

Intro Music: Turn out the light, open the curtains, go and do useful things you win. I said it, you win.

Champagne cork pops

All: Yay!

Holly: Well, welcome everybody to Diversify, our brand-new podcast. This is episode one. I am Holly -

Kate: And I am Kate

Holly: And we are here with our first ever guest who is

Zack: Zack

Holly: Zack is a wonderful, wonderful human being who I've known for a few years but don't get to see enough. That's why I've brought you here.

Zack: Thank you. I'm excited to be here for your first ever podcast

Holly: Yeah!

Zack: an honour and a privilege

Holly: Of ours

They laugh

Kate: Yes, of ours.

Holly: We are joined today by a little puppy called Ellie so if you hear some sniffles that'll be her but, uh, she's so quiet

Kate: She has her own mic though so -

Holly: She might as well have mine, she's probably got more to say. Um, Zack is an amazing activist, a member of the Green Party, was running to be a council member recently. He's also great at talking about the housing crisis, particularly in London but all around the country. He's an actor, he's a vegan -

Zack: We got that in there

Kate: We're not going to talk about veganism today

Holly: Mainly today we're going to talk about politics

Kate: And cars

Holly: And cars

Zack: Cars? I'm going to be screwed if we're talking about cars.

Kate: Well, we are celebrating today our first podcast, but we are also celebrating that I, at the age of 28, have passed my driving test.

Zack: Congratulations

Glasses clink

Kate: Yeah, we're very excited about this

Holly: On the second try.

Kate: On the seco – ha thank you. On the second try.

Holly: I'd just like to go on the record that I passed on the first try at 18... motherfuckers!

Kate: I think it gets harder as you get older.

Holly: I agree, I don't think I could pass it now.

Zack: I can't drive I'm screwed. I'm never going to drive.

Holly: That's much better for the world!

Zack: Right! I'm cycling everywhere. Sorry, you just passed your driving test and –

Kate: Do you know, it's really interesting that you should say that because I read a thing the other day about how when they had horse and cart in London it was causing a lot of pollution with all the horse dung and a lot of deaths with all the, horses. The invented the automobile to fix that, the pollution and the death -

Holly: Isn't that ironic?

Kate: Now, we're replacing them with bikes. The Guardian did an article, I think it was quite a while ago now, where there were all these bike graveyards in China, where all these rent your own – like Boris bikes – just thousands of unused bikes filling up landfill.

Holly: So Zack, you're part of the problem.

Zack: Have you seen those bikes around London that aren't Boris bikes but are those, like, ones that you can get on an app. I keep seeing them in the most random places.

Holly: They're orange. I always used to live just outside where the Boris bikes were available so I'd have to go somewhere to get on a bike to go somewhere but now, yeah, you just leave them and then I guess, do you just find the bike? And then you can just ride it around London.

Zack: I guess they have GPS on them and yeah you go find it. But apparently people keep leaving them in the middle of fields and things like that and kind of "comedy", in inverted commas, places, so when you look on the app you have to go somewhere ridiculous to get the bike.

Holly: Such millennials that we're not just trolling on Twitter, we're trolling on bikes.

Zack: Where are you going to go for your first big drive?

Kate: Um, down the one street in the small village that I grew up in that is just one street,

Zack: Ok

Kate: And then go down that street.

Holly: I really feel like it seems like it was worth it that you learned to drive.

Zack: Is that a metaphor or, there is just –

Kate: No it's literally called, `the Street`.

Zack: Oh. And you have to go the same way down it.

Kate: I mean, you probably want to be careful going when you're going down it though cause it's quite narrow. I don't know.

Zack: But I meant, you can go the other way and diversify

Kate: You can! You can, you can go both ways and diversify your journey –

Holly: And what a segue that was! So, bit about the podcast. Diversify is basically this idea that the world is so diverse and there's loads of different people in it, loads of different belief systems that are outside the, kind of, mainstream that are all beautiful and we could all do with diversifying ourselves because actually, once you escape the narrative of straight white cisgender male, heteronormativity and all that stuff, and just kind of look out and see the wonderful, colourful world that we live in, it's actually way more beautiful. So, today, we're going to be focussing particularly on something called proportional representation –

Zack: Woo!

Holly: Which, in case you haven't guessed, Zack is very pro. So Zack, could you give us a bit about your history? Cause I know you used to be in the Lib Dems and you campaigned for remaining in the EU, and then you defected -

Zack: I did

Holly: - to Green. So give us your little story.

Zack: So, I was a Lib Dem candidate for the constituency and London List. So, London, the way it elects its London Assembly members, doesn't often get talked about. Generally, when we have elections, it's first past the post, so that just means whoever is first to the post wins and that generally makes it a Labour versus Tory –

Holly: The post is the number of, either votes you need or the number of seats you need to become the ruling party

Zack: - Right, exactly. But because it's not 50% it's not necessarily a majority, someone could win on 26% and just everyone else is kind of hard luck, if that makes sense. Most typical example of that, of course, is in the States where Hillary Clinton won 3 million more votes but because of the, kind of, electoral college system we do have President Trump, unless he's, um, gone by the time this comes out.

Holly: Which could be tomorrow!

Zack: Exactly. But the London Assembly is one of the few times that it's a fairer system. So, each area in London will have one Assembly member for its area, which is generally Labour or Tory. But then what they do is, with all the extra votes, so hundreds of thousands of votes across London, they then 'top up' with all the other parties. So, suppose there was an extra 5% of votes for Greens, then they would get another 5% of seats, which worked out to be 2, I think Lib Dems got one of the seats, sadly UKIP got 2 seats but people wanted to vote for them and they wanted representation so, I think that's important.

Holly: So, does that mean that there isn't a fixed number of Assembly seats?

Zack: No, there's a fixed number of seats but 12 of them, I think it's 12, from constituencies, and then 12 are added from all the votes that have been 'wasted' in inverted commas.

Holly: So it's, kind of, trying to mix it up as fairly as possible

Zack: I would argue that it's still not nearly as fair as it could be and we could have proportional representation across the board. So actually, I mean, we've got into this subject now –

Kate: How would that work?

Zack: So then the seats would match votes. So, if 10% of people voted Green, they'd get 10% of the seats. Or if 30% of people voted Labour, they'd get 30% of the seats. Which might mean that you'd have more than 1 Assembly member in your area or it might mean that you'd have more than one MP representing your area.

Kate: So you're voting for the party, as opposed to the constituency?

Zack: You could still vote for the constituency and vote for the candidates in your area. So, Jeremy Corbyn, he's never, kind of, said if he's for or against PR, but he always avoids the subject. And when I've asked him about it before at hustings and, I think, Owen Jones asked him on a fairly recent blog, he said: "What do you think about proportional representation?" And Jeremy Corbyn said: "I think we need to have a conversation about it but I think it's more important that you maintain the link between your constituency MP and the constituent." Which is, to put it politely, a little bit of an interesting answer, because there's nothing in proportional representation that stops the constituency link between the MP and the people who live there so I think it's a bit of politicking.

Holly: Zack Polanski, I think you may have found the one answer Jeremy Corbyn's ever given like a genuine politician.

Zack: Well, I don't know if that's true either. On a side note, Yanis Varoufakis, the Greek, I can't say his name, the Greek finance -

Holly: I thought you just said a naughty word there!

Zack: Yanis Varoufakis, very left-wing, used to be Greek finance minister, really progressive guy, generally loved throughout Europe in left-wing movements, a good friend of Jeremy Corbyn, he said at a conference that Jeremy Corbyn's position on electoral reform was becoming 'contemptible'.

Holly: And you're talking about electoral reform being –

Zack: Proportional representation

Holly: Proportional representation because he's not coming out in support of it.

Zack: Right, exactly. But, again, somewhere where he's playing the game. There are a few political answers out there as well. For instance, his attitude on the EU. I still can't understand exactly what he's saying.

Holly: Yeah that to me is – I'm a semi-Jeremy Corbyn supporter. I voted Labour for the first time in the last General Election because I thought he ran a fantastic campaign. Also, it was a safe Labour seat anyway, but I felt like –

Zack: But how annoying is it – sorry to interrupt but that sentence leaves my mouth, that it's a safe Labour seat, nowhere should be safe, everywhere should be up for grabs and then politicians would actually be held accountable.

Holly: Absolutely true and actually I often do just vote with my heart anyway because I'm usually in a safe seat and that's good because I never feel pulled but that's also shitty because, my vote doesn't count and that's why we need proportional representation.

Zack: And also, having lived in safe seats, have you ever been canvassed? Has any politician ever knocked on your door and you've been able to have the opportunity to ask them why you should vote for them?

Kate: That very politician or someone who is campaigning for that politician.

Zack: Well, ideally, that politician, which would happen if it's not a safe seat at all because they literally try and get through every door. But yeah, even just a, you know, someone on their behalf.

Holly: Something that was really great in the last election – I've never seen so many people out in the streets. It was all Labour, and that was very interesting because this is, Newham is quite a safe Labour place anyway, but I came out of the station where I used to live and there were just people with Labour stickers, the kind of thing Owen Jones always talks about and you see the pictures and you go: "Well, actually, that never happens on my street". And I felt this, like, elation to actually vote for Labour for that one point in time but it was the first time I'd really seen like, proper ground level support.

Kate: Can we talk about the Momentum movement briefly? Because, I have a lot of contacts or acquaintances that either are on one side or the other. So, you've got people saying Jeremy Corbyn is going to save the country, that he's the best thing that's ever come along in politics for years and then you've got other people that are saying that Jeremy Corbyn's a communist. And, I don't know whether either of these groups of people that I'm talking to quite regularly, really know what they're saying. I feel like it's echo chambers.

Zack: Right

Kate: And I'm just interested in what your opinion on that is and if we can maybe try to detangle that web of confusion for people that may not be as interested in politics but would like some information.

Zack: Right. I think Jeremy Corbyn probably is one of the best things to happen in politics in years. I can't believe that sentence is leaving my mouth! I think he's inspired millions of young people to get interested in politics and I can only take my hat off to that. I think Momentum's a complicated idea to talk about. I remember being at a dinner table once at an event from a think tank called Compass, a left-wing think tank who'd encourage me to come and speak on one of their panels, and I was having dinner with these two people who were both the head of Momentum at the time, or running Momentum. And I presumed they must have been this huge operation because I'm always talking about it, we're always hearing people talk about it. Turns out there's only three of them. Three people who were running it at the time, initially. And also, Owen Jones is a good friend so, I can think of loads of good people who are involved with Momentum who really want the best for the country. I think also at the same time though, it is an absolute tribal machine that's a result of a system that isn't proportional representation. And I worry sometimes that when you've

decided something's wrong with the world, you always see things through that filter. But I think a huge problem, again, is that we don't have a fair voting system so people can't be held accountable. It really encourages this red versus blue battle and everything becomes about your team winning at the expense of all else. And I think a good example of this is Kate Hoey in Vauxhall, um, who's pro-Brexit, she's pro fox-hunting, I don't think she could be much more aggressive as a Labour politician –

Holly: I don't think she could be much more Tory as a Labour politician.

Zack: Right, good point

Holly: Can you tell my biases?

Zack: From what I understand, her local party really dislike her but actually when it comes down to election time it's more important that she gets in than anyone else, including a Lib Dem who I would say was doing a really good job of standing up for Europe and also some of the kind of more left-wing candidates. I just think Momentum, it's not their fault, but I think they're absolutely a product of that binary system. I also think the anti-Semitism is complicated. I don't believe Jeremy Corbyn is anti-Semitic and it really annoys me that I think that's a weapon used –

Holly: Can I just say, I don't think he handled the anti-Semitism very well, but that doesn't necessarily mean he is –

Zack: I agree and I think the extra complicated bit is I think he is willing to court the votes of people who are anti-Semitic to win because we live in a binary system, first past the post, in the same way that he's willing to court Brexit votes and that, for me, is why Jeremy Corbyn is so complicated. Because, I think he could be such a source for good, but because he's stuck in this old voting system which he supports and wants to continue supporting, it results in him having to take absurd positions that he doesn't necessarily believe in, that are completely against our ideology of diversity and equality etc, just in order to win and it becomes just about winning. Just to give you one other example. In Highgate, in Camden, fantastic Green councillor called Sian Berry. She was the Green's mayoral candidate, a young female scientist, smart, sweet's a patronising word isn't it? She's really empathic.

Holly: It shouldn't be... you probably wouldn't call a man sweet.

Zack: I would call a man sweet, which is why I think I paused and thought: "I'd call a man sweet". But I don't think most people would.

Holly: I do that as well, use a lot of things that are mainly associated with one gender with another and it really jars people and I think we should call more men and women sweet.

Kate: We should.

Zack: On Grindr sometimes when I call men pretty they get really bothered by it. They go: "Shouldn't I be handsome?" Anyway, that's a side note.

Holly: Also, no, there are handsome men and there are pretty men. And there are pretty handsome men. And I say that as someone who doesn't want to fuck any of them.

Zack: Are there handsome women?

Kate: Yes! And I say that as someone who doesn't want to fuck any women.

Zack: Can you name a handsome woman?

Holly: Um... uh... yes no I can. Kate Moennig, L Word? No, she's not really handsome. Laura Linney!

Zack: Ok, I get that.

Holly: Laura Linney is a handsome woman. Apparently she's one of, in like a couple of decades, she's the person I'm going to look most like. And I'm like great but I need to get handsome, at the moment I'm too doll-faced.

Zack: For the podcast listeners, Holly is very handsome.

Kate: Very handsome. Like a young Leonardo DiCaprio.

Holly: I've got curtains and everything.

Zack: *Laughs.* Sian.

Kate: Sorry Sian.

Zack: So, she's this amazing candidate. Her Green Mayoral campaign I thought was incredible. It was based in evidence-based practice but it was also visionary and it wasn't boring so, lots of good reasons she should be in politics.

Holly: And, sorry, was this the Mayor of London?

Zack: Yes, exactly. So she ran as the Green Mayor of London but then she also ran much more recently to be Green councillor in Highgate which she's done already for 8 years but was at risk of losing her seat. So, I support her so much I abandoned my own seat the day of election day and the day before just to go and support her.

Holly: This recent election?

Zack: Yes, the latest election. So, on campaign day, there was me, her and Caroline Lucas so we were a pretty tight unit. Things were pretty dire, I shouldn't say that but they felt pretty dire, when the leader of a party and the woman defending her seat and then it's just me, the three of us kind of in that area. I'm talking – there'd been loads of people earlier in the day – I'm talking now like between 8pm and 10pm.

Holly: The kind of last push

Zack: Exactly, final last push. And, I was walking through Highgate and I saw this Labour activist, very middle-class woman, who just said to me, so snarlingly: "You're the first person I've seen all day that isn't Labour".

Turns out there was maybe 50 – 100 of them, all in Highgate, all going for Sian's seat. Meanwhile, Westminster was on a knife edge with the Tories, but Labour were sending people to go and get rid of Sian, because there was a chance that Camden could be totally Labour and not have any opposition whatsoever. So, this is why it comes back to Momentum, that kind of attitude towards politics, where: "We're going to eliminate the opposition, we're going to have full control and no one can stop us doing anything we want."

And then, for instance, in Westminster my friend was the Labour candidate, he lost by 25 votes. So if just 2 of those activists had gone to Westminster we could have had a gay Labour councillor in Soho, who has never had a Labour councillor in its entire history since 1963.

Holly: Long pause while that sinks in –

Kate: And what about the idea of making realistic promises? I mean, I don't know the manifesto that well but I've had conversations recently where people will say: "None of this is achievable."

And people that are very educated in politics so I just have to take their word for it – but a lot of people say: "None of this is achievable."

Or people won't jump on the idea of the inheritance tax. So, someone tried to get me to, uh, change my mind about Labour by saying: "Would you like if when your parents died, you didn't inherit their house and it went back to the state?"

Do you think that is something that Labour is actually going to do? Do you think that the things in the manifesto that are problematic for some people are there because they're trying to promise a Utopia?

Holly: An inheritance tax isn't the same as: "We're going to take your entire house away."

Right?

Zack: Right

Holly: I haven't read the Labour manifesto but I'm pretty sure that would be front page of the Daily Mail, and the Daily Sun, and all of the ones that are problematic for human rights violations if it said: "Corbyn will take away your mum and dad's house when they die."

That's not the same thing as a tax, right? They're not saying –

Zack: No no -

Kate: - Tax already exists

Holly: I'm pretty sure, maybe I'm wrong but does the Labour manifesto say they're going to take your house?

Zack: No they don't. There would be significantly more that they'd be taking away – um – it wasn't in the manifesto, I don't believe, but there was discussion around should people be inheriting houses or, exactly what you said, should they go back to the state? And I think, to be honest, that's a conversation to have, I wouldn't necessarily say that that's a position I support, but I don't like the idea in politics that there are just some conversations that can never be had. And I think, um, for instance one thing I really support is a Universal Basic Income –

Holly: YES!

Kate: Yes

Zack: - and I think parties are really avoiding that conversation because they just know the problematic papers will have a field day.

Holly: Can I ask you just to clarify, for any listeners who don't know: how would you sum up, in a couple of sentences what you mean by Universal Basic Income? And why the context of it will change everything?

Zack: Cool. So, to reverse those questions, it's good because it would mean for actors and artists, they could pursue their dream of creating things and they would have a secure income while they contributed to society.

Holly: Yawn, who gives a crap about actors

Kate: Yeah no one cares about artists

Zack: Ok, and for everyone else, they'd also have the same freedom and creativity as actors and artists might do now if they weren't having to constantly struggle to make rent. And the idea of a Universal Basic Income is, every single citizen, no matter what their income situation, would receive x amount of money that would hopefully cover something like rent, basic food, and basic living conditions.

Holly: And I guess help with big decisions. Cause, even put simply, if I want to buy one banana it's 22p, if I want to buy a bunch of bananas I get 8 of them for £1. If you have a little bit more money, you can get more for that money. And it could, I guess, help people who don't have that chunk of money, even a small chunk of money, to put down for the beginning of a business, the beginning of this, the beginning of that. It is the kind of idea that it can also act as a springboard and then it helps society.

Zack: Right, absolutely. And the really interesting thing is: they're trialling it in lots of different places around the world and one place at the moment is Scotland, where I think they're doing it in three different constituencies, but each time they're having a look at the different impact it's having. So, one is on single woman of a certain age demographic because they think it will really affect decisions about families etc and having kids and this whole complicated conversation –

Holly: How interesting

Zack: It links in with everything else. And then there's one country, I think it was Kenya but I might be wrong, where they trialled Universal Basic Income for a few years, and they found that it was increasing things they hadn't even thought it would affect, like nutrition, dietary, kind of, conditions, I guess that's nutrition, educational attainment, and literally everything was on the up, it was looking like it was amazing. The IMF, International Monetary Fund, a fairly neo-liberal organisation, found out what was going on and shut the whole project down –

Holly: Just before the end wasn't it?

Zack: Right, exactly. And I saw the lady speak who ran it, she was doing a talk on it and I chatted to her afterwards about it. And she said that they tried to do everything they could to keep this thing going on, and they have threats and blackmail, everything, the IMF just said no. And essentially I think, without being a conspiracy theorist, it's because it'll shake the entire system up, it'll change the banks, it'll change the way wealthy newspapers have domination over so much, it's really the eye on the prize that I think everyone should be going for.

Holly: But it's all about a narrative: how can you win when you know most of the papers – let me phrase this well – propagandist papers are going to say this is impossible. How do we change the narrative? Because I think we all know what the Daily Mail is going to say the next day.

Kate: But also, to get a little bit more existential about it, are we being overly ambitious in thinking that humanity within the UK can adapt to new ideas that quickly? I mean, everyone votes for themselves.

Holly: I think yes.

Kate: Yes, brilliant. But it's quite possible that people didn't know what they were voting for, just like Brexit, sometimes people don't really listen to the facts. And if you are saying to someone, you are going to lose this and this if you vote for Labour – I've got some very middle-class friends who will say: "Oh yeah I'm totally happy with losing all of my inheritance if that's what Jeremy Corbyn wants."

And I'm going: "That's very quick to jump to that conclusion, I don't think you've thought this through."

Zack: Right

Kate: It's a very idealistic thing, to go: "Yeah! I don't care about my inheritance!"

And then when it actually happens to you...

Holly: But especially as we don't have a country that's functioning well enough to be able to help them out with bank of mum and dad helping them. So, the house goes to the state, that is, to me, not possible right because we don't have a state that is supporting people who don't have houses in the first place. So if you lose your mum or your dad's or whatever's house, that is the only security you have. But, if you have a state that can secure you enough, which I think if you go to other places, like even in Europe, they're like: "Why do you want to own your house so much? Why is this land so important?"

Zack: It's the same way as people who support left-wing Brexit, or Lexit. – Holly's rolling her eyes but actually I understand and I get it – if we didn't have this, kind of, very right-wing Tory government, that actually, you describe me as pro-European and I am, but I have huge problems with Europe and I think, under a left-wing government, there would be a really good argument to have about not being in the European Union because they've been holding us back in various ways but I think you have to look at things how they are.

Holly: And what they were doing with the Brexit referendum. If you're fighting alongside Nigel Farage and his racist buses you're probably on the wrong side. Twenty years from now or ten years ago it might have been a different story.

Zack: Agreed. I think also the Labour manifesto is problematic in various ways. So, for instance, they were against tuition fees, so they wanted free education, but I think one of the ways they were going to fund that was by freezing benefits. I would rather that people had more money on benefits, for instance through a Universal Basic Income, than wealthy graduates not contributing towards their graduate system. Now, what I'm giving is a false dichotomy because what I'd rather have is a free education and a Universal Basic Income and all those things are possible. And I understand why the Labour Party didn't want to promote that because they were worried about being seen to help the working classes too much, in terms of: "Oh you're helping too many people who aren't getting jobs."

So, again with Jeremy Corbyn, I feel like there's this idea of complete transparency and authenticity but he is really playing the game as well. But then another part of my head goes: "Well of course he's playing the game, he needs to win."

Holly: Right. So there's a great book called 'The Spirit Level' - I don't know if you've read it?

Zack: Yes

Holly: Yeah. So it's called 'The Spirit Level – Why Equality is Better for Everyone'. One of the things that struck me about that was that when the gap between the rich and the poor is the least, it will actually help those who are the richer as much as those who are the poorer end of the spectrum. Because average age of death, even amongst richer people in these more equal societies, is still higher. And you're thinking: "But if they're less rich, why are they still happier and why are they living longer?"

And the thing is, it's correct because it's working, but if you say to somebody: "Be a little less rich, and let other people be a little more rich. You'll actually be happier, you'll live longer and you'll still have everything you need and more."

It's counterintuitive when you just listen to it. But also, at the same time, was it Nixon? The first time it almost got signed into law, was a Republican American.

Zack: Oh wow. Um, though it's not that surprising because it's also quite a right-wing idea. Because, what you're doing is you're reducing the role of the State because you don't need to be taking as much in taxes and things like that because you're moving things around so it's quite a Libertarian idea, you're getting rid of the benefits system etc, um, apart from probably disability benefits. So, um, I think UKIP are quite pro Universal Basic Income.

Holly: That's really interesting to me. I think when people think of Universal Basic Income, if they know what it means anyway, I think of that as a very left-wing idea.

Zack: Yeah absolutely

Holly: Yeah that's kind of blown my mind a bit

Zack: I agree. There was a really interesting question at this conference, where the same lady I was talking about, someone put their hand up and asked a really long question – one of those long-winded comment questions – essentially said: "Is it not a problem with Universal basic Income, the same with Brexit, that if the right-wing control the narrative, something that could have been potentially progressive will become distorted and become a very regressive idea?"

And she went: "Yes."

And you just felt the room kind of go, "Oh. We've got to get ahead of the game here."

Holly: So context. I'm really big on context. We don't live inside a vacuum and what Kate was saying, about certain friends being like, "Well, we have to be pro Jeremy Corbyn because his great idea is perfect."

But the problem is, we don't live in a context where Jeremy Corbyn's great idea can come to fruition without right-wing papers or politicians scare-mongering, all without the fact that right-wing populism is –

Kate: - Also, correct me if I'm wrong but if you have a political party that's only in power for a few years and then someone else takes over then surely you have a lot of these plans that never come to – what's the word –

Zack: Fruition

Holly: That's that gang mentality that you were talking about, you want Labour or Tory and it has to be all Labour instead of that one Green candidate who is amazing

Zack: Exactly

Kate: And so no one ever manages to complete what they were trying to do and everyone ends up looking like they've screwed the country up even more because they didn't have enough time to put those ideas into practice.

Holly: Which is why, when you were saying, "Can humanity change that quickly?"

The last election, the 2017, general election, it was one of the most eye-opening enlightening, simultaneously horrifying and exciting things. The way Jeremy Corbyn managed to swing that narrative and Theresa May just generally not managing to create any narrative, literally swung everything from 'how much of a landslide is this going to be' to a hung parliament. And to me, that quick turnaround was really exciting, but was also scary.

Kate: Can I just tell you a tangent that my brain went on while you were saying those things? I was speaking to a vice-principal at a school recently and we were having a very similar conversation to this, and I said: "Isn't there some way to educate people in politics so that they can engage more easily from a much younger age, and there's not going to be so much of this confusion going on?"

And he told me that there's a course, and I don't know if it's all schools, that teaches all these things, that teaches children to be progressive and about politics, and it's called, I think: 'Core British Values'.

Holly: Oh God

Kate: I know! Doesn't it sound like the opposite of what it is?

Holly: That's good branding. Make all these UKIP voters think they're sending their kids to EDL school.

Zack: I think, there's another thing too that I saw the other day, someone said - I love Bernie Sanders - but they were like: "Bernie Sanders might win in a few years and then we'll have Jeremy Corbyn as Prime Minister, imagine how cool the world is going to be."

And I was like, "What? Two white, older, middle-class men."

That's the other thing about Jeremy Corbyn that people kind of, really put him up as this new, exciting – I guess this is personal bias but I'm just not excited by him. I don't see him as the future. I see him as part of the future but I think if our future is going to be resorting back to 1970s, white politics then I think we need to be going elsewhere with that. The other thing is, was it that Jeremy Corbyn ran a brilliant campaign? Or was it that Theresa May ran one of the worst campaigns in history? That's a genuine question.

Holly: I think both. But I think, for Jeremy Corbyn, I don't think he's God's gift – I mean I'm an atheist so I never would – but I do think what's happened to him is really unfair, by the media. It borders on breaking a lot of laws about media bias. Yeah so basically, I think it's really difficult to be a counter-message and he managed it and was like: "There is an alternative."

Also, Theresa May ran an awful campaign that was lacklustre and lazy. So, I think it's both of them, but I don't think that that should take away how good that campaign was and how it felt positive. And I had not seen anything positive and she managed to make people feel like there was hope, and when people felt like there was hope they voted a lot less for, what I would call negative, more racist, more sexist, more homophobic, more anti-what I stand for policies. So, I think it's half and half. Did that make sense?

Zack: Yeah

Kate: Remember how we said, before we started the podcast, that I was going to play Devil's Advocate and you were going to be the annoying one?

Holly: And this is how we end the podcast, with a punch up!

Kate: So, I'm going to ask a question that I'm not supposed to ask. We talked about parties implementing, um, ideas and plans and then not fully following through with them and therefore just leaving the country in a worse state than it was when they got in. If the Tories were to stay in power for, say, another ten years - I know, ugh - is it possible that whatever it is they're doing might eventually come full circle and start doing something good for the greater –

Zack: No

Kate: - population?

Holly: No.

Kate: No.

Holly laughs

Holly: Hayley?

Hayley: NO.

Zack: I think that, um, you said general population, it's not going to be for the general population, I was going to say it would be good for the 1% but then, we were talking about the Spirit Level, it won't even be good for them because they'll be living in a society with more crime, with people more resentful about the lack of healthcare provision, about prisons that are overcrowded and are not focussing on rehabilitation rather than, you know, punishing people. I don't necessarily know if the Conservatives are bad people, I think some of them genuinely believe that they're doing it for the best interests but I think that, they're doing things with the best intentions a lot of the time, I just think they're misguided in what the country needs and how things are. And also, you don't know what you don't know if you haven't walked in other people's shoes, and I think a lot of them just lack real world experience.

Kate: Ah, it's so easy to be in London and to see that crime is up. I mean, the amount of gang warfare that is going on in so many boroughs in London at the moment, it's soaring –

Holly: Somebody got shot in the head outside where we are doing this podcast right now, and I was there when it happened, and I can tell you right now, that didn't make me want to vote for tougher crime sanctions and all this stuff, it made me want to be more compassionate. And is politics not kind of summed up, in a bunch of people with good intentions accidentally doing everything wrong and trying to make things better

Kate: And no one really knows

Zack: And I don't know if it's always accidental so I don't want to finish a podcast with a pop at Sadiq Khan, but he took more donations during his Mayoral campaign from property developers than he did from Trade Unions. Since then, we've had such a lack of Social Housing Bills and you only have to walk around Central London to see the amount of homelessness, same as gang crime. You only have to walk round London to get that homelessness is massively increasing

Holly: And that is something I would love to talk to you about another time. We'd love you to be a friend of the podcast.

Zack: Nice

Holly: Today's podcast has been about, mainly, proportional representation

Zack: Which diversifies, by the way. So, every time they've got proportional representation in different countries, it results in more female MPs and more MPs from ethnic minorities

Holly: Woop woop!

Zack: Oh, and reduces your chances of going to war.

Holly: And let's be honest, peace is the way forward. So, PLUGS! Zack, tell us about you. How can we find you, what are you up to?

Zack: You can find me mouthing off on twitter @ZackPolanski, it's Zack Z-A-C-K

Holly: And good luck with Polanski! Let's just leave that one to the imagination

They all laugh

Zack: I wouldn't have thought anyone would spell it any other way but you're right, people come up with all sorts so: Z-A-C-K P-O-L-A-N-S-K-I

Holly: Great. And, um, he was on Victoria Derbyshire like a year ago as well, wasn't he?

Zack: I think I went on six times last year. Victoria Derbyshire, Newsnight love to have me on so, it's always nice to have a chat.

Holly: We've got a regular celebrity!

Zack: I don't know about that. One other thing, there's a podcast called 'The Family Tree Podcast'. It is by a guy who created something called 'The Getting Better Acquainted With' podcast, which was one of the Guardian's favourite podcasts a few years ago. He meets interesting people and interviews them for an hour about their life and about their politics. About three seasons ago, which I think was three years ago, he started to interview people about a

murder that happened, and the murder is fictional, but the interviews are done in the same format. So, he's mixing reality and fiction and as the seasons have gone on it's become more political and more and more relevant and slightly sci-fi.

Holly: Brilliant, the Family Tree. Kate?

Kate: Yeah?

Holly: Kate's giddy from her joy ride earlier on and, um, has enjoyed some bubbly. Kate, how can we find you?

Kate: I am KateLoisElliot at Twitter

Zack: What a name!

Kate: Um, can we just sp- ok this is the English spelling of Elliot, so two Ls two Ts. For some reason everything, on any computer ever, autocorrects it to one T and it drives me insane Holly, it drives me insane ok?

Holly: It's the patriarchy

Kate: It's the patriarchy

Zack: This is how every podcast is going to end. It's the patriarchy.

Kate: And on the next podcast I'm going to explain to you exactly why there are so many spellings of Elliott.

Holly: And I'm about to make sure that gets edited out.

They laugh

Um, you can find me on twitter @ourteamq, that is our as in mine and yours and all of ours, team as in, everybody should support arsenal, and Q as in the letters. Our Team Q, that's the producers of this podcast, essentially. There's also a blog, we're going to start doing `Song of the Week` which will all be interesting artists and we're also going to be doing a bunch of cool content there so take a look at www.wearetheq.com – if you want to find us then we'd literally love a follow because this is our first episode and who knows how many followers we're going to have! On twitter we are @diversifypod, on Instagram we are @diversifypodcast

Kate: And we do have three followers

Holly: And that's before we even have anything other than a puppy's face as our headshot

Kate: I set it up an hour ago

Holly: So, you will find us there. We are going to do this thing where, at the end of every podcast, we ask our esteemed guests just two quick questions. So, question number 1:

Kate: When, if ever, do you switch off your activism?

Zack: I don't, and it's a real problem, for instance when I go on dates. I'm a counsellor during the daytime, I often feel like I'm interviewing the person but very often people will say things that I find problematic and it's not like I attack them but I want to discuss and chat about it. And I think it's one of the reasons I've been single for the vast majority of my adult life.

Holly: The second question that we want to ask is, kind of just to end the podcast on a high, because we live in some dark times but it's still the lowest death and murder and hate toll in human history. So, our last question is:

Kate: Zack, will you please give us some sunshine?

Zack: Um, I've got two things actually. One thing is that exit poll you were talking about that came out of the 2017 general election which I think was one of the best moments of my life, where Theresa May had taken this huge, I don't even mean, I mean politics aside, this quite authoritative character had taken this huge gamble and been so cocky about it, and just to see the British public go: "Oh no no no, you don't tell us what to do"

Really enjoyed that. The other one doesn't start off as light but a year ago a friend of mine died in the Manchester terrorist bombing Martyn Hett. And his brother, Dan, I remember a few days after the attack, Mariah Carey had tweeted a picture of Martyn, and Dan, in the most dark Mancunian humour, just said: "I was unsure about my brother's recent social media move, but I'm starting to think he might have had it down."

In fact, here's the light: his mum went on Victoria Derbyshire this week with the mother of a dead ISIS fighter and said: "We have more in common in this conversation because we've both lost children to the same ideology, than to keep fighting with each other."

So, I know that doesn't sound like immediate light, but stuff like that, if you can find that within your darkest moments, then there's hope.

Holly: And listeners, go on twitter and just search the hashtag BeMoreMartyn, and he spells his name M-

Zack: A-R-T-Y-N

Holly: And it is just wonderful how Manchester has managed to defiantly create love out of hate and I'd like to end today on Be More Martyn because I think that's great. Thank you for coming to our first podcast, Zack, and thank you everybody, all three followers of you for listening

Kate: Yes!

Glasses clinking

Holly: Thank you Ellie for being the quietest dog in the history of podcasting

Zack: Yeah, Ellie you can bark now

Kate: Shit, where's she gone?

Holly: Bark!

Hayley: She's asleep!

Kate: She's gone!

Holly: We've bored her so much, she's asleep –

Kate: We've lost the dog.

Zack: Although she is pro-proportional representation

Holly: Ellie the dog is pro, is pro, is pro – fuck. Ellie the – Do you know what, let's end on a tongue twister. Say pro-proportional representation ten times fast, send it in to us, tag us on twitter, hashtag DiversifyPod and I swear to the God I don't believe in that, if anyone sends me ten times pro-proportional representation, that's our new theme song. Thank you very much for listening, all three of you!

All: Yay!

Instrumental outro

Kate: I'd like to do my radio voice for both if that's ok, we didn't discuss this but I've decided I'd like to do my radio voice for both if that's ok.

Holly: Another edit...

Record scratch sound

Holly: Helloooo, Holly here. Thank you so much for getting to the end of the podcast, oh my God we cannot thank you enough! This is just a quick one at the end, just to let you know, we actually recorded this episode before the recent People's March, and also before the talk of a second referendum on Brexit had become so mainstream, so that's why Zack doesn't mention it. But, fear not, Zack was on the march and, if we have him on again, which we certainly hope will happen, we'll be sure to ask him about it. Now, we know it's a whole week to wait before episode two lands but trust us, it'll be worth it, as we welcome the fantastic actor and activist – does that make him an actor-ivist? Ooh, punny lady! We welcome Daniel York, to talk about the importance of diverse representation in the media and arts world. Thanks for listening and, yup, hit subscriiiiiibe. Thank you!