

713. Cohen

Guest: Rhaina Cohen

VOXPOP:

TITLE IDEAS:

EPIISODE DESCRIPTION:

Lorem Ipsum

SEG AL

COLD OPEN

SIZZLE!!!

KB: Roxy, tell me what your pet peeve is with roommates?

RS: leaving little things around everywhere... What about you? What do roommates do that drives you the most nuts?

KB: [not clean the bathroom and kitchen!]

RS: OK, but what do you think YOU do that drives roommates the most nuts? I know what I do...

KB: [answer]

RS: And that's why we co-host a podcast and not dinner parties ... **[or something quippy]**

Theme bounces in

KB: From Religion News Service, this is Saved by the City!
A podcast from two Christian women living uncomfortably close to 23 million people in New York. I'm Katelyn Beaty

RS: And I'm Roxy Stone

TRANSITION: Setting up the problem

RS: Katelyn, I have my Bible open here in front of me.

KB: Who'd have thought this day would come?

RS: OK, OK.

I'm going to read a passage from Acts, a description of the early church that I'm sure we're all very familiar with:

All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all as any had need.

KB & RS: [spend a little time reacting to these verses - i.e., this was THE motto for our college church ...]

RS: We talked a ton about these verses when I was in college. And we held this up as an ideal that we all wanted to pursue, but in the end - even the most zealous and sold out among us in those years - is living in a pretty standard American situation now. As in: married, with kids. Or, at the most, living in a single family home with maybe some roommates or living alone.

KB: It strikes me that part of what was so compelling and also maybe peculiar about the early church was just how radical it was to live this way. It was not the norm and it remains not the norm. The social barriers and pressures are too high for most people to live in this much of a countercultural way.

RS: And when they do, they are seen as being weird or even deviant. Like they get accused of being a cult or there's a lot of suspicion around the set up being sexual in nature - like orgies or swinging or something. POLYCULES.

RS: I find these verses incredibly compelling and the older I get, the more I see them as offering a solution to a lot of our worst problems and inclinations. Like, it's more affordable to live with more people. It's less lonely and isolating. It's better for the environment to share resources and to live within proximity - walking or biking distance. Denser neighborhoods with public transportation are more environmentally friendly.

KB: I think I agree with you ... but I also don't live that way and I'm not sure I really want to.

RS: I know. Same. My fiance and I are genuinely considering living with one of our best friends after we're married. And, even with all of us agreeing we want to, the obstacles are really high just in terms of logistics - like the timing of a move, and choosing a neighborhood, and prioritizing everyone's non-negotiables, and deciding whose couch to keep. And so on.

KB: I lived with roommates for a few years in NYC and I've been very happy to live on my own

since then. I'm not sure I'd want to go back. But then I maybe I SHOULD want to. I keep thinking about our conversation with Andy Crouch a couple years back, and the

RS: OK, let's put a pin in that because it's worth talking about in earnest. But first, I think an old fashioned pros and cons list is in order.

VOX POP

RS: OK, before we begin our lists, I'm going to re-read this verse from Acts about the early church. I want us to keep this image in mind as we write down our pros and cons:

All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all as any had need.

So ... this is the lifestyle we're reacting to here. I want each of us to write down 5 pros and 5 cons to living this way. Let's take 5 minutes...

Pros:

Good formationally

Expanding myself

Financial

Support

Cons:

Conflict

So much communication needed

Not having alone time - solitary time

My space not feeling like my space

Feeling judged

RS: Time's up! Let's hear them. What are your pros?

KB: List. You?

RS: List.

[discuss as we go along - but in a snappy fashion]

KB: OK, is it time for cons?

RS: Yes, let's hear them.

KB: List. You?

RS: List.

[discuss as we go along - but in a snappy fashion]

NARRATIVE & DISCUSSION:

RS: So, one thing we haven't really discussed is how these verses are about a CHURCH community - the early church - not like a handful of Christians deciding to live this way on their own. But I don't know any churches that live or operate this way really. Or that even encourage it.

KB: Right, what's going on here?

DISCUSS:

-massive economic difference in most churches. Rich sitting next to poor.

-why is this not a priority for churches?

-should it be?

KB: So I think we've successfully identified that this way of living is great in theory but hard in reality. And that most people live it at theory — as aspirational or idealistic — and don't really pursue it.

RS: But our guest today found some people out there who are living in ways that prioritize friendship or companionship outside of nuclear families — from owning homes together, to raising kids together, to choosing to grow old together.

KB: Rhaina Cohen is a journalist and author of the new and fascinating book, *The Other Significant Others: Reimagining Life With Friendship at the Center*. We were excited to talk to her about her findings and why this kind of friendship might be the future...

FORWARD PROMO:

*** GUEST PROMO AUDIO HERE ***

RS: We'll hear more from Rhaina after the break.

KB: But first, a shoutout for the organization that makes this all possible.

Wrap it up.

Theme music comes up underneath, & transition to:

SPONSOR SLOT

Theme music bounces in

Rs Religion News Service is an independent, award-winning source of global reporting on religion, spirituality, culture and ethics.

Kb From communes to confirmations to compost burials, Religion News Service covers religious communities and their traditions, from birth to death and everything in between.

Rs And be sure to check out Religion News Service's other podcast offerings. We've got Martini Judaism with Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin and The State of Belief with Rev. Paul Brandeis Rauschenbusch. And Amber Hacker and Tom Levinson present the newest addition Money Meets Meaning, exploring the intersection of faith and finance. Give 'em a listen!

KB: And send us your ideas for next season - we're already making plans! Shoot us an email at sbtcpodcast@religionnews.com. Or drop us a rating or review wherever you listen to your podcasts! We love hearing from you!

Theme fades

SEG B

KB: Today we're joined by Rhaina Cohen. Rhaina is the author of *The Other Significant Others* and a producer and editor for NPR's *Embedded*. Welcome to the show Rhaina!

RS: Hi, Rhaina!

SEG C

WRAP IT UP:

RS: Well, Katelyn, that's a wrap on another amazing season of Saved By the City! Just in time too, since you are heading out to explore the great west on a road trip through several national parks.

KB: Yep! Blah blah blah...

KB: I don't think I have to ask you what you're most excited about during this summer break, Roxy.

RS: Yes, definitely the wedding. But also ... I cannot wait to get away for a few weeks of vacation. AKA, a honeymoon. No, we have not booked it yet. No, we do not know for sure where we are going yet. But we do have an idea on both and it will be later in the summer.

KB: Right around the time of a particular milestone birthday for me, and the same time when I'll be dropping our summer series for Saved By the City tentatively titled, "Tell Me What to Do with My Life."

RS: I'm really looking forward to that.

Wrap and wish each other and listener's a happy summer...

[music]

RS Saved By The City is a Religion News Service production. Senior Producer is J Woodward and the Consulting Editor is Paul O'Donnell. Our editor is Julia Windom.

KB Chaz Russo put together our look and Martin Fowler wrote our theme music.

RS We are Roxy Stone

KB and Katelyn Beaty

Rs&Kb Thanks for listening!!!

CUT NOTES

KB NOTES + RS NOTES