

Make Me Care About...

Make Me Care About...Explained
Podcast introduction transcript

Jen Hatmaker: Hey, everybody, this is Jen Hatmaker. Welcome to Make Me Care About. This episode is super special because I am getting to introduce you to this whole series. I cannot tell you how excited I am to bring you into these conversations, how fun and interesting this work has been. I have with me today the effervescent Chloe Louvouezo. Chloe, I am so delighted to talk to you. Hi, hi, hi.

Chloe Louvouezo: Hi, Jen.

Jen Hatmaker: We're introducing ourselves to the community. You work for the Gates Foundation, and we have heard of the Gates. Can you talk a little bit about what specifically you do there?

Chloe Louvouezo: I'm a senior producer at the Foundation, and I get to develop stories that really spotlight people who inspire our work. As background context, I grew up in Niger, West Africa, and I was always very proximate to many of the issues the Foundation focuses on in the communities where I lived.

Jen Hatmaker: What would you say the Gates Foundation is trying to accomplish by producing this series?

Chloe Louvouezo: The world is facing multiple crises in the wake of the pandemic. Between the war in Ukraine, climate and inflation, it's just really hard to see hope in your daily newsfeed. What the Gates Foundation wants to do is really expose people to some of the innovations and the innovators, and we think that people will learn something new and maybe leave inspired.

Jen Hatmaker: That is exactly what this podcast is about. How would you describe this series to a friend who knows nothing about the show?

Chloe Louvouezo: My elevator pitch would be something along the lines of, if you want to learn about some cool things that don't show up in your newsfeed, but you want some information that will make you a more thoughtful citizen of the world, then you should listen to make me care about, and you will walk away with some interesting dinner conversations.

Jen Hatmaker: That's it. You are hired to give the elevator pitch in perpetuity. It is rich, and it is deep, and it is interesting.

Chloe Louvouezo: It's thoughtful.

Jen Hatmaker: It's thoughtful, and it's hopeful. I walked away from every single interview feeling hopeful about some pretty big deal. I mean, we're talking about real systemic issues, and then I'm still walking away going, "Oh, look at this solution." You've listened to the episodes. Do you have a particular favorite?

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Chloe Louvouezo: Ah, it's so hard. Really it's so hard because both you and I have been close to the making of these episodes. I don't know about you, but I'm just really now fascinated with certain things that I've never thought of before that had never crossed my mind. But like you, I care deeply about women's issues. I just found myself getting really riled up as I listened to the episode on digital money.

For those who aren't familiar with the term digital money, it's essentially the ability to spend and save money without the use of cash. It really disrupted what I've been taking for granted as a woman in the United States, because there are so many circumstances that women find themselves in where a lack of access to digital money puts them in a really fragile, if not threatening situation.

Jen Hatmaker: I mean, I'm waving my hanky over here. I felt the exact same way. This series is so interesting because we're talking about, in some cases, what's going to sound to the listener's ears like a weird little quirky topic. You're an insider here, so you're the perfect person to ask. Why do you or why should anybody care about topics like some that are more obvious like maternal mortality and some that are less obvious like iodized salt, which is one whole episode?

Chloe Louvouezo: The magnitude of the maternal mortality crisis runs deep, and it really lives under the hood of this country and many others. As an episode topic, maternal mortality is less about introducing this obscure issue than it is about being so convicted that everyone should care about women at their most vulnerable state. But then there's other topics like you mentioned, iodized salt, for example, that are less obvious.

But I think what makes this show in this series special is that we are taking a short, but deep dive into the connection that is being made between the research and much bigger issues of global health, agriculture, and the benefits that these foods have on everything. For example, with iodized salt, our individual cognitive development, which is surprising, and our economic sustainability. All of these things have very real life consequences for communities around the world. I personally wouldn't have made that connection otherwise.

Jen Hatmaker: In fact, that was actually personally one of my favorite episodes. What do I know about iodized salt? Nothing going into it. I think it's something I buy at the store. I feel like I've seen the word, but I'm not sure. And then it was so fascinating, our guest for that episode, his name is Mekatesh, and at one point in our conversation, and I'm so sorry to steal his thunder, but he very casually mentions that he is a sixth generation salt producer. I was like, what are you saying?

Who is a sixth generation salt producer? What are you talking about? Now that he is using this as such a solution to global nutrition, it was very meta for me. The whole conversation was so interesting to learn about such a simple, inexpensive, ubiquitous solution to a problem. What was your takeaway after listening to each of these conversations with these incredible experts and leaders?

Chloe Louvouezo: That line, "if you think you know, you have no idea," that comes to mind. Because I think at the end of every episode, I do feel more enlightened and smarter about the world and just how connected we are.

Jen Hatmaker: I can't tell you how many times I have worked those interviews into my real life conversations because I learned so much.

Chloe Louvouezo: I'm curious though, can you tell us why you are hosting this show and just tell us a little bit more about yourself?

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Jen Hatmaker: Absolutely. I'm an author and I have a podcast. I primarily lead women, and this has been my space for most of my adult life. I have always cared deeply about justice, about the end of extreme poverty. I'm an adoptive mom and my kids are international. I have a lot of skin in the game. When I got a very fascinating phone call saying, "Jen, we're with the Gates Foundation. Maybe you've heard of Bill and Melinda Gates?"

I'm like, "I have." Melinda has actually been on my podcast. "Would you take a phone call?" I was like, "I sure will. I sure will." It's just work that I admire so much. I needed about two sentences to be convinced to join this incredible project.

Chloe Louvouezo: I'm wondering, as a host, what would you say is the point of this show for people who are listening and for whom these issues are very new?

Jen Hatmaker: There's the obvious litany of advantages to listening to the show, which is how much you are going to be exposed to, what you will be able to speak intelligently about when it comes to our world. But for me, at the root of it all, I just operate in this world under the belief that we belong to one another. I cannot find another way to exist in the world without thinking that we are one another's brothers and sisters. What happens to you matters to me.

This is what it means for me to be a good neighbor. I have this thought, I think, about making me care about what it might look like when we come back and revisit these 20 years from now. With all these solutions activated in all these places, how different the conversation will look even in a couple of decades.

Chloe Louvouezo: I'm banking on as being in a very different place. In 20 years, I'm really excited that this podcast has the potential to also enlighten and just expose people to just range of challenges, issues, and bright spots that are happening in the world.

Jen Hatmaker: Absolutely. Chloe, thank you so much for being here and for your time and for the work that you do in the world. It's just incredible.

Chloe Louvouezo: Thank you so much, Jen, for holding space for all of these important conversations and just for your partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Jen Hatmaker: It has genuinely been my pleasure. Okay, you guys interested? Want a little more? Definitely follow this show. You're going to be encouraged, for sure, and probably challenged. You are not going to want to miss a single episode in this series. We are so delighted to welcome you to Make Me Care About.