



Episode 711: Julie Borowski on Handling Critics, Persuading Skeptics, and Freelancing

Guest: Julie Borowski

WOODS: You were on the show back on Episode 70, and here we are on I think Episode 711, so —

BOROWSKI: Oh wow.

WOODS: Yeah, yeah, yeah, every 6- or 700 episodes or so we have to catch up (laughing). I thought, oh my gosh, I can't believe it's been so long. So it's been now a couple of years. I mean, I started the show in late 2013, and I think — was that around the time that you were no longer with Freedom Works full time? When did that happen?

BOROWSKI: I left Freedom Works in April 2015, so a little bit afterwards.

WOODS: Oh, it was after that. Okay, so you were still — okay. So all right, things have changed for you since we last spoke. Maybe you can start off by talking about that. What's it been like not being with an official think-tank or policy institute, but being completely on your own promoting these ideas? Is it good? Is it bad? Middle of the road? What do you think?

BOROWSKI: Sure, so like I said, I left Freedom Works in 2015. It was nothing against them; I just kind of felt that, you know, maybe I should do this on my own, become a freelancer. I'm young, so I thought, well, let's give it a chance and see how it works. It's been both good — I have a lot of flexibility. I can talk about whatever I want to talk about. I don't have to worry about any restrictions. It's also been hard. I've learned a lot about myself, as cheesy as that sounds, over the past year, and what I need to work on. I'm really bad at negotiation. I'm really bad at asking for money. The good thing about working for an organization, I've found, is that somebody does that for you. Somebody deals with all that awkwardness. So I've learned, okay, I have to be somewhat assertive in asking for stuff and getting help. So I mean, it's both good and bad.

WOODS: Well, I'm in somewhat the same position you are, and I know exactly what you're talking about. But now that I've settled into it and you're settling into it, if you can make it work, which is the big if, it's a great kind of lifestyle really, I think. Now, I

do want to talk about what you've been doing, and in fact, as I told you before we went on, I actually went to my private Facebook group, which is for my supporters, and I said, "I think I'm going to have Julie back on. What do you folks think I should ask her?" And, man, they're better than I am. They really — I don't have to do any work anymore. They came up with these great ideas. So I want to run some of these by you and see what you think.

BOROWSKI: Sure.

WOODS: For instance, apparently you have been doing some what you might describe as outreach to Bernie Sanders people, and people are curious to now how that's gone and what sorts of things you've done.

BOROWSKI: (laughing) So, gosh, Bernie Sanders supporters. I recently made a video kind of sympathizing with Bernie supporters. I have been not so nice to them in the past. I did an anti-Bernie video one time, and they got really, really mad at me, so I was like, okay — this was right after Bernie endorsed Hillary. I made this video sympathizing with them and saying, you know, I kind of feel bad for you guys. Like, I almost saw myself in them with Bernie Sanders, you know, not that I agree with Bernie Sanders on a lot of issues, but I saw how passionate they were about Bernie Sanders, and I saw myself in them with Ron Paul, about how I believed in this guy. And fortunately Ron Paul never endorsed the nominee, but Bernie Sanders endorsed Hillary, and I saw how upset they were and how disappointed they were.

So I kind of made this video sympathizing with them and saying, you know, guys, I'm sorry. Really, I said kind of I'm sorry about this. And you know, I thought maybe if I sympathized with them, maybe they'll listen to me more and realize that I'm not such a bad person, that we do have some things in common. We're both against the Federal Reserve; we're for civil liberties; we're against these wars. So I mean, I've gotten a lot of hate from them, but I think some people have come to kind of respect me after that video, to realize I'm not just this conservative who bashes Bernie supporters, that I actually sympathize with them sometimes.

WOODS: I was not surprised when he endorsed her, because I knew from the beginning he would, but I could imagine, as you say, how completely disorienting it must have been for his diehard supporters, because I'm sure they thought it was impossible. In fact, Paul Krugman wrote a column saying there's no way Bernie's ever going to support Hillary. And of course as soon as Paul Krugman said that, I thought, well, now it's really obvious he's going to support Hillary. So of course, since Ron Paul never did that to us I can't imagine the depth of the despair —

BOROWSKI: Yeah, I would have been so pissed off if Ron Paul did that —

WOODS: Yeah, exactly; that's right. So it's neat that you went ahead and made that video. All right, let's see, when you make videos like this, when you're out in the public eye at all, you do attract people who, as you have learned, don't really care for

what you're saying. And the Internet is not known for being a place where people say, "Dear Sir or Madam, I have read your article and I have decided — "

BOROWSKI: (laughing) Yeah.

WOODS: It's pretty rough and brutal, and I have people wondering how did you manage to cope with that or grow a thick skin.

BOROWSKI: Sure, so I started making videos in 2011, and to be honest, I was really intimidated by making these videos. Like, I was completely out of my comfort zone to put myself out there online. Some people think I'm this really outgoing person, but I'm not. It was really scary for me. And at first I saw all these comments, and of course as a woman you're going to get a lot of attacks on your look, and of course my voice is always criticized, and stuff like that. And I think at first it kind of was — it affected me a little bit, just because I wasn't used to hearing those comments. Like, in my everyday life, people are generally nice to me. No one's really brutally honest to me, so it was shocking to me at first.

And then you keep hearing the same comments over and over throughout the years online. It comes to a point where it just — you just brush it off, because you're so used to it. It doesn't affect you anymore. And there are people who are saying nice things to you, so I try to really hard just focus on the positive and just let the haters hate.

WOODS: I think that's a smart approach, and I will note, by the way, eventually I took that approach, but at first I used to feel like I had to go to every blog everywhere on the Internet that mentioned me and stand up for my good name. And I'll tell you, I sleep so soundly at night not caring anymore about any of the that. I want to know — I've seen these people, and I want to know if you've ever said anything about, or what your opinions are about Julie Borowski Army on Facebook.

BOROWSKI: Oh, yes. I had nothing to do with this. I did not make this page, but somebody made this page, Julie Borowski Army, and they just basically photoshopped me and crazy things, like Audrey Hepburn, that's my profile pic on Facebook right now, and just Princess Diana, like all these people. So it's funny to me, but like you said about the haters, the funniest thing to me is when I see somebody attack me on another thread where they don't think I see. Just somebody, like a Facebook friend will post my video, and somebody below says, "Ew, I hate her. She's the worst." I love to comment on those things, just to say, oh, hey, what's up — something like that. And their attitude completely changes. They say, "Oh, I'm sorry, Julie. I actually like your videos." So it's kind of funny when you actually confront people. They just change their attitude completely.

WOODS: What has been, of all the issues you've discussed, what's the one that you've found the most frustrating, that you're having the least success reaching people or persuading people, getting through to your viewers?

BOROWSKI: Hmm.

WOODS: Is there one?

BOROWSKI: Um, let me think about that for a second. Uh —

WOODS: Well how about this? I'll let you spin that around in your mind a little bit while I ask you a somewhat related question, which is, in your opinion, what are some of the biggest problem areas in libertarianism? Let's say unresolved issues or issues where you feel like the libertarian answer just isn't even all that convincing to you. Are there any of those that you can think of?

BOROWSKI: I think libertarianism is pretty weak on the subject of children. Somebody asked me today, "Should a parent be allowed to starve their child?" And it's really hard, because just as a human being, just common sense I just say no, of course not; why would you do that? But then libertarianism, like, there's not this strong argument against that, because if libertarianism is just the nonaggression principle, are you aggressing upon your child by not feeding them? It's a hard question. So on the children's issues, libertarianism I think still has a lot of work to do, as well as animals. I'm a huge animal lover. I'm involved in animal rescue, and the things I've seen people do to animals is just horrible. You know, there's animal hoarders out there; there's dog fighting, just terrible, terrible things. And when I talk about this to libertarians, some of them say, well, that's their right. These pets are their property; they should be able to do whatever they want. And I just, you know, maybe I'm being too emotional or whatever, but it's just like, no. Like, it just bothers me so much. So yeah, children and animals, I think that libertarianism still has some work to do.

WOODS: Okay, those are great answers. I really need to do an answer pertaining to children. There's one guest I really want to have on, and he just won't do it, and it's driving me crazy. But there are some decent libertarian answers to that whole question of, is the only libertarian position that it would be aggression against the parent to force the parent to feed the child? I don't think that is, but I can see how people would, and that makes us all seem crazy.

And then the other thing about animals, I don't think it's a question of your being emotional. I've had the same concern, and I think of myself as being Mr. Reason and all that. But I had Gary Chartier on; he might be somebody you'd be interested in talking to. He's an anarchist, and he thinks that there's room in the whole libertarian way of looking at the world for some kind of protection of animals. So he's definitely worth talking to. And you know, I have a daughter, 13 years old, who for her birthday last year, instead of gifts she wanted people to donate to the local animal shelter. I'm not kidding.

BOROWSKI: Oh, that's so nice.

WOODS: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So she loves libertarianism too, but I think she kind of feels like there's not a really good convincing answer on that. Now, by the way, people listening to this, if you feel like you have got a good convincing answer to these, then post it on your blog and send me the link. Don't just send me your commentary. I want

you to have a blog, write it on your blog and send me the link, and we'll talk about it on the show. All right, let's see, what else? We have to talk about the Julie Borowski Army. I think that's just super. When you're looking at all the things that you've done — you know, you worked for Freedom Works; you've done speaking engagements; you've made a lot of videos; you have a tremendous social media presence. Where do you think you've had the biggest impact?

BOROWSKI: Hmm, the biggest impact I think I've had is reaching out to conservatives.

WOODS: Ah.

BOROWSKI: If you go on my Facebook page, a lot of people complain that there's a lot of conservatives on there, and this is true, but I like them to be there, because at least they're hearing another argument, right? So I grew up a conservative; I think we talked about it last time. And I kind of understand their mindset. I know what arguments work on them to bring them over to the libertarian side. And I had success with them, because I've made a couple somewhat viral videos that were anti-Obama, which really brought the conservatives on board, because they love to see a young person bashing Obama. It doesn't matter what I say; as long as I'm anti-Obama, they're like, okay, this chick's cool. So they're on my Facebook page, and I've really — I think I've somewhat convinced them to be on the libertarian side. So I'd say, yeah, that's probably been where I've been the most successful at reaching those people.

WOODS: I just the other day had one of the admins form a Facebook page called Liberty Memes —

BOROWSKI: Yeah.

WOODS: — and he doesn't reveal his name; I just referred to him as Admin 2 on the show. And he was saying that he's had a lot of the same type of success, but that then once they're on the page, if he then makes memes pertaining to foreign policy or the police, these very same people are up in arms. Have you had any kind of experience like that?

BOROWSKI: Oh yeah, oh yeah. Some of these people assume that I'm a conservative, and then when I post about foreign policy, when I post about those types of things, they get mad at me. But I think they at least know where I'm coming from, that I at least am not a liberal, and they're really excited to see a young woman who's anti-Hillary and who is not a liberal. So hopefully they stay around.

WOODS: Yeah, all right, so they're willing to cut you some slack because you do meet other requirements. A lot of times people think of the anti-Obama constituency as being older or they're old white men or whatever, and you are neither of those things.

BOROWSKI: Mm hmm.

WOODS: So okay, that gives you some leeway. All right, tell me about — I hope this doesn't make you uncomfortable. If it does, this is a case where I would actually let the guest off the hook. But if you could possibly stand answering it, I'd really like to know.

BOROWSKI: Okay.

WOODS: Yeah, I know, where's he going?

BOROWSKI: (laughing)

WOODS: It's this. Now, on the one hand, obviously you love this stuff. I mean, you have a job, so-called, like me, that you might do regardless of whether you earned a living or not. You just love doing it, and it's a nice bonus that you're able to give a talk and get a speaking fee and things like that. So that's just a terrific thing. My question is — I want to know about monetizing what you're doing online, because you've got a tremendous Facebook presence; you have videos that are very widely viewed. Is the monetizing side of that just, well, the more videos I make and the more present I am on social media, the more prominent I'll be and therefore the more speaking engagements I'll get, and that's how I monetize it? Or do you have other ways — I mean, there's no shame in supporting yourself. Any libertarian who gives you guff about supporting yourself should be ignored anyway. But I'm curious about, are there ways that you can monetize what you're doing?

BOROWSKI: It's really strange to me when I see libertarians criticize me for making money. It's just like, aren't you supposed to be pro-capitalism? And I guess they assume if I'm making some money on it that I'm only in it for the money.

WOODS: Yeah.

BOROWSKI: If I was only in it for the money, I would not choose to be a libertarian activist.

WOODS: (laughing) Yeah, I know. Hello!

BOROWSKI: I mean, I went to college. I'm sure that I could get a job that I wouldn't like as much, but I could make a lot more money than I'm making. I do this job because I love it, first and foremost. But it does pay the bills. Does it — would I like to make more money? Yes, because I would like to raise my standard of living, because I'm a freelancer and I'm just trying to learn how to make money on the Internet. So I do make money on my YouTube videos through ad revenue. It's nothing crazy; it's not even half my rent, because I think you have to have, like, millions and millions of views to actually make a lot of money on YouTube. So yeah, it's my YouTube videos as well as speaking engagements. I'm getting a lot more, so if you ever want me to speak on your college or at a meeting, please email me. It's Julie@JulieBorowski.com. I'm also learning about other ways to monetize. You know, merchandise is another way. I'm learning how to do that. I'm also taking donations. I have a PayPal donation on my

website. So things like that; I'm always open to new ideas, because I'm still learning how to do this myself.

WOODS: I wonder if you could say to people, if you make a recurring donation of \$5 or \$10 a month, you get the following benefits, and one of them would be you could do some kind of like an intimate video chat with your biggest supporters.

BOROWSKI: Yeah.

WOODS: And people could just throw questions —

BOROWSKI: So I actually do that.

WOODS: Oh, do you?

BOROWSKI: Yeah, so I have a Patreon, Patreon.com/JulieBorowski, and we have a private Facebook group. I do monthly live streams. Sometimes I release a video early to them, so those kinds of benefits, yeah, I've gotten into that.

WOODS: That is smart. Oh, I'm so glad you're doing that. That's good, because a lot of times I make suggestions like this, and it hits people like a thunderbolt. That's good too, but I'm glad that you're sort of already on top of things. All right, good, good, good. Now, I mean, to me I look at this, and I find it — I find it miraculous I can do a podcast, period. The technology of this amazes me, that I have it out there, and then boom, instantaneously someone halfway around the world can be listening. And I can look at my statistics and see 140 countries have people who listen to the show regularly. This is amazing to me. But then also to be able to find ways that I can do this and not have to — not that I would work at McDonald's, but you get the point, you know, that I can devote the time and the care necessary to make it a decent thing, because people want to support it, and we find ways to make this work, to bring people together: people who want to support it, people who want to do the production. This is an incredible time to be alive, if I may be super sappy about it.

BOROWSKI: Definitely.

WOODS: All right, let me look and see what else I can run. Let's see if I can stump you with one here.

BOROWSKI: Uh oh.

WOODS: (laughing) All right, let's see. I've got this one. I'm not totally sure what it's driving at, to be honest with you, but that's your job as the guest. You figure out what the question is. I don't know what it is. "What is her long-term strategy for staying active in the liberty movement?" I wonder how I would answer that question. How would you answer that question?

BOROWSKI: Mm, my long-term strategy. I kind of feel like I'm at a job interview right now. Um —

WOODS: (laughing) Yeah.

BOROWSKI: Just keep doing what I'm doing. I'm releasing a new video at least every Thursday, so that's my video upload day. Just stay active, keep doing what I'm doing. I think it's just about more people being exposed to me and my videos, so if I keep making more videos, if I keep making more speaking engagements, I continue the stupid jokes on Facebook and Twitter, hopefully more people will find out about me and I continue doing this.

WOODS: What do you find generates the most buzz on Facebook? I mean, when you ask your followers a question? When you post a video? When you link to an article? Or is there a particular topic? When you're posting something, can you often tell? Can you say to yourself, oh, I know this is just going to go crazy with comments?

BOROWSKI: Yeah, it seems like the most stupid things that I post get the most views.

WOODS: (laughing) Okay.

BOROWSKI: And the actually, like, deep, intelligent somewhat things that I post don't get the most views.

WOODS: Oh, no.

BOROWSKI: But what I've found is a lot of people on my page don't get my satire. So I'll post something that's clearly satire, or I think should be clearly satire, and people will share it not knowing it's satire, or they'll comment on it and say, this is satire and somebody won't get it, and it goes crazy. I've had it happen to me where I posted this meme about guns, and it said the AR-15 shoots 1,000 rounds per second, that type of kind of like guns are scary thing, and it got 10 million views on it. It went crazy. This stupid meme got 10 million views. So I got so much hate for that, because people didn't realize it was satire, but it happens a lot.

WOODS: This of course is an election year, and in election years you have more people who are engaged with issues that matter to you and me, so do you find that you're getting more people and new and different people commenting on your videos that you think you can attribute to the fact that it's an election year?

BOROWSKI: I think so. There's more people paying attention to politics. I found it strange; just on my personal Facebook I have friends from high school and college and stuff who never post about politics, and I've seen a couple of them post about Gary Johnson. I don't know if I'm going to vote for Gary Johnson or not, but it was just so strange to me to see my worlds collide as I'm talking about this Libertarian Party candidate. So I've seen a lot of people, and even just people who I know in my daily life who are not that political, they just hate Trump, they hate Hillary, so I think

people are looking for more alternatives, and hopefully libertarianism is the answer. At least they're being exposed to the Libertarian Party, which hopefully will expose them to the philosophy. So I think there is a lot of opportunity to reach new people who otherwise wouldn't care.

WOODS: When you do get invited for speaking engagements, what are topics you like to discuss?

BOROWSKI: So it depends on the speaking engagement. I've been doing some college speaking, and I like to just do things like, what is libertarianism — those types of things — and how is the government hurting young people. And I can talk a lot about a lot of different topics. But when I go to libertarian-only conferences, sometimes I struggle to know what to talk about, because I don't want to just preach to the choir, you know? "Let's legalize drugs, guys." I mean, everyone agrees in the room. So I tend to talk about how to spread the message of liberty online, what are misconceptions people have about libertarianism, and how can we combat those — those types of questions, which, you know, hopefully people will learn something, as opposed to just being — we're all libertarians; let's learn how to advance the message, rather than just applaud me for being a libertarian.

WOODS: You are actually closing in on 200,000 likes on Facebook. That's —

BOROWSKI: (laughing)

WOODS: I think I'm at 75. So you're almost at 200,000. I don't even think I have a question attached to that. You just want to say something about that?

BOROWSKI: I mean, it's crazy. I don't know why, but yeah, wow.

WOODS: So is there — is there like a frequency of posting that you like to do every day, and is it the same for all seven days, or do you divide it up on the weekend? I bet you have a method to this.

BOROWSKI: (laughing) No, I don't. I just post things that I like that I think my audience will like. I share from other pages too, and sometimes they share for me, so it helps me as well as them. I just post what I want to post. I don't really think about it that much. I don't really pay attention to the numbers that much, because I think if I did I'd go crazy. But yeah, I have more on Facebook than YouTube. I'm trying to build up YouTube, but like I said, I can't think about the numbers too much, just continue doing what I'm doing.

WOODS: How long have you had this, you know, the Fan Page page on Facebook?

BOROWSKI: Hmm, maybe since 2012?

WOODS: That is tremendous growth. That is *tremendous*. It's Facebook.com/JulieBorowski. Of course we'll link to it at TomWoods.com/711. I sure

hope this is Episode 711, by the way. I keep saying that (laughing). Let's take a look at what episode I'm on. This is just how discombobulating this week is. It *is* 711. All right, no problem. All right, if people want to follow you then, is it best for them to go on Facebook? Do you have a website or a blog you send them to? If somebody is new to what you're doing, where are you directing them?

BOROWSKI: Probably YouTube. [YouTube.com/JulieBorowski](https://www.youtube.com/JulieBorowski). I have a webpage too, JulieBorowski.com. Facebook, Julie Borowski; Twitter, JulieBorowski, all of that.

WOODS: All right, that's good; that's good. So Token Libertarian Girl is out.

BOROWSKI: Yeah, I'm just — I'm glad to see her go.

WOODS: Okay, because isn't that who you were when we spoke last time?

BOROWSKI: Yeah, when I first started on YouTube I wasn't sure about using my full name, just because I didn't know, like, years from now if I wanted this YouTube channel to follow me. I think I was kind of embarrassing, was kind of awkward. So yeah, I'm just Julie Borowski now.

WOODS: All right, that's good; that's good. And it's working for you. You're almost at 200,000 — man, you are killing me. And I hope you get the *Tom Woods Show* bump and get some more likes over there.

BOROWSKI: Ah, that'd be great.

WOODS: Help nudge you over toward 200,000. Well, continued good luck with everything you're doing. We'll have the links to all this fun stuff: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, the site. It'll all be there at TomWoods.com/711. Thanks again, Julie.

BOROWSKI: Thank you, Tom.