

very-special-episode-rona-revisited

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SPEAKERS

Simpsons, Carole Burnett, Megan Goodwin, Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst, Sela



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 00:17

This is Keeping It 101: a killjoy's introduction to religion podcast. This season our work is made possible in part through a generous grant from the New England Humanities Consortium, and with additional support from the University of Vermont's Humanities Center. We are grateful to live, teach, and record on the ancestral and unseeded lands of the Abenaki, Wabenaki, and Aucocisco peoples.



Megan Goodwin 00:38

What's up, nerds? Hi, hello, I'm Megan Goodwin, a scholar of American religions, race, and gender. My masks bring all the dogs to the dog park, every day.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 00:51

Hi, hello, I'm Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst, a historian of religion, Islam, race, racialization- and I've had neither a full day off, nor on since March 2020. And that's not a joke.



Megan Goodwin 01:06

Not a joke. Just a fact.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 01:09

If you remember our very special minisode from when the Rona first broke out in the States, we are joined again by an equally special guest.



Megan Goodwin 01:17

Sela, can you say hi?



Sela 01:18

Hi.



Megan Goodwin 01:20

That is Sela, Ilyse's seven-year-old daughter, who is a blue belt in kempo karate, into female leads, a current and future badass, and is unlike a lot of adults we know in that she wears a mask, keeps her distance, and doesn't complain about it. Thanks for doing that Sela.



Sela 01:38

[giggle]



Megan Goodwin 01:38

Last year, we had you on the podcast to talk about the virus. Do you remember that?



Sela 01:42

Yeah.




Megan Goodwin 01:43


What do you remember about it?




Sela 01:45

Uh, it's kind of like this.


 Megan Goodwin 01:47
Kind of like this? Last year we talked about how Coronavirus, or COVID-19 was affecting you. And it was so long ago that all we talked about was missing Passover. What else have you missed this year? Can you tell me about Rosh Hashanah?


 Sela 02:02
Um... we... well that's not really a thing we like to celebrate with other people. Or we go to temple-

 Megan Goodwin 02:13
So did you have it at home?


 Sela 02:14
Um, yeah, we had it at home, but usually we go to temple and this year we couldn't do that.


 Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 02:20
Did we maybe go to temple on Zoom? Was that different?

 Sela 02:25
Yes.


 Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 02:27
What else have you missed this year, kiddo?

 Sela 02:29
Um, my friends.


 Megan Goodwin 02:31
Oh, yeah? Did you get to see your friends at all?


 Sela 02:35
Um, I saw them, but it was like at the school park, riding bikes, at Shae's Fort, playing hide and seek.

 Megan Goodwin 02:47
So outside mostly, huh?

 Sela 02:48
Yeah.

 Megan Goodwin 02:49
Yeah.


 Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 02:51
Sela, what's the hardest part of the virus been for you?

 Sela 02:53
Not- not going to school.

 Megan Goodwin 02:55
Yeah.

 Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 02:57
And who did you miss the most while we've been kind of isolated?

 Sela 03:02
Shae and Fiona.

 Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 03:04

Yeah, how come?



Sela 03:06

Because they were my- my- they were- bet-. They're my best best best friends.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 03:09

Hmm. And what do you want to do when it's safe to do so?



Sela 03:15

Go on the Fishers' boat and jump off the side with Fiona.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 03:19

That's very specific. Is there any holiday that you want to celebrate with other people? Either that's coming up, or that'll be this year? When we can- if we can safely.



Sela 03:32

Hanukkah.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 03:33

Mmm. What do you want to do with other people for Hanukkah?



Sela 03:37

Play dreidel and for- and for once eat chocolate gelt.



Megan Goodwin 03:43

Sela. What do you think you'll remember when you're an old lady grown up like us about this wild year? What do you think will stick with you in your brain?



Sela 03:53

Okay. One, you're not old ladies. And two, I think all our hikes will be the thing that I will remember. This was like the year of hikes for our family.

M Megan Goodwin 04:09
So many hikes. What was your favorite hike?

S Sela 04:12
Maybe the Charlotte nature reserve? That was fun. And also I get to climb on mega tree.

M Megan Goodwin 04:19
I saw pictures of that. That was awesome. So also, as you know, we like to assign our nerds homework. And last time you told them to read the "Mysterious Benedict Society." Is there anything new we should check out or movies that you watch that you think everybody should see?

S Sela 04:36
Um, I think everyone should read the "Bookwanderers" series, which is about a little girl named Tilly who can travel through books.

M Megan Goodwin 04:47
Ooh.

S Sela 04:48
And I think everyone should watch "World [of] Winx" which is about a group of fairies who actually go out into a different world to save the world.

M Megan Goodwin 04:57
Hmm.

S Sela 04:58
And everyone should watch the three movies about "Night at the Museum." Those are

really funny.



Megan Goodwin 05:07

Okay, that- that sounds like a lot of good TV for them to watch. I love that.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 05:14

Stop that Doom scrolling. It's time for the LESSON PLAN. A year ago we thought, hey, religion is what people do. And since the 'rona is affecting people, it's certainly affecting religion. At the time, things like Hajj were still questionable. Passover was just shifting to Zoom. American Christians were only beginning to whine about the 'War on Religion,' aka not going to church on Easter.



Megan Goodwin 05:44

Today, we're going to do a short recap of how we saw COVID affect religious communities. And we're going to remind you that religion is not done with you, because folks claiming their religious freedom is more important than your right not to contract a little understood and obscenley contagious virus- yeah, that's- that's a thing.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 06:02

DRAMATIC PAUSE. A check in. Goodwin, dare I ask, how has this year been for you? I mean, in the immortal words of Stephen Sondheim, "I'm still here." Just- it's been a lot. And on the one hand, I have joked that I felt like the virus was grading us on a curve, because both my partner and I have jobs we can do remotely. And we had a place that we lived safely, and we were not in danger of losing our housing, we ate, we- you know, we adopted another dog. We, in the grand scheme of this global crisis, or this collection of global crises have been really lucky. And at the same time, it has been really challenging. Because global crises, because, you know, in a house with the same person for a year, and he's my favorite person, but there's nowhere to go and you can't get away from anyone and everyone's stressed out all the time and medical anxiety and it just- Yeah, man, I- uh, let's- let's not have to do this again, how 'bout. What if we lived in a functional democracy that had better crisis management? Hmm. What if that.



Megan Goodwin 07:38

What if- what would that be like? New Zealand, probably. I hear it's nice.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 07:45

Yeah, yeah. Last year, on this very episode, I said something like this all blows chunks, my dudes. And I stand by that. This has blown and continues to blow chunks. I too have had relative security, relative safety. In Vermont, we have done exceptionally well compared to the rest of the US. So while it is impartial, my children have care, right? Like- they- at some point, things got back to being slightly more open with all sorts of rules and- and regulations unlike other places. So, in terms of the glass being, like, a quarter full, my glasses absolutely a quarter to 33% full, but I miss my people, I miss our life outside of this room. I miss having full days of work, and full days of rest. And I miss my kids interacting with others, like humans might interact with each other. And frankly, I miss imagining what the descent into authoritarianism and fascism wouldn't be about, like, mask wearing.



Megan Goodwin 09:04

Yes.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 09:04

So, I-



Megan Goodwin 09:05

Yeah I have to- Can I just say that the apocalypse wound up being a lot more about 'Where can I safely go to the bathroom' than I had imagined?



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 09:14

Oh, no, I always imagined that because Jews are very worried about poo. But- but I appreciate that that was new for you.



Megan Goodwin 09:21

Yeah, I was not ready. Once again, Catholic upbringing has left me sorely lacking in general life preparedness.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 09:31

I think for real my 'how has this year been for me'- I'm coming out of this far, far more angry at my allegedly "fellow" Americans than I thought was possible. Because y'all have heard me I run angry. Well, I think for me, it's one thing to know that there are folks who also identify as American that have very different commitments and values and ethics of care than I do. And it's another to be encountering those people in, like, the grocery store and have them be so aggressive about not giving a shit about us. Yeah.



Megan Goodwin 10:13

I would- I- I would like to not remember that that is true even though I think it's important that we remember that that's true. So. Keeping It 101: ON TODAY, the segment where we do some Professor-work.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 10:34

Alright, so I guess I'll give you a short rundown, nerds, about what has happened. We know that nearly everything shifted for this ongoing global pandemic, which we did not know a year ago. Many, if not most, religious groups worldwide have found ways to cope. Hajj was cancelled. Talk about putting humanity above ritual or rules- both eid al-Adha and eid al-Fitr, two major festival days, these major joyous celebrations for Muslims, went virtual. Jews, who are often prohibited electronics during services for example, on Shabbat and during holidays have held Zoom minyans, and high holiday services, and Hanukkah parties. My own Shul had a drive-through Hanukkah lighting, the menorah lighting, with this giant PVC menorah, and like, (frankly a fail but) hilariously attempted all car sing along



Megan Goodwin 11:33

Awww.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 11:33

with, like, the Rabbi nine feet away trying to, like, direct everyone in their vehicles.



Megan Goodwin 11:38

Awww.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 11:39

So many Hindu festivals have changed, but a great example (at least to my mind) are the Ramlila celebrations. Dus- specific- specifically Dussehra, this major festival day where the image of Ravana the demon king of the Ramayana, is burnt like an effigy. And folks play at the Ramayana, literally "lila" means to play. And so they dress up as characters, they reenact the scenes, it's an honor to portray these deities, and many of Ramlilas went online after most were canceled. So this is a major sort of public not just performance but- but ritual kind of ceremony. And I'm honestly- I gotta be honest, Megan, shocking no one, I'm ignoring Christianity. I gotta be honest, I need a breather.



Megan Goodwin 12:25

Yeah.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 12:26

Listening to Christians lose their collective minds about Christmas, seeing the airplane records set around Christmas time and New Year's, listening to folks all throughout December, and now as we approach Easter, talk again about how COVID is ruining THE (definitive article) THE holiday season. All of that, right there, is Christian supremacy. Often, white Christian supremacy, and I'm over it. Everyone else in the world seemingly figured out how to not murder your kin in the name of your God, and so get with your program is all I got. I didn't do a news roundup on Christianity. But, Goodwin, I know you want to talk practical issues. And frankly, those are a little bit more interesting. So let's move on. That was a decent round-up. And yes, I- yeah, I love to talk about practical issues. So as usual, Americanist caveat, I'm focusing on the legal stuff that is shocking here. And also a little Season Two throwback to remind you that race and religion and gender and sexuality are always part of the story. So I'll throw in some race, religion, 'rona stuff too. First off, though, the Supreme Court of the United States of America, bless its collective heart, decided in November 2020, that "religious freedom" (and please hear those scare quotes) outweighs the public good, and the public's health. It is bullshit. It is horrible. In December 2020, this moved beyond New York City to New Jersey and Colorado with similar cases reaching similar ends with the pathetically stacked Supreme Court. I digress, but Amy Coney Barrett is an affront to women who actually are accomplished and proof of religious nationalism, frankly, at the highest level and again, white Christian nationalism at the highest level. So natch this shit is right up my alley. Here's what happened. Oh, November, five-four ruling, the US Supreme Court sides with religious organizations in a dispute over COVID-19 restrictions put in place by apparently serial abuser, and still bafflingly New York Governor, Andrew Cuomo, who tried to limit the

number of people who could attend public religious services. What Cuomo tried to do was limit the number of people in a place because you know, COVID fucking 19. Religious groups in New York City, Roman Catholic Diocese in Brooklyn, Agudath Israel of America, another Jewish organization in New Jersey, and a small Bible Church in Colorado (this is the December cases) were found to have their First Amendment rights violated, with the court stating that limitations on worship were not acceptable and placed an undue and unfair burden. They were an overreach, allegedly. Allegedly. Allegedly. So why do we care? Because you, dear nerds, may be out wearing masks, we hope you are. You might not be out at all, you might be our first responder relying on folks to wear masks and socially distance so that when you have to be at work in the business of saving lives, your work is possible, the hospital can remain open, and you are at as little risk as possible in the middle of a global pandemic. You, our dear nerds, might be happy to have your religious festivals online. And even if you're not happy, you might be willing to have them online in your home, or after a two week quarantine and no stops allowed, get a she-wee for the side of the road, car ride. And all of that- bless. And all of that individual work is important and we appreciate you and also systemically doesn't matter because the Court said that religious events are allowed to be super spreader events, because nothing, not even the protection of other people's lives, apparently supersedes someone's right to drink from the same kiddush cup, or gather 100+ strong in a church. And that, beloved nerds, is how religion can kill you, even if you're not religious. And that's how your rights are mediated through the lens of religion- specifically, again, Christianity, although this did have ramifications for more than just Christianity- your rights are mediated through religion, even if you're not religious. That is how religion is never, ever, ever done with you. Even if you think you're done with religion. Whoof.



Megan Goodwin 16:49

Yeah.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 16:49

Whoof, whoof, whoof. What a time to live in these United States.




Megan Goodwin 16:54


Happy Anniversary! COVID-versary?




Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 16:56

I know. I think that there's also some burgeoning cases, but I haven't, um, I'll be honest, nerds, I did some cursory research, and I didn't find enough case law. So I'm going to skip it. But I'm going to cede that there are cases that are coming around whether or not your employer or your school district can force you to get the COVID-19 vaccination, whether or not mandating your little vaccination cards that I'm starting to see all over social media. And you best believe that when you post your vaccination card, I am liking the shit out of that.

 Megan Goodwin 17:35
Yes, we are.

 Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 17:36
But can you be mandated to travel with that domestically in the way that you need to prove vaccination records internationally or as part of a visa application? Right now, it seems like there are just some, like, what are the prior case law? And what might this look like in hypotheticals? But it's very clear that those tas- those test cases are going to start coming as more and more at least US residents have access to the COVID-19 vaccines and we know from prior case law, that vaccine exemptions are often, not always, but often, done in the guise of religious freedom.

 Megan Goodwin 18:16
Yeah.

 Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 18:17
And so I'm curious about what will happen next. In my home state of Maine, we had a case approved- basically, the governor made it much harder to get religious exemptions for vaccines, if you want to attend Maine public schools. It doesn't apply to adults. But it has raised a number of questions, and questions on the public ballots, all of these things, about whether or not adults have to get vaccines to access public services. A lot of this language is precisely around religious exemptions. And this- and again, this is just a place where religion isn't done with you because you could get the vaccine, and you should please, if you can get the vaccine, please do get the vaccine. And we are hoping that those keep working even if we need to get boosters, we hope that they work on variants, it looks like they are but we are never going to approach anything like "herd immunity" if a majority of people don't get vaccinated. So this is a place where if there are enough

religious exemptions, Coronavirus is going to be with us for much longer than it needs to be in the name of religious freedom. Yeah. She ain't heavy, she's-- PRIMARY SOURCES.



Megan Goodwin 19:43

[singing] Primary sources! Hey, Ilyse, how is the 'rona affecting your religion?



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 19:50

Well, thanks for asking. Last time we talked, I was most worried about grief ceremonies. I re-listened to the episode in prepping for this one and I was- I was clearly worried about grief ceremonies. What it would look like to lose this many people and in the US, we are at an appalling- actually, I think this is actually higher- I looked this up the other day, I think it is 540,000 and counting.



Megan Goodwin 19:52

You're welcome! Jesus Christ.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 20:17

And so what is it like to lose well over half a million people and, lose our rituals for grief. I have been to and seen shiva calls on Zoom both for COVID and not. So that's still with me. I think that feels so- still feels palpable to me. It's been really shocking to see kids do better, despite the real and visceral trauma of all this, than adults. Like I'm sorry, your annual barbecue ain't it. And I'm sorry that you're sad, I am- I am very sad too, but suck it up, adults. And frankly, I think- I think my- my religion is affected in this language of forgiveness, right? So, every year Jews do Yom Kippur. Many Jews do Yom Kippur where we are exhorted to ask each other for forgiveness, and the person we ask forgiveness from is not required to give it to us. But you got to do that before you are allowed to beseech God's forgiveness, right? It's the Day of Atonement. And I gotta be honest, it's been weighing on me since like October, and it feels like it's still weighing on me as we come into Passover. But I- I actually really hope we're never collectively forgiven for the grotesque ways we've placed our individual wants over our collective need, capital over people, facockta falsehoods over facts, throughout this whole thing. I don't want to say that I'm in a place of despair. But I will say, Goodwin, that when I re-listened to this first minisode on COVID I felt like we sounded so hopeful. And so fucking naive. Us, killjoys! We sounded hopeful and naive which I guess is to say my soul is as stormy as ever. All of that said has horrified as I've been by like, honestly too many fucking assholes out there where

like the norm seems to have been fucking asshole. Though, shout out to Vermont. Everyone's been pretty great, more or less. 'Rona makes me have like, really deep feels in my tiny icy heart about the folks who love my kids, who love us, and whom we love. And so when it's safe, you better believe I'm having a big ass party with every missed birthday and holiday ritual at one shindig you need the Valentine's table right next to the Passover table? I fucking got you. I got you.



Megan Goodwin 22:57

I'm into this, I love it.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 22:59

How are you doing? How is your religion? How is 'rona affecting your religion?



Megan Goodwin 23:05

Well, I said last time, and I stand by that pagans are among the OG social distancers when it comes to- to ritual doing because cyber paganism was a thing in the 90s, in the early days of publicly available internet. So while I never did ritual in the 90s, online, there have been networks for this sort of thing truly for decades. I found myself, and I suspect I'm not the only one, both really missing practicing with other folks and also being deeply and profoundly ambivalent about, like, trying to do this over Zoom, right? And that again- that's over and above all of my political and personal issues about Zoom. I will say that when I sucked it up and accepted that it was probably better to do something imperfectly with the tools that we had, rather than just be mad that I couldn't do it the way that I wanted to do it, I- I felt so much I want to say that I felt better and that's true, but that's not all of it.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 24:19

Yeah.



Megan Goodwin 24:19

Um, I did- I did a virtual collective energy direction thing the night before the election with a big group of folks that I don't know. But I will say I felt like I had to do something and being in a space where so many folks were worried, and hopeful, and- and angry all in one space and then ending up with like an "all you fascists bound to lose" collective dance

party felt like the right thing. I did a Yule ritual with a bunch of lovely, mostly queer, witches from Durham. And it's funny, I- I- I helped design some of the ritual elements with my friend Joy who was leading the ritual and I knew what was coming and still, when we got to the, like, naming the losses of this year, which was a big part of the Yule ritual. I just- like I fuckin lost it. I ugly cried on the Zoom with both people I love dearly, and people I have met maybe once in- in person. So feeling myself, like, not just be sad. I knew I was sad, but just, like, not be able to get it back right away in a way that truly surprised and kind of scared me. That was- that was hard. That was a lot. It felt like the right thing to acknowledge that grief. But fuck, man, that was a lot.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 25:57

Yeah.



Megan Goodwin 25:58

And then I got to this weekend for the first time since the last Equinox, be in the same place with one of the women that I practice with up here. So we just- usually we have more kind of formal ritual elements, the thing that we did for the vernal equinox this year is go for a damn walk outside because we can. And it felt so great. Like, I live in Maine. 50 degrees in March feels like a goddamn miracle.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 26:26

Yeah no, it's summer.



Megan Goodwin 26:27

It's just- yeah, that was the whole thing. She made- she's sugar free. So she made these sugar free chocolate eggs, which believe it or not, are delicious. And we spent a bunch of time in the sunshine. And that was my entire, like, Oh Star ritual, and it was dope, and made me feel like, okay, like, this is possible that things aren't going to be this way forever. In fact, they can't be this way forever. Because as Octavia Butler teaches us, God is change. So it might not get better right away. It might not get better at all, but it has to get different because that is the nature of how things are. And knowing that things have to change even though we don't know how they're going to change has been a weird, cold but helpful, comfort over the last fuckin 12 months.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 27:15

Yeah, I will say that the one religious ritual that I was really glad that you participated in with my family was our makeshift Yahrzeit for the Coronavirus.



Megan Goodwin 27:27

I loved that so much.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 27:27

Like we marked one year in isolation with you over FaceTime. And we did, like, an activity of like what was really horrible what was our favorite activity, but also, like, I for real read the- like read the mourner's Kaddish and wanted my children to hear, like, we listed how many deaths had happened in the world, and how many happened in the in the US. And we chose to leave out some of the elders that we knew, like broadly, that had had died of COVID early on, because these are elders that my kids didn't really know. And- or, like, you know, friends of friends and family and stuff like that. So I didn't want to overwhelm them with names, or to make them feel- because they didn't know these folks. But it felt really important to me to do that. Which like, alright, listen, Rabbis don't come at me. I'm sure this was like totally finagled and improper. But it was actually really important that you were there, like, my kids really miss you.



Megan Goodwin 28:32

Yeah I miss them too!



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 28:32

And I think one of the things that they missed a lot was like MoFus- on- MoFus in Maine.



Megan Goodwin 28:37

MoFus in Maine!



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 28:39

And so, I think-



Megan Goodwin 28:39

It's tradition!



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 28:40

It is! I think one of our grief spaces was- was that. But I think- I also think there's been these weird spaces of like, we are not OG cyber users for prayer, us Jews. And so there's been, like, really interesting spaces of, like, what does this look like as we move forward? Can folks Skype in, or Zoom in, or FaceTime in, to bar mitzvahs, right? Like, I've been to bar mitzvahs on the Zoom. What might this look like in the future? And would a conservative Shul like mine allow that for the enfeebled, or the elderly, or the, like, just can't afford to get to Vermont in the middle of March, right? And so, I don't want to say to, like, change everything, but I do appreciate the like, God is change. It might not get better, but it has to get different and I'm curious to see what the lasting impact of this will be. And I'm- um- I'm just so grateful for you, that like my kids, like, real, first, proper at home Yahrzeit was about this, and that you were present for it. I love that you let me be present for it. I- I have really appreciated the ways that you've insisted we can't- we can't grieve properly alone. It's both important to grieve, and it's important to grieve, with your family. With the people that love you, rather than pretend like grief is something shameful or something we shouldn't talk about. Yeah, I just- I really appreciated that. I appreciated the kids were into it and had their own narratives, and that they would surprise us with the things that they missed or the things that they really liked. Yeah, it just, I have been really grateful for the spaces where community seems possible, even if it's not how I'd prefer to be building community. And I'm also really curious about, yeah- the lessons that we learned this year about accessibility and- and how disability advocates have been saying, look, we've told you, we needed this all along, and you didn't listen. Yup.



Megan Goodwin 30:51

And I'm also- you know, there's- there's no way that my tiny town (even as we're the biggest city in Maine)- my tiny town of Portland, would not have gotten 60 plus people together the night before the election to do this witchy collective action thing. We just don't have that kind of momentum. But it was possible because it was online.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 31:12

Yeah.



Megan Goodwin 31:12

And having that many people share those commitments was amazing and really important.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 31:19

Well, that seems like a great place to move on.



Megan Goodwin 31:24

Let's do that.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 31:27

Don't pack up your stuff yet, nerds. You've got HOMEWORK.



Simpsons 31:31

Homework, what homework?



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 31:32

Hey, Goodwin. Remember last time we said no homework in a pandemic and then we did a whole ass year of episodes and we assigned homework every single time. And here we are, a whole ass year later, still assigning stuff? We are hypocrites. Anyway, let's keep it light. Since we are mid-Season Three and you've been around- we've assigned a ton already. So Megan, what trash are you consuming these days? I mean, so many trashes in so many different areas of my life. Media-wise my- my trash, right this second is I paid \$3.99 American currency to subscribe to the WOW+ network, which is where all of the, like- I can't even say second tier, I want to say like fourth tier drag race programming winds up. So I just- I just watched, like, a documentary series on the stage show put on by the RuPaul drag race UK winners, note just the whole season. And now I'm watching like 10 minute increments of Alyssa Edwards doing weird stuff in public. It's not good, but it helps. And it's- it's light and it doesn't make me feel like the world is ending, so that's helpful. You got me hooked on Father Brown which is like gentle murder mystery, uh, with aspirational progressive Catholicism at the core that- that scratches a weird itch I didn't even know I had. I'm so glad you're watching that behind us. It's like genuinely funny to figure out where you are in the series based on like when I log in to Brit Box it's great. Adorable. I'm

also deep in the middle- I'm like five seasons deep into a Veep rewatch and it has been- I mean, I watched the whole thing as it came out. It has been both hilarious and truly horrifying to watch some of the gags that they wrote about actually have happened in the last several years. The, like, I'm not getting what I want so I'm going to shut down the government, I won't raise the debt ceiling- that happened twice! Yeah.



Megan Goodwin 33:47

It was un- like the gag of it was surely no one would be this petty because everybody wants the government to keep running. Do they though? Do they?



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 33:54

No, it's- it's all been wag the dog for like 20 years now.



Megan Goodwin 34:00

Anyway, so- so- so- so that's my trash. Yeah.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 34:05

A+ trash.



Megan Goodwin 34:07

Thank you.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 34:08

Alright, you know I love a YA, easy, fluffy read and I was very into the Fire and Thorns trilogy. It stars a fat girl who self identifies as "fat at the top." There's a lot of Latinate religion, like, I can't call it Catholicism, and I can't call it Spanish, or like Iberian and it's in this like post-explosion world thing, but there's a lot of like, fake Latin happening in it.



Megan Goodwin 34:34

Interested!



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 34:34

There is some boy-girl kissing which, like, meh, whatever. But romance doesn't save the day. So it's- it's pretty- it's pretty good. I really loved the Lindy w- West book you sent me called "Shit, Actually:."



Megan Goodwin 34:48

Yes.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 34:49

Because I love terrible movies. And if that's your thing, nerds I also clearly recommend "How Did This Get Made," which is my all time favorite podcast. I'm gonna say for the last decade. It's like the podcast that got me started- I'm not kidding. Ten years ago on podcasts and I listen faithfully. Um, but yeah, that book of essays is like- I read it in an afternoon, I read half of it out loud to Kevin who was like "I am just trying to watch my gardening shows" no, I need to narrate for you this entire chapter it's hilar.



Megan Goodwin 35:17

Well- it's also confusing that you didn't just write it because I truly read, I think, half of the prologue and was like fuck it Ilyse needs this book, how did Ilyse not write this book.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 35:25

Well like some of it I truly was like, why am I not Lindy West's best friend? But then I was like, Oh, that's the thinking pattern of a stalker. But then I was like, I have legitimately made these jokes about these movies. And so how are we not best friends?



Megan Goodwin 35:37

Lindy West, if you want to call us we're here, we're available.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 35:43

Yeah, always. We will take your face off.



Megan Goodwin 35:48

Face wonderful.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 35:49

Not a stalker joke, it's a Nick Cage joke. Anyway, I have also watched in the past 12 months I'm gonna say a Herculean amount of TV because- because. And most of it was frankly terrible I liked "Bridgerton" but I want to also say out loud that like most TV that has a historical bent, it breaks my brain, but this one in particular, like, tried to cite a thing that I've actually written about in 1813 and I-



Megan Goodwin 36:16

Oh no.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 36:17

Don't you- I, like, consumed too much alcohol and called you, do you not remember?



Megan Goodwin 36:20

Yeah, no, I do. I forgot.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 36:22

It was not pretty. It was ugly. It was, like, ugly drunk. And I was screaming at you about the Parliamentary Act of 1813.



Megan Goodwin 36:27

You were so upset. It's just wrong.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 36:30

Anyway, that was a special treat. But if you are going to watch it please, please, please read Dr. Patricia Matthew's piece in the Los Angeles Review of Books about it. It's actually really good and she's really smart. And so, like, you know, zhuzh up your trash with some academic. And I will also- I will say I am loving your Worlds of Wonder \$3.99 layout

because I love a RuPaul season 13 is, frankly, like, fine. It's fine. That's the best I can say about it but I genuinely miss the crunchiness of earlier seasons and-



Megan Goodwin 37:03

Which I feel like UK season one kind of gives you.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 37:06

UK season one kind of gives me UK Season Two a little less oh but the break in the middle for COVID is interesting. Frankly, like I will stan a drag race Thailand till I'm dead it is amazing.



Megan Goodwin 37:16

That's the best one! It's the best one.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 37:17

It's the best one, hands down. But if you want to know, dear nerds, how trash is my trash, I've been watching a lot of UK Love Island, in fact I have watched all six seasons of UK Love Island I'm gonna say twice, in the pandemic. And ONLY UK Love Island do not come at me with your "Australia is passable" and the "US is fine." It is not. It is not fine. The UK does it and does it right it is like sex camp for adults it is, but like, it's bananas. It's bananas. High recommend. Oscar the Grouch level trash, but recommend.



Megan Goodwin 37:50

Slags or get the fuck out. I love it.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 37:53

Don't be a bellend, get into it. You can follow Megan, that's me @mpgPhD and Ilyse @profirmf, or the show @keepingit_101 on Twitter. Find the website at keepingit101.com . If you have friends who need materials for teaching religion online for the rest of the semester, maybe share this podcast with them. They and you can download and rate us wherever y'all get our podcasts. And don't forget that we have a ton of resources, additional readings, public facing podcasts and all sorts of stuff in the show notes.

Speaking of which, that's where we stash our transcripts. So thank you, as always, to Katherine Brennan: transcript-maven extraordinaire. Stay safe out there friends, wash your hands, still don't hoard toilet paper, get those vaccines, take good care of one another. Until next time, peace out, nerds.



Megan Goodwin 38:51

And do your homework! It's on the syllabus. But also consume some trash too.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 38:55

Oh, eat all the trash.



Megan Goodwin 38:58

I love it because it's trash. Is there anything else you want to tell the people on the podcast?



Sela 39:04

Go read a book.



Carole Burnett 39:05

HA! I love it. "I got through all of last year, and I'm here. Lord knows at least I was there, and I'm here. Look who's here, I'm still here."