

WHO WE ARE: A CHRONICLE OF RACISM IN AMERICA

EPISODE 6: The Myth of a Post-Racial America

CARVELL: This is Who We Are, a podcast by Ben and Jerry's and produced by Vox Creative. I'm Carvell Wallace.

JEFFERY: I understood fear, I think for the first time in 1968. And specifically the night that King was killed, because when the announcement came over the radio, the first announcement was that there had been shots fired at the Lorraine Motel. And we all knew who was staying there. And then several minutes later, there were announcements saying that King was on his way to the hospital. And it wasn't long after that, that the announcement was that he was dead. And I saw for the first time in my life, I saw fear in my parents' eyes.

And when I saw the look in their eye, a lot of the security that I felt melted away because I thought if they don't know what's going to happen, and they're scared, then I'm really scared.

CARVELL: The fear that the ACLU's Jeffery Robinson felt that day was caused by the unthinkable reaching into his town. A stunning act of violence, and an unprecedented response.

JEFFERY: When I was 11 years old in Memphis, Tennessee in 1968, I thought I was looking at a tank coming down the streets of Memphis. It was actually a 50 caliber machine gun that was mounted on a vehicle, but that was the National Guard. That was the military. We knew that something extraordinary was happening because the military was in our town. That was not the Memphis police. At 11 years old, what I knew is that the military was in my town because Dr. King had been assassinated.

And if you go to Memphis now, you will see the Memphis police, like many other large cities in America, having military-grade equipment. So think back to what you saw in Ferguson, Missouri, when Michael Brown was killed, and think of the nature of that equipment and think of the message that you are giving to the police department when you give them that equipment. You are essentially saying, "The people you're going to be dealing with, you're going to need this to deal with them."

CARVELL: Have you ever wondered why it is that local police have military grade weapons? Are the people in your neighborhood a military? Do the bad guys have tanks and rockets? Chances are if you don't live in a neighborhood with a lot of Black people, you might not have ever seen police in full military gear. The answer is both more complicated and more simple than you might think. While there has always been a certain relationship between policing and military tactics in the United States, this iteration that we see today has a lot to do with the summer of 1967. That year, known historically as The Long Hot Summer, America saw some 159 uprisings mostly in response to police brutality. And while the violence took place across the country, from Tampa Florida, to Portland Oregon, from Cambridge, Maryland and Cairo, Illinois, the most widely known uprisings took place in Newark, New Jersey, and Detroit, Michigan.

In Detroit, Lyndon Johnson invoked martial law and actually called in the US Army's 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions to quell the uprising. And in Newark, reports emerged that Black militants were picking off local police from snipers' nests in the projects. Remember that at the time, America was already engaged in battle in Vietnam, and the idea that a terrifying thing called "guerilla warfare" had made its way to the urban (i.e. Black) centers of this country captured the suburban imagination. It was also an idea that sold a lot of magazines.

A July 1967 story that ran in Life Magazine claimed to offer readers an exclusive, inside look at the secret sniper cells of Newark's Black Projects. The piece featured a photo of a Black man crouched in an abandoned project apartment, his face covered, holding a sniper rifle. It was everything white America was afraid of all at once. The inner-city, poor people, Black people, armed warriors. Problem was that the story wasn't true. The story's author, *Life* Senior Editor Russell Sackett later admitted that the photo had no connection to the story he was reporting. Sackett also admitted that the Black organization he met with was not a "sniper" organization and that he had seen no weapons upon meeting them. Nevertheless, the story did help fuel a narrative in cities across the country that Black people who expressed anger about racism and police brutality should be seen and treated as insurgents. In the 1960's, high ranking members of the Los Angeles Police Department were reading everything they could on counter-insurgency in order to develop policing tactics for Black neighborhoods and those efforts led directly to the debut of the Special Weapons and Tactics Unit, aka SWAT team, in 1969.

Police militarization continued throughout the 1970s and 80s with Richard Nixon's declaration of a War on Drugs, a tactic that his domestic policy chief John Erlichman later admitted was meant to be a dog whistle for racial politics. This was later picked upon and expanded on by the Reagan Administration and by the 1990s, it was not unusual to accept that inner city policing required military tactics. But none of what preceded it would compare to what happened under the Bill Clinton administration in 1994. That would change the face of Black communities for years to come.

JEFFERY: The 1994 Crime Bill is probably one of the most devastating pieces of legislation, not just to the Black community, but to communities of color all over America.

When Bill Clinton passed this act, he made a statement and he was incredibly proud. He said, "We are going to cut the federal workforce over a period of years by 270,000 positions." He said that would bring the federal workforce to its lowest level in 30 years. And he said, "We're going to take all that money to pay for the Crime Bill." Now, guess who works for the federal government? The federal government is one of the largest employers of Black and Brown people in America!

CARVELL: My family works for the federal government!

JEFFERY: And I just laugh about that because my grandfather, my father's father who worked in Memphis, Tennessee, we always said, "Granddaddy had one of those *good jobs*." Cause granddaddy worked at the post office and he got a steady check and he had a retirement plan, and he had insurance, and he had that security. And so when you're cutting these jobs, it's like, we're going to cut the federal workforce, which contains all of these Black Americans. We're going to put them out of work.

And when they got cut, they were going to take that money to put people in jail. And who were they putting in jail, but us! So he literally signed legislation that would eliminate Black jobs while taking money to put into policing, to go and quote-unquote police Black communities. That is a contradiction that is not cured by the fact that he plays the saxophone or that he's a Democrat.

CARVELL: An argument could be made that Americans only accepted this because it was assumed that the people most impacted would be Black people. If the President had proposed massive cutbacks for programs that supported white Americans, combined with a plan to dramatically increase the incarceration of those same Americans... well let's just say that wouldn't have happened.

JEFFERY: Hillary Clinton gives a speech and she's talking about young Black males and she says, "No conscience, no empathy. We can talk about how they got that way. But first we have to bring them to heel." And the first time I heard that I was like, "Wait a minute. She did not say what I think she just said." And I ran it back: "Bring them to heel." And that's exactly what the Crime Bill did, it brought us to heel and it treated us like dogs.

And that is a consistent, not just American, but a consistent political device throughout history. When you are getting ready to treat a group of people in an inhumane way, in a less than human way, start referring to them as animals. And that's how you want them seen, because if you're taking an animal and locking it away at 15, you know, that's not so bad. And it's different if you're taking a young teenager at 15 and locking them away.

CARVELL: Yeah.

JEFFERY: And I have never forgotten that quote. And it is completely consistent with the '94 Crime Bill, because the basic premise of the Crime Bill was to bring a new level of more punitive laws, harsher practices by police and prosecutors, with the goal of locking up more people for longer periods of time. And they met that goal. I was a criminal defense lawyer during this time. And I saw judges giving out time like it was ice cream and cake.

We have mandatory minimum sentences and the mandatory minimums are just crushing. And the way that they were written into the legislation, in many cases, those sentences would have to run consecutively. So you have a 10 year mandatory minimum sentence because of the amount of a drug that you have. And if there is a gun associated, meaning you have a gun in the closet, not that you're out waving a gun around somewhere, but a gun associated has another mandatory minimum that's tacked on to that, and that can be consecutive to each other. So when I was practicing in federal court in the nineties, 30, 40 year sentences in drug cases, that wasn't, like, something that came out of nowhere and it was happening to people in our community time and time again.

I think if you talk to many criminal defense lawyers today, one of the things they will tell you is that one of the most important symptoms that's telling you that the criminal justice system, or the criminal legal system, is completely broken is the disappearance of the trial. It's what's called "the trial penalty." So if I'm representing you, and let's go back into the nineties, I'm representing you on a drug case. And I come in and tell you, "Well, there was just enough to get over the mandatory minimum threshold. So you're looking at a mandatory minimum of 10 years. Your boyfriend had a gun in the closet, but you slept in that room too. So you could be looking at another five year mandatory minimum consecutive to that, but if you're

willing to plead guilty, then they'll give you a deal and you can do three years." The trial penalty became so important with the '94 Crime Bill. And it was becoming important before that, but the '94 Crime Bill just took these penalties and made it essentially almost impossible for a person to exercise their right to trial.

CARVELL: This is what we saw with the boyfriend of Breonna Taylor, the 26-year-old ER technician who was murdered by Louisville, Kentucky police.

JEFFERY: Her boyfriend was offered no jail if he would say that she was involved in a drug case. Now think about that for a minute, put yourself in his position. And you can say, "I would never betray a friend for something like that!" Well, what if you've got kids? And what if you're looking at 10 years in prison, away from those kids or making a statement about somebody that's dead, who you can no longer hurt, but that will save your life and put you back with your children. Might you be tempted to say yes, she was involved? And why did they make that offer unless they knew that he would be tempted? And the thing that shows you the hypocrisy is that they are now going to walk into a courtroom and tell a judge, "This man needs to be in prison for 10 years for what he did."

When, if he had said the words, "she was involved," they would have walked in and told the judge, "This man may have committed a crime, but he doesn't need to go to prison. We can monitor him in other ways and the community will be safe." And so when you have the kind of penalties that the '94 Crime Bill inflicted, you essentially say to someone who is innocent, "Roll the dice. You may have a great lawyer. You may have a great defense, just hope nothing goes wrong. Just hope the jury isn't in a bad way that day. Just hope you don't get a bad jury panel. Hope the judge doesn't make some bad ruling and some of your evidence doesn't come in, because then if you're convicted, it's mandatory minimum time and we cannot help you. But all you have to do is plead guilty, say you did it, and you'll be back at home in almost no time."

So when someone says, "I would never plead guilty to a crime that I didn't commit," my response to them is, "You don't know, cause you've never been in the position. You've never had this choice put in front of you." And if you are sitting in a jail cell for six months waiting for a trial, and then they come to you and say, you can do this for another 15 years, or you can do it for another 18 months... Don't be so quick to criticize people who make the choice to try and save their life and then understand because the Crime Bill was written with all of this knowledge, understand that when you then make that choice and plead guilty to save your life, you now have a criminal conviction.

CARVELL: And for the rest of your life, you are marked.

JEFFERY: Most people have the feeling that we have this narrative, you commit a crime, you go to prison, you do your time. You've paid your debt to society. And so now you come out and you move forward. It doesn't work that way. Collateral consequences are restrictions on people who have been convicted of a crime. Nationally, there are more than 45,000 collateral consequences for people who are convicted of crimes. They exist both at the federal level and the state level. So, if you can imagine, if you're convicted of a crime in California, every federal penalty, every federal collateral consequence might come into play because of your conviction. But the state of California has consequences on top of that. And so in the fires, this is a perfect example of where incarcerated people develop a skill that is critical to the safety of the community. They exercise that skill while they are in prison. The moment they

step out of prison and apply for that firefighting job, you're told, "Oh, you have a prior conviction. You're not eligible." That was the way it was until September of 2020 when it was finally changed in California.

DR. WILLIAMS: We talk about criminal justice as if it's divorced from issues of voting. But in fact, they're often intertwined.

CARVELL: That's Dr. Yohuru Williams; we heard from him in episode two.

DR. WILLIAMS: There are any number of things that you can introduce that then would be viable restrictions on voting: paying one's property tax; the poll tax; the literacy test. All those were legal ways that you could deny African-Americans the right to vote.

And the added benefit they get is to be able to disenfranchise those people, either by virtue of where, if you're not on the streets during the election, you don't get the vote, but then much later on you get this much more insidious felony disenfranchisement, where if you've committed a crime, you can be stripped of your voting rights as a punishment, because the argument is why would we want criminals to impact our laws? But that becomes one of the principles that's used to support this type of a political disenfranchisement of felons.

JEFFERY: Ask yourself this: If you were trying to set up a system where you take Black people and imprison them to restrict their ability to gain economic or social freedom, and you want to make sure that you can continue to restrict that ability when they come out of prison, what would you do? Well, when you pass the, the, uh, 13th Amendment outlawing slavery, you would leave an exception and say, "Slavery is gone unless you're convicted of a crime." And then you would come up with a system of collateral consequences, after the person comes out of prison, that would restrict what kind of job they can get, what kind of money they can make, whether they can travel freely, whether they can apply for certain positions, so that you restrict them to a very narrow lane of existence that will keep them as second-class citizens essentially for the rest of their lives.

CARVELL: But the 1994 Crime Bill didn't only change life for the people who ended up behind bars. It's impact reached people in all kinds of communities.

JEFFERY: Isn't it amazing, it's like you're driving and all of a sudden the streets are paved. And the two lane highway became a four lane highway and it's like, "Oh my God, what is it?" And then you see a prison. I can't remember which university that was, that did the racial dot map. They put a dot on a map of the United States of America, for everyone that answered the 2010 census and different colors for different races. And that just showed you segregation in America. But one of the things that they found is, they said, "We kept finding these random green clusters (and green was for Black people) in the middle of nowhere. And we couldn't figure it out." They were prisons. They were prisons.

And so, you know, I think that's one of the things that we, we have to remember is that this system has been set up so that there are a lot of, you know, mostly poor white and poor Black people who are wearing the badges, and walking into those places as corrections officers. And now their very livelihood depends on the system that's been set up to feed them human bodies to incarcerate.

And so you have small communities where literally the prison is the major industry in that community. And so a call to cut the prison population in half, to that community, what they hear is: "You're taking half of our jobs." And so now the issue of criminal justice reform is not an issue about what is going to make us safe, what is fair and equitable. It's: "You're taking money out of my pocket."

The folks that are investing in these prisons are doing it to make money. They're not doing it out of a civic obligation.

CARVELL: Like the Crime Bill, the prison system, the prison system is almost elegant in its ability to create feedback loops of entrapment. When rural communities depend on others' bondage for their own prosperity, how far have we really come from slavery? These mechanisms are built plainly into our systems, written plainly into our laws. And still we hide these truths from ourselves.

JEFFERY: I'm always telling people do not look at me, do not look at Barack Obama and say, "Well, they made it. Why can't everybody else make it?" Because the fact that some of us were able to escape from the foot on the throat of our community doesn't mean that that foot wasn't there. So that's an argument that really makes me angry because it ignores the reality that we apply to every other community when we talk about who succeeds and who doesn't. And it's really American. It's got to be about hard work and determination, and then you'll make it.

In the constitution, when they say "such persons," as opposed to "slaves," it's a nicer way to describe it. It's a way that lets those who are in privilege and in power look in the mirror and tell themselves, "I'm still a good person."

SHEREE: When I think about America and its laws and the things that were made to try to, to place limits on Black life, you can't keep changing the laws to limit one group of people without changing yourself. They say, if you, you, if you set out to destroy one person, you better dig two graves.

JEFFERY: I believe that there are a huge number of middle class Americans who believe in the American narrative, and as a result, say things like, "Well, you know, you made it and I know it used to be bad, but we fixed all these things and it's pretty even now. And you know, all lives should matter. It shouldn't be just Black lives." I, I really do think that there is a huge number of those people who can be put into a major state of cognitive dissonance by giving them the truth.

CARVELL: Giving people the truth means holding up a mirror, frequently to their uglier side. A mirror's job is to show us things that we can't otherwise see.

SHEREE: To repair deliberately inflicted harm, you must deliberately examine that harm and examine the forces that inflicted that harm. That is the first step. You have to see it.

CARVELL: Sheree Renee Thomas is an Afrofuturist writer, editor, and poet; and, like Jeffery, a native Memphian. But while both their paths initially led away from Memphis, Sheree returned.

SHEREE: I wrote a poem about that. You know, because the main question is, “Girl, why you move back to Memphis? If I was in New York...” Well, I'd been in New York for 20 years! I was ready to come home.

CARVELL: The Memphis she found, the river city that birthed both her and JEFFERY, holds a unique piece of this country's cultural and racial heritage.

SHEREE: Memphis is a... it's under the radar. It's a place that represents the macro and the micro of American history. Every American cultural form that you can say is uniquely American has its roots and crossroads in Memphis, Tennessee. No doubt, no question. I'll fight you on that. And from Memphis, all roads lead to Mississippi, right? So it's the Mississippi Delta “genius culture” is what I call it.

Being there, hearing my mother tongue, hearing those different dialects of different accents, the way that we emphasize certain things in different parts of the city, that was magic to me. I felt like I was walking back into a rhythm of a song that I knew. And that knew me.

CARVELL: When Sheree got back to Memphis, a lot had changed and a lot had not. She says the Memphis she grew up in wasn't all that different from the one Jeff grew up in, and it came with all the same unwritten laws and consequences.

SHEREE: We talk about whiteness as a default, as if it's this de-racialized thing. And yet if you're not catering to it, you are punished. If you do not uphold its invisible values, you are reprimanded for that. So it's like this invisible force that's implicit in almost every level of our lives.

What does it do to a people where you would need to have Blackness in order to be white? Where do you need to have un-free around you in order to celebrate your freedom? There's something dark and pathological and, and, and sick about that. And we don't talk about that enough.

For me, Afrofuturism isn't so much about shiny technology and new languages of the future. It's about creating a space in the real world for the things that we should have had for generations already. So an Afrofuturist perspective could be communities where children aren't drinking lead water. Communities where their homes aren't built on wastelands and all the real estate agents know that. And so you're being redlined as a community into those spaces and other communities are being warned away from that. For me, Afrofuturism also means that my mom's house has the actual value it should have, and isn't devalued a hundred thousand dollars because a Black body lives inside it.

DR. BARADARAN: The new deal was essentially reparations. Well, not reparations, cause there's nothing to repair, but like a wealth transfer to white people, right? Away from Black people.

CARVELL: Professor Mehrsa Baradaran, who we heard from in episode four, reminding us that while some people treat reparations as a form of science fiction, it's actually a thing that we've done before.

DR. BARADARAN: Take any moment in history where the white power structure created wealth in white communities and took it from Black communities. Go back to that moment and do that same thing. Now, funnel it toward Black communities.

The Homestead Act, where white people got land, you could do it, you know, the Civil War, where you went back to sharecropping instead of getting 40 acres. So take any moment, and go back to the solutions on offer that were not done and do that. So it looks like reparations, it looks like capital. It looks like loans. It looks like, um, just a complete elimination of the racial wealth gap.

SHEREE: I'm thinking about how the works of Octavia Butler have become even more popular and relevant than even when she was alive. She was this amazing Black speculative fiction writer who won the MacArthur Genius Award, and people think that she has this prophetic voice. But she was really writing about the Reagan years as she observed them from her home in California. And unfortunately, because the systems don't change very easily, especially if no one's actively trying to change them who have the power to do so,

I don't mean the people who are being affected by those systems, but the people who place and reinforce those systems, if they're not trying to change it, they're going to be present a decade from now, 20 years from now, 30, 50 years from now. So here we are in the 21st century reading *Parable of the Sower*, reading *Parable of the Talents* and thinking, "Oh my gosh, it looks like today!" Well, yeah! Because we never changed yesterday!

CARVELL: It may be too late to go back and change the lives of yesterday. But as we heard from OB/GYN Doctor Joia Crear-Perry in episode five, it isn't too late to change the lives of tomorrow.

DR. CREAR-PERRY: I tell my friends who are pregnant, you want a person who's going to deliver you - or, not delivering your, when a person's going to assist in your birth—see I'm still trying to decolonize my own language as an OB/GYN!

But you want a person who sees you and your children in the future, right? Who wants you here. Who imagines them being the president or curing cancer. And so that means they're going to fight for you. They're going to make sure they do everything for you.

CARVELL: Black folks have been asked to fight the same battles for so long.

SHEREE: I remember looking at some signs and photographs of wonderful, well-dressed people in the 1950s. They're so, you know, so polished and elegant, right? And they're out protesting in their fifties dresses and, you know, the black shades and their fedora hats, and the signs are the exact same signs that we have today! You know?

The same missions that we're still talking about today to show, um, Black people as whole human beings who have the rights as whole human beings of dignity, and to be treated well when they go to get healthcare. And to have their children treated as children, where they're in the classrooms and not tackled by police officers and adults who are weaponized against these little small child bodies. For you to just have access to the dream. You know?

And for your bodies not be a tool. And that's the thing, that's the story, that's the narrative that we're constantly trying to rupture, that we're constantly trying to disrupt and break

apart, that Black lives are not designed for the lives that we have. They're designed to be exploited, plundered, commercialized and used in a way where you don't have anything left when it's over.

MISKI: Black folks are expected to go through so much and have been through so much all because somebody couldn't see the value in a Black person's life. And so, yeah, I'm just really thinking about the burden of Blackness, and all that we go through. And all of that we've still been able to build and feel, and all of the ways we've still been able to show up for each other and care for each other.

CARVELL: Miski Noor, from Black Visions Collective in Minneapolis, who we heard from in episode three. Their work is about organizing, about resistance, but also about remembering what they're fighting for, not just what they're fighting against.

MISKI: I resonate with the idea of, you know, the opposite of the burden of Blackness, really being the magic of Blackness, the joy of Blackness. Like I wouldn't give my Blackness up for nothing. You can't have it - ha, you can't! You know, the people we come from, the legacies we've come from the magic of our otherness, you know? Blackness is inherently queer, is inherently other, is, is so much, um, and is everything.

SHEREE: I think it was Kodwo Eshun who talked about the Middle Passage experience as us being like the first aliens, right? The first contact story. If you feel like you're always othered and you're treated like an alien on Earth, then being in space can represent a possible freedom that you don't have on the planet. You can create your own new reality, right? And theoretically leave your troubles behind you.

CARVELL: Afrofuturist Sheree Renee Thomas again.

SHEREE: I remember the wonderful writer Nalo Hopkinson and Uppinder Mehan created an anthology called *So Long Been Dreaming*. And it was postcolonial science fiction and fantasy. And the challenge was for us to write stories which go past colonialism, like the completely different realms. And I've found that I struggled with that.

It was so hard for my imagination to think outside of this paradigm, it was very difficult to make that shift and how I did it, I kind of cheated. I created a planet that was, the descendants of Black people on Earth had colonized and terraformed it, right, to live there. But one of the things they had agreed amongst themselves is that they will not teach their children the story of Earth. They would not teach them of the trauma and the past that they had on the planet, they wanted new wings, new children that had a free consciousness, right? Free of all that, that dark history. But the history came to them anyway, or not the darkness of it. But what I wanted to tell in the story is that you can't completely cut yourself off from that history, from your past, because it is a part of you.

You shouldn't let it control you, but you have to acknowledge and respect it because if you don't, then you are forced to relive parts of it, right? It's because you tried to erase it. And they learned the very hard way when they reproduce some of the evils of the past on a stranger who appears in their colony. And they have no idea how this woman gets there, you know?

I think there are so many, so many new futures that are being imagined right now. And people are, in their many different ways, connecting with others to try to see them through.

Part of birthing a future is acknowledging what has been your present, and what has been your past.

It's interesting because I am a speculative fiction writer, but to be honest, I'm less fascinated with stories about us being in space because I feel like humans need to learn how to be on Earth before they take it into the stars. Can we evolve on the planet of Earth with all the resources that we have and figure out how to be better humans? Cause otherwise we're just going to take the same foolishness up into the stars and, and I know we can do better than that, right? But it's important to connect yourself to something larger.

I feel connected to the diaspora through water. We went through the ports through water and all over all over this world, right? Through the water, we journeyed and sought out new sites, new adventure, new foods, you know, on the waves of water. Messages are sent in the water. It's an amazing thing. The sky looks different after it's rained. You know, the world smells differently after it's rained. I hear different. I feel like I hear different life after it's rained, I'm attuned to the world differently. And it's a powerful force.

CARVELL: Black people's lives in America have long been governed by powerful forces--the water that brought us here, and the systems built to hold us captive long after slavery's theoretical end.

SHEREE: We talk about the late George Floyd and others as if they are new anomalies. And as I was explaining to a friend: there's always a name, there's always a group of people that we are mourning. This is a constant thing, because that's part of, that's the agreement that America has said that they feel comfortable, they feel comfortable when we are policed in these ways, they have actually done surveys. And when they see that they don't see it as brutality, they see it as the law being upheld.

And now all of that is coming into the light and it's been in our view for so very long, it's exhausting. That's why you need Afrofuturism. That's why you need new ways of thinking and seeing to help you deal with that fatigue, that mental fatigue and to give you hope that the world, that tomorrow can be different. And we are talking about, when we say tomorrow, we really mean today. We really mean today. Afrofuturism is not about some utopia in a hundred or a thousand years from now. It's about fighting for very possible, dignified, necessary change today.

CARVELL: Throughout this season, we have been working to outline the harms that have been deliberately committed in the past, to make a case that this violence wasn't an unfortunate, accidental side effect of America, but that it was enacted deliberately, purposefully, that it's woven into the fabric of our flag. We've confronted the past. We've arrived at the present. And as America wrestles with itself, as views on policing and reparations and re-enfranchisement of the formerly incarcerated shift, the question held in every conversation, a question yet unanswered:

SHEREE: Who is this country for?

I'm Carvell Wallace, and this is Who We Are.

For more information on the topics and ideas explored in this episode, go to our show notes and show page.

The production team at Cosmic Standard is:

Our Senior Editor, Cher Vincent

Our Senior Producer, Adwoa Gyimah-Brempong

Our Managing Producer is Elise Bergerson

Our Associate Producer and Researcher is Najib Aminy

Our Technical Director is Jacob Winik

Our Showrunner is Eliza Smith

And our theme music is by Markus Hunt

From The Who We Are Project we have:

Executive Producer Jeffery Robinson

And From Vox Creative we have:

Executive Producer and Director of Creative Strategy, Amber Davis

Supervising Producer, Annu Subramanian

Branded Audio Coordinator, Taylor Henry

Vice President of Content Production, Kiana Moore

I'm Carvell Wallace. And this is Who We Are.