



BURST YOUR BUBBLE PODCAST

EP41 - HARRY BELAFONTE FRAMES 1968

1968 HAS ALWAYS BEEN FAMOUSLY KNOWN AS "TURBULENT TIMES" FULL OF SOCIAL UNREST - WHAT WITH THE VIETNAM WAR, RACIAL INEQUALITY, AND NUMEROUS ASSASSINATIONS. IT'S A MESSY POINT IN AMERICAN HISTORY, AND NO ONE TIES ALL OF THESE ASPECTS TOGETHER IN ONE SURPRISINGLY NEAT PACKAGE AS WELL AS HARRY BELAFONTE.

I'M MORGAN JAFFE AND THIS IS BURST YOUR BUBBLE.

HARRY BELAFONTE IS PROBABLY BEST WELL KNOWN AS THE KING OF CALYPSO AND THE BANANA BOAT SONG. HE'S ALSO AN ACTOR AND AN ACTIVIST. BUT FROM FEBRUARY 5TH, 1968¹ TO FEBRUARY 9TH, 1968, BELAFONTE WAS THE GUEST HOST FOR THE TONIGHT SHOW WITH JOHNNY CARSON.²

BELAFONTE MAY HAVE ONLY BEEN THE HOST FOR A WEEK, BUT WHAT A WEEK IT WAS! HIS GUESTS WERE VARIED - TO SAY THE LEAST. THERE WAS DIONNE WARWICK - WHO AT THE TIME WAS KNOWN AS THE SINGER FOR "I SAY A LITTLE PRAYER" - MADE FAMOUS ALONG WITH THE FILM ADAPTATION OF *THE VALLEY OF THE DOLLS*; THERE WAS ZERO MOSTEL, AN ACTOR AND COMEDIAN WHO HAD JUST STARRED IN *THE PRODUCERS*; AMERICAN POET LAUREATE MARIANNE MOORE; METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART DIRECTOR THOMAS HOVING; AND KEN WHITE - A WORLD WATER SKIING CHAMPION.

BUT SOME OF HIS GUESTS - WELL THEY WERE CELEBRITIES, BUT ALSO POLITICIANS AND ACTIVISTS WHO WERE USING THEIR STARDOM FOR SOCIAL GOOD.

¹The Tonight Show, February 5th, 1968. (n.d.). Retrieved September 21, 2018, from https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1433482/?ref_=tt_ep_nx

² Walsh, J. (2017, February 23). 49 Years Ago, Harry Belafonte Hosted the Tonight Show-and It Was Amazing. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from <https://www.thenation.com/article/49-years-ago-harry-belafonte-hosted-the-tonight-show-and-it-was-amazing/>



BURST YOUR BUBBLE PODCAST

AS BELAFONTE SAID YEARS LATER, "ALL OF THESE PEOPLE CAME WITH A SOCIAL POINT OF VIEW. THAT WAS MY GOAL: TO ARTICULATE A PARTICULAR POINT OF VIEW. WE WERE AT THE PEAK OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL STRUGGLE IN THE COUNTRY. AMERICA WAS AWAKENED. THE VIEWERSHIP WAS ASTOUNDING."³

THE 1960S, AND IN PARTICULAR 1968, WERE IN A LOT OF WAYS OVERWHELMINGLY POLITICAL. NOT A BAD THING - JUST A TRUTH. MEDIA - WHETHER IT WAS THE NEWS OR A TV SHOW OR A SONG OR A MOVIE - WAS A REACTION TO THE TURMOIL THAT WAS GOING ON AT THE TIME. AND NOTHING OVERSHADOWED THE 1960S OR 1968 MORE THAN THE VIETNAM WAR.

BY THE END OF 1967, PRESIDENT JOHNSON HAD BEEN TRYING HIS BEST TO CONVINCE THE AMERICAN PUBLIC THAT THE END OF THE VIETNAM WAR WAS IN SIGHT, AND THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS WINNING.

ON NOVEMBER 19TH, 1967, GENERAL WILLIAM WESTMORELAND, WHO COMMANDED AMERICAN FORCES DURING THE VIETNAM WAR FROM 1964 TO 1968, TOLD *MEET THE PRESS* THAT THE U.S. COULD WIN THE WAR WITHIN TWO YEARS AND THEN TOLD THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB ON NOVEMBER 21ST THAT "THE END BEGINS TO COME INTO VIEW."⁴

ON JANUARY 17TH, 1968, PRESIDENT JOHNSON GAVE HIS STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS.

³Walsh, J. (2017, February 23). 49 Years Ago, Harry Belafonte Hosted the Tonight Show-and It Was Amazing. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from <https://www.thenation.com/article/49-years-ago-harry-belafonte-hosted-the-tonight-show-and-it-was-amazing/>

⁴Zelizer, J. E. (2018, January 16). How the Tet Offensive Undermined American Faith in Government. Retrieved September 23, 2018, from <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/01/how-the-tet-offensive-undermined-american-faith-in-government/550010/>



BURST YOUR BUBBLE PODCAST

CLIP: THE ENEMY CONTINUES TO POUR MEN AND MATERIAL ACROSS FRONTIERS AND INTO BATTLE, DESPITE HIS CONTINUOUS HEAVY LOSSES. HE CONTINUES TO HOPE THAT AMERICANS WILL TO PERSEVERE CAN BE BROKEN. WELL, HE IS WRONG. AMERICA WILL PERSEVERE. AND OUR PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE WILL MATCH OUR POWER. AGGRESSION WILL NEVER PREVAIL.⁵

YOU KNOW THE MORE HE SAYS PERSEVERE, THE LESS I BELIEVE HIM.

A FEW WEEKS LATER, THERE WAS THE TET OFFENSIVE.

TET IS THE MOST IMPORTANT HOLIDAY ON THE VIETNAMESE CALENDAR. IN PREVIOUS YEARS, THE HOLIDAY HAD BEEN THE TIME FOR AN INFORMAL TRUCE BETWEEN SOUTH VIETNAM AND NORTH VIETNAM AND THE VIET CONG.⁶ BUT NOT IN 1968.

ON JANUARY 30TH, NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS ATTACKED U.S. POSITIONS THROUGHOUT VIETNAM. THE ATTACKS WERE QUITE A SURPRISE FOR THE AMERICAN AND SOUTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS, AND THEY TEMPORARILY LOST CONTROL OVER SEVERAL CITIES. BUT IN THE LONG RUN, THEY REGAINED CONTROL OVER THOSE CITIES AND CAUSED HEAVY CASUALTIES ON THE NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES. BUT MANY STILL CONSIDER THE TET OFFENSIVE THE TURNING POINT IN THE VIETNAM WAR.

THE PROBLEM WAS THAT THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HAD BEEN LIED TO ALL ALONG. THAT THEY HAD BEEN TOLD THAT AMERICA WAS "WINNING" IN VIETNAM, OR AT LEAST AS MUCH AS ANYONE CAN BE WINNING AT SOMETHING AS ATROCIOUS AS WAR. THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE WERE ESSENTIALLY ALREADY DEFEATED.

⁵ Lyndon B. Johnson: Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union. - January 17, 1968. (n.d.). Retrieved September 23, 2018, from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=28738>

⁶Tet Offensive. (2009, October 29). Retrieved September 23, 2018, from <https://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war/tet-offensive>



BURST YOUR BUBBLE PODCAST

THAT THEY COULD NEVER LAUNCH ANY KIND OF ATTACK AS THE ONE THEY DID DURING THE TET OFFENSIVE.

BUT THEN THERE WAS THE MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE TET OFFENSIVE. ALL OF A SUDDEN NEWS OUTLETS HAD ACCESS TO IMAGES AND VIDEO OF THE CONFLICT ITSELF - THE BATTLES HAD MOVED FROM IMAGES OF HELICOPTERS AND SMOKE FILLED JUNGLES TO THE CITIES.⁷ THE LINE OF FIRE WAS SUDDENLY IN THE LINE OF CAMERAS.⁸

SHORTLY AFTER THE TET OFFENSIVE, WESTMORELAND REQUESTED MORE THAN 200,000 NEW TROOPS, ESCALATING THE VIETNAM WAR EVEN MORE.⁹ IT BECAME CLEAR TO THE AMERICAN PUBLIC: THE VIETNAM WAR WAS FAR FROM OVER.

BY FEBRUARY OF 1968, THE DEATH TOLL OF U.S. TROOPS IN VIETNAM HAD RISEN TO MORE THAN 500 SOLDIERS PER WEEK, AND AS THAT NUMBER ROSE, PUBLIC SUPPORT DECLINED.¹⁰

I MEAN, THERE HAD ALREADY BEEN OPPOSITION TO THE VIETNAM WAR AROUND THE COUNTRY, FROM EVERYDAY AMERICANS JOINING PROTESTS TO CELEBRITIES TAKING A STAND. I'M NOT TRYING TO SAY THAT ALL OF A SUDDEN PUBLIC

⁷Zelizer, J. E. (2018, January 16). How the Tet Offensive Undermined American Faith in Government. Retrieved September 23, 2018, from <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/01/how-the-tet-offensive-undermined-american-faith-in-government/550010/>

⁸Zelizer, J. E. (2018, January 16). How the Tet Offensive Undermined American Faith in Government. Retrieved September 23, 2018, from <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/01/how-the-tet-offensive-undermined-american-faith-in-government/550010/>

⁹Tet Offensive. (2009, October 29). Retrieved September 23, 2018, from <https://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war/tet-offensive>

¹⁰Britannica, T. E. (n.d.). Tet Offensive. Retrieved September 23, 2018, from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Tet-Offensive>



BURST YOUR BUBBLE PODCAST

SUPPORT ENDED WHEN THE TET OFFENSIVE HAPPENED. THAT WAS NOTHING NEW.

ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE TAKING A STAND WAS TOM AND DICK SMOTHERS, ALSO KNOWN AS THE SMOTHERS BROTHERS, ONE OF BELAFONTE'S FIRST GUESTS ON THE TONIGHT SHOW.

STARTING IN 1967 THEIR VARIETY SHOW, *THE SMOTHERS BROTHERS COMEDY HOUR*, STARTED AIRING ON CBS. ON THEIR NETWORK PROGRAM WITH SOME 30 MILLION VIEWERS, TOM AND DICK SMOTHERS CRITICIZED THE WAR IN VIETNAM, PRESIDENT JOHNSON AND HIS ADMINISTRATION, OTHER POLITICS AND POLITICIANS, AND WERE GENERALLY A COUNTERCULTURE RESISTANCE.¹¹ CBS REGULARLY CENSORED, AND EVENTUALLY CANCELLED, THEIR VARIETY SHOW BECAUSE OF THIS.¹²

CLIP: THE SMOTHERS BROTHERS COMEDY HOUR

AND SO, AS BELAFONTE'S GUESTS, TOM SMOTHERS JOKED, "I WANT TO THANK CBS FOR ALLOWING US TO COME ON NBC AND DO SOME OF OUR DISTASTEFUL MATERIAL."¹³

¹¹Bianculli, D. (2017, February 10). 50 Years Later, The Biting Satire Of The Smothers Brothers Still Resonates. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from <https://www.npr.org/2017/02/10/514104444/50-years-later-the-biting-satire-of-the-smothers-brothers-still-resonates>

¹²Bianculli, D. (2017, February 04). The Smothers Brothers: Laughing at Hard Truths. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/03/opinion/the-smothers-brothers-laughing-at-hard-truths.html>

¹³Walsh, J. (2017, February 23). 49 Years Ago, Harry Belafonte Hosted the Tonight Show-and It Was Amazing. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from <https://www.thenation.com/article/49-years-ago-harry-belafonte-hosted-the-tonight-show-and-it-was-amazing/>



BURST YOUR BUBBLE PODCAST

THE SAME NIGHT THE SMOTHERS BROTHERS WERE GUESTS, ROBERT F. KENNEDY WAS ALSO A GUEST.¹⁴

DAYS LATER, ON FEBRUARY 8TH, KENNEDY SPOKE AT A BOOK SIGNING, SAYING, "IT IS TIME FOR THE TRUTH - TIME TO DROP THE MASK OF OFFICIAL ILLUSION," WHICH, HE POINTED OUT, HAD ALREADY STARTED BECAUSE OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC BEING ABLE TO SEE THE TRUTH BEHIND THE TET OFFENSIVE.¹⁵ WEEKS LATER HE WOULD ANNOUNCE HIS RUN FOR PRESIDENT. MONTHS LATER, HE WOULD BE ASSASSINATED. BUT AS HE SAT ACROSS FROM HARRY BELAFONTE, ROBERT KENNEDY TALKED ABOUT - WHETHER HE EXPLICITLY SAYS IT OR NOT - THE ESSENTIAL END OF THE GREAT SOCIETY.

TRUTH BE TOLD, A LOT OF THE EFFORTS FOR THE GREAT SOCIETY FOCUSING ON POVERTY, DISPARITY, AND EQUITY HAD ALREADY ENDED, MOSTLY BECAUSE OF WHITE BACKLASH AND ALL OF THE MONEY BEING SPENT ON THE VIETNAM WAR.¹⁶

AT ONE POINT, KENNEDY SAYS TO BELAFONTE, AND TO THE MILLIONS WATCHING AT HOME, "I'VE SEEN CHILDREN WHO ARE STARVING TO DEATH IN THE UNITED STATES. NOT 'I READ ABOUT CHILDREN WHO ARE STARVING TO DEATH.' I'VE SEEN CHILDREN WHO ARE STARVING TO DEATH...WE HAVE 70

¹⁴The Tonight Show, February 5th, 1968. (n.d.). Retrieved September 21, 2018, from https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1433482/?ref_=tt_ep_nx

¹⁵U. (1970, January 01). Kennedy urges compromise in Vietnam. Retrieved September 23, 2018, from <https://www.upi.com/Archives/1968/02/08/Kennedy-urges-compromise-in-Vietnam/3841557748231/>

¹⁶Walsh, J. (2017, February 23). 49 Years Ago, Harry Belafonte Hosted the Tonight Show-and It Was Amazing. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from <https://www.thenation.com/article/49-years-ago-harry-belafonte-hosted-the-tonight-show-and-it-was-amazing/>



BURST YOUR BUBBLE PODCAST

MILLION TELEVISION SETS...BUT WE HAVE A THIRD OF OUR CHILDREN LIVING AT OR UNDER THE POVERTY LEVEL IN THIS COUNTRY.¹⁷

TAKING A STAND AGAINST THE VIETNAM WAR COULD COME IN MANY FORMS. THE WAR HAD A CHAIN REACTION, AFTER ALL. AGAIN, LIKE HOW MONEY WAS TAKEN AWAY FROM OTHER SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO GO TO THE VIETNAM WAR. OR HOW BLACK AMERICANS WERE DISPROPORTIONATELY DRAFTED INTO THE VIETNAM WAR.¹⁸ OR HOW THE AMERICAN INDIAN MOVEMENT, OR AIM, WAS FOUNDED IN 1968 TO HELP NATIVES IN URBAN AREAS WHO HAD BEEN DISPLACED BY GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS AND WERE FIGHTING FOR ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE AND LEGAL RIGHTS.

AND TO SHOW THAT SPECTRUM, ANOTHER ONE OF BELAFONTE'S GUESTS WAS THE SINGER AND ACTIVIST BUFFY SAINTE-MARIE. KNOWN FOR HER ANTIWAR STANCE AND NATIVE RIGHTS ACTIVISM, SAINTE-MARIE HADN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET ON NETWORK SHOWS - INCLUDING THE TONIGHT SHOW WITH JOHNNY CARSON. SHE WAS CONSTANTLY TOLD THAT SHE COULDN'T BE A GUEST, AND IF SHE WAS ALLOWED ON A NETWORK SHOW SHE WAS TOLD THAT COULDN'T SING HER PROTEST SONGS.¹⁹ BUT BELAFONTE INVITED HER ON, TELLING HER, "SING

¹⁷Walsh, J. (2017, February 23). 49 Years Ago, Harry Belafonte Hosted the Tonight Show-and It Was Amazing. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from <https://www.thenation.com/article/49-years-ago-harry-belafonte-hosted-the-tonight-show-and-it-was-amazing/>

¹⁸Goodwin, G. F. (2017, July 18). Black and White in Vietnam. Retrieved September 23, 2018, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/18/opinion/racism-vietnam-war.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=7B16192FA8995A49E4DB3105ED83E5B2&gwt=pay&assetType=opinion>

¹⁹Walsh, J. (2017, February 23). 49 Years Ago, Harry Belafonte Hosted the Tonight Show-and It Was Amazing. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from <https://www.thenation.com/article/49-years-ago-harry-belafonte-hosted-the-tonight-show-and-it-was-amazing/>



BURST YOUR BUBBLE PODCAST

WHATEVER YOU WANT.”²⁰ SHE SANG “NOW THAT THE BUFFALO’S GONE,” WHICH FOCUSES ON NATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS AND LAND RIGHTS AND TREATIES AND WAR.

CLIP: BUFFY SAINTE-MARIE SINGING A PART OF “NOW THAT THE BUFFALO’S GONE.”

BUFFY SAINTE MARIE WASN’T THE ONLY GUEST THAT BELAFONTE GAVE A SPACE AND VOICE TO THAT WOULDN’T HAVE NORMALLY GOTTEN THE CHANCE. FOR EXAMPLE, 15 OF THE 25 GUESTS THAT BELAFONTE HAD ON THAT WEEK WERE BLACK.²¹

BILL COSBY WAS ONE OF THOSE GUESTS. I ALWAYS STRUGGLE WITH THE CONCEPT OF SEPARATING THE ARTIST FROM THE ART - ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO BILL COSBY. BUT I FELT THE NEED TO TALK ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE HE HAD IN 1968.

WHEN *I SPY* PREMIERED IT WAS THE FIRST TV DRAMA TO FEATURE A BLACK ACTOR IN A LEADING ROLE, AND COSBY WON THREE CONSECUTIVE EMMYS IN 1966, 1967, AND 1968 FOR PLAYING ALEXANDER SCOTT ON THE SHOW.²² HE WAS THE FIRST BLACK ACTOR TO WIN AN EMMY IN 1966, AND IN HIS 1968 EMMY ACCEPTANCE SPEECH HE SAID:

²⁰Walsh, J. (2017, February 23). 49 Years Ago, Harry Belafonte Hosted the Tonight Show-and It Was Amazing. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from <https://www.thenation.com/article/49-years-ago-harry-belafonte-hosted-the-tonight-show-and-it-was-amazing/>

²¹Walsh, J. (2017, February 23). 49 Years Ago, Harry Belafonte Hosted the Tonight Show-and It Was Amazing. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from <https://www.thenation.com/article/49-years-ago-harry-belafonte-hosted-the-tonight-show-and-it-was-amazing/>

²²Timeline: Bill Cosby's life. (2014, November 22). Retrieved September 21, 2018, from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/lifestyle/bill-cosby-timeline/>



BURST YOUR BUBBLE PODCAST

CLIP: "WE NEED MORE PEOPLE IN THIS INDUSTRY...TO LET IT BE KNOWN TO THE BIGOTS AND THE RACISTS THAT THEY DON'T COUNT."

AND IN JULY 1968, COSBY NARRATED *BLACK HISTORY: LOST, STOLEN, OR STRAYED*, A PBS DOCUMENTARY THAT FOCUSED ON REPRESENTATIONS OF BLACKS IN POP CULTURE.

CLIP: INTRO OF THE PBS DOCUMENTARY

AGAIN I DON'T WANT TO IGNORE WHAT BILL COSBY HAS DONE AND HOW PROBLEMATIC HE IS, BUT THESE ARE MILESTONES IN BLACK REPRESENTATION IN POP CULTURE.

DAHANN CARROLL WAS ALSO ONE OF BELAFONTE'S GUESTS. SHE WAS THE STAR OF THE TV SHOW, *JULIA*, WHICH PREMIERED IN 1968 AND WAS, AS MANY PEOPLE ARGUE, ONE OF THE FIRST SERIES ON TELEVISION TO STAR A BLACK WOMAN IN A NON STEREOTYPED ROLE.

CLIP: JULIA CALLING FOR A JOB.

AND YOU COULD SEE CHANGES OF RACE AND REPRESENTATION IN THE MEDIA THROUGH MIXED RACE RELATIONSHIPS AS WELL.

ANOTHER NIGHT, BELAFONTE WELCOMED GUEST SIDNEY POITIER. ONE OF HIS MOST WELL KNOWN ROLES IS IN THE FILM *GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER*, WHICH WAS FIRST RELEASED IN THEATRES ON JANUARY 1ST, 1968, AND TELLS THE STORY OF A WHITE WOMAN WHO BRINGS HER BLACK FIANCE HOME TO MEET HER PARENTS.

CLIP: THE COULE TELLING THE (WHITE) GIRL'S PARENTS THEY ARE IN LOVE.

INTERRACIAL MARRIAGE HAD ONLY BECAME LEGAL ON JUNE 12TH, 1967. THAT WAS SIX MONTHS BEFORE THE FILM WAS RELEASED, WHEN ANTI-



BURST YOUR BUBBLE PODCAST

MISCEGENATION LAWS WERE STRUCK DOWN BY THE SUPREME COURT IN *LOVING V. VIRGINIA*.

CLIP: PROCEEDINGS FROM *LOVING V. VIRGINIA*

BEING ABLE TO SEE INTERRACIAL RELATIONSHIPS IN EVERYDAY LIFE, LET ALONE IN MEDIA, WAS NEW - BUT BELAFONTE BROUGHT THE DISCUSSION INTO HOMES THROUGHOUT AMERICA - NOT ONLY BY HAVING SIDNEY POITIER ON THE TONIGHT SHOW, BUT BY ALSO SHOWING HOME MOVIES OF HIS WIFE, WHO WAS WHITE, AND THEIR MIXED RACE CHILDREN.²³

AND WHILE THEY TALKED ON THE SHOW, BELAFONTE AND POITIER TALKED ABOUT THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT. LIKE HOW THEY WENT TO MISSISSIPPI DURING THE 1964 FREEDOM SUMMER AFTER JAMES CHANEY, ANDREW GOODMAN, AND MICHAEL SCHWERNER HAD BEEN KILLED. THE TWO HAD FLOWN DOWN WITH \$70,000 STUFFED IN A BLACK DOCTOR'S BAG. THEY BROUGHT TO CONTINUE TO FUND THE FREEDOM SUMMER VOLUNTEERS INTO THE FALL. AT ONE POINT THE KKK FOUND THEM AND CHASED THEM FOR MILES, FIRING GUNS AT THEM ALL THE WHILE.^{24 25}

THIS WASN'T THE ONLY TIME BELAFONTE WOULD HELP FUND THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT. HE BANKROLLED VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVES, THE MARCH ON

²³Walsh, J. (2017, February 23). 49 Years Ago, Harry Belafonte Hosted the Tonight Show-and It Was Amazing. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from <https://www.thenation.com/article/49-years-ago-harry-belafonte-hosted-the-tonight-show-and-it-was-amazing/>

²⁴Walsh, J. (2017, February 23). 49 Years Ago, Harry Belafonte Hosted the Tonight Show-and It Was Amazing. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from <https://www.thenation.com/article/49-years-ago-harry-belafonte-hosted-the-tonight-show-and-it-was-amazing/>

²⁵Blow, C. M. (2017, February 20). Harry and Sidney: Soul Brothers. Retrieved September 21, 2018, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/20/opinion/harry-and-sidney-soul-brothers.html>



BURST YOUR BUBBLE PODCAST

WASHINGTON FOR JOBS AND FREEDOM, AND BAILED MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. OUT OF PRISON.²⁶

BELAFONTE AND KING WERE CLOSE FRIENDS, AND KING WAS ALSO A GUEST WITH BELAFONTE ON THE TONIGHT SHOW.²⁷

IN FACT, THE NIGHT BEFORE BELAFONTE STARTED HIS GUEST HOSTING OF THE TONIGHT SHOW, KING PREACHED HIS DRUM MAJOR INSTINCT SERMON.²⁸

KING WAS ONE OF BELAFONTE'S GUESTS ON FEBRUARY 8TH, 1968, RIGHT AS KING AND THE SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE WERE IN THE MIDDLE OF PLANNING THE POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN.

AS I SAID EARLIER, THE GREAT SOCIETY HAD COME TO AN END. WHILE MEDICARE, HEAD START, AND TITLE I EDUCATION FUNDING STAYED, MANY OF THE PROGRAMS THAT DEALT WITH SYSTEMIC POVERTY, RACISM, AND WERE YOUTH CENTERED WERE ALREADY ENDING.²⁹

²⁶Petrusich, A. (2017, June 19). Harry Belafonte and the Social Power of Song. Retrieved September 23, 2018, from <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/harry-belafonte-and-the-social-power-of-song>

²⁷Walsh, J. (2017, February 23). 49 Years Ago, Harry Belafonte Hosted the Tonight Show-and It Was Amazing. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from <https://www.thenation.com/article/49-years-ago-harry-belafonte-hosted-the-tonight-show-and-it-was-amazing/>

²⁸Walsh, J. (2017, February 23). 49 Years Ago, Harry Belafonte Hosted the Tonight Show-and It Was Amazing. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from <https://www.thenation.com/article/49-years-ago-harry-belafonte-hosted-the-tonight-show-and-it-was-amazing/>

²⁹Walsh, J. (2017, February 23). 49 Years Ago, Harry Belafonte Hosted the Tonight Show-and It Was Amazing. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from <https://www.thenation.com/article/49-years-ago-harry-belafonte-hosted-the-tonight-show-and-it-was-amazing/>



BURST YOUR BUBBLE PODCAST

AND WHILE KING OPENED WITH A JOKE, MUCH LIKE ANY OTHER GUEST WOULD HAVE ON THE TONIGHT SHOW, BELAFONTE TURNED SERIOUS QUICKLY. AT ONE POINT, BELAFONTE ASKED, "DR. KING, DO YOU FEAR FOR YOUR LIFE?" AND KING'S RESPONSE?:

"NOT REALLY. WE HAVE LIVED WITH THIS A NUMBER OF YEARS NOW. IF I MOVED AROUND CONCERNED ABOUT THIS, IT WOULD COMPLETELY IMMOBILIZE ME AND I COULDN'T FUNCTION. AND SO I'VE COME TO THE POINT WHERE I TAKE THIS WHOLE MATTER PHILOSOPHICALLY. I BELIEVE IN MY SOUL THAT UNMERITED SUFFERING IS REDEMPTIVE, AND IF SOMETHING HAPPENED TO ME, MAYBE SOMETHING ELSE WOULD COME OF IT. THE OTHER THING IS THAT NOW, WITH WHAT IS AHEAD AND WHAT I HAVE TO DO, I'M MORE CONCERNED ABOUT THE QUALITY OF MY LIFE THAN THE QUANTITY OF MY LIFE. IN OTHER WORDS, I'M MORE CONCERNED ABOUT DOING A GOOD JOB AND SERVING G-D. ULTIMATELY, IT ISN'T SO IMPORTANT HOW LONG YOU LIVE - IT'S HOW WELL YOU LIVE."³⁰

THAT WAS FROM KING JUST MONTHS BEFORE HE WAS ASSASSINATED.³¹ BELAFONTE ASKED HIM ABOUT HIS PLANS FOR THE SUMMER, AND KING WOULDN'T EVEN MAKE IT THROUGH THE SPRING.

THERE WE HAVE IT. A SNAPSHOT OF 1968, ALL FROM THE DIFFERENT GUESTS THAT HARRY BELAFONTE HAD ON FROM FEBRUARY OF THAT YEAR AS HE GUEST HOSTED *THE TONIGHT SHOW* FOR JOHNNY CARSON.

ON THE LAST NIGHT BELAFONTE HOSTED *THE TONIGHT SHOW* THIS IS HOW HE SAID GOODBYE TO THE AUDIENCE:

³⁰Walsh, J. (2017, February 23). 49 Years Ago, Harry Belafonte Hosted the Tonight Show-and It Was Amazing. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from <https://www.thenation.com/article/49-years-ago-harry-belafonte-hosted-the-tonight-show-and-it-was-amazing/>

³¹Walsh, J. (2017, February 23). 49 Years Ago, Harry Belafonte Hosted the Tonight Show-and It Was Amazing. Retrieved September 19, 2018, from <https://www.thenation.com/article/49-years-ago-harry-belafonte-hosted-the-tonight-show-and-it-was-amazing/>



BURST YOUR BUBBLE PODCAST

"I AM FULLY AWARE OF HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE BEEN OFFENDED BY THE POLITICS AIRED ON THIS SHOW THIS WEEK. NONE OF IT WAS MEANT TO OFFEND. BUT ALL OF THIS WAS CONSCIOUSLY ARRANGED BY ME TO GIVE YOU ALL A TASTE OF WHAT'S BEING SAID IN ROOMS THAT MANY OF YOU MAY NOT KNOW OR ENTER. THANK YOU FOR LISTENING."³²

THIS EPISODE OF THE PODCAST ISN'T REALLY ABOUT ME BURSTING YOUR BUBBLE, BUT BELAFONTE BURSTING THE BUBBLE OF THE TONIGHT SHOW AUDIENCE. THE GUESTS HE HAD ON THAT WEEK FOCUSED ON THE VIETNAM WAR, POVERTY, NATIVE RIGHTS, CIVIL RIGHTS, RACE, AND INTERRACIAL RELATIONSHIPS.

THE TONIGHT SHOW AUDIENCE MIGHT HAVE SEEN ALL OF THESE TOPICS IN THE MEDIA - READ THE HEADLINES ABOUT VIETNAM TROOPS AND TAX DOLLARS AND DEATH COUNTS, LISTENED TO ARETHA FRANKLIN ON THE RADIO, SEEN *THE MOD SQUAD* ON THEIR TV SETS, OR WATCHED *PLANET OF THE APES* IN MOVIE THEATRES. BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THOSE AUDIENCES WOULD HAVE HAD CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THOSE ISSUES WITH THEIR FAMILY AT THEIR KITCHEN TABLES, PARENTS TALKING TO THEIR CHILDREN ABOUT THE ANTIWAR MOVEMENT AND VIETNAM. THAT DOESN'T MEAN KIDS WOULD HAVE BEEN PASSING NOTES TO EACH ON FOLDED PIECES OF PAPER IN THEIR CLASSROOMS WHILE THEIR TEACHERS BACK WERE TURNED. "HEY! DID YOU HEAR? LBJ'S GREAT SOCIETY FUNDING IS GETTING CUT." THAT DOESN'T MEAN THE TALKING HEADS ON THE TV WOULD HAVE SAID NOW MAKE SURE TO ANALYZE YOUR MEDIA. EVALUATE THE MESSAGES. ASK QUESTIONS.

BUT MAYBE THEY SHOULD HAVE.

I'M MORGAN JAFFE AND THAT WAS BURST YOUR BUBBLE

³²Belafonte, H., & Shnayerson, M. (2012). *My song: A memoir of art, race, and defiance*. New York: Vintage Books.
Page 325



BURST YOUR BUBBLE PODCAST

THANK YOU TO JEREMY FERRIS, WHO DOES ALL OF THE AMAZING EPISODE ART FOR THE SHOW. YOU CAN SEE ALL OF THE WORK HE HAS DONE OVER AT BURSTYOURBUBBLEPODCAST.COM.

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW ALL OF THE FOOTNOTES FOR TODAY'S EPISODE OR SEE THE FULL TRANSCRIPTION CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE, AGAIN, BURSTYOURBUBBLEPODCAST.COM. I'M IN THE PROCESS OF PUTTING ALL OF THE OLD EPISODES UP AS WELL, SO THANKS FOR YOUR PATIENCE.

ALSO THANKS TO LINGUISTATHEAT FOR LEAVING A REVIEW ON APPLE PODCASTS. LINGUISTATHEAT WROTE "I DON'T USUALLY LISTEN TO NON-FICTION PODCASTS, BUT THIS ONE IS HONESTLY THE HIGHLIGHT OF MY FORTNIGHT. WITH EVERY EPISODE I LEARN SOMETHING AND GET TO SEE SOMETHING FAMILIAR IN A NEW (IF LESS FLATTERING) LIGHT. BEYOND IMPRESSED BY THE RESEARCH THAT GOES INTO THIS AND THE SOUND QUALITY." THANKS LINGUISTATHEAT! I REALLY APPRECIATE YOUR KIND WORDS, AND I LOVE DOING THE SHOW. I LEARN NEW THINGS TOO.

IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY, PLEASE SUBSCRIBE TO THE SHOW OR LEAVE A REVIEW - I'LL GIVE YOU SHOUT OUT TOO - FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA, OR VISIT US AT BURST YOUR BUBBLE PODCAST DOT COM.

BURST YOUR BUBBLE IS RELEASED THE 2ND AND 4TH THURSDAY OF THE MONTH. THE NEXT EPISODE WILL BE RELEASED OCTOBER 11TH.

ALSO IF YOU LIKE BURST YOUR BUBBLE, AND ESPECIALLY THIS EPISODE ON 1968, YOU MIGHT ENJOY HEAT AND LIGHT, A NEW PODCAST FROM THE CONVERSATION U.S. - TELLING STORIES FROM 1968, THE YEAR THAT CHANGED AMERICA AND THE WORLD. THE STORIES ARE GUIDED BY THE PEOPLE WHO KNOW THEM BEST, EXPERTS WHO ARE SO PERSONALLY AFFECTED BY THE EVENTS OF THAT YEAR, THAT THEY'VE DEVOTED THEIR LIVES TO STUDYING THEM. LIKE PROFESSOR MATT DELMONT OF ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY, WHO STUDIED THE FIRST INTERRACIAL KISS ON AMERICAN TELEVISION, WHICH HAPPENED ON AN EPISODE OF STAR TREK 50 YEARS AGO.



BURST YOUR BUBBLE PODCAST

CLIP: PROFESSOR DELMONT DISCUSSING THE KISS.

THAT'S HEAT AND LIGHT, AVAILABLE WHEREVER YOU GET YOUR PODCASTS AND
AT [HEATLIGHTPOD.COM](https://heatlightpod.com)

I LOVE THAT EPISODE. I WOULD HAVE DONE AN EPISODE ON *STAR TREK* AND
WAS WORKING ON AN EPISODE OF *STAR TREK*, BUT YOU SHOULD JUST GO AND
LISTEN TO THIS ONE INSTEAD.

THANKS SO MUCH FOR LISTENING, I'LL SEE YOU NEXT TIME, AND HAVE A GOOD
ONE!

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