**E1+Meet+Jasmine+and+Mo.m4a**

**Mo** [00:00:04] That I don't know. Hi. Welcome to Parenting is Political. This is Mo.

**Jasmine** [00:00:10] And this is Jasmine.

**Mo** [00:00:11] And this is our very first episode of the broadcast.

**Jasmine** [00:00:16] Yeah, and I guess an important show note is that you might hear baby coos in the background and if you do that's August. We think that it should be normalized and completely legal and acceptable to bring young people your children to work. And so that's what we're doing.

**Mo** [00:00:35] Yeah. Which you know is something we'll dive into I'm sure on this podcast at some point.

**Jasmine** [00:00:40] In future episodes.

**Mo** [00:00:41] Yeah exactly. I'm excited to do this first one. This is something I've been wanting to do for a while and I love podcasts like a podcast junkie. I listen to them pretty much anytime I can. I don't know about like a month ago I told Jasmine I was like, "I think I wanna do a podcast. I think that would be something that would be really cool. And I think I wanted to be on parenting."

**Jasmine** [00:01:07] And I was like you're lunatic. That's a lot of labor but I love Mo and I want them to be happy. So here I am supporting this little side project.

**Mo** [00:01:19] Yeah. And this is again not anything I've ever done before. This is just more of like my passion and my interest. And Jasmine has so graciously agreed to help me out in ways that I literally cannot even imagine.

**Jasmine** [00:01:36] So we should set your expectations right now. You know we hope that you will tune in and experience really great conversation and thought provoking and action provoking commentary. Meaning that we want the things that we talk about to become transformative habits in your life. If you find them helpful as they've been helpful in ours. But don't expect some sort of like fancy pod save the people or New York Times kind of production. You're going to hear our kid farting in the background.

**Mo** [00:02:13] I might be farting in the background might be in the background.

**Jasmine** [00:02:17] [Laughter] Mo might be farting in the background. And besides having decent sound quality and an ability to download it that's all you're getting people. We've got four damn kids.

**Mo** [00:02:29] Yeah, we have four of them.

**Jasmine** [00:02:30] We're busy and we don't have time to make your fancy podcast production.

**Mo** [00:02:36] Not yet anyway.

**Jasmine** [00:02:38] Wow.

**Mo** [00:02:39] I got dreams for the future.

**Jasmine** [00:02:41] Dreams and goals I guess.

**Mo** [00:02:41] Yeah. So I guess again to kind of give you like a roadmap of what we're kind of expecting here. This is my project. This is something I'm going to be doing and Jasmine is going to be helping with it. So there's gonna be some episodes that it's gonna be me interviewing people and there's gonna be some episodes where we might do like some Q and A is where Jasmine will hop back on the podcast and answer some questions that you can email us at the end of the show and we'll answer those together and there might just be some episodes where Jasmine might do it and I might be sick or something.

**Jasmine** [00:03:14] Haha, you said do it.

**Mo** [00:03:16] Classic. But this first episode is just going to be our introduction.

**Jasmine** [00:03:23] Get to know us. Mo tell the people about you. Who are you? What should they know about you? What's your sign?

**Mo** [00:03:31] Well if we got to start with the sign everyone's gonna hate me. I'm a Gemini.

**Jasmine** [00:03:35] A.k.a. demon. It's ok if you bail now.

**Mo** [00:03:39] Let's get it out there. There's two of me in one person. Yes, I'm a Gemini. My name is Mo. I am non-binary person and I use they/them pronouns. I'm also an insta parent. Jasmine had already had three kids whenever I met her and fell in love.

**Jasmine** [00:04:02] GROSS.

**Mo** [00:04:04] And so I kind of jumped into family life. Or I didn't kind of, I did. And so now I have four kids because Jasmine and I decided I wanted to do this from the very beginning and now we are four. And so I am experiencing parenthood from the beginning this time which is a whole different ballgame.

**Jasmine** [00:04:25] Yes indeed. Yeah.

**Mo** [00:04:27] And so that's just a little bit of what I do. It's a little bit of my background. What else do you think the people should know?

**Jasmine** [00:04:37] You have a weird One Direction obsession.

**Mo** [00:04:40] I do.

**Jasmine** [00:04:41] You're white.

**Mo** [00:04:43] Oh well yeah. I'm white. I guess we should add that.

**Jasmine** [00:04:49] And I'm Jasmine. We already established thatI'm a Virgo, born September 4, the same day as Beyonce, and I like to never let the world forget that because it's important.

**Mo** [00:05:03] It is important.

**Jasmine** [00:05:04] We Virgos have to celebrate when we can because we're usually too busy being way too serious in organizing everyone's lives and trying hard not to say I told you so.

**Mo** [00:05:16] Trying being the keyword there.

**Jasmine** [00:05:17] My pronouns are she/her or Beyonce. I will respond to any of them. And I'm a mom of four married to Mo Tester. This is my second marriage because marriage is trash and we're gonna have episode about that. What else should they know about me?

**Mo** [00:05:37] Well you really like to cook and you make really good food, particularly sandwiches, which happened to be my favorite food. So really, we're soulmates.

**Jasmine** [00:05:56] That kind of makes me sound boring.

**Mo** [00:05:58] OK we'll do another one.

**Jasmine** [00:06:02] So what else is there? I think that's it, honestly. That's all I need the people to know.

**Mo** [00:06:08] I was going to say we don't need to let them know everything. This is the first episode after all.

**Jasmine** [00:06:14] But also shoot your shot. We want them to be hooked on us. We want you to be addicted to the melodic tones of our voices. We want to be the queer Casey Kasems.

**Mo** [00:06:28] Oh we did we mentioned that we're queer?

**Jasmine** [00:06:30] Oh gosh if they haven't figured that out from our pronouns.

**Mo** [00:06:33] Do they know that we are gay?

**Jasmine** [00:06:36] Well I mean I'm a fake gay according to the internet.

**Mo** [00:06:39] It's true. You only do it for the Internet.

**Jasmine** [00:06:40] I only do it for the Internet. That's why I got married to a non-binary person. It was just to pretend for the Internet. But again another episode for another time.

**Mo** [00:06:55] "Fake gay for the Internet," that's what the name of that one's going to be called. Just you wait. Do we want to talk about our kids at all?

**Jasmine** [00:07:07] I think let's just set the stage for everyone about just the title of this podcast and where we're headed. What makes us different than other podcasts besides the fact that we are an interracial queer couple. What can the folks expect from our praxis? Or the practice of what how we live. And our analysis, that is to say what we think and believe and how it informs how we live.

**Mo** [00:07:49] Yeah I think that's a great place to begin.

**Jasmine** [00:07:50] August agrees with us.

**Mo** [00:07:52] Clearly very vehemently agrees. So why is parenting political then?

**Jasmine** [00:08:03] Is that a question for me or for the audience?

**Mo** [00:08:06] Well I think the audience is welcome to answer it but because this isn't a live show I think it's a great time to answer that question.

**Jasmine** [00:08:16] I'm glad you asked Mo. Wow, August just coughed, farted and laughed at the same time.

**Mo** [00:08:23] It's happened to the best of us.

**Jasmine** [00:08:25] So the personal is political, right? Most of us acknowledge that there is no one area of our lives that we can really separate from our larger communities and the impact in larger communities despite what white supremacy, patriarchy, and capitalism want us to believe about how we live and how we find ourselves in community with one another. And because the personal is political, I can't really think of anything more deeply personal than how we choose to create family, how we choose to build and cultivate family in the context of the collective, and the choices that we make within within those lines.

**Mo** [00:09:15] Absolutely.

**Jasmine** [00:09:17] And so parenting is political then, right? Every choice we make in how we will rear young people into the world, whether we're insta parents or we're birth parents,or adoptive parents. Whether we're aunties or community members who are just invested in young people. However we find ourselves parenting and loving--that is an act of political resistance or an opportunity to co-sign the status quo. And the status quo of our society is really deeply embedded in anti-black white supremacy and racism. It's embedded in patriarchy and capitalism and this sort of extractive model of relationship and the commodification of people. And so when we as caregivers and parents choose the radical path it is an act of unequivocal resistance and emboldens and agitates other folks to also choose to disrupt their complicity in systems of harm, in those you know societal practices of violence. And so I think for me that's where parenting is political comes from. That sort of like the the echo of my heart around this conversation.

**Mo** [00:10:42] I really like that model and I think that's important that we understand that that's where we're working from. And as we go forth in this podcast and we talk about different ways that people are parenting or different ways that people are experiencing parenthood just understanding that everything comes back to a different form of resistance. You can either uphold the status quo or you can basically create this whole new pattern and break any sort of cycle that may have been happening and create a new way of living. So whenever I think about it, just some my personal background for myself, I was parented in a way that all of the power belonged to the parental unit. Like the kids weren't ever given any sort of say in matters. Everything was defaulted to, "Well this is what I said. And so this is how it's gonna be." That parenting style I think was given to my parents through the Christian church. A pastor stood up every Sunday and said, "This is how things are gonna be. And if you don't adhere to them then you're gonna be an outsider." And that kinda of model for parenting just isn't something that we're practicing in our parenthood. And I think it kind of built this generation that I'm a part of that really has a problem. Oh, I don't really know where I'm going with this.

**Jasmine** [00:12:30] So I think what happens is, oftentimes, folks are parented the way you were parented, Mo, and the way I was parented that is centred on punitive habits. And we wonder why we have really hard time imagining life outside of the carceral state or state sanctioned violence and that really is because from the very inception of us being ushered into family space or community spaces, we have these habits of domination, habits of punitive violence in relationship with each other that make it really really difficult for us to figure out what it looks like to have restorative and generative relationships.

**Mo** [00:13:30] Yeah and I think that the model that I was given was just like you'd said it's entrenched in white supremacy and capitalism. And so all I've ever known is that. And then whenever I became a parent I found myself kind of modeling that back to our kids. And I didn't really like that. And it showed up in ways I didn't necessarily know it would show up in. And I think one of those ways that it shows up in most is disciplining the kids. And we talk about that punitive model that I was given and how much it affected me now that I'm adult. I don't want that for the kids. I don't want to be extra punitive to them just because I can. And you will look a different kind of layers within that. You know I don't want to be punitive to them as as their white parent. You have to take that into consideration whenever I'm parenting for sure. And that can get down into tone policing our kids or just like how I monitor their bodies and their movement within our house. And those are like small details that I'm sure we will get into in future episodes. Where I'm wanting to go with this and just saying that I had to unlearn, and I'm still unlearning a lot of those models that I've been given to me. And I thought to myself that I'm so new to this parenting thing I'm trying to unlearn these behaviors that I was given that are entrenched in my supremacy and capitalism and just eliteism basically is how I was raised and I've I bet there are other parents out there who are similar to me who are trying to figure out that parenting is bigger than just the relationship that you have with your kid. That is super super important but also it's political in the sense that like at the most basic level you are creating and you're helping foster this relationship of another human being. And you're teaching them how to move throughout the world. And one day that that kid is gonna grow up to be an adult in that adult is going to move throughout the world how you taught them.

**Jasmine** [00:15:45] And they're going to be members of society.

**Mo** [00:15:47] Exactly.

**Jasmine** [00:15:48] So so well stated, Mo. Let's get real. The majority of us when we become parents or find ourselves in a relationship with a young person as a caregiver guiding that young person, in so many ways what we do is either replicate the habits of harm that we have experienced when we were young people, whether intentional or unintentional, or we become reactive and we parent based on trying to avoid the mistakes and traumas that we experienced.

**Mo** [00:16:26] Like swing the other way.

**Jasmine** [00:16:27] You swing the other way and you don't realize that you are engaging in that kind of behavior and then you make a whole new set of mistakes. And then on top of that there is a generational sort of trauma and learned behavior that goes name sometimes or unnamed. And so parenting then becomes just this recycled process of all of these things so convoluted. And you pair that with this habit in our society that parenting is sort of these binary models and there's a right way to do it. There's a wrong way to do it.

**Mo** [00:17:14] Never trust the binary.

**Jasmine** [00:17:17] Mo rejects the binary. We all hould. There is also this child rearing parenting industrial complex where everyone agrees on this is the right way to do it this is the wrong way to do it you should have this product you should not have this product. This is what family looks like this is what it doesn't look like. The reality is is that all that is bullshit. Parenting or being a caregiver or being in relationship with a young person is an organic dynamic thing. And there are some universal things around dignity and respect and consent and unconditional positive regard but for all intents and purposes, I guess even beyond that I don't know if I'm using the right turn of phrase here, but at its heart being in relationship with a young person as a caregiver is about a dynamic relationship. Each one is unique even within a sibling group. And each one should be about as much as it can be consent. And this reciprocity of growth and trust with one another. And obviously it's confusing right? Like a newborn or two week old baby can't give consent in the way that a eleven year old or eight year old or 17 year old can give consent as it relates to the habits and rhythms of your relationship. But there are habits of consent that you can begin to cultivate the very beginning of the life of a person. It makes sense that you wanted to go on this journey and it's so funny because you're always looking to me and going Jasmine you're such a great parent and you're teaching me and you're doing X Y and Z, but there are so many things that I have unlearned just in the course of our time as parents together that I didn't know five years ago, that I didn't know eleven years ago whenever I was becoming a parent to Zara. And yeah, insert something profound here about how parent to being a parent is an adjective. Wait wait. No not adjectibe. An Adverb. Nope, not an adverb, a verb. That's what I'm looking for.

**Mo** [00:19:42] I was just going to say that parenting is fucking hard.

**Jasmine** [00:19:45] You know how they say love is a verb?

**Mo** [00:19:50] Like DC Talk?

**Jasmine** [00:19:50] We're recovering white Anglo Christians y'all.

**Mo** [00:19:57] \*singing\* Down with the DC Talk.

**Jasmine** [00:19:58] Stop. Please stop. You know how like in the evangelical circles they'll be like, "Love is a verb not adjective"

**Mo** [00:20:10] I don't know. I've unlearned so much sense then.

**Jasmine** [00:20:12] English grammar is so hard ya'll. I know what the fuck I'm talking about I'm just sleep deprived. Anyway my point is, it's an action. Parenthood or parenting is not just this moniker that you put on and you're done. Like I became a parent because I pushed a kid out or I adopted a kid or I married into a family where I'm raising children. I'm a parent so the end. Parenting is like this constantly evolving experience.

**Mo** [00:20:46] Even though that's how society wants you to believe parenting is. Just like, "Oh it's natural. You'll figure it out."

**Jasmine** [00:20:53] Or they'll say, "You're the parent. You know what to do.".

**Mo** [00:20:56] What the fuck does that mean? Like you have to go and take classes for everything else. And the one thing that I feel like there should be the most support around, at least societally, because we all had parents at one point and it would have been helpful if people would be like less judgey. Shut your mouth and maybe more helpful.

**Jasmine** [00:21:24] No, let's be honest. If you went to a parenting class you would show up and be like, "This is trash. It's so binary. It's so heteronormative. Fuck this parenting class."

**Mo** [00:21:36] Yeah. It would be. But what if we taught the parent class?

**Jasmine** [00:21:40] Wow ok. So after we become independently wealthy from this podcast we're going to do a parenting class tour and workshop. Pin that to your dream board Mo Tester.

**Mo** [00:21:54] Is a Pinterest thing? Dream board?

**Jasmine** [00:21:58] No it's an Oprah thing.

**Mo** [00:22:00] Oh. That was one of the main reasons too that I wanted to do a parenting podcast was because when I went and searched on itunes for a parenting podcast everything was like white and heteronormative and like, "How to get your kids to take naps when I hear you say it's nap time." That's doesn't really apply to me who's like this non-binary person, in an interracial relationship, who became an insta parent and jumped into all of these things and then had a newborn. There's no there's no model for that. And there are no resources that I found online. If there is, then that's super. Point me in the direction of that podcast. I haven't found it. And so I decided why not make it. And so a lot of the future episodes are gonna be parenting like that's real. It's not gonna be this glossy picture of parenthood it's gonna be real and it's also gonna be the stories of people and folks that don't get highlighted enough. We're going to hear from people who are transgender and they're parenting or parents to transgender kids. We're going to hear from folks who were insta parents like me and just kind of jumped into things. We're gonna hear from people who are aunties and that's their form of parenting. We're going to talk to different parents from different cultures and countries and everything in between.

**Jasmine** [00:23:43] With varying levels of ability as well. There is such an intense theme of abelism within parenting advice and parenting communities that it makes it a deeply shame laden conversation to talk about how we can't always prioritize the needs of our children in certain moments because of the ways disabilities show up for some of us. That has an important conversation for us to be having. But more than anything else we want and I hope that you leave this podcast feeling invited into the conversation. Creating enough space for you to show up with your curiosities and your concerns no matter how problematic they may be. And that you feel received in your feedback. You can follow us on Instagram at Parenting is Political. Or you can look us up on our website www.parentingispolitical.org. And you can always feel very free to accept the invitation to drop us a line or a comment or a question and we're happy to entertain it.

**Mo** [00:25:07] They can e-mail us as well.

**Jasmine** [00:25:08] You can also e-mail us at contact@parentingispolitical.org. So as we grow and learn more about editing, you were going to have a bit more curated. Maybe we'll have some intros and some outros and other fancy things that we do. But this is kind of it y'all. We're gonna sit on our bed with August in our arms after the older siblings have gone to sleep and have these really important conversations with each other and hopefully you'll enjoy a bit of it and tune in in the future.

**Mo** [00:25:54] Yeah absolutely. I'm looking forward to it. I'm excited to do this with y'all. I can't wait to hear from you and just produce more podcast episodes. And thanks for tuning in.

**Jasmine** [00:26:07] Thanks so much ya'll. Till next time.

**Mo** [00:26:09] Bye.