



**Episode 1,482: Eric July on Malcolm X, SJWs and Comics, Metal and Rap, and More**

**Guest: Eric July**

**WOODS:** Well, I was looking at Skype, and it says last chatted over a year ago, and so I thought that is ridiculous. How did I let this happen?

**JULY:** Yeah, that's unacceptable.

**WOODS:** That is totally unacceptable, so I'm very, very glad you're back here. And I asked folks in the — the group is called The Tom Woods Show Elite, and you can get there through [SupportingListeners.com](http://SupportingListeners.com). And I asked them, what should I talk to Eric about, and as I was telling you, I got 81 responses. So I've streamlined them into a smaller series of questions. But with you, there are so many topics we could discuss, because there's music, and even within music, I mean, you're sort of cross-genre. But then also you're into gaming, you're into comics, you're into politics. I don't even know where to start. So I'm going to start with my own selfish question. I'm going to start with the host's prerogative. I'm going to ask my own question. And then most of these are generated from the folks.

**JULY:** Cool.

**WOODS:** I did in a previous episode ask you about your musical influences, but that's different from the one I want to know. I want to know what you listen to, and specifically I want to know what metal bands you listen to and think are any good.

**JULY:** Ooh, man. Well, certainly, it depends on what I'm feeling, but when it comes to metal, the bands that I seem to listen to the most are along the metalcore line. Certainly that stuff that was dropping when I first got started, for example, in my scene, which is early 2010s, so guys like who are from Dallas like Memphis May Fire, I would jam a lot of. But also a lot of the older metalcore stuff, like Killswitch Engage, as well as All That Remains and so forth. So it just really depends, but metal for sure, never can go wrong with like Memphis May Fire. I like to listen to a lot of hardcore stuff. So Ghost Inside, I can jam a lot; A Day To Remember, which crosses over to kind of some pop-punky, metal core. So it just really depends on the mood.

Hip hop is a little different, because I don't jam as much — I certainly don't jam any current hip hop, unless it comes out from really artists that I know I can depend on, such as like NAS or Eminem or something like that. So I'm really limited, and I'm listening to a lot of older stuff. Royce da 5'9" is another rapper that I will listen to if he drops anything today. But I listen to a lot of older stuff, and it just really depends on the mood.

And I think that's why the band is the way that it is, because it's not just myself, but certainly being a front man, I listen to so much of everything, you know what I mean? So I go through my stint where it's just nothing but more classic rock, you know what I mean? Or I go through my stint where I'm listening to just straight-up '80s and '90s R&B. So it just really depends. Obviously, metalcore and post hardcore music is my go-to when I'm just chilling out, but it just really depends on what I'm doing and the mood. And I may go a week listening to just straight-up classic rock, or I may go a week where I'm just listening to straight-up '80s, '90s, '70s, Motown music, who knows?

**WOODS:** All right, well, that's a really good answer. That's a good, nice, detailed answer. That's just what I wanted. So now talking about your music, the *Veracity* album you guys had a couple years ago was heavily political. I mean, for heaven's sake, the track names make that pretty obvious. Is that something you intend to continue with, or was that just a one-shot deal?

**JULY:** That was I guess you could say a little bit of both. Like we're never ditching it, but there was a specific motive, I guess, with that album, just considering the climate that we dropped it in, as well as where we were at with it being our number one — it was our first album, right? It was Backwordz' first album, so you had to let the people know what you're about. So what I didn't want to do and what the band didn't want to do is get a bunch of people that would jam us that didn't understand where we were at politically, that didn't understand where we were at socially. So now that the first album is out and it saw that much success, everybody knows exactly what to expect from us. So when they see me or Alex or somebody doing interviews or talking about some of these political points, they know what to expect, and it's not throwing anybody off.

But I will say that not every single record will be like that. The upcoming record that we have, which is our second album, is a tad different. So it does have that sort of influence where we do have those political and social points, but we also have some other things that we wanted — or more so, it was more political. This one's more social, I would say, the upcoming album, and it's not as political. But it does have those elements that I think a lot of people will expect. But even though we had an 18-track album, we didn't get to talk about everything that we wanted to talk about, and I certainly didn't get to dive into some of the social issues that I would love to discuss. But this album, we're kind of entertaining a lot of that. So expect that, but don't expect it to be just like *Veracity*, where pretty much every other song, at least our lead singles, certainly our lead singles, were for the most part, aside from "Be Great," were like straight political. I don't think this album will be like that.

**WOODS:** So when's it coming out?

**JULY:** Ooh, that's what we're trying to work out now. I'd like to get it out by the end of the year, so 2019, end of 2019. But that's not a promise. It may be quarter one, first year. I want everybody to understand, because everybody's been asking me — I can't do a dang stream without somebody asking me when's the next album coming. What a lot of bands have the luxury of having — if you want to call it a luxury. I don't really consider that — is that when they're under the labels, they have labels that do essentially everything else other than make the actual music. In some cases, they send in people to do that, too, considering who the producers are. With us, because we're unsigned and we're so passionate about remaining that way, we have to do everything that you'd think a label would do.

**WOODS:** Yeah.

**JULY:** So when it comes to not just laying the foundation for the record, which we're still kind of laying that foundation with the music itself, we have to plan everything out, from the tours, from the promotional schemes that we're going to have when it comes to putting the record out, the release dates. All of that sort of stuff with CDs, merchandise, everything that is centered around that that a label would have a bunch of people helping them out with, we do that on our own. So it takes obviously a little more time, which, I think people would have liked to see us on a schedule where we're dropping an album every other year or something like that. We're not really able to have that schedule, because we're so stubborn about keeping it in house.

**WOODS:** All right, I got that. I got that. I totally understand that. I did an episode with another musician where they left their label, and they couldn't be happier about how it's gone. But if you've got to plan a tour, it seems like a pain in the neck. Like I was thinking like these big bands, I mean, obviously they have somebody planning their tours for them, but I mean, you've got to make it work so that it makes sense geographically, that one thing is to the east of the next, but there has to be an available venue at that time. Like, you would need a computer to figure it all out.

**JULY:** Yeah, it is — and again, that's part of it. It's like, who else is going on the road that plays your type of music? Like if there's a band that's similar — there's not a whole lot of bands that are very similar, but we do appeal to a lot of the same crowds. Are they going to be touring around the same time? Are they going to be at the same venue? Do we want to risk being over on that side? Because maybe people won't want to come out to see us both. Like, you have to take all of that stuff into consideration, and you have people, like booking agencies that can help you out with a lot of that stuff, but certainly when you're unsigned or you're trying to map some of that stuff out, it can be very, very difficult. But it does take a lot of time, and we're just being careful, because we do — like the sophomore album is very important, considering that we had so much success with the first.

**WOODS:** Yeah. Yeah, exactly. Well, first of all, when it comes out, you've got to come back on and we'll promote it.

**JULY:** Oh, yeah, let's do it.

**WOODS:** Yeah, get the word out about it.

**JULY:** Much love.

**WOODS:** Are you going to come to Florida?

**JULY:** Oh, yeah, it's a lot of places, actually, that we didn't touch on, considering all the tours that we did on the last record, and Florida was one. So we've got to get there. There's a lot of places in the southeast region that we never touched. We got pretty much everywhere else, but we didn't really go out that way. We were more so, when we leave Texas and we were going west, we were going sort of northeast, but we didn't really hit a lot of the southeast parts. We did get like Kentucky and stuff like that. We've done some of the

Carolinas, but we didn't get to Georgia, Florida, out there, and I would love to hit that stuff whenever the first tour is.

**WOODS:** All right, because I'm looking forward to being the oldest guy at that show.

**JULY:** [laughing] You'd be surprised. You'd be surprised at some of those older guys.

**WOODS:** Oh, yeah?

**JULY:** Man, no, seriously, definitely because of who we appeal to, I mean, we get some of these guys that are older guys, that I mean, they're metal guys for life, but they're older and they're throwing down in that pit, man, so don't be surprised.

**WOODS:** All right. Okay, all right, well, I will be pleasantly surprised if that's the case. All right, let's stick on politics for a minute. Has there been any way that your very-open politics has hurt you guys?

**JULY:** I would say it depends on what way that you look at it. Objectively speaking, you have to understand that, yes, people see you in a certain light, certainly when there is a political monopoly on everything art, but certainly in our genre where it's just, top to bottom, mainstream leftism, right? And us being so against that, certainly me being so against that, but also being smart enough — and I think this frustrates a lot of these people, because look, man, the reality is that artists, you shouldn't be really getting a lot of your political opinions from them, because a lot of them don't know what in the world they're talking about. That's just the honest-to-God truth. They don't know what they're talking about, in my experience. It's unfortunate, because I see guys that are within my scene, on the internet, talking about things. Like these guys go virtually unchallenged, man, but they don't know what they're talking about. And I actually did a video on this, talking about how I get asked, like, *Hey, man, why don't you appear on some of these sort of — aside from the music stuff, appear on some of the maybe more leftist-dominated mediums?* And I'm just like, they don't invite me. It's not because I won't do it; it's because they don't invite me.

**WOODS:** Right.

**JULY:** They don't invite me. Like yes, you'll see me on Fox, you'll see me on *The Blaze*, and you'll see me on these podcasts that are outside of libertarianism, but are more so like conservative, and I was like, because they'll at least invite me to come talk. Even if they agree with me and they've never tried to — you know, I've showed up on *The Blaze* so many times, being a panelist on *The Blaze* with Glenn Beck and so forth, and none of those guys have ever, even though they know that I'm coming to disagree on some of these topics, they've never been like, "Hey, man, can you tone it down if you're going to come on our show?"

But the guys on the opposite end of them, if you want to consider it the opposite end, but the guys that are more so with the mainstream leftists, they don't ever invite me. So that's why I don't. And to me, it's a little frustrating, because they do have this sort of protective bubble that a lot of these artists are in that goes virtually unchallenged. There's no alternative sort of approach that they have to actually defend themselves, they have to actually know what

they're talking about. So with that being said, I think that's just really indicative of where we're at.

And yeah, you're going to take that hit. You're going to take that hit if you're an artist certainly doing any sort of like punk or metal, more so metalcore. I think metal at least has a lot of – straight metal has a lot more guys that are open to different sort of politics. But certainly in my subgenre, not at all. But you do take a hit.

I see comments and stuff, people saying things about us. *Oh man, those guys' politics*. I did a cover with a good friend of mine named Lauren, we covered a song. It got like a million – right now, I believe it's almost – it may be at like maybe 1,500,000 views on YouTube, a cover that we did last month, I believe. So it really got out there. And I was seeing some of the comments, not everybody, but some of the comments, like, *Oh, I'm so surprised Lauren did this cover with him considering his politics*. And they're saying weird stuff like that, but because we're such an outlier, that's like the first thing people know.

So you do take a take a hit, but in the same respects I believe I do get some supporters that do like us for us, and they feel like we're a breath of fresh air in our genre because of that. So I think we get supporters, but we also lose – not necessarily lose supporters, but people are I guess turned off by the fact that we're open libertarians and, again, also smart enough to defend our positions. So I think that frustrates them.

**WOODS:** This just a curiosity question on my part. Do metal vocalists have any vocal techniques they use to preserve their voices when they're singing? It's really harsh vocals you're doing sometimes, and it seems like you could kill yourself vocal.

**JULY:** Absolutely, and I think that's – I have a physical therapist that I go to, and I was talking to this guy that was there about that. And he said that he didn't like metal. Me and my actual physical therapy were talking, and he's like, I didn't like this – he's like, *Yeah, man, I feel like I anybody could do that*. And I was looking at him, and my physical therapist was looking at him too. It's like, dude, I don't think you really understand the talent that goes into knowing how to scream properly, for example. And even the more harsher singing, like that is a talent. That is something that you have to work at. You will blow your voice out. You will literally – I've seen so many stories of people screaming wrong, for example, and like ripping their vocal cords. Like, that's an actual thing. Not everybody can do it. You can maybe do it for a minute, but you will kill yourself if you do it the wrong way.

So it is a talent. There's actual technique to it. And even myself, I've had to learn to not only preserve my voice, but to put on a better show, because as you're doing longer shows, you're doing those harsher vocals, if you're not singing, if you're not screaming properly, you can mess up your voice. But also you can kill your fatigue, long term, when it comes to not even just doing that one show, but if you're on tour, you've got to do it the next day, you know what I mean? So there is a technique to it, and even me, I'm always learning new things to make it easier on myself, because there is a technique, and the best metal vocalist in the game are the ones that have absolutely mastered it.

**WOODS:** Last time you were on with me, maybe two times ago, you said that reading Walter Williams and Thomas Sowell really changed the way you look at the world. What did you learn from them, and is there anything if you had the chance you would ask them?

**JULY:** Oh, man, so much has changed in that couple of years, believe it or not. I finally met Walter E. Williams at SMU, and to be able to tell him and obviously look him in the eye and just tell him what he's meant, certainly, in terms of my influence, it was awesome. And it was funny, I tell the story all the time now, where I'm at this venue at SMU, and I was in the back, and after the showed, people were going up front trying to talk to Walter Williams after he did his speaking engagement. And I'm walking down the aisle, and so many people are like trying to get to me, *Hey, that's Eric July*, taking pictures. I'm like, dude, I'm not the star of this show. So it's funny, how they were seeing me is how I see Walter Williams. I'm like, dude, I'm trying to meet this guy that has been such an influence on me. So I did finally get to meet him, and I did tell him what it meant to me.

And what that is, is that reading his approach when it came to just markets, and libertarianism as well, and like the state against blacks, for example, with Walter Williams, like you can look at some, even the more legitimate gripes that you even see that come from these predominantly black organizations and stuff, what Walter was able to do was make sense of it all, but make sure that the focus is on the right thing. Even if you diagnose the problem, the solution more so is where people get it wrong. And he was looking at, let's look at how the state has utterly destroyed some of these communities. Let's see how like minimum wage and how it has historically affected young black individuals who are going to these rotten schools, that they're not going to get that talent or gain a skill set more so in school, so they have to get a job, and what minimum wage does is price them out of the market. So to hear him explain it like that was something I had never heard. So even looking at poor young black people or looking at young black folks like myself that were trying to gain skills and looking at markets and how the state was more so being used to hinder us, as opposed to looking at some boogiemans white person, it was an interesting aspect.

And more so, from just straight economics with Thomas Sowell, he just made sense of it all without having to use diagrams and math and stuff that you get maybe along the Keynesian side of things. It was just mind blowing to me, like to read *Basic Economics*, even the first page, and I felt like I got it. Like reading the first sort of chapter of *Basic Economics* in which he's basically explaining scarcity, and I'm like, *Wait a minute. Wait a minute. You mean like — it makes so much sense*. So they obviously both have led me down the rabbit hole, but I don't even go down that rabbit hole if it's not for Dr. Walter E. Williams and Dr. Thomas Sowell.

**WOODS:** All right, one more political thing people want to know the answer to, and it's — I grouped these two questions together. What's your opinion of Malcolm X, and what's your opinion of black nationalism?

**JULY:** Ooh, man. See, Malcolm X is one of the most misunderstood thinkers, and not just on people on the hood see him just as this black militant person, but even people who like to wear Malcolm X on their shirts and stuff like that and think that Malcolm X was just this awesome person, they don't even know, really diving into some of what he said. And as I gained more knowledge about Malcolm X, I've gained such an appreciation of him, what things that he was saying in his era that certainly, they apply now, not just on the obvious, which white liberalism and stuff. But not even just that, but he was leading the charge — as opposed to what Martin Luther King Jr., for example, was. He was more of an integrationist, as in, he was praising citizens and stuff like that. And Malcolm X was like: look, dude, instead of trying to look to get access to these guys and their resources, if these leaders are such

geniuses, they should be able to teach us and teach these communities how to create for themselves.

And that message was obviously something that not only — there's pre-Mecca, post-Mecca, it was still the same Malcolm, even when he sort of left more of the, I guess, the more militant Nation of Islam and such, right, when he was more so — He still had those ideals, and those are so relevant even to this day. I would argue even more so relevant to this day, because we see that to this day. And so it's funny, when I see people like what Colin Kaepernick and everybody's talking about owners should be bringing him in as a backup quarterback or as a starting quarterback, more so, he's so talented. And I always look back at some of the things that Malcolm X, and I think Malcolm X would have been laughing at them championing that. It's like, dude, if black folks run his league, why aren't black folks creating their own like football leagues? If we do feel like we're being put out, economically speaking, why don't we just create our own? I think that's a valuable lesson that can obviously crossover, I guess, into not just black folks, right? Into different ethnic backgrounds.

But even when it comes to white folks, a great quote — I put posted this on my Twitter the other day — in which Malcolm X was talking about — I think a lot of people just look at, oh, he hated white people. And it wasn't like that. There's a quote where Malcolm was like, if a white person puts his arm around me voluntarily, that's brotherhood, but if you hold a gun to him and make him embrace me, that's not brotherhood. That's hypocrisy.

And it just really highlights how it was never about — and certainly when he got to understand it even more, it was never really about, with Malcolm, just hating white people or anything like that. It was more so about: look, we see that governments and states, and there are these individual white people that are really aggressive towards us, but I want blacks to be able to be self-sufficient. I want blacks to be able to create for themselves. It doesn't mean that I hate white people. In the process, I'm willing to work with white folks if it's voluntarily, but don't hold no gun to them and force them to embrace me, because all that does is create more conflict. And again, I think that stuff is still relevant to this day.

**WOODS:** All right, let's switch over to another topic that comes up when I mention the name Eric July. Because people watch your videos, and they know what interests you and what gets you worked up and so on and so forth. And I don't know really much of anything about the world of comics. I mean, I know about what any average person would know, and no more. But apparently, one thing I have learned is that there is some ideological controversy going on in that world with the social justice warrior influx. What does that consist of? Because I've heard even some left-libertarians try to say, oh, this is just the typical right-wing intolerance, and there is no SJW infiltration. It's all in your head. What's really going on with that?

**JULY:** They are out of their minds. If that's their position, they are lying.

**WOODS:** [laughing]

**JULY:** That's a literal lie. Like, no, it's bad. This time around, it is bad. And what we're seeing, it's more so people are seeming to use the comic books, certainly when you talk mainstream comics, more so Marvel than DC, but you can include DC in it, is that they're using the comics as an extension of their activism. And that's why you're seeing such a backlash, because people are tired of it, because it's so on the nose, and they're also taking characters that shouldn't act like that and putting them in storylines like that. And that's the problem

that people are having. Like a great Stan Lee quote is along the lines of that, that he said he always wanted to put social issues underlying the plot, but he never wanted to feel like he was beating the reader over the head with it. And I feel like a lot of writers, when it comes to comic books, have completely ignored that. Or they're like, yeah, no, no, we're going to beat you over the head because they feel like it's their obligation to do it, because again, it's an extension of their activism.

For example, Greg Rucka is a writer. He's been writing comic books, and he wasn't always like this. And he writes the *Lois Lane*, issue #1, and he has Lois Lane basically grilling what looks to be former White House press secretary Sarah Sanders. And she's grilling her on, like — what is it? — refugee camps and stuff of that nature? I'm like, wait a minute. I'm reading CNN, like in comic book form. What is this? What is this? And I was like, all right, let me go look up Greg Rucka real quick. I haven't followed this guy at all in terms of his politics. And then I look on his Twitter, and he has like this 45 that looks like a Nazi symbol with like a circle and a dashed red X between it, sort of, obviously representing Donald Trump. And I was like, oh, my God, here we go again. These guys are predictable. They're so predictable. It's so on the nose.

And to act like it was always the case is a lie. I know one of the biggest lies and in comic books is like X-Men. Like those types always like to signal to the X-Men. Well, if you don't like your social issues in politics, then what about the X-Men? It's like, X-Men not only proves their ideas to the contrary, but they're basing X-Men on a lie, and that is, a lot of people assume that Professor X and Magneto, for example, were created to be representative of Martin Luther King Jr. as well as Malcolm X. And that's just a lie. I have a video where I go through Stan Lee's exact ideas behind the creation of the characters, and it had nothing to do with that. It had nothing to do with that.

But even if we assumed that, let's say, the mutants were metaphors for, I don't know, disenfranchised black people, that proves their ideas to the contrary, because it's not on the nose like that. Like they're obviously mutants, and that could be in relation to everybody. Like, black folks aren't the only people that felt disenfranchised at the time that the X-Men were created.

So even if we assumed that to be true, it's the opposite of what's going down now, where it's predictable, and it's just a direct representation of whatever the talking point is. And it's in comics, and it's ruining a lot of these characters and these comic books, because, again, people are using it as an extension of their personal activism. And I think Donald Trump, certainly his election just sent these guys over the edge, man. It sent them over the edge, and now they're for sure utilizing some of these characters.

So for people to say that it's not like that is a lie. Sure, there are books — and I talk about them — that don't go that route, but there's so many examples in which they are, where it's really representing the political points, the social points of the actual writer, and they're just putting it in your face in a comic book.

**WOODS:** How about the gaming world? First of all, do any of your audiences overlap? Like if you do that stuff and you do politics, is it the same people?

**JULY:** Some. I wouldn't say all. I've done a great job, I think, with my YouTube, in which I've kind of had a little bit of everything, so people know that it's just a hub for me. But what I have learned is that people that come from, say, the comic book side, they find out about the



music or they find out about the political stuff, and even if they weren't on that, they respect the fact that I'm putting myself out there like that, and they're willing to stick around and just learn a lot about it. So I always say, if I haven't made somebody angry about a position that I have, trust me, I'm going to get over to you at some point, considering that everybody comes from different sort of backgrounds. Because they know me from different things. If you know me from gaming, you know me from comics, you know me from music, you know me from speaking about politics, you're going to know me from those elements. So if you come to my YouTube, for example, you're going to be surprised by some of that stuff, because it's not just that, though it is kind of top-heavy on the comic books. I talk about a little bit of everything, so there is some crossover effect, but I will say, yes, there's more people that just know me for either one or the other. But they do stick around, nonetheless.

**WOODS:** What's a day in the life of Eric July like?

**JULY:** Man, it's wake up, workout — I wake up really early. I did a video on this, by the way, talking about how — because I got asked about like, dude, you do 700 things, like how in the world do you fit all that in a schedule? I work out really, really early. Like, on any given day, for example, o if I'm going to go play basketball, I'll wake up at 4:30 on that day. And I play basketball, and I will then come back home, shower, eat my breakfast. Then I will get to work, you know what I mean? By work on me, I will work on videos. Maybe I do some comic books or something like that. Read some comic books. I'll write, maybe some stuff for the band, depending on what time of the year it is. And then whatever is lingering after the day, I do that. So if I've got time to stream, I'll do that. If I've got to spend time with the lady, I'll do that.

So it's a lot, but I think me waking up early — and I don't waste time. I've been very, very efficient with my time, so I don't just sit for a long, extended period of time, just fiddling my thumbs on my phone or something like that. It's always purposeful, everything that I do, and I get to it. So it's waking up early and being disciplined and sticking to the schedule, is what it is that I have to do. Otherwise, there's no way that I could do all the things that I do in a given day.

**WOODS:** Well, if people want to follow the things that you do, what's the quickest way to start doing it?

**JULY:** Actually, I got a lot of influence from you, by the way, on this and obviously starting my own website and having that as a hub for everything me. So obviously EricDJuly.com, which will lead you to pretty much all of my social media. But YoungRippa59 is going to be Twitch, YouTube, sort of that stuff, where if you want to see the comic books, you want to see me game, you can type in that handle anywhere. But EricDJuly.com, @EricDJuly on Twitter, I'm everywhere. So if you just go to my website, EricDJuly.com, you'll be able to get access and links to every bit of my social media.

**WOODS:** All right, excellent. So I'm going to link to that stuff, I'll link to your that site at TomWoods.com/1482. And best of luck with everything. Let's talk when the album comes out. And by the way, didn't you say you were going to do a solo rap album? Is that still in the works?

**JULY:** Yes, that's actually going to come before the Backwordz album.

**WOODS:** Oh.

**JULY:** That's coming by the end of the year. That will absolutely be the next project, and that will be solo. I know a lot of people are like, *Hey, man, we want to hear you with the rap stuff. Man, I can't get it with the rock stuff.* So I'm giving you guys — and it's free. It'll be free. It'll be all media platforms, such as Spotify, iTunes, and all that. You'll be able to stream it. However, it will be free to download on my either BackwordzMusic.com or my website, and you'll be able to get it, because this is for them. This is a free mixtape. It's solo, just straight rap. I'm finishing it up right now. I don't know if I'm even going to do features. I'm like, I should do a feature, but a lot of people want to hear me rap so much, I may not even do features on it. So yeah, you guys, be sure to look out for that, because that will drop by the end of this year.

**WOODS:** Okay, good. I'm glad I remembered to ask that.

**JULY:** Yeah.

**WOODS:** All right, well, I'm looking forward to seeing you again maybe at one of your shows. So thanks again, Eric.

**JULY:** Appreciate you having me on.