



Episode 1,414: Michael Malice on Immigration, Culture, and the New Right

Guest: Michael Malice

WOODS: All right, if we're not moving some copies of *The New Right*, then I resign as the head of the *Tom Woods Show* enterprise over here.

MALICE: Your guest host did a better job.

WOODS: Yeah, no kidding. No kidding. I watched your interview of yourself on *Your Welcome*.

MALICE: You know what the best comment was on the YouTube?

WOODS: I can imagine, but what?

MALICE: "You can cut the sexual tension with a knife."

WOODS: [laughing] Oh, that is much better than anything I would have thought of.

MALICE: [laughing] I was dying.

WOODS: Oh, man. It puts me in mind of the *Seinfeld* episode, where he meets a Janeane Garofalo character, and she's so much like him, and he's just totally smitten, and he realizes, I know what I've been waiting for all this time: myself.

MALICE: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

WOODS: And by the way, it was so well done. I mean, the pacing, the camera, back and forth. It seemed real. It was really well done.

MALICE: Yeah, it was fun. The other good comment was, someone said, "Boy, it must have taken him a lot of times to change his clothes after every question."

WOODS: [laughing] That's a good one. These are actually worthy of you.

MALICE: Yeah, I was impressed.

WOODS: That's good. All right, so as people I think have grasped by now, much of the book is organized around personalities, generally one per chapter. And you're telling the story kind of through the stories of these personalities. And this was the way St. Martin's – which, we

remind people, St. Martin's is a big deal. To get published by St. Martin's, that is a big deal. St. Martin's wanted it done this way. And you were saying that you prefer to focus more on the ideas than on the personalities. But in this case, I will say the personalities are quite colorful, so it does work. But I thought in this episode, let's just — you know, we've looked at this subject from a number of different angles so far —

MALICE: Wait, can I say something?

WOODS: Yeah.

MALICE: There was a real genius on Twitter who asks me, he goes — the books about the fringe of American politics, right? I talk about Mencius Moldbug, the Cathedral. And he goes, "Does neoreaction appear anywhere in your book?" And I go, "No, it's all about Milo." And he goes, "Oh, I guess that's too fringe for putting in a book." I'm like, oh, my God.

WOODS: [sighs]

MALICE: Yeah, it's just a book about Milo.

WOODS: Yeah, because that's what the world needs.

MALICE: [laughing] Yeah, that's my forte. Like, *Milo: The Unauthorized Autobiography*.

WOODS: Yeah, yeah, yeah, exactly. All right, what I want to do was to actually explore some of the ideas, because we get interesting glimpses into the mind of our narrator and guide, because sometimes he'll take us on several pages worth of analysis, like on your cultural theory, for instance, in one of the later chapters. And so we do get a glimpse inside your mind, and we get a glimpse at maybe how you think some of these figures are wrong or they've exaggerated something or they're completely missing the point or whatever it is. And other times, there's more sympathy. I wonder if you would, at this stage now, having completed the book and it's out and you've taken us on this journey, can we sit back and you walk us through a few of the ideas that you think are central to this — well, I hate to say movement, but to this, whatever it is, conglomeration of people, and tell me where you think they're right and where you think they're wrong?

MALICE: Ooh, that's a broad question. Okay —

WOODS: Well, let's do one at a time. Pick one.

MALICE: Okay, I got you; I got you. One of the big questions is: what does a win condition look like? That's a video game term. Like, at what point — you know, it could be you clear a castle or you get a sword or you kill the dragon, right? So for these people, it's what does winning look like? And I don't think conservatives think in those terms. Like they think about beating the Democrats almost like a sports team. Like, even if you win the Super Bowl, there's going to be a Super Bowl next year, you know what I mean? It's almost this kind of perpetual thing. And with here, it's like, no, no, no. This is a war, and there's going to be a victory, and it's going to be us, and what's that going to look like? So I think that's a big question that they would all have between us.

And I do have lots of conservatives that I'm friends with, and some of them — I'm not even going to mention who — like I've DMed with them, and this person's a prominent conservative Catholic, you know, socially conservative, and they were talking to me and DMing me, and they're like, I had to realize these people want me dead. And I think that is the big distinction between, *Oh, you know, the media, they're so sloppy*. And it's like, no, no, no, these people preparing you for the gulags. So those are the two, I think, different approaches to the media, being one example.

WOODS: Yeah, and that is very revealing. That is very revealing, these different ways of looking at it.

MALICE: And you're asking me whether I agree or not. For me, I hate it when people say like, *Well, I don't understand how you can look at this and not think that*. It's like, well, if you can understand something, that's not saying something about the thing you can't understand; that's saying something about your brain, you know? But I will use that expression. I can't understand how people can look at the Brett Kavanaugh case — and Brett Kavanaugh is a very accomplished man, very powerful man, wealthy, smart, well liked. And if you saw what was done to him, without apology or consequences for people who went after him, I don't understand — and again I'm using that expression I don't like — how you as a layman think you would fare better if the Eye of Sauron got turned on you.

WOODS: The Kavanaugh thing, yeah, I ended up doing an episode with Dave Smith, and we just riffed about it. We just talked about it. Because I remember, I was in the car, I listened to his statement, and how am I supposed to know who's right in this situation? How am I supposed to know? But I thought to myself: wow, geez, he came out swinging. That was about the best statement you could give. And if he really is innocent, it seems to me he has the appropriate level of outrage here. And then I thought, what are they going to say against this statement? It was all, *He doesn't have the right judicial temperament because he's angry at being called a rapist*. That's not what judicial temperament's about. It's when there's a case in front of you, if you can look at it impartially. It doesn't mean if somebody comes up to you and accuses you of masterminding the Holocaust, that you get angry. Of course, I would want the person to get angry. I don't want an automaton.

MALICE: Or if someone in your court is someone who's been proven beyond any doubt to have raped and murdered a child, for you to be Michael Dukakis in that '88 debate and be like, *Well, you know, given all the pluses and minuses* — no, you want that judge to be like, *This is an atrocity, an abomination, and you are going to be put away to make sure you're never in the same room with a child again*.

WOODS: Right.

MALICE: That is perfectly appropriate judicial temperament in the face of something — and also, judicial temperament would be: *You know what? You sold marijuana. I'm not putting you away for the rest of your life*. I mean, it means having a heart, not being a robot.

WOODS: Yeah, not being a robot. And yet, you know full well, if the shoe were on the other foot, they would be cheering his righteous indignation.

MALICE: And also, if he had been calm, they'd go: look, you know he's guilty, because if someone said to me that I'm a rapist in front of my kids, I'd punch him in the face.

WOODS: Right, that's exactly what I said. There was no way for him to win that. So that was a significant thing.

MALICE: And Tom, what you just said, this is the difference between conservatives and the New Right. Do you think these people are playing fair? Do you think it's possible to win on their terms, or do you think they will, after the fact, write the principle that will allow them to declare victory? This is the big distinction.

WOODS: But yet, you'll recall Lindsey Graham, whom I don't care for, was absolutely vicious in this going after Kavanaugh's enemies, to the point where people who have not liked him for a long time – I mean, Ron Paul people don't like him. You've got all these people saying, *My gosh, now that John McCain died, maybe the real Lindsey Graham is coming to the fore.* And there was even this – people have used it for memes, this photo of him walking, he's adjusting his tie with a smirk on his face, and right behind him is a woman screaming at the top of her lungs, and he's got this smirk.

MALICE: And the photo, if people want to look it up, is called "The Owning of the Lib."

WOODS: [laughing] Is that what they called it?

MALICE: Yes.

WOODS: All right, so that, you would say in there you caught a glimpse, but only a glimpse, of what you would normally look for on the New Right.

MALICE: Correct.

WOODS: Because he's not part of that movement, but boy, he reflected that for that brief moment.

MALICE: Yes.

WOODS: Yeah, so it wasn't a matter of – he didn't handle it the way a Mitt Romney would have handled the situation, because he loves the US Senate, and he loves proper decorum, and he loves respectability –

MALICE: There were more organizations that you can count on the right who were like, Kavanaugh should withdraw. Remember?

WOODS: Yeah.

MALICE: They were all saying it. And this is the big difference, a big difference between the conservatives and the New Right: are you going to back down, or are you going to double down and punch these people back twice as hard? And Trump being the greatest example of this, when they came for him, instead of apologizing – there was this great clip; people can find it. This is when he was a candidate, and he's doing a presser, and a journalist asks him,

he goes, "Hey, Mr. Trump, don't you think the term 'anchor babies' is offensive to people?" And Trump goes, "Okay, what do you want me to say instead?" And the guy goes, "Children, American-born children of undocumented immigrants." And Trump goes, "You want me to say that?" Then he goes, "No, I'm going to say 'anchor babies.'" And the guy keeps talking, and he goes, "Excuse me, I'm going to say 'anchor babies,'" and just moves on to the next question. So this premise of, why are you – and I talk about often the impossibility of discourse – why are you engaging with someone when there's no upside, and they're not coming at you from your framework? There's no point. So it's just like, *Yeah, okay, I heard you. No. We're moving on.*

And another example I use in my book, Jim Acosta was in the Oval Office or adjacent to the Oval Office, with the president, and this was after – you're going to have to bleep this, because *The Tom Woods Show* is a lot cleaner place than the Oval Office – when President Trump allegedly referred to those ****hole countries. And Jim Acosta goes, "Mr. President, are you comfortable with immigrants coming from Sweden and Norway?" And Trump goes, "I want them in from everywhere." And he goes, "Oh, but not like Africa." And Trump just goes, "Out," and just points at him, and that was the end of that.

WOODS: Yeah.

MALICE: Instead of, "Oh, I'm not racist."

WOODS: Yeah, yeah. Right, yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

MALICE: Tom, if someone comes up to you that you never met, and let's use another example, and goes, "You know, I'm not a rapist," you're not going to feel more comfortable around this person.

WOODS: Yeah, no kidding. Likewise, he handled – I don't know how many months ago it was. It was a press thing, and they asked him, they said, "Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez called you a racist." And he says, "Who?" And they said, "Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez." And he just, "Psh, who cares?"

MALICE: Who cares?

WOODS: And that was his entire response. Which was the correct response. Correct.

MALICE: And he did the dismissive hand motion.

WOODS: Yeah, dismissive hand motion. Totally correct, because everybody's a racist for her, so who cares?

MALICE: Right.

WOODS: Completely correct. If only he were so good on the substantive things I want him to be good on as he is on how to handle situations like that.

MALICE: Yeah.

WOODS: All right, let's move on. Give me another thing, another issue where you can come down to one side of the other as to how the people you're chronicling are thinking.

MALICE: Boy, I mean, that's kind of a broad — I mean —

WOODS: Well, so that's why you take it anywhere you want to. Play to your strengths.

MALICE: No, but one of the things that you had said to me while I was producing this book, is that you weren't sure how I stood on certain issues, right? So now having read it, what things that you had a question about my perspective, now are you like, *Okay, now I know what he thinks?*

WOODS: Um —

MALICE: I think people want to hear your perspective of the book as well as me running my mouth all week.

WOODS: Yeah, that's true. That's true. I have to say, I'm still — I understand a bit better, but I'm still unsure about exactly where you are on immigration. But I do understand —

MALICE: It's easy. There's costs, and there's benefits, and it's a complicated issue. And to be blatant, the thing that the open borders people are not being fair about — I'm not going to say "fair." I hate that word — but whatever about is, to pretend that there's no cost. There's a cost. And to say that there's no benefit from immigration, I'm here. Well, I guess that's a huge cost. But so I think it just comes down in many ways to economics. And I agree that, at a certain point, if you have X amount of immigrants coming into a country, it's going to have a profound change in that country.

And here's very easy example for the people who are totally open-borders types. If a huge number of women from Canada, which is a culture extremely similar to our own, move to America, would that have no impact in American society? It would have an impact on birth rates. It would have an impact on life expectancy. It would have an impact on what diseases are prevalent. And the Free State Project is based on the idea that —

WOODS: I was just going to say that.

MALICE: — if you get a small cadre of individuals and move to a population, it will have a change there. So I would be much more interested in this issue being discussed in terms of costs and benefits. Because on the one hand, I agree, free migration. On the other hand, you're coming here using the state to migrate you, and you're voting yourself for more things, and so on and so forth. So this is why when the state is involved and murkies the waters, it's not an unambiguous good or an unambiguous bad. So that is what I want to hear the issues about, but the issue's being like, *Oh, if we have any immigration, America is ruined*, as opposed to, *Well, if you're not for full open borders, you can't really call yourself a libertarian or an anarchist*. Okay. That's nice. Neither of those people are interested in conversation.

WOODS: I think another thing that I was helped with in this book — and I may have mentioned it earlier in the week or I may have said it to you privately, so I don't remember. But certainly

when I emailed you about the book, I said that I thought you made pretty convincing arguments against the apocalyptic tendencies of some people on the right, who for one reason or another, think that civilization is on the verge of collapse. Now, I have to admit, I'm inclined in that direction now and again. And you, in case after case, give reason to believe that things are not either as bad as they seem to some of those people, or they're not at all as they seem, or they're neglecting important contrary factors. Or even the analysis of freedom of speech, like this must be the worst time ever for freedom of speech, it's like people saying, Barack Obama must be the worst president in American history –

MALICE: Or Trump.

WOODS: Stuff like that makes me crazy. Or Trump.

MALICE: And I'm like, okay, how would you compare Grover Cleveland to Tyler? You don't know, so shut up.

WOODS: [laughing] Right, I know.

MALICE: You can't even name all of them. What are you talking about?

WOODS: Right.

MALICE: I meant you, Tom Woods [laughing].

WOODS: I was going to say, I actually can name them all, but – All right, but what I do still want, though, is I want people to leave this knowing that – because I think the impression people have is that the only thing these people care about is race. I think that's what people think. Is that true?

MALICE: No, no, for the alt-right, the defining, definite characteristic of the alt-right is they regard race as the most important or one of the most important issues. And at one point, my editor said, "You know, I want this book to be about white nationalism." And I'm like – I didn't even bother responding. I'm like, this is – if you want to read about white nationalism, there's more sources than you can count. I don't think it's that – I don't think I could make it particularly interesting. I think the arguments are there, and if you want to read the arguments, go ahead. I'm sure they won't be in the show notes page. But I wanted this book to be the kind of thing where even Tom Woods, who is extremely well steeped in politics and American history, could learn a thing or two and be entertained.

WOODS: Yeah, it's true. And I did make brief mention at one time, either in this one or the last one – my memory is so terrible. But for example, your stuff about how culture works is interesting, and how it develops and where it comes from and what the sources are, building on Camille Paglia and Thaddeus Russell. And I remember, again in private conversation, your interest in pursuing this topic further, because you find it so interesting that the right complains that it's not really driving the culture; they feel like people who despise them are driving the culture. But that's a problem. I mean, why do they not really have a cultural voice? It's almost as if they don't understand how it works or they don't understand the dynamics of it or something. But you've got a good discussion about that later in the book. And I know we've talked about it before, but can you say a few words about that, and then

link it up to why should this matter to the New Right? Why do they need to understand culture in terms of Michael Malice's analysis?

MALICE: Sure. So Andrew Breitbart was the one who basically had the idea that politics is downstream from culture, or culture is upstream from politics, I think. I've seen it written either way. And I think most people listening to the show have come to the realization that Washington is the end game, and things like the universities, the media, are very, very important and precede it. That's where the battles of ideas are fought, and Washington is where they're implemented. And if you've lost it where they're fought, at that point, you're just arguing over what the trimmings in the house look like. And that basically is what happens in Washington. Even when people like the Tea Party group come in, or the '94 group with the Gingrich Congress.

So it's kind of like conservatives see that liberals are driving this car, and they realize, you know what? We're not going to get to our goal unless we're driving a car as well. But it's like they have no idea how that car got built or how cars get built in general or how that liberal happened to get that particular car. And when I speak to conservatives about this, they do realize – it's something that they never realized that they don't realize. And then once you point it out, they're like, oh, this is actually a very big problem. So I am starting in this book to kind of solve that issue, but this, I think, is the big issue for the right wing to face. Where does culture come from, and how has the left managed to dominate it so thoroughly and pervasively for so long?

WOODS: I mean, that really is a great question. And you've done a pretty good job of tackling it, but I think the way they look at it today is, well, the problem is just that we're shut out of the traditional channels. We can't get a foothold in the traditional channels of culture, because they're dominated by people who hate us. Okay, but then the question becomes: well, then, how did that happen?

MALICE: Right. How did those people who hate you get to be in that position?

WOODS: Yeah. And usually, there's like no answer at all, because whatever they did, you could have done.

MALICE: Right, especially if you're smarter and have truth on your side.

WOODS: Right, which you're supposed to, so what the heck, you know? All right, Michael, as we actually start to wrap up Michael Malice Week here – we've got five-ish minutes still to go – I'm going to actually turn everything over to you. This is your show for the next five minutes to say or do whatever you want.

MALICE: Okay, so one of the questions I put forth on Twitter – and Tom, you're an author. You've written literally a dozen books. It's not an expression. You've written a dozen. As an author, you never know how a book is going to be perceived or what's going to stand out to people or if they're going to perceive something as a joke that you didn't realize or forgot that you put in there. So I want to know what were your biggest takeaways. And I'm going to ask three takeaways: a line that stuck with you, a funny thing that stuck with you, and a concept that stuck with you.

WOODS: Okay, the line – because I actually underline it.

MALICE: Oh.

WOODS: It was one that we actually referred to in an earlier episode, the one on democracy, is that –

MALICE: Those who need leaders are not qualified to choose them?

WOODS: To choose them, yeah.

MALICE: Yes.

WOODS: Because I mean, that actually could be a line – not that I favor essay contests, but man, to have somebody elaborate on that in an essay, that actually would be a good topic for an essay contest. So I think that's a great line. The thing that made me laugh, even though as I read it, I realized that I actually had heard the story before, but yet I laughed at it anyway, was the story about the glitter in your kitchen [laughing].

MALICE: Oh, why are you triggering me, Tom? Why? Why? Oh, gosh. For those who don't know, someone – it takes a lot for me to lose my cool. I've screamed I think twice in the last, let's say, ten years. Someone at my New Year's party asked me, "Hey, would it be cool if I threw glitter when the ball drops?" And I looked at her and I said, "No." And she goes, "What would you do if I did it?" And I go, "Punch you in the face." And she walked off, because I was reminded of this video by the band The Go-Go's, "The Whole World Lost Its Head," and during the during the bridge in the video, they were just standing there and glitter was thrown at them. And I read an interview with them, and they said, we're still finding it in our private parts. Like we will never not have glitter inside of us, right? So at midnight, she glitter-bombed my kitchen. And I lost my mind. And I'm still finding it.

WOODS: Yeah, and so you have a funny line in there about how long it's going to be that you're still finding glitter in your house.

MALICE: I couldn't even believe it.

WOODS: All right, so I really enjoyed that. And then there are a number of – I mean, your stuff on culture I was kind of familiar with, but still, to see it spelled out was helpful. But the chapter on democracy I thought was particularly satisfying, because I've heard critiques of democracy, and I, by and large, agree with them, but they always make me feel a little bit uncomfortable, because I know what people are going to say as soon as I utter them. *Well, what do you prefer, wise guy?* And I'll say, "Oh, well, I prefer a system where private institutions provide defense services." And they'll say, "Ah, okay, democracy." So it would just be impossible to convey that to anybody.

But so in other words, I went in there kind of knowing most of the arguments but not really feeling like any of them were really home runs. And I think it helped that it didn't take you that many pages, that I felt like you really, very effectively and persuasively summarized why this is, again, not a case of something that could just use a little bit of reform, or maybe if we change the electoral college around a little bit, it might work better. You're showing that,

inherently, this is going to lead to atrocious outcomes, and it has to, and it's not going to lead to the popular will being effected. It's going to lead to the establishment of another kind of oligarchy, that you still are left with the brute fact that some people rule and other people are ruled.

MALICE: Yes.

WOODS: The mechanism of democracy is meant to obscure this So that people will just learn what they're told in third grade about how their society works, And you just hope they stick with that view. And most of them do. So I thought the authors you brought in were well chosen and the ideas were persuasive. When you're dealing with one of the – I mean, that and public schools are about the two most sacred things we have in America.

MALICE: Yeah. Oh, yeah. Don't get me started on those [laughing].

WOODS: Yeah, that's another thing.

MALICE: Well, I don't think this line is in the book. It's not in the book. But if you guys use this line, make sure you credit me also. And I'm not using these words lightly: public schools are literal prisons for children, and the only place many people will ever experience the threat of violence in their lifetime.

WOODS: Yeah, it's true.

MALICE: And people are like, *What do you mean "literal"?* No, no, I mean, literal.

WOODS: Yeah, I couldn't agree more. I mean, I would say approximately half of the problem with public schools is – it's not just that the stuff they're teaching or the teachers or whatever, the facilities – half the time, to be perfectly blunt, it's the other kids that you're imprisoned with.

MALICE: Of course. The whole point of freedom and being someone who's for peace, both politically and personally, is, Tom, if you and I are having a big dispute, and even if it's getting to the point where it might get violent, that I need and you need to have the freedom to walk away peacefully. Maybe I'm humiliated because I let this guy talk to me a certain way or whatever. But that's still preferable to escalating it to violence. And in school – even in a job, you can quit. School is one of the very few places – and you're a child – where it's escalating and escalating, and you cannot vacate. You do not have the flight option. And you know what else they tell the kids? And this isn't just in public schools. One of the most atrocious things. "It doesn't matter who started it."

WOODS: Yeah, what a crazy thing to say.

MALICE: And kids know, three, four – you're a dad. They'll go up to parents and be like, "Oh, this person hit me." "It doesn't matter who started it." That's all that matters.

WOODS: Yeah. That's how life works.

MALICE: And it's horrifying that the children have this understanding that this is a line you can't cross – you don't lay your hands on someone – and they go up to this authority figure, whether biological or state, and they're told, no, it doesn't matter. Really?

WOODS: Yeah. Yeah, no kidding. No kidding. And my favorite thing now is how they're cracking down on bullying. And the anti-bullying policy consists of hanging a poster in the main office that says, "We don't tolerate bullying here." And they've got that poster right on up there. That's the policy. That's it. It's" the poster. And you go in there and you say, I've been bullied," and they say, "That is a terrible shame." [laughing] That's about it. I mean, I've seen it.

MALICE: And I think you're a little bit outdated here. Here's why. That anti-bullying campaign was a thing maybe like ten years ago. And as I discussed in my book, as soon as the people who are traditionally bullied – meaning the nerds who play video games, action figures, comic books – Gamergate, when the video gamers turned on the evangelical left, they were all portrayed as school shooters in training and as white supremacists and that these kids need to be put in their place. So even that has gone out the window as soon as someone refused to take a knee before the altar of progressivism.

WOODS: All right, I'm going to let you have the last word, which seems appropriate for Michael Malice Week here, and give us your elevator pitch. Why should people read *The New Right*? What are they going to learn that's valuable, that'll help them understand the world better? Why is the world a better place if people read this?

MALICE: Um –

WOODS: Well, screw the world. Why are people better off if they read it?

MALICE: I've got some really good jokes in there. And listen, if you after a week of listening to us talk you're not interested in the book, it's not for you. Go have a nice dinner and live your life, and I wish you nothing but the best. Not every book is for everyone.

WOODS: Well, your aside about Vince Foster –

MALICE: [laughing] Oh.

WOODS: I don't want to ruin it. I don't want to give away one of the jokes, but I just love the way you throw that in there and then you carry on. It's perfect. Absolutely perfect. It's filled with stuff like that. You're reading along, and you never know when the next one of those is going to pop up.

MALICE: I did enjoy that. Like, I'll be serious, serious, serious, and just throw in some one-liner at the person, and then they're back to seriousness. Yeah, yeah, that's a lot of fun for me.

WOODS: Yeah, yeah, absolutely. So, very well done. Check out *The New Right: A Journey to the Fringe of American Politics*, linked at TomWoods.com/1414. And folks, we will see you next week.