



Episode 1,716: Michael Malice: Is Everything in Decline, or Is There Legitimate Hope?

Guest: Michael Malice

WOODS: All right, so by the way on the show notes page, TomWoods.com/1716, we'll have all the links to Michael Malice and everything he does and his Twitter account, which of course you should be following. You would be in the company of Donald Trump, Jr. if you follow Michael Malice on Twitter.

MALICE: And Jeb.

WOODS: And Jeb. That was astonishing to me.

MALICE: On my birthday. Did you see what just happened this week on Twitter with Kamala Harris and me?

WOODS: No, I didn't, but I want to know about it.

MALICE: Well, this is a little detour. So I don't agree at all that I've been successful in everything I've done. I think anyone who becomes successful fails a lot of things, and that's maybe being a little pedantic or whatever. But someone had tweeted at me, "What will it take to get you to read Kamala Harris's book?" and I said, "A grand." And someone just PayPaled me a grand.

WOODS: [laughing]

MALICE: [laughing] And I'm like, what have I done?

WOODS: Yeah, exactly. Well, first of all, number one, that's astonishing on multiple levels, number one, that somebody would spend that much money. Number two, that we live at a time when this phenomenon you've just described is even technologically feasible, all these things happening at once. But then also, if you throw out a remark like that, "a grand," and then it actually happens, you might be inclined to think, well, geez, I actually think it would take more than a grand now that I think about it.

MALICE: It's going to be torture.

WOODS: Yeah, yeah, it is. Now, when did her book come out? Was it a campaign book?

MALICE: It is. It's like a bio, but what they do is they released these bios to prep the person for the campaign. It's basically a mythology. And someone commented somewhere that their girlfriend is part of like this liberal women's book club, and they read all the presidential nominees' books, and that they all thought it was the worst one, because it's going to be so corporate and just excruciating. So I'm going to do a live stream about it. I ordered a hog snout to wear while I do my livestream and a pair handcuffs. But I'm not looking forward to this at all, at all, at all.

WOODS: But still, that is astonishing that somebody sent you a grand.

MALICE: Yeah, they sure shut me up.

WOODS: [laughing] Yeah, they sure did. I love that story. That is great. I thought, given the interactions you've had with the unlikeliest of people, I thought, what, did she respond to you? That's impossible. But in a way, this is far worse. I would much rather it have been that she responded to you than that you have to slog through the book. But it'll make for a great livestream, though. I would tune into that.

MALICE: There's not going to be any meat there. It's going to be like, "I was at this event, and people were saying things were bad, and I wasn't having it. So I stood up and fought for blah, blah, blah. Then everyone clapped." Do you know what I mean? This is going to be like reading the back of a box of Duncan Hines, but 300 pages of it.

WOODS: Yeah. Yeah, awful, awful. I've never read one of those books, one of those campaign books.

MALICE: They're excruciating. I wonder how much she had to do with it, too.

WOODS: Yeah, that's another question. And anytime it has to do with anything other than biographical details, which themselves are, as you say, just mythologized, when you talk about ideas or whatever, what passes for ideas is just excruciatingly stupid.

MALICE: Yes.

WOODS: And by the way, we're not singling out people in the Democratic Party or people on the left. I couldn't imagine reading a John Kasich book, you know?

MALICE: Oh, God.

WOODS: I would just hate everything about it. Or I don't know, even Ted Cruz, who I think is actually a fairly smart guy, by the way.

MALICE: Or like *End the Fed*? t's going to be hot garbage.

WOODS: Are we talking about Ron Paul's book? Get out of here.

MALICE: It's complete dribble.

WOODS: People are not going to believe this. I have actually not read his book, *End the Fed*, just under the radar, but one way that Ron Paul was different on this particular topic is that his first real campaign book came out pretty much after the campaign was over, came out in April of 2008. He wrote *The Revolution: A Manifesto*, and that was not, hey, I was a milkman when I was younger. It was nothing like that. It was foreign policy, civil liberties, economic liberty, and I'm going to spell out those things that I have only 30 seconds to talk about in the debates. It was the exact opposite of these books. I mean, really, that's the standard, but no one — And interestingly enough, if I may dwell on this for a moment, when it came out, there were publishers out there that thought, we don't want to touch this because by the time we could publish it, no one will even remember who Ron Paul is. But the younger people working at these publishers were saying, no, are you kidding me? No, this thing is going to take off like crazy. It hit number one as a *New York Times* bestseller, even after he was borderline out of the race. That's not going to happen with Mike Huckabee's book. So anyway, all right, I got a little sidetracked.

MALICE: Oh my God, Tom, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I just popped open a segment of her book from Amazon.

WOODS: Let's hear it.

MALICE: I promise you everyone wants to hear this. The preface.

WOODS: Okay.

MALICE: This is election night, 2016. Oh my God, I can't believe this is real. Tom, anyone who's listening who doesn't like me, and there's many reasons to do this, this is your chance to enjoy my pain and suffering. Okay, this isn't even page one. It's page XI in Roman numerals. It's the introduction.

WOODS: Oh gosh, okay.

MALICE: "Election night. At a certain point, my nine-year-old godson Alexander came up to me with big tears welling in his eyes. I assumed one of the other kids in our group had been teasing him about something. 'Come here, little man. What's wrong?'" That's what she calls him.

"Alexander looked up and locked eyes with mine. His voice was trembling. 'Auntie Kamala, that man can't win. He's not going to win, is he?' Alexander's worry broke my heart. I didn't want anyone making a child feel that way. Eight years earlier, many of us had cried tears of joy when Barack Obama was elected president. And now to see Alexander's fear..."

Hold on a second. Let me just finish this quick.

"His father, Reggie, and I took him outside to try to console him. 'Alexander, you know how sometimes superheroes are facing a big challenge because a villain is coming for them? What do they do when that happens?' 'They fight back,' he whimpered. 'That's right. And they fight back with emotion, because all the best superhero have big emotions, just like you.'"

WOODS: Oh my gosh, Michael.

MALICE: I have to drink poison.

WOODS: Yeah. I mean, I hate to be the one to state what's obvious to everyone, but obviously no aspect of that story is true. I mean, this is crazy. At this point, it's just expected —

MALICE: Do you know what's even crazier, that this is the night she was — she was also running for Senate that night. She got reelected or elected, right? So there's two things going on. He's still going to be giddy that his auntie got elected.

WOODS: Yeah, right, exactly. Oh, that is painful.

MALICE: "That man." I like "that man," like he doesn't know Trump's name. It's "that man."

WOODS: Yeah. Oh, that's just awful. We know with metaphysical certainty that that did not happen, and I don't know, surely her own supporters have to know that didn't happen, but I don't think that matters.

MALICE: Yeah.

WOODS: All right, well, good luck. You're not even out of the Roman numerals. Have fun with that one. Enjoy your thousand dollars.

MALICE: I'm going to have to spend it on like Percocet or something.

WOODS: Yeah, I was going to say tranquilizers or something.

MALICE: Oh my gosh, yeah. Okay. All right.

WOODS: Well, this is a great segue into what I wanted to talk about. Now that you're sitting here in misery, I want to talk about what is a good reason for hope, at least compared with the past. And one of the points that you've made with me and others in the past is that people who, let's say, describe themselves as being on the right tend to be purveyors of doom and of decay and decline, and they always will believe that whatever time they're living in is a time of decline and falling away from something better.

MALICE: Wait, are you saying that's my position?

WOODS: No, I'm saying that's the position you that you're going to critique.

MALICE: Okay. Okay.

WOODS: Because you're going to come along — and like this is almost everywhere, you see this kind of a lament. You'll come along and say that this is short-sighted, because you're not looking at the big picture. There are major ways in which the world has not only gotten better, but in fact has shifted if not more in our direction, than at least in a way that makes it more possible for us to talk and spread ideas than we could before. Obviously, even with all the problems we have with the internet right now, it sure is better than getting your news about the Vietnam War from Walter Cronkite every night. And the fact that anybody

anywhere in the world can get hold of a vast library of extremely important books at the click of a button, this is an advance.

So what I want to do is, first of all, talk about that, and then revisit it because 2020 has been a really, really rough year, and see if maybe we need to modify anything in this point of view. But I've probably butchered the way you talk about this, so how would you situate this problem of people on the right constantly seeing decay and decline?

MALICE: I don't regard this as a function of right or left at all. I think the very basis of much of contemporary leftism is that the world's about to end: climate change, we're on the verge of the next extinction event, the air's going to be unbreathable, we're going to have super storms and all this other stuff. I don't think this is remotely close to exclusively or even largely a right-wing perspective. I mean, the left-wing perspective is that we currently have Hitler in the White House, which is certainly not a cause for cheer.

There's a book which I always recommend on this subject called *The Idea of Decline in Western History*, by Arthur Herman, which is his first book and I cannot recommend that enough. It's like one of those 15 books I think everyone should read. It used to be 10, but I've been reading a lot more recently that are excellent. And he just goes through all these various predictions at different points that are like, all right, in 10 years it's going to end. And the arguments are often sophisticated, and they never pan out to be true.

Now, it could be the case most certainly that just because someone was wrong every single time in the past, that does not mean or even imply they're going to be wrong in contemporary times or the next time they say it. The premise of the boy who cries wolf is that the wolf does show up. So even though he cried wolf inaccurately every single time, the wolf does eventually show up.

What I think, there's certain ways of looking at this, which I just find excruciating, because once you are aware of it, every time someone does it, it drives you crazy. And one of them is when people say, "Well, obviously, such and such and such." When you're looking at things like economics, when you're looking at things like socio political trends, when you try to reduce any of these issues, which involves the entire globe, billions of people, all sorts of information, to one factor, that to me is really a very, very weak argument. And when people say something is "obviously true," what they are actually meaning is apparently true, meaning on the face of it, this looks like the case. But we all know, especially when we're dealing with so many powerful forces that have free will, that respond to incentives, these things reversed themselves all the time.

The example we have from *The Simpsons* for the *Simpsons* fans is the character Disco Stu, who was a big disco fan, and Homer goes to his office, and he basically has this chart extrapolating, well, if disco sales increase the way they have from '72 to '73 up through 1985, it's going to reach the moon. The other example which people on the right should be extremely aware of is Al Gore's famous hockey stick. Remember? Al Gore took the weather, the temperature trends from like a finite period – I don't remember, it was like ten years. And he said, well, if we extrapolate these ten years, the temperature on the face of the earth is going to be a trillion. And it's like, yeah, that's true, but that's of no relevance. That's not how data works. When Bill Clinton left the White House, there was a balanced budget, and they were talking about paying back the national debt in 13 years, or 17 years, whatever

it was. That of course did not come close to happening. So that's something in the other direction.

And the other thing that drives me crazy, is when you say, oh, I'm hopeful for the future, or I think things are trending in a positive direction, they're like, oh, well, what about this one bad thing? It's like, if you say things are trending and largely are positive, that does not mean or imply nothing bad is happening, or there's no possibility of anything bad happening, or there's no possibility of anything really bad happening. It's just a different perspective.

And I think — and I hate doing this, but this is one of those cases where I've seen enough examples of it, where I feel it is necessary. I think this is one of those cases where psychology does play very heavily into it, that when we are down in ourselves and we are down in our position in life, it is a lot easier or it's tempting to kind of project this onto the culture or the world at-large, and then to be like, well, you can't expect me to be happy because everyone everywhere is in a state of misery and it's only getting worse.

WOODS: All right, let me jump in here now. Just to clarify, of course I know obviously on the left the catastrophizing that goes on and climate change being one example. I'm thinking about the right simply because that's the people I'm surrounded by and I'm on their email lists and it's constantly a, you know, *if only Aristotle could be alive to see how far we've fallen* kind of email. And that I do want to hit back at in some ways.

And I think the way you've described the way you think about it is appropriately nuanced. You're not saying that everything is always better and improving and there's no possibility of anything bad happening. But I guess there's a big, big asterisk right now because of what's just happened with the response to COVID-19 here, because there are two things about it that I think are very, very disturbing for the future. And frankly, I kind of want you to comfort me on this or reassure me on this, because right now it's looking pretty grim.

The two things are this. Number one, the public reaction. Now, I know you are not exactly known for overestimating the intelligence or whatever else about the general public, but geez, I'm fairly cynical and even I'm surprised at how readily so many people have gone along with their own destruction to the point where their livelihoods are ruined and they are willing to play along by these rules whereby they're not even allowed to say anything about that and even to regret the passing of their business or whatever. They just know, I'd better shut up because I'll be shamed if I say anything, and they abide by these rules.

They want to enforce crazy, irrational, allegedly public health rules on everybody. They want to be locked down. In South Dakota where they're perfectly well managing the outbreak, people were demanding to the governor, "Lock us down." Lock yourself down. Stay in your own house if that's what you want to do. So number one, the compliance of the public has shocked me, and it was far, far more — I thought people would be unhappy having everything taken away from them, and I guess I was wrong. That's one thing.

But number two, the other side of that is, now the states have seen that you can make all kinds of crazy demands of people indefinitely, give them no clear data as to when they can have their lives back, and they'll go along with it. How is that not going to be — I feel like from now on, we have to assume there's at least a decent chance that our lives will just be disrupted from time to time, which makes long-term planning impossible, makes economies

very difficult to carry on. What's the silver lining, or why should I look at this and not be extremely discouraged?

MALICE: Well, one of the reasons to be optimistic and the only way to be optimistic is to be optimistic based on facts. I am opposed to and I hate this kind of Pollyanna, sunshine, hoorah-for-people, everything-is-wonderful mentality. I reject that completely. I think it's nonsensical. As much as I despise cynicism and I think it's insidious, this isn't as bad as cynicism, but the premise that human beings are all basically good and going to do the right thing at all times is nonsensical. And if that is going to be your operating assumption, you are setting yourself up for defeat and failure, and it's just incorrect.

I'm going to quote Mencken, H.L. Mencken, who I don't remember when he died, it must have been like maybe the '60s or something. He was a great kind of curmudgeon of his day. He died in '56, excuse me, and he said, "The average man does not want to be free. He merely wants to be safe." And I'm going to read Ayn Rand from the introduction to the 25th anniversary of *The Fountainhead* from 1968. She ended it by saying, "It doesn't matter that only a few in each generation will grasp and achieve the full reality of man's proper stature and that the rest will betray it. It is those few that move the world and give life its meaning. And it is those few that I've always sought to address. The rest of no concern of mine."

So I don't believe in democracy. If your vision — I don't mean you, Tom, just one's vision for happiness and positive function is going to be predicated on the masses and them doing the right thing, that also completely flies in the face of all the data. One of the other reasons I'm a big fan of Hamilton is his absolute withering contempt for the average man, who does not have any kind of vision or hope for the future. They're just ballast. So I'm not surprised — to answer your question, sure, it's kind of surprising to see to what extent, but I don't see how being optimistic should be — this is kind of Marx's idea, right? — that the future is determined by the masses at large. I don't see that being the case at all.

Now, this is certainly going to give the state reassurance that they can get away with a lot, because this was kind of like in the same way that World War I set the stage for the New Deal. They're like, okay, we had a legitimate — we'll use the term loosely — emergency. They fell into line very easily, even at the cost of ruining their livelihoods. Well, now we could just make them do it whenever we want. So that is a data that is of enormous use to the state. But at the same time, I don't think that fact in and of itself, which learning information about the nature of how the masses work I don't think is reason for either optimism or pessimism per se; it's just a fact.

WOODS: Well, how about this? This is another thing we've talked about. We've obviously talked about social media; I know where you stand on that. I guess it just irritates me more and more all the time. It's not just that people get kicked off various platforms. It's also that I'll look on Facebook, for example, and there'll be these fact checkers or there'll be a link under another link, clarifying why this first link is misleading. And then you click on it, and actually they have — sometimes there are misleading things linked, of course.

MALICE: Sure.

WOODS: But other times you click on it, and you think, oh, this is just nitpicking. Of course, the original statement is basically correct. And it only seems to swing in one way. Yeah, you have a lot of apolitical people who don't know any better, so they don't realize maybe there's

an agenda at work here, and they just think, boy, there's a certain kind of person who's just always wrong about everything.

MALICE: Well, I mean, a good example of this is just recently this week, there was a fact check. And the claim was Kamala Harris called Joe Biden a racist. False. Well, yeah, she didn't call him a racist. She just implied it by pointing out what she claimed were his racist actions. So yes, they do frame these things in certain ways that are disingenuous and intentionally disingenuous. I'm not saying this is great. But I am saying if you look at the broader context, the best way to maintain authority and the best way to manipulate people is by being honest.

There's an enormous asymmetry between being truthful and being dishonest. If I tell you 100 truths and one lie, you are going to regard me as a liar. So the more this happens — and everything happens on a marginal basis, many people are binary thinkers, they can't handle this for some reason or other. Probably a function of them being trained not to. But the more iterations of this you see, like you said, where you're calling this a lie when it's just a figurative use of speech, come on. At a certain point, this is how people go from obedience to skepticism to distrust toward hatred, and it has to go through that route. It's very rare when someone just is like blue pill and then become red pill. It's much more common when it's this kind of creeping kind of erosion of their trust in what they've been trained to believe in since they were children.

And let's talk about that. So if you want to get at the root of this, it's the fact that for over 100 years, by design, children have been taken from their families and molded and broken in our public schooling system to becoming obedient and docile. And now for the first time in that period, there is a huge movement and demonstration of its efficacy of having people be removed from that system. I mean, for a long time, I've been enormously critical of conservatives, who understand this on some level ostensibly, that the state hates them and this ideology designed to oppose them. And they're perfectly happy to drop their kids off and have these people raise their children. Now with this corona thing, people have seen that there are alternatives. And Cory DeAngelis, whom you've probably had on your show —

WOODS: Yeah, I've met him. Yeah.

MALICE: Great dude, who's like our best person on this issue. It used to be that there was some study, I don't remember where it was, where it said the time period from something to go from like a crazy Tumblr post to a *New York Times* op-ed was like 20 months, right? That's how quickly the fringe of the left was transforming leftist ideology in contemporary terms. It went from Cory — and I'm sure he's not the only one. That's just where I came across it — saying, *Why, if the schools are shut down, is the money going to where the teachers are? The money should follow the student.* And Trump was saying that explicitly.

So if we are having a point where there is an assault on the universities, when we are having an assault on public schooling by its nature and people creating alternatives, I think this is, in terms of the long term, enormously useful. Plus, because these lockdowns and because the schools were shut down, this takes it out of an ideological context. Instead of it, as they would like to say, oh, the only people homeschooling are these freaks or these like fundamentalists, or whatever pejorative they want to use to make up, now, when so many kids are being homeschooled from every kind of background you can imagine and people are seeing that their children are happier, they're not bullied, they're not unrecognizable as a

function by design of the school system, I think this bodes extremely well for the future generations.

WOODS: I don't know how you're doing this. Let's see, how long have we been talking here? Let me look. What is it, like 27 minutes? And I feel better already. This ain't right. And of course, you know that I am a little bit plugged into the homeschooling world because of my work with the Ron Paul curriculum.

MALICE: Of course, yeah.

WOODS: And because I also promote that as an affiliate, I see some of the sales coming in. And so obviously not all the sales come through my link, but I know after having done this for four or five years, which months of the year are the big ones. And, oddly enough, July is not a big one. It's like if you're signing up for a homeschool program in July in anticipation of August or September, you're like Ned Flanders, who when it turns January 1st, gets out of his bed and files his income tax. For some reason, people don't do it till August or September. But we had a terrific July, much better than we've ever had. So far, August has been fantastic. And usually we don't get that much activity until late August.

MALICE: And also, there's just an enormous asymmetry here as well. Because if you have 100 people who are functions of public school and you have three who are homeschooled, they have the numbers intellectually, because each of those three kids will have been taught to use their mind on their own, whereas with that group, it's one mind spread out in 100 bodies. So I think the reason to be optimistic, again, is if people are putting their eggs in the basket of democracy and expecting democracy to solve these issues, and that's where you want to look at having it be a numbers game, just in terms of pure math, yeah, you should be very pessimistic. But I have never understood that to be the case in terms of what saves countries or moves cultures, at all.

WOODS: Just a couple things that are just little asides. You mentioned Harris saying Biden was a racist, and she didn't actually say it, but what other conclusion were we supposed to draw from that whole thing? I thought it was interesting when — did you see the clip of Stephen Colbert asking her about that?

MALICE: Yeah, I just saw the headline. She says, "Oh, it was a debate."

WOODS: Yeah, that was literally — I watched the clip. Her answer was, "It was a debate," and she's laughing. She's laughing through the whole thing. And then she says it again. And then she says something like, "Yeah, it was literally called a debate." So she says that three times and laughs through the whole thing. I don't exactly understand. Is the laugh meant to imply that we were stupid for having taken her seriously during that? Like, what else could that laughter mean? It was so weird.

MALICE: The laugh serves two purposes. One is he's asking her a serious question, and her laugh is demonstrating to people who go by nonverbal cues that this is not in fact a serious concern, number one. Number two is it demonstrates that, oh, she's unruffled. This isn't a big deal. Stop taking everything so seriously and literally.

I keep saying this point on Twitter and I'll say it again: people need to look to dogs to understand how the average person operates. And this is not an insult to people. Dogs are much better than most people. If you see people giving those cute — you know how some people have dogs that are like protective breeds, like a Rottweiler or Doberman. And what will happen is if a stranger comes over, that animal will look toward its owner for cues. Is this a stranger or a friend? And these bright dogs — the guard dogs are usually brighter breeds — will be very friendly, some of them, towards strangers, because they're like, *Oh, immediately this is my owner's friend; this is now my friend.* Or, *Wait a minute, my owner's suspicious. Let me be on guard.* So if he is trying to, correctly, be like, what the heck is going on here? And her audience is looking to her for cues, *Is this a reason be concerned?* she's queueing to them: *This is nothing. Don't worry about it.*

WOODS: All right, well, that is as good as an explanation as any, because I figured it had to be something like that. And obviously she has to be prepped for how is she going to answer the most obvious question so obvious even Colbert has to ask.

MALICE: I disagree, because she wasn't prepped for what Tulsi did. And everything that Tulsi said had been online as criticism of her for months. So I think a lot of times when we assume that these people necessarily have done their homework, that is not accurate. I'll give you another example which is kind of mind-blowing. Some of us remember during the debates in 2016 when Ted Cruz went after Trump and said New York values aren't American values or something to that effect. "Conservative values don't come out of New York City." And Trump goes, "Well, Bill Buckley came out of New York, as well as many others." And then he started talking about 9/11 to the point where even Cruz had to applaud. Cruz had said that criticism of him earlier that day, and Trump had responded that same way when he was asked about it. So Cruz knew Trump had that answer, and he tried it anyway. So it is very weird a lot of times, where you and I would think this is coming, you should be ready for it, and they don't.

WOODS: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, okay, that is an interesting example. Now, let me run something by you on the social media problem, because I know that —

MALICE: Wait, I've got to ask you something else. What would you expect her to say anyway? She has no good answer.

WOODS: No, she doesn't. No, I would expect her to deflect in some way or even say — well actually, I would have to think about it, but I would think that if I'm hiring five-figure-a-month consultants, somebody come up with something glib, right? You've got to. People have gotten out of worse before. I mean, George Bush raised taxes after saying he wouldn't. Like there's got to be something.

MALICE: George Bush didn't get out of it, so I don't know that the glibness would necessarily help her.

WOODS: I'll think about it. I'm going to think about what could she have said that would have been better than, "It was just a debate."

MALICE: Even something like, "Oh, the more I learned about Joe Biden, the more I realized he's the opposite of a racist," that's setting up Colbert to throw something at her.

WOODS: Yeah. Yeah, I don't know. I don't know. Maybe that is the best answer, was to be as dismissive — see, I think that the laughter is a way of being dismissive.

MALICE: Correct.

WOODS: Like the concern is not even valid, like I'm not even worried about that. Why are you worried about it? Whereas I guess it's partly because I view everything through a Ron Paulian lens, I can't imagine — first of all, he wouldn't be in that situation. But I can't imagine him laughing at the suggestion that he might take himself seriously. He might take seriously things he said on national television about the guy running for US president right now.

What do you think about this idea? Trump has been talking about ways that he might bring the social media companies to heel, but by and large, not much has really come with that. But it seems to me that he has at his disposal a way to do that that doesn't involve government power or coercion. And that would be, if there is a serious quality competitor to, let's say, Facebook — and there are some that you and I have heard of, and I'm sure there are some that you and I have not heard of that are small. And he simply announces that he's going on that instead. He's leaving Twitter and he's going on that. All he would have to do is make that announcement and 10 million people would be on it and it would be up and running. Now, where am I wrong about that?

MALICE: I don't think you're wrong about that. I mean, he's not one who cedes ground, and I think we are seeing Twitter, really in contrast to 2016, where it was much more the corporate press was doing the dirty work, the social media types are right now, really like, we've got to throw our weight behind the establishment and the right people, meaning the kind of Cathedral establishment. They hired Kamala Harris's press secretary to be one of Twitter's censors recently. Bill Mitchell, who is like the king of the boomer-cons, they just banned him from Twitter last week. Carpet Donktum, who was President Trump's meme maker, they got rid of him allegedly over copyright violations, even though it's clearly fair use. So they are very much putting their finger on the scale. I've said this before: it's hard for us to overestimate how much existential despair it causes people working at some of these organizations to view their site as a mechanism toward promoting ideologies that they find just downright satanic.

WOODS: Yes.

MALICE: And so for them to just sit on their hands and have any kind of semblance of "fairness" makes no sense, just on an emotional level to them, let alone a logical level. But what I think is going to end up happening is a lot — you know, sometimes conservatives say Twitter's the public square. We need to pass laws. Fine.

I am very, very concerned — let's pretend it was 30 years ago, and CNN was like the only basically cable news channel. And if you had codified that into law and said CNN is the public square. Everyone has to be here, or CNN has to have both sides. Well, CNN has both sides. They will have April Ryan, and they will have whoever else you want, Elizabeth Warren. And then from the right, they will have Rick Wilson, and they will have Bill Kristol and Anna Navarro. And they will tell you with a straight face, "Look, we have as many Republicans as we do Democrats."

These laws are impossible to implement in the way conservatives would like to see them implemented, because you don't have the willpower on both ends to have that happen. And if you did have the willpower, the law wouldn't be necessary to begin with.

Now, I know there's that movement to repeal that publisher privilege away from Twitter. I'm not familiar with what that would mean in practice. The point being, unless there are alternatives presented to these outlets, this is going to be the case — and there needs to be alternative worldviews. And that's why it has to start with the abolition of public schooling or the mitigation of it, a full-bore assault on the universities and what they're causing, and going in that direction. Every culture is going to have a dominant worldview, and that dominant worldview through corporate structures is going to dominate pretty much pockets where people gather. So how do you work around that is the broader question, and there's no easy answer.

The fact is having more and more outlets is a great possibility to work around this. And the example I've used before is you look at dating apps. It used to be OkCupid was the one, and now they're so specific. You've got 60, 70, 100 different ones, right? Even for just regular straight people, you have Hinge, you have Bumble, you have Tinder, and OkCupid and a couple of others, let alone like other less common situations. So the premise that we all have to be in one place is the mentality that we have to listen to either CBS, ABC, or NBC. It's nonsensical and ahistorical.

WOODS: I have a completely different question I want to end with. When we look back on the financial crisis of 2008, there's no consensus on what the cause of that was. I mean, among influential people, it's deregulation caused it and this and that. But there is a competing narrative that has something to do with Federal Reserve policy. And so we've got these two different ways of looking at it that are still floating around. Nobody would say definitively we've all agreed on what the cause of that was.

I'm wondering, let's say 30 years from now, when we look back on the lockdowns of 2020 — I mean, right now there are people who say the lockdowns are saving a lot of lives and other people who say the lockdowns are a bunch of witchcraft that don't necessarily do anything. It seems like the virus goes the way it goes, no matter what you do with it, non-pharmaceutically. Okay, well, eventually you would think there'd be some data that would be very suggestive, and we'd be able to come to a conclusion about this. But it's like people have something ideologically at stake in the outcome.

So I wonder if 30 years from now, which of the following two scenarios is more likely: the majority will realize they'd been hoodwinked and severely damaged and they'll never let this happen again, or we'll still be arguing about it? Some people saying thank goodness we saved all those lives and we defeated those selfish people who want to go out for a sandwich, and other people saying you destroyed people's lives and you didn't even accomplish anything. Do you think that we're still going to be divided about this, or do you think a consensus will develop?

MALICE: I can't see how a consensus would develop. We don't have a consensus about the Great Depression or many other issues, so I don't see any mechanism for consensus. We don't have consensus about 9/11. And this is something where there's an enormous incentive to not have consensus, because what you need to believe for many people is that the lockdowns were existentially urgent and necessary, but we also needed to take to the streets to protest

police brutality. So if you have simultaneous contradictory ideas, it's very important for you to take control the narrative, because if you don't, then very quickly, it just collapses because of its incoherence.

WOODS: Well, then it's all the more urgent at least to consolidate people who are skeptical of all this. The definitive book on this has just got to be done, and in the old days, I would have felt like I should do it. And in this day and age, I feel like I want to pass the torch on to somebody else. And there are some excellent people who have been doing some excellent work, but the other side will have their books. Thank goodness we saved millions of lives.

MALICE: But you know what's really funny is you just basically quoted my mindset when I'm writing my next book, because I have gone on like Glenn Beck and all these other shows, and I've been berating conservatives. I'm like, how is it that we all know the World War II, Normandy, all that stuff — and I'm not trying to be dismissive. I mean, this is an epic, amazing, great story. But I'm just going to kind of being cavalier about it, because we all know it and it's good that we all know it. But no one knows about the end of the Cold War, because this was done without a shot. No one died. And this was the great victory of the right. And I said you can't expect *The New York Times* to talk about it, but certainly you would expect at least the boomer-cons to not shut up for five minutes about Poland 1989, and they don't. And then I'm like, well, you know what? Instead of complaining, I'm going to do it. So that's part of the my next book is like, yeah, okay. Like if you're in a position to actually do something about it, shut up, Malice. Go home and do it. I'm like, okay.

WOODS: Well, tooting my own horn slightly, that's kind of what I've turned to doing myself, because I've written a lot of articles and I've griped about a lot of things, and that sometimes changes people's minds or it makes people think, and I'm not dismissing that. But if I'm unhappy about the way that people are being educated, build something else, was my answer. And frankly, I think that's something — why did the conservative movement, with all its think-tanks and its billions of dollars, why didn't they create a K-12 homeschool program? How come like eight of us in the libertarian world stepped up and did it? They're pouring all their money into political campaigns, and we poured very little money, actually, because we do it on royalties, into something that's really, really great and significant and helpful. So I feel like that's one of the most important things I've done. I've written books, that's true. But this can educate an awful lot of people and not just complain about how bad the existing education is.

MALICE: Yeah, and that was my thing with *Dear Reader* about North Korea. I'm like, all right, I'm going to do — and same thing with *The New Right*. I'm like someone has to do this. And I block people on Twitter all the time when they're like, "Oh, you shouldn't talk about this. You should talk about this." Like, okay, cool. Good to know you.

WOODS: Yeah.

MALICE: But here, it's just like, yeah, I'm going to do something about this, and that's what I'm doing. And it's excruciating, I've got to tell you.

WOODS: Yeah, well, no kidding. Well, let me just close by saying I always find *Your Welcome* to be interesting and worth my time, so we'll link to it. You can also just find it in your pod catcher app, whatever one you use. But of course, it's spelled while *Your*, and no, it's not incorrect, so if you correct either one of us, we're going to — Malice will just ignore you, and

I'll smack you around. But go look for *Your Welcome*. And Michael and I have had some good conversations on there as well. In fact, my favorite may be the one we had in early March of this year, because it was just before the world changed so much. And just the sweet naivete of Tom Woods talking about his great plans for April brings a tear to my eye. But anyway, thanks, Michael, I appreciate you being here today.

MALICE: You are welcome.