

Erica:

Hello, listeners, and welcome to Balcony Talks. I am Erica Bennett, a current grad student in the Religion and Culture Master's program at the University of Alabama. Here at UA. We often find ourselves in great discussion on our buildings' balconies. We wanted to bring those conversations to the public, but found it difficult to catch all of the interesting conversations and record them candidly. So instead, we offer this podcast Balcony Talks where we discussed topics that may be heard in passing but we brought them to this podcast space. Today, I am joined by Sierra Aycourst, a fellow grad student.

Sierra:

Hey, Erica. I was just scrolling through TikTok the other day and this video showed up on my feed that I didn't totally understand that I thought you would maybe be able to help me understand. It was a video of a woman who was explaining that she was a radical traditionalist Catholic, and she used the hashtag radtrad. She was talking about wearing a veiled mass and how it signified her religiosity. But I'm confused because I grew up Catholic and I have never seen anyone veil at mass. I was just wondering, what is this? What is rad trad? Do you know what's going on?

Erica:

That makes sense. I recently saw Kaitlin Bennett, the girl famous for her different videos on different campuses. She's the gun girl or whatever, but I saw her post a photo on Twitter the other day that she was going to Sunday mass and she was wearing a veil. I'm not sure exactly what is going on, but I think I know who we should talk to: Dr. Lauren Griffin. She is studying exactly this, the online rad trad culture, along with her other research interest. Dr. Lauren just accepted a position as an incoming Religion and Politics Professor in the Philosophy and Religion Department at Louisiana State University. So I bet she'll have some good answers for us.

Erica:

Can you explain the hashtag #radtrad? What groups are using it and what's the significance behind this hashtag?

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

Rad trad is the social media term for radical traditionalist Catholic. The easy answer is that traditionalists or radical traditionalists are Catholics who prefer traditions, liturgical forms, and presentations of Catholic social teaching from before Vatican II or the Second Vatican Council beginning in 1962. Before that council, which is just a meeting of bishops, the mass was said in Latin and priest spaced away from the congregation and women had to cover their heads in mass. There are Catholics who want Catholicism to look more like this and who still attend Latin mass, and we're seeing on social media, who still wear the veil both to Latin mass and to novice order mass, which is what we call the ordinary form of mass or the majority of masses said today.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

But radical traditionalists also have ... not all traditionalists or Latin mass goers, but there's a history of anti-Semitism. For example, the Southern Poverty Law Center has a list of radical traditionalists hate groups. But there's also been a recent rise of leftists and liberation theology types who are gravitating toward traditional mass and piety as their own way of rebelling against neoliberalism and capitalism

and modernity. So there's a lot going on there in terms of religious identity and politics and gender and conceptions of ethnicity and race and nationalism and immigration and more. It's a lot going on.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

Now, the hashtag itself is interesting because it's sort of a fun meme word. Rad trad. The internet is sort of rammmed with it. Well, maybe 30 years ago, I'm not sure how many people would've self-identified as a radical traditionalist Catholic. The term rad trad wasn't a thing yet. The earliest I found it is about 2012 on Twitter.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

But now it's widespread. So rather than it being a specific group of people that we can point to, this is a really great example of how our conception of a coherent rad trad group is really created by us using the term. Like popular stereotypes, media images, and our academic work, it's invented in talking about it. Of course, a particular Catholic's adherence to tradition, however conceived, like veiling, is happening. But this idea of a singular rad trad identity or group really is like, as J.C. Smith would say, a creation of our own study. A lot of the conversation online revolves around exactly who counts as trad or rad trad. How seriously does one have to sit at Latin mass to be rad? Do you have to veil, et cetera? Conversations around veiling in particular is a really interesting spot to look at how trad culture is actually brought into existence and managed.

Erica:

What I'm getting from this is that rad trad is just this overall internet idea. Lots of different traditional groups are using rad trad. Is it mostly Catholicism or do you see a lot of Protestants? Is it leaning towards radical traditionalism in Catholicism related to pre-Vatican II times?

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

I think that this idea of going back, we can think about origins narratives. We see it in a lot of different tradition. The resurgence of house churches that was really popular in Protestant communities a few years back. There are definitely trad groups in Anglicanism and Orthodox communities, for sure. There was an article in the New York Times called Christianity gets weird because on Twitter sometimes they call it weird Christianity or weird Catholicism, which it also refers to the idea of tradition. That we're bringing something back. We're making it great again.

Erica:

For sure. I think that's interesting in the resurgence that we've seen in this hashtag rad trad recently, especially after the Trump administration, having that be the whole slogan for a really long time. Bringing this created past in our head and being like, "Let's bring it back." Well, we can see with radical traditionalism, this #radtrad, that might not be the case. There's not this perfectly pristine tradition in the past that was awesome that we need to like pick up and move. We're almost like creating this idea of tradition and then fake-ly picking it up and moving it.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

Right. That's what's so interesting about our job is that we can look at communities we call religious and communities we call political or wherever, and just say, "Hey, how are narratives of the past working?"

How are these actually acts of identification for the here and now and not so much a record of the then?"

Erica:

Yeah, I think the record of the then. I love that. So you talked about it a little bit a minute ago, but when did we see this radical traditionalism really get a foothold in social media? You said the hashtag was 2012, we start seeing it. But when do you think the popularity of it really sprung off?

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

That's a really good question. I think as far as this being formed in around sort of these terms, these very online terms, so I'll see the term trad or rad trad used in conversation with other very online identities. There's a quote from a Twitter user who was like, "Why is my TL filled with like K-pop-ers, cinephiles, trads, Catholics, MGTOWs, incels. These are all very online identities. Performing this online has gotten wrapped up in all, it is related to all those other culture, e-girls, trad wives, things like that.

Sierra:

What I don't quite understand is what is the radical part in rad trad? Because the words radical and traditional seem kind of paradoxical. How do those work together? How can you be both?

Erica:

I had a similar question while talking to her. They're kind of like this conservative idea and this liberal idea meshed into one, but we did luckily touch on that.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

Putting those two terms together, radical and tradition or radical and orthodoxy, there was a movement decades ago out of Anglicanism that was the radical orthodoxy. Putting those together is interesting. It's intentional. Who's rad enough to be trad is a huge topic on trad Twitter. How trad do you have to be to be rad? Some people don't want to be known as rad. They're like, "I'm trad, but I'm not one of them," however construed. Again, the identity being really formed in the online discourse over and over every day, who's rad enough to be trad, for sure.

Sierra:

Okay, that makes sense. Because I've been seeing this rad trad trend on social media for a while now, so it's nice to know what's going on. But I'm still confused about why is it now that women are starting to veil at mass? I never saw that growing up. Since I've stopped going to mass, so I don't know. Am I missing something? Have there been changes within the Vatican that changed some rules? Or what else is going on?

Erica:

I think Lauren has a perfect explanation of that.

Erica:

We touched on it a little bit, but can you go a little bit more into how veiling is being connected to this hashtag and this ideology we've circled around?

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

The history of veiling and head covering is long and not linear or consistent. The simple answer is that before Vatican II, women had to cover their heads in mass. This is based on 1 Corinthians 11, which some interpret to say women should cover their heads when praying. But the head covering requirement wasn't explicit until the 1917 Coda of Canon Law. Of course, head covering was common before that both in and out of mass, but by no means is it happening in all times and all places for the last 2000 years.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

The veil, just a cursory look through paintings of mass from the Middle Ages to the 19th century, show a variety of head wear both for men and women and lots of images in which women's heads are uncovered. In the Middle Ages. The wimple was really popular for a while and then became only for nuns as fashion changed. Women started doing elaborate braids and beading and other styles like the hennin which is that long cone headdress, which I really liked when I was a kid to dress up like a princess.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

But these were changes in fashion outside a mass. In fact, the lace mantilla that's popular now, this resurgence of veiling is very specifically a mostly white, but now different colors, lace mantilla that came about in 16th, 17th century Spain, and then the Americas, Latin America, were Spain-colonized. But by the 19th century, mantillas were mostly just for Holy Week, the week before Easter and at bull fights.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

If you look at photos of Catholic mass in the U.S. in the 20th century before Vatican II, from the 1910s to the 1960s, you'll see very few veils until the 60s. It was hats. You'll see flapper hats in the 20s, and little crescent or circle hats, pillbox hats, like little flower-trimmed head pieces or small hats from the 50s. People wore hats. Think of any archival photo you've seen of this time period. Men and women when they're out, you just wore hats. Women just kept them on in church while men removed them. I have a totally unsubstantiated theory that Jackie O, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, single-handedly brought back the lace mantilla in the early 60s.

Erica:

Wait, yeah.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

There are photos of her, and of course, icon, whatever, so in 60s you'll see lace mantillas in photos of mass. But still fairly few. Women still wear hats and girls would wear what's called a chapel veil, which is a little silk or lace doily that they would just set on top of their heads, mostly for communion. But by the late 60s, women are already not covered at all. Then as Vatican II started becoming in effect, head covering fashion in general, people weren't wearing hats as much. So we see less head covering. But it was never illegal to wear a veil or cover your head in mass.

Erica:

What it sounds like is that veiling at mass is something people have done for lots of years on and off, but especially with the example of the early 1900s in America especially with just these little hats, the cute

ones, and they definitely are fitting the fashion at the time. But veiling at mass is less of a "religious requirement" and more of a social phenomenon that's happening. This thing that's being grouped and created, and it's not just this, "Oh, the Pope said I had to do it. Oh, the Vatican said I had to do it." It's more of these social performativity versus something that we could maybe see in the doctrine of women have to have head coverings. It's not. We don't quite see that. We're seeing it more in this social context that's changing over years and changing through the generations.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

The idea that this has always been a part of Catholic traditional culture As if it's a stable, a historical thing. So we've got those origin narratives going on, especially that appeal to Mary wanting to veil as she did, look as she did. But one thing in common for a lot of these explanations of veiling, is that they debate what it "means," whether it's modesty, humility, empowerment on some. So, what it means. Again, assuming that it's a stable thing that communicates something in and of itself, and as you're pointing out, we can ask as scholars interested in how culture works, what social purposes is it serving. How is it being used by people in this very historical moment?

Erica:

I think that's awesome, and I agree. It's impossible to take these examples we've brought of the TikToks, of different people posting on Twitter, and taking them out of time. There's one. Just the fact that it's being posted on social media places it in a very specific time in human history that can't be ignored. Speaking of these examples and thinking of TikTok and Twitter, as we talked about earlier, are those examples, do you think there's something special about social media that's created this re-veiling trend? Or do you think there's a larger or different explanation for the re-veiling trend popping up pretty recently?

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

That's a really great and complex question. The short answer is yes. I think that digital media is the determinative factor here. But of course media isn't something that's apart from us or from culture. I think that just a cursory glance right into the history of head covering shows a diversity of practices that was embedded in local cultures and fashions where it was common to cover one's heads all the time, not just in mass. But the discourse that it's always been there is just such a great example of how we imagine tradition and then mediatizing it, exactly, it tears down those physical barriers we used to have. So if you didn't know that veiling was a thing before social media ... Women have been veiling. We just didn't see it performed. Now there's all these ways to sort of create new affinities and draw new boundaries that we're all seeing. So the fact that it's been mediatized is determinant.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

So, veiling in 2022 is performing a very different social work than it did, say, in 17th century Spain or 14th century England. Even in 2022, the veil does different work depending on who's using it. For some, it's creating an embattled tradition that we got to preserve tradition in the face of modernity. I read the popularity of veiling or perhaps the growing discourse on veiling in light of growing contemporary challenge to normative ideas about gender and heteronormativity.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

At the last podcast episode you all discussed, I remember, we have super popular queer icons like Lil Nas X and Janelle Monae, and people play with gender performance like Harry Styles. It's common now to talk about gender identity and fluidity. These are very mainstream conversations.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

Then we see the reactions to that. Reactions to LGBTQ folks in general being normalized, reaction to bills like the Don't Say Gay bill. I read some of the veiling discourse. Not all, but some of the veiling discourse, as very much in that conversation. But I mean, to go even broader in the creation of tradition, we see statements like, this is a quote from a tweet I read, "I veil because the 2000 years of church history are more important than the last 50 years since Vatican II." So right in that construction, we see Vatican II as an event that broke a previously unbroken line. So we've got a lot going on there. Narrativizing Vatican II as an event, a crisis, manufacturing veiling as part of that past.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

But every now and then there are little interesting explanations of relationships with tradition. I came across another comment under Kaitlyn's veil post that said, "As a married woman, you should really wear black now. White is for virgins." Someone else replied, "Oh, you don't have to follow that strict old rule. You can wear whatever colors you want, even fun colors now." On one hand, we've got unbroken tradition of veiling and you have to do it. But also, you go make it your own. I think that's a really nice example of the idea of it's not bringing back the 60s or the 1560s or the 1360s, or whatever.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

This whole conversation is built on modern ideas about choice and the individual. This is a product of modernity and looking to what the discourse reacting against the veil, which there isn't a ton of, but I found a few pieces. It's interesting to ask how those are also reacting to veiling. Constructing themselves as modern and rational in the face of "backward, oppressed." We're all constructing ourselves in reaction to these ideas of modernity and tradition and how we construct ourselves as modern subjects or religious subjects, and how are those sometimes put in opposition.

Erica:

I think that's the interesting part too, especially in America. I grew up in the south and so it's a very Protestant area. There's Catholic pockets, but not too much from where I grew up. All of my social media, my friends growing up, I didn't see Catholics doing Catholic things, or whatever that means. But now I have this access to internet that is worldwide and people are posting every day. That's when we see these veilings, and then it, I think, almost spurs a trend, even saying re-veiling trend. What does that mean that has a social media or a media context in it already?

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

And, I mean, who knows if us using these terms is creating the idea that it is being a trend. There's no sociological data on how many Catholic women veil so it's hard to say if it's a trend that we're seeing on the ground, or if it's a media trend. Anecdotally, I've read pieces by priests who say they're noticing some women veiling for the first time, but not in huge numbers. So it's hard to say how widespread the practice is or if it's actually growing or if we're just having to see it more.

Erica:

Is it actually, the amount of people doing it, is that big or what I'm seeing on Twitter used to be zero and now it's 20?

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

Exactly.

Erica:

And so now I think it's a trend because I've seen 20 women from across the globe putting a veil on before mass and taking a photo of it. Is that actually a trend that's happening? Or is it a trend because I used to see none of it?

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

Well, and what's great about it is, at least in our work, we don't necessarily have to answer the question. We can just be like, wow, look how this phenomenon is being formed in the discourse itself and the media images itself. In other words, the more we talk about it, the more we construct "girls who veil" as a coherent bounded group with the same reasons and purposes that we can say, beware or behold, whichever way. That's what I find interesting.

Sierra:

Okay, so veiling, isn't new, but it's kind of new. It's this resurgence of an old tradition, but the resurgence makes veiling its own unique modern act. And so, those who participate have new reasonings and motives for doing this. So then, that makes me interested in the internet and how this new idea of radical traditionalism and veiling at mass is reaching a larger audience than ever. Do you think that means congregations in a way are now not just your local church, but also your followers?

Erica:

I had the same question. I think Lauren has an interesting explanation.

Erica:

Is religiosity now larger than just your congregation? Does it now connect to a whole ecosystem of a religious internet or a religious side of the internet?

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

Yeah. I mean, digital media is interesting in that these peer-to-peer digital networks have now served like broadcast media. For example, when I asked my students what they're watching, the most common answer is that, "Oh, I just scroll TikTok" or "I watch YouTube." Most often, it's podcasts on YouTube. Of course, it's not passive. We get instant feedback, instant conversation around the thing that we're posting. Communities of practice, like you said, can develop fairly quickly apart from the physical space. What we might call fringe practice of veiling at Catholic mass, which in the past one may have never seen even if you're Catholic your whole life, is now all over the place. So those physical barriers of the pre-digital world are gone. And these groups, even if quite small, once assembled online are super robust, even in the face of larger "mainstream" or majority groups.

Sierra:

This transcript was exported on Sep 02, 2022 - view latest version [here](#).

I know that recently in the U.S., we've seen a lot of news around the increase in religious traditionalism, but is rad trad specific to America or are there other places where we see this idea as well?

Erica:

I think it's easier for us to see rad trad in American social media because that's what we interact with the most, but Lauren told me that's not the whole picture. '

Erica:

I think this is an important question to think about as scholars. I know we live in the United States, so most of our knowledge of internet is going to be from a very American point of view. But this trend of #radtrad or veiling, if we can even call it a trend, what part of the world are we seeing this become popular in? Do you think that's an important conversation to tackle onto this?

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

Radtrad the hashtag, I've seen when I've mined Twitter for it, I see it in always in that construction, radtrad. That English, I mean, those words are from other languages as well, but that radtrad version, tweets in Tagalog, in German, in Portuguese. I have a paper command about Brazilian uses of this.

Erica:

Wow.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

It's definitely a thing that is popular in multiple locations. I don't want to call it global because I think that the goal of highlighting the varieties of Catholic traditionalists around the world is to analyze on a global scale the ways in which they actually challenge an idea of globalism. They're formed in conversation with each other to be sure, and new media makes that possible. They make identities possible that weren't possible before. So, veiling and traditionalism is certainly global in that it appears in a lot of places, but there's no unified global Catholic trad. Of course, as the entertainment media center, the U.S. still drives a lot of internet and meme culture. But it really, as specifically discussion of gender roles and veiling shows, it really is a layered story of exchange and circulation. It's not just one country or one place or one tradition or one religion acting on people. It's like people using different tools in the cultural toolbox that involve local stuff, but also internet culture that sort of defies physical boundaries.

Erica:

That makes sense.

Sierra:

This is all really cool. I love how Lauren has intertwined the internet and her research on religious ideas. I wonder if more scholars should be using the internet in their work.

Erica:

I hope scholars do start using more internet and social media data in their work. I think Dr. Griffin would agree with us.

Erica:

As a scholar or just someone who's interested in this topic, why do you think we should care about re-veiling? Maybe, isn't it a good thing people are reinserting themselves into their faith or does it say something else? Why should we care about this?

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

I think the reason this is cool apart from any sort of interest one may already have in it, is because it's just such a great example of how we imagine tradition and think of things as stable, ahistorical, apart from social reality. I mean, like we said earlier, all discourse about making something great again or going back to an imagined time, whether that be 1950 or 1350 in the case of some of the trads, wherever we're imagining that pure place to be is doing real social work in 2022. This is such a great little tight example of how digital media is involved, internet culture, origins discourses on the past, mobilizing ideas of tradition. It's such a great example of so many little, little things.

Erica:

Because I think when you first see rad trad or you first see someone veiling, I think you can, because the internet is such part of our everyday life, it's so integrated in everything we see, I think when you first see it, you can be like, "Ah, well, that's just another person being religious. It's just another person deciding to wear something on their head." But when you take a step back and kind of be like, "Oh, okay, what's going on here? What are all the parts that have led to this?" Because it didn't just come out of nowhere. I think we've said that a few times. It's not that this veiling has just popped up. One person didn't just decide one day to start veiling. There's lots of layers to this. I think that adding the internet as one of those layers just is really interesting and cool in our modern age of scholarly work or just being interested in stuff.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

I think what people at UA in the Religion and Culture can offer in particular, what I've been noticing is that people really want to talk about specifically right-wing Christianity, Christian nationalism. These are big conversations in the field right now. I've seen people write, people have written pieces in the New York Times and The Guardian addressing traditionalism, unveiling, and trad wives, things like that. It's all interesting. It's all great. But this flurry of work, I just feel like people write about lots of things like being nostalgic or being anti-feminist, being alt-right connected, but no one seems to question the notion that they are traditional. No one's unpacking these ideas about mobilizing tradition in this way, which I think is really important and something that people like us could add to the conversation.

Erica:

So, how do you use social media in your work other than just looking on Twitter? Is there, I don't know, I just want to know how are you using social media to further your scholastic-

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

Endeavors?

Erica:

Endeavors.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

Indeed. I've done a couple different things with the help of Professor Waringa. I've been thinking about computational text analysis and getting lots of tweets. Pulling big data. I've been using Python not only to mine the tweets, but also to see trends and relationships. So there's one way to do it. One method to approach. I also have been really interested in theorizing technology, theories of technology and discourse of technology. So, how people think and talk about social media algorithms. That's why I like TikTok so much because people imagine the algorithm so much. There's a lot of discourse about, like, my algorithm's off today. Or, why is this on my FYP?

Erica:

It's like an entity.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

Yes. And people will react. Like, their identity. There's all this talk on TikTok about how the people have questioned their like sexuality and identity because they're like, "TikTok thinks I'm whatever," or "TikTok thinks I'm an ex-Mormon," or "TikTok thinks I'm a part of the lesbian community, that I'm interested in farming," or whatever. So all of these trends, communities have done a really good job on TikTok. So, there's all this talk. I'm really interested in theorizing that. The idea of it. Not only just the talk on it, the content of it, but like people are thinking about thinking. Think about what they're doing. And how that also goes into identity.

Erica:

Should scholars start studying and analyzing how religion or tradition or culture, all with air quotes, are expressed on social media? How are these different aspects that have just been, there's so many books, so many books about these topics, but now we're moving to the internet age? Should scholars be looking at these topics and how they're being expressed on social media? If so, if you think yes, why?

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

That's a really good question. Of course, I mean, that's how it's media, right? The fact that we've written books about the printing press and how that's affected, or the transition from scroll to codex and how that impacted. I think the more interesting question is not whether we should because obviously that's where life is happening and that's how ideas are being made. But I think that this shift in media and technology over just the last few decades is so fast.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

It's so hard because we're still writing about how the printing press impacted media and "religion" or whatever, nationalism or whatever. It's so fast and it so requires knowledge of the technology or whatever. I think that what the exciting part is that it's making us rethink our theory, our approach, to how we're even talking about this. So we had this idea, we're reevaluating older ideas about media theory like the medium is the message, or a reception theory or whatever. These more clear cut, well, how did people receive the message? How did people produce and control the message? Well, now it's like a big old mess. And so, we have to rethink how we're approaching the study of it altogether, which is exciting and frustrating and interesting.

Erica:

That makes so much sense because we had the printing press for hundred ... well, hold on. That sounded dumb. I don't know how long we had the printing press for, but we had it for years.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

Hundreds.

Erica:

Okay, hundreds of years before something new was invented to make it better, but we see on Instagram, but we see on social media, that the news cycle is 24 hours. That's a very common thing that 24 hours is the new cycle on social media. So we are going through stuff like you said at an exponential rate. Not just technology, but just ideas as well.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

So much content.

Erica:

So much content.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

A little bit of everything all the time.

Erica:

That was never available until a few years ago. I agree. It's really making us rethink all of these longstanding ideas of what we had because you had time to sit and think and mull over and read 700 books. But now I don't have time to read all of the tweets in #radtrad. There's quite literally not enough time.

Dr. Lauren Griffin:

And if you caught up, even if you did, there'd be more of that.

Erica:

There'd be more. It's more and more and more is coming.

Erica:

So after hearing all of that, what do you think is the point? Why should someone care about this internet thing called #radtrad? Why should I care that Kaitlin Bennett is wearing a veil while she goes to mass? What did you take away from this interview with Dr. Griffin?

Sierra:

That's a great question. I think that the important thing from having this conversation that I think I've learned is we now live in a time where we have different avenues for creating our own identities and sharing those identities with other people. Especially with social media, the #radtrad wouldn't have existed 20 years ago when we didn't have Twitter and we didn't have Instagram and we didn't have all these different forms of social media. And so, I think the question then becomes, how are these

different trends, how are they individual acts of performativity but within larger structural areas? When I first saw the rad trad trend, I was like, "Oh, must be something going on in the Catholic church, the structure, the hierarchy." I hadn't even like considered that these were individual choices that were people were making based on their own interpretations of their religiosity. So I think it one of the questions that we can ask, and one of the things we can think about is, how is social media changing the way that we create our identities and then reaffirm those identities to those around us?

Erica:

I think that's perfectly said. I also want to add, I think, secondly, this is a great case study of nothing is really from the past. Obviously, things are from the past, but when the veiling trend has reappeared specifically, it isn't a direct copy from the past veils of the Catholic church. It's taking bits and pieces from a shared history and making something new, which is really awesome. I just think it's something to think about and something we talked about a little bit with Dr. Griffin. I think it's something really cool that we're able to link our past with our present and also realizing that maybe the past isn't as stagnant as we think it is.

Erica:

But it's been really awesome talking to you today, Sierra. Thank you for bringing me these awesome examples.

Sierra:

Thank you so much for having me on Erica and answering my questions, and having Dr. Griffin on as well to explain further the questions that I did have about this trend

Erica:

Balcony Talks is an American Examples production in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Alabama with funding from Henry Luce Foundation. This episode was produced by Erica Bennett. Special thanks to Dr. Lauren Griffin and Sierra Aycourst. Follow the Department of Religious Studies on Twitter and Instagram at the handle @studyreligion. Or on Facebook at facebook.com/relatua. If you enjoyed this episode, please subscribe to our podcast on SoundCloud, Spotify, or Apple Podcast and give us a rating and review.