Ed Pokropski:

Hi my name is Edward Pokropski. My pronouns are he, him, and I am 39 years old. I live in New York City. I'm a produ, a writer producer for NBCUniversal. and I've recently gotten back into doing standup comedy. I've been doing it for four years. Tried to do it during the pandemic through Zoom shows, and, you know, eventually outdoor things when things opened up. Tried to do more online things but only recently now have gotten back into doing a storytelling show. and that's been really great. So it's a little bit about me

Adapted Podcast:

n vc, what do you do there?

Ed Pokropski:

So, I work as a writer producer for the Cable Network. So that like covers USA Sci-Fi, Bravo, Egen, a bunch of those. and I work in the marketing and promotions team, so anything that promotes, you know, the new shows that they're running, new movies that might be in circulation or premiering, you know, through Universal Studios. maybe it's something that's happening through a sporting event. Maybe it's the Olympics. so, or like a heritage month campaign. So a lot of the you know, promos that go out to air or streaming or social media. You know, I might have a hand in some of those projects and, you know, write, produce, and edit some of the, you know, material for that.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. I'm just gonna throw this one at you. can I call you Ed? .

Ed Pokropski:

Yeah, Ed's good. Yeah. I feel like most people call me Ed.

Adapted Podcast:

Ed. Okay. I'm just go throw this at you because I, I feel like you're probably a pro at this, but so what, who are you, what, what should people know?

Ed Pokropski:

Well, I am, I, I guess in one way, many times I do define myself by my career and I don't know if that's a good thing or a bad thing. I don't know if that's because I live in New York City and like, you know, it's a media landscape. but I guess I, I kind of define myself that way sometimes because it's a big part of, like, when I went to school, it, it was one of those things where I was undecided and I always liked you know, being creative. I always liked writing. I liked photography a little bit. And I think when I sort of, I had started out in corporate communications and then through taking some electives, I eventually transitioned over to film and television. And I think that was a big turning point in my life because it was at a time where, you know, no matter who you are, I think always people assume like it's really hard to have a successful career in the arts, in media, in television, whatever.

So I think it was a little bit of a risky thing, but then even more so, and I guess at the time I didn't even think about this cuz it wasn't as much of a conversation when I was getting outta school of like the idea of Asian American representation within media. I hadn't thought about it as much then. And I think it was also because of where I was in my life in terms of my connection to my identity of being a Korean adoptee or an Asian American or however, what, however I wanted to define or however anyone else would want define it. but it was, it was really important to me and really exciting getting into media what I did. And I think a lot of my, you know, big turning points in life had come because I made that choice and work in this field and, you know, like being creative and have learned to tell now a story about myself.

And I think having this, this path has helped me do that. well I think so I think that's why probably I end up defining myself that way sometimes. I think I also define myself in a way of being, you know, a Korean adoptee because of my last name. And I'm sure this is a common theme for a lot of adoptees. you know, when you're sending emails, when you are making phone calls, when you're meeting people, sorry, that's my dog. If you just heard that. that's why. Yeah. Okay. So you probably heard that. when I'm, when I'm interacting with people, you know, digitally first I think usually what ends up happening is you have to have that conversation of, oh, hey, hey, sorry <laugh>, you have to have that conversation later because, you know, probably like one out of, you know, one out of every five people, you know, was always like, cool, that's an interesting name.

I didn't expect to see, you know, you based on your last name. So, you know, I think that's a another way that I'd probably define myself. And, and what is kind of the impetus of this show is to address some of those questions and those first interactions when I meet people. Cuz I know for a lot of adoptees it's probably part of their everyday life and, you know, has been happening since they were young. And I think this show that I'm doing you know, addresses that in a funny way because I think it is, I think they're, those conversations are funny and they're, and they're awkward, but I think having the time, you don't always get the time to dive in or have a more in depth conversation to the person you're having that initial reaction and conversation to. So I think this show is me, you know, poking a little fun at it, but also taking the time to say why do I get those questions? How can I answer them if I had more time? What goes through my head afterwards, after I sort of debrief with myself? and I think that's that's the, that's a really long answer to your question of who am I? But yeah,

Adapted Podcast:

It's interesting that you, when asking like who you are it started off like your work stuff, but then it really just, it seems like right now who you are is really this show and connecting to your telling these stories about your adoptee experiences.

Ed Pokropski:

Yeah, and I think that only came from like a long period. I mean, like I said, I'm 39, so I feel like going through a lot of different points in my life where I had a very you know, tumultuous relationship with my identity and adopt and adoption. And I, I think that's, that could be said of a lot of adoptees. So I, I, it being where I'm at now definitely came from a lot of trial and error and a lot of, you know, issues. So I think that defining it this way and having the ability to do this show is, is really great because at least it then it also kind of blends the work that I've done with, with writing and with media and understanding visuals. Also the work that I've done with standup and understanding just how to stand in front of a room and talk and tell a story and, and, and in some ways try to be funny.

And then, you know, the adoption side of things is just something that I've been, you know, kind of dealing with, you know, throughout my life in different ways to some success to, to some, not so much. And I think it's, it's kind of like the merging of those three things, and it, it feels nice. It feels fun, it feels challenging, it feels like it's and it, I feel like it's sort of bringing people in in a way that I really like. and I guess that takes a lot for me to say because I've done plenty of work that I end up looking at it and then hating it. I go, wow, I can't be, I'm, I'm a hack. I'm terrible. You know what I mean? And this is one of the first things that I've been able to look at and be a little bit kinder to myself and say like, oh, I, this isn't so bad. This isn't, this is okay. I mean, still have those, you still have those points of doubt and you're like, can it be better? Or am I really hitting all the points? Are people getting from the intention or the people getting what the, what I, you know, want people to get from the show? But this is, this is one of those things where I feel like the volume and all those thoughts is, is a little bit turned down and I feel like I'm, I'm more motivated just to keep trying as much as I can.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. First of all, we have to ask, what what's your dog's name and what, what kind of dog is it?

Ed Pokropski:

yeah, so the dog's name is Poppy. she is a cockapoo. and it's actually funny with, with her my wife and I, we had started watch, well, we had watched her for, you know, her parents, my in-laws where we end up like watching her for a few months at a time when they like, might go on a trip or, you know, just travel a little bit. And then what happened was in, you know, at the top of 2020, it was one of those things where they were just bringing her to, for us, for temporary time, for us to watch her. And then they were gonna go around a little bit, and then shutdown happened. They live in Canada. They couldn't come back and, and get her. So we had her for like two years. And it was, you know, by virtue became, we became very attached.

She went back for a little while and then now, so basically we just sort of split custody of, of Poppy. But it's nice because then I think like you know, her parents, the, the companionship they have with her is, is nice. And then they get some time and then, and then they get some time to just go off and, and you know, they're retired and do their own thing. And then the time that we get with her, we, we get to, you know, have a, have her and you know, just, you know, we have a, we have a good, we're like a, you know, we're a little family ourselves with, with her. So yeah, she's, she's great and, and we get very attached and then, you know, and then we have some time to ourselves when we give her back. But it's, it's a nice, it's kind of a nice arrangement. It kind of works out.

Adapted Podcast:

Do you think adoptees have this kind of a special connection to like pets and dogs and cats and, you know, the fact that you sort of become their parents?

Ed Pokropski:

I, you know what, I didn't think about that, but that, that could be the case. My, my brother who's also adopted you know, not, we're not biologically related, but we're adopted from different families. He he was more of a cat person. I had, there were points where I had a dog, and then there were points where, you know, when I was single, I, I didn't wanna kind of have a pet around to, because I wanted less responsibility at that time. So I think it depends on like your status in life at a certain point, but I could, I could see there being a correlation between, you know adoptees wanting some sort of companionship, even if they're, you know, single or on their own for a while.

Adapted Podcast:

I mean, I know we hate those slogans, right? Adopt don't Shop and,

Ed Pokropski:

Oh, God. Yeah. Well, I mean, so, okay, so it's very funny. you know how like the algorithm is with like social media and things like this? And obviously I've been posting a lot of stuff about the show and been talking more about adoption in general than I usually had before in the past on social media at least. And then I, and then I had a bunch of like canine like dog rescue things Follow me <laugh>. So, I mean, there's a perfect example of like the word, you know, the word adopted is, it's one of those words that like, it, it can ca it can be a catchall for a lot of different things, but yes, it is, it is weird when some of the same language of adopting a child is similar to adopting a pet. And I mean, I'm sure we could dive into the, the weird thing that some people kind of treat some adoptees in that way too. So, you know, there, there's definitely something there. But yes I think that was the one I looked at everyone, I was like, why am I getting followed by K nine? Oh. And I was like, oh, Jesus Christ, you know, <laugh>, it was one of those situations.

Adapted Podcast:

okay, so Ed, what's the name of your show?

Ed Pokropski:

Okay, so my show is called case 84-1410. My adoptee experience, it's kind of a cl I will admit it's a little bit of a clunky title, but I wanted it to be somewhat clear and, you know, not, you know, there was plenty of things that I probably could have named it and been a little bit more cheeky. And in the past, I, I've named things something a little bit more like cryptic. So like, there, there, you know, you wouldn't, you wouldn't quite know what it was and mysterious. But this one, you know, the case number thing is, is related to, you know, my case number, you know, from the adoption agency. so there is somewhat, that's connection, but the say I Korean adoptee experience, you know, as like kind of the subtitle because I just want people to be clear about what this, this was going to be.

I, I had thought about like, maybe in the new year when I keep doing this, maybe I'd just shorten it to call it case 84 or something a little bit more easy to roll off the tongue. But for now, I, I think to see it in print, I like seeing the longer title. I, I do think when people ask me, they're like, what's the name of your show? And I have to say, <laugh>, well, it's called Case 84 14, you know, that, that is a little bit of a mouthful. But the point, the point to it is really to say I, I want the to be clear that this is what the show, you know, speaks on. And I think yeah, I could, I could, like I said, I could, I could put a couple other words that might allude to it, but this, I I just kind of wanted to be very, like in your face, this is the show type.

Adapted Podcast:

So you had this back like this hobby or this background as being a standup. Right? How did you go about writing the show?

Ed Pokropski:

Well, it, it's, it was a combination of things where when I was doing standup, you know, when you start out, you only get, you know, you get five minutes here, you get five minutes there, you get open mics and you get small spots and you're trying out a lot of different things. But with only five minutes, most of the time, and this is true, I think of a lot of comedians, you know, you're just trying to introduce yourself. You're just trying to say, Hey, and like a common thing for comedians is like, I know what I look like, I look like this mixed with that, or I know what you're thinking, blah, blah, blah. You know, that's, it's very common because you're just getting your footing. And, and, and, you know, it's that type of thing for me, of course, is that when I would, you know, give the host of a show my name, they'd always have a bit of a problem with it.

But they'd say, you know, here, welcome to the stage Ed Pokropski. And then I'd walk up and there'd be a little bit of like a chatter and like some snickers, and I'd have a, a joke right off the, the front to, to address that and talk about my adoption. And then the first chunk of it, like, you're really just trying to like, get through that sort of initial thing. And maybe even your whole set is just about you. So I had, you know, a good four years of like, material floating in different lengths of sets, five minutes, 10 minutes, 20 minutes of stuff about my adoption of stuff, about my upbringing, stuff about my mom, my dad, you know, all that thing was swirling around in there, mixed in with some other jokes that I was trying out. And then there were times where I would do like speaking engagements at work through you know, maybe like a corporate d e i a diversity inclusion group, or say like an Asian American in media group.

And there were times where I would talk about myself, person a little bit more my career path, a little bit about the adoption. and then eventually I did this like speaking series, this TED Talk series where I did like a shortened 10 minute version of like, some of the pieces of this, and just a little bit of talking about going to Korea to find some information on my on my adoption. And it was kind of through all those different pieces that eventually I had enough to kind of like form it into this type of longer format show. And it just kind of took a while for me to, you know, find all the, the ways that it kind of came together. I had actually watched some other comedians who started doing, you know, more storytelling shows, more, you know, vis having visual cues that they were sort of speaking to.

And that touched on being funny, but also very like, emotional and like having, talking about tough topics and those types of those comedians really kind of inspired me to see like how you could break something down into this type of you know, storytelling show. So yeah, I, it definitely took a while and I didn't know that I was writing this show all that time. It's only within the last, you know, year, year and a half that that I really was able to say, okay, I think I can pull all this together and, and form it into something a little bit more cohesive.

Adapted Podcast:

you know, what, what do they say? Like, all good, you know, comedy comes from a dark place or has a dark tragedy,

Ed Pokropski:

Plus time equals comedy. That, that, there's that saying too. Yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. I, when you're talking about like your identity I, I kind of imagine that some of it is kind of poking fun at, you know, the fact that, you know, you're Asian, but have this maybe Polish,

Ed Pokropski:

Polish Yeah. Name

Adapted Podcast:

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah. And like, you know, like that you didn't think you'd see me walk up here, you know, like, is is some of this kind of painful that you're in a way making a joke about yourself?

Ed Pokropski:

Adapted Podcast:

Or are

Ed Pokropski:

You, I guess, I guess in a way, well, you know what, it's not painful for me. however, what I have found is that self-deprecating humor sometimes makes an audience uncomfortable if they're not the, if they're not an audience that like, likes that <laugh>. And I think here's a, the, there's a really tricky thing that happens that I've still never quite figured out yet. If you have, like, say, you know like a skinny, what people might consider, you know, by traditional standards, a nerdy white guy on a stage, and if he's being self-deprecating oftentimes no one seems to have a problem. And it's, and, and they laugh. And it's funny for whatever cultural reasons, for whatever society thinks that we've built around that, that's okay. People find that fine. But me being an Asian guy, if I start getting too self-deprecating, it bums people out.

And now whether that's like it's an Asian, like I've done a lot of shows that's, you know, Asian based, because I've put on shows that are, you know, all Asian lineups and things like that over for Asian nonprofits, and they don't wanna see me be self-deprecating. And I understand why <laugh>, I understand why they don't want someone up there you know, you know, shitting on themselves. Sorry, I don't know if I can curse. Sorry, crapping on themselves. <laugh> no, you can, okay. They, they don't want to, I know, understand why some crowds don't want to see that. I, I, I get that. But the, the problem is, is that for me, and I'm sure for many, you know, for it is just, I, I, I am a self-deprecating person, and, and yes, I, I wanna be confident when it's appropriate or when I feel confident or whatever, but like, at the same time, in some cases, it's just funnier to be self-deprecating <laugh>.

So that's just the nature of who I am, separate of all the other identity stuff, separate of all being Asian, separate of being Korean adopted, you know, throw that stuff out the window. And, you know, I, I just, I like self-deprecating humor. So, but I also understand that, that, that a crowd is, you know, a crowd's there to see you, a crowd's there to have a good time and have a, you know, so it's a, it's a delicate balance to strike. And I don't wanna, I don't wanna be that type of person who's like, well, the crowd's wrong. I'm, you know, this is comedy and blah, blah, blah. Like, no, it, at the end of the day, like I, I, I want the crowd to be having a good time and, and you know, there's stuff that I can do that kind of like, you know, softens the edges on that. I will say that my show does have some dark things of it and has some, like, I, I get into some hard stuff and, and, you know, there are people often, you know, cry at certain points, but that's kind of the point, you know, that's p part of like finding the comedy in those things and like having people go to the edge of like, tears and then pulling them straight back and, and giving them relief. And I like that. So I, I just hope people see intention, that's all. Like, no matter, yeah,

Adapted Podcast:

You hear me, you break them down and then bring

Ed Pokropski:

Them down. Exactly. And I think as long as people know you're taking care of them, as long as they know you, you're there and there's a purpose, I think people feel better about that. If I was just there to shit on myself for the sake of like, you know, I just thought it was funny to be, for the room to be awkward and bad, and I just, it was some sort of sick thing that I think people wouldn't respond as well. But what I'm trying to say is that like, even if there's some uncomfortable moments, it's for a better overarching, you know, goal or thing in mind. And you'll see, and I'll show you, we'll get there. So I think as, I think people feel better in that case, like, oh, this is a re there's a reason he's self being self-deprecating now, but he'll get, he'll, he'll balance it out with some other things.

so that's why I do think pain as to your initial question of like, do I ever feel bad when I'm talking about painful subjects? Not, not in, not in the same way anymore because I've built this show specifically to address those in that specific way. And yes, I, I, I get choked up and I cry at every show. And actually, I had a friend of a friend ask me after they saw the show, they said what are you doing to take care of yourself? Are you like, how are you mentally preparing yourself before each show? And I thought that was a really good question cuz I was like, oh, I wasn't consciously preparing myself or taking care of myself. I was taking care of myself. I was doing something to mentally prepare, but I hadn't thought that that was what I was doing.

I was just kind of going about my day and doing the things that I wanted to do and, and felt like put me in a good place. So it was good that they said that because I thought, oh, right, I'm stepping onto a stage. I'm running myself through a traumatic like experience in some cases, and then I'm bringing myself to tears and I'm bringing an audience to tears, and then I'm bringing them back. But I also like, think of it, I I grew up boxing and I still box now. And in that same way that you're like, it's almost like you're going, you're, you're, I'm throwing myself almost into a sparring session, or you're going through like a simulated like trauma or simulated pain because you kind of know how to like, handle yourself in that, in that period. And it's all in a very controlled space. And then you come out stronger. And I think that's what I'm doing. It's, it's different from, you know, from a full on fight or a full on match. It's like I am setting up the, the tent poles, the boundaries here. I'm setting up the, the rules within the thing. So I can go in, I can sort of take some body shots, I could take some punishment, but it's simulated. It's, it's, I trust myself. I trust the situation I put myself in, so I I come out Okay.

Adapted Podcast:

And I mean, just kind of just, you know, honestly, being adopted by white folks is weird, isn't it? That's a weird experience.

Ed Pokropski:

Well, and and I, and I talk about that in the show, and yeah, I think it's you know, and I think like this to the point is that it is a weird experience. but I think, like, what I've found, and like when I talk to people, and I think it's a good thing is, is families are weird in general, like all families, whether you it's to biological, whether it's like you, it's a divorced family setup, whether it's, you know, you, you live with a stepparent or maybe you know, maybe a one of your parents passed away when you were young or, or you know, you're

Adapted Podcast:

Maybe you have two dads or something.

Ed Pokropski:

Exactly. Yeah. So I think all these family structures, like ours is yes, unique in, in one regard, but I know there are so many unique family structures that that would have similar things to say. Like, and even once that, like on the surface, you know, mom, dad, 2.3 kids, you know, all those two, like I'm sure that the whole thing is nine times outta 10, they're like, yeah, we look like we're fine. But actually it's a, it's a goddamn mess. So I think that's the funny thing is like, when I go up there and say, well, this is weird, but you give seamless ideas. Like I'm sure you're thinking about how weird your family is too. Again, I wanna bring, I wanna bring people in this sh this show is absolutely about adoption and four adoptees, but at the same time, like I want the people that are coming that aren't adopted or the, or maybe coming with an adopted person that's like, it's their friend or their family member or their significant other. I want them to also feel like they're connecting with it in a way that, that feels, feels like unique to them as well.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. This might be weird, ed. I can, I hear a little bit of it. Like I know I'm just one person, so I don't know if that's weird to you to

Ed Pokropski:

Well that's interesting. I hear a little bit of it. it's not in the same way, like if this was a book, I'd absolutely be able to read you a excerpt. The tricky part about this is it relies so much on the me standing on that stage, having the visual that I'm presenting to the audience and feeling and seeing the, the, the energy from the audience. so I don't know that it would really work the same way if I was just to read you like even one of my notes from the show mm-hmm. <affirmative>, because I have it broken out in notes versus like, I don't, I don't really read off a script. Like I wrote it out, like when I was rehearsing this, I wrote it out as almost if it was a script, but I, but then when I went to do it live, I have bullet points and I let myself sort of speak to it.

Adapted Podcast:

What about one of your jokes that you might

Ed Pokropski:

Oh, so well, I'll tell you the joke that I used to start out with and sort of has made its way into this show. whenever I would, one of my first jokes when I started out at comedy was, Hey, I know you didn't expect me to come up here, but yes, my name is Po Krosky. Po Krosky is Polish, that is my last name. I have it because I'm adopted. I like to tell people that I was born Asian, but then raised Polish, and that's why I have average intelligence. So that's, that's my first, that used to be my opener and has found its way into this show as well. so it, it visually takes a little bit of a different form in the show. but that used to be my, my opener. And it would, it would work. And sometimes when I had more time, it would really work because then I could kind of like slow it down and let the audience like figure out what that really meant, what they just heard. And sometimes I had to like blow right through it and get to the next joke. So yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. I could imagine like, especially if you're not in a, well, let's say, let's say you're not in a, an adoptee audience and you're kind of feeling your way with, you know, the, the temperature of the room and like, you'll tell a joke like that and if like, there's no chuckles, if it's just silent

Ed Pokropski:

<laugh>, well that happens all the time in ka it isn't, not even just with that, but like,

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, it's like, yeah,

Ed Pokropski:

Absolutely. You, you have a room bomb. Well, and that's the thing, it's like, sometimes I'll tell you which rooms usually laugh the most and get that joke is, is a room of like middle-aged white people. They, they absolutely love that joke. They think it's hilarious <laugh>. And I think like it depends. You just never, you never know. And like but I, but I do, I do like that joke. And I've had some friends be like, when you get it, when you actually, when kid, like, when the connection hits, and I've had some rooms that like, yeah, like laugh their heads off, I have outta rooms. They're like, haha, uhhuh gotta move on. You know? But that's, that's, that's comedy. That's

Adapted Podcast:

When you said that, I was just thinking like my, I think my joke would be, you know, to play off what you just said, you know, like, yeah, I'm Asian, but I had white parents and I was a solid B student and everyone was happy.

Ed Pokropski:

Yeah. And I mean there that, that, that was a version too. And I think like, yeah, I mean all to say the structure is you centered out with just being average <laugh>. Yeah. Yeah. But yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

so you said it's like primarily it was for adoptees?

Ed Pokropski:

No, no, no, it's not primarily for adoptees. I mean, the show itself is very adopt adoptee, you know, it, it's about me and it's about being adopted and all this stuff. When I say it's for adoptees in the sense that like, you know, I, I've tried to reach out to the adoptee community as much as I can because I know like there's not always a lot of media out there that is centered around this topic or there sometimes there is, and it can be a mixed bag. And I, and I'm hoping that this this story is like, it's just my offering, you know, to it. And yes, I want the adoptee community to be, you know, involved if they want to be, if this is the type of thing that, you know, any individual adoptee wants to, like, cuz I know, and there were times in my life and there were times where like you're just like, oh, I just be, just because I'm adoptee doesn't mean I wanna go out and watch every single damn adoptee, you know, related thing. And I get that vibe too. And if that's what your thing is, then, then absolutely fine. You don't, I'm not saying you gotta watch this thing like do your, live your life, you know,

Adapted Podcast:

Stay away.

Ed Pokropski:

But I, I do think this, what I hope to say is that like, even if that, even if there is that person that's very much like, I don't, you know, best I'm just living my life. I, I don't even, you know, that's fine. But if, if, if there was a show that you could see that maybe is this is, this is probably close. You know what I mean? Like, cuz I think it kind of pokes fun at at some of that stuff. The other thing I'm trying to tell people, and, and this is kind of the more like emotional flowery version of like, what I would say the show is have you ever been in a situation where you've like been in a, an area where you've seen a friend hugging another friend or having a mo like an emotional moment with a friend and you've come into the situation and you don't know what's going on, you don't know why, and you feel like for a second, or maybe I shouldn't, well maybe I should step away, but then the two friends notice you and then they say they invite you in and come on in here and now you guys all are hugging and then you share this quick moment.

You just don't know what's happening. But then, then you find out and you're like, oh God, we're having a moment. This is great. I'd like to say that this show is like, if in that moment I'm an, I as an adoptee am hugging another and adoptee, and you maybe the person who's not adopted have come into the room and then we invite you in to give you a hug too. I think that's kind of like the emotional flowery way to describe this show is that yes, I am speaking to this thing and hope, hopefully bringing some comfort or funny, you know, notes to this topic myself, but then also to someone who might relate to it as being adopted themselves, but as you as the person who might not be adopted or not connect. Exactly. I want you to come in for the hug too, you know, so that's kind of the way I, I'd like to describe the show,

Adapted Podcast:

You know, and then can, that really makes sense because I think as adoptees part of, you know, like half of our life is just this feeling like we're not understood. Yeah. Because our experience is kind of so unique in many ways. And even among like our Asian friends, they don't understand what it's like, you know, having talk

Ed Pokropski:

About that a little bit too. Yeah. I I I don't let the agents get off east <laugh>.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. And our white friends don't quite understand, so we seem white, but, you know, so I, it's it, I can imagine it's also kind of like your chance to have like teachable moments too, even though it's dressed up as comedy. Yeah. You know?

Ed Pokropski:

Yeah. So I think that's the thing is I'm, I'm trying to be very careful about, I, I think the phrase you use is, is appro like, you know, teachable moment is like, I think a, a term in the zeitgeist, but I I also wanna be careful because I, I never wanna be preachy. I never want to be accusatory. I never want anyone to feel like just because they've asked an awkward question, just because they've been curious. I never want to like, shut the door, push anyone away. I, I want to say like, you've had this thought, someone else has had this thought and here's why. And here's, you know, we've all been sort of like programmed by a lot of different things, media and a lot of different things to have these types of thoughts and questions. And that's, that's to the point. It's not necessarily just that it's teachable, quote unquote teachable is that it's just hey, I get it.

Like, we have some weird, like things in our head about adoption adoptees too. We have some weird preconceived notions about all these things. And let's dive into as why the answer mostly is media, <laugh>, movies and television. That seems to be the common theme. And I kind of dive into that and that's how I kind of explain it a little bit under that lens. But I think it makes it it, it's, it's, it's a nice, I think it's a nice mix of like, yes, you're like, oh yeah, I did think that. Or maybe that wasn't, you know, the right vibe and, but it's never to say like, you're wrong or you're bad. It's just like, but this is why I thought that. And like, oh, right, okay, cool. Like we're all gonna make these mistakes. We're, we're all gonna kind of like tap dance through this minefield, but like, it's cool, it's fine. Like, let's laugh about it. Let, and let's like dissect it a little bit more.

Adapted Podcast:

What, who were your role models in media growing up?

Ed Pokropski:

Oh boy. Well, I think, like, I think it was tricky because I, you know, as we could all talk about, you know, we didn't have as many Asian role models on American, on the American side to kind of point to. And I think like I ended up like

Trying to connect as much as anytime I saw an Asian American doing something, but the roles were always kind of like, you know, odd the way they sort of like were shaped. I mean it's, it's interesting now seeing someone like Kiwan the, the guy from everything everywhere all at once. and thinking about his path and, you know, when he was data in the Goonies and short round in Indiana Jones. I mean, I, I remember watching Indiana Jones the Temple Doom with my dad and it felt weird, but I didn't know why. But I real, I did like the movie because it was an adventure movie, but I did feel conflicted and I felt odd, but I didn't know why when I was young. It was only till I got older that I was like, oh, that's probably the, a lot of people would say it's the worst of the idea Joe's franchise.

but I think like the healing part of it, and I, and I'm so happy is that like seeing that actor, seeing him sort of grow now and get the recognition he deserves, but like still somehow be like on the surface, a really joyful person made me feel better. Because there was something that I thought, like he went through a lot of pain of not being able to be cast and stuff. And for the longest time, his only role and only things people would think about was him, was, oh, oh, it's data. Oh, it's short round. And, you know, it put, you know, Asians and specifically Asian men in a very weird, you know, bucket and compartment. But now I feel like he's come to this point of like this past role and just seen like, even though it came later in his career, he's sort of gotten the recognition he deserves. So I think like that long timeline story is something that I feel good about. And I guess what also I think about is like, sometimes it just takes a long ass time and it takes a lot of like pain. But if, if you get there, if you get to that point, if, if, if it's gonna be okay. And I think he's a great example of that.

Adapted Podcast:

And what was weird, I didn't see the Indiana Jones movie you're talking about. What was weird about that movie?

Ed Pokropski:

Well, there's a lot you can talk you that there's, yeah, there's been a ton of things talked about that one. But for him, I think it's just what in that situation is you have, like, he played, he's like a kid at the time. He's maybe like 10, I think, but he's put like against, he's the sidekick, he's put against like handsome, like adventurous, staring Harrison Ford, who's already an icon at that point. And Will and forever will be. So you've, you've got these two, you know, this, this kid who's, you know very much, he's still like a big part of the plot, but you know, he's, he's, he's the, the sidekick and he is got like, kept phrases and he's, you know, he's just a cute little precocious kid. And Indiana Jones is the adult, the, the part throughout the leading man. So you've got that kind of mm-hmm.

You've kind of got that relationship, which obviously he is been played out plenty of times before. the odd thing of course is like, for me watching that is like, I'm like, that's, that's sort of like, I'm a similar age. That's me. My dad is white, you know what I mean? Like, it's kind of that weird thing where it's like, I always feel, I guess like for a little while I always felt like the, the kid, the sidekick, the, you know, and then there's this other more, you know, hero over here. You know, that's, that's kind of how it felt a little bit. Certainly. I, I think there're, and don't get me wrong, I love Indiana Jones' franchise, but it's like the, I think a lot of people would agree it's what, it's the weakest of the, of the now, well people, I don't count the fourth, but that's, that's another conversation.

But I, I think it's the type of thing where that's another podcast. That's another podcast to talk about movies, which I could for. But yeah, I, I think that's just one of those situations where and it would be different if there were, and this always goes back, if there were plethora of roles for Asians and people of color in general, that you could have the gamut. You could run the spectrum of okay, both, well, okay, he's the short, he's the sidekick in this one, but in another one there's this other Asian lead that's like the hero or, or, or whatever. then it'd be okay. But the fact is, is like that was the one role and then he was never cast again for base, you know, for for decades. <laugh> until 20, until 2021. So like, I think that's, that's where that gets why that's so tricky.

But seeing him post pictures now as an adult, like talking about how he appreciated, he like posted this picture with Harrison Ford that went viral and for some reason there was just something about it that I, I sort of like felt I had like a pit in my stomach or I felt hard hardened by like that whole thing. But seeing him be okay with it, like seeing it, it's his agency, it's his, it's his role. And seeing him kind of like be like, that was a point in my life and that was a time that I had and, and I value and cherish like the co-star and like the director for this and, and whether that's real or not, and whether that's just, you know, if you're being jaded and think like, oh, he's just doing that because it's Hollywood or whatever, fine, whatever. But it felt genuine to me. So it felt like it helped me sort of rectify the fact that he is just like, he seems to be a very gracious, amazing person, <laugh>, and that's nice. And seeing him come full circle and say, okay, I didn't get the shot that I deserved all those years ago, but I got my shot now and I don't regret being short round. I don't regret being data and like what a what an amazing dude to be able to like kind of like come to come to that conclusion now I think is great.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah, that sounds really gracious in a way. you know, ed, I was saying, you know, I was thinking, you know, like so many of us kind of grow up running away from our Korean identity or you know, we're saying why I'm not, that's not cuz I'm adopted or I'm not, that's not related, you know, and like we almost like we have this like chip on our shoulder to prove ourselves that, you know, it doesn't define us that adoption doesn't define us. But the weird thing is that I've observed, and I don't know if you have as well, but I feel like in whatever kind of I don't know whether we're singing rappers com comedy playwrights, what, you know, writers, I feel like when we tap into that identity piece, that is our strongest story and, and it's almost, it, it comes off as, I mean even this podcast, you know, it ends up kind of being like our, our, you know, like our best material is this thing that we've been running away from our whole lives.

Ed Pokropski:

Yeah. I think we're sort of, we go through a lot of stages or I, I'll speak to myself and you know the idea where you, you want to, you want to feel like you can learn more from others and other people's stories and cultures. And I think that's a good instinct to have. and yeah, I don't know why I myself like was so reluctant sometimes and had that same thing where I'm, you know, I, I pushed it away. But I do suspect it's, it's the same reason anyone pushes stuff like that away from themselves is because you want to be seen as a person beyond these other things that you feel, feel very surface level I think is what happens. So you want say, you know, I guess for instance, like when I was in school and I was being, you know, trying to be a director or whatever, you know, like, or write my own things like, you know, you wanted to say people you know would see you for the work that you were doing or the, the craft or whatever that, and not necessarily anything else beyond that.

Cuz it feels sometimes like you might not have gotten it on, on the merits in your own. But on the flip side of that, it, it's like if, if you're being personal, if you're telling your story and part of that story is in this case adoption and, and that if you're not talking about then, then you're not really being true to yourself. And yes, we can all edit things out, we can all like focus on one part of our life if we're not just adopted. We, we have a whole bunch of other things that happen in our lives and we absolutely could just focus on that. but to but to push it so far away to say like, like that's not gonna be part of my personal story would be crazy for me specifically. That would be crazy for me <laugh> because it has been so much part in my story.

So I think, yeah, I think when I was ready and found the comedy and inter found the, like the, the angle that I felt comfortable with, then it was, then it was ready and then, then I was ready and then it was time. but I think that's what it just goes back to is just we, we want to be able to be seen for something more because we've been seen only for that for so long. And I think that's like I think that's what happens a lot. Like I just thought about like with like dating and stuff like that, a comparison I can think of is like, and I've heard some other people say this where sometimes you might get this weird thing where someone will say like, oh you're pretty attractive for an Asian person. You know, like, oh, you're mm-hmm <affirmative>.

Like, well, couldn't you just say, oh you're pretty attractive <laugh>. Like you didn't have to add the foreign Asian person. And like, what does that meaner? Yeah, so I think the qualifiers are the things that like really eat at us. And I don't mean just for that example alone, but like, I think the qualifiers, like if someone said, oh you're, this story's pretty good for an adoptee story, not, I don't know that anyone would say that cuz that would be weird <laugh>. But like, I think that's like, I think if there was a, anytime you have to put a qualifier on some it, it, it, it cuts the legs out of anything that's like, that's good. Like, oh this is, this is good food for a chain restaurant. Anytime you just drop that thing in there now all of a sudden like, oh, it's not really good. And in fact like why did you even say that, that statement? So I think many times adoptees myself that I can think of included is that like we're just trying to run from the iden the the qualifiers we're trying to run from that, those little passive aggressive, aggressive statements that feel like we didn't need, we didn't need that, we didn't need to hear that <laugh>.

Adapted Podcast:

And so your show, how many shows have you played to predominantly Korean adopt adoptee audiences?

Ed Pokropski:

I've yet to play a show that is predominantly Korean.

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, even in LA

Ed Pokropski:

Well the one that, the one that's gonna happen in la la I, so far, I'm not sure. I mean, yeah, I guess that one could be. I mean it's a pretty larger, it's a larger theater and I mean LA's a very diverse area. So I mean the, the people that have sort of reached out and and kind of said they're definitely coming have been like, I've gotten a very good response from the, from the adoptee community out there. So that one might be the largest that the adoptee community come out. I mean New York too, there's an adoptee community here, the the also known as the AKA group, they had a bunch come out, but it still has not been the majority. It's been at best maybe like 20% of the audience at mo, you know, and that's, I think I'm being even generous in that regard.

But it is nice at the end like when, you know, an adoptee will come up and will have a moment and you know, they say it connected and they had similar thoughts but they didn't know how to like express it exactly in that way. And, and that I always appreciate because it's like, oh well good, now I'm, we're both feeling not so like alone. And I know that I've talked to other adoptees even before doing the show and I know that some of the things I touch on are things they hear too, but your responses are different, your feelings about it are different, but I at least can present it and say this is how I feel, how you feel. You might feel different. So it's also nice to like talk to their, like I said, when it's their significant other or like a family member and they say something like, I don't think we've even, we've even talked about it at length and I get that also makes sense cuz sometimes you just don't want to di get into, you know, sticky topics even with people you're close to. So even if this is a door opening to maybe another conversation between people like that, great. And if it isn't, that's okay too. I think it's just like having those moments. I think the last couple shows I've given some time to do a q and a at the end and that's been interesting and that's been fun. I hear, I hear new questions and I, I you know, get some more feedback and it, I think it just helps the whole process to kind of feed show in that way.

Adapted Podcast:

You could come up with a workbook, you know, that people can take home.

Ed Pokropski:

No, I could, it's like one of those, what are, what are those charts called? It's like if, if they ask this, then da da da. And then if they ask that you go down here and then if you go, you go over there. So yeah, I think it's and I just wanna like, not to use the tired word within these spaces, but like empower, I, you know, I want to empower like people and myself to say, like, to slow things down to kind of like laugh and ask further questions and like, you know, don't we often, I think we just breeze past like weird comments. So we breeze past these uncomfortable moments with people because it's like societal norms say like, well you can't, like you can't put that in someone's face. That's not nice, that's rude, but it's like, well they sort of asked kind of like a, a slightly insensitive question, so why can't I say, why did you ask that <laugh>?

You know? so I, I think if we had those moments, like sometimes people you forge even the strongest friendships from not letting things just be like, just bounce off the, the surface of the water when you say, well wait a sec, what, why? That's so interesting. Why did you, what made you think about that? People really like get they go, wait, I don't know. And then, you know, you, when you slow everything down, especially in cities that are, you know, in cities where everyone's just moving around so fast and doesn't want to like slow things down, but when you actually slow things down and can have like a, a moment of conversation, it feels, it feels better. I think it feels for better for everyone involved. So that's what I'm trying to do. I'm trying to slow things down even though show's only an hour, I'm trying to slow things down and let people think about them and have those moments

Speaker 5:

Later.

Adapted Podcast:

So Ed, is the, is it true that the, the secret to a Philly cheese steak is really the bread?

Ed Pokropski:

Oh boy. it, I guess it depends on, so the roles are very specific. There's a couple you know, specific bakeries that kind of supply for a lot of the popular ones. I mean, some people say it's the what cheese you use. I, you know, it comes down to a personal preference thing. I mean, when I, when people come to Philly, they ask me for a cheeses steak rec recommendation, like I'll give it or I'll take them to the one. but that's just so I can get it out of the way to then take them to an actual restaurant that I like or like, I think is, and the other weird thing is like if I just took someone to like a corner pizza shop slash sandwich shop in Philly and got them a cheese steak, it would be a good cheese steak.

But I think they would be somewhat let down by not having the, the lore or the like, you know what you gotta build, you gotta build the store. If I was like, oh, this shop, no one knows about, it's down this alley and blah, blah, blah. But if it was just the, just some random ass shop that I just picked, because like, it's fi it's close and whatever you like it, it still would be good. Yeah. But you gotta build <laugh>. You gotta build the store. But the point is, as long as you have, yeah. As long as you don't have a soggy roll. As long as you have some people like those strips of meat. Some people like it chopped up and depending if you like cheese whizz or not, don't like cheese whizz, you find those, that combination, whether you like onions, you don't like onions, you find that combo and then anyone can be happy with it.

I, I took a, I took a friend and he's, he's a very, he's an amazing cook. He has eaten food all over the world. I took him to Philly and we were like, he's like, well, we're not just gonna eat sandwiches and, and cheese steaks all the time. I was like, no. I was like, I if you don't want him to cheese, like it's fine. I got him and cheese steak, it was his favorite thing that he had eaten the whole trip. He, like, I took him to some other like, like really nice, you know? And we, and he was just like, the cheese stick was like, are we gonna get another one? Can we take one back with us? And I'm like, oh my God. And he was one, he was the person I was like, oh, I didn't think he was gonna connect as much, but it was his favorite thing that he ate the whole time. And he ate it with the cheese whizz and then all that stuff. So I just think as, as most food things are, it's a personal preference thing. And I would I would be happy to take anyone on that journey. But if they, if, if there's plenty of other sandwiches that I would recommend then and be part of that tour versus just the cheeses steak.

Adapted Podcast:

What's the quick blurb about you growing up?

Ed Pokropski:

Well, the quick blurb is that I was adopted and there was a short period of time where I was in California in like, kind of, it was called Hollister, near the San Jose area. And I was there you know, with my younger brother, again, adopted from a different family. And then my mom and my dad, they got a divorce when we were, when I was about five or six. And then we moved to Philly. It was me, my mom, my brother, my mom is originally from Philly. We moved back here and that's pretty much where I was raised. And yeah, grew up and went to school and all that stuff till, you know, when I started working in media, I started working there and then moved up to New York after a little bit of working there. So yeah, quick blurb is that I am yeah, I'm a Philly boy. That's, that's the quickest blurb. <laugh>,

Adapted Podcast:

What's a, what's a thing that really kind of, you, you know, like you have cred that you're actually from Philly, like that you would say to another,

Ed Pokropski:

Another Philly person? Person. Oh boy. Wait, from a Philly, another Philly person.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. Like to say, oh, like, they'd be like, okay. Yeah, you're, you're, you're really from Philly. Is there any

Other than your accent is your accent?

Ed Pokropski:

I don't, I don't have the heavy philia accent. I, we probably, if, if I said like, oh, I'm from Philly, so and so, oh, I'm also from, we, then what usually happens is like, oh, which neighborhood you grow up in?

Adapted Podcast:

Oh, it's a neighborhood.

Ed Pokropski:

Yeah. So then if the neighborhood sort of like then from there there's not like a, a huge checklist of like stuff, it's like, oh, which neighborhood? And then it's not

Adapted Podcast:

Like, go Eagles or something. Well,

Ed Pokropski:

Cause even then it's like, yeah, I guess if someone was like, someone said Go Birds, you'd say Go Birds. You wouldn't say Go Eagles, but you know. Yeah, no, no. Well there's one you, if, if someone was like, go eat. If I said, if someone said to me, I'm from Philly, they said, go Eagles, I'd be a little bit like <laugh>, you know. But if they said Go Birds, then I would say, oh, okay. Yeah, sure. So there's a good example. If someone said, go Eagles, I'd be a little bit like, okay, <laugh>. or if they said Eagles, if they said Go Eagles, then, then fine. But if they, they would have to say, go Birds, that would be, that would make more sense.

Adapted Podcast:

<laugh>. have you been back to

Ed Pokropski:

Korea? I have. And actually this show is, is is a little bit about that. And I have been back, I went in 2015. I won't spoil. I won't spoil what happened, but I okay, well the show, the show covers that.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. Okay. And you are married? Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. You married a, an Asian woman?

Ed Pokropski:

Yes. she is Chinese though. I, you know, she would say she's Canadian. She has like more roots and ties to Canada. But yeah, she's you know, eth ethnically, I guess you could say Chinese.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. Okay. Well, what is it like having Asian in-laws? Right?

Ed Pokropski:

It's you know what, it's great because, you know, and, and, and jokingly enough, like they, they they are kind of like, in a way and, and rightfully so. It's like I am Asian, sort of, but not in the cultural way that they would think or know it to be. but that's kind of okay. Cuz even if I was, let's just say I was more Korean, there still would be sort of like you know, not a, a complete con obviously, cuz the Chinese and Korean is very different too. So like, I think I, I, you know, having them there, I'll tell you, the nice thing about it is just seeing a strong Asian family structure and love and tradition in that way that I didn't grow up with, being able to be part of it now feels really nice.

And it's not to say that that's like, that was the intent, that was part of it. It's just I didn't, I didn't anticipate being so like comforted by that in a weird way. So like, and not to say like that everything they do is traditionally Chinese or traditionally Asian or whatever you want to call it. they do stuff that's, you know, just like anyone. It's based on where they, they, they're very, they've lived in a lot of different places. So I think just seeing them it, you know, just kind of exist in that way and, and know that it's not like, you know, it's easy for things to get, for everything to get steroids, but we're like, oh, this, you know, an Asian family is like this or white family is like that. Like, it's not that. It's just like seeing, see, feeling a part of like a, a really strong, loving family structure is nice. You know? I would say that's the, that's just the thing that's like, feels, feels good about it mostly.

Adapted Podcast:

Do you think it would surprise your younger self that you ended up with an Asian person

Ed Pokropski:

<laugh>? I think a lot of things about my life now would surprise my younger self. yeah, I certainly in, you know, there was a time in high school where I, you know, I, I didn't, I, I would not have expected that, but at the same time, I don't think I thought as forward then. So anything would've, like I said, anything would surprise me. And yeah, I, I think like now I think being in New York and being in the career I have and doing this show, and I think that would surprise me more in a way I think that would surprise me the most. I think. and honestly, I, it not, it's not like, it's not like being with a Asian person is what would surprise me. It's like, as my younger self, I think finding as good of a person and partner as my wife is, is what would surprise me most <laugh>.

I think finding her and like the feeling, the way that we feel together, that would surprise me most. I, I think there were plenty of times where I didn't think that was possible in a relationship. So, and especially with my parents being, you know, divorced at some point mm-hmm. <affirmative>. So I would say not, not the part about being, ending up with a, with an Asian person. I think ending up with my wife specifically is what would surprise my younger self the most that I, not to sound cliche would, would be so lucky. I think that's what it would surprise me.

Adapted Podcast:

I'm sort of wrapping up, but I wanted to ask too that, I mean, Korean guys are cool right now.

Ed Pokropski:

Hmm. yeah, I feel like I just, we, we were late to the, I was late to the party falling. I was in high school now. I think about that, all

Adapted Podcast:

That.

Ed Pokropski:

Well, you know what? I think that goes back to the other thing is this, this is, this is the double-edged sword that all this stuff is, is what's cool and what's not cool is that like this, this feels, and I could tell, like I, I have there's another comedian you know, friend that I know that he has a very, he looks like a k-pop guy. Like he's, he's tall. He is got like, kind of that like look and the hair and the vibe mm-hmm. <affirmative>. And I think he, it's, it's a blessing and a curse. And I think like it's easy then for people to just then distill people down to one thing and what's what's hot at the moment or what's not. So while I do think like, yes, it's, it's, it's cool and it's funny to see like you know, that that positivity at the same time, it feels very much like just the other side of the coin of like, well, this, this is, this feels like it could be fleeting.

And then all of a sudden we're back to the other thing. and I think that's the other part that's tricky too, is like, yes, Korean guys are cool now, but a specific kind of Korean guy is cool now. And I think that's also to the point. It's like we always, we do this as a society. We always say like, this specific idea of a person within the confines of this is what is cool. Not the broad spectrum of, of a group, of a person, of whatever. Like, they gotta be this tall, they gotta have this hair, they gotta have this jawline, they gotta got, you know, that to me is like the, the weird crappy thing. Like for instance, when I used to here's a weird gross thing is that, and I'm sure other people, like when I was in a more like white community, and you know, at a certain point when I, it was in teens oncology, then like, and people do that thing like, oh, what kind of Asian are you?

Or where are you from? And blah, blah, blah. And then I'd say, oh, I'm Korean. Sometimes guys specifically would say, oh my God, Korean girls are so hot. And I would always think like, is this a bonding moment? Was that statement for us to bond <laugh>? Because it was like, well, what does that mean? What are you saying? I am not a Korean girl. Are you patting me on the back because I share some form of genetic similarity to the women that you are fetishizing right now. So the, that's what to me is like weird and gross. And that's when, like, when we think about like, yes, Korean, Koreans and in general, but Korean guys having a moment right now in K-pop and all that stuff. Yeah. When I, when I see it, I'm always like, oh, cool, nice. And then there's part, then the other side of me goes like, ah, this feels, this feels bad, but for a different reason. so yeah, I, you know, I think it's just like, I'm older now, so it doesn't it doesn't, it doesn't affect me. Like it would if I was, if I was 20 and if I was like single, like, I'm sure I'd be like, yeah, Korean Koreans, right? Woohoo. Yeah, I'm Korean. Like, you wanna go get a, you know, I'm sure I'd be, I'm sure I would do that and be crappy about it, but like, yeah. I think now in my older age of being like, eh, it's just, it's just weird.

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. Yeah. so Ed, where, where can people see your show?

Ed Pokropski:

So I, I don't know when this episode's dropping, but on December 15th in LA I'm gonna be at Dynasty typewriter and it's in KTown. And that shows at 10:00 PM the doors will open at nine 30, and then I'm gonna be doing it in New York again on January 25th and January 28th at a theater called The Tank. It's like near Chelsea. you can find all this. I, if you just go to my Instagram and I have a link there and it has all the, the next shows that I'm doing. so yeah.

Adapted Podcast:

What's your Instagram?

Ed Pokropski:

It is at E pops, e p o p S k i, I just shortened my last name. So at E Pops Ski do, do some people come up to you thinking that is actually your last name?

So I try, I tried to like, there was a very, very, very short period of time when I was doing standup that I tried to use that for a few shows just to, just to make it a little bit easier on people. Uhhuh, <affirmative>, you know, people would just fumble with it. And I just thought like, oh, psk, that's so much quicker and easier and snappier. but I never got, you know, through to the point where like that really mattered or mean a thing. Mm-hmm. I have talked about the idea of using my, you know, Korean name, you know, that I had gotten at the orphanage, which is U Y O O. but I haven't really found the way that that kind of fits or works yet. Sometimes I use it in press things if it, you know, it's just, so sometimes you only see names and you never get a fuller story of like a press thing.

And especially if I'm doing something that is Asian related, I try to have the, that last name in the mix there because, you know, it's not that I want, I just want people to know that it's not some, it's not a white guy doing this thing. Like it's a, it's, it's an Asian guy trying to do this Asian, like for instance, comedy festival, you know, because I know if I was like looking at, you know, a press release and I'd say Asian Comedy Fest run by, you know, and insert white name here, I'd be like, oh, of course. Gross, blah <laugh>. but, you know, and, and, but I, I want to be able to, for people even at a glance to know that there's, you know, an Asian American involved or, or, you know, behind the scenes somewhere. So yeah. So that's kind of like the connection with like mixing in the, the Korean name

Adapted Podcast:

And you know, we don't, yeah. And then it's also like, you know, you don't necessarily have to, I mean, maybe there's pressure to, to it. what's a Asian i your name, you know?

Ed Pokropski:

Yeah,

Adapted Podcast:

Yeah. So like, you are Asian, so, but you have a Polish name, so

Ed Pokropski:

Right. And there's plenty of people that like, have names for a, a ton of different reasons. So I try

Adapted Podcast:

To find They're married too.

Ed Pokropski:

And they're married. Right, exactly. Yeah. So I try to find, like, I try to find the balance and, and know that like the last name that I have is, you know, I have it for a lot of reasons, but I have grown up with it and I know of some experiences that I've had that are relevant towards not only this show, but my life are, are related to that. So, you know, I I I, I try to find you know, there's no right answer, but I try to find like the justification within certain circumstances that made the most sense.

Adapted Podcast:

And it's authentically you. Yeah, yeah. Essentially. Yeah. I mean, and you gotta love like Atsuko Okatsuka? Right. She just,

Ed Pokropski:

Sure

Adapted Podcast:

She didn't, you know?

Ed Pokropski:

Yeah. And I think that that, that her, you know, sh at this time, this is a great time to, for people taking back an identity thing to say that. No, you will say my name as it stands, and I think that's great too. So like, yeah, I mean, what was that joke that Hassan said, like, you can say Timothy Chae, so you can say my name, even though I, I do mess up. I do mess up saying his name. Cause I don't think saying it the, the way that I thought I was supposed to say it originally, so, mm-hmm. No, but I think that is a, a good point's. Like we can say sir Chev Ronan, we can say Timothy Shama, we should be able to say, you know, Asian names too. So I think that's the, that's the takeaway. That's the lesson there.

Adapted Podcast:

Okay. well thanks so much. People can follow you on @epopski.

Ed Pokropski:

Yeah, @epopski. Yeah. Mostly I'm on Instagram. I feel like I, okay. Never really was good at Twitter. And even though it's burning to the ground now, it doesn't necessarily matter, but <laugh> oh, and on Facebook, I'm Edward Pops ski on there because you know, while I know Facebook is also its own weird minefield, the only thing that works, the thing that works well, there are some like getting involved in these groups and they do a good job and like putting an event on there like that, that, that is still, I think in the best circumstances are, is still good pipeline. So that's where I'm at out Facebook.

Adapted Podcast:

That's probably a ton of Edward Pokropskis out there, right? Have you like

Ed Pokropski:

Looked? There are not, there are actually not a ton. There's basically like my dad and maybe two other dude <laugh>, that's all I know of. I, I joke, I, I, I used to have this joke and it's a very, very long one. But all this to say is that I was trying to beat the most famous p krosky and it being me. This face would be the love <laugh>, like the, the perfect <laugh>, the perfect joke and, and revenge, well, not revenge, but just joke to me is that if, if if I was the, the, the most famous pki, that'd be great.

Ed Pokropski:

Thank you, ed, for sharing part of your story with us. To see him live in upcoming shows in New York and San Francisco, visit his Instagram for details @epopski.