



Episode 1,057: Dave Rubin on the Left's Drift, and Striking Out on His Own

Guest: Dave Rubin

WOODS: As we were saying before, we've had a lot of people on Twitter saying the two of us need to talk, so we'd better not let them down. This is it. We're doing it right now.

RUBIN: Well, listen. If Twitter says something, you'd better do it or they will turn on you quickly.

WOODS: I have learned that lesson.

RUBIN: [laughing] Let's submit to the mob. Here we go.

WOODS: So I generally pride myself on not asking guests the same thing that they've been asked a million times. I had Ian Anderson of Jethro Tull on the show. I did not ask him, "Why did you decide to play the flute in a rock band?" because everybody asks him that. "Why did you name the band Jethro Tull?" I'm not doing that. But in your case, there ain't no getting around a couple of fundamental questions, just especially because I will have a sliver of the audience that has somehow managed to get through life without knowing who Dave Rubin is.

RUBIN: Let's roll. Let's roll.

WOODS: So I would like to know just quickly about how you came to be the Dave Rubin of 2017 as opposed to, say, the Dave Rubin of 2007. Do you feel like you changed, people around you changed, or both?

RUBIN: Yeah, well, it's interesting, because I don't think I have changed that much. So quick bio for some of your audience that may not know me. I am 41 years old, born in '76 Brooklyn, grew up in New York and Long Island, went to State University of New York at Binghamton, lived in Manhattan most of my adult life. Did standup in New York for 12 years, and then about 5 years ago, moved to LA. So I truly am one of those rare people that have only lived in New York and LA. You can judge that as you will.

In terms of if I have changed since 2007, I mean, I have always — I remember when I was in eighth grade and it was '88 and Michael Dukakis was running against George H.W. Bush, and that's when I sort of first got interested in politics in a social studies class and we were doing a mock election. It was so obvious to me that the liberals

were the good guys. And there's a moment in the election, which I'm sure some of your listeners will remember, where H.W. called Dukakis a liberal and Dukakis was running away from the word "liberal," and I just couldn't understand it. Liberals were the good guys. They cared about the little guy. They cared about minorities. They cared about poor people, all of those things.

And so since I ever cared about politics, at about 12 years old in '88, I've always considered myself a liberal.

Now, about five years ago when I moved to LA and I was doing a show with the Young Turks, that's sort of when I dove into the progressive world. And now I can tell you very clearly there's a huge difference between being a liberal in the truest sense, in the classical liberal sense, and being a progressive or a leftist. Now, for a while, I think the progressives were sort of making some sense, but in the last couple of years, they've really gone off the deep end and it's gone from being progressive, meaning for progress — and that's a sort vague term that's hard to define, but basically being for what I would say are the right things in society — to being a really terrible authoritarian collectivist movement.

I mean, liberalism at its heart isn't that far off from libertarianism. It's about the individual. It's about logic and reason. It's about limiting the state. It's about owning your own life. I mean, this is really what liberalism is. Now, the word liberalism has been so derailed that, in a way, by still calling myself a liberal and not saying I'm a libertarian or whatever else, I'm sort of always swimming upstream, because even my allies now, some conservatives who I like, they'll always say "liberals this," "liberals this." That's the way the conversation has derailed. So I'm trying to hold a position here that is a little bit like standing on some sand while you've got a wave coming at you.

But my positions, just to answer your question clearly — my positions haven't shifted that much. I'm happy to tell you about any of my positions. I'd say I've shifted a little bit right economically on taxes and things like that, but beyond that, the basics of the things that I've always believed in I still believe in. Those things now seem to be a rarity on the left, and that's why I think people have been attracted to what I'm doing.

WOODS: Well, here's what I want to know. Let's just say a good number of your guest are, shall we say, edgy. I'm not quite sure how to put it. But they're guests who, let's say, might not make it onto a lot of shows with your audience and your reach. So there must be some reason you want to talk to people like that, who are quite intelligent but who say things that are outside what we call the Overton window. Now, is it your view that you just think that we're irrationally excluding a lot of perspectives and so we should just give them a chance to talk? I mean, in other words, it's a deliberate choice on your part to seek out controversial guests, so what's motivating it?

RUBIN: Well, what's motivating it truly is that I love having conversations with interesting people. So regardless of what you think about Milo Yiannopoulos or what you think about Sam Harris or Ayaan Hirsi Ali or Richard Dawkins or Michael Malice or any of these people, they're all interesting. They're all saying something. They're saying something relevant, often, many of them — if I was to take, say, Milo and Sam

— saying completely opposite things. But I enjoy talking to them and I learn from them.

I think one of the things that we're really suffering from as a country right now is people are afraid to admit not only that they don't know everything — which, none of us know everything — but that they're still evolving on issues. As I said, I haven't moved that much. I've shifted right a little bit I think economically, but that doesn't mean that I sit here and that as I'm talking to you right now I think I know every which way I'm going to think in ten years from now. I mean, the point of being a human is having a flexible mind so that you can evolve. So I'll see every now and again, someone will find something that I tweeted seven years ago that I maybe don't believe now or an idea that I wouldn't push out there now. And they'll go, *Ah, see, you're a fop or you're a sellout*, or something like that. And it's like, no, I'm actually a human, and that's the point. I've learned how to change.

So I don't seek out people for controversy. When Milo, for example, the couple interviews that I did with him, and we did a live event or two — now, I knew they were going to court controversy, but my goal was not to court controversy. My goal was to have an interesting conversation. And in the case with Milo, like with these protestors, it's one thing to protest. I am 100% for protest. But if you're going to burn schools down and if you're going to pull the fire alarm and create a human wall so that students can't enter, thus proving that you're not really against walls; you just don't like Trump's wall — I mean, all of these things — then we have a real problem.

And unfortunately, what's happened on the left, there's been an absolute intellectual collapse on the left, so it's a lot easier these days for me to find people who are conservative or who are libertarian, the few classical liberals left — it's a lot easier for me to talk to them and make some sense of what they're saying than it is to get sort of people who act in good faith on the left. I think, unfortunately, there aren't many of them right now.

But my goal is not to court controversy. My goal is to have good conversation and to learn something. And often — I think it's probably the same way for you — often when you're talking to somebody, it's not just that you're learning because they're saying something. Often you'll learn something about yourself because you'll go, *Well, it doesn't really sound like they know what they're talking about*, or, *No, I completely disagree with that*. I like giving people the space to share their ideas and then let's see if those ideas actually meet their muster when the rubber hits the road.

WOODS: I want to say something about the reaction among some of your former colleagues to your — again, I don't want to say "new position" if that's not really the best way of saying it. But I want to be as fair as I can to progressives, because if I were to suddenly change my mind, or at least let's say if I were to be perceived to have changed my mind or I suddenly had a lot of people on my show and gave them somewhat sympathetic hearings that would shock my listeners, I have a feeling a lot of those people would be really, really upset at me and some of them would say terrible things that they can never take back and so on. So I don't think it's — I want to be, as I say, as fair as I can. Maybe it's not anything exclusive to progressives that made them unhappy with you, but what exactly was that like?

RUBIN: What was it like when my former colleagues were talking about me? Is that what —

WOODS: Yeah, well, in other words, when all of a sudden they realized, *Hold on a minute; wait a minute. Rubin has gone a little nutso from our point of view*, and suddenly they just start hitting you. What were they saying? Were they being nasty or sticking to the ideas or what?

RUBIN: Well, first off, it goes to the heart of the matter, which is that the left has a general rule. The left loves diversity, but they don't love diversity of thought. So while they scream that everyone else is a racist and a bigot and a homophobe and all of this nonsense, they actually are the ones that are doing most of the pre-judging, because if you look at a black person and think you know what they should think because of the color of their skin, or if you look at a gay person and know which way they should vote, or any other minority, for example, and think that you know them, you know what they are because of their immutable characteristics — that is prejudice. I mean, that is pre-judging right there. So the left, they claim to love diversity in that they love the diversity of colors, but the second you step out of that, they really have an issue with you.

So I mean, without specifically getting into anybody unless there was someone that you actually wanted to mention specifically, I would say they viewed it as you'd left their religion. I mean, this is the irony. My friend Peter Boghossian, who I've had on a couple of times, called this postmodern, leftist monster — he calls it a secular religion. And I think that really does nail it on the head, because the way they behave if you leave them, you are now the enemy. And it's not just if you leave them. If you hold virtually any contrarian position on anything, they will toss you out. They become the totalitarian and sort of over-the-top controlling monster that they claim that the right is.

And I've got to tell you that right now, my speaking schedule for the next year at colleges is jam-packed and virtually every gig that I have is from college libertarians or conservatives. I don't have one invite from a progressive group or a Democratic group or anything that would be on the left. Now, that tells you a little bit about which way the tolerance is running these days. I say that as someone that is for gay marriage; I'm for legalizing marijuana; I'm pro-choice; I'm for strong public education; I'm against the death penalty. I mean, most of these things are thought of as leftist things, and yet the right is the place that is interested in my ideas and interested in conversation.

So as to what my former colleagues might think of me: probably not great things. I mean, most of them won't talk to me anymore, which is sort of unfortunate. I have a general policy, which is that I won't lose friends over politics, and I've had personal friends who are not public people that that sometimes can be a struggle with. But I think part of the problem in the country right now is that people want politics — I don't know if they want it. People have made everything about politics, so sports is now about politics, entertainment is now about politics. Everything is now political.

For me, that's a great example of why the libertarian ideas make the most sense, because everything shouldn't be political. Live your life and I'll live my life, and as long as the ways that we're living those lives are not in direct conflict with each other, then

that's how we can make this incredible experiment of a country of 300+ million people work. It's the only way we can make it work. I don't deserve anything that you have because you have more, and if I have more, you don't deserve anything that I have.

I mean, these are the basic ideas of what liberty is. You have the right in this country — it's incredible and our founding documents are pretty beautiful. You have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. They stuck the "pursuit of happiness" in there, those crazy people, and then we've got a couple other rights in the Bill of Rights. But that's it. All of these guys, the Founders would be rolling over in their graves if they saw how giant and monstrous the government had become and the way that politics has leaked into everyone's life at all times. It's not the way that it was supposed to be, and I think part of the reason people respond to me the way they do is because I'm trying to, in a simple, thoughtful, and honest manner, explain that to them just like we're talking about now.

WOODS: It really is getting unbelievable. It's not only just, if you're at a sporting event, what your posture is is political; whether you like Thanksgiving is now political. Every aspect of your life, it's extremely obnoxious. I'm interested about your speaking schedule and how weighted down it is with conservative and libertarian groups, and I wonder if that's partly because, even though Trump is in the White House, I think people on the right still feel like in general the trend is against them, that there isn't really a major right-wing trend sweeping America. So anybody they can reach out to who has some curiosity about them and isn't one of these people who can't stand the sight of them, they're interested in talking to.

I wonder if it's partly out of kind of a defensive, or also — just in general, though, in my experience, frankly, I have seen more of an open-mindedness on the right, and I say this as somebody who I think of myself as being on the right, even though I'm more antiwar than the biggest hard-leftist you can find. And yet, I don't get any left-wing invitations of any kind. None. They're not interested in talking to me.

RUBIN: Yeah, well, listen. First off, the biggest hard-leftist you might find is pretty down for war with Russia, it seems at the moment.

WOODS: Yeah. Yeah.

RUBIN: And that's the beautify, ironically, of what's happening right now because of Trump, is that everything is upside down. Yes, we are polarized and it seems like we all hate each other and all that stuff. What I'm finding right now is I'm very hopeful in reality, because people are reevaluating what their beliefs are. I think the adventure that I've been on and the evolution that I've been on that I've been very upfront about and that I've been talking about for years now I think is the adventure that everybody is on right now. If you're awake in this world, you're reevaluating what you thought the world was like before Trump, basically. And there are new alliances forming.

And by the way, I think you're right that there's a little bit of a, I would call it a rational self-interest in these organizations bringing me there, because yes, these people have been told for years and decades and decades that they're the evil ones, they're intolerant ones, they're the racists and the bigots. So now they see someone like me that comes in there and will talk to them honestly and not judge them and can

respectfully disagree with them, and they see value in someone like me and I see value in someone like them.

And I always think it's funny because I'll see a little bit of the lefty Twitter mob go after and say, *Ah, Rubin, the conservatives are using you. They're using you.* And it's like, what an incredibly insulting way to think of it. What makes it that they're using me? I'm actually — you know how much email I get from conservatives in the middle of the country, Christian conservatives going, *Wow, Dave, I never heard a liberal that was decent before and you've made me rethink some of my positions.*

So I think there's actually a natural partnership. If you are open to ideas and if you realize that we live in a country where you're going to have to be tolerant of other ideas and not have a country where the government is going to tell everyone what to think and how to act all the time, well, then you've got to find some allies in places you didn't think they were. And I think that's what I've done, so I'll keep doing it as long as they'll invite me. And by the way, if any of your audience are progressive and they're at schools right now, send me an invite. Let's do it. I'd be happy to do it, of course.

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Who would you describe as your intellectual influences?

RUBIN: I mean, if you want to go back in terms of like the real standard bearers of classical liberalism, John Locke and John Stuart Mill and things like that. I'd say in the modern sense, where are the liberals? So in a modern historical American sense, where is the JFK of now who is a Democrat, right? "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." Imagine if Bernie said that. It's actually the complete opposite of what Bernie, who's basically the leader of the left today — it's the opposite of what he says. Bernie says your country, the state, the government should give you more things. We are going to take from some and give to others. That is the reverse of what John F. Kennedy said, the complete reverse.

So where is John F. Kennedy? Where's Daniel Patrick Moynihan? Where is Jacob Javits? Where have all the Blue Dog Democrats gone? They're nonexistent at this point. The modern Democratic Party has been taken over by leftists. It's been taken over by Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren and Keith Ellison and Tom Perez, all of these people who endlessly want to grow the state, who think that they can manage everything. They think they can make a better world through the government, and it simply is not true. They believe that if only their policies were instituted, that then we could have some sort of utopian society.

And the simple truth that people really need to understand is, a, these utopian societies never exist. They don't exist. You never get there, and what you do is you'll end up killing a lot of people along the way for wrongthink, in effect. But also, it can't exist by its very definition because we — you cannot have a perfect system when we are part of it, because we humans are flawed beings. That is the point of being a

human. It's to figure out what your purpose is, what you're doing here. But we can't build a system that's perfect because we're not perfect.

So if there were a — I wish — I was just having this conversation with a few people last night, and it's like, man, I wish that there was a renaissance of true intellectualism on the left. I really wish there was — that didn't demean everybody, that didn't want to control everybody. I would love that. And even if I at this point completely disagreed with them because more of my leanings are libertarian now, even if I completely disagreed with them, I would love that conversation. But if the conversation is just going to be you either agree with me or you're racist, and that in effect is where we're at, well, that's not a good starting point for anything.

WOODS: I would say in — I can't believe I'm the guy trying to be evenhanded on dealing with progressives on the show, but when I think about official conservatism, what is sometimes called Conservatism, Inc., I'm totally unimpressed with their official intellectuals too. It's really low-brow stuff that it's degenerated to, and particularly in the blogosphere. It's just embarrassing. But if you look at all the unapproved conservative figures, you do find some interesting ones, and that leads into my next question —

RUBIN: Well, can you give me a couple examples of who you mean by that? Because I can probably name a couple; I just want to make sure we're on the same page. So who would you say are the unapproved ones that you think are pretty decent?

WOODS: Well, I think Paul Gottfried's really smart. I know nobody likes Pat Buchanan, but I think he's one of the best writers I've ever come across in terms of his prose and his columns. And on this show, I came within inches of getting him to admit that it might have been a bad idea to go into the Vietnam War. That's an accomplishment. I can retire after that. The people associated with little, tiny *Chronicles* magazine, which is paleocon, antiwar, those people are all really good.

But there aren't a whole lot of huge names on that side. I mean, there are a lot of, shall we say, lone wolves out there. Like, Michael Malice is not associated with any particular institution, but I would put him up against any of these boring, old conservatives. Because either the conservatives — they're either low-brow or they're so high-brow that they also are kind of, I think, frankly, cowards, because they can't possibly get accused of having wrongthink because no one can understand a word they're saying. They're talking about nominalists versus realists in the 14th century. Well, yeah, no one's going to bother you if you talk about that, but I think we have more urgent things to talk about right now.

RUBIN: Sure, sure. So where do you put guys like, say, Ben Shapiro and Dennis Prager? Where do you put them in that?

WOODS: All right, they're definitely smarter than the typical conservative. I'll give you that. And Ben is — I will say I think Ben is courageous to do what he does, to go into those lions' dens like that. It's not easy. Even when in a way you kind of feed off it, it's not easy. And so I give him credit for that.

But I still, for me, one of the biggest things for me is foreign policy, and I think on that he's just — and like Dennis Prager too. I went on Dennis Prager's show and we had a wonderful time talking about domestic policy. Then in the second half, he wanted to know about foreign policy and I thought, *I could just say what he wants to hear and just kind of tone myself down.* But I thought, *What's the point of that? Why? Why would I do that?* So I just told him I thought — I said the idea that the U.S. government has just been this innocent bystander all along makes it impossible to understand what's going on in the world. And I said there's nothing conservative about this ridiculous foreign policy we have. It goes against conservative instinct or whatever. And he thanked me politely and I never spoke to him again [laughing].

So that to me, that's their big, big drawback, is at least when it comes to foreign policy, all the cheekiness and independent thinking that they boast about otherwise goes right out the window, and I get conventional, old John McCain and Sean Hannity. You know, been there, done that.

RUBIN: Right, okay. I just wanted to understand what your line of thinking was and I understand that. But for the record, I think that probably — although that's unfortunate I guess that you haven't been on with Prager again, but I think probably he did actually want to hear what you actually believe and not just what he wants to hear.

WOODS: Oh, and I know that. I know, I know. Because I thought, well, I can phrase it in such a way — but I thought, you know, I'm just going to come out swinging instead. I just felt like doing it. Now, meanwhile, by the way, on the foreign policy thing what shocks me is how really not that important it is to the left. I thought it was. And then recently because of Trump, I've heard people on the left actually saying, if only we could have George W. Bush back. What? What are you talking about? You heard this too? What are you talking about?

RUBIN: They do this incredibly insane and really insulting-to-your-intelligence game with this kind of thing. So every time a Republican is out of office, the second they say anything negative about the Republican that's in office, they now make them the hero.

WOODS: Yeah, so they like Mitt Romney too. They like Mitt Romney now.

RUBIN: Who do they like right now? I mean, truly, really think about this. Who does the media really love right now? The media loves McCain because he hasn't gone with Trump on some of this stuff — although now he went with him on the tax thing so they're turning against him again, but when he speaks out against Trump they love him, even though they completely demonized him when he was running against Obama. They love Romney now because of Romney's willingness to speak out against Bannon and against Trump. And again, George W. Bush is the best example of this, where now any time he says anything that's anti-Trump, the left starts applauding as if he was somehow the grand moral arbiter. I mean, this is the guy that they told us was the Hitler that we have now, according to them. So it's just a lazy, intellectually dishonest place to be.

WOODS: But on the other hand, again, I want to be — This is the last time I'm going to try to be fair to them. That's it. Three times in one show, that's it.

RUBIN: [laughing] You're really doing it; you're doing it.

WOODS: But honestly, if there were people who were speaking out against Obama on the left and stuff, maybe we would be interested in that. So I don't want to make it sound like it's just on the one side, because the partisan nature of all of this is so ridiculous, that you care deeply about bombing and then Obama does it and nobody cares. Then Trump does it and they suddenly care again. And then the creepiness of the media can't stand him, but they all agreed when he hit Syria. They said he's presidential now. So he's not presidential when he's traveling around the world trying to reach agreements with different countries? That's not presidential. Presidential is he bombed. That's not normal to me. I don't think that's normal. It shouldn't be that way.

RUBIN: Well, I agree, and just to be totally clear, you're really not exaggerating when you're saying this, because that day that he dropped that — what did they call that? The mother of all bombs?

WOODS: Yeah.

RUBIN: I'm pretty sure it was Chris Matthews, if I'm not mistaken, on MSNBC saying, "Trump became president today."

WOODS: Yeah, isn't that crazy? Because he dropped that bomb in Afghanistan. Crazy.

RUBIN: Yeah. Now, look, perhaps by dropping that bomb, he sent a massive signal to the Taliban and even to ISIS fighters in Syria that the game is different now and we're not going to go by this sort of muddled Obama policy of red lines that aren't really red lines and all that. Perhaps what Trump did when he sat down with Mattis actually made sense. Perhaps. I genuinely don't know. I think there's some evidence actually that some of this stuff has worked, because ISIS is actually losing territory.

But without going too deep into that, yes, these people have taken every position every which way, and the idea that you only become presidential when you drop bombs is actually crazy, and that that would be coming out of the left — who, by the way, loved Obama and he was at war every day of his presidency. I think the only president in the history of the United States. And right now, we're still in Afghanistan still, which is the longest war in the history of the United States, and no one even knows why we're there. But the idea that war and bombs lead to being presidential I think is just a silly notion.

WOODS: Let me jump in, because my kids just last night were asking me — they said, "Does the U.S. just bomb all the time? Is there a time when we're not bombing? Is this normal?" And I said, "Well, there's been at least an on-again, off-again war [00:30:02] pretty much for your entire lives. There's never been a purely peacetime footing." And I said, "The only president I can think of in recent memory who just said I'm not going to do this during my term" — and they said, "Ooh, who was that?" And they were

guessing. And said it's Jimmy Carter. And my kids had no idea who he was. These are like little kids. Never heard of Jimmy Carter before. And I said, "Isn't that funny?" His name's never come up because he wasn't a "great president," precisely because he didn't do this.

RUBIN: Well, it's interesting. We could get into Carter, and I think there's many more reasons to think Carter was a failure than a success. That's probably a whole other conversation altogether —

WOODS: Yeah, yeah.

RUBIN: But your point basically stands, and that's sort of why again I said this thing about the Founding Fathers before, that they'd be rolling in their graves if they saw how big government had become. I think this is a direct part of that. The government was never designed — I mean, I just went to — Thomas Jefferson is my personal favorite Founder, and I just went to D.C., which I try to do once a year or so. I do all the sites, all the usual sites, and go to all the monuments, and I went to Mount Vernon, Washington's estate, and all of those places. Go to — I'm sure many of your audience have done this already. Go to the Jefferson Memorial. It's a little off the beaten path, which is unfortunate because you have to make a little bit of an extra trek to get there. But go to the Jefferson Memorial and read that — I think there's four documents that they have in the giant mausoleum there. Read those documents, and it basically explains everything you need to know about how this government was supposed to work and how the people were supposed to have the power. and there's nothing in it about us having to rule the world. Now, unfortunately, we're in a weird place now where we've done so much in terms of the world that the vacuum that we will leave as we step away from the world will only be filled by bad players, unfortunately. But that doesn't necessarily give you a good enough reason to stay and keep doing all this stuff forever. Nobody knows why we're in Afghanistan. Nobody knows. And we're still there and nobody even talks about it. So something is rotten in Stinktown, if I can quote *The Simpsons*.

WOODS: [laughing] Yeah, I love — When we moved away from Topeka, Kansas, I literally on the highway heading to the airport stuck my head out the window of the car and yelled, "So long, Stinktown!" It turns out when you're on the highway and you're actually sticking your head out the window looking the other way, it's much harder to drive than Homer makes it look. Like, it was actually terrifying, it turns out [laughing].

Anyway, I have a juicy question for you, but before we get to it, I have to do a favor for my listeners in my private Facebook group.

RUBIN: Sure.

WOODS: They specifically — they just want me to clarify something about — because they say, *We love Dave* — I have people saying — *He's just a great human being*. Like, they weren't even just saying we like what he has to say. They're saying, *He's a great human being. We're so glad you're going to be talking to him. But could you do one favor for us, and that is, we don't want him, if you can somehow get him not to mention libertarianism in the same sentence with driver's licenses anymore* —

RUBIN: [laughing]

WOODS: Because the argument would be that, let's say you had a pure, private-property society. Surely, whoever the proprietor of the road is would demand some standards for the drivers, so it would be settled by private property — Likewise, we're not per se against stop signs. Whoever the road owner would be would make that determination. Although there's a lot of interesting stuff recently about how much safer it is if you have roundabouts instead of traffic lights. So anyway, I had to put that in there.

But here's my juicy question: who is the —

RUBIN: Well, let me address that for 30 seconds.

WOODS: Oh, do you want to jump in on the driver's license point? Go right ahead.

RUBIN: Just really quick. Look, I've said the line a bunch of times, and I think the reason I said it was because at the Libertarian convention, there was one guy who was just going on and on about it. And it's like, guys, I want you to be taken seriously. I want this party to actually —

WOODS: Oh, I know. Believe me, do we need to hear that. [laughing] I couldn't agree more.

RUBIN: I really do. I really do. And real quick, I mean, look, I had Gary Johnson on my show. I think he's a really decent, fundamentally decent guy. He was so outclassed and not ready for what he stepped into, and it's really unfortunate because if there had ever been a year where, of course the Libertarian candidate was not going to win and wasn't even going to get 12%, but this was the year, last year was the year that they could have gotten 10%.

WOODS: They needed somebody with a strong personality, which he just lacks.

RUBIN: Yeah, he just lacks.

WOODS: He just doesn't have the energy in him. That's not who he is.

RUBIN: Yeah, and that was the unfortunate part. And look, when I did my thing in August before the debates, I said I want to endorse this guy because I want to get enough juice so that they'll at least have to put him on the stage once. I said, look, they're going to put him on the stage; he's not even going to do that well because I don't think he has the intellectual acumen to really be there, and I think also Trump would just beat him senseless and even Hillary could beat him on policy.

WOODS: Oh, yeah.

RUBIN: But I wanted him to at least get there. He didn't do it. But in terms of what your audience is asking about the driver's licenses, yeah, I get what the premise is, but I'll be aware of this.

WOODS: Okay, that's all we ask. That's all we ask. All right, here's my question: I want to know — maybe you don't even want to answer this, but who on your show has been the edgiest guest that, after the interview was over, you thought to yourself, *Well, darn it. That was a lot more reasonable and persuasive than I thought it would be?*

RUBIN: Um, well, I can tell you that the most convincing guest that I've had is Jordan Peterson.

WOODS: Really? Okay.

RUBIN: Yeah. So I've done a few things with him. We've done a couple live events together, and we've done some colleges together; we've done I think three sit-downs on my show now. I would say in terms of clearly stating their ideas and dealing with high-level intellectual topics, really deconstructing post-modernism and leftism and collectivism, I don't think there's anyone in the public space right now that's doing it better.

He's also doing something really I think effective, which is telling people, especially young men, to get their lives in order, that this stuff that we're talking about, that we've now been talking about for however long, this isn't just political theory we're talking about. But if you really believe in the ideas of individualism and if you really believe in the ideas of liberty, then part of that means you've got to take care of your own life. Get your life in order. And I think he's doing an exceptionally good job — and I've seen it, because when I've been out in public with him, the people that come up to him and say, "Jordan" — they don't even say political things, per se. What they're saying to him is, "You're helping me get my life in order. And if you can get people's lives in order, well, then —

WOODS: Yeah.

RUBIN: — then, now you've got a great bedrock for them go out there and fight for the ideas that we're talking about here, fight for individualism, fight for your own freedom and your own liberty. So I'd say he does the best sort of case of these are my ideas and really think about them. I think on the intellectual side, Eric Weinstein [00:36:53] is probably the best pure intellect on what are the problems we have in society right now, what are the reasons that we seem unable to talk to each other. And you know, he's a mathematician and a physicist, and the ways that he's able to convey extremely high-level concepts in a somewhat digestible way, even when some of them go over my head. But we've become good friends and have continued that conversation.

But you know, and then there's some of the more mainstream people like with Sam Harris or Ayaan Hirsi Ali, who are saying extremely difficult things — in this case, usually about religion — that they're telling you the truth and sometimes the truth is really tough and you don't get a lot of cred for it, for saying the truth when it's tough, but they're sticking their necks out there and doing it and I have nothing but admiration for them.

WOODS: I have a guy in my private group — I told everybody last week that we were going to be talking and then you and I had to reschedule, so I have this guy saying, "All

this week, I listened to each episode saying, all right, this episode is just as awesome as an episode with Rubin would have been, but tomorrow better be Rubin." And so every day, like I did Gareth Porter on Vietnam, I did an episode on Catalonia. And he said, "Look, I literally asked for the episode on Catalonia, so I've got it, but I'm still saying, 'Where's Rubin?'"

I know you have to run, but I am curious as we part just about your business model. It's amazing, isn't it, that we live in this world that you can be your own man and you're able to still support yourself and build up an audience. I mean, I don't have the audience that you have, but I'm able to do quite all right just here with my microphone and my computer. Can you just say a little something about your business model and how it's going for you?

RUBIN: Yeah, of course. You know, for the record, you were 100% honest with your audience. I was the one that had to reschedule. My schedule and my travel thing has been so insane, but that's completely on me, so you were being honest with your audience.

WOODS: [laughing] That's quite all right.

RUBIN: Just putting that out there.

WOODS: Appreciate it.

RUBIN: Yes, you're totally right. What a beautiful thing that there are people like us, some of whom are more successful than both of us, some of whom are just starting out now, but that have all of the tools to get these ideas out there. So to give you the little bit of trajectory that I was on, I was with the Young Turks. At first I did standup, as I said, in New York. I had a show on Sirius XM for a while, but I was pigeonholed really talking about pop culture even though I wanted to do politics. Did my thing at the Young Turks for about two years, and then I had my sort of political awakening and I left. I ended up at Ora TV, which is a digital network that was founded by Larry King, who's become a friend and a mentor of mine, which is just absolutely incredible. I mean, the true king of interviewing — you know, people think I'm pretty decent at it, but to me, that guy is the standard bearer of this.

I was with them for a while, and after about nine months, I had realized that our show was growing at such a rate and that the audience was so passionate about what I was talking about, and I felt like every day I was getting a slew [00:39:58] of emails saying, "Dave, I'm the same way. I always thought I was on the left, but something is not right here." And it felt so powerful to me that I thought, you know what? Let's see if we can do this independently. There were a couple changes happening at Ora where they wanted more out of us but I wasn't going to see any of the fruits of that, and I thought, you know what? I have to start putting these ideas into practice all the time about individualism and owning your life and all of these things.

So the real beauty, if I've done anything right in my life, partly accidentally but partly intentionally, is that the things that we've talked about here, the ideas of rational self-interest and doing what is good for you, which in turn I think is then good for the

people around you, and all of those things, I've been able to put them into practice. So in June of 2016, we went fully independent, and we're fan-funded mostly on Patreon, but now – for years, we didn't put any ads on our podcast. Now we put some ads there, and you know, the YouTube ad rev can be up and down and whatever else it is. We have a few little partnerships.

But yes, I'm my own boss. I'm able to run a small business with the same principles that I talk about on air. I pay 100% of all my employees' health care, and I'm happy to do that. Some of my people get a percentage of the profits we make every month because I want them to be incentivized to do better work. And then we've got some part-timers as well. But I'm very proud – more than anything else – yeah, I love talking about the politics and if I had all the time we could do this all day, for sure. But I think really, the thing that I'm most proud of is that the ideas that I'm talking about are the very ideas that have given me the life that I want, you know?

And I feel very – I'm very humbled by that, that people – You know, all of my content is free. Every show that we do is free. Nothing's behind a paywall. If you're a patron of ours, there's some bonus things that we do, but not bonus interviews. There are little fun little things that we do. But everything we do is free, which means that the people who support us on Patreon, some of whom give us hundreds of dollars – some give a dollar; some give hundreds – they're all doing it voluntarily because they want the ideas to get out there. So it's in their rational self-interest. If you care about these things, well, then you want to help people who are talking about the things that you care about.

So it's a beautiful partnership, and it goes to show, actually, that if you are an individualist, that the type of collectivism that will come around you because of individuals is actually beautiful. So as bad as I think the word "collectivism" is, when it's based in individualism and you're all trying to do something because it's right for you as the individual, not because of your immutable characteristics or because of guilt or some other – because people are telling you you're this or that, but because it's you, what you own in your mind, that's a beautiful thing and I'm very proud of that. And it's connected me with all sorts of people who were intellectual heroes of mine and celebrities that I always wanted to meet and athletes, and I get to have great conversations like this. And I'm very proud of that.

WOODS: Dave, if people are now curious to watch your show, how do they do that?

RUBIN: Well, our branding guy's pretty good, so it's RubinReport.com, YouTube.com/RubinReport, Twitter.com/RubinReport, Instagram.com/RubinReport, Facebook.com/RubinReport. And I think I'm off the Snapchat. I couldn't take it anymore.

WOODS: [laughing] I'm still trying to figure out how to use it. I'm four years older than you so I'm an oldster.

RUBIN: Trust me, I am way too old to be doing that thing.

WOODS: It's not — I can't even — Instagram — I feel like I'm doing pretty well on Facebook and Twitter. I'm just going to quit while I'm ahead. But just in case people didn't quite get that branding message, I'll link to all that stuff on our show notes page. This is Episode 1,057, so TomWoods.com/1057. Well, Dave, it happened. Now the Twitter hoards can now stand down. It happened and I'm very glad about it. Thanks so much for talking to me today.

RUBIN: Well, it's a pleasure, and I'm glad we had so much crossover in our audiences. And this is what it's all about, right? Finding people who, if we were to do this for the rest of the day, yes, I'm sure we could find some disagreements on things and that's fine. This is an experiment, this country. This is a great experiment, and we've got to keep testing it and making it better, and I love that there are voices like yours that are trying to do it the same way I am. It's a beautiful thing, so I've really enjoyed it.

WOODS: Thanks so much. Continued success.

RUBIN: Okay, thanks a lot, Tom.