Black men. That was their idea of what was going to happen. So, there's a fetishization of Black bodies as perverse and sexual and animal, which really connects to our Henty stuff later. Those are all absolutely false.

Then there's this whole thing about because of that, they're going to attack White women who are the paragon of virtue and holiness and purity like Mama Mary, holy mother of God. Let's draw all of the parallels to bridge and horror shit. So, a lot of the lynchings, when you look at the history of that violence, I think it's this story from 1924 that I've been reading up on today. Raymond Bird was a Black man, and he's 31. He was from Wytheville, Virginia, which is near where I live. He was lynched in 1924 because a White woman had his baby or said she had his baby.

I don't even know if it was actually his baby, but she said she had his baby. He was imprisoned for "rape" and then he was lynched. It was incredibly violent. I'm not going to get into this because you don't need to read about it or hear about it unless you want to read about it. We'll put a link up if you do. But what was the rhetoric behind it?

Kieryn:

It was all chivalry.

Eve:

It was all chivalry. You want to carry this on and talk about the KKK?

Kieryn:

So in their constitution, it says, "This order is an institution of chivalry, humanity, justice, and patriotism, embodying in its genius and principles all that is chivalric in conduct, noble and sentiment, generous in manhood, and patriotic in purpose." Yeah. It's all based in that. It's almost like chivalry was created to uphold White supremacy. It was.

Eve:

Let's talk about all of the crusades in the middle ages were about White supremacy. Absolutely.

Kieryn:

Yeah. So, it's not surprising that that's something that has permeated through this whole time.

Eve:

It's not surprising that this language of chivalry pops up in situations where we're discussing White supremacists, White terrorists, incels. All of these groups think that they've got God on their side

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because they think that they're protecting White women because they think that White women are their property. So, they have to protect them.

Kieryn:

They need to be protected.

Eve:

Their property needs to be protected because it's not the woman that's important. It's the White uterus that can reproduce with their White sperm to make more White babies so that whatever, they're going to have their fucking paradise.

Kieryn:

Yup. Because that's what the law exists to protect is property, not people. It's property. White women are honestly property. That's how they see this. That's how they believe it. So, they're like, "Obviously, this is how it works."

Eve:

If you don't believe me, go read Jessica Valenti's The Purity Myth, because I've talked about this a lot and that's your gateway drug into understanding how all this works.

Kieryn:

Yup.

Eve:

Okay.

Kieryn:

GA Henty.

Eve:

GA Henty. We've come a long way to finally get to the point of this entire episode.

Kieryn:

We are now at the point where we get to GA Henty. We've understand.

Eve:

We've been trying to get to GA Henty for a really long time.

Kieryn:

It is property and White supremacy.

Eve:

So who the fuck was this guy?

Kieryn:

He wrote a lot. He wrote a lot of books. He was a war correspondent in 1800 something. He died in 1902.

Eve:

He was a very bearded, patriarch figure from Imperial England. He was a conflict correspondent, work correspondent. I mean, he basically followed the British empire as it was expanding and wrote about it. He reported on India and the opening of Suez Canal. He was there for all of these big deal moments where the British Empire and its insatiable appetite for brown bodies and blood and destruction and property got what it wanted. So, where did you run into him?

Kieryn:

He was just common reading. He was everywhere. His books were just things that people had. I saw them in the homeschool book sales. It was very prolific. He wrote a lot of books. A lot of the boys that I knew read them and saw the way he portrayed men, I guess, and chivalry as the thing they should try to embody. That was just a huge, huge influence on the behavior of a lot of the boys that I knew.

Eve:

So we got to go back a little bit in the constellation of homeschool history to explain how GA Henty became so popular in our world, because we had so many of his books, so many of these gorgeous, hardcover, thick, luscious paper with embossed titles. These were \$30, \$35 books and homeschool families had dozens of them.

Kieryn:

Oh, yeah.

Eve:

So I've talked about Auburn Avenue Theology before. I'm going to talk about it again. It's this collective of Presbyterian conservative thinkers and pastors and theologians, these leaders in the reformed Presbyterian, far right wing Presbyterian community who got together and were basically trying to push theonomous teachings and come to an agreement about how their theology worked in terms of theonomy. When I say theonomy, I mean God has predestined America to be the Christian nation, and before Christ can return, we have to return it to biblical law. We have to return the United States to a situation where stoning a rebellious son is legal.

Kieryn:

Basically, we need to go back to being Puritanical.

Eve:

Right. Douglas Wilson was one of these guys, and Douglas Wilson is a big writer who's involved in the revitalization of these neo-Victorian values. So, you see him writing books about betrothal and courtship. We see him writing about biblical manhood and womanhood. He's prolific. He's the guy who founded that really weird little Christian school in Moscow, Idaho, and basically runs his little cult there. He's like a slavery apologist. He's one of those guys who's like, "Yeah, but the war between the states," because he never calls it the Civil War.

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Kieryn:

The Civil War.

Eve:

He's like, "The war between the states was just about the government overstepping. Everybody was actually behind enslaving humans, because that's biblical. Slaves were required to submit to their masters, and their masters was supposed to teach them Christianity. That was their noblesse oblige." I mean, he is basically tapping into all these language, all of these dog whistle pieces that are present in the Harris writings. The Harris kids grew up indoctrinated by this stuff. They grew up being disciplined by thinkers like Douglas Wilson.

So, Douglas Wilson, we're going to put a link to this PDF that's real fucked up. This is his book that's a little pamphlet on basically an apology for Southern slavery as biblical. He basically says that Jerry Falwell believed that slavery was biblical as well, which I mean, yeah, it was. This is part of why the Bible's so fucked up. This is part of why the church needs to denounce racism and deal with this.

Kieryn:

Exactly.

Eve:

But Douglas Wilson also helped mentor the founders of Vision Forum.

Kieryn:

Right. Yeah.

Eve:

We've talked about Vision Forum before.

Kieryn:

So they run a lot of the media for homeschoolers. They had a film expo thing. They write books. There's a bunch. They do a lot of indoctrination.

Eve:

Doug Phillips is the founder, I guess. They had a publishing arm, and they brought back a lot of this Victorian propaganda literature and got it reprinted because a lot of it was in the public domain. So, they just started making a ton of money off of reprinting Henty books, basically, among other things. I think they were the primary publisher of them. I don't think anybody else did.

Kieryn:

Yeah, no, I think they were the primary.

Eve:

Okay. We'll fact check that in our notes later. So, what was the first Henty book you read?

Kieryn:

I don't actually know. I think I might have just skimmed through the Henty books because they were boy books.

Eve:

Okay. I was obsessed with them because they were boy books. I really liked reading boy books.

Kieryn:

I did too, but I read The Hardy Boys and Fun Boy.

Eve:

Oh, see, I thought Hardy Boys was boring and below me.

Kieryn:

You also read a lot more than I did.

Eve:

Yeah, yeah. That's my problem. I just always do that. So, the Henty books have this formula where it's abnormally blonde and blue-eyed child. We have no idea where he came from, but he's in this brown village with brown people. Suddenly, he realizes that he actually belongs with ex-Imperial Force or not. Other important Imperial Force is coming to oppress X Arian community, and he must save the day. He sneaks into battle and actually doesn't get anyone killed and actually releases some livestock into the field and disorient things and actually save today somehow.

It's a trope. It's a very stock, plug in, X and solve for Y formulaic crap, Victorian fiction. It's propaganda. There's nothing smart about it except for the vocabulary maybe. But we gobbled these up. I know so many people who read so many of them.

Kieryn:

I know so many people who are just like, "GA Henty is the best. You should read GA Henty." I'm like, "Yeah."

Eve:

I mean, he did have a vocabulary that... I don't know, probably some data scientists could fact check this, but I feel like it was on par with Tolkien's.

Kieryn:

Right. If you were done reading Tolkien, then moved to GA Henty basically.

Eve:

You were looking for something else that was going to be lusciously or grotesquely descriptive. You were looking for something that was Anglocentric. You were looking for something that was heavy vocabulary, and your mother would be impressed because she would have trouble getting into it. You read Ivanhoe already also. So, you were looking for something else, and this is what you went to.

Kieryn:

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Yeah. I just read Ivanhoe and I stopped there.

Eve:

Ivanhoe is full of crap too.

Kieryn:

Oh, yeah. It really is. Ivanhoe bored me to tears, actually. It was a struggle. I was like, "Geez, why do I have to read this book?"

Eve:

Are we making sense? Are we connecting chivalry enough with the White supremacy stuff?

Kieryn:

I feel like we keep coming back to how it's White supremacist.

Eve:

I mean, I feel like that's every episode.

Kieryn:

I know. It's almost like everything comes back to White supremacy and capitalism and our entire childhood was not so subtly geared to enforce that forever.

Eve:

Right, exactly, which is why we think that we recognize all these shooters because they sound like kids we did debate with us.

Kieryn:

A lot of the stuff they espouse is stuff that we also grew up hearing or in environments that were similar to what we grew up in.

Eve:

Well, let's finish damning Mr. Henty for his White supremacy here. Do you want to read this quote from one of his novels? It has a chapter called the N-word character. I've highlighted it.

Kieryn:

Yeah. I will read the quote.

Eve:

Read this horrible quote. This was mined by Rachel Maddow a couple years back, and I think 2010 on her show. We'll put a link up to that transcript up there too.

Kieryn:

So there was the chapter and the quote is, "They are just like children. They're always either laughing or quarreling. They're good natured and passionate, indolent but will work hard for a time, clever up to a certain point, densely stupid beyond. The intelligence of an average N-word is about equal to that of a European child of 10 years old. They're fluent talkers, but their ideas are borrowed. They're absolutely without originality, absolutely without inventive power. Living among White men, their imitative faculties enable them to attain considerable amount of civilization. Left to their own devices, they retrograde into a state little above their native savagery." I mean, he's dead, but I want to strangle him many times over.

Eve:

Let's find his grave and pee on it.

Kieryn:

Yes. Let's have a party and do that.

Eve:

Let's burn a pile of shit on top of it. I mean, basically, he's not being inventive here. This is the language of empire. This is the language of that time. This is the language, not just of that time, but this is the language that we got in here and told was our cultural inheritance.

Kieryn:

I was never told this explicitly, but that whole thing was implied whenever race came up in any book that I was reading or history. It was always that people of color are lesser and less intelligent, and that's just how God made them, which is such fucking bullshit. It's seeped in everything.

Eve:

So you'll see Henty saying this stuff. If you read the Douglas Wilson book, you see him saying this stuff and then you see these teenage Christian boys-

Kieryn:

Absorbing that.

Eve:

... absorbing this and regurgitating it on their Rebelution blog and indoctrinating their peers with this basically back washed White supremacist rhetoric.

Kieryn:

Yeah. By the time it got to TheRebellion, they were like, "We're colorblind. We don't see color. Color doesn't exist," but it's still there.

Eve:

It's permeated.

Kieryn:

It's still there.

Eve:

So this is stuff that we've been paying attention to for a long time. This is stuff that the more we dig into it in this current political atmosphere, the more we realize how it's all came to interconnected. You can hear us figuring it out as we're talking to you, but it shouldn't be surprising and it doesn't surprise us when this stuff becomes violent and when the rhetoric that backs up our country's really bullshit and lax gun laws. It's because the rhetoric for gun laws is basically tied to chivalry stuff.

Kieryn:

It is. It is entirely tied to saving the women.

Eve:

I have to protect my family.

Kieryn:

When people talk about gun control, the first thing that comes up is, "But how will we protect the women and children?" It's like not this way clearly.

Eve:

I like shooting guns. I do not own one, but it is something that I occasionally enjoy and they scare the hell out of me. I don't want to live with one because this is where it comes from. This is why it's prioritized. This is why it's valued. I mean, the history of gun ownership is basically, let's kill savages. That's where they were invented.

Kieryn:

It's only acceptable for White people to have them. The law exists to keep White people having them and no one else having them. Like so many people that I grew up with believed this stuff and have literal arsenals in their entryway closets full of ammo and grenades and guns that are somewhat military grade, just in case the day comes where they have to protect their family.

Eve:

Yeah. I mean, I'm not going to endorse, but I can see and understand a rationale that says that queer people right now need that stuff and journalists right now need that stuff because they're being actively targeted.

Kieryn:

I feel that sometimes, and I think about it.

Eve:

Violence and there's a good logic there, but honestly, the less that these things are around and available, the better our society. Anyway, that's a whole tangent.

Kieryn:

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That's an entirely other thing.

Eve:

Yeah. Well, this episode got really dark. I'm glad to the Twitter person who asked us about it.

Kieryn:

Yes. Thank you for mentioning chivalry.

Eve:

Yeah. Our friends on Twitter agree when we ask them questions. Ask us more questions, guys.

Kieryn:

Yes. Ask us more questions because Eve is coming down and we can totally do a Q&A podcast. Yeah.

Eve:

So if you like this podcast, you should really, really support us on our Patreon. We are freelance writers and activists. All of this stuff that we're doing, we're doing for you, because we're passionate about it and we love it and it doesn't pay our bills. So, please help us. Please buy us some beer. Please keep our lights on. Please help us buy new phones. I don't know. Whatever it is that we need that is dying this week.

Kieryn:

We need to stay alive.

Eve:

Healthcare or whatever.

Kieryn:

We've got so many things.

Eve:

Music shit.

Kieryn:

Healthcare.

Eve:

The music from this episode is by The Heavens from their albums DiNozzo.

Kieryn:

You can find our contact info, the way to email us questions, and a link to our Patreon at kitchentablecult.com. Our Patreon itself is [/kitchentablecultpod](#).

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Eve:

Please join. It doesn't cost a lot. You get early access to stuff.

Kieryn:

If you're in Oakland, the Bay Area next weekend and you want to come watch us do a podcast.

Eve:

Come hang out and meet us.

Kieryn:

Do it. Follow us. We will announce it on Twitter and email and Patreon. So, follow us all of those places.

Eve:

Get in touch.

Kieryn:

Yeah. We will see you next week or hear you.

Eve:

Yeah. You'll hear us. Okay. Thanks for joining.

Kieryn:

Bye.

Eve:

Bye.