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Beyond ego, beyond self-centered fear, beyond exceptionalism,
beyond individualism, beyond headlines, this is beyond.

many ways as we've been producing this show together and who has known Sarah for a very long time now. So I think it's only appropriate for you to share some of your herstory with us and which you have in common and why we feel like Sarah is such an important guest to have on this show. Yes, this is probably three some odd years later. But what a moment. She was a baby. This is the gorgeous part of my stories with Sarah, Sophie Flicker, is that, you know, I want to say that it was also a beautiful, gorgeous, glamorous moment and music, culture, and art. Sarah was all a teen, if I may, really, I may just, that's, yeah, I was.

Yeah, I was. Yeah, a teen, my children grew up.

A wonderful mother, Arnella is an author, and is Arnella still with us?

I apologize for 90s. She is, yeah. He's in Denmark, beaten the Democratic Socialist drum louder than ever. Absolutely. Our connections go deep politically.

Father is also a basic, really human rights, civil rights, legal witness and attorney now probably cruising really well in life. He's struggling a little bit.

I'll tell you about it. Yeah. He's having a hard time. Okay. He's with us. Okay.

He's with us. Great. So we go back. We go back many Christmases and many holidays.

But I want to say that, you know, I want to sort of put an exclamation mark for Sarah, too, is that it was during the Rodney King.

coming, you know, really tied into an incredible moment in history in San

Francisco's, you know, kind of underground, subterranean, very, very mixed party scene. So Sarah, what was, I don't know if you could add to that introduction and what part of your life, but Sarah does come from a music, you know, sort of theater training as well. So my children are, you know, addicted to theaters. So your paths crossed not only because of family, but I think we're strengthened by a certain amount of activism, if I'm reading this correctly. And I think you used a term earlier this morning with me, Judy. You talked about child activism, you know, the children of activists, basically, and how some of them grow up. And I just wanted to add that Sarah, she's talking about San Francisco, but I believe that you're now in Brooklyn. I am in Brooklyn now.

I was born in Denmark to a Danish mother and an American father, but my dad moved to Denmark for a while when I was born. Both really principled, I would say. Like, incredibly, you can't parent perfectly as I found as a parent of three kids now, but you can instill your kids with a principal. And the one thing about, especially my mother, is she is unwavering and unapologetic in her beliefs. And that's something she passed on to me that I'm so grateful for. I moved to California when I was five. And then when I was about, I don't know, 14, I had been dancing and doing theater, and I was commuting to San Francisco from Palo Alto to take ballet five times a week. And I became a teenager, and I was like, ooh, I want to go to clubs and flirt. And so I would play hooky from ballet, and I would go to Hate Street. And I met all these incredible people who worked at Wasteland. And through that became part, you know, enmeshed in the music scene at a very young age. I did have my friends. I remember it so clearly. I remember her name and everything. I had her expired passport. And that's how I would get into nightclubs. And in that process, I met all these musicians. And to Judy's point, not only was it just the coolest scene ever because,

you know, on the one hand, you'd be with the heavy metal scene, but that was also part of the hip-hop scene, which was also part of the funk scene, which was also part of, like, the jazz scene. And not only that, but, like, we were bending gender so hard at that time. And in such a sort of before the curve kind of way. Like when I think sometimes things that are happening now can be shocking to me, even though I know better than to be shocked by anything. But it was so not weird for all of us to have trans friends, to have non-binary friends. And, you know, of course, you know, Judy can speak to all the ways in which, you know, gender has historically been bent in so many indigenous cultures. It was just so foundational.

I couldn't have landed in a better place, and I understand how lucky I am because it could have gone in a million different directions. But to land, you know, in the lap of this family, I'm an only child, you know, I don't have any kind of family. And to land with this family and then to have Judy as my mentor and to guide me through becoming an activist and an organizer, you know, taking care of sick friends, joining act up, you know, all these things, you know, meeting all the people at the bearded lady. Like, I don't know what my life would have been like if I hadn't met Judy, honestly.

This is Beyond Borders, our first episode of our second season.

I'm Martha Senator, and I'm joined by Judy to Logan and Sarah Sophie Flicker.

Coming up in the conversation, Sarah Sophie Flicker's involvement in the Women's March on Washington, the election of Zoran Mamdani in New York City, and her work with the Resistance Revival Chorus.

Season two of the Listen and Beheard Hour starts on January 7th, when we will feature more of our conversation with Sarah Flicker.

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work and you've certainly expressed pride in the women's march and so i'd like to just hear from you what's been your your motivation maybe and where it's led to yeah i mean i agree you know the women's movement is is not the thing except for the fact that as i was you know becoming radicalized by Judy in the best way possible. I also was starting to at Mills College and was very lucky to be there at a time where that school was, I mean, I imagine probably the most radical feminist education you could have. And so I just remember like the first class I took was about black, it was black feminist thought was the first class I took. Feminism to me was always intersectional and it was always radical.

And so while I can't really align with a lot of what I think has been a problem for feminism in the last 15, 20 years, I've been adjacent to it and I understand it, for better or for worse, participated in it in some ways with the Women's March and other things. but my relationship to it is funny.

just general oppression with women's rights.

I mean, somehow, I think what you might be hinting at, Sarah, is this sort of white woman's feminism, and I don't like to call it that even, because I don't think it's only white women who get sort of duped into that type of behavior.

I think it's more like not to excuse white women but there's sort of this consumerist even behavior that's counter to you know respecting the earth which you know if we did that maybe we could respect women more as well but so I think there's this sort of refusal to acknowledge that violence because of the part that our positions play

if that's like the disconnect when we have this difficulty talking about feminism when really I don't like I don't have any trouble talking about women's rights and yet there's this thing, this sort of thing in the air that hangs there. Beyond Borders is brought to you by Listen and Beheard Network. Please visit our archives at listenandbeheard.net.

capitalism. And I think on the one hand, we're in the middle of such an intense backlash. So you know, backlash has only happened when you're doing something kind of right, you know. So that's why we're seeing the backlash against women, against black people, against, you know, I think there's a backlash for sure after 2020.

But where I think it specifically started to go wrong, or at least this is a part of it, is sort of the uplift of this idea that,

you know, the girl bossness of it all, and the idea that I think that it's very easy for white women to fall into, which is this idea that if you're adjacent to power, that's better than not being near power at all,

but what happens when you're adjacent to power in a system that is only meant, you know, for straight white men, if we're naming it, you can't participate in that and further the cause.

So, you know, like this whole sort of lionization of women's CEOs or even, you know, a woman president.

to Me Too right now in this feeling that Me Too went too far, which I find hilarious, hilarious. You know, but that said,

I was never comfortable with the whole cancel culture thing. And that's another thing that I think sort of derailed all of us. You know, and right now, I think misogyny, at least in my lifetime is at an all-time high.

And I can see it with my kids, my daughter, especially, from, you know, what she tells me. And you can just see it in the culture. And I also just don't

think that the kids are buying the whole, you know, rural boss CEO empowerment, feminism. Because at the end of the day, it's like it's about solidarity and it's about working together and working with men, obviously. And while

I'm disappointed in men as a whole full stop, I also understand the ways in which they haven't been invited in to the conversation and there's, we have to find a better way to balance that.

actually marched on anything in the physical together, but we have definitely organized on some hardcore concrete issues that linger to this day.

And it is race capitalism that confuses us all. But you know, when I've gotten an email or a little note from Sarah requesting just a little bit advice, you know, what do we do? You know, what is going on with child rearing in this time, a revolution or this time of change or this time of conflict. And, you know, or maybe it was just a quiet time that I would get a little question from Sarah. And I, you know, I always thought that at some point it's the benefit to the hard work that we do and the commitment that we have to our purpose as organizers.

If our children Could be participants somehow, but without any real lessons through pain and punishment, coercion or shame. You know,

that's, I just, that's me and Sarah. I really want to just share that. So anytime

I had to lend advice, I was challenged because I knew I was speaking to a real, you know, matriarch here. I knew I was speaking to the divine core of what a woman truly is in terms of leadership, you know, truly understands that there's always openness and meaning. So what do you, how do you teach that to your children so that they don't squish, you know, us into concepts and,

and categories that were open and strong that wing and powerful in our openness and and the mystery, but it's a hard lesson. We've come this far, and now our children

are kind of actually ready for this lesson. And I feel extra blessed. You know, I really do have our children receive this information. I'm excited to meet Sarah's all three of them, you know. Can't wait. But, you know, I get to have this, and I do, audience, get to have this conversation with Martha as well. We are raising the next generation. and I'll world. We've come through with some of that practice. True practice. I want to kind of open it up again to Sarah. I mean, you know, when we talk about that sort of a hotbed of cultural, it was a cultural hub. It truly was. People were speaking truth on stage through hip -hop. It was an implosion. Sarah was at the time, Again, maraturally, it was just such a beautiful, what a wonderful influencer I had on my heavy metal family. We were related to Kirk Hammett of Metallica, who is also deep in my soul, a soulmate, supported the 1992 campaign that I participated with other women in organizing the anti -Columbus, you know, Indigenous People's Day, Berkeley thing, back in 1992, the pentacle, the real highlight of my time with Sarah and Kirk. And Kirk was so deeply influenced by this womanness about him that countered all the hierarchical bullshit in the world. You got to know Kurt to know this. This power structure was not his gig, man. He just loved this vibe. And Sarah brought more femme. I want to say because, as we started saying earlier, you know, there's something inherently questionable about a very young woman running off with a somewhat older heavy metal guy. Yeah. You know, and things could have gone in a whole bunch of different directions. And I am just so lucky that he is him And you guys are you guys because he set a standard for me, and I hope he knows this, that he set a standard for me that I have never fallen below. And I've been treated incredibly well by everyone I've been in a relationship, be it a woman, man,

a non-binary person, because he showed me very early on that that was possible. And my husband, who I'm married to now, you know, is in that lineage of those kind of men. And, you know, and it's why I don't dismiss men at all, you know. And I just wish that they were more involved, you know, and I think we need to meet them a little bit more where they're at. And raising boys, you Judy knows it's um it's I was so scared I was so scared because you know I don't even like I said I don't hang out with a ton of men I certainly don't work with a ton of straight men um but wow being a mother to boys is such a gift and you and you and they are um so different and it's such a spectrum, just like anything, but I'm learning so much from them. And I do believe that the youth is the future. I also believe, for some reason, I don't know, maybe it's just me and I wonder how you both feel about this, but I'm not comfortable. You know, I remember after the Parkland shooting and those kids doing what they were doing, and I know some of them and have kept in touch with them. They shouldn't have had to do that. You know, like we, we have not, we haven't finished our job, and I don't want it to be their job to do this. And I know that my daughter, especially bristles at this idea, like, oh, the youth are going to fix it. It's like, no, no, no, no, no, we broke this. We broke this. Or we didn't, or we didn't mend it in the way that we had hoped, and I'm committed to mending it, not just for them, but for their kids. I don't even know if I answered a single question you just ask. I love that. This is so... Well, I think that brings us to present-day activism. And the idea, I did want to understand better, our listeners, to understand them better because I brought up the Women's March on Washington, and maybe we could use that to kind of come to some of your present-day activism. learn from that, the ways in which culture is always upstream of policy.

And, you know, and I'm so much more interested in influencing things however I can or shaping things however I can, leading with joy and art and truth to power, but in a beautiful way that I think people can hear in a way that they can't always hear a number.

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You

know,

and hard and challenging and I learned a lot. And I had organized 300 people to go to Pennsylvania to knock doors. So we were in Pennsylvania and we lost.

And, you know, I just remember the next morning my friend Michael Skolnick, who is a wonderful straight male white organizer. And I can say,

I can count them on one hand. I've worked with him for about 15 years.

And then Thursday, I had about 100 people at my house, and it was,

I just remember it was, like, so wild because it was like the Working Families

Party, who I work with all the time. But it was also, like, people who had worked

for Hillary, and it was people who had worked for Bernie. And it was, you know,

housing organizations and racial justice and, you know, all these different people.

I also remember that was the night that Leonard Cohen died. I just don't know why

I remember that, but I do. And I remember looking at my phone, there were all

these messages. And people were saying, have you seen these posts on Facebook about

marching on Washington? Which I hadn't seen. The next day, I get a call from

Michael Skolnick, again, who's like, I've tapped you and a handful of my favorite

women organizers. These people who have put this on Facebook haven't organized before,

we need you guys to come in.

Belafonte's office and he was there, which was what, you know, and there were just,

and we were surrounded by, you know, tell me if this is more information than you wanted. It was just so incredible. And I don't feel like people know this story completely. You know, we were, you know, I just remember, I'd be like, we were all trying to take calls, you know, so I'd go into like a closet and I'd be in this closet taking a call with like Madonna's manager, you know, and I'd be just sort of looking at everything and there'd be these piles of photo negatives. And over the weeks, I would look through them and it would just be like the raw negative of the march on Washington or like some random picture of Eartha Kitt, you know, or something with Mr. B, we called Harry Belafonte, Mr. B, you know, something he had done where I'm just like, I can't believe I'm immersed in this. And he would just be sitting in the corner and he would just pipe in every once in a while. And I remember one time we were talking about something and someone said, oh, well, that's just preaching to the choir. And he just says really quietly, sometimes you have to preach to the choir if you want them to keep on singing. And I was like, ooh, you know, it's just, and then, you know, like, Gloria Steinem would roll in, and I remember her saying, you know, because we were having a lot of, there was a lot of tension between, you know, the white women who were organizing and who didn't have maybe as much as experience and, you know, more seasoned organizers who were predominantly black and brown women and you know I sort of found myself being a bridge as much as I could and not succeeding a lot of the time but succeeding sometimes it's one of the most important things I've ever done and it's something that's also kind of embarrassing because it's not it didn't do what I wanted it to do When you say embarrassing, what part of that is embarrassing? Linda and I talk about this all time, actually. It's like we were sort of thrown into this moment, and I wouldn't have changed a

thing about it. But to have millions of people ready to do something, and we didn't have the capacity or the time to strategize around what the next steps would be to keep those millions of people engaged and clearly organized them, I feel like that was a real missed opportunity. And I also just remember standing on the stage in D .C. because, you know, we were all in D .C., but we had been organizing nationally and internationally. And we had come up with this idea of the sister marches, which was really inspired by Elder Bernice King, who had amazingly gotten on a call with us really early on. And she had sent us the binder from the march on Washington and how social media pages and we built them from like zero to a million in a few weeks and that was powerful and also like I hate it so you know it's just and I just remember standing on the stage that day and looking out at a 1 .2 million people in DC and thinking like we're too late this is too late like where were these people a year ago? Where were they six months ago? And I just also, for the record, want to say, we had nothing to do with the pussy hats. Like that was, yeah, yeah. We was like, those, I just remember Powell and I being like, wow, those are the ugliest hats I've ever seen in my entire life. And, like, so culturally off not meeting the mark and yet I'm glad that happened and it was kind of amazing that it happened you know to like be there at three in the morning in DC setting up the stage and all of some of these trucks roll in with these garbage bags full of these pink fucking pussy hats that you know that all these women had knitted all over the world and all over the country and like it's beautiful in one sense and like

This is the Sarah that I've always known, and I know it sounds really trite, but really the continuity of principle and delivery, you know, I believe you're, you know, when you say, I just, you know, there could

have been more. I feel so much like there was no continuance. That's what I came out of with 92. I felt like a lot was, you served, A lot of, you know, there was no pink hats, but certainly a huge marketplace came in and took over.

And it was taken over also by big shades and long braids. It kind of kicked us women to the side. And these fancy guys, you know, took center stage. For our listeners who want to really understand what you're talking about with 1992, you do have a new book out called Tribunal Rising. Which they They just ordered. You are one of the editors, and they should, you know, they can delve deeper into what that was all about in this book, Tribunal Rising, edited by Judy Tologyn and Angela Marino. Yes, correct. Yes. Who we hope to have on this show at a future time.

I'm bringing guests that have worked with me and organized with me, And that's what's going on. And Sarah does. And I don't blame out being really annoyed with the youth movement kind of talk, okay? But Sarah did represent a new form of these organizing. It was very radicalized and it was very deep. We did not have the internet like they do now. So you see, what people need to understand is that I believe that Sarah has continued, my love. I think you've continued to organize with the choir, with, you know, and sort of, it was been very generative to do the stage, bring guerrilla theater and beautiful cabaret forward, you know, for, which some of that I've, I've seen online, to bring it forward from the women's march and the pussy hats. I also saw my old friend Sarah Jones in your living room, but she was in your living room.

I met her when I was pregnant with my daughter. So we've been friends for 18 years, a little bit longer. And she's a great, you should have her on the show. I mean, she's amazing. I mean, what a great. And she just organizes and works, you know, through these characters in such an incredible way. And also just what a great person and what a good friend,

You know, so we love Sarah Jones. I feel like the Mamdani campaign has been a bit of a full circle moment for a lot of people. It's funny. I saw Linda two nights ago. I had an event for Justice, the Justice Democrats, who I love, you know, who are a radical, you know, electoral politics group. And, you know, but they've tapped pretty much everyone from the squad and Jamal Bowman. and they're just rad.

Okay, kid. You know, and so I said to Linda, I was like, I think I met your friend Zoran. And she's like, yeah, you might run for mayor. And I was like, well, what do you think? And she's like, I think he can do it, you know? But we were both kind of laughing. But, you know, I was an early adopter. And I think I threw one of the first house parties for him, and which we called a friend raiser because they had already, you know, met their fundraising goal at that point, but he was still like at 1 % in the polls or something like that. But it was incredible because I watched him turn like, this man can walk into a room of people who are completely dubious of him, whether it's Donald Trump or a bunch of like girl bosses and he can turn them in the course of that meeting.

Not that I think he's turned Donald Trump, but I do think he charmed the pants off of him. And so it's a few things that I think have like really solidified ideas I've had and really made them real. And one of them is that if I really think about where does feminism get in trouble, for example, we get in trouble in movements when we aren't consistent, when we aren't principled, when we don't have a moral framework that we are like adherent to, and when we apologize or back off of things that we know we need to be pushing for. And what I've watched So Ron do and what I've watched his team do, those social media things that everyone, you know, loves to say are the reason he won. They aren't the reason he won, but they are an extension of his consistency,

his kindness, his completely unwavering steadfastness to like a real moral framework.

And also just like, for example, never apologizing for being a democratic socialist.

Instead, like trying to listen to what it is that people are afraid of.

And he's an financial.

our future here in New York. I'm in Harlem. Oh, hi. Yay.

What's our future coming up under Mom Donnie for art creators? How are we going to see that manifest? I mean, I can't totally say other than I hope we get Judy to move to New York. I helped organize and host Zoron's Arts and Culture team and a fundraiser for his transition. I mean, it's just wild. Like, we're going to have a mayor who understands the power of culture. And he understands the power of culture because he used that power to get elected. So he, like, really, really understands it. I don't know how it's going to play out. But I know that maybe for the first time in the history of New York, the arts are going to be supported in the way that I know they can be supported because I'm Danish and I see how arts are supported. Yes.

How are they supported? They're funded. They're funded by the government because the government there understands the power of art and culture.

And that's how you build movements and that's how you spread messaging. And that's how it's a form of truth telling that can be propagandized,

of course. But not in the same way like that the news can. As an organizer, it's the tool I rely on the most. I just know we, you know, we formed this chorus in my living room nine years ago. It's one of the things I'm most proud of. How could people find out more about your chorus? There was this revival. I mean, you guys are actually hitting it. I mean, really every year and every other booking is so profoundly like it's more, it's, you know, ramping up each time. So again, once again, this is Sarah continuing since the Pink Hat era.

How can we really participate and be patrons and support? One of the first things we did after forming was create a toolkit that exists on our website so anybody, anywhere, can start a resistance revival chorus. And, you know, there's countless factions of resistance revival choruses internationally and all over the country. And, you know, when they reach out to us, we try to be as present and mentoring as we can because we've done this for nine years. And I think, as we all know, like one of the hardest things you can do is keep a big group of people together, you know, and it hasn't been without its pitfalls. We're doing it and we have this a real foundational group of women and femmes and non-binary people and trans women who have stuck with it. And then, you know, there's also there's people who are cycling in and out and the door's always open. So there's always around 70 of us. And that. You know, and sometimes like yesterday, like six of us showed up for a protest. And sometimes 40 of us show up for a protest or a event. You know, it just depends. We're called the Resist. And what is that website? Yeah, sorry. I'm so bad at that. Okay, we're called the Resistance Revival Chorus. We have an album, This Joy, that's out on all the streaming platforms. We are on Instagram at, I think it's just at Resistance Revival Chorus. We have a Facebook page. We have a website. You know, mostly we're trying to fundraise to record a new album. And one thing, another thing I'm really proud of about this group is, you know, for the most part, a gift. Such a gift. It's such a gift. You know, it's such a gift. Yeah. So, yeah, I mean, we just would love if anyone wanted to fund our album. But aside from that, like, just be in community, learn the songs, start your own chorus. It's so powerful and it's such a powerful way to spread a message with a lot of joy and the thing that I've learned about singing specifically in groups of people. We ended up building a whole voter safety program at Working Families Party out of

it called Joy to the Polls because what we found was music, which is the heart of Judy's in my story, is it de-escalates. It's a natural tension de escalator.

When people dance together or sing together, their heart beats the line. You know, it calms your nervous system. It is vulnerable to sing with other people.

And so it's, it builds immediate community.

This has been an incredible hour. I've really overtalked, though. No, and actually I have one more request of you, which I've been doing with all our guests, which is to put you a little on the spot and ask you to either improvise or just say something with the phrase, listen and be heard. Listen and be heard.

I mean, I think the listen part is What I would like to underscore,

I think a lot of people are being heard. But I don't think everybody knows how to

listen. And, you know, if anyone has been inspired by,

you know, what's been going on in New York with Mom Donnie, you know,

yesterday. And I really worry about that kid because I'm like,

please go take a nap. But he did a 12-hour listening tour of New York yesterday

where basically there were 12 hours of slots that everyone from every borough could

sign up for. And I don't remember how many minutes they got with him, but he

listened and he just listened.

And when I think about what's lacking in leadership, it's listening.

So, yeah, it's important to be heard, but it's more important to listen. Because if

you want to be heard, you're going to be heard in a much more wholesome and sort

of inclusive way if you listen first, and I would say that,

you know, for white organizers, specifically white cis women organizers,

um,

listen, listen, and listen a lot.

I want to say, you know, Marth, is that I'm my generation, I'm older than all, all

three of us here and I'll, both of you. And I know that for a fact,
folks that are my generation,
the movement and life way of a seraph, Sophie Flicker, is a way of listening to
what exactly is very informing to, to an older person, what would be to do next.
And I just want to show that with my contemporaries out there. Yeah, but you're
biased.

I just feel like I'm like, when I say that about my daughter,
she's like, okay, mom. But, uh,
I'd know that Thanks.

And honestly, like, Judy is the reason I'm here doing what I'm doing.
So I'm embarrassed that I spoke so much because I think people need to hear you.
Oh, no. This is the time where Sarah Sophie Flickr learns. And,
you know, really part of our cultural codes are very strong. Mine is a sense of
to really sort of hold my, hold my mud. And I think that that's very much a part
of your roots as well. This is the time to sort of, I will be there to elevate
you my love. And so no, no, no. It's time to elevate your voice.

And I just, please, I'm so blessed. Thank you, Martha, for creating this.

Martha, thank you for bringing us together, because this lady's one of the most
important people in my life. Ditto. Well, as I'd like to say, listen and be heard,
network. We are the network, and I want to thank Judy to Logan and Sarah Sophie
Flicker. My name is Martha Senator, and we'll see you again in a couple weeks.

Thank you both so much.

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