

beth broderick final.mp3

Steve Phillips [00:00:00] Welcome to Democracy in Color with Steve Phillips, a color conscious podcast about politics. I'm your host, Steve Phillips, and [00:00:06] I've been reflecting a lot lately about how politics at its core is about storytelling. What narratives do we convey and how do those narratives influence human behavior in general and voting in particular? Are we a country that is making progress away from its tortured racist history to the extent that it will elect a black man as president? Or are we a country being overrun by foreigners of color who are changing the country and we need to resist these changes so that we can, quote, make America great again? Those are narratives that have dominated the past two decades, past few centuries, really. In addition to the storytelling, the worlds of politics and entertainment have long overlapped, and artists and entertainers frequently get involved in politics. [43.1s] Will.i.am 2008 Video, for example Yes We Can came at a pivotal point in the presidential nominating contest after Obama had lost in New Hampshire and people worried that he'd lost momentum for the nomination. That video building on his New Hampshire concession speech was seen by millions of people. It helped rejuvenate the campaign. In recent years, the entertainment industry has been going through profound changes that impact society broadly in terms of how we get art and entertainment, who makes it and who profits from it. This year has seen lengthy strikes by writers and actors. The writers strike was finally settled, but the actors are still out on the picket lines, and there's was a setback in the negotiations last week after a fair amount of optimism about it being resolved. So in today's podcast, we're going to dive into the intertwined worlds of entertainment and politics, and we have the added benefit of doing so in the month of October with an actress who is perhaps best known for playing a character on a TV show about a teenage witch. For this conversation, I'm joined, as always with my co-host, Sharline Chiang, who was also the mom of a daughter on the age of the audience for the Teenage Witch Show. Hi, Sharline. Are you guys gearing up for Halloween? And do you want to introduce our guest?

Sharline Chiang [00:01:58] Hey, Steve. Yes, here at our home, we are definitely gearing up for Halloween. My daughter often says it's her favorite holiday. And I say really? Like not Christmas first or, you know, any other holiday? No, she says it's Halloween and it's not even a big Candy fan. I think it's just the whole shebang I always love. It's really one of my favorite holiday. She gets to use her.

Steve Phillips [00:02:23] She is her mother's daughter.

Sharline Chiang [00:02:24] Yeah. Getting to dress up the excitement, the anticipation, getting to see the what the other kids are wearing and getting to see grown ups dress up and have fun and, you know, be somebody or something different for a day. And just the fantasy of it. And of course, going out trick or treating and people giving free candy is not a bad not a bad deal. And just the fall, the autumn, you know, it's such a wonderful time of year and it's just what we associate with the fall. And so I'm really excited today to be talking to our guest, Beth Broderick. Beth is an actress and activist. She's a veteran of the stage and screen and she's best known for her role as Aunt Zelda in the long running hit TV series Sabrina the Teenage Witch. She's also starred in a number of TV series and films, including Glory Days and Psycho Beach Party. Beth is an active volunteer and political fundraiser, along with Steve, she served as a member of the board of directors for the Progressive Majority and has supported several local and national politicians in their campaigns. She's a founding member of Momentum, one of the first organizations in New York established to assist people with AIDS. And she's a founding member of the Celebrity Action Council of the City of Light Women's Rehabilitation Program. That's a program that

provides a hands on service to homeless women. And back again. We are so happy and thrilled to have you here today. Thanks for joining us.

Beth Broderick [00:03:52] Oh, well, I'm happy to be here. Thanks for having me.

Steve Phillips [00:03:54] You know, it's great. Great to see you again where we could bring our histories and this platform together for this conversation.

Sharline Chiang [00:04:02] Let's dive right in. Beth, the writers strike just ended in September. I'm sure everybody who's listening by now already knows about it. And this was after five months of striking a historic deal between the WGA and Hollywood producers was finally reached that will have long lasting effects on the industry going forward. Actors have been on strike since July. Beth, what are the concerns that the actors had that led to this decision to strike?

Beth Broderick [00:04:29] Well, there are an awful lot of them, like so many industries in America and perhaps around the world. [00:04:35] Most of the profit has been concentrated up until the very, very, very, very tiny, teeny, tiny, tiny top. So not even in the top 1% of the top half percentile. Right. Is making pretty much all the profits on show after show. I wrote an article about this for the Huffington Post years ago called Cavemen in Cashmere about how all these movers and shakers in Hollywood hold themselves out to be these you know impressive liberals and support in support of so many progressive causes. And yet when it comes to their own practices, they behave like the robber barons. They they you know, they they profess to disapprove of. [37.5s] [00:05:13] So it's been a long time coming. The inequities have just grown larger and larger and larger. The streaming services have really taken advantage of the fact that they're making so much product and yet they're paying less and less and less to the to the artists and creatives. And I think it has to do with a lot of these companies being, you know, subsidiary companies of larger and larger and larger corporations. And so they look at the bottom line and say, why are we paying artists? Why would we pay artists? So, you know, they make washing machines and all kinds of other things as well. So it's been a long time coming. [38.1s] I [00:05:52] think the concerns about artificial intelligence and people being able to, for instance, they could right now take my voice and turn it into a voiceover for a commercial without me ever being in the room. Wow. There's so many samples of my voice, you know, on record in film after film and TV show after TV show that I wouldn't have to be present. So that's a big concern. We don't want people reproducing our voices and faces, and it would be like plagiarizing someone's writing, you know, So. So and they then want to be able to do it, particularly with with extras, which is, you know, these are all tricky questions and it's a deep negotiation. [42.3s] And unfortunately, the people on the other side are not full of a lot of goodwill towards us. And so it's it's just taking a lot longer than than we had hoped. And to be honest, they started shutting the town down in January. So most people, in anticipation of the strike, they were hoping to starve people out before they went on strike. And so many, many people have been out of work for a year. Thousands and thousands of actors will be kicked off their health insurance. It's a it's a the struggle is real. It's a it's a very difficult time.

Steve Phillips [00:07:10] When you're talking about that title Cavemen in Cashmere. I was thinking, well, that was probably, you know, significantly before the whole MeToo reckoning. Right. So I actually I just want to read this. I've just pulled the article up and we'll link to this in our show notes. Right. So you open you say sexism, corporate malfeasance, ageism, wage inequality. These are all issues at the forefront of the

progressive battlefield. It is ironic that these very same issues are never tackled within our own industry. And so I think that was 2009. So that was somewhat a.

Beth Broderick [00:07:44] Long time ago.

Steve Phillips [00:07:47] Yeah.

Sharline Chiang [00:07:47] Yeah. And the more things change, the more things stay the same.

Beth Broderick [00:07:51] Well, yeah. And you know, I mean, [00:07:52] I remember I did an interview for NPR and, and I did the math for them and said, Let me just be very clear about what the math is. A job. It used to pay \$200,000. Now I might pay 30, a job that used to pay \$20,000. Now we'll pay 2500. So when you're doing that kind of math, there's it's not possible for people, the young people, the people starting at breaking in, people that are trying to build a career, it's not possible for them to make enough to survive no matter how much they work. I have movie children. I had one movie daughter. I made her dinner not too long ago, a couple of years ago, and she said, well, I'm still, you know, still doing my waitress job and said, What do you mean you're doing a waitress job? Well, you have a leading role on a series on HBO. And she said, Yeah, but they only pay me \$5,000 an episode and they only shoot 12 episodes. And you are paying an agent and a manager and, you know, so So that math simply doesn't work well. Well, right. So people are waiting tables in order to star on HBO. So that is absolutely unacceptable. [63.6s] Right. And, you know, and and it's a growing, growing problem. And so, you know, [00:09:03] we even have agents that are telling their actors not to join the union because there's a lot of nonunion work that they could be getting. And I tell those actors, well, that's true. So you could get a job here and there, but you'll never have a career. You'll never be able to make a life of this if you don't join the union. And if the union can't win these kind of fights. [20.4s] So. Well.

Steve Phillips [00:09:25] It's the it's interesting Entourage, you mention that HBO example. I was listening to another podcast and they were talking about that is they talking with the producers of Succession and the decisions they had made about where to do where to take the show. Originally they said we could have done it on other networks, but HBO offered us the chance to have helicopters. And if you think about Succession, they have lots and lots of helicopters. But so that reflects the size and scale of the budget that they actually have. So a network and a company that has that level of resources has a lead actress who has to wait tables as well. That says something about why you all had to go on strike.

Beth Broderick [00:10:06] It says a lot about why we had to go on strike. Yeah. And, you know, it's it's been very confusing and there's been some contentions about some of the ways that it's been handled. But, you know, like, like I was like, I didn't I didn't raise my hand and volunteer to lead. So it's not really up to me how they how the people that are trying to make this work conduct themselves right. I just have to be supportive as I can possibly be.

Steve Phillips [00:10:33] You know, so I'd like to be just pull back a little bit more. 30,000 foot around, like the role of arts and entertainment and narrative and communication and social change and politics. That's one of the key things that I try to lift up in my current book, How we When the Civil War is about how the how the Confederates, the original and the current ones have had a core tenet of distorting public opinion. Right. I mean, starting

with redefining the Civil War itself. Gone with the Wind is a, you know, ode to the Confederates, and it's at its core. And so it's been a fundamental part. So someone who's been involved both in the industry but also very much in politics over the years. And so we connect and we are on the board of Progressive Majority. And I you were trying to help different candidates with their messaging and the organization. B So I thought if you could share some of your reflections about the role of narrative and communication and political and social change.

Beth Broderick [00:11:36] Well, I think storytelling is at the heart of it. And I think, you know, I, I have a blog on Substack called Wit and Wisdom from a Woman of a certain Age. And in my blog that will be coming out tomorrow, I was talking about how in show business, we're getting better. We're we're trying to do better. You know, like when I started in show business, it was a very white world. You know, the world of television was incredibly white. And you can see now that people of color are playing lead roles in essential roles in project after project after project. And that's that's that's real progress. And you have to hope that that, you know, the fact that we've had black men play the president of the United States on television is part of what paved the way for Barack Obama to be the president of the United States. These things, these things are correlative. They do matter. And, you know, you think about Ellen DeGeneres coming out and being the first person to come out as lesbian on television and being fired for doing so. And and the progress that we have made since then, in the ways that we depict people from the LGBTQ community, you know, like people with disabilities now often are hired to portray themselves to to inhabit their own disability onscreen as opposed to having an actor pretending to be disabled. So we are getting better. We have a long way to go. But I do think that these sort of things resonate both in our culture and in our politics. If you look at the fury on the right towards the simple movie Barbie, you know, it's almost it's almost hard to grasp that this movie could be such a problem for people on on the far right. And yet they consider it a real threat just to talk about women wanting to be essentially appreciated for who they are, for real, for how their feet are actually flat, not built in heels, you know. And so all of these things do matter. And I think I think, honestly, since Trump was elected, there's been a severe dearth of political action on the part of people in Hollywood. So there's been a real hesitancy for people to speak out because it raised the stakes so high. He made he blew things up and encouraged hatred and cause and encouraged division to such a degree that people that just simply want to make movies and television just started to go silent, radio silent about their feelings and their beliefs. And I think that we need to correct that. I think that people with with voices that can easily be heard need to be using them.

Steve Phillips [00:14:23] You mentioned that I hadn't actually put together the sequence of the show 24, which I loved and watch every episode. And then preceding, you know, in fact, in the cultural conception of a black man as president. And so in 24, that black man as president played by Dennis Haysbert. Right. And so you have a connection. What kind of shoot was going back with him back in the day?

Beth Broderick [00:14:44] It was my roommate in college for a while because we were in Pasadena and we were at the Palestinian Playhouse. So that was where the American Academy was housed. And Dennis had a really big struggle to find somebody who would rent to him. He was this. Big, giant black man. And people were just like, you know. And so because Pasadena, you know, has a deeply racist history. I know. I know you know that. I mean, at one point, Colorado Boulevard was sort of the dividing part. Black people could live north, white people south, and never the twain shall meet. And so I was like, well, you can sleep on my couch until we find something. Like, we literally had to sleep on my couch

until we can find him a place to live. So, you know, he and I have gone around talking to students about that, about how, you know, that was our beginnings and also the fact that neither one of us were considered by the school to have much potential. And yet we were the two that had the most enduring careers. Right. So. So we talked to students about that a lot. Like don't let outward appearances of disapproval discourage you, you know, because you just have to keep pushing and you will find the right place. But they don't always know. They can always read the tea leaves. Sometimes they tell you you're not very good and it turns out they're wrong.

Sharline Chiang [00:16:00] So that sent them some good advice. But how did you get involved in political activism and when?

Beth Broderick [00:16:07] Well, you know, I was about 23 years old and I started reading about this thing called Gay Men's Cancer in New York City. And it was very alarming. People were dying very quickly for no reason. They became ill and then suddenly died. Much like happened recently in the pandemic. And then at one point, I read that there was a guy, a state senator, who was introducing a bill into the state Senate to quarantine all gay men. Wow. And I thought, well, this is no longer just an illness. This is this is this is a civil rights matter. This is this is of dire importance that I show up. And so I showed up at the Gay Men's Health crisis, which was one desk in a tiny little room at that time. And I said to the young man, I'm here to volunteer. And he was gobsmacked. He couldn't believe a woman would walk in the door. And he was like, Oh, yeah, sure. You know, like he didn't take me seriously at all. And I was like, Listen to me. I've been on my own since I was 16. Write my name and number down. Well, if somebody needs me, they need to be able to call me. And so I got a call from Peter Abiteboul, who would become my partner, and he's like, Are you a woman? Are you really a woman? I need a woman so bad I you doing? And so I was like, Yes, yes, I'm really woman I'll help. I'll help, I help. And so that's I went shortly after to serve Thanksgiving dinner at St John's in the village, and it was the first time I'd seen people who were that ill. And it was so sad. They were so young and almost nothing left of them, just skeletal. And with Kaposi's sarcoma all over one side of the face. And we had, I think, 13 boys that night and we reserved Thanksgiving dinner. And I just, you know, Peter, afterwards he said, I need you, I need you, I need you. And I said, You have me for as long as you need for anything. And we started this program momentum that ultimately became momentum because we recognized a real need for people to have not just medical support, but financial support. They were spending down whatever little SSI benefits they could get on medications that weren't approved. Right. So there was no money to eat or buy clothing. People were dropping £60 in a month. They had nothing to wear. And so we had a free clothing store, free grocery store we had and we also really made an effort to socialize people. So we brought them together for these big dinners and we got people to come and sing and, you know, just to keep people in community because they were terrified to leave their home. And so during that time, we had a president named Ronald Reagan who wouldn't even say the word AIDS. We hadn't even discovered that term until when I started. But we did shortly after, and he never said the word. And so it became very clear to me, both at the city level, the state level and the national level, that it really, really does matter who's in office, that it's that it is actually a matter of life and death, who who we send to represent us at every level of government. And so there was no turning back from there.

Steve Phillips [00:19:15] You still do a Thanksgiving tradition?

Beth Broderick [00:19:19] I do. I do a Christmas.

Steve Phillips [00:19:20] A Christmas tradition?

Beth Broderick [00:19:22] Yeah. I've been providing the gifts for women in the emergency shelter at the Good Shepherd home for battered women for this would be the 34th year my friends and I will gather to. So we do we we really make an effort to make them beautiful and full of all new thing, brand new things. Things that you when you leave home with not even a toothbrush, you know. So they're beautiful makeups and silk scarves and jewelry and things just to make them feel like, you know, I think it's just so important that they know that someone out there is thinking about them and and acknowledging and celebrating their. Humanity because we lose track of that with people who are lost.

Sharline Chiang [00:20:03] And the dignity and.

Beth Broderick [00:20:04] How deeply human they are, you know.

Steve Phillips [00:20:07] So you said there is no turning back on the political road. So what were some of the political fights or whatever campaigns that you have been involved in?

Beth Broderick [00:20:16] Oh, my goodness. Well, I did I can't even count the number of I know if you remember this group that I was in called The Hope Let's. Those are Nancy Stevens and Sarah Nickels and me and Cookie Parker and Carol coed. And we were determined to win back the Senate. And it was the year that Obama won. And we did it. We managed. And we we I mean, we raised money for so many politicians that people just ran when they saw us walking down the street. You know, it is a great story about Brad Pitt, by the way. People are like, don't work with Brad Pitt. It'll cost you \$5 million. You talked people into donating like everything they made in the movie to causes that matter to him. So, you know, it's interesting. He and I did a series together many, many years ago, and we've both been on similar paths of of civic involvement about, you know, caring. I was a very early adopter of Obama. Very early. I had met his chief of staff, Pete Rouse, when I was lobbying for a prostate cancer imaging technology research, which is a big mouthful of words to say, but they couldn't get any male actors to do it. So. So I went and lobbied for prostates for almost a year. But we did get that bill passed and I met Pete Rouse then. And so that's how I got introduced to Barack Obama. And I was as much as I loved the Clintons, I was absolutely convinced that it was Barack Obama was the right candidate at that time. But I had worked hard on the Howard Dean campaign. Oh, my God. And raised a lot of money for Howard Dean. And then, you know, of course, we threw our loyalties to John Kerry. And so I've been deeply involved in politics pretty much since the time of the since the eighties, since I started We started this program in 1984. And I did that for almost five years. I was 23. Didn't go on a date. Never did, you know, I nobody wanted to date me because I ran an AIDS program. So.

Steve Phillips [00:22:24] Wow,.

Sharline Chiang [00:22:24] Wow, wow.

Beth Broderick [00:22:25] Yeah. I never went out on a date. So 23 to 28, I was very engaged in very serious, very difficult, very devastating and social service delivery work. And I think burnout is a has such a foundational it's such a foundational part of who I am in the world. And you know, that early time in my life, how I what I observed and what I learned. And, you know, believe me, I met more than my fair share of heroes doing that work as well. But there were a lot of things missing from our politics that are still missing

today. And so [00:23:02] I'll never give up trying to trying to work towards a better union, a more perfect union. I mean, I don't care how crazy it gets. I'll never stop speaking out and I'll never give up. [9.0s]

Steve Phillips [00:23:11] So when I when I met you, you had two dogs and their names, if I recall correctly, were Democracy and Social Justice.

Sharline Chiang [00:23:19] No way.

Beth Broderick [00:23:20] And they hated each other.

Sharline Chiang [00:23:22] Can't make that up.

Beth Broderick [00:23:28] Social injustice, hated democracy, Social justice had to go live in Orange County with my sister.

Sharline Chiang [00:23:37] You can't make this up. Some writer needs to write this into some sort of episode. That's. That's too much gold.

Beth Broderick [00:23:45] It was true.

Sharline Chiang [00:23:46] But I wanted to ask you, Beth, and I'm just being blown away by hearing about your journey. And you know what you intuitively knew. And so bravely, I must say, engaged with at such a young age during a time like you said, when there was so much fear and so much discrimination and along so in your twenties, you were also building your acting career and continued to, along with continuing to work towards social change. So I want to ask you, what do you see as the role of people with large platforms, including, you know for sure, celebrities who are, you know, in our culture worship, They are the most visible and often have the largest, most influential platforms. What do you see as the role and responsibility of people with large platforms when it comes to things like social change? And should people expect people with large platforms to speak up for social causes like voting, for example, voting rights or protecting democracy or, you know, do we just say, well, to each their own and we, you know, just let everybody decide?

Beth Broderick [00:24:49] I think it's essential. I mean, I think and there's there's wonderful young people like Billie Eilish, for instance, who has at every concert, she has people there registering voters at the entrance and the exits.

Beth Broderick [00:25:02] I don't think I knew that. That's great.

Beth Broderick [00:25:03] Yeah. She's determined to get people registered to vote. She doesn't really tell them who to vote for. She's not in got engaged in that. But, you know, and I think young Taylor Swift has taken a few difficult stands and and but you know, there are also examples like the Dixie Chicks now called the chicks of people who have been canceled have been sort of turned out for standing up for what they believe in. I think I never got in trouble, even though I wrote for Huffington Post and I was very outside. I've always been very outspoken. But, you know, I came into this industry as someone that it was understood that I'd run an aid program for five years. So people really just go, well, that's yeah, that's that's just going to speak out. This is how that's going to go. We can't hold it against you. You know, there's no I'm so associated with, with my political point of view and the social service delivery that I believe in and espouse that that it's I don't consider it dangerous for me. But even if it was dangerous, I would speak out about, I think

when Trump was running and when those kind of fevers ran high all around the nation, people became afraid to speak out. When when your followers and your supporters are threatening to kill a poll worker, you you have to stand it as a celebrity is going to feel like a you know, like a massive target, you know, in in in those in that context. And so a lot of people got quiet. And unfortunately, what did they say like that? It's not always just the those who do evil, but those who stand by and watch that they are as guilty. And so I think all of us, whether they're an artist, an actor, a celebrity or just, you know, just somebody who who wants to put dinner on the table for their kids, all of us have to take a more active role in our politics. We just simply must. And I think a lot of that going back to story, a lot of what has happened on the right since Ronald Reagan is that people have been told that government doesn't work and that there's no reason hoping that they will feel there's no reason to vote. You know, it's all voter suppression. At the end of the day, every single thing that they do is to try to get you to not vote. And so the most patriotic thing you can do is walk into that polling booth, you know, and and I don't think people it's just not told. That story isn't told often enough. It's not told in the right ways. We're not getting that message across in the way that we really need to, because the negative message around government, you know, negative energy and negative dialog is very powerful stuff and it's very hard to combat. And, you know, being out there like people think, I'm a relentless optimist and there's a, you know, almost the implication that I'm a Pollyanna behind that. And maybe that's true. Maybe I am a bit of a Pollyanna, but I am also a believer that we just have to keep getting the message out that good government does matter. And and it and it it and it does exist. And there are good guys on every side of every argument. And the only way to settle these things peacefully is to vote and to let the majority prevail. And I think minority rule is their whole the whole essence of the argument on the other side is we have to counter that with faith, that there are more of us who believe in government and who believe in the good that we can accomplish together than than there are those who consider minority rule to be their birthright.

Steve Phillips [00:28:44] Yeah, I mean, one of my mentors in the law had said that he could always tell the right thing to do as a litigator by looking at what their opponent was doing and then doing the opposite. And so if the right is trying to stop people from voting, then that should be a pretty good signal that we should really encourage.

Beth Broderick [00:29:05] More people to.

Steve Phillips [00:29:06] Vote.

Beth Broderick [00:29:07] Yeah, I mean, all those years of living in Texas that I lived in Texas for a while and they have elevated voter suppression to an art form and and and honestly, it has depressed the population. The population does feel like it's an uphill battle and they don't know if it's even worth trying. And, you know, and you have people also in our country who have come here from other nations where it might be more true that it doesn't matter if you vote right, like, you know, who come from these dictatorships or these places where the that are really ransacked by gangs. And so to them, it really doesn't matter. And we have done a terrible job of reaching out to those communities of color and making sure that they know and not just communities, colored communities from ex-pat communities of all kinds. Making sure that they know that here it really doesn't matter if you go ahead and it really does matter who is in office. And we really we really are in charge of our own destiny.

Steve Phillips [00:30:09] We just follow up on that. That's the last point. And the Texas thing was talking to a friend of mine, Rebecca Marquez, who was with the Human Rights

Campaign in Texas for a number of years. And just reflecting on the work that's going on and this thing about the voter suppression being an art form, by the way she was out talking about it, is that the right wing in Texas is terrified and they're terrified that things are going to change. They know that they don't have the majority support. So that's why they're so one of my article about the voter suppression piece.

Beth Broderick [00:30:41] Oh, yeah. I mean, and they're attacking cities now. They're like, Houston, we're sticking to voting, you know, so that you can only have one thing to put your ballots in. And, you know, it's just so when you're you know, you get attached to a great candidate like Beto O'Rourke or, you know, these people who really go out there and fight the good fight. And it's just it's really, you know, it's demoralizing, you know, to see what the lengths that they will go to to keep people from voting. I mean, this is panic neighborhoods. I don't know if you know this, but they have giant billboards with a big judge's gavel on them. And it says if you vote, you go to jail for voting illegally. Illegally is the tiniest little letter's right. So did you vote to go to jail?

Beth Broderick [00:31:29] I had no idea that.

Beth Broderick [00:31:30] Big with a big judge's gavel.

Beth Broderick [00:31:32] So nasty.

Beth Broderick [00:31:33] So I mean, that's what I mean by it's institutionalized the voter suppression. And and it's it.

Steve Phillips [00:31:44] It's narrative and storytelling. That's that's storytelling in this one. Yeah.

Beth Broderick [00:31:49] Yeah. That's storytelling. You know, in in in terrible, terrible story.

Steve Phillips [00:31:56] Yeah.

Beth Broderick [00:31:57] But yeah, they get that message out in communities of color very frequently speaking communities. Well, and people keep asking me about the Hispanic vote in Texas and I'm like, you know, they, they, they there's a reign of terror towards the Hispanic vote being waged. And it works. You know, a lot of the voting. Yeah. So we've got to tell a better story, a different story and, you know, and try to help people of every cultural background understand that they really do have the power.

Steve Phillips [00:32:32] Right. I think we're going to get to the pivot in a moment. Just on that point was to plug it up a point and then an up and coming podcast, right, so that people don't. Why I didn't realize until I was doing the research on my book is that there are now actually more Latinos in Texas than whites, that it's 39, 39, slightly more Latino people don't think about Texas that way at all. And so this gets back to the suppression thing. And Latinos and African-Americans are the majority of eligible voters, and then you add Asians. So I just think it's hard to keep letting that point up for people then to plug our next podcast after this one. I believe it is. So we're going to interview Stephanie Valencia of Atkins, who's been involved in trying to help progressives buy radio stations in Latino communities to be able to get at this little narrative storytelling.

Beth Broderick [00:33:18] Yeah, because that's where we need to be, period, on the radio in Texas. Because even in the white communities that, you know, where football is worshiped, if you can get on those radio stations that cover the local games and you can get like I always tell people, spend your money. Texas is huge. It's so much bigger than California. And it's so and there's no corridors of information. Okay. So if you're in Dallas, the chance that you know what the mayors name of Austin is are very slim. Right? Whereas in L.A., we know who the mayor of San Francisco is. It's you know, we were the mayor of Los Angeles's in Texas. Nobody has any idea. Right. And I always kept thinking, there has to be some way, like some kind of mayor's quarter periodical where the mayors of the major cities like, contributed like a magazine that we could get out to people because people just have no idea. It's so big. The Expanse is so tremendous that people just don't really find ways to communicate within that, You know, sphere is really difficult and, you know, and it always goes back to me to lawn signs. I believe in lawn signs and I believe in going door to door, you know, and people want to spend they drop millions and millions of dollars on television in Texas. And it doesn't it doesn't move the needle.

Sharline Chiang [00:34:39] You know, often what we talk about, I did want to plug it. I mean, it's all related to talking about the future and talking about younger young people. I thought it was really interesting. When you mentioned your you did you say your movie child?

Beth Broderick [00:34:51] Yeah, I have a lot of movie children.

Sharline Chiang [00:34:53] Yeah. I've never heard that term before. And I had to kind of go, what does she mean that? Then I was like, Oh, I get it. Is this other actor who is portrays a child in the story that you're that you're in the in the show. Going back to what the writers and actors are fighting for right now. Just to kind of contextualize. My understanding is that they're basically fighting for the future and the direction, the future of the entertainment industry and the protecting the rights of actors and writers going forward. And so that will have reverberations of implications for the younger generations, like you said, that are starting in the field now as they go through their career. And I did want to give listeners some a little bit of background about your show in case some are not familiar with it. And by the way, my daughter and I and my husband just watched the first episode the other night and she's 12 and she was delighted and I was delighted to be able to watch it with her. And she was very excited that I'm getting to talk to you today. So this show that you were in with Sabrina, the Teenage Witch, and that premiered in 1996. Now Netflix has produced a new version for today's generation. It's called The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina, and that is actually the name of the original Archie comic book series that the Sabrina characters comes from. And so The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina released in 2018 for this new generation. And then you guest starred on the show in Season two. And I'm wondering, as you think about this next generation of actors and entertainers and including the writers and those involved in the in the industry, what are your hopes for the future of the industry and what are some of the lessons that you've learned that you would hope to pass along to them?

Beth Broderick [00:36:38] [00:36:38] Well, my biggest hope for them is that they again, we need to tell that keep telling them the story of why being in the union matters [7.5s] [00:36:46] and why insisting on being paid union wages matters because there's a lot of producers trying to pay people cash under the table and low, low wages, you know, as far as the union, because they don't want to pay into pension and health. And I want for those people to have the opportunity that I had to build a life that has sustained me for over 30 years. I have pensions. I have health care, you know, And these things really, really

matter. [27.3s] [00:37:14] Yeah. And you know how I'm trying to tell young people this story that it really does matter How you get paid now matters for you your whole life. It's going to matter. [10.4s] Right. And and [00:37:27] and what you demand for yourself now, because a lot of things on commercials have all gone nonunion. A lot of independent films have gone nonunion. And so you're seeing these people over and over again in commercials who were not union members. So they're not even getting paid per use. So they might have made a fee like 20 \$500 for that commercial to run repeatedly day in and day out, day in and day out, the end of day, week after week, month after month, year after year. Now, that's just not a sustainable, sustainable model, right? So that's why we have residual payments, like when Sabrina is still believe it or not, it's the number three streaming show on Peacock. [40.1s] My show, the original Sabrina, is still very popular in every country in the world. It's on every day, almost everywhere. And so there's a whole new generation of viewers that just keeps coming, you know, year after year. And we're so grateful for that. I mean, it's such a wonderful thing to see new people enjoying the show again all over again. But imagine if if we never got paid for that. You know what I mean? That that you know, the fact that people are still profiting from that show, we should be allowed to participate in that.

Sharline Chiang [00:38:46] Yes, absolutely.

Beth Broderick [00:38:47] To some degree. And and so many of the big studios now, they're working on buyouts. So you only get paid once. Right. And you don't get paid residuals. And so they can continue to make a profit on that piece of material. Like in a case like my show, for 30 years, they've been making money on it. And but they want the right to just cut the actors off it with a one time payment. And so all of this really does matter in terms of the future for actors in the business. And I think it's really depressing if you're young. I mean, they were, you know, the I have these movie children building building their career nominated for a Tony and doing this, doing that covered it gets cinema sent home for a year brick wall no, no work for you and you know we've just kind of just started getting back on our sea legs and then the strike and so after another year. [00:39:43] So if you're young and you're listening to me and you're out there and you're frustrated, you're thinking, I don't care about the union, I'm just going to go do it. I just want to go do it. You're you're only hurting yourself because at the end of the day, without the support of your union, you're not. Not going to be able to make a life for yourself in the arts. [18.6s] It's just simply not possible. If you look at all the people that live in towns where they're like Austin, Texas, where, you know, most of the work is nonunion, those people all have day jobs. They do not do it for a living. It's a hobby. And [00:40:16] so if you want to be more than a hobby for you, you know, you got to you got to trust in the collective. And and honestly, the collective, the way of of it all is the key to our survival as a species. It's a key to every single to solving every single problem that we face. And this rugged individualism, this I'm going to go do my thing and I don't care about you. This is it's destroying the fabric of our nation and it will destroy the fabric of our industry if kids participate in it that way. So that word to me is, is is the most important word of the moment collective, because whether it's in talking about the environment or we're talking about political disaffection or we're talking about wage inequality, the only way to tackle these issues is as a collective. And so that is what I urge young people to continue to be part of. [59.6s]

Steve Phillips [00:41:17] All right. So we're going to have to wrap in terms of people staying in touch and following you and where you're at to keep track of your work and whatnot. So you mentioned that you're doing the substack that the main.

Beth Broderick [00:41:31] Substack dot com. And yeah, there's an article, usually a new article every 7 to 10 days I have about 5000 subscribers. I'll be more than happy to welcome some more. So everybody got a best product to substack that come. And mostly it's funny, not always. Sometimes I tackle big issues, but mostly it's just my observations on life and try to have a good time with it.

Steve Phillips [00:41:56] Yeah, and I can endorse it as a reader. I subscribe to it and actually people will send it to me periodically about like, Oh, did you see this piece? The best wrote about it? So I think two or three people have done that actually. Well, that's.

Beth Broderick [00:42:08] Nice to hear.

Steve Phillips [00:42:09] Yeah. And then in terms of the duration of your work as we wrap this, so we were talking about who we are, featured guest, etc., etc. and then I had mentioned the process of the strike, I mentioned the relationship and we were friends and then our associate producer followed it, had a she seen both versions of the show. It was so fascinating that we meet on Zoom. She's in North Carolina. Her eyes lit up when your name came up. The photo was born in 1994 and that your show premiered in 96. And still it's still having this resonance and this impact.

Beth Broderick [00:42:43] And so and and the other thing I do so much of is the Hallmark Christmas movies and lifetime season. And that's another world that I'm just so privileged to be a part of because it just makes people so happy, you know? And if people stop me on the street, they're like, I loved Christmas Town. So it's so moving to me to be able to bring joy to people and to be able to participate as an artist in that way is just an honor, really. Well.

Steve Phillips [00:43:18] We appreciate your work and I appreciate your joining us on the on the podcast.

Beth Broderick [00:43:22] Definitely. Thank you so much.

Steve Phillips [00:43:24] That's all the time we have for today. Thank you for listening to Democracy and Color with Steve Phillips. Please help us get the word out about this podcast by subscribing wherever you get your podcasts, sharing with your friends, tweeting at Democracy Color and at Steve Pete tweets and finding us at Democracy in Color on Facebook or Instagram. You can also keep up with all things. Demco by subscribing to our newsletter at Democracy in Color dot com. If you listen to our podcast on iTunes, please leave us a rating and a comment and help others to find our show. This podcast is at Democracy in Color Production. Our producer is Olivia Parker. Fola Onifade, our staff writer and associate producer Sharline Chiang is our editor and co-host. Special thanks to April Elkjer for quality Check, recorded virtually with the assistance of the podcast studio San Francisco. Until next time, watch Sabrina the Teenage Witch and Keep the Faith.