

**TRANSCRIPT FOR EPISODE 07: (AUGUST, 2013):
CINEMA JOURNAL PRESENTS: JOSH HEUMAN ON INDUSTRIAL
AUTHORSHIP,
ROUNDTABLE ON THE GEORGE ZIMMERMAN VERDICT**

Christine: Welcome back to the Continuing Summer Adventures of Cinema Journal Presents Aca Media. I am your host, Christine Becker, I teach at University of Notre Dame, but I'm currently in Smith Mountain Lake, Virginia. Michael, where are you at?

Michael: [00:00:34] And this is Michael Kackman. I am sitting in a wonderful but empty office at the University of Notre Dame, where I am in the process of getting settled.

Christine: So a busy week for you, then, huh? Getting yourself all the way from Texas to Indiana, and now getting everything in place?

Michael: Yeah, there's just a whole – there's just way too much paper in my life.

[00:00:54] And, well, you know, moving is an extra special kind of fun, especially when you pull into your new house at 4.30 in the morning to discover a broken refrigerator, a swamp in the backyard, and a sinkhole that has opened up because of the –

Christine: A sinkhole at 4.30 in the morning.

Michael: Yeah, it's – well, it's a work in progress, like all other living things. We're working on solving things and filling – we're trying to fill the holes with sand, and gravel, and concrete and small foreign cars.

Christine: This doesn't sound like something academics are usually all that expert at, filling in sinkholes, but you're managing?

Michael: [00:01:31] Well, you know, I've got the [interweb], I'm doing some research, and I'm – you know, I'm figuring it out.

Christine: Well, that is one thing we are good at, at least, doing research and figuring things out, so there's nothing we can't do, really. Because we know how to look things up.

Michael: We do. We can look things up, and, besides, we have this huge listening audience full of able-bodied volunteers, who, I'm sure, are going to be running right up to South Bend to help out with this little sinkhole problem.

Christine: [00:01:56] Exactly, you know, our semesters don't start for like another couple, three, four weeks, so I'm sure there's plenty of people who can run up and help you out.

Michael: Come on, folks, just bring shovels, that's all you need to do. Just bring a shovel. It'll be fine.

Christine: Well, we are, as I mentioned, in our summer edition – I guess this will be our last summer edition. We'll be together, you and I will be at Notre Dame together for the next episode, so this is our last renegade, summer renegade edition.

Michael: That's right. And you're spending your summer bass fishing in Virginia?

Christine: [00:02:26] Exactly, yeah. It's kind of a family reunion situation. My dad lives on a lake, and fishing is a traditional family thing to do. So we went fishing last night and I got a great picture for Facebook, [because mainly the benefit] – and then, of course, we get to eat it. We're having a fish fry tonight, so –

Michael: Very nice.

Christine: The things we do over summer.

Michael: Yeah. Excellent.

Christine: And we're very excited to close out our summer editions with what we have today. We have, once again, only two segments rather than our usual three. This time we're limiting it to two because the second segment is very long, but we think it's extraordinarily worth listening to.

[00:02:59] And so, we're just going to clear the decks a little bit and just go with the two segments. The first segment is going to be the Cinema Journal Presents interview, and I have an interview with Josh Heuman about his recent Cinema Journal article about the FCC and the WGA filings in regard to media ownership. And then our second segment is going to be a roundtable that was conducted in regard to the George Zimmerman trial verdict and the aftermath.

[00:03:25] And I spoke with three media studies scholars to give us basically a new perspective, I think a perspective that – there has been so much written about the verdict and talked about it, but I really wanted to get to the heart of what can media studies tell us about this. And I got three guests, and I think it's a really knockout roundtable, so we're really excited to be able to present that.

Michael: As someone who wasn't able to participate in the roundtable and was just a listener, and also as someone who is getting a little tired of the talking head noise that sheds lots of heat and not much light on the Zimmerman case, I would really encourage you to listen to this. It's – I think you'll find that it opens up the conversation in some really interesting ways.

Christine: [00:04:06] So we'll be getting to that in a second, but first of all is the Cinema Journal Presents interview with Josh Heuman. Josh Heuman is an instructional assistant professor in the Department of Communication at Texas A&M University in College Station. Most broadly his work explores the cultural life of media industries and media policy with an emphasis on contemporary television, and his current research program focuses on the regulation of cultural work in media industries, along with various side projects.

[00:04:33] That program centers on an investigation of television writers' professional entrepreneurship in the areas of contract and policy. He's been published in such journals as *Television and New Media*, *Communication, Culture and Critique*, *Popular Music*, and *Law, Culture and the Humanities*. So, welcome to the Aca Media podcast, Josh.

Josh: Thanks for having me.

Christine: Sure. So your recent *Cinema Journal* article is entitled "Independence", and that is in quotes, "Independence", *Industrial Authorship, and Professional Entrepreneurship: Representing and Reorganizing Television Writing in the FCC Media Ownership Reviews*".

[00:05:02] And the heart of what your article analyzes is the Writers Guild of America filings submitted to the FCC during their Media Ownership Regulation Reviews of the 2000s, wherein writers were asking for a primetime set aside for independent programs. And what that means is the WGA wanted one quarter of the primetime schedule set aside or reserved for the airing of independently produced programs, whatever that might mean, and that issue is at the core of your analysis.

[00:05:28] So the set aside argument was kind of in the spirit of the Financial Interest and Syndication Rules, good old fin-syn, which is one of my personal favorites in regulatory history. So you know you're a TV Studies geek when you have FCC regulation favorites, and I am. But what you particularly analyze is the WGA's campaign as a discursive strategy, a structured negotiation of concepts like independence, which, in turn, reveals a great deal about discourses [of] legitimacy, authorship, authority, in the TV industry, and from there you branch out into economics, public interest and beyond.

[00:05:58] In fact, what I most appreciate about your article is how it ropes together so many issues and approaches; you've got policy, labor, production, culture, cultural politics, industry, history, authorship. And you say in the intro this is part of a broader project, so I was curious how all those aspects are working together in that larger project.

Josh: [00:06:15] Well, the big problem I'm interested in is this umbrella question of ownership in radio and television writing across the history of broadcasting. Just a quick example of work that might be close to the Cinema Journal article: Right now I'm looking at contracts from writers' overall deals, which claim very strong and very broad and deep ownership in writers' works. In doing so, these contracts are often very close to the terms of the Copyright Act; they're working very much in the shadow of the Copyright Act.

[00:06:49] So, Chris, you are on an overall deal with my studio. Even though the work that you're doing looks an awful lot like an independent contract, the contracts argue that even if you might be working independently, even if you might be working off hours, this is work for hire. So the terms of this relationship are very much in the shadow of the terms of the Copyright Act.

[00:07:14] They're also following baselines set by the Writers Guild's, collective agreement with producers, so in a lot of cases you almost have to read the individual contracts next to the collective agreements in terms of how close they are in negotiating within the framework of the basic agreement, and sometimes negotiating even against the framework of the basic agreement. As you say, there's also a much longer history there, where these problems of employee ownership and employer ownership are also getting worked through as far back as the early radio writer's guild contracts.

[00:07:48] In the 1950s, radio writers actually had more rights [in] their ideas than contemporary writers do. 1950s contracts said that if a radio writer, a staff writer, came up with an idea outside the context of their employment, they would hold ownership of that idea. So in some ways writers have actually taken a step back in the way these contracts are structured.

Christine: [00:08:09] But I think what's fascinating is you're also trying to bring in the notion, also, that these are creative, they're both creative laborers, and they're also, in a sense, artists. And trying to define what all those things mean in terms of copyright, in terms of law, in terms of policy, I think, is really interesting stuff you're digging into. And also, then, one goal you express in the intro is to put authorship studies and industry studies in conversation more, and I really like how you do that in the article.

[00:08:32] So in the first subsection you say the article is pushing toward “an alternative to, on the hand, structuralist narratives of a submersion of authentic creativity and industrial production, and, on the other, humanist counter narratives of authentic creativity’s persistence or even resurgence”. And so you see author and industry in TV as more intertwined than those strict structuralist or humanist approaches do, and the industry both enables and constrains authorship.

[00:08:57] So one thing you point to, then, is how the writers themselves, particularly show writers, are part of – and I love this phrase – a structured performance of authorship that’s dependent on institutional logic. So in your account, what role does this performance of authorship play in the set aside claims, how the WGA filings are trying to define the writer-producer’s role in the conglomerate era?

Josh: [00:09:19] Well, I think at one level this point is really parallel and really consistent with what scholars of independent film have discussed. Something about work by people like Philip Drake and Alisa Perren; they’ve said it much better than I would, but the sense that independence is a discourse and a practice within the industry rather than something outside of it. And then going even further back, I think [unintelligible 00:09:41] makes a similar point in his history of artistic autonomy as not any kind of freestanding value, but something that only emerges within a particular market and particular field.

[00:09:55] At the same time, I think writers are also negotiating different kinds of institutional contradictions, not only between art and commerce, for example, but between entrepreneurial and more corporate understandings of what a free market looks like. So I think one of the neatest arguments that writers are making in these proceedings is that the value of writers’ independence should be protected as a kind of valuable creative work in and of itself.

[00:10:25] That the value of writers’ work is not only something that’s measured in the outputs of commercial industries, but also in the labor markets and the careers that writers pursue. In ways that, I think, brings them very close to similar arguments around creative work in British cultural policy in particular, ideas of Cool Britannia, where we’re valuing cultural workers rather than cultural industries as an alternative framework for understanding the value of independence.

Christine: [00:10:59] You also make some parallels with the music industry, and other even general corporate discourses, and I think that's also a way to complicate this notion of authorship as just a creative pursuit. It's also part of corporate labor and definitions of how that labor works within these institutional logics. Which also, you point out throughout the article, are often contradictory, and each side can conform it in some way and used to even take advantage of some of those contradictions and use them in some of their own ways.

[00:11:27] And that's one thing I thought was most fun about your article, and the idea that it's – and so my sense was I think most of us – and I'm speaking of media studies academics – would instinctively identify with labor and against these corporate behemoths, and we think it would be kind of a no-brainer to explain to the FCC why independence in the form of separating production from distribution is a good idea. But your analysis really shows it's not that simple. That argument is tied up with so many complicated definitions of how these things work.

[00:11:56] So I was wondering if you could also walk us through some of the components of that. So, for instance, the WGA argument that integrating production and distribution in television is deadly to creative freedom. How is that complicated when you start picking apart how they're discussing production, distribution, and even just the general concept of independence in these arguments?

Josh: [00:12:17] I guess first off my gut definitely goes the same way that your gut goes. And I don't want to make an argument for conglomeration or against independence. I think most narrowly I want to say that independence is part of a discourse of professional entrepreneurship, but at the same time I think that implies that that discourse doesn't simply tell the truth about the world. In some ways, it might be very limited.

[00:12:40] So I think for starters, maybe, the discourse of independence carries some very strong romantic assumptions about autonomy and authenticity in art, ideas which have been complicated in different ways, as well as assumptions about total control by media industries and industrialization as the end of creativity and innovation. I think whether from an academic perspective or a policy perspective, there are larger questions that are getting flattened in those assumptions.

[00:13:12] I think maybe for one example, I think the question of subsidiarity gets flattened. So rather than thinking about specific forms of control in relationships across supply chains, very often we close down those questions by thinking about a much more general sense of ownership. Did you ever go to Wax Trax! Records?

Christine: I don't think so.

Josh: [00:13:33] Okay. Just one of my favorite works along these lines – Steven Lee was a popular music scholar, is a popular music scholar, who, I think, was planning to do a participant observation of the Wax Trax! record label, [unintelligible 00:13:47] associated with it. Right in the middle of his participant observation, they signed a product-distribution deal with an arm of a major label. And so he finds himself right in the middle of these really interesting changing practices at Wax Trax!

[00:14:05] This problem of subsidiarity raises really complex questions about what's actually happening on the ground, which aren't always answered in advance by [drawing equivalences] between ownership and control. So I think subsidiarity is one question that independence tends to evade, the discourses of independence tends to evade. I think there's also a lot of interest in questions around distribution and intermediation.

[00:14:29] Alisa Perren has an article about distribution in the Cinema Journal. [Derek [unintelligible 00:14:36] and [Derek Johnson], I think, have a collection forthcoming on questions of intermediation, where the emphasis on independence and the authority and authenticity of the producer apart from the industry tends to devalue, diminish, or even obscure the work that's done by these kind of distributors or intermediaries.

Christine: [00:14:57] And while you're talking about distribution, both you and I went to grad school at University of Wisconsin-Madison, and I just remember every time I hear the word distribution I still think of Tino Balio saying distribution is king, whenever you're trying to understand how the industry works, or who's making money, or what, look at distribution. And that's also something, I think, that's just getting ever more fascinating in television today. Like the question of where does distribution stand

these days? And now, with new outlets, Netflix, Hulu, Amazon, all these kinds of things – partly, of course, these are new forms of production, but they’re also complicating distribution as well.

[00:15:34] And I was curious about that, if you have any sense of how those changes going on right now, the kinds of discourses you’ve picked apart with these things that were happening in the 2000s, if you see anything echoing, going forward, in these new regulatory or contract issues that might be coming forth with new streaming distribution, web series.

Josh: [00:15:52] I think very much in the same way that cable seemed to change the game, new networks are seen to change the game, I think that with the rise of Netflix, Amazon, YouTube, as internet-based delivery services, I think it becomes harder to sustain the argument that we should hold broadcast networks to any kind of 25 percent set aside for independent networks. Independent programs.

[00:16:20] Where I think that those struggles [are going to] shift and change is toward questions of preferential routing by cable services. So it hasn’t quite gotten to College Station yet, but providers like Comcast are saying we’re going to put bandwidth caps on your internet usage, and our own video services will not go to those caps, will not count to those caps, but when you use Netflix, that’s going to count to those caps.

[00:16:48] So I think we almost come closer to questions of network neutrality rather than maybe more traditional questions of broadcast regulations. I think [unintelligible 00:16:56] we also want to follow those movements further in terms of contractual and economic relations as well. I think about work by people like [AJ Christian], [Ellen Cider], who are thinking about this new marketplace, new labor markets and new labor relations that might be shifting with the emergence of providers like Netflix, Amazon and YouTube.

[00:17:21] I think Cider is relatively more pessimistic, Christian might give a little bit more cause for optimism, but there’s certainly a sense that the game is changing, that these relations are changing. One of the funny stories that came out of the Produced By Conference from a few weeks ago was Darlene

Hunt saying something like, “I wish I could work for Netflix, but my overall deal with Sony doesn’t let me do that.”

[00:17:51] So whether it’s justified, whether it’s the grass is greener on the other side, I think there’s a sense out there that the new boss might be different than the old boss, and the new boss might be better than the old boss. On the other side of that – though I also wonder about tracing some of these movements further back in time. So thinking about the way that Alisa Perren talks about the relatively greater freedom in original cable programming, certainly basic cable originals, pay cable originals, going back to new networks, these transformations of the market that we see with Amazon, Netflix and YouTube have a longer history, maybe going back even as far as HBO and Showtime’s financing of independent films as a way to generate programming.

[00:18:42] So certainly I think this is an interesting time to think about labor markets and labor relations as these markets change, but we can also trace a longer history backward in terms of how this market has evolved as well.

Christine: [00:18:54] I was curious as I was reading what a WGA member would think of your account. Another recent movement in academia, and in our podcast itself has touted this, if people want to back and check episode one we talk about this, but the value of academics sharing ideas and research with industry people. And so, I was wondering how you think a WGA member would react to the article. How do you hope they would react? What do you think they would get from it?

Josh: [00:19:19] I suspect that anyone outside not only the academy but this very narrow chunk of the academy might be very bored [by me, I think]. I think a lot of writers would also be very familiar with the problems and arguments that the article develops. Certainly I can’t say that this is universal, but I think there’s often a really extraordinary appreciation, a really extraordinary sense of the larger economic context in which writers work.

[00:19:47] I think at some point in the article I reference Craig Mazin on Amazon, just for one example, and he’s done work as part of the WGA, and might be an exceptional case. But I think if not necessarily

across the board, at least fairly widely lots of writers are very keen to these developments and these transformations. I think I would be particularly interested in potential differences among writers' readings of the piece.

[00:20:16] So certainly on one hand, how would a more senior writer, a writer-producer or a hyphenate, react to some of the arguments versus a more junior writer? Also really interested in the possibility of differences across age. So at this point, the fin-syn rules are 20 years old, they're also one of my favorite FCC regulations, but certainly written before many of our students were born, and I think before many working writers have entered the industry.

[00:20:53] And I'm curious about what kind of sense of historical consciousness would characterize writers' [understandings] of their work. I think ultimately, in a kind of rosy-eyed view in this work, in the work that happens around it, I would hope to enlarge conversations around writers' work, and the determinations upon it, especially in a historical sense. But again, that might play out differently to different readers with different positions.

Christine: [00:21:22] Well, I think you've given us a lot to think about, particularly both looking back in terms of regulatory history and then looking forward in terms of things happening in labor industry policy going forward. So I appreciate your intervention of your article.

Josh: Thank you very much.

Christine: [00:21:35] All right, bye-bye. So one correction to something I said there in the interview with Josh, I mentioned that in episode one of our podcast you'd find us talking about the importance of relationships between media studies and the industry. It's actually episode two, the one where I did a report on the Georgia State University symposium on media industry studies. So, episode two, folks. If you missed that one and you're interested in that topic, go check out episode two.

[00:22:08] So now we're going to turn to our second segment. This is a roundtable I conducted with – I first of all recruited Kristen Warner, I was interested in her perspective, and she then helped bring in

Bambi Haggins and Miriam Petty, and we sat down for what I think is a really compelling conversation. Specifically the question we were dealing with was: What can media studies bring to the table in terms of understanding the George Zimmerman verdict and the aftermath?

[00:22:36] And I think what you'll find in this conversation is an incredibly passionate, affecting, emotional and, above all, smart, really smart take on all of these issues. And so we're really proud to be able to present this. One thing – because it's very long, and this would have ended up a much longer episode than we usually do, I plucked out one of the segments. I asked a question about the role of social media in the aftermath and the discussion of the Zimmerman verdict, and so we plucked that out of the conversation.

[00:23:05] And we're going to put that on our website, a kind of online extra, if you will. And so if you want to hear that additional question, you could just go to our website at aca-media.org, and we'll have that there for you to listen to.

[00:23:27] So we are blazing some new trails here at Aca Media as we try out our first Skype roundtable. We won't tell you how long it took us to get to this point of starting to talk and record, but our very first try, you know, it could've been worse. And plus, we're going to address a topic as fresh as today's headlines, and that's the George Zimmerman verdict and its aftermath. So I'd first like for our roundtable participants to introduce themselves. We have Kristen Warner, Bambi Haggins and Miriam Petty. So, Kristen, would you start? Introduce yourself, please.

Kristen: [00:23:54] Hi, I'm Kristen Warner, I'm an assistant professor at the University of Alabama.

Christine: Okay. Bambi?

Bambi: I'm Bambi Haggins, I'm an associate professor at Arizona State University.

Christine: And Miriam?

Miriam: Hi, I'm Miriam Petty. I'm an assistant professor at Northwestern University.

Christine: [00:24:11] Okay, so thank you all for joining me. I'm really excited about this conversation that we're going to have here. The idea to do this, for me, started with Kristen Warner's Twitter feed, actually, and this was on the night of the Zimmerman verdict, and for days following it. She really distributed some of the most insightful commentary I'd seen, both offering her own thoughts and then links to blogposts by academics and cultural critics.

[00:24:32] So I subsequently thought it would be useful to sit down with a number of media studies and cultural studies scholars for a conversation about how a media studies perspective can help us understand the Zimmerman verdict, its cultural aftermath, discussions following it. And especially because, of course, these are real events with real people and terrifyingly real consequences, but the public has really primarily consumed this as a media event. So I was interested in that media studies perspective on it.

[00:24:58] So I recruited Kristen for this first, and then we filled it out with Bambi and Miriam. And I actually wanted to start our conversation there, in terms of why each of you are interested in participating in this conversation for both personal and academic perspectives. In media studies, we're often personally invested in what we explore academically, whether due to [fandom] or just intellectual curiosity. But a topic like this really has deep consequences for everyone, of course, but especially from the African-American perspective, and that takes that investment to another level, I presume.

[00:25:28] So I'm curious if each of you can speak to your desire to participate in a public conversation about this topic. So, Bambi, you want to start us out on that?

Bambi: [00:25:37] Certainly. I had to do – really felt the need to do something. I think I was tired of posting things on Facebook, and looking at other people's articles, and I felt like the only way that I would be in any way prepared to try to articulate the significance of this event to my students, and really to myself, is to have the opportunity to talk with other people about – other media scholars, but also

other people who are dealing with – who are processing these issues as well as members of the black community.

[00:26:25] I mean I called Kristen the night of the verdict, because I said I – well, I said I really needed to talk to another black person. And part of it, too, is I spent some time on Skype last night talking to a good friend who's teaching in Lebanon, and trying to explain to her the ramifications of this, just the feeling of really feeling as though there's this gutting of the social contract.

[00:27:03] There's this lack of enlightened self-interest. There's this – there's what we knew was going to happen. I don't think any of us were surprised by the actual verdict, but what I was surprised by is how angry my impotence as a result of it made me. And I want to be able to talk about this in perhaps not a less passionate way but in a way that is really getting students to try to engage this event as part and parcel of this mythology of a post-racial America.

Christine: [00:27:43] Mm-hmm. Kristen, you have thoughts on that as well?

Kristen: [00:27:46] Yeah, I think when we initially found out about the verdict, I was at a family reunion in Seattle. And it was one of those things where you're just trying to do what you need to do but you also have to sit with this. And I got the call from Bambi, and it was just like, well, let's just talk about it for a minute, and try and figure out what it is that we feel. Because you go through all the stages, and it was just really sad, and angry, and you felt completely powerless, and the powerlessness is, I think, something that we wanted to, as she said, to figure out if we could do something about.

[00:28:20] And so, we talked about doing various kinds of workshops and things, and it just became a way to try and not feel powerless. And so, in the days following, and reading what people said, and reading all the articles – and I'm very selective about my Facebook, and I did not see – I do not try to have anybody. [I've created] like a bubble, and I try not to have any foolishness. So I missed a lot of the crazy.

[00:28:50] But from what I could gather, the things that people were saying and the ways that we wanted to – the ways that people were responding to his were just – it was so passionate and so ... There was just so much pain that was just so palpable that you have to talk about it in some kind of way. And not just feel it, or not just react to it in the way that you normally would, but try to think about what's at stake. What ground have we given up in order to have this 'post-racial era'?

[00:29:19] And so, I am just very invested in talking through this with colleagues, and talking through it with students, as the semester approaches, so that we can begin to think about what this means, not just this incident but the larger ramifications of what this incident stands for.

Christine: [00:29:37] Mm-hmm. And, Miriam, did you feel a similar impulse of a desire to share and participate in conversations?

Miriam: [00:29:43] Yeah, I would say that for me this verdict and the entire case is a perfect storm of the political, and the personal and the professional, all overlapping in one huge moment. Because I was saying to my husband, when we heard about this, I said to him this feels like 9/11. There's a kind of before and after feeling that I have that feels equally catastrophic, that feels equally significant as a defining moment for a generation of people, as a defining historical moment in a particular kind of way.

[00:30:26] And so, we were actually at a party with a bunch of friends when we heard this verdict, and it threw cold water, hot water, you know, everything. It just really [snapped] us for the rest of the evening. And then the next day, we went out with – I have a little boy, and so that's part of what I mean about the personal, the political, the professional. There's a way that having a son who is 2 years old in this moment felt really, really crazy, and there were points where I was having a hard time that day just being with him, just looking at him, just holding him, without just getting really, really upset.

[00:31:06] And he is 2 years old and very aware in certain kinds of ways, but he was saying things to me all day that were just about to set me off. So he would say, "I really love you, Mommy," or he asked me to sing Amazing Grace to him, and I was just like, you're killing me, kid, like you really ... I don't know how I'm supposed to keep my head above water when you're saying these sorts of things to me.

[00:31:31] So we had this historical moment that's very affecting personally, that has political significance for me as a person who is African-American, and then professionally I actually have something intelligent, [an expertise], informed to say about this. And so, it's this moment that on no level can I deny it. On no level can I be separate from it. It affects me in all of these arenas of my life.

[00:31:59] And so, all of these things that I teach my students about the politics of the gays, about the significance of stereotype, about all these sorts of things, it's incredible that all of these things are encapsulated in this moment. Bambi and Kristen have both really well-articulated the way that there's not a lot of shock in a particular kind of way. It's not like this is so stunning for this to happen in the United States, but it is just gutting in a particular kind of way. It is distressing.

[00:32:33] And because it felt like such a huge historical moment for me – I remember we were walking around in Evanston, where we live, you know, nice suburb of Chicago, with our son, and I noticed that people were averting their gazes from us and didn't really want to be friendly and neighborly the way that I'm used to people being in Evanston, to some extent.

[00:32:55] But I also just felt a kind of strange discomfiture that was coming out of my own spirit and my own mind in that moment, that was really this question about safety, this question about citizenship, this question about what is my ground and when do I get to stand it. You know, all of these sorts of things. So there was no way that this was something that I could in any way avoid talking to you, and I felt like the best way for me to really deal with it is to engage it with people who I respect and who I know are going to help me think about it in new ways.

Christine: [00:33:33] And I'd like to pick up on one thing you're talking about there, about the idea of trying to find concrete ways to make sense of this. And maybe we'll start with you, then, Miriam. What do you think are some of the primary ways of putting a media studies or cultural studies lens on this? How might that help us understand the issue of, first of all, how the verdict came about, and then especially the reactions to it, and moving forward? So what are some of the things you would think about in terms of a media or cultural studies frame we could put on this?

Miriam: [00:34:01] You know, I think there are two major concepts that, for me, come from media studies but also from, more broadly, African-American Studies as a field. Because I'm always an interdisciplinary and an intellectual omnivore in certain kinds of ways, so I'm always – and I think African-American Studies tends to be that way anyway, very much concerned with a kind of interdisciplinary frame that uses the right tools for the right job.

[00:34:28] And so I think preliminarily, in terms of talking about it in terms of media, it takes us back to questions about stereotype in this way that I think, as scholars, at a certain point we always are like, well, let's get beyond stereotype. How do we ...? You know. And that's true. There's a way in which when you teach students sometimes about stereotype then that's all people are willing to see; that it becomes very difficult to talk about African-American images in film or in media without it just being about, well, that's just a stereotype, or without it being reduced to that. Let me put it that way.

[00:35:06] But I think this case, to some extent, really reveals how significant stereotype is in terms of the way that people imagine people of color, imagine young men of color, imaging young black men. Patricia Hill Collins, who's a sociologist, uses the phrase controlling images to talk about this, and I think both with respect to Trayvon Martin himself, and, I thought, very profoundly with respect to his friend, Rachel Jeantel, there were certain kinds of controlling images at play that just simply rendered them invisible.

[00:35:44] That rendered them [unseeable] from a perspective of a complex humanity. And so, with Trayvon Martin there was a way that as soon as George Zimmerman saw him in a hoodie, walking down the street in a 'nice neighborhood', there was something that he saw that he decided he had to move on. And his vision has been proven wrong, but that's the vision that was upheld in the verdict.

[00:36:16] And so, this idea of a controlling image, of an image that shapes our sense of reality, shapes, then, in turn, our actions, shapes policy, shapes law making – right? Because Stand Your Ground, to some extent, is around that as well, the idea of a Dirty Harry law or a make my day kind of law, right? All of these things really demonstrate how we really engage with media and media images in the way that we understand who our neighbors are, who we are, and what the relationship is between the two.

[00:36:50] So I think that that's one piece. I think for me the other piece is Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham's idea of the politics of respectability. And Kristen and my friend, Brittney Cooper, has begun to complicate that by talking about the politics of disrespectability. But the idea of the politics of respectability, the idea that Trayvon Martin needed to have been some kind of perfect choir boy, some kind of model student, that he needed to pass some kind of moral litmus test established by a random person in the street in order to, a, not be summarily murdered in the street, b, receive basic justice in the wake of his murdered, and, c, be mourned as a young person whose death was untimely and unjust.

[00:37:37] That he need to live up to some kind of politics of respectability ideal, that's part of what's been so enraging to me about it. Because if we're just going to gun down anybody who ever smokes weed at 18, we're really – you know, there's not going to be a lot of people left. So those are the two for me, two really important frames to understand what's going on in this case.

Christine: [00:38:00] Bambi or Kristen, you have any additional thoughts on that?

Kristen: [00:38:03] Sure. I agree with everything that Miriam said, and I think that I would add to that that the one thing I think that media studies brings to the conversation [unintelligible] is the idea of signs, right? The idea of signs and signifiers. The idea that we can look at, and by looking at these images, we can help enlighten or help illuminate how these stereotypes are continuing to circulate.

[00:38:30] And so, one of the most interesting things that happened during the trial was – I think I posted a picture of Don West's daughters, an Instagram photo of his daughters celebrating the day that he knocked Rachel Jeantel, he did such a great job cross-examining her, and they went out to celebrate with Chick-fil-A ice cream.

Christine: [00:38:50] You couldn't have constructed that yourself more perfectly, right? All of the signs in that picture.

Kristen: [00:38:54] Every bit of it just – was just – it was all laid out. These perfect looking white ladies and their dad eating Chick-fil-A ice cream cones. And then the hashtags and the Instagram tag, you know, ‘he killed it’, blah, blah, blah. It was just so –

Female Voice: [Unintelligible 00:39:08], yeah.

Kristen: [00:39:09] My word. I mean you couldn’t have – like you couldn’t make that up. And so I remember Chris saying, “I could do a great semiotic [unintelligible]. Please give it to us.” And I think that part of what it was, was we’re looking at it and we all know what it is we’re looking at, but to pick out the signs and to talk about what each of those things mean, and how it is unconscious, but at the same time still very active, those are really important things that media studies can contribute to this conversation.

[00:39:38] So talking about the look of Trayvon, talking about the look of Rachel Jeantel, talking about how George Zimmerman exists in between cultures as this Hispanic man but who expresses his identity as a white man. So what that means, and how he’s allowed to walk in between both of those things, so that he can be excused [in one front]. Well, he’s not white, so it’s not that, but he is very much standing in for or representing that whiteness, and so how that plays up.

[00:40:11] I think media studies is perfectly tuned to help illuminate that. But I would also say I saw someone write something about what to do in the classroom, and someone suggested a trial, like we could do this little mock trial thing. And it scared me [unintelligible]. Not that there was anything negligent or malicious in the intent, but that the impact of it – and the fact that at this moment I that that more black – I think black folks are just scared.

[00:40:39] And the idea of trying to rehabilitate a trial through another trial without any sort of conversation about critical legal theory, which would have taken into question this whole idea that justice is blind, this idea that we are atomized individuals and we have this individual – like each person is rational, and that racism is this irrational thing that if you just figure out how to work it out, if you just get some sense, you will become rational again, and thus you won’t be subject to this racist, irrational attitude. As if that’s the case.

[00:41:16] And so I think those sorts of things seem really good on the surface, or seem really interesting because you can explore ethics and all these other things that are really good, and yet, I wouldn't recommend that. Because I [unintelligible], and I think that the idea of a mock trial and doing all that with all that in mind is just not a good idea. It doesn't seem like you would get to what actually the point is, which is that race is a part, and that as much as we want to try and separate race from the law it is and has always been part of our legal system.

[00:41:50] It has always been working in conjunction with it. And that as much as we want to assume otherwise, it's not. And so, rather than a mock trial, I might actually suggest that we actually pull in some critical race theory, pull in some critical legal theory, and just help our students understand some of these assumptions, or unpack some of these assumptions that we have about the law and the law being blind, and people being able to separate their bias from their civil duty of being a juror.

[00:42:20] You can't separate your feelings. If you are scared of black folks, you're going to go in the room and you're [going to be scared of] black folks, right? If you like them or if you love Jesse Jackson, or you love Oprah, it doesn't matter. These kids don't look like Oprah or Jesse Jackson, and it's not going to matter. So bringing that into the classroom and unpacking those assumptions, I think, is a good start.

Christine: [00:42:45] All right. Bambi, did you have anything to add?

Bambi: [00:42:46] The only thing I had to add was I think the whole justice is blind thing, race had nothing to do with it, it was a colorblind process – you know, if it was a colorblind process, you don't have to actually say that. You know? You don't have to continue to justify that of course it didn't play a role. And I think one of the things that really disturbed me – and that had a lot more to do with reading comments after articles that I was reading links for – how happily hateful these comments were.

[00:43:24] Comments like "If he hadn't been so damn aggressive, he'd still be alive." Like this blaming of the victim. Murdering Trayvon once, and then trying to murder his character as a part of this process,

putting the victim on trial. But I think that's part and parcel of this incredible kind of insensitivity that's taking place right now.

[00:43:51] In the same week, all of these posts about – and of course this is not the same level by any means, but Marc Anthony saying God bless America at the MLB All Star game. And there was all this hateful – “Why do they have a spick singing?” “Why do they have...?” “He’s not even a citizen.” He’s a Puerto Rican American.

Christine: [00:44:15] He was born in New York, right, yeah.

Bambi: [00:44:17] Yeah. And at the same time, you have the gutting of the Voting Rights Act. At the same time, you have this energy that's saying, on one hand, that this whole [millennialist] discourse, saying that we are – that it's post-racial, that this generation doesn't have the same hang-ups that previous generations do. But you know what? Trayvon was a Millennial.

Miriam: That's right.

Bambi: [00:44:48] And he has become a new Millennial [unintelligible].

Miriam: That's correct.

Bambi: [00:44:55] And if you think about it in those terms, I think it's important to – I always feel like it's important to put things in a historical context. Part of what we were talking about in terms of the respectability quotient, how have they deal with that in media before? Oh, there was this super Negro in the sixties, there's a super African-American in the 1980s. Strangely enough Bill Cosby was a member of both.

[00:45:28] But I think media plays so much into these expectations of how we can idealize an other, and the way that the other is idealized is by making him fully digestible, fully assimilable. And the thing

was, if you put any kid in a hoodie with a nice T, a white kid, an Asian kid, a Latino kid, what makes the hoodie this suspect classification?

[00:46:07] And I know that there's something a little bit reductive about people putting on the hoodie, and I am Trayvon Martin, and – and, you know, God bless them. I think their heart was in the right place. But the thing is that you can try to empathize with this experience, but if you haven't ever been followed in a store, if you haven't ever had people cross the street to get away from you, when you're just walking on the street, if you haven't gotten the look, what are you doing here, that's hard to explain.

[00:46:46] But I think what the case and its aftermath really proves is we have to talk about this. We have to make our students think about these issues. Because the colorblind and post-racial mythologies that are being circulated are just not acceptable.

Christine: [00:47:09] And that's another part of the reaction. You mentioned the hateful comments, but I was also disturbed by the casual dismissal of the idea, and not just that race could be involved but someone had posted – a friend of mine from high school – something like, well, you know, the verdict was the verdict, and then she wrote, "Nuff said". And I'm like, I don't care – how can you even just throw that phrase out there when a boy is dead, and just sort of like, 'nuff said, we're done, let's move on.

[00:47:36] I'm like, no, we have to have these conversations about it. We have to interrogate that. And I found that really problematic of just causally saying, well, all right, let's move on, let's get over it. That's stunning that people would have that attitude.

Kristen: [00:47:50] I just think it's really funny, you know. Like I was reading something on Twitter today about how people talk more about Anthony Weiner and his little Carlos Danger thing. And there's this sort of comfort with it, almost. There's this, like, okay, this is something that's familiar, this is something that's fun, it's tawdry, it's taboo, but it's safe. Although I guess if you started to talk about his wife [unintelligible 00:48:12] her difference, it may get tricky, but mostly, you know – or his own sort of – you know, the Carlos Danger Latino stereotype that he's trying to embrace. Whatever.

[00:48:22] Like, okay, it's all funny, but it's so easy to talk about it and there's – and talk, and talk and talk about it, and there's really not much else to say. But I just find it really ... The contrast with – the discomfort with talking about Trayvon. And obviously it's uncomfortable. There's a dead kid who was not avenged [for the way he died], and we know this. There are certain things that we know.

[00:48:47] We know – we may not know what happened in those four minutes, where the defense put on their show, but we know pretty much what happened. And the fact that it – I get that it's uncomfortable, but the way that people want to dismiss it, the way that it's not as [comfortable] to talk about it, because you're afraid you're going to say the wrong thing, or you're afraid you're going to – or you just don't want to, or whatever your feelings are. It's just funny to me how some things are so much easier to talk about.

[00:49:15] Certain things are so much more like, oh, yeah, we can gab about this, and it's meaningless, you know, for days. And this other thing is so delicate, and dangerous, and fragile, or volatile. And that's where things get really interesting for me, because, yeah, I mean there's really nothing – there's a lot at stake for Anthony Weiner, but then again, he'll still have his life.

[00:49:43] If he chooses to, if he continues to run for mayor, he could be mayor or not, but he'll still have his life. He'll have his life. And that's the thing for me. He'll live. This kid is not living. His parents have to continually remember, and every single day there's a new news story about a new juror who comes out to say something else about, you know, what she thought or why she didn't hang the jury, or whatever. It's just [this kid's dead], and we don't want to talk about it. We would rather talk about Weiner Gate.

[00:50:13] We would rather talk about every other thing other than the fact that this woman and her son's father and their family have to grieve this every single day. So I just – I don't know, I'm struggling with that.

Christine: [00:50:27] In about a month we're going to be going back into classrooms, except for those lucky folks who are on leave, and so this will still be really fresh in everyone's minds. So I was wondering

if you guys could comment – you’ve hit on it in a couple of earlier points about how we should – media studies scholars should think about incorporating this event into our courses, and if there’s any particular moments that you think will lend themselves particularly well to teaching this event in the classroom.

Bambi: [00:50:51] I’ll be honest and say I’m really struggling with figuring out how to do that. And part of it is because my own feelings are so strong right now. And I want to have – I want to be able to be passionate but also to be able to be Socratic about approaching it, you know, about getting them to come to some of these conclusions. Not saying – I mean even a phrase like using the mythology of post-racial America, that’s an ideologically packed statement.

[00:51:26] And part of what I’m trying to consider is how we talk about these media events, and how media events inform our – like for each – in lots of ways there are different generations who have ... Different generations have these media events that set a trajectory one way or another. Whether it’s the assassination of JFK, or RFK, or MLK, or Malcom X, the way that impacted a generation.

[00:51:59] And I already said that there is a relationship between [unintelligible] and Trayvon Martin, and trying to find a way to explore that in a sociohistorical context, as well as looking at the way that these multiple forms of media have commented on it, and have constructed different Trayvons. The Trayvon of Fox News was not the Trayvon in MSNBC.

[00:52:28] And that’s where it gets ... I know I do media studies, I know I do television studies, I know I do cultural studies, but there’s some sociology in here, and there’s definitely some communications theory here, and there’s ... And so, it’s how do you do it in a way that feels pedagogically solid with whatever course you’re teaching?

[00:52:54] Now in comedy as social discourse I’m not going to talk about Trayvon. Until Chris Rock does a special and talks about it, and then I can pull it in. Which will probably happen fairly soon. But you know what I mean? There’s not a direct way to pull that discussion in. Although now I’ve said that

and I'm thinking about different connections, about 9/11 and the way there was a post-racial moment that got erased.

[00:53:25] So I guess my answer is I'm trying to figure that out, and I don't know if I'm going to have it figured out the way I want it to be this year. I know that I feel a moral, intellectual, ideological imperative to talk about it. I just don't know exactly how to do it.

Christine: [00:53:48] Miriam, do you have any ideas for how you're going to tackle that issue in the classroom?

Miriam: [00:53:51] I'm kind of with Bambi, I'm still struggling to make sense of it personally in certain kinds of ways. But I also – I mean I think it's important to make space for it, and I'm thinking about it in terms of the classes that I'm teaching. There's potentially some room, I just – I'm concerned about glossing it, especially because we teach on the quarter system, and so everything is already shorter than it should be anyhow.

[00:54:23] I'm concerned about trying to take it on and then not really doing it justice in a particular kind of way. I'm teaching a class, for instance, on the politics of passing, and passing in media, in the fall. And there's a way that what's going on with Zimmerman, that complicated space that he's occupying, betwixt and between, that his Latino-ness becomes an issue in a particular kind of way, but also gets elided in other ways, to me, is really appropriate fodder for thinking about how passing works in conjunction, sometimes, with race, gender, class, religion, all at the same time.

[00:55:13] But by the same token, including it, especially with an undergraduate level course, just to take that chunk, there's – first of all, there's a set of assumptions that I bring that I'm going to have to teach my students even to make that make sense to them. And so, I'm thinking about it. I think what Kristen said about this having implications for a kind of [semiotics], I mean I think it's sort of like each and every piece of the case.

[00:55:41] Whether we're talking about Don West and his daughters and their Chick-fil-A ice cream, whether we're talking about the snide conversation about Rachel Jeantel as precious, right? Mind-blowing. Whether we're talking about Trayvon Martin's iconic hoodie and the way that that gets reproduced or whether we're talking about the politics of this kind of colorblind ethics.

[00:56:06] Any one of those things really lends itself to a conversation, to a segment, but I think taking any one of them also produces a responsibility to the case as a totality that I'm just trying to wrap my head around how do you do both of those things.

Christine: [00:56:25] So, Kristen, do you have the answer for us all about how to deal with this?

Kristen: [00:56:31] I mean real talk, you know, I am ... I have to admit that I'm nervous about it for a lot of reasons. I mean I ... I am in a location that's really very interesting in terms of race relations. And, you know, teaching a group of students is always [unintelligible] the race and gender stuff. And I am teaching a race and gender class in the fall, and I've done it several times, but every time I have to bring up certain new, current issues, it's always very unnerving as to how it's going to go down.

[00:57:03] So I always need a bit of time to get my own self right, to figure out how I can teach someone else. Years ago the SlutWalk NYC thing happened where young women put the "Women are the niggers of the world" poster up, and there was this huge brouhaha on social media. And I wasn't able – I brought it into the classroom, and I was like, I know how I'm going to do this, and it completely fell apart because I wasn't sure how to do it.

[00:57:32] [Unintelligible] be fair or be able to explain it clearly, because there was so much confusion as to what the problem was. It's not [unintelligible] it's not obvious. So the same thing circulates in my head with Trayvon. I see how it can fit in a variety of ways, because I talk about casting and how he [fits] certain types, so talking about stereotypes, I can see it, but I think the larger things, the larger issues, are where I need to process through a little more.

[00:58:04] Because, yeah, it's one of those things where emotions are still quite on my sleeve. I haven't yet figured out how to integrate it into just – like Bambi says, it's like Socratic. Well, what do you think? And be able to bite your tongue when [unintelligible]. Because I don't think I can hold it in my face. I can't pretend that I'm not bothered by the crazy stuff that can be said. And I'm not yet ready for it.

[00:58:28] So I don't know quite what I'm going to do either. We might do some stuff with discursive analysis. We may look at some of the pieces that have been written about it, and talk about how the language suggests certain things. We may do some rhetorical stuff. But, yeah, [I don't know].

Christine: [00:58:50] At the very least it obviously sounds like this could be a class or a conference. I think a few of you were talking about possibly doing something [at SEMS] but even a separate conference. So any final thoughts from any of you? Additional things you wanted to say, or future developments you'll be looking for?

Miriam: [00:59:07] You know, I think that in some ways I think even the question that you asked about how we bring this into the classroom – there's always the phrase, the teachable moment. Everybody likes to use that phrase and talk about how these are these moments where we can embrace this in the classroom.

[00:59:29] And I think that's true, but I think that the way that our own humanity gets involved – I mean I am right now really taking it slow and steady to make certain that this all gets contextualized. That this all, for me, gets to a point where it's a little bit manageable. Because right now it's so close, it's so personal, on so many levels.

[00:59:58] And so, I think having these – I think for me, I'll say this. This is really what I'm trying to say, is that mustering up the energy, and the courage and the patience to have certain kinds of conversations around this is a really – for me, especially when you're talking with folks who are not necessarily coming at it from the same place, who you're going to have to do some teaching with, who you're going to have to engage in that teachable moment, is really the work that I'm trying to press myself to do right now, in manageable doses.

[01:00:33] I just feel like it's changed my sense of how important that is, even though I do it in the classroom but I just mean on a person-to-person level. And I know that that's been the position of a lot of folks that I know, is that engaging in these kinds of conversations, when possible, if at all, if you're not going to just really let fly on somebody but really practice a kind of patience, I think there's something useful and productive about that.

[01:01:01] I think that it's not at all easy, but I think it's an important thing to do in the wake of the case and everything that we saw get manifested in it.

Christine: [01:01:12] Any final thoughts for you, Bambi?

Bambi: [01:01:14] I think Miriam put it very well. I think we have to be able to process it ourselves, in a way, before we can try to negotiate a conversation, particularly in – depending in where you are. Kristen's in Alabama, I'm in Arizona, Miriam's in Chicago – well, Evanston. Our populations are different, but there are different challenges with each of these populations to try to engage in these discussions of race, and privilege, and what's the meaning of racial profiling, and how does that fit in terms of broader themes of multiple American ideologies.

[01:02:06] I feel like – very personally a project I was working on is really rooted in the idea of mediated sense of home and the American Dream. And I have not been able to pick up a pen to talk about this. To try to engage that idea of the American Dream. Because it's so – god, I'm sorry, because it's so ... It's so fresh.

[01:02:36] It's so ... It's so present that when you have no sense of safety, how can you have equality of opportunity, or equality of condition, or any ability to [access] those things? And I feel like I'm struggling.

[01:03:04] I'm struggling with it, with this case and the aftermath, because it really should shake you to your core that we're still dealing with these issues. And I think I'm older than all of you guys too, so it's one of those things, it's like, really? Really? We're still here?

[01:03:33] And so, as a teacher, as a scholar, as a human being, I feel challenged. I feel like I have to work through this in multiple intellectual, emotional and even spiritual ways, to try to come to terms with it. To try to come to some peace with it in order to be able to use this as a teachable moment. Right now it's a painful moment.

Female Voice: [01:04:05] Yeah. That's right.

Christine: Kristen, any final thoughts?

Kristen: [01:04:10] Yeah, I think the teachable moments will come, like Bambi says. I think it will come, it's just – it's real, and I think all of us react in very different ways. I find my feeling currently is just fatigue about it. I'm – because I'm – because it's just – I'm tired of it. I'm tired and weary, and that's the emotion, and almost numb. Because it's too – like to think about it, if I were to, it's just too much.

[01:04:41] And to go about your life and be so – and to be so hyper aware – not that you're not already, but to be so much more hyper aware, and to notice more things that you did before.

[Unintelligible] so uncomfortable with you, you know? To go in an elevator and people treat you very differently, or much more cautious, and you don't know if it's because you're where you are or if it's because of George Zimmerman's verdict and they assume that you're going to have a reaction because that's what you're bound to do.

[01:05:13] You know, like all these feelings, they are overwhelming. And so, I feel like the teachable moment will come, but first is the moment where you just have to feel it out. And I would say, also, to our white colleagues, to be good allies, you know, to learn and listen and watch, and ask the questions that you want to ask, but ask them to the people that you know. With people whom you can trust to give you a response, not teach you, but show you where to go to look it up.

[01:05:45] And to help in this, right? Because if we're going to buy into this social contract, if we're going to at least buy into the possibility of post-raciality – which I have never really wanted it. I've always – I've never been into the utopic, you know, and I've always thought the – you know, like we just

need to actually get to the place where we can be black and that's all right, and you can be white, and that's all right. And you don't want me to be like you, and I don't want you to be like me. That's where I want to get. That's not colorblind, that's not utopic, that's just being able to be yourself.

[01:06:21] But if we're going to at least [have] the possibility that one day that could be, then maybe, you know, help on both sides, that learning how to be a good ally, learning how to – when it's time to step up and go in with those jurors, for example, don't wait for us to tell you. Go forth. [Unintelligible], you know. Tell [B37] about her privilege, and like that type of thing. I think that would also be so helpful at this moment.

[01:06:50] Because for a lot of us, we do feel this insular pain. And so, if we're going to, again, continue on this project, or buy into this idea that we are this large human community, then take up the part that is for you, and go – and like Chris said, recognize privilege, and work that out in a way that is productive, and that would progress that cause.

Christine: [01:07:17] And I think here would also be a good point to plug Dear Black Woman, which is your blog, right? Because as you said, you invite questions, and uncomfortable questions, and that – getting back to that idea of social media, [that sort of] communication, seems really important.

Kristen: [Yeah].

Christine: [01:07:31] And the other thing, listening to all of your final thoughts, I'm going to throw out an idea. I think we should revisit again in like a year, after you've been in the classroom, you've had time to talk about it, we've had time to think about it, we've had time to see if there's any – I guess it's ludicrous to say if anything might change, but I would love to revisit this again in a year and see how, looking back, things have developed over the year with the topic. Because I do think it's a conversation that needs to keep happening, not just weeks and months but years that needs to keep happening.

[01:08:00] So I really enjoyed the conversation today, I hope you have. I appreciate the insights you've offered here, and, yeah, I'd love to see how this will play out in the coming weeks and years.

Miriam: [01:08:07] I think that would be great. I'm completely game for doing that. And I think I so appreciate, Kristen, you sounding that note about allies and how to be an ally, and I think that that's essential. And I think that I really appreciate even this format being opened up to have a conversation like this, because that's an example of how you do that.

Christine: [01:08:27] All right, well, thank you very much for your time, and I guess I'll see you next year, then, maybe.

Bambi: Okay. Thank you.

Christine: All right. Thanks.

Kristen: Thanks.

Michael: [01:08:43] Thanks, Chris, for organizing that. That was a really great conversation. We want to remind you that the conversation isn't over, and you'll find some additional material that didn't quite make it into this version of the podcast online at www.aca-media.org.

Christine: [01:09:00] And we also – I really love that roundtable format. That was our first attempt at it, and I think it went really well. It was a great conversation. And we want to encourage our listeners, if any of you would like to arrange a roundtable like that – not necessarily on a contemporary breaking news topic, but anything, you know, a roundtable about Middle East media, or something historical, even. If anyone would like to try to put that together and have a multiple-person conversation with us, I think it would be a really great addition to the podcast.

[01:09:30] So we encourage you – if you have any ideas along those lines, suggestions, people you'd like to hear a roundtable with, contact us. And there are so many ways to contact us.

Michael: [01:09:40] You can reach us via email. Our address is info@aca-media.org.

Christine: [01:09:45] You can also follow us on Twitter and tweet us any comments. Our Twitter handle is @aca_media. And we also have a Facebook group, which you can find by going to Facebook and entering aca-media. And we already mentioned our website where you can find the online extra for the Zimmerman roundtable, but once again we want to remind you that our producer, Bill Kirkpatrick, puts together a set of really great links with various fun little Easter eggs there, and there's always, of course, Michael's picture in the about us section to check out.

[01:10:17] So head to aca-media.org for more information related to the podcast.

Michael: [01:10:22] So, Chris, what are you listening to or watching as our summer starts to wind down?

Christine: [01:10:28] Keeping up with things is kind of tough, but I have been doing some summer catchup. And of course everyone's talking about that I did start watching is "Orange Is the New Black", the Netflix series, and got pretty far along on it, and then had to leave for this family vacation. And it's driving me crazy, because I've gotten through – I think I finished episode nine before I left, eight or nine, and my entire Twitter feed is obsessed with it and talking about it, and most of my Twitter feed has finished it, and I feel totally left out. And so I think when I get home from this family vacation tomorrow I might just stay up all night and finish it, so finally I could be part of the conversation on Twitter about it.

Michael: [01:11:03] Ah, excellent.

Christine: [01:11:04] And you've, I guess, had some limited possibilities for viewing.

Michael; [01:11:08] I haven't had – my possibilities for viewing are almost nil. I am still without cable TV or internet service at home, or any of those good things. And so, I've been reverting back to old media. The most notable thing I've been doing in the past few weeks is listening to bizarre late night talk radio, Anybody who used to take road trips across the country in the eighties and nineties remember Art Bell and his Coast to Coast AM radio show.

Christine: Yes.

Michael: [01:11:37] Well, with all of his people talking about alien abductions and all kinds of paranormal, goofy stuff. And Art Bell's no longer on the air, although I have actually heard that he might be doing a satellite show, but now George Noory is running Coast to Coast AM, and it's not as strange and bizarre and wild and weird as it once was. Now it's more like strange and bizarre, and kind of sad and creepy. \

[01:12:02] Because apparently, as those who listen to conspiracy radio know, paranoid schizophrenia is now actually a political movement. And it's thriving, and alive and well, and it's all over the airwaves at 4 in the morning when you're cruising through Arkansas, and Missouri and Indiana.

Christine: [01:12:22] Well, on this family vacation of mine I've discovered I have a nephew who basically seems to not necessarily believe every conspiracy theory, he keeps insisting, "I'm not saying I believe it, I'm just saying it's interesting." So he finds – and I'm talking the entire gamut. So, for instance, he really, again, not necessarily believes but is interested in the theory, like, how long has this one been around, that Paul McCartney really is dead.

Michael: [01:12:48] Oh, yeah, of course. It's not that I believe it, but ...

Christine: [01:12:51] And illuminati. And he insists that virtually every movie – and he was asking me this sincere question. He said – you know, because he's like, "Oh, you study film. Can you answer this question for me?" And I'm like, sure, ready to – excited to answer it. "Why is there a triangle in virtually every movie ever made?" You know, he's thinking like illuminati triangles, or whatever. Like why is that?

Michael: [01:13:13] Is that maybe because any three points make a triangle?

Christine: Right. You presented a logical explanation, but that one's not the fun, interesting one.

Michael: Oh, man, now I'm going to be seeing triangles everywhere.

Christine: Oh, you'll just look for them, yeah.

Michael: I hope you haven't turned him on to Kubrick yet, because if he watches "The Shining" and then the – yeah, you don't want to go there.

Christine: No.

Michael: That's some seriously advanced level stuff.

Christine: I should also be careful, I guess, which radio shows I suggest he listen to as well, it sounds like.

Michael: [01:13:38] Yeah, you absolutely should. Well, enjoy all that modern, advanced digital streaming media out there, those of you who are participating in such things. But also, don't be afraid of prowling the late night dial too.

Christine: [01:13:52] All right. So we just have some final thankyou's for the podcast. So we would like to thank Josh Heuman for the Cinema Journal Presents interview, and also the roundtable participants, Kristen Warner, Bambi Haggins and Miriam Petty.

Michael: [01:14:06] Aca Media is the official podcast of Cinema Journal and the Society for Cinema and Media Studies, and is produced with the support of ISLA at the University of Notre Dame, and the Department of Communication at Denison University.

Christine: [01:14:18] And final thankyou's, then, for Bill Kirkpatrick, our co-producer, and Todd Thompson, our technical producer.

Michael: Thanks for listening.

Christine: And good luck getting prepared for the impending fall semester.

Michael: Course packets, ho.