

**DEFIANCE 007**

# WHAT HAPPENED AT EVERGREEN COLLEGE

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## **DEF007 - BRET WEINSTEIN INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION**

### **WHAT HAPPENED AT EVERGREEN COLLEGE**

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**Peter McCormack: 00:02:16**

Morning, Bret. How do you do?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:02:17**

Doing pretty well. How are you?

**Peter McCormack: 00:02:18**

Doing very well. Thank you for agreeing to do this. Really appreciate your time. As I said to you before, I wasn't fully aware of the Evergreen College story, and then I went back and did my research. And I remembered seeing it on Rogan and so I've done a lot of research, a lot of what the hell's going on here, moments for me, and it's a very good timing for me as well, because right now I'm very politically confused. I don't identify with the left or the right. There's things I like from both sides, but I am very troubled by how much fighting is going on at the moment.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:02:50**

If you're not politically confused at the moment, you're not paying attention.

**Peter McCormack: 00:02:54**

It's just so much crazy. I mean, especially here, right in Portland, what's happened with Antifa and the proud boys? I'm just like, it just feels like to me at the moment, most people just seem to want to have a fight rather than find the answer to things.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:03:06**

Well, I'm not sure most people want to have a fight and Antifa and the Proud Boys is a great example. If you are not in Portland, this is a dominant feature of the news. When Portland breaks into the news more often than not recently, it's had something to do with battles in the street between these entities. But the fact is, if you live in Portland, you never see it. I mean, not never, never. You can encounter it, but the fact is, these guys square off. They announced that they're going to do it. The cameras show up and so it becomes a dominant feature of what people understand is going on here when in fact it's not much of a feature of regular existence. That said, I do know people who have had close encounters, some of them very serious. I know a local coffee producer has been driven out of business by some of this false equity nonsense and-

**Peter McCormack: 00:04:02**

In what way?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:04:03**

Basically, a trumped up claim of bigotry that resulted in something like a boycott that made business impossible to continue with.

**Peter McCormack: 00:04:16**

And it was false?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:04:18**

Well, how does somebody like me know that? I know that I've spoken in-depth to the people in question and I find it impossible to imagine that the things that were alleged happened. On the other hand, since I wasn't there, how can I rule it out, which is of course part of the ploy here. Because nobody is in a position unless you were present, to say X, Y or Z didn't happen, a desire to sympathise with the victims of one thing or another has been

weaponised. So I can say based on everything I know as a human being, what was alleged did not occur. On the other hand, I cannot say the same thing as a matter of having been a witness.

**Peter McCormack: 00:05:00**

I think I saw her in an interview of yours, maybe it was with Ruben, you talked about accusations have become a super weapon.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:05:07**

Yeah.

**Peter McCormack: 00:05:08**

I mean you had one yourself, right?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:05:10**

Well, I mean they've become a super weapon by virtue. So what happens is, it's like some kind of high powered gun that smuggled in one piece at a time, where no pieces lethal, but then upon assembly it's hyper-lethal. So, if you couple the idea that only certain people can be racist and other people might be bigoted, but they can't be racist by virtue of some special tweak to the definition of racism. Then, you smuggle in the idea that anybody who would deny this is evidencing that they have an especially big problem with race.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:05:47**

And that to ask for evidence of racism is itself racism. The point is, you don't realise that you're standing in a minefield until the mine suddenly, bleep alive and you realise, Oh my God, they're everywhere. And any normal thing that you would say triggers another one. So yes, it's a phenomenon that once you've experienced it, you realise what it is. But for most people who haven't confronted it, it's easy to imagine that it is a rare phenomenon that has been exaggerated by people like me, which it isn't. In fact, I have frequently, and my wife and I, my wife Heather Heying, who was also a professor at Evergreen, driven out at the same time. We have had the experience multiple times of having journalists come to interview us. They're very polite and they listen to what we have to say, and then we'll get a call, you a week later.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:06:45**

"Oh my goodness, I went to Evergreen. I didn't know what to make of your story, but I got

there and it's even worse than you said." That's very reassuring because people assume, the story is so extreme, people assume it must be exaggerate. That would be natural to assume that, but then for them to discover that in fact we have aired in the other direction. We've been extremely careful and portrayed only that which happened and we've been generous in an our interpretation that it's heartening to know that that's apparent to those who have heard us and then checked it out on the ground.

**Peter McCormack: 00:07:16**

Well, the whole story of Evergreen is, to me, is absolutely crazy. It seems to be something that was, something that have started out as a fair challenge by yourself to a change in a tradition, that got blown up out of all proportion. Al don't even know if people realise what they were actually arguing about.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:07:37**

Well, it got utilised, is the problem. It's very hard to tell the story so that people understand it. There's a natural narrative about what happened with the day of absence and my challenge to it. It just happens that story isn't exactly right. The true story is much more complex and it involves a certain number of bad actors who, I believe knew full well what they were doing and then it involved a lot of people who are well-intentioned but deeply confused who signed up for various syllogisms that resulted in them becoming pawns of of the bad actors at the top of whom there were not many.

**Peter McCormack: 00:08:16**

How long had the tradition of the day of absence been going on for?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:08:21**

The day of absence tradition at Evergreen is almost as old as the college, so it goes back to the very early seventies. Now, it's changed over time. Initially, it was Day of Absence is the title of a Douglas Turner Ward play. He was a black playwright who wrote a a play about a fictional Southern town, in which the black population does not show up one day, in order to emphasise what role they were playing. That idea was borrowed by an early faculty member at Evergreen and initially it was black faculty and students that had the tradition of not showing up. Later, that was broadened to all students and faculty and staff of colour and another aspect was added the day of presence, which was sort of the corollary to it. In any case, it's been going on since the beginning of the college. It was only in my final year there, that the idea was to ask white people not to show up, and on the one hand that

seems like six of one, half dozen of the other, but that's really only how it's supposed to see him.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:09:33**

If you look at it more closely, and what I said in my email that supposedly triggered all of this, was that there's a huge difference between absenting yourself to make a point, which I support, and absenting other people on the basis of their skin colour, which I will never support. What's more, is surely illegal on a public campus in 2019 in the United States.

**Peter McCormack: 00:09:55**

Okay. Well I've got questions about that, but just back a step, because one thing I hadn't seen anyone ask you is, how traditionally had this day of absence run? Was it something everyone was fully aware of, and recognised or was it just something happened in the background and people didn't realise that was happening?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:10:12**

It's a very important question. Here's what I understand. So I was at Evergreen for 14 years at the point that this finally blew up. I was aware of day of absence from the first year I was present. I think it would be hard not to be aware that there was something, but I was teaching in the sciences. In my 14 years there and my wife was there a year longer than I was. In her 15 years there, we do not recall a single student of ours deciding to take advantage of day of absence and not come to class. We would have accommodated them if they had, but it never happened. Which tells you something. It's not a huge college, about 4,000 students back when it was full. For us to have taught as many students as we did and never remember a single instance of somebody absenting themselves, we would've known because they would have missed material and we would have had to accommodate.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:11:09**

That suggests that it was at least not an important campus-wide phenomenon. My guess would be that over in the humanities and social sciences, it was more important. The two things happened in 2017 when it blew up. One, was that they asked white people not to show up. The other, was that the administration backed day of absence in a way that we had never seen before. So not only was a group of people of colour effectively asking white people not to come to school, so that "the experience of people of colour could be centred for a day". That was their language. But the administration, this official government body, was suggesting that we participate. In fact, for anybody who's interested, another faculty

member and a graduate of Evergreen have pried loose an email chain. Actually, the faculty member triggered the email chain, which reveals when the administration was asked, how exactly do you want me to encourage my white students not to come to class? So getting the administration on record explaining their position on this, the administration is clearly aware that there's something dangerous about what they're doing.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:12:34**

So, their language is very carefully parsed, but it's quite clear, the administration does not want white people on campus that day. In any case, there's a tremendous amount of information that we now have as a result of a small number of people's diligence in unearthing it. But we know how this looked on the inside and it's every bit as shocking as you might imagine.

**Peter McCormack: 00:13:00**

Well, it's very clear to me that, I'd never heard of the day of absence before and I was like, okay, now I understand this. This is a oppressed minority group who wants to highlight the fact they're playing an important role in the operations of the college. I think that's a great idea. I suspect it was over time, maybe it had died down as we've become more culturally diverse, as society has moved on, but you know, perhaps it was more important back in the '70s. That I don't know, but the change to ask white people not to come, for me, it was very clear and creating a new form of oppression. It's a backwards step. For me, that was very clearly a bad idea. I read your letter. Very fairly worded. Yeah, we need to discuss this. There's a very clear difference. How did that get to the point where it escalated to you being called a racist? I guess what I'm trying to understand is, who was behind the idea of this new day of asking white people not to come?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:14:03**

I believe, it was a couple of the bad actors and I think there is a underlying generating function. In other words, there is a story about what takes place in a dust-up like this. Then, there's the actual explanation. The actual explanation, because it's not stated, because it's discussed privately is not evident from the outside. But you can reverse engineer what it must be, based on how it behaves in light of certain challenges. One thing that you can recognise right away, is that there is an argument being deployed inside this movement, that effectively says, anybody on the other side is guilty of X. This was evident as the train wreck was occurring. I told my antagonists, I said, "You should check on my history."

**Peter McCormack: 00:15:05**

Is this, the allies or enemies?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:15:08**

Well, allies is a tortured term in this context because effectively while ally, the normal meaning of ally would be effectively a symmetrical partnership. In the case of the social justice movement, ally has become a tool of subordination. To say you are an ally, subordinates you. So, allies is one side of the coin. But on the other side, there is no such thing as a person who opposes the equity juggernaut who is not a racist. Right? Even if I was black and I opposed it. Actually, it might've been worse if I had been black and opposed it, because then I would've been accused of acting on my internalised white supremacy. Right? In this case, I was just simply accused of white supremacy. But there is no category for objecting to a bad policy proposal on the basis that it is bad policy, rather than due to some deep moral failing that has to do with bigotry. So that's your first clue that something is wrong.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:16:20**

If you simply ask these people, if you query, well, how do you know that I'm not against this because it's a bad idea, because it doesn't good for the college, because it will render the college insolvent if we do it. The answer that comes back is that's impossible. It's impossible that you are acting as a matter of, in the interest of good policy. It is, of course, that you are defending honour and privilege that you have as a white person and we should expect you to do it, and here you are playing your role.

**Peter McCormack: 00:16:52**

Well the pursuit of equity itself, often feels like it comes with creating new inequities.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:16:59**

That's the whole point. When you start to ask questions, so as you ask questions, these policy proposals emerge. A thinking person who can extrapolate, sees, oh my goodness, these policies carry a huge danger with them, the natural thing to do is to ask questions. When you start to ask questions, you come to understand things. Like A, nobody's going to define the term equity for you. Do you know why? Because it's not a word. Equity to most of us is supposed to be a word. It has a definition and it has a lot to do with equality. But because this is effectively a plan for rapidly gaining power for effectively transferring power and wellbeing from one population to another, the term must never be defined. What you

will get are examples. If we had equity, it would look like X and so you'll be given an example that seems like nobody could oppose it. There's a cartoon you will see circulated with kids looking at a baseball game, and there's a short kid and a medium-height kid and a tall kid. The short kid can't see the game and the medium kid is on his toes looking over the fence and the tall kid can see it.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:18:19**

Then, there are some boxes and there's a distribution of the boxes that renders everybody able to see the game. Who could oppose that? But what is implied is false. What they really want is to turn the tables of oppression, and it's not even the real tables of oppression. They want to turn the imagined tables of oppression so that those who were privileged are now subordinate and those who were, in their own minds, most oppressed, will be the most well-resourced and powerful. If they were honest about that, nobody would listen. It's obviously a preposterous plan.

**Peter McCormack: 00:19:01**

Was repeating the same problems.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:19:03**

It is going to create an indefinitely long cycle of retribution, rather than the Martin Luther King vision, which effectively is, we must forge ahead towards a level playing field. The level playing field is a desirable, stable state. Now, I do think a fair criticism might be progress towards the level playing field has stalled. What are we going to do about that? If those in the social justice movement were saying that, I would be a lot more inclined to listen to what they had to say about the evidence that it has stalled and a plan to jumpstart it. But, that's not what they're saying. It's effectively a power grab and the, as you said, and as I said in my email, the reversal of the day of absence was a symbolic exercise of power. We now have the power to tell you where you can and cannot be, and it has to be opposed. Any reasonable person should oppose it.

**Peter McCormack: 00:20:09**

Well, it maintains a division as well. Again, I struggle with this pursuit of equity, but I guess a real equity would be, is nobody applying for any role, position, job opportunity in life is discriminated against by disability, colour, gender. But any attempt to enforce, say, pursuit of equity here, automatically will start discriminating against the groups to do that. Is the like diversity programs. Some diversity programs in themselves are racist because ... I had it



recently with somebody who was arguing on Twitter about somebody was complaining about the lack of females that were employed at a company as programmers. The reply of the guy said, he said, "I'll just employ the best person for the job." So, the pursuit of equity could ultimately lead you in that situation to not recruiting the best candidate for the job.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:21:04**

Well, here's the problem. It might be that the best candidate for the job is going to be a guy, because the places that people learn to program are heavily biased in favour of men. But that is a hypothesis and it makes predictions for which there will or will not be evidence. The claim that there is bias, when it is taken as an assumption, in other words, if it is true that the most qualified person for the job is male, then the reason for that, is because of some kind of bias. That's the only explanation that could exist for a skewed demographic. Well then, it's a weapon because surely there are lots of other reasons. I mean, as James Damore discovered, you can't even point out that a factor in the equation is surely the interest in programming that people have. The evidence tells us that for whatever reason, males and females tend to differ on whether or not programming sounds like fun to them.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:22:18**

Women tend to be more interested in things that are social and men tend to be more interested in mechanical stuff. That could be because of bias and nobody, including James Damore is saying it couldn't be because of bias. But it's not inherently because of bias. It's an open question and at the point that we've shut down the questions, and we move on to correcting for bias that we have simply assumed exists, we are of course, on a road to madness.

**Peter McCormack: 00:22:47**

What actually happened in the situation? There was the desire to change the day to ...  
Would it be to ask not to turn up or forbid them to turn up?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:22:57**

Oh, it was not forbidden.

**Peter McCormack: 00:22:59**

Okay. So it was to ask.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:23:00**

Well, but again you have to understand there's ask, which I still would have objected to. Then, there is ask and the administration of the college showing up in a way that it has never been in my experience. In 14 years at the college, there was never a case where the administration was backing day of absence with the kind of fervour that it suddenly was at the point that it was white people who weren't supposed to show up. This was clearly a, it was being used as a litmus test. Either you will agree not to show up or you're telling us you are the enemy of our movement. There was no place to stand where somebody like me who says, "You know, I won't be told I can't show up to a public college because I'm white".

**Peter McCormack: 00:23:44**

Well, that's where I got the piece from where it was a binary choice. You're either allies or enemies. Was this to do with the new president, who came in, who appears to me, firstly he appears very weak as an individual. Which, I don't hold it against him but felt too weak to handle the situation when it got out of control, but also felt like he came in almost with a social justice agenda for the college.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:24:14**

Yes. But it's deeper than that. One thing I would say is that the president, George Bridges is a sociologist who, his specialty did involve questions of racial injustice in in jurisprudence, I believe. So, there's a question about why he was hired and I'm not sure we know the answer to that.

**Peter McCormack: 00:24:37**

Okay.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:24:37**

He may have been hired to do this, but what is clear, from the point of view of somebody who was there and was paying attention to the process, was that it's not that he was too weak to handle the protest. I mean I do think he was too weak, but he also initiated the processes that metastasised. So he set this in motion because he had an agenda, which he would not have been able to accomplish had he not used race as a weapon. To the extent that he was too weak to handle what happened, it was also his own chickens home to roost. He set it in motion and then it came back to bite him. But I would point out, he somewhere in the many hours of video that emerged from the protests, which then became riots, he is talking privately to a bunch of the leaders of the riots. He has invited them into

his office and he and the administration are talking to them. They're in fact, negotiating with them. This is day one of the protest, I believe.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:25:49**

Among other things, he tells them that the average tenure for a college president in the US is something like four years. He's now been there. He, he has not had a short-lived presidency. He has now outlasted the average tenure of a president. So let's be clear, it's hard for me to find polite terms for how I feel about this individual. He took a college that was capable of doing miraculous things for people who do not generally have resources pointed in their direction. It took students who were not well built for your average college, and gave them a potentially remarkable educational experience. It was a very valuable place, and he almost single-handedly wrecked it. I have, my generosity towards this person is dwindling, based on the massive costs to the college that have been endured in order to preserve his reputation.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:27:03**

... in order to preserve his reputation. But in any case, he generated the plan, he set it in motion. It did result in changes to the college, massive changes that he would have been unable to bring about as a result of the fact that, among other things that were special about the place, faculty had unparalleled precedence in, faculty in academic governance. So at most colleges, the administration plays a very powerful role in academic governance. At Evergreen, that wasn't the case. The faculty had control over the rules that were made for teaching. And in order to institute a new regime, he used race to divide the faculty. That's effectively what happened. And I think, at some level, that's the underlying story of what happened at Evergreen. What you saw wasn't really it.

**Peter McCormack: 00:27:58**

Were there any racial problems before this?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:28:02**

I don't know of any place on Earth where there are no racial problems. However-

**Peter McCormack: 00:28:09**

Anything of note, like was there underlying tension? Were there debates about racial problems?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:28:16**

There are always debates about racial problems. What was conspicuous at Evergreen was that there were claims of massive racial inequities. When the Equity Council began its work, it studied the question, and it came up with a statistical analysis that suggested that there were serious racial inequities. However, this is a public college, so it is possible to force documents to emerge through public records requests. And it is quite clear from that, and from discussions with people who were present, people who were mathematically sophisticated and present for the statistical analysis, that the conclusion that there were racial disparities was foregone. And the data was cherry picked in order to tell that story. And if you look at the actual data from which the data that was presented was originally taken, it tells a very different story, that, in fact, Evergreen was very successful at neutralising disparities that walked through the door.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:29:29**

So were there problems? No doubt. People are insensitive. Was Evergreen a place that had special problems? Quite the opposite. It was about as sensitive a place as you can imagine, a place where people would be willing to listen to almost anything that you would want to say about disparities that were there but were hard to see, or something like that.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:29:54**

So at the point, maybe a year before the thing boiled over into public, allegations that there was a serious problem with white supremacy at Evergreen started to emerge, and I started to ask questions about it, like, "Okay, I'm willing to listen, but can we see the evidence that that is true?" And of course, that got all kinds of paradoxical responses about asking for evidence is itself racism, etc. So-

**Peter McCormack: 00:30:25**

So we should just accept the accusation without any facts.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:30:28**

You have no choice but to accept the accusation. I mean, that's really the point is that this is a weapon. And the structure of the weapon is, "We are alleging that there are massive disparities that students of colour are experiencing, hostility, oppression, racism, bigotry, all of these things, day in and day out," and that anybody who says otherwise is the problem. That's the structure of the weapon.

**Peter McCormack: 00:30:55**

Who represents the people of colour at the college? Was there a specific group themselves, or was it the equity group, the Equity Council?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:31:03**

Well, I mean, I have to be ... It's very hard to get this right. I would say, at Evergreen, who represents students of colour? Everybody. I'm not saying that they do it well, right?

**Peter McCormack: 00:31:19**

No

**Bret Weinstein: 00:31:19**

We all have ignorance. But my point is, the nature of the place is that people are sympathetic to claims of injustice. And so, the entire place, in some sense, represents those who come from oppressed populations. It is sympathetic to those claims out the gate. Does there need to be an official body that represents people of colour? I'm not even sure what "people of colour" means in that case. "People of colour" is a designation that we are assigning. But I mean, first of all, when the Equity Council did its work and the Day of Absence was structured, there were workshops during the Day of Absence about how Asians were part of the problem of white supremacy.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:32:08**

So the point is "people of colour" doesn't even mean people of colour. "People of colour" means people we want in the club and not people we don't want in the club. Right? Jews are considered white for the purpose of accusing them of having historical unearned privilege, even though Jews were obviously enslaved and murdered in massive numbers in the heart of Europe in the middle of the last century. So the whole story is incoherent. Who represents people of colour? I don't know. This whole thing emerged for a political purpose and it drew the lines of who people of colour were in an arbitrary fashion.

**Peter McCormack: 00:32:49**

What I meant was, were there specific individuals or a specific group coming to the Equity Council explaining that there are currently problems in the college?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:32:58**

Ah. Well, here's the problem is we are going to go down the rabbit hole.

**Peter McCormack: 00:33:04**

Yeah.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:33:04**

When the president came to Evergreen, he was newly hired. He hired a friend of his, a guy named Stan Chernikoff, who interviewed ... Initially, I thought Stan was a good move. And Stan went around, he interviewed hundreds of people. And the idea was he was going to find out how the college actually worked for the purpose of informing the new president so the new president could act intelligently rather than just hauling off and doing things that wouldn't have fit the place.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:33:33**

But in fact, Stan was drawing a map. He was mapping the faculty. He was mapping our tensions. He was mapping them for the purpose of the president wielding a kind of power that the founders of Evergreen never imagined its president would wield. And in effect, the Equity Council was staffed with bad actors. Not everybody on the Equity Council was a bad actor, but the bad actors were on the Equity Council. And their purpose was for them to make trouble that would then create the opportunity for the president to make the changes to the college that he wanted to make, which again, he would not have had the power to, under normal circumstances.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:34:16**

And this pattern was consistent. It wasn't just the Equity Council. After the riots, the protestor who was caught on film multiple times orchestrating the kidnapping of the faculty and the administration, I mean, it's a literal kidnapping. He has them corralled in a room where they are not being allowed to leave. He's instructing other people to make sure that they don't leave. The president, at the point he needs to get up to go to the bathroom, has to get permission. He has to be escorted by two people in order to go to the bathroom. It's a kidnapping. Now-

**Peter McCormack: 00:34:52**

It's unbelievable to hear.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:34:53**

Well, it's unbelievable. But here's the more unbelievable thing that people don't know. So you have a kidnapping, it's caught on video. So we know exactly who said what, there's no

ambiguity whatsoever. As far as I know, nobody denies anything. The kidnapper-in-chief ends up being placed by the president on the committee that, the following summer, after the riots, rewrites the Student Code of Conduct. He's paid to be on this committee. So you take the worst of the worst and you put him in charge of writing the rules for other students? This is somebody who had been an RA in the dorms and had abused his power, who had kidnapped, who had orchestrated the protest at my classroom, 50 students I'd never met, some of whom didn't know why they were there, and he effectively threatened them, and said, "You have to go and protest at Bret's classroom, whether you understand why or not." So that guy didn't belong on a committee writing rules for other students. But that's exactly where he ended up. And he was being paid by the state to do it.

**Peter McCormack: 00:36:06**

Wow. I mean, it sounds to me this is one of those situations where the bullies win. And there's some, I guess misguided person who thinks they're an activist, but actually they're a bully, and their modus operandi is really out of kilter with what you would expect for proper open discourse to resolve a problem. It feels like he's just bullied himself into a role. And-

**Bret Weinstein: 00:36:27**

He did.

**Peter McCormack: 00:36:27**

And this is where I come back, I think the president was weak. He came across as very weak. He came across, in almost every situation, that he could be shouted down and become almost ... just shouted down. Because I mean, the moment where he was told to put his arms down was to me-

**Bret Weinstein: 00:36:43**

It was many moments, in fact.

**Peter McCormack: 00:36:44**

Well, there was that ... I saw one specifically, and then somebody came and mocked him behind him.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:36:48**

Oh, sure.

**Peter McCormack: 00:36:48**

And I thought this whole situation is ridiculous. It felt like one of the best things would have been the removal of him from the whole situation.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:36:55**

Oh, of course.

**Peter McCormack: 00:36:55**

It's out of his depth.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:36:57**

So-

**Peter McCormack: 00:36:57**

How would that have happened? How could that have happened? And why didn't it?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:37:00**

Well, it didn't because, as weak as the president of Evergreen was, the governor of the state of Washington is even worse. So the governor of the state of Washington, Jay Inslee, his office is literally eight miles from where the riots unfolded at Evergreen. So at Evergreen, I can defend this for you if you'd like, but we had a week of literal anarchy. As I understand it from the chief of police of the Evergreen police force, I was being hunted for by a band of anarchists, and the president had ordered the police to stay out of it. So you have a college in which the jurisdiction is the campus police force, and the president happens to be in a position to order them not to intervene. He does so, leaving roving bands of students with weapons, there's actual physical violence.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:38:07**

And as this is unfolding, my wife and I, my wife was literally Evergreen's most popular professor, I wasn't too far behind, but she was literally the most popular professor at Evergreen, we took, she happened to be on sabbatical, so she had no students, I had students, a group of students of mine, and my wife, Evergreen's most popular professor, and I went to the governor's office and asked to talk to him. We were told he wasn't there. That may very well be true. We spoke to two of his top deputies, his deputy for higher education and his deputy for civil rights. They were initially dismissive of the story we were telling because it was too preposterous, but we ultimately convinced them that, in fact,



anarchy had broken out at Evergreen and that this was a very volatile and dangerous situation and that the governor needed to act.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:38:57**

As far as I know, the governor of the state of Washington has still not mentioned what happened at Evergreen more than two years later. Somehow this all unfolded eight miles from his office and his house, and he has steered entirely clear of it, even though, obviously the Board of Trustees of Evergreen should have fired the president. It's un-understandable. And members of boards of trustees of other colleges that I've talked to about this are scratching their heads over how the board of trustees could possibly have not fired George.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:39:33**

But the board of trustees serves at the pleasure of the governor. So this is directly his responsibility. And the fact that the college is down by 50%, its student body is down by 50%, it is unable to pay its bills, it is laying people off at an incredible rate, which means that it can't deliver the educational goods that it is supposed to deliver, so even the tiny student body that remains is not being well-served, of course the governor needs to fire the board of trustees, fire the president, and start over. It's in the interest of the people of the state of Washington that Inslee do this. How he has avoided doing it is anybody's guess, and why he would avoid it.

**Peter McCormack: 00:40:23**

Do you think there's, this is where we go to political correctness gone mad, and there is a fear of ever challenging somebody who might come from a minority who has some reason to question what's going on. Do you think this is just fear, "I don't want to upset maybe a black community"?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:40:41**

Well, again, this is something I should have said a few minutes ago, this was not the students of colour of Evergreen. This was a small subset of the students of colour of Evergreen, and quite a number of white anarchists, and quite a number of well-intentioned white students who thought they were doing the right thing because they were liberals. But there were a large number of students who wanted no part of this. And in fact, the violence-

**Peter McCormack: 00:41:13**

The silent majority.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:41:15**

Not even silent. There were some very courageous students who wanted no part of this. But the sad part is what happened to them. So my wife and I had a student on our ... We had a study abroad program in 2016, the year before the riots, where, in the final quarter of the year-long program, we took 30 students to Ecuador and spent 11 weeks travelling to the Amazon, to Galapagos. Anyway, these were students we knew quite well.

**Peter McCormack: 00:41:44**

Wow.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:41:46**

There was one student in that class, a young woman who, mixed race, half black, who during the riots was walking across campus and was cornered by, of course, the very same bullies who accused her effectively of being a race traitor for studying science. Now, I don't quite know how to process that story.

**Peter McCormack: 00:42:16**

I don't know how to process what you've just said.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:42:19**

It's so maddening that anybody would attempt to stigmatise and intimidate a person who wished to study science, somebody who said, "I don't feel racism at Evergreen." That was like a sin to admit that you were a person of colour and you didn't feel like Evergreen had a special problem. That was setting yourself up for special derision and intimidation, because of course, even a small number of people of colour saying, "Actually, the story doesn't make sense," puts the lie to it. And so they effectively needed to silence those who would speak against the narrative.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:43:01**

And this is something people need to be aware of is that you can't walk into these stories and know what's going on. I mean, if my wife and I hadn't stood up and did what we did, the coup at Evergreen might well have gone off silently. Right? It was only because there was some pushback. It wasn't just Heather and me, but on the faculty side, it was almost just Heather and me. And that resulted in dramatic footage that called the world's attention to this, which then resulted in people actually looking into the story, people like Mike Nayna,

who's done a wonderful three-part documentary, Benjamin Boyce, the Evergreen grad who was in the middle of a many-part series on what actually happened at Evergreen.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:43:48**

This allows us to understand the story, but what you need to extrapolate to is what you would know if those factors hadn't come together. And the answer is you would probably, if you knew anything at all about what happened at Evergreen, you would probably think, "Oh, there were some racial tensions. Maybe things got a little out of hand. Who knows?" The idea that, actually, those racial tensions were trumped up and that the riots were about the reversal of an imagined narrative of oppression, that this was a power play, those things require an in-depth investigation to even understand. And the question is, what don't we know about other places? We know about Evergreen, but what don't we know about what happens elsewhere?

**Peter McCormack: 00:44:36**

You mentioned a coup. If that had happened, what were the changes that they would have wanted to implement at the college? Obviously, we've talked about the change to the Day of Absence, but are there are other things they wanted?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:44:48**

Yes. I mean, there's a question about "they," there's a question about the Equity Council and what it wanted, and then there's a question about the president and what he wanted. The thing about Evergreen is it was a radical experiment in education, and the experiment was half-brilliant. So the founders of the college threw out virtually every rule and structure that makes a normal college work, and they replaced them with their best guess of what would work better. And they got about half of it right, and maybe they got half of it wrong. The half that was gotten wrong could have been fixed. But instead of fix it, there was a desire to unhook the part that really worked.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:45:31**

So the key to the place was that faculty had complete freedom to teach what they wanted in whatever way they wanted. And no administrator was in a position to tell you not to. The only exception to that are you had to teach your share of freshmen, and I suppose if no students showed up to your course, they could tell you to teach something else. But basically, you had a blank canvas.

**Peter McCormack: 00:45:58**

It sounds like a free market for education.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:46:00**

Well, it is. And both things that a free market produces happened. So for a small number of highly dedicated faculty, this was paradise because what you could do is throw out the rule book, figure out what really should be in a curriculum, and build it and see how it worked, and then innovate on it year after year.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:46:20**

And the other thing that made it special was that classes, which we called programs, were full-time. That means students take one class at a time, professors teach one class at a time, which means that you get to know each other incredibly well. So my experience and Heather's experience was that when we walked into our classroom, we knew everybody in the room. We were in a position, effectively, to model what they were hearing us say and to tailor the lesson so that it really landed. That was on the plus side. The downside is, in an environment where you're licensed to teach anything you want in any way you want, nobody's in a position to say you're not meeting the standard. And so, there were a lot of lazy faculty who basically produced make-work and delivered ideology rather than meaningful content. And so anyway, both things existed simultaneously at Evergreen.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:47:20**

And what ultimately happened is that the faculty that did not wish to utilise this for educational purposes mutinied. And we were left with a challenge of the remaining part, of the good part of Evergreen, by the part that wasn't serving anybody. But the reason I'm down this road is that a college in which your professor really knows you and they really care about you, they're not getting highly paid, they're there because they want to be there, that college is in a position to educate people who would be lost in another environment. I must say, this is personal to me because I was always a terrible fit for school. But at Evergreen, I could teach in a way that people who were like me were not lost. To have that college destroyed over this insanity is appalling because there's no backup plan for students who are not well-built for college. And to turn Evergreen into just another unimaginative place distributing ideology and not paying attention to the individuals in the room, it's a tragic loss.

**Peter McCormack: 00:48:36**

One thing that was really hard for me to figure out in doing the research, and this might sound funny, is I actually couldn't figure what their real bone of contention is and what changes that were desired, beyond you being fired. It was very hard to actually pinpoint, what is it you are actually complaining for here?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:48:58**

Yeah. I think the thing is you're looking for an object that doesn't quite exist. And the object that answers your question is unsatisfying.

**Peter McCormack: 00:49:05**

Well, because lots of the people during the protest, especially in the classrooms or in the rooms where they were shouting or singing and dancing, there was no consistency between the people. It just felt like there were a group of people who just wanted to shout and swear, and almost like they were doing it for the attention of the room rather than a real purpose. And I don't want to patronise or condescend people because maybe some people did have a real bone of contention, but it felt it was more for attention than for a purpose. Because I couldn't find a coherent narrative between the people.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:49:39**

Yeah. Well, at the point that you're looking for a coherent narrative, you're not going to find it. But you will find a generating function. They wanted power. And that doesn't explain everybody in the room, because some of the people in the room were allies who were trying to do the right thing, who were tools of those seeking power. But the generating function is they wanted power and they wanted power. I mean, and if you look through the hundreds of hours of video, they want the cafeteria to stay open for them. They want free gumbo. They want not to be penalised for not turning in their homework. So there's a lot of really mundane stuff on the list of demands that emerges over the course of the protest.

**Peter McCormack: 00:50:15**

But everything you said there is a change that would be for everyone. That doesn't seem to be anything that's racially profiled.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:50:20**

It's whatever crosses your mind at the moment. You want power. I want you to put your hands down. That makes me feel good because I'm exercising power over you. I don't really

feel threatened by your hands. If I try to parse the story that the students felt threatened by this incredibly weak white man gesticulating with his hands as he tries to explain stuff, there's no way anybody felt threatened by George. I mean, George could, frankly, make a fist and it's not threatening. He's too weak, right?

**Peter McCormack: 00:50:48**

Yeah.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:50:48**

But being able to take the president of the college and tell him when he gets to use his hands, that's power, to tell him when he gets to pee, that's power. And so, the bad actors were really looking to gain power and to evidence that they had it.

**Peter McCormack: 00:51:04**

So they were just use race as a tool.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:51:07**

Of course.

**Peter McCormack: 00:51:07**

Yeah.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:51:08**

Of course. And the tragedy is all of the people who wouldn't have done that, who ended up being tools of those who would, or people who ended up being silenced so that they didn't end up on the wrong end of those that would.

**Peter McCormack: 00:51:19**

Well, this is where you get to peer pressure a mob mentality.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:51:24**

Of course.

**Peter McCormack: 00:51:24**

I mean, I've just ... It's not the same story, but just yesterday, I was in my hotel, and on Netflix, I watched the Red Roll Red, or Roll Red Roll, it's the story of a group of football players at a school in Ohio who end up raping a young girl because she's passed out drunk.

And they were explaining how most people would never be involved in a situation or accept a situation like that. But as a group of young lads, once one starts, there's a peer pressure to become involved. And this peer pressure, it's quite scary on young people.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:51:58**

Oh, it's terrifying, what it is ... I mean, it is capable of creating gas chambers. I mean, that's the thing is there's a dark theme in human history and it evidences itself in various ways, but the subject of the conversation and the mechanisms through which this thing acts are distinct.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:52:19**

So I did not know at the point that what unfolded at my classroom, unfolded ... what the immediate explanation for it was. It just so happens that the class that I was teaching was called Hacking Human Nature. And what it was about was how civilisation functions and fails to function. And never mind the question of how you might get the power to change civilisation, if you were going to write the rules for civilisation that would actually work, that would create well-being and distribute it in some fair way, what would those rules look like? And we had, in fact, talked about the historical instances of witch hunts and other things that look like them. We had talked about why that happens.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:53:13**

And anyway, we had had it on the board maybe two days before the protest broke out at my class. And when the protest broke out at my class, I did say at some point, I was being interviewed somewhere, and I said that it had the character of a witch hunt. And people, of course, reacted terribly to my alleging that this was in some way like a witch hunt. And then months later, I found that the lead protestor, again, this guy who ends up writing the Student Code of Conduct on that committee, ends up kidnapping the administrators, he had posted on his Facebook wall a statement, something to the effect of, "Never have white men hidden in the shadows of themselves, and-

**Bret Weinstein: 00:54:03**

In the shadows of themselves and feared the hunting of witches or something like this. He had invoked witch hunting a couple of days before he had sent students to my classroom, basically saying it's time for white men to experience being hunted as a witch. And the thing that shocked me about this is not only was this a witch hunt, but even the people perpetrating it understood that it was a witch hunt. That was its purpose, right? Was simply

to reverse in their minds that injustice, white people have hunted other people in this way, so it's time we start hunting them. And it's like, well, okay, at the point that you know that you are, the bias of humans tends to be, you look at a situation like what happened in Germany in the thirties or you look at the witch hunts in Salem and you think, oh, I really hope I would've been on the right side.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:54:57**

Right? But these people actually identified with the people on the wrong side of the witch hunt. So that's a shocking fact to me.

**Peter McCormack: 00:55:07**

What's the outcome been? Obviously you left, but you must be aware of what's happening at Evergreen. You must know people there. What's the outcome been? How has it changed? Has it destroyed the college?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:55:18**

It has destroyed the college. What is difficult to understand is the college is effectively, how do I even say it? It has a student body that is half what it should be. The stories of what goes on in the college are of a faculty that is entirely demoralised. A campus that has no-

**Peter McCormack: 00:55:45**

Fearful as well? Of it happening again?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:55:49**

I don't think it could happen again, but you have to understand. So I took a lot of flack for using email to talk about the problems that were going on at Evergreen and then ultimately talking to the press as things boiled over.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:56:07**

But there was no other option because those options that would normally exist had been eradicated. So the president had in some way changed the structure of faculty meetings. Faculty meetings used to be places where Evergreen faculty disagreed with each other openly and freely. And because of the structure of the college, it wasn't like the untenured faculty were timid and only the tenured faculty had forcible positions. It was an open forum and they turned into a pedantic exercise where everything was scripted. There was no opportunity to ask questions, et cetera. So the point was, email was the only place that we



had access to each other fully. And so I resorted to it. That is now gone also. So this is a tiny school, or a small school, and there's no reason the faculty should not be able to email each other-

**Peter McCormack: 00:57:09**

Of course not.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:57:10**

An authoritarian nightmare, like George Bridges can't abide faculty talking to each other. So they have instituted a policy where basically every thing that is mailed to the faculty has to be reviewed by some entity that yada yada, yada. So-

**Peter McCormack: 00:57:31**

It's a bureaucracy.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:57:33**

Well, let's put it this way. It is a caricature of the little communist dictatorship-

**Peter McCormack: 00:57:43**

Of course.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:57:43**

Is what it is. And all of the elements are there, including the demoralised population, the economic hard times that accompany it. I mean, it could hardly be a better model for the hazards of that kind of thinking. The question really is why doesn't the state put it out of its misery and I mean they could. The thing that we assumed was going to happen to it at the point that it began to collapse was that it would maybe become a branch campus of the of Washington, or something, but instead it's just being left in this state where it doesn't have students and it doesn't have a path to gain them.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:58:35**

It's only getting worse because essential functions are being cut, so it doesn't have something with which do attract a new population of people who might be interested in giving the place a chance. So I don't know, it's like a dead college walking.

**Peter McCormack: 00:58:48**

One thing that also stood out to me, and again, this might be just, this might be just because

I haven't seen everything that happened. I'm just going based on the footage and maybe the footage is extreme, but in a room where the president is being repeatedly yelled at in turn by people who are swearing and shouting and stamping on the floor. It seemed to me that there was a lack of strong leadership amongst the people protesting to actually try and calm the situation and have some form of, I don't know, kind of fair discourse at the point where if people are just repeatedly shouting at somebody, there's no progress to be made.

**Peter McCormack: 00:59:24**

It is just bullying. But were there situations where they were getting groups of people, maybe a smaller group of say five or six people around the table to represent both sides, to have some kind of fair discussion?

**Bret Weinstein: 00:59:36**

Again, I think it's just hard to accept that this was a con, but the people who were driving were not interested in a discussion.

**Peter McCormack: 00:59:46**

Okay.

**Bret Weinstein: 00:59:46**

They were not interested in making points. They were not interested in discovering where they were wrong because this was not a good faith exercise. This was a power grab and this is very confusing to most of us because we can't imagine being in their shoes. It is also difficult for us to understand because so many of the people involved in the protest were simply confused about where they were in history. So if the leaders are cynical and involved in grabbing power for themselves, and the rank and file of the movement are well intentioned but confused, what you tend to see are the rank and file and assume that the whole movement is like them. But no, the leadership has far more influence over the way this unfolded than the the rank and file do.

**Peter McCormack: 01:00:48**

Right. And they whip up the crowds. They cause a shit storm. And because of that it creates pressure and they end up getting the results they require. But it's ultimately at the cost of the people who they have pressured into joining them in this.

**Bret Weinstein: 01:01:04**

Not only that, it was also the biggest cost to be paid here was they crashed a college that was positioned to serve people who were not well served by other colleges. People who are most harmed by what happened are students who are poorly served by other places who might have gotten a good education at Evergreen. And in particular if your hope is for people who come from populations that are historically oppressed to gain equal footing, this was the kind of place that could provide a means to that end and to crash it for social media likes or YouTube clicks or whatever it is that they crashed it for. Or to get free gumbo and not lose credit for skipping class or that stuff is just, it's a mind numbing waste.

**Peter McCormack: 01:02:08**

Yeah. And also, I guess it seems like a lot of these people, they are quite young, potentially immature and a little bit out of their depth in the things that they were getting involved in. And I do wonder, like when I was say 20 we wouldn't have protested like this. We wouldn't have people with phones filming it for YouTube. We didn't have things to share on social media. It was a very different environment now.

**Peter McCormack: 01:02:33**

It seems like it seems like if everybody, well not everybody, but lots of people want to become part of something, some kind of campaign or demonstration. And also this bleeds into the recent fear I've had of the left that's been growing or I'm increasingly seeing censorship or people being shouted down or groups of people I've talked to Antifa who seem to be an oxymoron themselves and it seems to be a lot of violence and anger and censorship coming from the left. Which shouldn't be where it's coming from.

**Bret Weinstein: 01:03:10**

Yeah, well I don't know, there are a lot of factors here. And then I saw this in Occupy to which I was initially quite favourable towards, but what was going on inside of Occupy was utopian anarchistic nonsense. There was no, I don't want to say there was no solution orientation, but there was this naive fantasy on the part of many of the people who drove the conversation that was simply not going to manifest in any sort of policy improvement in any way. So the left has lost touch. And I think one thing that is probably true is the left has been out of power for so long and those on the right are going to bridle at this. Right? But that thing, that Democrat thing that gets in power every now and again in the US is not the left, right? The DNC is not a left leaning organisation. It is a right-leaning organisation. And

so the left has not had power in so long that I believe it actually has lost touch with what to ask for and how to wield power responsibly. I think it just doesn't know.

**Peter McCormack: 01:04:28**

Well they've brought out Bernie Sanders, didn't they? I mean I don't fully understand how this works. The DNC actually works because I'm from the UK. Right. But, but as I was aware of it during the, before the election, it seemed to me like Bernie was ahead of Hillary, but Bernie was blocked out here. Explain to me how that happens.

**Bret Weinstein: 01:04:46**

Well, first of all, you have to understand that Bernie is not a Democrat, and so he caucuses with the Democrats, which makes sense because otherwise he's an army of one. But the internal politics of the parties is built to prevent choice from emerging in the primaries. In other words, your choice gets narrowed in the primaries and then maybe you get a legit shot at a vote in the general election, but the point is all of the dangerous stuff, the dangerous stuff being where change actually happens and therefore progress might be possible, has been eliminated in the primary. So then you have a horse race at the end that is not really about change. It's about something else. In the case of the 2016 election, we had a very interesting circumstance where people have gotten so sick of being manipulated by the two parties that we had a mutiny in both places, right?

**Bret Weinstein: 01:05:48**

Or the mutiny is probably the wrong term. Maybe we had an insurrection, and the insurrection on the left was Bernie. I was a Bernie supporter. I was a Bernie supporter right through the general election. In fact, I could not vote for Hillary, but so many people were frustrated on both sides that both parties lost control of the apparatus that allows them to maintain control under normal circumstances. The DNC regained control and pulled the rug out from under Bernie who would indeed have crushed Clinton and probably beaten Trump. At the point that the DNC pulled the rug out from under Bernie using things like the AP to create the impression that Bernie was about to lose and things like that. At the point that Bernie lost the primaries and then embraced Clinton. All of the energy that wanted to vote against business as usual had to either sign up for business as usual or sign up for Donald Trump.

**Bret Weinstein: 01:06:56**

And so this explains why a lot of people moved from Bernie Sanders to Donald Trump,

which doesn't seem like a rational move unless your point is anything but business as usual. Right. And a lot of people did that. They weren't enthusiastic about Trump, but they voted for him because he wasn't-

**Peter McCormack: 01:07:14**

Hillary.

**Bret Weinstein: 01:07:15**

Yeah, because they didn't know how the story ended, right. And so that's where we are is that we've had two demonstrations, one on the left and one on the right, that people are sick enough of business as usual, that they are willing to gamble on a nonstandard move. And the question is, are we going to suffer through another election of the power players failing to grasp what they are up against and what it's meaning is? And the real conundrum actually is that the Democratic and Republican parties have become influence peddling organisations. They're effectively like crime families and they cannot make the move that would make them popular and gain them power because it is in conflict with their business model.

**Bret Weinstein: 01:08:11**

Their business model involves cutting average people out of the spoils of civilisation and cutting people in on the spoils of civilisation would make them popular. But of course it would mean giving up those spoils, which they don't want to do. And so they are stuck figuring out what else to feed people that they will believe. And this is in part the explanation for what's going on in the social justice movement, which is how could you gain political power if you're not willing to cut people in on the spoils? Well, you could transfer spoils from one group to another, not your spoils, but their spoils. So in effect, people are being organised around things like race and gender and sexual orientation to demand wellbeing that is currently in the pockets of people who are not particularly well better off, but better off than they are. Right. So it is another, it's a new version of the same old divide and conquer political strategy that we've seen between the parties that's now unfolding within the Democratic party.

**Peter McCormack: 01:09:20**

So how do you think this is going to play out in the next election?

**Bret Weinstein: 01:09:23**

Wow. If I had-

**Peter McCormack: 01:09:25**

Who do you think and who would you like to have the nomination for the Democrats?

**Bret Weinstein: 01:09:28**

For the Democrats, I would like to see Yang or Gabbard.

**Peter McCormack: 01:09:34**

Interesting.

**Bret Weinstein: 01:09:34**

Or they could team up. That would be a desirable outcome. That said, I don't know what happens. Let's say Yang gets the nomination. Let's say he wins the presidency. I have a hard time imagining that the entity that has fought so hard to prevent meaningful change is going to simply roll over. So I honestly cannot tell you what mechanism would be brought to bear, but I have the sense that as, although I am quite sure that Yang is a smart and decent fellow as he appears, and that he is creative and interested in change and as wiziwig a presidential candidate as you can hope for.. I have the sense that we would learn something about how our democracy resists change under emergency circumstances if he won, that would not be heartening.

**Peter McCormack: 01:10:32**

Yeah, I find politics very interesting, but also I'm kind of becoming more apathetic to it because I don't feel like our vote really ever makes any change that much. I just, especially on seeing what's happened in the UK with Brexit, we've had a vote. Now people want another vote. We don't know what it means. The whole process is very difficult to come engaged in because I've gone beyond believing these people care about us as individuals and want better for the population and actually it's more about themselves and their own personal careers. And so I'm personally very apathetic to politics right now to the point where I'm, as bad as it sounds, I may not even vote because I don't care now.

**Bret Weinstein: 01:11:13**

Well you know I would counsel you away from that.

**Peter McCormack: 01:11:15**

Okay. Good.

**Bret Weinstein: 01:11:16**

I don't think that your sense that it is, that it has been robbed of its power is incorrect. But I do think there is something to be said... I think we are in very unusual circumstances and what I would say is your vote is actually inexpensive in one regard. Which is let's say that we discover that our democracy has been completely unhooked from actual power and that it has been turned into a race to preoccupy us, but actual power functions in some other way. Well it seems to me you still need to vote in order to justify the kinds of responses that you might have to a democracy that wasn't in any way democratic. So I would say votes that you have a position from which to legitimately complain about what's happening, that would be a start.

**Bret Weinstein: 01:12:13**

But I would also say the 2016 election did demonstrate something, as did the Brexit election, which is that they demonstrated that whatever it is that controls our democracies is losing control. Presumably, it did not want Donald Trump elected. I don't think it would've wanted Bernie Sanders elected either. Presumably it did not want Brexit to pass. And so the fact is, what we've discovered is that through some pathway we don't understand, power still exists in the voting booth and learning how to operate it would be smart.

**Peter McCormack: 01:12:50**

Okay. I think that's fair. All right, I'm going to finish in one final question.

**Bret Weinstein: 01:12:55**

Sure.

**Peter McCormack: 01:12:55**

I've really appreciated this and your time. Totally not covered anything I had in by listed the way, but it's been fascinating. But what I did want to ask you is it's a very weird, crazy world right now, and perhaps it always feels like that, but it does feel like a very strange world we're in at the moment. You as a evolutionary theorist and biologist historically, like how do you take everything in that's happening in the world right now? The rise of Trump, Brexit, the constant war over, is global warming real, isn't it, how are we going to solve it? This does feel like there's a lot of tension in the world, it feels like the world's very tense at the

moment. There's a lot of questionable problems with China and control and companies who are censoring themselves to keep China happy. We've got the expansion of their belt and road program. We've got Turkey now entering Syria. It feels to me very tense world at the moment. I don't know if your history as an evolutionary theorist brings you to any conclusions, but I'd be interested in knowing how you feel about things.

**Bret Weinstein: 01:13:59**

It brings me to several conclusions, one of which I hesitate to offer because I think it can easily be taken the wrong way. But I do think that we already knew level of incoherence and that that sense that this story just doesn't even add up, is novel. I think it is quite true that there is often a true story of history and then there's the public narrative of history and they are not the same story in general. But the true story makes sense. I may not be defensible, but it's at least it's comprehensible. In this incoherent moment the real question is how do you figure out what to pay attention to and what to ignore. And figuring out what to ignore may be every bit as important to figuring out where we're headed as figuring out what to pay attention to. In other words, the noise may be so disruptive of a valid model that filtering out things that mislead may be the key to understanding what you're seeing and this is in fact not so unlike biology.

**Bret Weinstein: 01:15:14**

If you walk into a tropical forest, you have to ignore almost everything in order to deduce pattern because there's so much going on simultaneously. You get to it in a sequence. You don't get to it all at once. So as for how to do that, I would say, look, we've never beaten the scientific method for understanding how things work, nor do I expect we ever will. I think it may be altered in its particular description, but in essence, it is the best way we have of figuring out how things function, and it works just the same way with respect to events in the world as it does everywhere else. Which is that you build a model, that model makes predictions and then you see if those predictions are manifest. And if you do that based on if I pay attention to this source, if I pay attention to events in this story, it increases my ability to predict what's going to happen next.

**Bret Weinstein: 01:16:21**

Then there's probably a lot of signal in there. If paying attention to something else results in no increase in the ability to predict or worse, it ends in a decrease in your ability to predict,



it's probably too noisy to be useful. And simply paying attention to that which actually empowers you to see farther is, it's crude but effective.

**Peter McCormack: 01:16:44**

And are you optimistic right now?

**Bret Weinstein: 01:16:47**

Well, I've come to a state that has elements of both optimism and pessimism.

**Peter McCormack: 01:16:54**

Okay.

**Bret Weinstein: 01:16:55**

I think there is still time to regain control of the ship and I think it is possible to get from here to a very positive, steady state for humanity, one that would recover substantially on all of the values that I think we should share. However, I'm watching the dysfunction and I'm thinking we are hurtling towards a point at which we will no longer have the power to get to that positive end state. And if I had to bet, I would bet that the opportunity that exists will vanish without our capitalising on it.

**Peter McCormack: 01:17:34**

Okay. There's a good point to end.

**Bret Weinstein: 01:17:38**

It's an end point for sure.

**Peter McCormack: 01:17:39**

And I think I would at some point, if I'm back in Portland, I'd like to follow up and talk about some other things with you because obviously there's many other subjects you'll probably interested in and things I find fascinating. But-

**Bret Weinstein: 01:17:50**

Yeah, I can't believe we've spent all this time talking about Evergreen.

**Peter McCormack: 01:17:53**

Yeah, well, I mean that was the background and but what was very interesting is I got to ask you a couple of questions that I didn't think anyone had asked you that were important to

me, that gave me a better picture of what happened. And then there were other things I wanted to cover with you, but they feel like separate topics, I'll talk about them afterwards. But no, I really appreciate your time and I think I've definitely like to do a follow up in a few months or whenever I'm back in Portland.

**Bret Weinstein: 01:18:16**

Great. I'd love it.

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