

Robby Soave on the Biden Media Coverup and Why Corporate Media Is Broken

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SUMMARY

Robbie Soave discusses the current state of American media and politics, highlighting the challenges of misinformation and the evolving dynamics between political figures and the media landscape. He emphasizes the importance of free speech, the need for accountability in media reporting, and the impact of technology on public discourse, particularly regarding the younger generation's political identity.

- The media's handling of President Biden's cognitive abilities has shifted, with increased scrutiny and fact-checking reminiscent of how they treated Trump.*
- There's a growing divide in political identity among Gen Z, with a notable split between conservative and progressive ideologies based on gender.*
- Soave critiques the media's tendency to sensationalize and misrepresent events, using the Covington incident as a case study.*
- He argues that social media has democratized information dissemination, allowing for diverse perspectives but also leading to potential misinformation.*
- The importance of maintaining a liberal ethos of allowing individuals to live their lives without undue interference is emphasized.*
- Soave expresses optimism about the future of free speech in America, despite challenges from government and media.*
- He advocates for the need to foster environments where young people can engage in healthy social interactions and explore their identities without fear of judgment.*

Robbie Soave, welcome to Dad Saves America. Great to be with you. I have been watching Rising for a long time. And so, I'm excited to talk about all things media with you. It's a very weird time for us as Americans, for us as parents. Like, I watched the presidential debate with my son. He's 19. He technically can vote in the fall. And it's not the kind of quality of conversation I would like to be able to have, in theory, about American civics.

Yeah. Um, it's bad. So, let's start with the moment we're in, because it's a media moment that's really weird. Yes. Um, I think we are learning that the media was not very transparent with us, or maybe they just did their jobs really poorly. That the story that our our president, Joe Biden, is um is is not in a good place cognitively. It's something the media failed to admit for weeks. I Either they knew and they covered helped cover it up, or they didn't know and they did a bad job reporting it. I mean, a month ago, if we go back to that, remember there were those several videos of Biden at um at an event uh with world leaders, and uh he looked he looked real bad on camera. He looked very confused, disoriented.

And the media, headline after headline, Washington Post, New York Times, The Atlantic, CNN, MSNBC, they all said, "These are unfair, misleading videos designed to trick you into thinking that Joe Biden is too old." Then we had the debate. How has that narrative held up? There's obviously been this um the right up to like days prior feeding montages of "This is the best Biden we've ever had. This He's sharp sharp sharp sharp sharp sharp sharp sharp sharp sharp. So, it wasn't it was active lying or act active misrepresentation as much as it was trying to suppress dissent that this is not going well.

There was that report uh on his age and then the Wall Street Journal did a piece that was separate that also interviewed a lot of people on the hill about the state of his cognitive capabilities and that was roundly just made fun of and and decried. So, there's a gut impulse here, especially if you're like not a fan of Joe Biden, whether you like Trump or not, to be like, well, this is just the usual like media in league with the Democratic Party. It's just like it's just manifest corruption. Why is anyone surprised about this? Yeah.

It does feel different though in ways that I don't know why it feels different. Like the level of of of lie, the stakes of the lie. Uh so, how do you think about that? You can tell that the media Biden has been doing the media on easy mode for the entirety of his presidency. You can tell because now that's over. It's been very different for him in the last 2 weeks. The media has treated him like they treat Trump.

They have been savage. They have been I noticed um in a in transcripts now of his comments in in the New York Times, they're including like the stutter words, the incoherence. They used to just edit all that out. I mean, they do that for a lot of people to, you know, make Yeah. Make you sound a little bit more you take out the ums and the pauses. They're not doing that anymore. They are they're savage to him. Um they're even fact-checking him. Well, I think some of them believe wrongly that they can force him from the ticket. The the media and you know, I'm painting with a broad brush.

The media is a lot of different people and institutions who have different sets of priorities and different levels of political bias, uh etc. I think some people in the media think their best chance to stop Trump, their partisans who they hate Trump, is to now go as hard as they can against Biden and get him to drop out. That is not going to work. I'm telling you, he's not going anywhere. I think there's like a low chance, but they're acting like it's a certainty, like he's he's done.

Why would he go? Why would he do that? He wants to be president again. They they all do. All of our political figures, we're learning, would rather die in office than enjoy a nice retirement. It's very unhealthy. It's true of Trump, too. His entire party turned against him multiple times and he said, "Screw you, I want to be president again." They're all like that. That's what we're really finding out as Biden and Trump have a lot in common.

Hey there, friends. I just thought I'd cut in because this is an unusual moment for unusual times. Obviously, you know, Robbie made a bet there that didn't play out. He's got a lot of great things to say. You should stick with the conversation because most of it doesn't hinge on whether or not President Biden is, or as you know, is no longer running for re-election. Um but yeah, things are changing quick in the political world these days, aren't they?

All right, back to it. Well, it is interesting because on that commonness front, you now have um Biden taking to his rallies and decrying the media. And as well as actually, you know, having lock him up chance. So, it is the like layers of irony here like are endless, it seems like. You're you're based in DC, right? So, you're you're living and breathing the political all the time and you're on a daily political show.

The part I don't understand, though, is if you even sort of kind of believe that Donald Trump represents an existential threat to democracy, to the republic, to our constitutional order, whatever. And sure, he didn't burn the country entirely to the ground in his first term, but now he's going to be unhinged. It's sort of like the worst of all possible worlds. This is a real bad strategy to try to stop America's Hitler, isn't it? Like wouldn't you have been trying to keep if you knew Biden was in such a difficult place cognitively, so it clearly incapable of like presenting to the public and to the world as being a capable president.

Wouldn't you be like, we got to have an open primary. We need to start this conversation now. We're screwed. Like, right? Yeah, one gets the feeling that behind the scenes, behind closed doors, I think a lot of media figures and Democratic officials don't necessarily buy their own spin on how dangerous Trump is. And then you have to, you know, if we're talking about the media people, we do have to keep in mind, and I don't know how much this actually motivates people's behavior in the industry, but a Trump presidency would be good for the media financially. Um it'll be good I mean for their failing declining viewership numbers on cable news and failing subscriptions, um it would be the best thing that could possibly happen to them. They've been laying off CNN just did another round of layoffs.

Um it's been a it's been a rough couple years for the media because Biden is boring from a media perspective, and Trump is a is a cartoon character. He's a he's a he's a content creator. He's a You know what I mean? Yeah, yeah. You got it. In addition to representing something that they don't like and disagree with, they gain subscriptions during the Trump presidency. So, they have that to look forward to if uh if he comes back. There is um this very interesting thing that's that's taken shape in new ways, which is the way in which audience capture happens now. So, like at the level of sort of the structure of the news media business, we now have this thing where The New York Times is always left of center.

They were carrying water for Stalin, etc., etc. But, as a paper that got distributed to newsstands across the country, the relationship with the reader, I think, was different than a business model in which your subscribers become your primary audience and create this positive feedback loop where like why would we want to upset our like liberal elite college-educated white women that buy our subscription? So, therefore, it's really not in their interest to upset those people. And vice versa on the right, like everyone's kind of captured by their audience now in this world of subscriptions and and um infinite choice. How do you understand what's happened to news and to reporting and to the and to your industry as a result of these technological changes?

For sure, you've hit upon a really interesting dynamic that I I contemplate a lot. And it is true for conservative and alternative and dissident perspectives and platforms as well. You know, I think back to like let's say you owned a newspaper 40 or 50 years ago. How would you even know who your most popular writer or columnist or feature was? You'd have to run like a survey or something. If you coupon if you mail it back in and you find

out that well, the crossword's everyone's most popular feature. They sold advertisement and advertisements was a business model and the what the content was actually didn't matter all that much. It used to be kind of boring, the content in a lot of newspapers. That's what local news was a lot of Yeah. You know, not I mean, important to the people who live in the community, don't get me wrong, but not not the kind of thing we see in newspapers now because the quality of the content didn't need to be exciting. It didn't need to be telling the readers what they want to hear in terms of their perspective. We have much better analytics now. You know, I write for a magazine that has as a nonprofit reason, donors, et cetera. And then my show on YouTube through The Hill is you know, that's an advertising model. But you do because of the analytics. You know, I see every day you know, let's say we made 10 different videos. I see which ones perform well. I see which headlines and how they were packaged form well. See where people drop off.

You see the comments. You see if you like you take a different take or you and people like I don't want that. never going to like I'm never going to say something I don't believe or I don't think because that's a short-sighted strategy and you'll eventually lose the trust of people if you're just literally going to tell everyone exactly what they want to hear all the time. It's so personally corrosive. Yeah, it's bad. But you can find out which subjects the audience likes more and that's the true filtering effect.

You know, if they just want to hear about like COVID interview good match. I was really interested in the COVID policies. I was really opposed to all the mandates. The audience had high interest in that subject. That's all I wanted to talk about. That's a lot of what we did for 3 years. But you know, then other things don't get talked about. It's not it's not it's not censorship, but it's it's what the audience wants and expects. And I I've said this so many times. If you your readers, your subscribers, your audience, you can tell them something they don't want to hear some of the time. You can talk about things they're not interested. You can learn you can walk them along the path to appreciate new things. But if you consistently are oblivious to or ignorant of what they're expecting, you will fail in the media every single time. I had Bill de Blasio on this show and it did not go over well with my audience. Yeah, I bet.

I bet. You know, it's a right-of-center audience which is a you know, I don't like to think of this stuff in terms of left-right. I'm very libertarian which makes me not exactly left-right along some dimensions. But yeah, it was like like literally like nope. Not watching this guy. And and we had actually quite a pretty jovial conversation. I didn't hit him on COVID stuff cuz it wasn't what it was about. But it's also like, well, what am I going to say? Like you're you're the worst. Yeah, it's not Like what am I going to say to him? I know he's going to just defend that he was working with the information he had at the time and it's just not the way I understand what I'm doing with this.

Even so, no. Didn't work. It was like, okay. Maybe a debate would have been better. Like let's have him debate somebody else and I will like watch and eat popcorn with the audience. I don't know. Is there have there been ways that you've found that you can bring a subject to the people that you know appreciate your perspective that challenges them and is more likely to open ears than not? Well, the good thing about my show, uh Rising, uh is a it's a it's a debate show. It's right-left debate show. Yeah.

I now, like you, I'm not exactly uh I got get lumped in with the right, but I'm a you know, libertarian. As but I'm representing conservative views. So, if there's an issue where, you know, I I'll sometimes say, "Well, maybe I don't personally feel this way." Immigration, I'm you know, I'm more of libertarian than of where the right is now, certainly on immigration. So, I'll say, "Well, I'm personally more supportive of immigration than a lot of people on the right, but here's what I think a conservative or Republican would respond to this argument." And we'll have the debate along those lines. And I have a rotating co-host at the moment, but the people who span the from the very far left to just kind of center-left Democrats. And sometimes I'll have two of those people on at the same time and they end up fighting more than anyone else. I mean, the level of disagreement which and that happens with people on the right, too. You're pro-Trump and anti-Trump people agree on like 95% of policies, just screaming at each other for personal reasons. And the left has that same dynamic. There'll be the stop the vote. I didn't know what that was until I I co-hosting the show. This was this seminal moment in Democratic circles where they uh were forced to vote forced to vote, excuse me. That's what it was to try to stop Nancy Pelosi from becoming the speaker several years ago, hold up her vote, and it's this very obscure thing that everyone on the left knows about. Like they remember where they were when forced the vote was happening. I have no idea what this is.

I don't remember that. That's like a thing on the right. Do you know what I mean? It's uh it's like the tyranny of small differences or the desire for some kind of purity. Yeah. And it is a maybe a particular kind of psychological profile that wants purity. I probably fall into that camp. It gets I think mediated by having spent a good amount of my life in New Jersey, I think. Well, it happens in libertarian circles, too. You know, the Libertarian Party has had this some conflict between the Mises Caucus people and other people in the party, and I'm like, man, we I think we all agree on like 99% of policies here.

Is there a reason this needs to be so argumentative? This is like it's not healthy anymore. If you're not opposed to or in favor of fractional reserve banking, get out of the room. I don't want to talk to you. You are a communist. Right. Um So, here we are with an intransigent president who it it seems like is getting a lot of support from an increasingly tight inner circle, including his immediate family. And a media that has suddenly realized, "Oh, we don't like this anymore.

And now we're at war effectively with the head of the party that something north of 90% of people in the news media business, according to some research, vote for and are card-carrying members of. So, so yeah, what's your prediction? You sort of alluded to he's not going anywhere. I don't think he's going anywhere. Why? What How do you What What are you expecting is going to happen? So, the most common error I hear people utter when they discuss this, I'll hear that I hear this all the time. I hear I'll hear someone say, "They They are going to switch him out. They won't let him run at this point." And I always say, "Who is they? Who are you talking about?" There is no they. The head The they in the Democratic Party is Joe Biden. The they in the Republican Party is Donald Trump. We This is not the 19th century where a smoke-filled room of cigar-smoking party leaders picked the ticket based on Back then, um even sometimes the incumbent president was dropped from the ticket because the smoke-filled room of party bosses decided, "No, in this election we want, you know, someone from Ohio and someone from a a Southern Democrat turned Republican." They're like, "This is the ticket we want to concoct." They had control and they had factions they were dealing with. We don't That dynamic is gone. There is no independent leadership in either of the party. The leader of the party is the candidate. So, no one can make

him go. I mean, literally no one can make him go.

He already won the delegates. They're pledged to vote for him. He would have to release them. They could technically all mutiny, is my understanding, but I've read the reporting with people talking to the delegates. The delegates all say that they're backing Biden unless he tells them not to. So, there is no they to make him go. He can only go if he himself decides it, and I see no indication that he's going to do that. What about it's just this week this the the story of the week on this front is George Clooney as the um avatar for the super elite high-dollar donor class that um is now saying, "No, Joe, you've got to go."

So, does that Do you think that donors in this in our system play enough influence that they could push Joe Biden out of his second term? Nope. I don't. Look, they can damage him. May- I I think he's not To be clear, I d- I don't think he's likely to be reelected president. I think he was uh his odds were bad even before the debate and all this started happening and this is further damaging him. Uh um you know, I'm just the polls are generally pretty accurate, actually, and the polls have had him a little bit down for a while and now he's a lot of bit down.

A- but but by the way, I uh Kamala Harris, I think, would is likely to perform slightly better than Joe Biden based on the polling. She also looks likely to lose to Donald Trump. So, then it's like, why would they go through this elaborate, unprecedented, self-destructive process of replacing him for someone who's not like a certainty to win at all, who also looks likely to lose? I mean, to be clear, they should probably try it. If I was the Democratic Party and I did have this power that I'm saying does not exist, I would switch them out at this point. But, there is no one who can do that. It has to be Joe Biden. And if Joe Biden stops running for president, if he steps aside, his odds of being president again right now are like I don't know, like 20% or something? Something like that.

go to zero. They just go to zero. What is the incentive for him to step aside? He wants the Democrats to win, but he also wants him to win. His They'd have to convince him and and if I'm them, this is the strategy I would adopt. You have to convince him that his odds of being reelected are already zero. And so, he gains he loses nothing by stepping aside and maybe the party gains something. You have to encourage him to put the party's interest above himself. But, we see the problem there, which is that political leaders don't put anyone's interest above their own. Again, this happened with Trump. No Mitt Romney, John McCain, the entire party, so many members of the Senate. They turned on him twice. They turned on him after Access Hollywood.

They turned on him after January 6th. They all said, "No, thank you. Please, go away." He did not care. His conviction that he should be president again is stronger than their conviction that he shouldn't. And we're seeing the same dynamic on the Democratic side. So, I I think Look, I could be wrong. I I I I think there's zero chance he drops out. I think it is extraordinarily unlikely. It's interesting to hear you say that, especially sort of a politico, because I think for the general public, and especially for those of us that don't live in DC, where you can't escape this conversation at all, it feels likely.

Cuz we're opening up every every screen. Every is now like, "Oh, no, any day." It's like it feels like any day now

there's going to be the press conference. It feels like that. And you're right, this is a hot take. Even most probably many political journalists I know in DC expect him to go away. But remember, he's already won the nomination. He just has to hang on. He has to by taking no action, he confirms himself as the Democratic candidate. He could have a bad health situation. I mean, his health already seems not good. He could, if he had a stroke or he had a bad fall or something, do I think he would step aside? Yes. I I don't think this is impossible. I just think it's not likely given how political operators handle thing like Diane Feinstein died in office. Chuck Grassley ran for re-election. He's 90. Ruth Bader Ginsburg stayed on the Supreme Court costing Democrats a vote for like a generation. And on and over and over and over and over again. People now, political leaders don't retire. They don't step aside when they're caught in sex scandals or financial scandals, the things that used to cause Yeah, like Gary Hart.

Right. Yeah, that guy Are you kidding? That guy would have never gone away if that sort of thing You could be You could have an orgy with like six prostitutes of every gender. There's probably more than six now, and you would not go away, right? It doesn't We don't have that accountability anymore. I don't know what it says about our society we don't have as much democratic accountability. They just hang on. It's a marvel Cuomo resigned. Governor Cuomo in New York, honestly.

Uh what what's his name? Al Franken. He would have never resigned if that had not happened at like the height of Me Too. Oh, right, right. And it was for a picture. resigning. He said he regrets resigning. Well, cuz it was Well, yeah, cuz he's looking around of dumb, honestly. He's looking around and like, so I had a jokey picture of pertaining to grope a soldier while I was actually on like a comedy tour celebrating the troops and I'm going to resign for that compared to like people like crazy the things that I mean, we have people who just stay in office now forever. We have the oldest um by average age Congress we've ever had in American history. The average age of people has gone up and up. It's just hard to get By By the way, other countries don't have this problem. I think this has to do with like the parliamentary system versus our winner-take-all system. You know, they do have a more independent party mechanism in other countries where they say, "Okay, you're we can see your favorability is now down. We're swapping you for another leader."

That just doesn't happen here. There seems to be um a kind of chaos in in politics across the West. How do you understand? Do you have a um a kind of poly sci theory of the moment we're in that's broader than just this election cycle? Because obviously Europe Yeah, they got different systems, but French just had an election that I don't fully understand where Le Pen, who I think's mostly gross. Yeah. It's like, oh, so now you get sort of like right-wing authoritarianism, but with kind of socialism policies. Who's like Who's like liking this? Yeah. But it did look like like the Le Pen party actually got more votes even in the second round and yet got I don't know how that works. It doesn't strike me as like, oh, we should we should try their system on for size.

It's just got a different set of weirdnesses. The UK's gotten crazy. So, what's your theory? Do you have a theory? I mean, look, there's a lot of clearly a lot of dissatisfaction with uh political incumbents, with the kind of I think technocratic elite that especially in Europe has been in power for a while. Um there's uh so many so much concerns about immigration in both Europe and the US. I mean, polls show us in US this is the top issue. And again, I'm someone who wants legal immigration, thinks that immigrants are very important for we can't build

things without a labor supply. Um, that, you know, my grandparents and great-grandparents were immigrants from Italy and Germany and that, you know, they were spat upon when they got off the boat and they were hated the way Yeah. you hear some of the rhetoric about immigrants today and they've helped to make this country great. So, I generally have that same feeling about immigrants. Obviously, the chaos at the southern border is not good and it's to have to have people, you know, swimming across rivers in unsafe conditions for them and then contributing to instability on the border is not good. We need to, you know, reform the policies so people can come here legally. I think everyone like basically everyone supports that.

Congress just won't do anything. But, you know, there is a there is a a concern and a fear about um, immigrants about crime and instability. That again that in America is not closely actually correlated. I mean, we have to the extent we have crime problems, it's not disproportionately immigrants. That might be different in Europe. I, you know, haven't looked as closely at it. In Europe, I think it's that maybe the cultural fears about the waves of refugees they're dealing with might be Islam Islam's played a part in uh the concerns in Europe. We have people the people entering our country illegally. I mean, you think whatever you want about illegal immigration, but it's like Catholics um, who fleeing socialism. Uh They're probably more conservative and family oriented than the existing population. I do like to say if if we could orchestrate a swap of gender studies graduates for Mexican Catholics, I would do a two-for-one deal. I have this argument with Every day of the week and twice on Sunday. Thank you. I have this argument with people on the right all the time where they're talking about how our values are going to be dilute our culture's under siege from immigrants and I'm like, by your logic, the people you right-wing man, the person who is most against your views, your worldview, who wants to change America most in a way that you don't agree with, they are wealthy and white. Their ancestors came over on the Mayflower, and they have a graduate degree from a prestigious university. They are the most American. They've been here forever, and they are more hostile to your values than anyone, than the vast majority of the people entering our country, even illegally. So, do what you want with that information, but it's just a very misplaced um fear and frustration to me. Yeah, I um I will say, so I uh being sort of more radically libertarian than some, I've generally been like you know, pre-1924 America, where you could just basically come in through Ellis Island and chunk, and maybe you get called Smith for some reason instead of your real name, but otherwise you don't have tuberculosis, come on in.

Seemed to build the greatest country the world's ever seen. I I have gotten a little more worried that maybe I'm just a utopian in some respects, cuz it is easier to get here than it used to be. And there's other forces at work. And it does worry me when I look at some of the things about Europe, and and but maybe Europe's also real bad at integrating people. It's like Yeah. people go to France and they're like shunted to a ghetto forever. So, then of course they're always blowing stuff up over Yeah, and you know, Europe has had a is a place of conflicting ethnic tensions for thousands of years, right? They have we we we call it France and Germany and Britain, but those are even subgroups of people who have been fighting, you know, who are forced into the same kingdom for the thousands of years. The US, America, is founded on these really great ideals and has been successful in integration that that that we are a a a community for people who care about the rule of law and freedom of speech and market economies and democracy and it's worked pretty well.

noted. Right. It works pretty well. Um you know, my my again, as I said, my my great-grandparents were like Italians and um and Slavic people and like that was considered a mixed marriage, right? Nobody said, "Oh, those

are all white people." That's a new invention that they all get lumped into the same ethnic or racial category. No, their ancestors hated each other, but we America solves that pretty well. So, one of the things I've noticed in our comments is the rise of a slogan and even I think even today's Wall Street Journal was talking about it.

What about Project 2025? So, Project 2025, which I haven't really looked at closely, I understand Neither has Donald Trump, he says. I understand it to basically be the the output of the Heritage Foundation and and and an attempt to say like, "Okay, let's come up with our conservative vision of what public policy could be and how to do it so that Donald Trump, who's a delegator, let's say, um has a bunch of stuff to do out of the gate." What's your understanding of Project 2025?

It's playing a role as a buzzword in our politics at the moment. You know, what's what's the deal from your perspective? Yeah, the Democrats, the Biden campaign have a concerted strategy of running against Project 2025. They have um elevated it to this pivotal position to the extent that Donald Trump has kind of distanced himself from it. Um like you, I have not read through all of it. Yes, it's policy ideas from the Heritage Foundation, some of which I agree with and some of which I don't. The Heritage Foundation has gone in a kind of more right-wing populist direction um uh on foreign policy. I sort of agree with some of those ideas on uh sort of markets. I I think it's an unhealthy direction, you know, very wanting tariffs and all those kinds of things.

Uh I think if there's a broader guiding principle in it, they are and then this is I think this is the part of Project 2025 that has most freaked out Democrats or or liberals is is the idea is like getting rid of bureaucrats, which I do actually think is a good idea. it is. And this idea that, you know, Donald Trump made the deep state a coined that phrase or made it a phrase that everyone knows what it is now and then people on the other side want to pretend it's not true. No, no, no, there is not this massive federal bureaucracy of progressives who are running the government independent of what any of the political leadership says. Now we're in this moment with Joe Biden so clearly out of it where they're trying like the defense, his people are saying, "Don't worry about this. There's this permanent federal bureaucracy of deep-seated ideological progressives who are actually running the government." Which is exactly what the deep state theory is. Correct. So look, I think and I would think this way, you know, if if Democrats come in and there's a massive federal bureaucracy full of right-wing people, I mean, imagine if that were the case, it's insane, but I mean Yeah, obviously they would replace them to implement the policies they want. The idea that, you know, I this is what I really don't like is Fauci type people who have just in government forever and have their own agenda and operate in a basically progressive way but are independent of political considerations.

Well, I don't think that's a good system and to the extent Project 2025 is taking aim at some of that, I I I do support having democratic accountability, having the people who actually win office. Not that this is the greatest system ever, but it's better than having a pure permanent government class that just does whatever they want and has no accountability. This is the thing about the protect our democracy sloganeering that cuts in a lot of directions. It's as if they're swinging like a mace around and every so often it hits them in the face and they just keep swinging it. It's like, okay, so you're the protect democracy crowd, but you're now aligned to kick out the guy that actually won the primary for your own party.

So that's weird. You're the protect democracy crowd, but you're really upset that that the Supreme Court has limited the power of the unelected Yes. administrative state with the Chevron deference ruling. So, wait, but so you realize what that means? Well, how do you understand the Chevron case? Cuz it's tied to this stuff. I this was an outcome that many libertarians, including myself, have wanted for a long time. Just saying that the administrative agencies they can't just make their own rules. They are our system gives under our, you know, original conception of how the US government works, gives most of the power to the legislature. Says Congress makes laws, and then the presidency carries them out. And what has happened over time is that the Congress no longer wants to do anything, govern, legislate.

It's it's reality TV, it's entertainment. They just want to talk on TV, yell at each other. They're not really doing anything. So, the executive has supreme power, and then this independent bureaucracy just does all of the policies they want. The the level of deference they've gone to do that has been very bad. So, this ruling is just saying, "No, if you're going to like totally wholesale invent a new policy, and you're some agency of the federal government, no, you need a clear mandate from Congress to do that." That is pro-democracy. That's saying the people we vote into office that we have some say over, they're the ones, and then they can suffer the retribution in terms of the the ballot box if they pass policies we don't like. I mean, that's how it's supposed to work. It seems like there's these two threads. I actually brought this up with my de Blasio conversation, and he was like, "Oh, you actually you know, you kind of know what the progressive era was about." He was like, it was very trivial in a way, but civics education in America being what it is, any knowledge of it kind of seems interesting.

You have two threads in progressivism, it seems like to me. You have a you have a populism that gives rise to stuff like senators being elected instead of appointed. And you know, William Jennings Bryant type of energy. The Bernie Sanders, we the people, democracy now. But then you have the Claudine Gay type, the Woodrow Wilson Princeton Yeah. expert elite class, the people are stupid, let's create the Fed which is totally unaccountable independent agency. Oh, the most progressive Elizabeth Warren concocts an agency and let's let's house it at the Fed and have the Fed print its budget.

And like the least democratic institution, I'm talking about the consumer product safety commission or whatever it is, the CPSC. consumer protection. Yeah, they're terrible. It's like the the least democratic institution maybe ever conceived in American history by the so-called progressive Elizabeth Warren. How do you you are you host a co-host a show with I would say like, you know, the the ideological spectrum on Rising you know, it tends to be broad. Yeah. Um you've got people just are like socialists.

How do you understand the threads of progressivism even as you kind of interact with the people on your on your show? Um you're right that I that I that's a very smart difference you're articulating between kind of the technocratic elite progressive liberalism and progressive left type people. My audience has a substantial audience of people who I think they think of themselves as populist and for them that actually spans a lot of right left issues. Um the audience under the previous host Krystal and Saagar who hosted the show three years ago before I came aboard, it got a big audience for a pro-Bernie Sanders people.

And so then so the audience was very left on in a lot of ways. Although, you know, what what is left mean on

foreign policy now, right? That's that's kind of aligns with what the right thinks on foreign policy. When COVID hit, I noticed a split on the left even in terms of the audience is that in along exactly those lines the people who are like trust the experts the experts are Fauci and Burks and the CDC and the people in government they've got this man and the people on the left who are popular who are anti-pharmaceutical companies and anti you know you see that in like the trajectories of the careers of people like Glenn Greenwald and Krystal Ball who was hosting my show for a while or Jimmy Dore or Russell Brand going one way and then the the the you know the other people going the other way. So it's a that is a very important difference. Now I as a libertarian I also think populism is flawed in a lot of ways. The you know I think the the novel insight that libertarianism has is that you know the populism versus technocratic elite you know they're fighting over well the elites are bad and you know evil and morally depraved and can't run our society. The people know what they want and then the elites are saying no the people have no expertise they don't understand policy they would vote for bad policies the the elites know what our observation is that well the elites are bad and wrong and the people are bad and wrong. Everyone is bad at making decisions for others. Everyone is bad at governing someone else's life. So what we want to do is take that decision-making out of the power of the elites but also out of the power of the people. We I I want I don't want my life decided by other people if they have a graduate degree or not it's doesn't they're no better at it than anyone else. So I think that's our that's our distinguishing characteristic libertarians.

There's H.L. Mencken saying that the people know what they want and deserve to get it good and hard. Yep. Yep there's a lot of truth to that. It it's it's actually a hard time to to to talk like that. Um in in so far as A it sounds like you're just an elite jerk. Yeah. And and B I think the energy around a sense that there is a kind of elite that isn't just a kind of typical oh people that are in the upper echelon, but there is a there's a class. There's a sort of shared life, you know, um Charles Murray talks about it in his book Coming Apart.

Like he talks about the Frankly, the areas that you and I live in like Austin, Texas or the DC area or you know, the New New York, New Jersey super zip codes where where latte sipping you know, cosmopolitan suburbanites and we don't even we've never even watched a NASCAR race or blah blah blah. our own wood or anything. Yeah. chopped plenty of wood myself, but that being said, it's like and and then there's like the rest of the country.

And there is a there is it also maps against sort of the urban rural divide which I've seen firsthand as being very profound in this country in particular. Maybe it's every I think it is everywhere in Europe. But how do you think about politics through that lens of like urban versus rural and where at the level of the public like where these things are breaking. Yeah, class differences are so important in our society. They're so politically relevant and actually that the media has done everything they can to minimize class issues because the way they see conflict and social dynamics in our society is purely through the lens of race at all times. They have tried to make race the most salient um dividing issue in our country in modern times. Race has become the salient thing the media talks about when actually class if you you know, if you look at data, there's a lot of arguments that class is the more salient thing is where that you actually come across fundamental differences in values people have and how people want to live.

I mean, you know, Donald Trump is like gaining ground with political my with with with a racial minorities Yeah, race is actually becoming less salient. Education level is the most the most like politically deterministic for whether you're Republican or Democrat now is becoming not just how much money you make, but how elite your education is. So, that's where the fundamental difference at a desire to live in different ways. And I just you know, I don't I want people to live in accordance with whatever works for them, dude. That's fine by me. It's okay.

Different people can be different. It's like it's as simple as that. But if we're going to have this intense winner-take-all system with very high stakes. And there are high stakes because decisions get made now at the highest level by this permanent bureaucracy. I mean, COVID showed it when the elites really humiliated themselves. Our entire pandemic response for the entire country in the hands of a cabal of bureaucrats who are were not elected and whose guidance ended up being really bad and who maybe caused the thing in the first place with the stupid things they were funding.

Uh bad throwing out their own rule books that they had written themselves. they made it up. They said that the six feet of social distancing was made up on the spot. They've admitted that. It's like uh here's a deep cut nerd thing, but it's like uh FDR apparently at the transition out of the gold standard would literally wake up and be like, I think gold should be worth like 26 bucks. What do you think? It's like, "Oh, yeah, this feels like this doesn't feel like a problem to have um someone who's also in constant chronic pain just deciding on a whim what the value of money should be.

Talking about the media covering up the health conditions of the of the president. And you know, I would have said that could never happen today because the media's too adversarial. But and it it couldn't have happened for four Well, I don't know. Maybe it did happen. I like I I would correcting myself. I don't think he I don't think Biden was this bad off the whole time, but I guess I wouldn't have known if he was. This does raise an interesting question, which is are we better off today as um in the information landscape or not.

Now, like and I'm inclined towards yes. I'm inclined towards we are better off today at a time when you basically had a tiny like closed like white-knuckle closed faucet that dripped, you know, and that's the way it is from Walter Cronkite. Like that was like a that was like propagandized 20th century stuff. It's hard to know what's true today, but we knew that was false. That was Gulf of Tonkin time. At least now we get to see Abu Ghraib.

You know, so we get to watch the Afghan pullout. We have to watch agree more. I could not agree more. more about that from your perspective. there is too much romanticizing the past just in general, but that is so true of the media. Yeah, they could manufacture an entire consensus for foreign policy especially cuz there was no adversarial or critical media. Like I said, they covered up the infirmity of FDR for his entire presidency which lasted like a thousand years. They they used to newspapers created what the the the Spanish-American War was created by the media and there was there was no You used to your local paper used to be called like the Tennessee Republican. It was like ostensibly it was completely aligned with the party. Now we have a very adversarial media. We have a very um there's so many more sources of information. Social media has given rise to a lot of independent alternative contrarian perspectives. You know, the right I I I get so frustrated when the

right starts complaining about social media. I'm like, your Daily Wire, Daily Caller, Townhall, Blaze, all of you people, you would not exist without social media. Without Facebook, you should be thanking Mark Zuckerberg every day that he created this thing that allowed you guys to get vast reach. And I agree, I think it's good. I think the platforms have been so good for exactly what you described, making sure you actually do see the pictures from from the atrocities in the Middle East or wherever else. And some of those pictures are wrong and misleadingly edited, and yes, there's So the worst is yet to come on that.

possible for that to happen, but I I'll take that over yeah, just Walter Cronkite can tell you whatever, and there's no one to disagree cuz there's just a handful of networks and a handful of of media sources. We don't have that anymore, and I think it is absolutely good. And social media has played a positive role in that. There's just way too much complaining about social media these days. I'm a I'm a social media techno-optimist person. Um that's what my second book is about, and because every both Republicans and Democrats will just hold these hearings where they haul the tech CEOs before them, and they just scream at them incoherently, and they demand new legislation to destroy their companies, and Republicans and Democrats want to do this, and I think it is it would we'd go back to the Walter Cronkite era if they had it their way. It's pretty clear that um that that is what the elite class wants. They want to turn all of this stuff off. And like you see it especially with the sort of um I guess they're baby boomers. This sort of like boomer like, "What's that with the tubes and the Tik Toks, and shut that all down. Like can't we just shut that all down?" This hasn't been in the news lately, but I think it's very it's real it's really important. Tik Tok.

What what's your sense about Tik Tok as a platform? If I remember correctly, and this is going to sound stupid because I just don't remember. Didn't they pass a ban on Tik Tok? Sorry to be like that happened. I'm kind of forgetting that that happened. So the law uh requires the parent company ByteDance to sell it to an American company or be banned. Um So I'm against this. Um now I think there are certainly criticisms you can make of social media companies and the I think you know, if we're talking like harms to children for instance, look, anything done in excess can be harmful. If they were playing their Game Boys all day long, too, that would not be healthy, either. You should get some exercise.

You should pay attention, be engaged in school. Come on, Robbie. It's the Switch. You know, you got to get back to the I play I No, I play my Switch. So, uh you're you're talking to a hardcore uh Nintendo person. But, yeah, like when I was a kid, my mom limited the number of hours I was allowed to play video games during the day on on the weekdays, and that worked pretty well. And I I I I understand the phone is more accessible, and it's maybe difficult. You know, I I I don't have children myself, so I'm not trying to malign parents and the difficulties they have in in keeping uh avoiding the screen addiction type thing. But, it just doesn't seem so fundamentally different to me. Fine, they're they're using them in classes when they should be paying attention.

Yeah, okay, they shouldn't have them then. Tell the school shouldn't do that. Like, I I don't I don't think these problems are beyond I I I think families and schools and communities can work on these problems without the extremely over-the-top, and I would argue ultimately unconstitutional efforts to ban the platforms entirely. I mean, remember when California tried to ban violent video games? What happened? The Supreme Court, in a decision authored by Scalia, said, "This is speech, and there's it cannot be No, you cannot The government

cannot prohibit the sale of violent video games to kids." So, I have to think if it got to the Supreme the Supreme Court, they'd end up saying the same thing about social media. So, you asked about TikTok specifically, there are national security implications for TikTok, perhaps.

I I don't think those have actually been very well explained or so, but yes, China is an adversary. China censors things. That's bad. You you should Would they manipulate the content on the platform to like subtly send anti-American vibes to kids? Sure, I I think that's perfectly plausible. But, you know, Facebook and Twitter um manipulated the content to appease the Biden administration in terms of COVID and in terms of Hunter Biden and everything else. So, like we can actually deal with that problem, cuz we could prohibit federal officials from having this censorious um contact with companies. Like, let's put our own house in order. I don't think the threat from TikTok is any different than the threat from any of the other social media companies. And also, there's there is good stuff you can get on those platforms. People watch my show on TikTok. Clips of it go viral sometimes.

I would be like I I I think the content we put out is good and and taking down one of the platforms to satisfy these like really nebulous concern seems bad to me. How do you see the landscape changing in the short term as we approach the election? So, this has been one thing that I that you know, this show is only 2 and 1/2 years old and I've been very curious like is it going to be is it going to get weird? Are the companies going to get tight in weird ways either actively out of political biases inside their staffs um which are overwhelmingly left of center or just out of like cover your ass, I don't really feel like the federal government trying to break me up right now. So, I'm just going to suppress suppress suppress cuz that was one thing about the suppression of the Hunter Biden laptop.

Um I'm very shocked about that Missouri case. That was an unfortunate loss. So, we need to be clear that that was bad. The the Missouri V. Biden case where the Supreme Court had the opportunity to stop federal officials from messaging social media companies and implicitly threatening them to take down content. They declined to do that. So, um that level of pressure is going to resume. It's been on pause and it's going to resume and it's very bad. I will say and this could be naive optimism on my part.

I do think the social media companies are a lot more skeptical of what the government is telling them than they were before. I mean, I don't know how much comfort it is, but if you listen to Mark Zuckerberg now or some of the other tech CEOs, they're pretty mad. They're pretty embarrassed, humiliated that they went along with some of these things that now ended up being wrong on COVID and on Hunter Biden. Yeah. And even the moderators, because at first it was like when all that was happening, I'm like, "Man, these company they're progressive.

They hate free speech. They're taking down all this is so bad." Then when you actually got to read the emails, the moderators in many cases were like, "You want us to take down this account? This is fine. What are you saying? You FBI official, what are you" And then it got really threatening and they're like, "Okay, I guess we have to do this." But it's not like they wanted to do it. It's that the pressure was really intense.

Now that's all been publicized, which is a good thing. So, Yeah. I think it's possible, maybe it's not likely. I think it's possible that this kind of thing happens again, they're going to be a little bit more unwilling to go along. I mean, they've said, Mark Zuckerberg and others have said, "We would not go along with this again." So, we'll see. I remember you were a voice, maybe a lone voice, on what has become increasingly common, and that was this sort of bizarre coverage of the Covington confrontation. Yeah. Can you just recount what that was about? Because it it's a snapshot into the way, frankly, the way media can really turn us against each other on the basis of just outright falsehoods in in in really destructive ways. I like I know it's sort of maybe it would be feel like old news, but feel like you broke the story on this. It was my career-defining story. I had no idea that years later that would be the thing people know me for. Um Yeah, I So, what had happened is several years ago that pro-life students from a Catholic high school in the Midwest were on the Lincoln Memorial. They'd been there for the March for Life in DC for pro-life causes and they were wearing the pro-Trump MAGA hats. They were on on steps of Lincoln Memorial like hanging out before going to their next activity.

It was a Catholic school boys and uh there was a short video that went viral on social media that appeared to show the boys, and one boy in particular, harassing this Native American peace activist man. And um and like one of them was like staring him down and was in his way. And this went absurdly viral. And everyone had to commented on it. And these like people were like, "This is the face of Nazism, of of racial hatred against the other." And these they were attacked.

They were savaged for like 24 to 48 hours. And uh even at even conservatives weighed in and were like distancing themselves from this you know, 15-year-old boy. Right. It's crazy to think about now, but this is that all happened. I sat down to write about it. Um it was on a weekend. So I had not I had not been like on the clock. I sat down and was going to write about it. And when I was sitting down to write about it, I just I got lucky. It so happened that the entire video footage, hours of video footage, surrounding that 30-second or however long it had been long clip, had just become available on social media.

So I sort of like, "Well, I'll watch the whole thing." I watched the whole thing. And when you watch the whole thing, you just it's amazing how again, not an altered video, just a just a clipped video could completely wrong wrongly present what happened. When you watch the whole thing, you realize that there had been this other group, the the Black Hebrew Israelites. They're like a kind of a Farrakhan type black nationalist group that shout like they shout at women and Jewish people and gay people just in the streets of DC. It's just a crazy group.

We used to make fun of them um in the Times Square cuz I worked at Viacom and MTV. You'd come out and there they'd be. And they they were dressed sort of like Klingons. So it's like, "Oh, here's the black Klingons screaming at people." Yes, screaming like anti-Jewish slurs and anti-gay slurs at just everyone who walks past. So they had been yelling at the they had been on the scene and they had been That's what they narrative claimed the boys had blocked his package passage. No. And one of one of the boys that did was about to get in sort of a confrontation. The the the main focus of the eye of that that kid, the fascist kid, had like been like, "No, don't engage. Like, don't just leave them alone." Be exact. So, so 180 opposite. Yes. So, when you watch that, you were like, "Huh."

They acted This was an inflamed social situation, cameras on, and they comported themselves fairly well, and the main kid comported himself completely well. So, I wrote that article saying, "The media got this one really wrong." And I did not know when I wrote that that that would be the thing I was remembered for however many years it is later cuz it went Millions of people read the article. A lot of mainstream media organizations did then they shared my article to set the record straight. And then some people, very left people, claimed, "No, I was wrong and I was covering for fascists and you know, don't believe your lying eyes." And it was a it was a whole thing. The culture of your industry.

This is an interesting window into it. And having worked in children's television at Nickelodeon, I didn't experience any of this stuff from the uh um the Dan Schneider Oh, yeah. documentary about all that horrible child exploitation and weirdness. But there is something about entertainment Entertainment does create a commodification of humans because you're casting people based on looks, and you're telling them what to do and say, often in risque ways, and that you have to treat that like a job, and that creates weirdness. It creates a weird inhuman numbness to things, and I think it's part of why the entertainment industry is gross.

It's really gross for adults on television to call 15-year-old boys fascists and try to destroy their lives for the all the world to see and permanent record. So, what is it about from your perspective inside of this world of journalism and news and covering events, what cultural forces make that such an easy thing for seeming adults who have a job that is supposed to involve some degree of integrity and responsibility and journalistic ethics to do that?

Yeah, cuz they they tried to then in trying the people who wanted to defend how they had treated these boys, they were looking for other things. I remember all these subsequently debunked stories like, well, this wasn't their first racial incident. Here's them like doing blackface at a basketball game a year ago. It wasn't even It wasn't even the same school. It was just another school with the same name. It was like on a like like everyone had painted their like chests like black or red or blue or something. They weren't doing blackface.

Like it was it was What are you doing? What is wrong with you? You're trying to find a reason to ruin the lives of teenagers. You know, it is it is harder to be a young person these days, frankly, because of the the phone, not cuz of social media necessarily, but just the ability to record everything at all times. Like there's a running transcript of your life now, sometimes a video transcript. Everything you say and text or tweet is preserved forever, and then and and the thing about young people is they're they do make mistakes, and they should be allowed to do that.

I'm sure if you transcribed everything I said when I was a kid, it would be I'd be horrified. But that's how it is for everyone. Yes. And now we hold people we used to kind of have a you know broad norm that you can still get yourself in serious trouble if you do something violent or very wrong, but but the young people's ideas about the world are in flux and they're growing and they need room for self-improvement and up to 18 there's a pretty broad level of forgiveness for expressing problematic views or using problematic word. I mean this is crazy to be saying this is some kind of crime.

That's how we all used to behave. And now because it's so easy to dig up that kind of stuff and the media loves digging up this stuff. The I I love when the the media will have a story like Yeah yes, I'll be the texts have resurfaced. Oh, did they? Did they unbury themselves in the sand? The the the text it said like, you know, digging through the sand to come No, you unburied it because your it appealed to you to ruin the life of a teenager. I I think it's evil is the word for it. Um it's just because it's easy to do and it we need to reassert we need to reestablish some social norms that we still will are capable of forgiveness for people uh particularly young people.

All right, I'll keep this quick. If you like what you're hearing and want to hear more, don't forget to hit that like button and subscribe to the channel so you won't miss our new content as it comes out every week. And now back to the conversation. One of the things that um is coming at us a thousand miles an hour is the end of security through obscurity. Yeah. Because you used to have to have a mind read all this text and that imposed a cost barrier to some of this sort of like grotesque character assassination digging.

Now you can ask a large language model vague questions and it can search virtually infinite amounts of text to find the thing that was kind of like you being racist sort of kind of. Like, what's Robbie said in anything he's ever written that's kind of racist? And it can actually do an amazing job at doing exactly that thing. Have you thought about the implications for media public discourse that this kind of search in particular. Forget the generative stuff and making stuff up and deep fakes. Just the ability to actually search the entire corpus of any person.

Combined with the fact that everything's getting recorded and easily transcribed automatically. Like YouTube, Vimeo, they all auto transcribe everything. So the searchable text is already there even if you don't realize it. But maybe we'll just get to a point where this is now literally true of everyone and we just have to have a general social truce on this stuff because you'll be able to find that for literally everyone. Like I don't worry so much about myself cuz I mean I am in a public speaking ideas career field.

I should be held to a higher standard. You're held to a higher standard. You know, if we're if we're paid, employed to express ideas um and I get in trouble for something I say, well, you know, that's that is my job. That's different than you know, somebody who's just you know, works at a Starbucks or something and made a made a hand gesture that now we're we're being told is a white nationalist hand gesture even though that just got made up 5 seconds ago. Like that's the person who gets in trouble. It's a fake thing. It's like hey, okay, no, he's a he's a he's a he's a Nazi for saying okay to his mom at the soccer game when he was six.

Right. And the people who get upset about that the experts in white nationalist iconography symbiology are like supposedly the anti-conspiracy people. Like you sound like a conspiracy theorist. If you're saying that everyone flashing a hand sign is secretly a a Nazi, what what are you talking about? Like they end up being as paranoid and like crypto Nazi obsessed as as the people they're supposedly going That's neither here nor there. I'm hoping broad social truce needs to set in when it will be so easy to when you're not even going to be able to trust any images because they could all be manipulated to to a impressive degree, you know, we'll stop canceling people we'll stop canceling people for like having like your nude photos of you leaked because actually it's perfectly plausible and easy for an AI to create a nude photo of anyone. I don't know. The future's going to be an

interesting place. You have signed up for a job in which you must consume the news torrent on a regular basis. How do you keep yourself sane? Uh with great difficulty. I don't know that I have, but uh you know, when I'm off the clock, I try not to pay attention to the news if I can help it. I do. You know, I I tweet less than I used to I used to be super active on on Twitter what we what we used to call Twitter we now have to call X which is still kind of called Twitter.

Um because before I had my show Rising because I had a need to express my views on politics. Now that I talk for 3 hours on my show every day, I could care less what I say about politics in in my downtime. You know, it's funny when you meet people including at events like this and they want to hear what you have to say about politics cuz I they know me from my show and I'll be like, I don't know, what do you think? I'll listen to you talk for a change. I I don't have any need to hear my own voice any longer than I already do. So you just got You know, I play a lot of video games. Um I do a lot of Dungeons and Dragons nerd stuff with my co-workers. You know, you just I go to the gym a lot. You got to And when I'm at the gym, I will not listen to polit political podcast. I do not listen to political podcast. I do not listen to news. I listen to fiction audiobooks or listen to music sometimes.

I you have to have some place where you can be in a head space that is not consuming news. It seems like we have interesting dynamics happening with um you know, my son's 19, so the Gen Z like in terms of politics. And that is that it looks like things are breaking in opposite directions for males and females, for boys and girls. Uh and that in that in some respects, Gen Z is actually has the largest cohort of um like super conservative identifying people of any like generation at this stage.

But also a larger cohort of like super ultra liberal liberal. I hate to use the progressive Yeah. identitarian, even communist. And it maps against actually this is all the girls and this is a bunch of the boys. So, how do you think about where we're heading in terms of like relating to each other when politics is driving us apart? You're right about the the gender split is very interesting. A lot of conservatives will say that that's because modern society is hostile or the even the level of government policies have been hostile to traditional masculinity or the avenues for young men have been stigmatized, that young men themselves have been stigmatized, and so they're turning away from a kind of political and cultural ideology that has no use for them and no place for them. I think that critique has some merit. It can also go too far because there are aspects of masculinity that have been unhealthy historical I mean, men commit all of the violence in our society. Like statistically Yeah. if you look at it's not it's not racial, it's not that you know, that's people want to make it about There are say mass shooters are disproportionately white or something.

They're disproportionately male. All violence is disproportionately caused by men. Yeah. And that would be and it's a good thing that like schools have gotten actually less violent over time. It used to be socially acceptable to really like for young boys to like beat each other up and now that was just like criminal matter if you do that. You can't do that as much and it's good. The the amount of like routine violence that that young men had to face as part of a growing up uh was not good.

So It's partly that, you know, when you have a school system built and designed by the same people that build

and design the prisons, of course school yard's going to be like a prison yard. That was That's That's a good insight and yeah, that is where I was going to go and that you can take that too far and now because we've also uh stigmatized or made illegal just boyhood, just you know, I mean, you know, walking to school by yourself, riding your bike by yourself, you know, the kind of free-range parenting. At Reason, we do a lot of work on those issues. My colleague Lenore Skenazy writes a lot about um the explicit government policies that have made it impossible for young people to be active and and to you know, play by themselves on the playground or play with other kids, you do all this normal healthy adolescent development. That's disproportionately impacted boys cuz they're the more more physically um active sex. So, there has been I think a rebellion against that. Yeah, that stuff is all bad and we've gone way too far.

I'm so proud and thankful for the work Lenore and other people have done on to to actually have to have to change the laws to make it so that kids can again walk to school by themselves, ride their bikes to the store. Uh cuz parents get arrested for that stuff all the time. It's crazy. It's incredibly loose definitions of neglect that that have become basically an open door for child protective services to get called by you know, the grumpy cat lady who's like who's letting their kid take a walk. Um And that stuff does disproportionately hurt um black people and low-income families cuz they have they have more kids and they have less of a financial ability to get a babysitter or have someone you know, they got to work multiple jobs, low-income people in general who are disproportionately uh racial minorities as well. They're working multiple jobs and they can't have someone watching the kids all the time and that should be okay. That's how most of us grew up, having an older sibling take care of them or having the neighbor some and kids are left alone for a while and usually it's fine. Uh now and then bad things happen. There There is a role for the state sometimes child services, but usually they're making things worse. Even if the family situation is not ideal. Do you know what's really not ideal? Having kids ripped from their homes and put in foster care, which is often abusive at high rates of abuse. So, the family situation has to be pretty bad and pretty dangerous for the best thing for these kids is for them to be put in different homes. And this happens at the drop of a hat unfortunately in low-income places and communities. It's bad. In terms of navigating our political world and keeping yourself from becoming uh captured by the echo chamber.

Which is part of this thing, too, right? Cuz the girls are going off here, the boys are going off here, but I think all of us also face this challenge of how to navigate the information landscape in a way that can keep us sane and feel like we believe things that aren't bull Any advice? Yeah, it's uh there are definitely some bad role models out there um for young people including I would say Andrew Tate whose popularity I do not understand because he just seems like a very reprehensible individual. Um but you know, has uh like Romanian sex trafficking? It's not your bag?

No, I don't I don't like trafficking women in basements to produce sexual content that he then disparages because he says women are all skanks and trash and I'm like, but you're forcing them into these condi- I mean, not forcing it, you're incentivizing them to go into these conditions. It makes It's very weird. Um you know, I I think the best thing would have be do more of what I'm what I was advocating just a minute ago is to again make it decriminalized letting young people, young men socialize health in a healthy way and and play outdoors and you know be be more have more traditional physical activity type things available to them. Everyone can benefit even people at our ages can benefit from logging off now and then.

Put your phone away, go for a jog, talk to somebody in person. Don't just be like looking at your phone the whole time. That can help keep us sane you know politics feels very important because in some ways it has gotten more important because now the decisions are made at a more national level for we all will have to abide by the rules of Donald Trump or Joe Biden or the team behind them and the decision-making is less is less democratized, less decentralized. It's very centralized. So I see why the stakes feel very high but everything's probably going to be fine.

Um I like your optimism. Technology, the market is amazing. I mean we have Amazon now. Amazon is so great. Amazon like I can I could look at I could pull out my phone right now and be like I want to order a pair of suspenders or something and they'll be at my on my doorstep before I even get home tomorrow and they're not expensive. That's amazing. Technology is making our lives easier and better all the time.

It is outpacing the feeble attempts of our regulators to strangle these things in the crib. We should still fight against their efforts but the future is probably going to be a pretty great place in a lot of ways and I'm excited to see it and you can become overly fatalistic if you're just paying attention to the news and the political landscape all the time. It's not it's not good for the soul. We're here at FreedomFest which is a libertarian conference. One of the things that I've personally been experiencing and I've been talking everybody I can who I feel like is thoughtful and I I you're a thoughtful person.

Thank you. I would call myself and my philosophy fundamentally liberal in the classical sense. Like we had Andrew Doyle on and he called himself a liberal and he had to qualify like well you know in in London in in England like liberal means something different than in America. It means open, free, essentially constitution our constitutional system is a liberal order. It feels like there's some kind of soft underbelly that has been exposed in liberalism and this is You know as we come to a close. And I don't know what to do with that but like I it's I'm I'm a little less certain where we go and what we need to do to protect the things that are that have made us so successful as a society. Like liberalism properly understood you can say libertarianism perhaps but there's something that isn't clicking or there's something that's being that's I don't know if it's tolerating the intolerable but something feels like it's going off the rails. Do you have that sense? Do you do you know what I'm talking about? I think liberals of all stripes in the broadest sense that includes even libertarians, we all have to remember or reassert rediscover the core of our ideology which is leave people alone. Is that I don't know what's best for your life. Your situation might be different than mine.

How you want to organize your community and your family might be fundamentally incompatible with how I would do it and that's okay. That's perfectly fine. We all have to learn to mind our own business a little bit more. I mean that's true of some of you know my fellow libertarian people on on some of like this gender stuff for instance. And you know I I too have a lot of questions about or skepticism of some of the therapies and the procedures and the surgeries that are being recommended that are now actually debated even by elites in other countries. They've done studies of this stuff actually we don't think this is good." And yeah, I I get it. I just I don't think it's good. And if I had you know, I would have what the what I would recommend for someone in my family or how I would approach this issue might be very different from how a progressive or something would. But still, I do I think it should be in the realm of government policy making? No.

Do I think if your kid wants this and your family's okay with it and you got a doctor who wants to do it, am I going to say the government should really come in and overrule that, even if I think that would be the best thing? No, cuz that's just we're all we're going to fight over everything. We're going to be knives out all the time if no one gets to live their life differently or have a or or or think we're wrong, cuz I don't know.

Maybe maybe it's good for some people and bad for others. I don't know. It's just not my problem. We all have to remember that it's not your problem. It's somebody else's problem. And you can say what you think. We have free speech. You should certainly be able to do that. But we just can't control what other people are going to do. And and the liberalism has moved away from that as its guiding light and certainly in in the progressive liberal direction, but I think some ways even in a right libertarian direct on those fronts, cuz I hear this issue animating a lot of people. And again, I I get it. I have a lot of skepticism of of what the medical establishment for a long time has said about it. But at the end of the day, I don't know. And I don't have to know, cuz it's not my job and I'm not going to organize society and and no one really should. We should just all leave each other alone, right? I ask every guest the same question at the end, the last question. And that is we called I call the show we call at here in Emerging Order the show Dad Saves America, because I believe that one of the heroic roles we can play to protect liberty in this country is to be good fathers and to raise a generation that knows what it means to have agency, to want to exercise it, and to want to live in a free society so that they can exercise their their agency, their mastery of themselves, and decide what kind of life they want to live, to have experiments in living as John Stuart Mill said.

how do you think about your role in the American story? That's a broad question. Um well, I don't have kids yet. Unfortunately, I aspire to have kids someday. I have a lot of nieces and nephews um that I love very dearly and I'm everybody's favorite uncle because all my kids are my my nieces and nephews are obsessed with um Nintendo and Pokémon and stuff like I'm still playing cuz I'm a big video game nerd and I understand actually like my uh my brothers-in-law my brother in LA I don't know what the kids are talking about. Like it's Pokémon cards. It's still popular. It's been popular since I was in the fifth grade.

My own I mean my role in the American story is to is to help tell it is to be a writer and a commentator. I honestly I actually prefer writing to speaking on TV. It's funny that people keep paying me now to have like television shows and express my thoughts. I never thought I was a very good public speaker. I hated public speaking as a kid. I had I would like never wanted to be in the school play. I never wanted to give a presentation in front of the class. I'll get nervous. Um I was like not outgoing and charismatic. It that's funny to think of now because now I could like stand up in front of any crowd and give a speech on any subject at any moment even if I know nothing about it because you just get used to talking in front of people and my nerves are totally gone on that and I I don't mind being on TV and I kind of enjoy it. But what I really like is writing and um and writing about issues um that affect people in their communities in terms of this young people being able to live their lives free of government oppression like I've been describing to you on with Lenore's issues. So, I I aspire to keep researching and writing about stories and then get to talk about them on TV for making people feel freer, express the freedom that we are thankfully allowed to have in America particularly on speech. I do a lot on First Amendment um issues. That that is an issue we're pretty protected from at the Supreme Court level. I look at like Europe does hate speech laws and all these other things that we are just non-starters with us. As politically divided as we are, again, uh optimism, we are in a good place on free speech. It could be better. I don't like that

Murthy Missouri decision, either, but the Supreme Court has pretty universally said that even contemptible speech is protected at every level. And uh you what you have more ability to exercise your freedom of speech because of social media and all the platforms today. And uh and that's a good thing. So, my my role is I guess to be one of those speakers.

Robbie, thanks for being on Dad Saves America. My pleasure.