

Episode 119-- The Importance of Art-tism in the Fight for Gu...

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SPEAKERS

Jason Sole, JJ Janflone, Kelly Sampson, Farooq Al-Said



JJ Janflone 00:08

This is the legal disclaimer where I tell you that the views, thoughts, and opinions shared in this podcast belong solely to our guests and hosts, and not necessarily Brady or Brady's affiliates. Please note, this podcast contains discussions of violence that some people may find disturbing. It's okay, we find it disturbing too. Hey everybody. Welcome back to another episode of Red, Blue, and Brady. I'm one of your hosts, JJ. And of course, you know, my great co-host.



Kelly Sampson 00:44

Great, that would be me, Kelly.



JJ Janflone 00:48

And today, Kelly, and I get the pleasure of speaking with two great people. We have Farooq Al-Said and Jason Sole. And just to pull the curtain back a little bit, I keep being like, super inspired by the folks who come on this podcast, and not just because the great work they do, but because they're willing to spend time with us, although virtually despite how busy they all are.



Kelly Sampson 01:06

Yeah, I mean Jason was literally in a car on the way to an airport when we were recording this.



JJ Janflone 01:12

Yeah, and Farooq was in lockdown after talking to the FBI, so we'll talk about that later. But what I think people need to know about is this, is that in addition to these people just being amazing, both Farooq and Jason are activists, artists, and educators. Farooq is with 1Hood. And Jason is with Humanize My Hoodie. And together, we're all talking about what it means to be an activist and an artist in gun violence prevention.



Kelly Sampson 01:36

Yeah, JJ, I'm so excited for this episode. And I think listeners will get more out of it if we just lay a bit of context upfront. So first, listeners will understand this episode better if they're familiar with code switching. And this is a term that's relatively familiar in black communities or other communities of color, but we found it's not necessarily known to a wider audience. So for that reason, I'm going to cite a definition first published in the Harvard Business Review. It basically says broadly, code switching involves adjusting one style of speech, appearance, behavior, and expression in ways that will optimize the comfort of others in exchange for fair treatment, quality service, and employment opportunities. Notably, the author's talk about how code switching has, quote, long been a strategy for black people to successfully navigate interracial interactions, and has large implications for their well-being, economic advancement and even physical survival. And that's an important point because, in a society like ours, where white cultural norms are considered the standard, not that it should be that way of course, but oftentimes, that means black people operating in white spaces will adopt white cultural expression for self preservation, opportunity, and even just survival, and that's code switching. It's a survival tactic.



JJ Janflone 02:50

Yeah. And I think that, you know, I want to thank you so much, Kelly, for that, for breaking down that definition, not just for listeners, but for me, too, because, you know, as a white lady, you know, sometimes I think code switching is not as apparent to me, because I'm part of that, you know, white culture that for so long has been dominant in the US. And, and I also think this is really important, because I feel like Farooq and Jason did a really great thing in letting me and a lot of our listeners into what felt like an otherwise really

private conversation that is a super important one.



Kelly Sampson 03:19

Yeah. And, as a result, our white listeners or other listeners who spend the majority of their time in non-black spaces, they have never had the privilege of hearing a candid conversation, like the one Jason and Farooq have on this episode. And I say privilege on purpose because we're so fortunate that Jason has trusted us with their true voices and their wisdom. And we always talk about how our work will be better and more lives will be saved when we can have honest conversations, prioritizing the truth about gun violence and racism, even when it comes at the expense of white people's comfort. So I would challenge our listeners to sit with any discomfort they might feel when listening to this conversation, and see it as an opportunity to better understand how gun violence impacts communities that you may not be part of.



JJ Janflone 04:02

Yeah, and I think we want to make a point on use of language too really quick.



Kelly Sampson 04:07

Yeah, so you will hear the N word in this episode. So here's some things to keep in mind. First and foremost, that word stems from the dehumanization, brutalization and subjugation of enslaved African people in the United States. That being said, in today's world, some but not all, black people have chosen to reclaim it, and use it. And so this is an ongoing debate, even among black people.



JJ Janflone 04:32

And I think it's important to point out that that debate is happening among black people, and does not give white people or other people of color license to use the word. And if that seems odd to you, there are a lot of resources on the topic, and I will link to them in the show notes. But in the meantime, I just really want to make it clear that Brady is committed to allowing our guests to share their uncensored views, but their views do not necessarily represent ours. And we're well aware that, even if our black guests use the N word, we as a white lead majority white organization don't want to, do not, and will not use that word.



Kelly Sampson 05:07

Yep. And on that note, I feel we both talked so much.



JJ Janflone 05:11

It's just Kelly, it might just be that quarantine's getting to me. I need conversation.



Kelly Sampson 05:15

Don't we all. But, uh, yeah, I think with that, we can kick it to Farooq and Jason.



JJ Janflone 05:23

So I think the absolute best place to start, Jason and Farooq, is to have you two introduce yourselves and tell our listeners just a little bit about some of the work that your organizations do.



Jason Sole 05:31

I'm Jason Sole, co-founder of Humanize My Hoodie, leading this movement with a close friend. I'm a professor, former president of the Minneapolis NAACP, just trying to really figure out liberation for black people. You know, throughout my career, throughout my life, I always want to figure out how black people can be safe. All my undergraduate work, master thesis, all the way working up through the PhD program was all focused on threat perception of black people, and how white supremacy is oppressing us. So Humanize My Hoodie is saying, hey humanize me. You don't got to know that I'm a criminal justice professor, you don't got to know that I'm a father, you don't got to know that I'm a husband, just treat me like a person. So that's the, that's the energy behind the movement. We're grateful to be global at this point and truly honored.



Farooq Al-Said 06:14

Yeah, Farooq Al-Said, Director of Operations at 1Hood Media based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I'm a full-time super villain, part time innovator, artist, activist, martial artist, and you know, community organizer and community builder, former educator, former incarcerated person, immigrant. You know, a lot of things, things that I have to be, what I have to be in, you get me, happy to be here.



JJ Janflone 06:37

For me, art and activism often go hand in hand, but we don't always hear a lot about the why. And for you two and your organizations art and activism, they seem so intimately connected. And so I'm wondering if you could tell our listeners a little bit about how that came to be.



Farooq Al-Said 06:51

You know, we we always say our art is activism, I think a lot of people look at activism as specifically just one lane, like protests, like you have to be out on the streets and you have to be with a picket sign. But activism has shown over, you know, the decades that black people have been fighting for civil rights and human equality, human rights, that it manifests in a lot of different forms. You know, whether you look at like Fela Kuti, whether you look at Gil Scott-Heron, The Last Poets, whether you look at Basquiat, whether you look at Colin Kaepernick, whether you look at, anybody that uses their craft, their art form, to convey a socially positive, socially just, and socially conscious message. That's how art and activism go hand in hand, specifically at 1Hood. That's what we teach. We're literally at the intersection of education, artists, artistry, activism. We always teach to be active to your art, no matter what it is, like myself as a martial artist, like I use those principles every day as an MC, like, you know, that's, that's the whole foundation for my music, and you get me. So everything that I talk about is something through the lens of social conscience.



Jason Sole 07:51

For us, art is like, what comes naturally, you know, like, we like to say at Humanize My Hoodie, the hoodies are just our uniform. You know, that's just what we put on when we lace it up. But we teach in criminal justice, like Andre is a fashion designer grew up in Waterloo and had a vision to go to New York Fashion Week. So it's like, for us art is just natural, we know we can just create, whether it's music, whether it's, you know, portraits, whether it's posters, whether it's, we know, we know, we can just do that effortlessly, and our people are going to feel it, because it's our duty to mold culture. So for us, art is a part of everything. Art and science, make us a university, you know, I'm not just a professor or teaching criminal justice at university. It's like, I'm from the trenches, too. I got shot up. I've been to prison a few times. And for me, I always was artistic in that, whether I was writing poems and lifting up Paul Laurence Dunbar, or thinking about Ella Baker, her collective leadership, it was always art that helped us push things forward. Ee look at Gordon Parks, and all the photographs, he took of Muhammad Ali and others. So we saw those images of Muhammad Ali sweating, and it made us like, man, we can go a little harder with this man, that man took a fight to Africa. If he can do that, we know we can do this. So we live

out of ancestors, and we stand firm. And when it's time for us to say, hey, man, you know, we want to abolish the police. We're standing on that and we feel firm, and we got too much material to say they protect white wealth and whiteness. So whenever we stand up, it's like, we got a lot of people riding with us because we saying what's right at this time, we're not, we're not, we can do it through art. We can do it through literary work, we can do it through, art is so many different forms. All we got to do is wake up and bring God gifts to the table, can't loose with that.

K

Kelly Sampson 09:36

I was gonna say as both of you were talking about your work, and then also referencing the work of other people like Gil Scott-Heron, I was thinking about how you can remember a spoken word or a piece of art that you saw or photograph much more than you might be able to recite off like a policy brief and some statistics and things like that. So I'm just wondering if you could talk a little bit about the ways that art as you've experienced it help break down some of the barriers to things like policy or typical political conversation that might come up.

J

Jason Sole 10:08

You know, in Minneapolis, we all always needed to be creative. When Jamar Clark was killed, it was important for us to take over a precinct for 18 days. The art just came with the precinct being behind us. So for us, it made sense to just show it when we had the projector, and we put justice for Jamar onto the police station. It made sense where it's like, man, we need justice from these oppressive systems. Art just comes naturally. When you give people like spray paint and like billboards or like whatever, a blank canvas, when you just let folks just do what comes naturally and like build on it and like one person draws one thing and another person draws another, it's going to create something that's amazing. It might not be the best form or the best version, but at the same time as the opportunity for folks to express themselves. Not everybody got the words, not everybody know what to say, but they can draw something and hold it up behind me. I remember holding up a sign for Korryn Gaines and Aiyana Stanley-Jones in both of my hands and it was like, that mattered to lift up those young girls who were slaughtered by law enforcement. So I mean, the art comes pretty naturall. If you got people around you and they pretty fly and they pretty dope, all you got to do is put like the paintbrush in their hand. Like for real, so it's like we got, we got young folks who we should be like praising as elders because they got the gift, all they need is the support around them. So for us, we're that support where it's like, hey man, we're gonna give y'all all the tools. And that's why you see like, it ain't our job to be frontline in a movement. It's our job to give the tools to the young people for them to be frontline in a movement.



Farooq Al-Said 11:46

Yeah, absolutely. You know, when you look at how this works, like I think, I don't know if it was this podcast I said it on but I've said it before on a few other podcasts, policy is boring. You know, speeches, all these you know, loquacious, you know, orators and everything like that, pretty much outside of Barack Obama recently, it's very difficult to quote any of them because it's wack. Like no one wants to sit up there and listen to a lecture. Even if you go to a university, you don't pay attention to everything that the lecturer says like, you might have a dope professor, you might have a dope speaker, but you're going to get bored at some point, right? Unless it's like Michael Eric Dyson and someone that's like really, really out there with it, but that's hip hop, still. With rap, with anything artistic is specifically with black people, that's in our DNA. We're going to learn that a lot quicker, like when Opal and Patrisse and Alicia came up with Black Lives Matter and just like put that on Twitter, like that's succinct. It's quick. There is an art form to that, you get me? And then when Kendrick did We Goin Be Alright, right? No, he didn't write that and say, you know, this is gonna be the soundtrack for the movement. It just when, when we were out on the road, when we were out on the ends, when we were seeing precincts burn, when we were seeing cop cars set on fire and rubber bullets, and arrests made and all this, no matter what, we gonna be all right. And then the song was there for it, you get me, it was there for it. I said in a rhyme, I try to use my fashion as a faction in my activism. The brother said well humanize my hoodie. Like I might come out in a \$400, \$500 hoodie because that's how I like to come out. You get me like, yo, I like fashion. You get me, I like, you know, like these things. That doesn't mean a cop won't put bullet holes in there because my hoodie is expensive. You know, but my fashion is a form of my activism like I come out you got to humanize this, you got to overstand that this is how I represent myself, you get me. So the art being part of the activism so much more digestible, so much more palatable, is the fact that people are going to always gravitate towards art in times of adversity, whether you look at any period in human history, when you have war, you have hardship. Art form is what got people through it. When you looking to see what happened to some extinct civilization, you look at artwork. You look at art. Specifically when it comes to people at a global majority, we dictate, we narrate, we heal through art. That's our form of justice, is art, everything is there. So that's how we communicate it. So it was only right, that it exists today in this modern civil rights movement in a form of art.



JJ Janflone 14:09

Can I, can I jump in real quick with a question because I have to, I have to wonder like the is there a fear ever of things that are vastly important, particularly to the movement or to art that is created by black voices, being co-opted by white culture and then

commercialized not for the purpose it was initially created? Is that ever a fear or is that just sort of something that you kind of take as it's an unfortunate reality of living in a racist world?

F Farooq Al-Said 14:37

So if you look at, okay, if you look at all the protests that happened in summer, right, and you look at the way white people came out, and then you look at the numbers of the votes. Most of these white protesters voted for Trump. You had to have statistically, mathematically you had to have voted for Trump. A lot of these white people came out here and co-opted the movement and they started move in in a specific space because it was the first time you got out the house after quarantine. You've seen an opportunity, and there was some shit that was cool. It was your first expression to come out, right? And we even see this with gentrification. Black Lives Matter signs don't go up in neighborhoods until you moved out all the black people. That's how gentrification works, and how it's done, it's done in a way of co-opting. It's like, okay, we will support this black neighborhood, and we will support this black art, after we move out all the black people from the neighborhood. And that's how it works. So you know it. So it's always existed in a way that unfortunately, the, it doesn't get a gravity or appreciation to it until someone white does it and then it's like, oh, okay, now it's cool, now it's trendy.



JJ Janflone 15:46

Because I guess that's, that's the fear that, like, you want to be a good ally, but you don't want to steal.

F Farooq Al-Said 15:53

And, you know, I think like with allyship, allyship doesn't have to be anything extra. Like we see right now, white people turning in their family to the FBI for being, you know, part of the terrorists at the Capitol. That's what allyship needs to look like. We don't need performative allyship; we got enough of that this summer. I seen enough performative allyship and co-opting black culture for Instagram likes this summer to you know, I could die and never have to see any more of it again, I'd be good.

K Kelly Sampson 16:20

I think one of the things that came up when I was listening to you share is like, historically black art, even during the era of slavery, and Jim Crow. This country loves our art and our

culture, but not us as people. And so it's like, I feel like sometimes people will think well, I like Rihanna, so therefore I like black people. And so it's really interesting to think about what that means in the context of art and activism. So I appreciate you sharing that.

J

Jason Sole 16:47

I can't even think about that, like for so many people, once you doing something that's contagious, or you inspiring people or you evoking something that they not close to, you know, they not in close proximity to, they're going to want to like, even if it's not to be performative. It just happens because they're so conditioned to where things are trendy to them. What they're not looking at is this stuff coming from the most sacred place, man, we got people who died for me to be able to have a shot to do something different. This is like, it's different for us. It's like we really got people we trying to bring home from prison. We don't got time for people to be playing around us and acting like it's cool and then you jump on to the next one. And you just, it was some folks who got to a point where they are wearing a hoodie, you know, and it made them feel like they was down. But it was like, man, if you ain't ready when somebody asks you what Humanize My Hoodie mean, you ain't did the work. So it's like don't be co-opting because if somebody actually when you like, oh, it's just a cool hoodie. No, we're not doing this for a cool hoodie, man, we're doing this to move the culture. Like we're trying to make sure that person who just came home can say, yeah, man, I'm formerly incarcerated. But I'm this, this, this. and this, Humanize My Hoodie opens the door for somebody to be able to speak to that. If you like, if I walk up on somebody, they might not even know I created this. And I say, hey, what what's making you rock that Humanize My Hoodie? If they say something that's just like, oh, you know, what I'm saying, my friend had one, no you don't really understand, man. It's like when I got on this hoodie, you don't think I could be a scholar, you don't think I could be an amazing father, you don't think I'm an amazing husband, you're thinking the worst of me. So for us, it's like, you can try to co-opt this all you want, but it's too strong. And we're going to make sure we keep the integrity of it. I don't fear it. But it do be like, and even like I said, when you're doing something that's amazing, people going to jump on board and try and mimic it and probably beat you to it and different things like that. You got to just keep going and keep leveling up. Because like when you get lost in that, you're not bringing your gifts to the table. Andre and I always say we want everybody be able to bring their gifts to the table, not their trauma, not their drama, bring your gifts and we thrive. I mean, when, when Trayvon was killed, I have to go back. You know, I came home from prison 2002 was trying to grind trying to learn my rights, trying to figure out everything for the community. Like I didn't really want to learn my rights just for me. We was getting locked up, snatched up, and it didn't make sense. So I started college 2004 that's when I became an organizer. I met Angela Davis in 2004. Started working with Marian Wright Edelman, so I already had a lens. By the time Trayvon was killed, we had

already been doing restorative justice circles helping people come home from prison. So for us, everybody in my family and community we were already like, I mean, it's been happening. We were already locked in. We were quote, unquote, woke already. So we didn't necessarily have to do anything different, but we did have to make some noise. So with that, that's when you saw Minneapolis doing those large scale protests shutting down the Mall of America, shutting down the highways like we was just, we wasn't planning, and it was a beautiful display of queer folks, trans folks, atheist, Muslim, Christian, black, white, Latinx, it was like a beautiful display of what democracy really looks like. So, for us, Trayvon sparked the BLM movement. And he made a lot of us say, you know what, we're gonna go ahead and mess with your money, we shut down the state fair, we started really just ride. And of course, we got stronger every time 18 days holding down a precinct. That's not a small thing to do. And five protesters got shot by white supremacists. We still stayed out there and still held it. Not only that, we rolled out for Philando Castile, like for real, and I was blessed to be a part of an art project with his mom, you know, to bring it to Walker Arts to be able to discuss, like, what happened and why the NRA didn't step up and speak on Philando's behalf because he was legally like he was licensed to carry, and they said nothing. And we was pushing that narrative. So I mean, a lot of people get smoked in Minneapolis, you saw what happened with George Floyd. Like he was lynched eight minutes and 46 seconds, and we always roll it out. So here, I mean, if people didn't know before, when it's time to ride a lot of our people who we've trained, who we've taught, who we stood next to, they get to jump out there and say I know the framework. And if they need to call on us, like with 1Hood, when they need to call on us for assistance, they know we got them. We passed out a lot of food during the uprising. We did a lot of runs for elders' medication, because stores were burned down, they couldn't get their, you know, needs met. We stood tall, that's our reputation. For us, Trayvon was more of the same, but it was like, it was about the clothing too. And that's what made us say, at Humanize My Hoodie, it's like, we don't see a lot of black people get killed when they got suits on. And I'm not trying to create a revolution of people everybody having on suits, I'm saying I should be able to wear whatever and get grace. For real don't run up on me thinking you know me because of what I got on my body. And with Trayvon, a hoodie was even admitted as evidence, and it made no sense. So for us, Trayvon made us route a little harder.



Farooq Al-Said 21:58

You look at like respectability politics and where that gets and there's a lot of divisiveness within the black community around that issue. And I know you probably encountered some of that with the Humanize My Hoodie issue, but like, you gotta keep in mind like they was killing niggas in the 50s in suits. It didn't matter bro. Like you know, like they was, they was killing us in suits. Just because it's not super popular now that you know, the, the

brother in a three piece suit with an ascot and like a top hat, you know, in like the wingtips isn't getting shot. That doesn't mean it doesn't happen. That just, that just means it's not as sexy in the news as oh, you know, 14 year old boy had a hoodie on, so like Geraldo Rivera is gonna get on the news and chat some shit about he needs to be killed because of a hoodie. No it's like, you know, that's kind of the part of I think the intersection between arts and activism right now is you see what Luke Cage did on having a hoodie on right. And they even actually made a specific hoodie for Luke with the bullet holes in it, then Carhartt sold it. And it was dope, man, because it was iconic, you know, and but even though that symbolism because Carhartt supported Trump, I mean, that's still symbolism over substance. But you see that reflection of our activism manifests in a lot of different forms. You know, the Luke Cage, Trayvon correlation was super important, was super, super important. Because it's the antithesis of these narratives that you can't be a superhero if you come from the hood. You can't be a superhero if you're black. You can't be a superhero if you came out of jail. It's like nah, like, you know, that was so dope about seeing that on the screen. And I don't want to make this into a long thing about you know, the, the media optics of it, because we can talk about that another time. But there was so much that went back to Trayvon's upbringing and just, just being a regular black kid in America in the West and what that means because Luke Cage, you know, brother came out, you know, he did some time. You know, he gets powers, he gets shot up. And now you know, he's the, he's the man on the ends. It's just like, yo, we're just trying to restore balance to the force, you get me. And that's just what our lives are like, though. It's like Luke Cage was just walking around, getting shot up, Trayvon walk around, get shot up, we walk around getting, Philando Castile was just driving, getting shot up. So that's that kind of harmony of our activism.

K

Kelly Sampson 24:13

Kind of what both of you're getting at in this idea of respectability politics, where because we live in a society that's based on white supremacy, black people are not allowed to just be human. So we're not necessarily allowed to just be in a hoodie or suit or educated or not educated or make mistakes, because we have this barrier over us kind of requiring us to be superhuman, and it still might not be enough. And then the respectability politics idea of, you know, when we're advocating for black people, are we advocating for black people who can code switch into white culture or are we advocating for all black people regardless? And I think one of the things that's so interesting about the work that both of you have done is that you are standing up for all people and, when you mentioned Philando Castile, I always think it's interesting when people talk about unarmed black man or armed black man, because we live in a country where for white people, there's this narrative pushed around, have a gun, you need a gun. Having a gun is a great way to be a good citizen, and so it's like, why when this man is illegal firearms carrier, do, is that, is

that relevant at all? When it doesn't matter. He's a citizen of this country. And he has the right so I just, I really appreciate what you guys just said.



Jason Sole 25:28

Let me let me just speak to that. Like, I got caught with a pistol when I was 19 years old. And nobody cares about the story to it. They just like you're failing, and they slap it on you, you got to go through the system. If you got the better lawyer, you will win. You can beat it, all that stuff, and I didn't understand it at the time. But I'm like, and the main thing the judge kept saying was, why would a 19 year old boy have a gun? That's all she kept saying, like at court. And I was like, man, come on, man, I'm not having a conversation. Like I don't do that. I'm not about to have a conversation with you. But I couldn't say, hey, man, somebody pulled a gun on me two days before. You know what I mean? So it's like, because I got caught with a gun. You labeled me a felon, you say I'm a monster. And you say I'm violent, because I got caught with a strap. But it's like, I had to have that strap. I didn't have nobody else to call. You know what I mean? I didn't want to have to call nobody. I just never been like that. It's like, man, I've never had to save and come help me out because I'm stuck, and they got me in this situation. It's like, no, I try to figure it out. And unfortunately, having a gun was only for safety for me. Like I said, I've been shot, I've been I've been through a lot of that kind of trauma. For me, like a gun never really kept me safe. It only like, I was criminalized for having a gun throughout. Even when I got shot, they couldn't see me as a victim because of my black skin. It just looked at it like they kept saying you must have done something. You must have done something. I'm like, dang, I can't even be a victim when I'm bleeding and learn how to walk all over again. So for us, we do have to be superhuman. And it's unfair, because people look at what we endured during slavery. And they feel like we can just take more pain than other people. And it's like, that philosophy is trash man. It's like, let me rock this hoodie and these sweats because you know, my life like is filled with stuff that you don't have to go through. Don't make me have to wear a suit and walk around and say these buzz words for you to feel what I'm saying. It's like, man, get out your head and come to your heart. So for us, man, we try to, we try to make sure people like feel us man rather than trying to, we educate when we must. But at the same time, it's like, if you grow where I grew up in Chicago, you probably would have ended up dead or in jail too. I'm one of many. So I think people need to really understand like, we're judged for everything we do and don't do. For black folks, we judged by everything we do and what we don't do. And it's like people always be like man, you know if you're this color, you move like this or you'd be late if you like this. Man like I know late people of all races. For me, I'm saying we're going to deal with the attacks. But it's like if we look at Harriet Tubman, if we look at Frederick Douglass, if you look at some of the, like abolitionists that stepped up before us, they left blueprints we got to pick up those blueprints and pass the torch to the people who're coming up ahead. That's how

I see it.

F

Farooq Al-Said 28:19

With the names that we have dropped so far and just kind of climate and you're looking at what has just happened, I'm not sure when this is going to air but you know with the with the, the attempted coup on the Capitol, black people have to be the perfect victims. There's always an excuse when the perpetrator is not black. Right. Trayvon was, you know, Trayvon didn't kill nobody. Right? Philando Castile criminalized for his own death. George Floyd criminalized for his own death. Sean Bell criminalized for his own death. Tamir Rice criminalized for his own death. Korryn Gaines criminalized for her own death. Breonna Taylor criminalized for her own death. You see the pattern here. Tony McDade criminalized for their own death, right? There's so much, black people have to be the perfect victim. Let's look at Botham Jean. You can't, I can't answer my door? I can't answer my door no more? That's what you're trying to tell me, like someone come to my house, I can't answer my door. So black people have to be the perfect victim. And right now specifically in the climate and you see the disproportionate unfairness, that irrevocably unnoticeable lack of unmitigated equality in the, in the, in the, in the, in the news right now, that these people, you can steal a podium, you could walk through the Capitol Building, you can be introduced into the Capitol Building, but I can't open my front door. I have to be the victim, the perfect victim, right? Antwon Rose the Second had to be the perfect victim. They don't tell you that he was an honor roll student. They don't tell you that he had two jobs. They don't tell you that he wanted to be a chemical engineer. They don't tell you that he worked at a free store giving back to the community. They don't tell you that he was a mentor. Right?

J

Jason Sole 29:59

For real, talk your stuff, man, I'm I, I'm a fan now for real, keep doing you bro.

F

Farooq Al-Said 30:05

You know, it's just like, this is what, you know, this is what I do for a living. But unfortunately, it's very difficult to keep saying the same thing because right now, you know, when, when I have when I'm told that I gotta be careful coming out the house for this week, this specific week, I get vexed because it's like, why? Because, like, when you look at, when you look at this, and I'm really gonna put a punctuation point there, so we can proceed with the program. But right now, why are you upset? Because black people came out to the polls? Like, why are you upset? Because you don't own me? Like, that's literally why you're upset is because you don't have any agency over my skin color, or any

agency over my citizenship, or any agency over my ethnicity, my religious affiliation, none of that. Are you upset that I'm making money? Are you upset that I'm calling attention to the fact that you treat me poorly when I walk into the store? Like, I can speak the King's English. I lived in England, I could do that, but I don't want to. I talk like this. Occasionally, you might hear something come out with like, oh, he's not from here, but that doesn't mean anything like, you, what are you upset at at this juncture? It's the fact that your president didn't win. This is your democratic process that you adhere to, and when it doesn't work in the fashion that you want, because it literally went the way it's supposed to by the paperwork. You're upset, so you storm a capitol. That's what the, that's what the United States allegedly tried to escape from the crown isn't it? So you're just replicating the first time, this is the first time anybody's ever broke into the Capitol in 219 years? Right. So it's just, it's very vexing to me that right now, that you know, the media is taking this narrative about black people and white people, as if we don't occupy the same spaces. This is why, and I love, the more and more I say it, the more I love it. Humanize My Hoodie, like you have to, why do I have to have all these adjectives attached to my name? Why can't you just see me as a human being? Why can't you just authenticate my humanity and just keep moving? But the fact that we have to say these things, it's like, listen, you know, hands up, don't shoot or whatever. I you know, me personally, I don't chant them at protests when I go because I don't believe in that, because even with my hands up, you're still going to shoot. But the fact that that even has to be rhetoric, that's employed right now to let you know that we do not occupy the same space as equally. Right, I can't go out of my house right now for fear that white supremacist militias might attack me or militia members, or some type of Neo-Nazi might attack me when I'm going to the supermarket because I'm hungry. I can't do that right now. Walk into the Capitol building, and be escorted by police and actually kill police officers, and you still have the, you still have the white agency to dictate what you want to be fed in jail. I didn't even have that. When I was locked up, I was like, yo, because they had no Halal meals. I had to just eat the vegetables and whatever else that was in there. This man can literally say I'm not eating it because it's not organic after he helped incite an insurrection. Let me stop I'm done now.



Jason Sole 33:15

Cuz I was like, I feel you. I feel your energy. It's like, we get to be in your head, in your heart for a little while because I'll say this just to add on, you know, to what to what you were saying. Like we always this target. You know what I mean? Like when we traveling we two tall black guys, man, like, no matter where we going, and it's like, we feel like we got that microscope on us. We got to move accordingly. We got to do everything perfect. And like you say, even in that, we still get smoked. It's like, when I think of Sandra Bland, it's like she should have been able to smoke a cigarette in her car. It's not illegal to do that but, because of her skin, like we still looked at as people who don't have rights like three fifths

like you think about the 13th amendment, it's still slavery, so they can gun us down and use criminal justice as the justification. Man that's why we jammin with Colin Kaepernick. We want everybody to know their rights man. Andre and I we laugh all the time, it's like, man, if we would have knew our rights at 15 we would have been like ay 4th amendment. Backup, man, you ain't searching nothing. You ain't doing nothing because we didn't have access to the information. It's like, I wish I grew up with Google. If I grew up with Google, I would have been telling cops all day, don't do that, you're not gonna pull my mom over no if you go about your business. I wish I knew that information now, so we have to learn our laws if you don't know your rights, you don't have any.

K

Kelly Sampson 34:35

I'm just going to say one thing on that point. I agree with you about how knowing is powerful, but just popping off of my co-host role and just sharing experiences. I do think it's interesting though, just the way that power works because I mean, I'm a lawyer, I passed the bar and I know my rights. But a police officer in DC yelled at me for giving a homeless man some money. And I, in that moment was so scared that even though I know my rights and even though I'm an attorney, I didn't say anything. Because it's the, knowing what I know about this country and knowing what I know about how we're treated, that sometimes even when you know your rights, if someone is abusing you, or abusing their authority, it can be so terrifying. And you can often just feel like, you know what, I just want to survive, and I just want to, I just don't want to have anything happen. So I appreciate what you all are doing to about humanizing and reminding people that we're human beings, and we have feelings, and when someone with authority and with power and with weapons is being aggressive towards you, it's terrifying, because you're a human being.

F

Farooq Al-Said 35:43

You know, we had our rallies and everything in Pittsburgh that kind of went national when, you know, for the situations that were occurring in Pittsburgh, just to our unique set of circumstances, right. And it's not to diminish or minimize any other city in the country but Pittsburgh, had, you know, from 2017 to 2019 been perfect storm for natural disasters, you know, every, every possible thing that could go wrong in the city happened in Pittsburgh in less than two calendar years. Literally everything from political corruption, police murder, public infrastructure crisis, you know, public health crisis, protests, everything right? There was a, there was a picture that was circulated around the internet of National Guard snipers on top of the roof of Target in East liberty in Pittsburgh, a neighborhood in Pittsburgh, that used to be black that's now one that has Google, Duolingo, a couple of Amazon, and a couple of very high profile billion dollar corporations. There were police snipers on top with helicopters in the sky, drones and everything like that. And then where

was this energy in the Capitol building when these people were openly planning this on Parlor, openingly planning this in real life in real time? Where was that energy? It's baffling to me that the safety of whiteness always gets projected in such a pristine way in, in an innocuous way. Right? I think the word is innocuous that we have to use here. Even when it comes time for police murdering black people, you never hear, you always hear the innocuous term officer involved shooting. Yeah, and they've got to know, the police killed him. Let's, let's use that language. I know, I know what happened. It's not an officer involved shooting. If you if you phrase that grammatically differently, then it gives a completely different context to the situation. And right now if we're looking at the situation, you look at how rappers are portrayed in the media, right? Or it's always if a rapper does something negative it's always rapper comma statement. But if he does something positive, if it even gets covered, it's businessman, mogul, entertainer, comma statement. Right? That's what's happening right now is you're, you're finding all these ways to nice up this logic and nice up all these talks and phrase these things very friendly for the consumers. Even as the things are happening, I was reporting on it live but, kind of, on my IG like I took a social media hiatus, but I had to come back for this shit. But it was like CNN even put protesters. We didn't even get that. I didn't even get protestor. Tucker Carlson called me a terrorist. I'm like, yo, I'm like, I'm like, come on. Like, you, even CNN. That's the thing though, the media has the narrative. And that's what comes with art and activism because we have to command our narrative, whether Humanize My Hoodie, whether it's an arts and education platform that's uplifting voices for people who can't control their narratives. That's what our job is and that's why art and activism is so bloody important. Because right now, right? It's not, I'm not chatting about censorship about Donald Trump or on Twitter, nothing like that. It's the fact that black voices get censored because our pain is only relatable when there's a dollar sign behind it. Like we said, they, they boycotted businesses, they shut down businesses. That's when you listen to black voices is when we stopped buying shit, you know what I mean, and that's, and that's why and that's why, again, the art, if we command our own art, our narrative echoes so much louder.

K

Kelly Sampson 39:07

So kind of one question, I'm glad you brought up changing the narrative. Because at Brady, obviously, we are working on all sorts of issues of gun violence, everything from mass shootings, to the sorts of community violence that we see every day, especially in black and brown communities, to domestic violence, to suicide. But a lot of times when people think about gun violence, they tend to think about one type of gun violence and that's, sort of, those big mass shootings that you see. And so I'm wondering as artists, if you could talk a little bit, if you could talk a little bit about what the role that art can play in changing that narrative, to really show how gun violence impacts people who look like

me and you.

F

Farooq Al-Said 39:52

I'm gonna ask Jason a question first. Brother Jason, when, when the judge was interrogating you about why you had a pistol, why you had the blick, did you say come walk where I walk? Come to my neighborhood, tell me how you feel. Are you gonna walk through my neighborhood without a gun, even though white people gonna be safe in our neighborhoods safer than you and me gonna be. If you look like me, would you not carry a gun?

J

Jason Sole 40:12

There wasn't no room look I'll say this, if I had on a suit rather than an orange jumpsuit, I might have been able to get that off. But only thing stood up in front of that judge was a tall black guy from Chicago and a confirmed gang member, nine millimeter. I played four years high school basketball. I never failed a high school class. Like I mean, I ran in track relays like I got, I had success. None of that made it into the courtroom. So if I had on a suit, and maybe had a high priced lawyer, I probably, probably could have got that off, but she don't want to hear nothing. She had a busy day, and it was just like, come on, man, go ahead into that system and make 12 cents an hour. That was all they saw, there wasn't no restorative justice. It wasn't no, he has potential. It was none of that. So for me, you know, I always got to like point out where it's like, you say mass shootings, and you say mass incarceration, but you only saying that you've taken out the humanity. Like with those mass shooters, man, we know who doing that stuff. Like, come on man, we know who doing the mass shootings, man, it's very particular. But at the same time, it's like, for us, we don't get that pause. Always say, a cop when they run up on a white person, there's a pause there. We never get that pause. We never get that space. We've seen that brother get tackled, because somebody thought that, you know, he had their phone only because he was black. We saw people get arrested at Starbucks. Because it's like, we can't do anything we can't, like you say, we can't open our door. We can't drive down the street. We can't do anything man, our skin. Like we, like we said after Trayvon was killed. You got to have the complexion for the connection. And a lot of times being white is right, and that's just how the stuff goes. So for us, yeah, we're controlling our narrative. And we're doing it in a strong way. We aren't playing respectability politics. When we see some of our people of color who rise up and go higher, we always say, hey, man, what you're giving back to the people who're coming home? Like who you really accountable to? Like, for real, we're not doing that. We're aren't going to let somebody, we aren't going to let nobody co-opt the movement, white, black, like, nobody's gonna do that. And for us, it's like, we're trying to work, do our work as well. So we go to therapy. We try to like lift up

transgender folks. And that was hard for me because all black lives matter. But it was like, the trans community. That was a tough one for me. I did my work, and I'm still doing the work. So, I'm not saying I've overcome my bias. But if we're telling other people to step up and change their hearts and their minds, I don't want to be a hypocrite. I want to do the work too.



Farooq Al-Said 42:53

He touched on so many things I be talking about all the time. But Kelly, I want to address your question. The narrative around black gun ownership and then just you know, shooting in general, I think we have to talk about Chicago. Chicago always be, is a media, the media loves running wild with Chicago as this gangster thugged-out city. But that didn't start with us. Al Capone was in Chicago. The Valentine's Day Massacre was in Chicago, right? We'd have to talk about, like, if you want to talk about mass shootings, you talk about the mob. But they, but that's romanticized. They get, they get Martin Scorsese films. They get epics. Right? Black culture doesn't get that, right? So that's a narrative we have to talk about right there. As it pertains to black people with guns, there's always that narrative around unarmed black man, right? What does that mean? Why do you toss that in there as something that needs to be a talking point? If we have the right to bear arms, why am I killed for having my firearm? Why am I being murdered for having possession of a weapon that's lawful? We have to talk about that. And also with the fact that police violence attributes to gun violence. They always statistically leave that out of how many people are killed by firearms a year, they never factor in the number that police kill. You never talk about that. The number shoots way up. Once you introduce, once you, once you take that whole heap of it out, right, if I'm talking about, okay, well, I'm gonna give you, you know, I'm gonna give you this piece of this pizza, but there's four pieces missing, you're gonna be upset. You might be kind of happy because you're saving calories, so that's the way you present it to the media. But when I tell you that there's four other pieces in there were extra cheese and they loaded it up, then it brings the calorie count up. And now we have to have a different conversation about what this pizza looks like. And that's how America is, isn't it? Like, you know, we have to talk about the narrative around guns and black people is never the same when you introduce a badge, once you introduce an economic class, and when you introduce a financial background.



JJ Janflone 44:48

Well and then age too because I think both of you just referenced what, what I think a lot of people have seen in the news recently with what is being called the Soho Karen thing which is a 14 year old boy got flying tackled by a 22 year old woman but



Farooq Al-Said 45:07

Trayvon was 14.



JJ Janflone 45:08

Yeah, well and Tamir Rice was 12. Yeah, he was baby.



Farooq Al-Said 45:14

I caught, I caught an attempted murder charge at 17 years old because it was in a Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. I was tried as an adult. Right? There were other people that caught charges that I was locked up with that was 17 that caught minor charges. In Allegheny County as it stands up until earlier this summer 100% of all youth tried as adults were black. I'm gonna say it again for the viewers. Up until this summer 100% of all youth in Allegheny County tried as adults were black. Even now the numbers like in the high 90s percent. And it stayed that way for years. That was a statistic that stood for years that was infamous in the city where, the county were the city of Pittsburgh rests. So you know, we talk about age, age isn't given to us, we're automatically viewed as men, as women, way above our time.



Jason Sole 46:03

That's the sad part, man, you know, I got two daughters. They're 13 and nine years old, and they already my baby, who's nine years old, she's already at that place where society isn't seeing her as that cute little girl no more. And that, that hurts me that people got to look at her because it's still my baby. Even my 13 year old, it's my baby. But the world don't see my 13 year old as a baby, you're not going to do that to us. You know, it's like Tamir Rice, they, they call him a young man. Like, it's like, you want to call me a young man, when I'm in front of the court, or you want to call me a young man when you're stopping me, but you don't want to call me a young man just on my day to day. That's why I'm like, I don't understand that, man. It's like the perception that people place on us. It's like, you was the ones who had slaves, like, how you trying to make it like, I get all of that stuff. But it's like, the way the media is structured and the way things are. It's like people going, it's like, we got to constantly say, Black Lives Matter. We got to constantly say every day, it's 365 for us, we don't have a day off. You know what I mean? Like, we know our phone can ring anytime. We got brothers, like I'm grateful you out here, bro, and you able to do your thing, man, we got people who went away for 99 years. And we're trying to bring him home. So either we get killed in the street, or you go into the system and like throw all these numbers on us. We've been under attack, I'm glad the world is

catching up and looking, you know, because like we've been saying this for a long time. I'm glad people are quote unquote, woke. But it shouldn't take people storming the Capitol. It shouldn't take like for me to be like putting this perfect, cuz it's like George, I'm gonna say this, George Floyd made the world look at what was happening. We thought we had that with Philando. We thought when Philando was killed, we created the global energy because people will send their art from England and Italy and all of that stuff like trying to stand in solidarity. But seeing George Floyd get lynched for eight minutes and 46 seconds, we thought that was enough. Why do you got to see people starting to Capitol to get even more woke? That's what I don't understand with all this education and all the programs and stuff, people only want to go so far, getting tired of that.



Farooq Al-Said 48:17

If I could, if I could just answer that, I know that was kind of rhetorical, but this is why bruv. It's because George Floyd didn't happen in the suburbs. That's why, you know, even though we were quarantined, and we were kind of forced to look at George Floyd. It was the perfect storm. Like if that didn't happen during the pandemic, it didn't happen. It's just as simple, it's just like, you know, it's, this is another day, you know, it's just another day in the system isn't it. But right now, this Capitol shit, right? This happened. People are losing jobs, but it's not just people losing jobs. It's, oh, that's my neighbor. That's my co worker. Now it becomes tangible, because it's happening and it's affecting people's lives because there was so many people in there, the spillage is so wide. It's like, oh, once this net is finally cast, you're gonna see the implications of white supremacy, not just for your average white supremacist, your garden variety, you know, hatermonger, but you see that there was a Capitol security guard, a Capitol Police officer who put a MAGA hat on, you've seen Capitol Police opening the doors, you've seen elected officials seconding, beckoning, echoing this insurrection. You've seen the president inciting this on Twitter, but he's been doing that. So I don't know why it took four years to get him off Twitter when this shit was nothing new. But you see how far this goes now, and that's why it's a little different, because it's now, it affects white people in a way that George Floyd didn't. White, George Floyd's death made white people uncomfortable. Right? That was, that's a full stop. George Floyd made white people uncomfortable. That's why he was killed. That's why we're talking about him because of his level of discomfort. The Capitol is now affecting your mom, your dad, your uncle, your brothers, your sisters, your cousins, your spouse, all of that. That's why this is going to be something different because now, it's going to have to white people got to fix this shit.



JJ Janflone 50:11

So I'm struggling here, because in the interest of like time and editing, we have to stop.

But I don't know how to make that happen because I feel like we're touching on a lot of really important stuff. And I also know that like, yeah, I know, I think we have to do like a part 10 I mean, I'm, everyone should go listen to your podcast for one, Farooq. And then I know,



Farooq Al-Said 50:31

This Week, This Week in White Supremacy.



JJ Janflone 50:33

Yeah, and I know, Jason, you have like, I spent a lot of time on your YouTube channel for Humanize My Hoodie today. So and I know, I'll drop plugs for everything. So people can go check out what all of you are doing there. But I guess, like final, final questions that I would have is, you know, where do you see this going? You know, what, where do you see sort of this intersection of the art that, that that you guys are doing and the world that we live in? You know, where do you see that going in? In 2021? Because it's day 12 of a new year, and a heck of a lot has happened. So yeah, so if you can where, where do you think we're going? And where do you think this ends?



Jason Sole 51:15

Um, I think Humanize My Hoodie is headed to a space where you're going to see just many more black youth running their own businesses, you know, it's like, if I would have had some structure at 15-16, I wouldn't have had to sell drugs. So I think Humanize My Hoodie, we're like a conduit to resources for our neighborhood. So I think we're gonna, you know, give back to our schools, you know, definitely my schools in Chicago. Andre and I, well, we do things there often, and it's like, if we can get our people to understand that, hey, I'm a human just like you man. Like, you know, we can figure this out, we can, you know, think through these traps and obstacles, then we can be able to liberate ourselves. So I think we'll bring many more leaders home from prison, and you'll see them, you know, carrying the work forward but I think we'll have survivors, as well as formerly incarcerated, working together in a capacity that you haven't seen. It seems like we are a good bridge between a number of worlds and we want to make impact while that continues to be the case.



Farooq Al-Said 52:19

You know, I don't really see there's an end in sight. I think that there's, I believe that we

have finally been placed in front of our workload. And with Biden and Harris, the first thing they have to do is be held accountable because they also ran on that law and order platform. They also ran on some big supercop vibes. So now is their, this is, you know, their show improvement moment. You know, I don't think there's ever been a presidency that you know, you have your work, so clear cut out in front of you. Even Obama coming in after Bush didn't look like this. So now you have an opportunity to have a president and vice president really live up to, you know, say, oh, this is what we have to do. So I think that 2021 to 2023, 2024, we see that there's, you know, work that's going to be done, we have to look at the trends, we have to look at classrooms, we have to look at a lot of these ways that these narratives are introduced and what, what form and what form and fashion and figure out what system, what system, we're going to be calibrating, what metric we're going to be holding these against now, you know, we know what the standards are. We know what exists. We know what the FBI says, we know what the Department of Justice, and the Department of Homeland Security says. White supremacy is the largest threat to American safety there is. Period that's a full stop. What are we doing to combat that? Are we going to keep acting like it doesn't happen? Are we just gonna keep buying records and you know, supporting black people in these superfluous ways where it's like, okay, we gave you some money, we gave you a little longer than Black History Month, we gave you some Instagram likes, please shut up. Nah, that's not how it is. Right. So now we have to look at what work white people are willing to do. That's what it comes down to. Like really, and truly, that's what it comes down to.

K

Kelly Sampson 53:53

That just leads me to one thing I wanted to kind of, say, to pick up on what you were saying about white white people are willing to do and the way the white supremacy works. And on our podcast, we have, just like with our organization, we have people from all walks of life as listeners, and some of them may have never heard, you know, two black men just speak freely without having to code switch, or try to center white people's comfort. And so to any listeners who are listening who fall into that category, I would challenge you to sort of reflect on your reactions and reflect on what you can do, reflect on the discomfort that you may feel, or the surprise that you may feel to be privy to a conversation that you have never been privy to. And that can be a good first step is to really just analyze that because I suspect that a lot of people may have never heard someone, you know, speak as freely as you have about what it has been like for you to do the work that you've been doing. So I just want to throw that out there to listeners. And just say like, a big thing that you can do is to sort of reflect on your own experiences and challenge yourself in that way too.



JJ Janflone 55:02

Thank you, Kelly, for that. And thank you Farooq and Jason, so much for coming on and sharing with us. And please, everyone take a look at all of the fantastic links that we have in the description of this episode too for other ways to challenge yourself or just to educate yourself more. I feel like I've learned so much, just being able to be in a virtual room with everyone today. So thank you all so so much. So, Kelly, I know I've talked to you about this, but I've been trying to learn a lot more about firearms, even during the pandemic.



Kelly Sampson 55:30

Yeah, I've been really impressed actually. You have flourished. For listeners who don't know, JJ has really been on that.



JJ Janflone 55:37

Thank you. It's been hard, you know, through virtual spaces, but I've been trying and I actually want to thank our listeners who are gun owners who have reached out with really good resources on places to get training and things to read. And, but one of the things that I've learned in this journey is how guns and bullets react to their environments. Say to like a lot of heat, like an oven of heat.



Kelly Sampson 56:03

You're laughing because you know. You know that I'm just like, okay, why would they be in an oven that is hot. Like what? What's happened? What's happened?



JJ Janflone 56:13

Yeah, it's not a visual medium, but I know what Kelly's face looks like. Yeah, it takes us to this week's Unbelievable But which is from, which is from a while ago, but an 18 year old in St. Petersburg, Florida. She was trying to make waffles. Who doesn't love waffles? Very wholesome, right?



Kelly Sampson 56:29

I certainly do.



JJ Janflone 56:30

Right? Everyone loves a homemade waffle, but unfortunately, one of her housemates had placed a magazine from a 45 caliber Glock 21 in her oven, because, and this is according to my internet research, an oven is where some people choose to actually store their guns.



Kelly Sampson 56:44

I just, why? Like, I know that they're that, the kind of joke that people will be like, oh, I don't cook, so I store my shoes in my oven or something. But that's a lot different than, I live in a home with someone else who does obviously cook. And I'm just gonna put a gun in there? And even if you didn't cook, like with all the things we know about safe storage, an oven is not safe storage. Why?



JJ Janflone 57:14

Exactly. And you know, I grew up, my mom always stored our pots and pans and stuff in our oven. And so you always had to like take them out. But I remember even being like habituated to remove things from the oven every time before you used it, I would forget all the time, because you just forget.



Kelly Sampson 57:29

I just got so upset about it because I'm like and also if you live in a household with someone else, it's just common courtesy. Like putting the gun aside, it's just common courtesy to say I put this thing in the oven, but especially if it's a gun, so it seems like there might be more to this story. I don't know it's just such an odd thing to do and not tell someone.



JJ Janflone 57:50

You don't leave your dirty dishes in the sink. You don't use the last little bit of toilet paper without replacing it, and you don't store your guns unsafely. Because what happened here is that the heat actually set off the rounds and set off the bullets which then riddled the stove with bullet holes, exploded in the stove. Now luckily, the young woman is okay. She only suffered minor injuries, but the stove is a loss.



Kelly Sampson 58:12

I mean, fortunately, it's just the stove, but my goodness.



JJ Janflone 58:18

So this week was all about the bills. First, we have the US House of Representatives, which passed HR 1, which now has to move on to the US Senate. What HR 1 does is present a package of proven reforms that you know, would do among other things, it would put ordinary Americans ahead of big money donors, expand and protect voting rights and access to the ballot, hold elected officials accountable, and even more. There's a huge list. And these reforms, I think, go really to the core of our ability to create a representative democracy and address America's gun violence epidemic.



Kelly Sampson 58:48

Yes, 100%. And we also had HR 8 and HR 1446, two bills that were introduced in the House of Representatives to expand and strengthen the Brady background check system and close existing loopholes that allow individuals who should not possess a firearm to purchase one. Those at the time of us recording have not yet gone to a vote, but we have hope. In particular, these bills are so important following a year of record breaking gun sales and exacerbated gun violence amidst a global pandemic.



JJ Janflone 59:21

Hey, want to share with the podcast? Listeners can now get in touch with us here at Red, Blue, and Brady via phone or text message. Simply call or text us at 480-744-3452 with your thoughts, questions, concerns, ideas, whatever. Kelly and I are standing by.



Kelly Sampson 59:36

Thanks for listening. As always, Brady's life saving work in Congress, the courts, and communities across the country is made possible thanks to you. For more information on Brady or how to get involved in the fight against gun violence, please like and subscribe to the podcast. Get in touch with us at [Bradyunited.org](https://bradyunited.org) or on social at [Bradybuzz](https://bradybuzz.com). Be brave and remember, take action, not sides.