

Getting Curious with Jonathan Van Ness & Kathleen Belew

JVN: Hey, Curious People. I'm Jonathan Van Ness, and welcome to Getting Curious. Ever since our episode on trad wives and right wing conservatives on social media, Christian nationalism has been on my mind. So with all of these trad wives and with all of like, just like, you know, conservative white nationalist ideas, just kind of being all over the place. Like what's going on with white supremacy in the white power movement right now in the United States, we just revisited in our, in case you missed an episode at the end of last year. Our episode with Jackie Antonovich, which we love Jackie Antonovich, and if you haven't gone back to that episode, you got to. But her episode was really about like the deep dive into abortion and reproductive care in like early America. I really wanted to know more about like the recent history of white supremacy. And like my parents' lifetime up until now, like this is more like contemporary white nationalism in the United States. And to talk about that, we're bringing in an incredible guest, Kathleen Belew. Kathleen Belew is a historian and professor of History at Northwestern University. And an international authority on the white power movement. Her book "Bring the War Home, the White Power Movement and Paramilitary America" is available now. So if you're into this episode, you want to uh get more of k work, get that book, Kathleen, how are you? How are you?

KATHLEEN BELEW: I'm great. How are you?

JVN: Good! Kathleen, will you tell us a little bit about yourself and your work?

KATHLEEN BELEW: Sure. So I'm a historian of the White power movement, which is a broad social movement that brought together a whole bunch of people that used to be at odds. And this happened in the late 1970s. Um It brought together Klansmen, Neo Nazis, tax protesters, radical tax protesters, skinheads and later on militiamen into one big social movement that shared people, guns, weapons, money. Um and that has been mobilizing more or less without a real stop in momentum since the late 1970s. So the biggest action that this movement has perpetrated to date was the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995. Um but more recently, we have seen them out in force at events like Unite the Right in Charlottesville, Virginia in 2017 and then on January 6th, 2021. Um so this is a movement that is interested in fundamentally anti-democratic end points, whether that is a white ethno-state or attacks on our electoral institutions.

JVN: Not a white ethno-state, Kathleen. Oh my God. Um Fuck. OK. So um now it's been three years since the insurrection on January 6th. Um how are, how are these stories being told? Like what's going on with the caseload? Um where are all the case or where are all the cases standing? Isn't the one guy like running for Congress? Like, yeah, what's happening, Kathleen tell us.

KATHLEEN BELEW: So let's, I-I think what helps to figure out that whole set of questions is to step back and just remember what happened on January 6th. So what we saw on our own television screens, in front of our own eyes, is a large group of people storm the Capitol, break in and attempt violent action against lawmakers and a whole number of other um problems. Um immediately there was, you know, a-a-a kind of sparse condemnation of this from the right, right after it happened, but almost immediately we switched into denial narratives, minimizing narratives. Um You'll remember the infamous line about like, "Oh, it

was just a normal tourist visit at the Capitol,” um or trying to sort of recast it as a false flag operation. Um there's been a lot of energy put into that. So Mike Johnson most recently decided he was going to release all the footage, which sounds like it would be a sort of um 'sunshine is the best disinfectant' move about putting the information in front of the people, but actually is going to fuel disinformation and kind of the spread of false narratives about this event even further. But what we saw has been very consistent over time: it has been borne out in the prosecutions, it appears in the footage—if you look yourself at the real footage—um and what it is is sort of the collision of three groups of people. One is sort of just the big um group of 'stop the steal' um adherents. So people who thought that the election was corrupt, people who might just really love Trump, people who want to protest and exercise their right to free speech. Within that group, there is a kind of sliding scale of extremism, right? A lot of people just wanted to meet up with their friends and demonstrate against something that they thought was wrong: that is their right to do. Others came wanting to break something: that is against the law, right. Then, so that's the first big group. Aside that we have the QAnon people who are deeply motivated by conspiracy theory. Some of how that works is new. Some of that is as old as at least the beginning of the 20th century. Um all of it is super, super fast and supercharged by the internet. But conspiracy belief works a little bit differently than what I'm gonna describe in a second. The third group is the smallest number of people, but these are the people who were intensely organized; they came with plans to breach the building, they had weapons um or, or they planned, they, they attempted weapons, they ended up not having weapons, but they discussed having weapons. Um they showed up in tactical gear, they showed up with long and involved plans and the communicated with each other ahead of time. Those are groups like the Oath Keepers and the Proud Boys. Um and those are also the people who are now being found guilty of seditious conspiracy, which means they conspired together in a plot to overthrow the government or interfere with our electoral process. So not only is that what we saw happen, many of them have now been convicted of seditious conspiracy. So alongside this big long series of disavowals from the GOP, we have a quite significant arrest and prosecution record going now. Um so as we're recording this, the number is around 1200 people arrested and 450 people sentenced to some kind of prison sentence coming out of this um this thing including six people sentenced for seditious conspiracy. Now, um I will also say like six might sound like it's not a large group of people, but that is a stunning number of convictions. We hardly ever convict people for seditious conspiracy. Um and in fact, the last time the government tried to do that in 1987/88 it was a just a total disaster that resulted in acquittals of people who had been um attempting a very dramatically violent um war against the federal government. So the fact that they got six convictions, convictions means that there is kind of a, a stunning amount of evidence.

JVN: If my memory serves me correctly, like there was like, maybe, I mean, that impeachment for the insurrection that, that Congress, uh when they impeach Donald Trump, that was the most bipartisan impeachment ever. And it did have some, it had one Republican senator joining, you know, in the vote to remove from office, which I think Mitt Romney was the only senator that voted to remove him from office ultimately, right, or was there another one?

KATHLEEN BELEW: Um I think that's right. I would have to go back and look, but I mean, at the beginning, a number of people, yeah, and a number of people supported some kind of disciplinary action at the beginning ranging from Mike Pence to Mitch McConnell. Um to you know, sort of like, um, I mean, my, my reading of, of sort of like, GOT, GOP broad sentiment

that was, that people in their base were shaken by this, this was a direct attack on democracy. And like, yes, there is a certain section of, like, the Trump block base that is in favor of violent action like that. But, um, at the beginning it really seemed like people wouldn't support it. And then there have been sort of like—it's hard to tell in real time if this is a moving needle or if this is just something people began to say out loud—but we did start to see a bunch of survey data about people who um would tell somebody on a telephone survey, something like, yes, I think violence is ok if that's what it takes to restore Trump to the presidency. Um so, you know, I think we always have to take phone surveys with a grain of salt because people are very brave on the phone to somebody who has just called them in their kitchen. You know what I mean? That doesn't mean that those people will go out and pick up a gun and perpetuate a civil war. Um but there is like a slide in the way people think about our political norms and there is a movement toward violence more broadly.

JVN: Well, it, it really, it, there has been a concerted effort from the right to minimize, distract and um you know, just say that January 6 wasn't that big of a deal, as you mentioned earlier. Um when it comes to 2024 I mean, well, actually let me back up a bit. On this, on this podcast, um If any of you got a chance to listen to um our re-release of Dr. Jacki Antonovich's episode, who's another historian who we interviewed back in 2022 about the history of abortion. Um there is a link between like white supremacy, our understanding of history and oppression, um And like in a misunderstanding of our history more broadly. And I think one thing that I'm really concerned about is like, we learned also in our episode about environmental activism with Dekila Chungyalpa where it's like 80% of the United States, like identifies as some sort of religion and of that, like a lot of them are Christian and this link between um Christian nationalism, white nationalism and a lot of those like religious like overtures that and, and also during this time from January 6th, 2021 to 2024 we're seeing a consistent backslide on like queer rights, LGBTQIA+ acceptance. Um There is more, you know, and also, you know, women in this country have broadly lost their right to reproductive freedom. And it's like all of these things that are happening to people that are bad. It's like the right seems to keep getting stronger and I can't tell if it's from, if it, is it bad polling data; are we going to come to November 2024 and it's actually going to be ok and you know, we're kind of shitting our pants for nothing or is it 2016 on steroids? Um so it's like when it comes to white supremacy, when it comes to the organization of, um you know, people on the right, what are our causes for concern? What do we need to keep our eyes on? What do you think—it kind of reminds me of our episode of Sonya Passi as well. A lot of times which was about domestic partner violence, but it's like a lot of times we see things that are called like, oh, you know, like a husband shot his wife but it's like that's domestic partner violence, that's intimate partner violence, but we don't call it that. So it's like a lot of times I think we must see white supremacy but we don't call it that like, so it's important for us to be able to identify what the hell it is. So what should we be looking out for this year? What is white supremacy in 2024?

KATHLEEN BELEW: So many excellent questions in there. So let me just sort of get to some of them. I um so, ok, so historians, you, so this is this whole set of concerns, like, how do we make sense of all of these different sort of emerging threats to the way that we think about our democracy, right? Like all of these are threats to basic freedoms of individuals and communities. Um but are being painted as if they are kind of moral, moralized boogeymen that are coming to hurt people's families, right? Like this is a intensive, intensive fissure in our national life. And people, you know, there are good people on both sides of this divide who are deeply believing that they're doing the right thing. So I think that this is exactly

where history can really help because it gives us other moments um to think with that, that show how these things work together as kind of like pushing and pulling factors um for people's politics. So, um OK, so about language and white supremacy: um it's important to know that when historians are talking about the word white supremacy, the phrase, um we're talking not only about individual belief that white people are better than other people, we're talking about a broad system um of opportunities, histories, lack of opportunities, um inequalities that continues to sort of perpetuate a society where we don't have equal chances based on our race. So there's a whole bunch of places we can see this that have nothing to do with like the direct topic we're talking about, right? So you can look at maternal mortality, you can look at how much education kids lost during COVID, you can look at incarceration or policing and in all of these places, you don't need a room full of racist actors to get an unequal outcome. And that's because we live in a country with a long history of racial inequality where it's still baked into our systems of governance in our courts and our institutions. Um so white supremacy is all of that. Within white supremacy, we do have this category of individual belief and within individual belief, there's a small sub section of people who not only think that white people are better—in whatever way they believe that—but also are willing to take violent action to ensure what they see as the safety of the white race, the future of the white race. How they get to that has to do with deep belief and fear about how they see the world around them. So um in the White Power movement in the 1980s, we're talking about people who believed that the race was under attack um quite deliberately from a conspiratorial group of outside forces that were trying to eradicate white people and understanding that belief system is how we see the links between things that otherwise uh otherwise might look like they don't have anything to do with each other and otherwise, in other words, um why are the Proud Boys both marching on the Capitol and showing up at trans story hour at the library, right? What is the connection point between these two sets of action? So this is what people sometimes talk about is the great replacement theory. But it is important to understand that it goes in a bunch of directions, right? It's not just about race. Um people in this movement believe that abortion and immigration and gay rights and feminism and um interracial contact, um they believe that those are all threats because all of them represent a threat to the birth of white children. So they believe that um the trans community is a threat, um not only for kind of like the usual reasons that we hear, but also because they're worried that that will lower the white birth rate and that that will lead to the extinction of the white people. Now, on top of all of that, there is a religious belief system at work here um that is sort of co-evolving with Christian nationalism, but it's distinct. So in Christian nationalism, particularly in Evangelical churches, there is this idea of the rapture. Um shall I stop and explain?

JVN: Oh I know the rapture is like that whole thing about Jesus' next coming because all hell breaks loose and the seven signs or whatever, and it's like the signs and...

KATHLEEN BELEW: I thought you might already know all about this based on some comments and other interviews I've heard

JVN: I'm from a cornfield, so I've definitely heard about this. Yes.

KATHLEEN BELEW: So that end of days, that apocalyptic end of days, where there's going to be like, you know, the end of the world um that is in white power religion and it is in kind of mainstream Evangelical religion. But the Evangelical religion has the rapture, which is this moment when the faithful are just going to be peacefully transported up to heaven, like in the

Left Behind books, um without having to be there for that messy end-times battle. Um there is no rapture in Christian identity, which is the main faith belief among the more extreme group. Um they believe that their job is either to sit in a bunker with a bunch of guns and be ready to survive or, often, to pick up the guns and rid the world of enemies so that Jesus can come back. Um and the enemies in this, in this political theology is basically everybody else: Um people of color, LGBTQIA folks um race traitors, journalists, communists; everybody else they want, they want to eradicate so that Jesus can return. Now that is a very extreme distillation. But that sense of fear and that sense of urgency, I think, is really what brings these groups together because they often have quite intensive differences. Um and you need that ideology to kind of motivate violence and cement people into one group.

JVN: What can regular people do when they see people being radicalized in their communities? Like if, like if we see that going on, I mean, I think that happens like, how do you know?

KATHLEEN BELEW: Um it is a huge problem. It does happen and I get um letters and comments from um a really wide variety of people that have encountered this themselves. Um so the first thing to remember is that there are kind of points of radicalization where people in your community might be stressed. So parents, school librarians, um other people who have an open access to the internet um around them are often seeing this kind of radicalization happening in front of them and don't necessarily have resources to deal with it. Um and we're talking about, you know, there was some study about how many clicks is it from the front of YouTube to Nazi content online and it's like, I forget it was like six clicks but that, that's for kids, you know, who are 10,11,12,13, right? Um we have to be ready to start talking about this and to start recognizing disinformation when it is in front of us. So there is an amazing Institute at American University um the acronym is Peril P-E-R-I-L, um I think we can link that for your listeners. Um but they have a wide variety of sort of um resources and download sheets and kind of ideas for what to do when this is happening in your community. And I will say also that the longer historical message about this is that this is a movement that has worked really hard to distract us from looking at it. The idea of the lone wolf terrorist comes from this movement as a way of trying to get people not to look at it as a movement. It would love to be thought of as a normal tourist visit. It would love for us to look the other way or not engage or, um, you know, simply don't do the work of reading the stories about this and, and I know that you're...

JVN: Kathleen! Can I tell you that that is my biggest fucking concern! I have family members who just don't take up this issue. They don't talk to their kids about politics, they don't like to read things that they find stressful or uncomfortable for them. And simultaneously also a lot of these same family members have a lot of friends who probably would have been at the Capitol or, you know, would have been on that. Like I want to protest, I went on that, you know, lower end of the spectrum. But what about those fuckers? What do we do about those goddamn people?

KATHLEEN BELEW: Well, so I think the first thing is that the history shows us, we have to take care of our communities. You know, you have to know um if your neighbors are getting harassed, it matters a lot if somebody is watching out for them, you know. Or if the local police station isn't prosecuting something in your city, um you can find out what else you can try, you know, like there are all kinds of ways that communities can band together and stand strong against this kind of thing. And the history really shows us that that can work. Now, the

thing about not wanting to read the news or not wanting to talk about it, like, I feel that because, like, doesn't it feel like, just like a fire hose of impossible information every time you open a news site? I get it: you could read every story about The Proud Boys and you would still be getting just one little thread of this big tapestry of problems, right? Um, I totally understand that. So it is not, you know, when I ask people to try to pay attention, that's not a small ask, it's a huge thing to just be paying attention. Try to be aware of this as one of the issues because the thing is that like when, when, when I started writing this book way back before Charlottesville, um, they turned to violent revolutionary activity because they thought mainstream politics was a closed space. They thought they couldn't achieve what they wanted to even under Reagan and so let's have a race war instead, right? And many of them are still doing that. But now the door to politics is open too. So it's not enough to worry about mass casualty bombings. We also have to worry about attacks on election institutions, harassment of poll workers, um, attacks on kids in libraries for story time. Um, these are things that are all part of a big plan that has to do with a fundamentally anti-democratic outcome. So it's not something that we can ignore. Um, and regardless of your politics, if you care about, you know, things like being represented in a democracy or the validity of an election, I think it's, you know, the hour is late. We have to pay attention now.

JVN: What are some action items that people can do right now as they finish up this podcast, maybe you're driving to work, I don't know, maybe you're cussing somebody out on the internet. I don't know what your life is. But, you know, when Biden says, because it's like, let's be honest, you know, it's looking like it, it probably will be Trump/Biden unless there is some, you know, big unforeseen thing. Um but it doesn't feel that inspiring. Well, I guess it is inspiring to save our democracy. I am inspired to save our democracy, like for, for threat of totalitarian dictatorship. That makes me want to go to the polls! But it's like, will people believe it? Because I feel like people are just like, "Oh, well, the inflation wasn't as bad then," and I'm like, y'all this amnesia. I'm scared. Action items: not doom and gloom.

KATHLEEN BELEW: Action items! Yes. Sorry. I think doom and gloom lives next to the action items.

JVN: Doom and gloom and then you can do action items, do doom and gloom and then end up on action items.

KATHLEEN BELEW: Well the big action item is that, um, you know, as much as people are frustrated and tired by our politics and I feel that, you know, like, I totally understand that it feels like nothing happens or changes but, like you, we do need people to consider, um, that, you know, every vote that you take might be the last time you get to do it, right. So, it does matter. It matters, it matters a lot. Um you got to vote for the right to continue to be counted. That's not a right that we've had through most of American history. People fought really hard, you know, that life, liberty and pursuit of happiness thing, they didn't mean me. Um they didn't mean probably most people listening. That was only for white, property owning men. Um so the fact that the rest of us have these rights is the result of work and community building and activism and reaching out to each other. Um and if we want to keep it, we have to fight for it. So that's action item one. The other thing though is that, you know, as much as we get fixated on Presidential elections and as much as I believe that the re-election of Trump really does present a threat to the future of our democracy: that's not the only place we have to show up and fight because where the real threats also happen and where your listeners can make more difference, locally, is at school boards and local elections and

what's going on in your community, keeping your neighbors safe from targeted harassment. That is stuff that has to happen at a smaller scale. And a lot of the time, these huge issues like um taking away, there was, there was an a a thing about taking away... There have been so many stories but like if you want to take away a gender affirming medical care, that often starts at a school board election with sex-ed attacks on local um institutional protections. Um the teaching of history has become incredibly um divisive for this exact reason. And I know that when you have a hammer, everything looks like a nail, and I'm a historian, but these are the stories we need to understand in order to ensure the future of our working democratic system. So um you know, get out there, read some stuff, talk to people and be with your neighbors. That's, that's what I hope people will do.

JVN: And I think two big resources for that, that we've discussed so much here is, I mean, I know, I say all the time but Sister District, Sister District, Sister District; there's so many ways you can help, you can donate, you can donate your time, you can do call banks. And we also know that money makes a way bigger deal and volunteering makes a way bigger deal earlier in the election cycle than later. So I know it's like, "Oh fuck Jonathan. It's fucking, it's January. I don't want to talk about this. It's like not till November." The sooner the better, the sooner the better. And I also, yeah, I, I think that's, you know, really good action items. I think the only other thing I would just say is this, is that like I am uh I'm trying to get away from black and white thinking so much; like such extreme polarized thinking because it's true that a lot of our lives live in the shades of gray. I am really concerned. I'm devastated with the loss of life that's happened in Palestine. I'm devastated with what happened on October 7th. I think that President Biden and this administration is like, I don't think that they've necessarily done everything that they could do to protect Palestinian lives. And at the same time, I recognize that the Biden administration is like really in a rock and a hard place situation because of the way that the right because how can you have Rep Elise Stefanik or Steinfink or however I say her last name, how can you have her like, you know, taking on these folks who are, you know, taking on these like, um you know, university presidents who did say shit that was bad. Like, I mean, it's, it's, it should not be that hard to question or to say the anti-Semitism is wrong and you know, calling for the genocide of Jewish people is always wrong. 100% of the time. Like that shouldn't be that hard. But it is really interesting what um what's that one cute representative from... Jamie Raskin, Representative Raskin said, which was like, how can we be taking this from Representative Stefanik when like Donald Trump has dined with Nick Fuentes, Kanye West. Um also Donald Trump, I mean, and then Stefanik said like, oh, well, you know, Trump was the best president for Jewish people ever because he moved the embassy to Jerusalem. In the original 1948 plan, like Jerusalem was supposed to be an international city that everyone had access to. So it actually was like highly inflammatory to Middle East peace to like move the capital of Israel to Jerusalem. That really plays to like Benjamin Netanyahu's base; the base of like really right-wing Israelis who were kind of like what most Israelis want and what most Americans want and, you know, like, similarly, like, there's like a similarity between like right wing Israelis and like right wing American like politicians and then like, really militarish, really fear driven. And I just, I don't want people to be so disappointed in the United States' response to what has been like as Senator Bernie Sanders said, like a mass atrocity event, I don't want our uh people to lose faith in the Democratic Party and then not show up in state and local elections, not show up in their school board elections not show up. I'm just so concerned for our other country people who are here, who are living in poverty, who are marginalized communities who do not have access to reproductive rights or queer rights or human rights

or voting rights and all the things that you were just saying that we have fought so hard for and I'm just, I'm just fucking worried and I don't want us to cut off our nose to spite our face or whatever that phrase is.

KATHLEEN BELEW: Yes, I am, I am terrified about that too. Honestly, I think, you know, Israel, Palestine is so hard because of all this history. Um and you've just outlined some of it. Um there's also the history of how we in the United States have thought about Israel, the place that Israel sits in religious belief, not only for Jewish people in the United States, but also for Evangelicals. Um and there's a bunch of ways that people are deeply and personally engaged in that conflict through, you know, through belief, through family, through history, through bias, through, you know, like there's a ton of ways that people feel implicated. Um and, you know, I, I teach on a college campus so this is lived for my students every day. People feel, um you know, if people feel like it's impossible to say anything about it, people feel bullied, people feel worried and that's, and that's on every side of all of it, right? Um so like, I think so, the first thing that I would say is like, I think that there is a useful history of how we've been talking about free speech that creates this moment where um Stefanik is, is questioning the university, I think Stefanik. But when she's questioning the university presidents and they can't feel like they can say, like, of course, you can't call for genocide, like, of course, that's against our beliefs on campus. Um and it has to do with this kind of longer attack on um college campuses that has to do with using what has been called free speech, quote unquote lately as a kind of thinly veiled guise for bringing hate speech into campus. So, I mean, my question for Representative Stefanik or um representative Senator. Anyway, my question for Stefanik, yeah, represent Congresswoman Stefanik would be like if we're this concerned about speech on campus and hate speech on campus, where were you when it was people on the right like Milo Yiannopoulos doxing trans students and Steve Bannon calling for genocide of an entirely different kind, right? Like there's people calling for genocide and violent action on campuses quite a lot. Um and because of that kind of tactic and because of...

JVN: And to be clear, Kathleen, that's like against like queer people or like the whole great replacement theory, people like they want like all the other people like?

KATHLEEN BELEW: Yes. So in those cases, there's been this cloak of, oh, we can't not let them speak because it's free speech. Right. Quote, unquote, free speech. Um, and because of that, there has been a legal maneuvering by universities who have to respond to, you know, people coming on campus with outright hate speech quite a bit. So then, you know, we have years and years and years of that and all of these college presidents work with legal departments about like how they're they are and are not allowed to talk about things. Um and then here it comes and it's our students saying some really intensive and hateful stuff, you know? Of course, it's not OK to call for genocide. Um but is that protected speech becomes a legalized question, you know. Um so there is like backstory there, but I think you're absolutely right to point back to the Trump dinner with Kanye and Nick Fuentes because that is, I mean, like that is an outright embrace of exactly the kind of speech that Stefanik was concerned about; that is an outright embrace of Holocaust denial, of calling for additional violence, of um calling for campaigns of harassment and death against these targeted communities. And in an age of mass shootings that are perpetrated by the same movement, it is aligning with real death counts. These are, you know, we, we've seen, we've seen mass shootings perpetrated by the White Power movement in Jacksonville, in El Paso, the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh and Buffalo and Charleston and Texas. And I mean,

it just, it goes on and on and on like this. And we know that these are not lone wolf actors because they have social ties with each other. They are talking to each other. They are literally cutting and pasting from each other's manifestos. And I know that because I put it in the turnitin.com plagiarism software. It's the same thing.

JVN: What's that story, Kathleen?

KATHLEEN BELEW: Oh yeah. So the, the, the Christchurch Manifesto um and the El Paso shooting, they like people are just cutting and pasting each other's manifestos. Um so we have all kinds of information about how these are interconnected events, right? So, so maybe this is the real action item. What would it look like if we just put these pieces together so that we can think not about only one act of anti-Semitic speech, right? Which is of course important. But how is that act connected to this wider attack on all of these communities? How does Pittsburgh share its resources and love and support with El Paso, with Jacksonville and with Buffalo; these are differently impacted communities where you know, a shooting might look like it's anti-Black violence or anti-Semitic violence or anti-Latinx violence. And it is, but it's also all white power violence. So putting that together, bringing the people together I think is a really powerful opportunity for counter organizing. These people belong in same fight.

JVN: It's calling it what it is. Yes, y'all are white power fighters. Y'all are like white supremacy fighters and it's like you have to call it that.

KATHLEEN BELEW: Right and we have to ask of our political officials like cool, if you're genocide, then you're against all the rest of the genocide, right? Because that is what's being called for in many of these places.

JVN: Kathleen Belew! That was really good. We're going to have to have you back to talk longer and about more history because that was fucking major. Oh yeah, I forgot. Um Where are you the most active on social? Are you the most Instagram-y? You, are you the most TikTok-y? Where can people keep following your work?

KATHLEEN BELEW: I am on Twitter for the moment X slash Twitter. I am on Blue Sky.

JVN: Oh yeah, I hear that's good.

KATHLEEN BELEW: Yeah, I could be persuaded to go on TikTok if people are actually consuming things over there.

JVN: Well I've persuaded everyone at this point. Get over, fucking, get on there on TikTok. Girl: conspiracies, politics, history. Having the news story is the green screen and then breaking that down like, "Hey, I'm historian Kathleen Belew. Absolutely. Go for it. Get into it. You could be the TikTok queen of history. I'm here for it.

KATHLEEN BELEW: OK, I will consider it.

JVN: What other news stories are you keeping your eyes on?

KATHLEEN BELEW: Oh my God. Mifepristone case at the Supreme Court today. The um abortion pill, they just decided to take it up at the Supreme Court so that is a, um, you know, that'll be something to watch. People might want to contact, um, their medical provider to have that on hand while it is still legal for yourself, for your friends. Um, what else am I watching? Um, and then of course, you know, all of the Trump legal trials we're watching. I

saw that he's asking his executive immunity to be considered by the Supreme Court. If they say he has immunity, um, then we...

JVN: All four of those cases go down except for the two state ones: New York and Georgia would remain.

KATHLEEN BELEW: Exactly. So I will be watching closely to see what happens there.

JVN: We got to see what happens there. Ok. Ok. And now what's the moment of joy we can end on?

KATHLEEN BELEW: Let's see. It'll have something to do with my dog. I'm just picking one from the roster. The dog has, my dog is an Australian shepherd. She is my light, she has a sequined santa bow right now that came home with her from the groomer. So that is my moment of joy today.

JVN: Cute. Ok. Um Kathleen, you're the best. Thanks for coming on curious now and we're just so appreciative of your time. Thank you.

KATHLEEN BELEW: Thank you.

JVN: So, is white supremacy a covert killer? I think my biggest take away from that was that the white power movement wants to be very like incognito. They don't want people to name it as such as the white power movement. You know, I think that a lot of right wing people have been very good at labeling us as like, you know, woke and snowflakes and this and that. But we need to be really clear about what Charlottesville and what January 6th stand for which is the white power movement. Even Timothy McVeigh, as we learned, like, you don't have to be white to uphold the white power movement. You don't have to be a marginalized person to uphold the white power movement. We see this time and time again between like the George Santos and um you know, the Candace Owens. And there's a lot of people who benefit from the White Power movement who themselves are not white. Also, a lot of the stuff that we talked about in this episode really reminds me a lot of what we talked about with Sonia Passissy and Curious Now and in Getting Curious, which is that a lot of these things are also intimate partner violence. And so really, when we think about how oppression is connected, like this is in our homes, it's individual and it's also systemic. It's both, it's not one or the other, it's really truly both. So I love you all so much. Thanks for writing with us. Thanks for um being down with all of our things that we're auditioning and kind of changing and trying out in our gorgeous getting curious universe. We love you. We so appreciate your time and listening to us and inviting us into your homes and cars and earbuds. I hope you guys are having a good start to your year. Share us if you feel like it. If you are moved by these episodes, honey, and you want to share, share, honey. We love to see it. We want to reshare from our socials. Um So we love you all so much. Thanks for listening to Getting Curious and we'll see you next time.

You've been listening to Getting Curious with me, Jonathan Van Ness. You can learn more about this week's guest and their area of expertise in the episode description of whatever you're listening to the show on. And honey, there's more where that came from. You can follow us on Instagram @curiouswithjvn. We are doing the most over there and it is so much fun. You can catch us here every Wednesday and also make sure to tune in every Monday for alternating episodes of Curious Now and Pretty Curious. Still can't get enough? Subscribe to Extra Curious on Apple podcasts for commercial free listening and our

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