

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

Marshall here. Welcome back to The Realignment.

Today's episode is a follow-up to one I recorded last year with Richard Reeves, author of Boys and Men,

Why the Modern Mail is Struggling, Why It Matters, and What to Do About It.

Today, speaking of John Lovell, author of The Warrior Poet Way, A Guide to Living Free and Dying Well.

John's the founder of The Warrior Poet Society, a former Army Ranger, and a YouTuber.

Given his background and different ideological perspective from Richard,

it was cool to approach the man-slash-masculinity crisis from a different perspective.

This is obviously a polarizing topic, but I suggest you get started by reading Christine Mba's recent piece in The Washington Post,

Men Are Lost, A Map Out of the Wilderness, which I've linked in the show notes.

Given that Richard is launching a new organization, the American Institute for Boys and Men,

and senators on the right like Josh Hawley of Missouri and Chris Murphy of Connecticut

are explicitly engaging on the man crisis issue, it's clear that this is no longer 2017

and this is just a space solely staked out for good or for ill by Jordan Peterson.

Hope you all are having a great start to your August.

And of course, a huge thank you to the Foundation for American Innovation for supporting the work of this podcast.

John Lovell, welcome to the realignment.

Thanks for having me on, Marshall.

Yeah, it's great to chat with you.

I think your book came out at a really interesting time.

There's been this evolving conversation about the state of men and masculinity in America right now.

And a few years ago, you've written about this in your book.

This was constrained to the Jordan Peterson YouTube side of the world,

but recently outlets from the Atlantic to The Washington Post started picking this up.

So I wanted to just read a couple interesting factoids off and get your reaction to it.

And you can obviously fit that into the story you're telling in the book.

So now for every 100 bachelor degrees received by women, 74 men receive a bachelor degree.

Overall enrollment in college has declined in the past few years, which could be a useful phenomenon,

but 70% of that decline is actually male.

So there's probably something going on there at a gender level.

There's been a big drop of employment among men 25 to 34 and three out of four deaths of despair.

Those are suicides, alcohol abuse or overdoses are men in that like 25, 34 to 48 category.

So hearing those just sort of right off to you.

What's your just overall reaction to that and like what's kind of what you're kind of seeing happening in these spaces.

It's not surprising at all.

If you go after masculinity and the masculine soul is destroyed along the way,

you're going to find a bunch of men that have been displaced that don't have something to fight for

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

and the tools to be able to engage in that warfare so we can undergird, provide, protect, and shepherd our families and the families, the bedrock of culture in general.

If masculinity goes by the wayside, the family unit follows and culture goes into a precipitous decline as well.

And so none of this is surprising at all.

There has been a subtle tacit war against masculinity in its traditional understanding.

And so the idea is authoritarian regimes would displace their greatest competition and that's strong men who are not afraid of being bullied and who will stand for principle.

And they can do so with intellect and a host of other tools at their disposal to be able to keep tyrants in check.

And so if you want to rule the roost unchallenged unchecked you destroy your opposition strong men.

And so that's just one piece of what's going on.

I'm curious.

What is the masculine soul?

That's a very specific wording you use.

So like I'll be interested in what that means.

Sure.

So some people think that we are bodies and we have souls.

I am more of C.S. Lewis's inclination.

We are souls and we happen to have a body.

You are, you know, and that so basically I have an immortal soul and I was created male.

And my body matches that of course because it cannot be otherwise.

And so basically it means I'm knit together differently than a female.

What I major on they minor on and what they major on I minor on so it's not like there isn't parallel but generally speaking I'm supposed to protect and provide and shepherd in a servant style leadership.

Something I'm curious about is obviously the book, you know, refers in the title to warrior poets to use the word warrior early in the episode I'm interested in.

Obviously, you know, you're a former armor ranger.

So the military language rhetoric is going to come naturally to you.

We live in a society that's increasingly civilian at every single different level like we're actually at the 50th anniversary of the end of the draft in terms of the Vietnam War.

So when you're speaking to men via YouTube or people who are reading your book, it seems like our experiences are going to be completely divorced from this sort of military ethos you're speaking to.

What's that like?

Like what do you where do you kind of see the gap emerging everywhere you look there's a fight, whether it's socially or it's in the world of academia, whether it's in competing narratives and value structures on the silver screen for Hollywood, whether it's in the psychology psychology camp.

So like Jordan Peterson, that is a warrior and you brought him up earlier.

I'm like, that's a warrior.

And then there's also military and police and so EMS everywhere I look, I see a world on fire.

There's a cultural war, a legal war.

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

There's physical wars.

Ultimately, though, all power and laws are backed up by force.

And so like us, I don't like taxes and I own my home.

And so I don't feel like I should have to own pay property taxes.

And if I just send the IRS just a letter of like, hey, I'm out.

I own this home back off.

Eventually they will seize my property.

And if I don't leave, they'll send men with guns to throw me in jail or they'll shoot me.

And so ultimately even paying something like taxes on a home you already own, they will kill you for it.

Ultimately, all laws and power derive itself from physical force.

And so I think it is not just a metaphor to say warrior, but it's a good all around idea for men to be able to be strong.

Now I'm in no way, I use that as just a little example.

I'm in no way saying, hey, take up arms and take on big brother.

I'm like, no, I'm just pointing out that all power and all laws ultimately are backed up by physical force.

And so because we live in a world where the threat of violence is always under the surface, even a few levels,

whether it's somebody breaking into my home or some active killer event because mental unwellness is really, really bad.

And we have this idea that violence is always somewhere out there, but as a loving protector, I'm a guy who doesn't want to fight.

I don't want to hurt anybody.

Now I have tools to be able to do that.

So if violence comes to my doorstep, I'll be able to protect those that I love, even if they're strangers.

I'm a protector of the innocent, not looking for a fight, but certainly knowing how to end one.

And so it is out of love for humanity and truth that we want to be able to be good protectors.

And so warrior can be taken metaphorically in those other areas.

I already talked about it of academia and whatnot or legal and social, cultural, but also a physical means to being a warrior is a good idea for everyone.

And you don't have to don multicam and join the military or something to do that.

Everybody can make small steps to take a jutsu class, man, to do some gun stuff.

Yay for that.

Learn some blade fighting or some just general security things that could be able to mitigate risk for you and yours.

You know, I'm really curious.

How do you think men who are particularly attracted to the spaces you're in, right?

So whether that's resiliency, independence, gun culture, etc.

How do they balance that independence of also like their obligations to society?

Because once again, like it's very easy to kind of go down a path of like, well, wait, why do I have to pay taxes?

And then like the tax man's there.

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

Like, how do you think about how people should balance those different competing instincts, maybe? Good question.

So I don't like a forced obligation to my fellow man.

So the moment somebody starts saying of like, you owe this to your fellow man, you owe this to your country.

That seems like a slippery slope where globalist or leaders could demand it of me.

So I'm a huge fan of giving charitably to other people.

I'm not a fan at all about the illegal confiscation of the fruits of your labor and the redistribution thereof.

I think socialism or communism is stealing.

That's what it is.

It is taking what you didn't earn and redistributing to other folks.

And so I don't like that at all.

So I'll be very charitable of like I'm giving and I want to be able to contribute to my fellow man and help with society.

But I don't like it to be compulsory.

And so that starts to look like authoritarianism.

That looks like tyranny.

It immediately gives them a crack in the door, which they will fling wide open within one generation.

And so I think there is a burden of brotherly love that we should give to our fellow man.

And by extension, that will ripple out to an entire country.

But I don't owe my political leaders anything.

They should owe me something though.

They represent me.

I don't serve them.

They serve me is the way it should be.

So anyway, that's that that gives you a little bit of a glimpse into how I see the idealic form.

Did that answer your question?

No, it did because the key thing there is you're kind of differentiating between communism and socialism.

But still under your articulated review, you're still fine playing property taxes to support basic social services like the police fireman, like those things.

So I think there is a certain amount of taxes that I'm good to pay of like, I think that being able to combat foreign threats, which are extremely hostile.

It'd be a good idea for us to be able to have a military.

I think roads are really important.

Now, I think 90 something percent of the taxes that we pay are absolute government bloat that is causing far, far more harm than good.

And we are moving toward a welfare state, which is they take massive amounts of a person's wealth over their time and then barely give them anything back in the way of social security once they hit a certain age.

I'm like, if you didn't rob them blind their whole lives, everyone's going to kick back as, you know, very, very wealthy people.

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

But if you add up all the taxes that you're paying of like, maybe I don't know what you make, Marshall.

I'm not interested.

I'm a millionaire.

No, I'm not.

Well, I'm just saying, you know, maybe it's maybe it's as low as, you know, 25 or 30 percent.

Maybe it's as high as 40 percent.

I don't know.

But if you start adding up of like, all right, well, here's your property tax.

Here's all the sales tax that you do.

Here's a vehicle tax and all you got your cell phone tax.

Everything you do is taxed.

And so if you add it all up, it may be something like 40 to 50 percent of your entire earnings are given straight back to the government.

50 percent.

I'm higher than that.

And so they're taking massive amounts of wealth and spending it in ways that I find not only unwise, but some of it I find outright evil and diabolical.

So at what point is taxation, pure theft and tyranny?

At some point, we all become slaves.

What happens when the tax rate is effectively 80 percent?

If in the words of Andrew Clavin, when they take your money, they take your time because you trade your time to get money.

When they take your time, they take your life because your life is made up of time.

At what point do you actually become a slave?

70 percent tax rate.

90, 100 percent.

You're obviously a slave.

But 90 percent tax rate, you can't survive.

The dream of living for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness is utterly dead because you cannot make it on 10 percent, not even close.

And so we are certainly on a line where taxation has reached such a high level that it is outright theft and tyranny.

And I don't know what that line is exactly, but I know there is a line.

I don't want zero and I certainly don't want 100.

So I'm working that out still.

I don't know.

Yeah.

And you're just, you know, you're describing politics in terms of like what that line is and how you determine what that line is.

You know, something I'm curious, especially given, you know, your status as a veteran, you said explicitly that, you know, you're not a huge fan of obligation, inherent obligation, especially at a compelled level.

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

And something that a lot of folks in like more, let's say, like traditional political circles have like raised when they're confronting what the numbers they started the podcast with are, hey, like maybe we need to bring back national service.

Like maybe we need to have a draft, like look at the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s, always like, you know, 18 to 25 year old men like going off into the woods and like building stuff, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

What do you think about drafts, national service compulsory things like that as means of basically two questions and like at a philosophical level, what do you think and then to wasn't saying like there was like a draft and you had two years of obligatory service like it's the 1950s.

What do you think that would do to address some of the things that you talk about or are concerned about?

Well, something like 1950s, if I looked at a country that actually stuck to our Constitution and wasn't this rogue, insidious thing, well, I would feel a little bit better at the idea of a concept of a draft of like, hey, World War, your whole country is going to be steamrolled and everyone you love is going to die.

And so let's just put that as like, that is our constraint.

So let's make a thought experiment, that is it.

And if we don't organize and make a draft, our entire way of life is going to be gone.

I wouldn't like the idea of a government being able to draft free citizens because that is basically the forcing of the free man to risk their life for a cause they may not believe in.

And so I do not like that on its face, the idea of a draft.

However, I will give a nod to the practicality of it.

Maybe that's the only way everyone even survives of like we enjoy certain liberties as Americans and that liberty is not free.

You know, you do have to pay some type of taxes.

You do have to give yourself over to submit for the public good a certain amount of laws for your fellow man.

You shall not murder is part of the deal.

You know, you got to sign on for that.

And if you can't sign on for this a few, you know, important laws, well, then you can be feet and go live somewhere else.

But there is certain advantages of being an American and you have to basically you can't just be completely rogue, libertine, do whatever you want in a psychopathic way without consequence.

You know, so, idealically, I kind of struggle with the idea of a draft in general.

Nowadays, I definitely have a huge problem with the draft because of one is what I see the state of our country in also the presidency.

You have to swear an oath to follow the orders of Joe Biden as commander in chief.

I won't do that.

I won't do anything of like, I think that is a corrupt crime syndicate.

I think I have absolutely no ability to pledge my life and death to the orders of Joe Biden of like, I don't think there's anything operating upstairs.

I think he's a globalist puppet.

And so, man, I can't ask I certainly don't want to be drafted into that.

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

And also seeing that the military is being eviscerated by the consequence of woke ideology forced upon it.

Soldiers are fleeing the military because of installed woke leadership, which is destroying the fabric of the military.

And now as recruitment is down over 25% for its goals for this year.

They have recently made an announcement that they intend to activate the inactive ready reserve.

So to take soldiers that have already gotten out and to say, hey, you're going to come back in so we can meet our numbers.

They're forcing you to go along with this woke ideology.

And then they're forcing you into the military so you can't even escape the woke ideology.

So it's it's really bad state.

I would absolutely oppose vehemently any type of draft right now, especially as as everything is.

So if there was some other thermonuclear war and we're thrust into an apocalyptic, you know, nuclear dystopian future and everything is falling to pieces.

Well, we can talk about draft then.

I don't know.

I don't know.

Yeah, yeah.

Immediately forget about woke stuff overnight as soon as we're all the way down on Maslow's hierarchy of needs to just basic survival.

We'll forget about genders immediately when we all have distended bellies because we can't eat.

I think the thing that's fascinating for me here then is so million follow ups to this.

So one military obviously played a huge role in getting you to where you are your conception of yourself.

A lot of the ideals you're describing here.

So to hear your dissatisfaction with that status quo is honestly kind of depressing.

I guess what I would ask is this is a podcast which is, you know, listened to by people in like decent positions of like power and influence.

So I want you to kind of speak to them if you're describing this.

What I'm curious about is like, given what you just articulated your dissatisfaction of Joe Biden, I'm not quite sure how we're supposed to organize a society.

If that is your mentality, like in the sense that if this were 2005, I could have found a super liberal, you know, vet from the 90s or something who would have said like, what could George W. Bush, he, you know, lied us into Iraq.

He lied us into, you know, Afghanistan, body, body, body, body.

Those aren't my opinions, but like someone could easily kind of say that.

And I guess sort of like as a policy person, I'm like, shit, like, are we supposed to organize a society if we're kind of swaying between those two positions.

So just like, what's your kind of like reflection on that?

I got an answer.

So whether it's a guy I like in the White House or a guy that I don't like in the White House or a gal, whatever.

2023, you know, whatever.

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

I don't think they should have nearly the power they do over our lives.

I think the primary power should rest with the Constitution.

We should be free.

We shouldn't have, you know, just tens of thousands of crazy laws on the books.

You don't even know everyone's committing felonies every day.

There's so many or at least misdemeanor all over the place because we have so many laws.

And when laws are that prevalent, freedom is shrinking.

When the government grows losses, the federal government's millions and millions of employees, the bigger the government is, the smaller the man is.

The bigger the government is, the less free you and I are.

And look at the spending.

It's trillions and trillions of dollars.

The executive branch wields untold amounts of power that is really unchecked, too, as they have appointed all these zahars over all these just different areas, which can completely affect our lives.

And so I think the power of the federal government should be shrunk dramatically, drastically, wildly.

And in that effect, it wouldn't matter as much who was in the White House.

Right now it matters a lot who's in the White House and you better like them because everything's about to change one way or the other.

And regardless of how it changes, and this is why I really despise politicians in general, is it never really changes for the better.

I hear all kinds of political platitudes of here's the Republican talking points, the Democratic talking points, but guess what?

Things bureaucrat bureaucracy seems to be advanced, what could gender seems to be advanced.

I'm losing my country.

I love my country still.

And I do not like the abandonment of ideals, the warring that we're doing against the First Amendment and the Second Amendment, which is the only real backstop of a failing Republic of this is not good.

And so the problem is, is everything is hopelessly corrupt.

On that note, you know, something I'm curious about you're bringing up your dislike of politicians, politicians are increasingly coming on to your turf in terms of like the masculinity discourse.

You know, I've had Senator Josh Hawley on the podcast, he recently, you know, wrote a book of masculinity, Senator Chris Murphy of Connecticut, who you are very not aligned on when it comes to gun policy, etc.

He's just like written a book about masculinity.

He's talking about this.

Do you have any just sort of thoughts on people who are directly in politics?

Like you speak to politics sometimes, but like that's not your day job.

What do you think about politicians entering into the masculinity crisis of men discourse left writer center, right?

It's less, you know, evaluate Josh.

What do you think about like their perspective by coming into this situation?

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

Sure.

So on a very few exceptions, you know, of like, I really do not like politicians because I think most of them are absolutely corrupt, wielding untold amount, untold amounts of power.

And so there's a few exceptions I can think of right now a few politicians or I'm like, man, they're awesome.

But it's not the office that I am repulsed against.

It's the type of man occupying it or woman occupying it of like, I want good men and women occupying all the different areas of life.

And so it's very possible to have really good politicians.

I just see that most of them are absolutely corrupt.

And that's my big upset.

It's not the office.

Now, I don't like politics in general.

Folks know I'm not political, but people less discerning may be listening in and be like, oh, John is being very political.

No, I'm not.

The problem is, is politics has swallowed up everything else.

So everything has become a political discussion and talk about abortion because somehow that's a political issue.

How is that a political issue?

Exactly.

How's abortion?

I could see it being a biological issue, a theological one, a moral issue, a philosophical.

How is it political?

You know, like, you know, masculinity is a political issue.

The weather.

You can't just talk about the weather climate change.

Everything is now a political issue.

And so the only way you can avoid being political is to talk about nothing.

Talk about sport.

No, sports is political.

I mean, sport sports players certainly asserting themselves in the political realm of taking knees and making public statements and going after America and boo for the flag and weighing in on all kinds of stuff.

Of now these are political activists as well.

So there's no place I can go to escape politics.

And that irritates me because now I have to, you know, enter into political discussion and I don't.

I'm theological.

I'm highly philosophical on those areas, but I don't really like politics.

Now, my, my big contention for most of the political leaders is this.

You can enter into public service and you have a capped salary.

Maybe you make 150 grand a year.

Maybe it's 250 grand a year.

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

And somehow you immediately become a multimillionaire with beach houses all over the place. You know, if like your, your hedge funds are outperforming the greatest hedge funds man, hedge fund managers.

You're doing legalized insider trading to make a bunch of money or you're taking suitcases of money from people.

Like how is it that you are multimulti-millionaire serving in this public office?

If like it's just the most obvious way that the American populace can be like, oh, you guys are all super corrupt.

Oh, you're all bought and paid for, aren't you?

Your opinions aren't your own.

You'll placate the masses telling us lies and empty, yeah, raw platitudes.

And then you'll do the secret bidding of the globalist who bought you, you bunch of crummy, spineless cowards.

And so that'd be my message for most politicians.

For the few out there who didn't take the briefcase of money, all you have is my most sincere and ardent thanks.

Brothers and sisters continue to toe the line.

Thank you.

We need you.

We support you.

And I dare say we love you.

Thank you for being virtuous in a world gone wrong.

So I appreciate that answer because I think it gets to the core of the dilemma here.

I think the difficulty when like, let's say, and I think this kind of goes to your point around the size of the state and what government's up to.

Obviously, a lot of the things like abortion are going to become political just because like, like it, oppose it, et cetera, the state's making decisions on those levels.

I just want to note that.

But I guess my question for you is then what is your advice for how folks should try to address the topics that we're hitting today without descending into unhelpful politics?

I think something that's happened with like Jordan Peterson, I think that back in 2017-2018 when he came on the stage is I think he was like super, super, super compelling, super, super interesting.

But now he's doing like, you know, anti climate change, you know, monologues, you know, for the daily wire.

And like, obviously, like he's entitled to hold his positions, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

It's more just that like, if I were his, you know, guy on the side, I'd be like, yo, like, by becoming political and what you're becoming political.

I think the thing which you're most useful on, which is just like, you know, 10 rule, you know, the rules and everything is going to be really be kind of ruined here.

So like, maybe you disagree with that.

And like, obviously, don't want to talk about it.

I'm not telling people to kind of shut up, but I'm just trying to say, like, it's just, it's just frustrating for me.

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

Do you kind of get what I'm saying?

It's sort of like, how do you, how do you think, how do you think through this as a creator yourself to that?

So there's the tactical move of I know how to get more views on YouTube.

And if I get more views on YouTube, I will make more money.

And if I make more money, I can do more stuff that I want to do, you know, and that'd be pretty swell.

I like money.

I like influence.

I like people excited about the content.

I would rather have less trolls, less people angry at me, less people attacking me.

That all sounds pretty great.

And I think Jordan Peterson's the same way.

I think he knows exactly the tactile tactical reasons why he should and could operate very, very differently.

But he doesn't do the tactical thing because he doesn't care as much.

I don't care anymore.

I'm ticked off enough about corruption running rampant about sin and evil and lawlessness.

I am tired of being bullied.

I'm tired of seeing freedom of speech attacked.

I'm tired of seeing little kids mutilated dead babies.

I'm tired.

I'm sick of it.

And people may not like that, but we should always have let's have open discourse.

Let's engage in the war of ideas and let's not have big tech corporations that can censor us and shut us down.

Let's continue in the democratic way of disagreeing and coming to consensus and arguing things out.

The problem is, is when First Amendment starts to corrode and disappear and that the people demand the censorship of the views that they don't like.

Well, I'm like, well, then, then you're ultimately consigning us to physical war later.

If you lose in the war of ideas and you take away a person's voice so that they can't speak and you can't argue in the public square.

And if you censor them long enough, that's going to build and grow and grow until one day the only recourse you've left with them is physical violence.

And I do not want war.

I do not want that.

And so I'm just recognizing not as like a hate threat.

This will happen.

It's like, no, no, no, this, this is just the eventual cause and effect.

So you don't want public discourse to break down.

Don't cancel anyone.

Let it all work out in the wash in the war of ideas of like, if you don't like Peterson on climate change

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

stuff, we'll listen to his argument.

Don't say that.

Just listen and then listen to the counter arguments and then back and forth and back and forth and keep an open mind.

And it's okay to passionately believe stuff because yeah, like that, that means you stand for something that's good.

The worst thing is when people put up tolerance is the top thing.

GK Chesterton, a great 20th century philosopher would say tolerance is the top virtue of a people without convictions.

And what that means is because you don't really have any core beliefs.

Because you don't feel anything in your bones to be true and valuable.

All that you care about is just keeping the peace instead of like, no, no, no, don't disagree with what's going on.

Just go along with the status quo.

Let's have everybody happy on the surface so that in 20 years will all crack under the facade, the veneer and it'll be outright war.

So we got to engage healthily with the people we disagree with in the culture war to mitigate what would ultimately happen later.

And is always the cause in history when people's points of view are repressed is you are not too far away from open war.

And I don't want that.

That's fascinating.

So here's a follow up to that the non-tolerance and you're better read on this stuff than I am.

So please like, yeah, I'm saying this.

I'm saying this unironically, like educate me on this.

Is there a difference between a societal norm of tolerance versus you individually, John?

No truth that you hold to be true to kind of get what I'm saying.

Because from my perspective, it's like, OK, like as a building block of society, we have 330 million people.

We're not going to agree to one truth.

Therefore, a society of 330 million people would try or even like, let's say like, because like I'm in Texas, right?

Like a society of like, you know, tens of millions of people who said, we're going to have truth be our number one objective.

Like that wouldn't work here either.

And that would just lead to like division and division and division.

Now we're debating, you know, parts of like Austin versus other parts of Austin who have different truths, right?

We're getting to our most microscopic.

So how would you differentiate between tolerance as a societal norm and just sort of like as individuals.

We know our truths and we're confident in it.

If we can't agree on one truth, we're screwed.

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

The Americas failed and it just takes a little time to work that out.
If you can't agree on one truth, then we are screwed.
A house divided against itself cannot stand.
And before we were rallied around one truth, we were one nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all.
We agreed with that.
That was our one truth that everyone signed up for and everyone agreed with.
And we hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they're endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights.
And among these rights are the rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.
And then we made a bill of rights that said the government's not allowed to take away free speech or to censor anybody.
And they're not allowed to keep the press from being able to expose corruption and stories and bury them.
And you're allowed to assemble.
We can't lock you down and shut you down.
You're allowed to do all this stuff and you're allowed to have physical recourse against a tyrannical government gone wrong because you can all have guns.
And we're not allowed to make any firearm laws to be able to take away your ability to do that.
And so we all believe that until now.
And it's been really eroding for decades now.
So it's not like now, but now as a nation declines, it does so slowly over time until the very end.
And then it picks up wildly.
And we're in the very, we're in the twilight of the American experiment.
Perhaps in a hundred years, historians will look back and say America had actually already died as it was in its founding.
Perhaps we died in 2020.
I have no idea when historians will put the dash in the final date on America.
Maybe it's gone already.
Maybe it hasn't.
Maybe we'll get some type of revitalization.
But if we can't all come together under one truth, we are screwed before it was one nation under God and the Constitution.
Now, for the very first time in all human history, we have denigrated societally into truth being a relative idea.
There is no objective real truth.
And we have launched into a terrifying nihilistic relativism.
In relativism, there's not one truth or the truth.
There's just your truth and my truth.
And so you see it, you say two plus two equals five and I say three and we're both right in a relativistic system.
And of course, it's not true.
True capital T truth is narrow and exclusive by definition.

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

It just is.

And now it seems intolerant to say two plus two equals four.

All the infinite numbers is just for my you got it just for the laws of logic hold fast.

The law of identity and non-contradiction and the law of the excluded middle.

We can't even have discourse without relying that the laws of logic exist.

So when people say their truth, some of them mean in a relativistic way as if there is no truth.

And if we don't believe there is a truth, then we certainly can't rally around a truth that can guide us together so that when we disagree on little truths,

of like, hey, you think, you know, the earth is going to be under water from polar ice caps melting.

And in two years, we're all going to be dead.

And this other guy doesn't believe anything's going on.

And then there's other people that kind of believe some and some not like great.

We can all have different perspectives and we're weighing out data and we're disagreeing and we're talking about stuff and we're figuring it out.

But we're bound together through our commitment of the one great truth.

And then everything else is perspective.

It's difference and of opinion and it's all feeling our way toward more objective reality.

So this is where this gets really interesting because I don't know how much time you spent with people who work in like what you would call censorship,

what they would call like misinformation, disinformation space, people like big tech companies, we're going to give everyone their,

we'll give people the labels they want to pick, pick whichever one you are if you're a listener who comes from that space.

But I think what they would say is they would actually agree with you about the idea of truth.

And I think if you actually look at where a lot of more, let's say like heterodox or independent or conservative libertarian people kind of get pissed off at social media companies,

they're kind of ticked off at a 33 year old who lives in like Menlo Park in California.

And they're like, great point, John.

There is truth.

Pizza gate, like pizza gate, like the conspiracy theory that there was literally, you know, children in the basement of a DC pizza parlor and a random part of the city is not true.

That did not happen.

Therefore, because we as a society can't operate without with different interpretations of that story.

I am going to censor or I am going to block or I'm going to D algorithm to rank people who put that story out there.

Without someone at the government necessarily telling them I know people in that space who would do that with with or without a conversation with the FBI.

So what I'm curious about then is what would you say to them, right?

If someone would say you're right, John, truth is real.

Therefore, in my private capacity as a worker at a tech company with this platform that we own, I'm going to impose my interpretation or what I see is just the uncontested truth.

They would say pizza gate equals not real is the same thing as you saying one plus one plus one plus one equals four.

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

And by the way, you know this, never do math, ever do math live on a recording.

I was like, please get to four.

As I started saying one plus one plus one plus one equals four.

But what would you say to this dynamic, right?

Because I just it's not that you're contradicting yourself.

It's just that this you're getting at the tension.

Oh, great.

Then I have one simple request.

Great.

You get to censor whatever you think according to your worldview, but give up your I think it's section 30 protection from the federal government.

So that you were a publisher now to 230.

Yeah, 230 230.

So what that means is if I'm on the phone.

I'm on the phone right here and I'm talking to somebody and I'm saying something that AT&T disagrees with AT&T doesn't censor my call and cut it up.

What happened?

Oh, they didn't like what I say.

That's a utility.

They are a platform that allows phone calls to happen.

Well, the internet companies are operating like a platform.

Anybody get on say whatever you want.

Do your thing.

But for the internet and for information.

But the moment they start saying and this is true and this is false and will boost this story and will downgrade this and will put censorship accounts on this ideology because we really don't like these conservative voices.

But we really like these lefty voices.

As soon as you start doing this, you're acting as a publisher, you're curating the information according to your worldview.

And so just remove your protection because are you a platform or are you a publisher?

If you're a publisher, then go nuts.

But if you have damages, we get to sue you for it as would be the case for any publisher on the planet.

But they enjoy legal protections and indemnification as if they're a platform, but then they act like a publisher.

So there's no public recourse and that's highly, highly inappropriate.

They're having their cake and eat it too.

And it's the government that's allowing them to do that because ultimately I think the government as the Twitter file showed is pulling the strings behind silencing political opponents.

When the Twitter files came out, it was extremely revealing that all these lefty tech corporations are banning the voices that they do not like.

And so you can bring up something that's radical, like a pizza gate thing and say, see, because of this

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

crazy thing, now they have an open door to also do the bigger problem, which is they're banning other folks.

If I'm censored every single day, we've got good content.

People love it, but they just don't get my notifications anymore.

You try to search for me and you're not already finding me.

Good luck following me.

I remember typing in warrior poet society and I typed in the entire word and we have hundreds of thousands of followers on Instagram.

This was recently typed in on someone else's phone and I had to scroll down to page two to find out they fully typed out warrior poet society because there's a shadow band and not letting people who don't already know me find me.

And then they're like quarantining on YouTube like I'm a virus to slowly choke me out of existence while they flip my audience into other viewpoints.

Perhaps if I'm far right to them or whatever, they'll flip them slowly to something more moderate and then they'll see torquing girls from tick tock and they'll see stupid cat videos and whatever they can.

And so I see a radical, highly discriminatory, illegal, sensorious behavior that's happening from the big tech corporations and there's absolutely zero accountability for it.

And so they can silence and cudgel folks that would dissent by saying, hey, we're just, you know, or it's not there is always the first reaction or they'll say, hey, see the pizza gate kind of thing.

Well, I just had a friend post a sound of freedom movie review with Jim Caviesal, the actors Jim sex slavery is one of the worst human slavery problems of all time.

America is one of the greatest consumers of it.

And so we absolutely know this is a pizza gate.

This is human slavery happening right now and YouTube banned the story.

They not they they they removed it.

There wasn't anything offensive.

There was no, you know, graphic displays of anything.

There was no foul language.

They just buried the story.

And I'm like, whoa, why are you censoring a guy who just wants to help little kids from being sold into sexual slavery?

What is happening there?

And so, yeah, everything's super corrupt.

And everyone needs Jesus.

That's what we need.

We need Jesus.

So there you go.

So in this last section, a couple more personal questions.

So just number one, I am I'm really interested in you just, you know, you've got a really compelling background.

You're citing GK Chesterton, but you're also kind of on YouTube.

It's something I'm just kind of curious about is like, how do you think of YouTube?

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

What's put aside like censorship debates?

Like, is being a YouTuber a useful place for being grounded in like your thought or kind of in the work you're putting out?

Because something I just sort of think about if you're reading about people who are intellectually minded, like in the pre Internet era, you know, you write a piece and it gets picked up by a magazine or a newspaper.

Maybe it doesn't be a dozen or you have your own newsletter, but there's no algorithm.

There's no like, I did this episode of Neil Howe, who's done who's the fourth turning guy a week or two ago, and I just woke up and had 100,000 views in comparison to like a super wonky healthcare episode.

The only had like 3000 views.

It's like not a shocker that that would be like a differential reality there.

But I'm sort of like going through this experience of, oh man, like, obviously, if my desire is to be like John, I need to do more fourth turning videos.

It's very straightforward.

Now I'm grounded in the sense that okay, I don't want to just do that.

It's cool that I get paid to do 100k one day, 3k another day.

So how do you just think about this like when you're putting this about yourself will also try to be grounded in your own thought?

I don't really care as much about the views or the algorithm anymore.

The algorithms rigged against me and some views are going to crush it and some people some won't.

I'm not after huge views or huge money anymore.

Anymore.

So where did you start?

I don't think I actually I said that poorly of I before of like when I was early starting off, I was just trying to survive.

I was in debt trying to just feed my family.

And so it's I wasn't compromising morally then.

But I'm just saying of like when I first got into business, you know, of like years and years ago of like, I was fighting to survive.

I needed money.

I was never going to compromise my beliefs.

But I mean, especially now more than ever of like, hey, YouTube's trying to put me out of business.

So is Instagram and Facebook.

So so is all these baited there.

They have a plan to put me out of business.

That's what I believe the of like I am many times bigger than I was in 2018.

Now we're well over a million followers on YouTube, but my views are less than they were when back in 2018.

Five years ago with a fraction of the following, my views are lower now than they were then.

My money now from YouTube is lower now than 2018 levels.

How?

How is that?

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

How is it mathematically possible?

And it's not.

It's not.

You cannot.

It would be an insult to my intelligence to suggest that it is because of my poor content is because I don't have anything to say as we've we've multiplied staff.

We've got high cool tech gear.

We've figured a bunch of stuff out.

We got mailing lists and all powerful websites and still I'm less than 2018 left.

That deck is so rigged against me.

So I have an option.

I can play the algorithm game and make everything I say so count out to the policies that they want to push.

I won't say any of the stuff that matters.

And then I may be able to make some entertaining stuff and I'll get some good views, which means good money and whatever of like, but I don't care anymore.

I don't get put me out of business.

I give a rip.

I'm going to say the truth as loudly as I can screw you guys to evil people of like destroying people's lives with just horrible, horrible.

It's the mutilation of kids that's really got me upset too.

It's also the murder of kids in and the destruction of a country that I've loved and fought for.

I hate it.

I can't stand it.

And so, yeah, put me out of business.

I don't care.

I'm done being bullied.

And so it's part of, you know, of like the impetus of the book of they are putting me out of business digitally.

So, okay, I'm going to go do speaking events on the country.

I will go physically to people and they can take my words, which cannot be censored now and buy my book.

And so now it is physical there.

And so I'm trying as the digital has been overrun.

It's a dead end street for me.

It's a dead end street.

They're not going to allow me to continue.

They took a sitting president of a billionaire and they silenced him.

They took him off all social media and then they wouldn't cover any of his stories and let him speak to the people except in little soundbites.

They silenced the leader of the free world who was a billionaire.

They silenced him.

Now, I don't I'm not making a judgment call on whether you like Trump or hate Trump.

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

I'm not interested in that.
And I'm not saying what I believe.
I'm just saying they did that.
I'm like, holy cow.
And then the rest of us are screwed.
If they can do that to him, what are they going to do to all those little guys?
And everyone's a little guy compared to Trump, you know?
And so, yeah, it's really, really bleak.
And that's why I deeply love my family.
That's why I'm in a fight for freedom.
And when I'm done with this of like, I'm going to be out hanging with my family and having some fun.
And I'll read some books because that's where the wisdom is.
It's a very you'll find stuff online, but you'll sort through a whole lot of poison and you'll ingest a lot of poison too.
Whereas the older books, I really like that too.
So I visit the internet, but I don't live online.
I live in the real world.
I've got real deep relationships.
We're making steps towards self-sufficiency on our homestead.
And we got full, vibrant lives, loving Jesus.
And yeah, spending quality time with each other.
And so I will re I will visit the world and try to rescue it as far as I can on my little corner of the internet, which is disappearing under my feet because I'm not going to just roll over.
I'm not going to go down without a fight.
I will not go silently into that good night.
So for the last kind of wrap up question, we've got a bunch of different places.
This has been fun, but we did start really heavily with the, you know, deaths of despair.
And when I was bringing up like the declining college enrollment, it's not that I necessarily think we should have more people go into college.
It's that if you look at the declining enrollment plus the declining workforce participation, people are not taking one path that may be failed and transitioning to something that works.
It seems like people are just kind of like stuck in this middle.
So just given everything you've written, you know, with the warrior poet way, given the kind of a practical side of your career, right?
You're doing firearms instruction, like, you know, you're, you're a former army ranger, et cetera.
What would you tell people kind of find themselves like young men who find themselves in that category?
Because the one, this isn't, I think, I think micro, you know, dirty jobs.
I think that's like important discourse, but like that's been, I'm 31, right?
Like I've seen that discourse since I was in high school.
So like, it's just not enough to tell people, you know, you don't have to just go to college.
You could go be an electrician and make more money like, and that could be very true.

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

But also like, that's obviously not enough.

This problem has gotten worse.

So we obviously need something deeper than just like making clear there are other pathways outside of that stereotypical, you know,

go get your BA from the state university like paths.

So how do you just sort of like some of us look like, how do you think about like when you run out?

Because I'm sure you run into young men who are in that weird in between space.

Like, what do you say to them?

Yeah, are you asking, hey, young, like specifically vocation, like a career path for young men?

Oh, just, yeah, yeah, yeah, basically.

Yeah, thank you.

This is why it's good to talk to people who do this professionally.

What I'm getting at here is if we look at those statistics I cited at the top of the episode, declining college enrollment, declining workforce participation.

Very clearly, a lot of young men are taking themselves out of like this traditional like received path of how you achieve success.

Like the path that like, let's say it's 2005 that like your high school principal were told you like the path succeed.

Men are not choosing that.

And I'm just deeply skeptical of anything that says like, hey, and the way we're going to fix all this is we get men going back to college in the same exact way they were going before today.

I don't think that's a possible solution.

So if we're in this in between where young men are rejecting the old status quo.

What do you think is a helpful path that young men could take that doesn't lead to the destruction and the despair they were kind of talking about with like the death and the suicide and the overdoses.

Yeah, so I understand what folks leaning in right now would want to hear, but truly I cannot impress this enough.

The thing that really made the biggest change for me that that took me from more of an apathetic lifestyle of like, I know what I'm supposed to do.

I just don't care.

I've just rather watch TV and eat junk food and be taken care of and I get that.

I'm like, I don't want to do hard work.

And the thing that really changed me is I got converted to Christian and I started becoming a follower of Jesus about 22 years ago and it's made all the difference.

Set my bones on fire.

I care about truth.

All of a sudden my desire to learn grew up.

It just blessed me in every single way.

Everything I've got so done.

Truly it is the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

It is the fear of it.

And so that sounds like such a churchy Sunday school.

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

Some people are being like, oh, come on, John.

I'm like, no, I'm I'm telling you, that's the best thing you could do for life here on earth and the next. For those of that of like, man, just the wisdom of the world is ridiculous, stupid.

It's just stupid.

None of it's worth it.

What matters is loving God, loving people and being on that mission.

And, you know, I could kind of vacillate on some other pieces that you skipped on.

I've got thoughts on college.

Most college degrees aren't worth the paper it's printed on and it actually does something worse than just waste four years of your time.

Five years of your time runs up massive student loans that don't disappear.

If you declare bankruptcy, you always have to pay the federal government can't escape those massive student loans.

So beware taking money from the federal government to get an education that isn't going to pay off.

I get a few resumes every single day right now for Warrior Poets Society.

We're not offering positions right now.

So don't everybody swarm me.

I'm just saying right now we're getting resumes every single day.

And when I see a liberal arts degree, there's a check that it's hard to not look at that resume and think.

So liberal arts degree, are you a Marxist?

Are you a do you hate capitalism?

So if we hired you, you'd secretly be rooting against the company making money.

Is that what it is?

Of like, how woke are you?

How entitled are you?

Are you are you a lawsuit waiting to happen?

Now, I don't do any of the hiring and so nobody can throw any shade at me for it.

Because I just see resumes, but I'm not providing any input into our hiring processes now.

And so, but a liberal arts degree oftentimes will hurt you more than help you now.

I would rather you have no college education because what it means now is you are entitled.

You're woke.

You probably don't even know what bathroom to use and I'm supposed to trust you with a client.

But, you know, this is insanity.

You're spending massive amounts of time and money to change your brain into working in a way that is not helpful at all for a company.

So I would rather have just a hard working and virtuous, you know, 19 year old before me with no college education.

I'm like, all right, I can build this dude up into something that's that's, you know, highly good if we had time.

Usually you got to come with skills already for the various things that you'd be plugging into.

So anyway, I would be real careful just seeking the wisdom of the world, which is like, hey, go get a college degree of like, man, that's right now my house is under construction.

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

So I'm at my home office right now and I got construction workers in there right now doing jobs that I don't really understand.

I really like those guys.

They seem like really good dudes and they've got a skill set and they're paid very well.

Believe me, they're paid.

Unfortunately, they're paid very well and they don't have massive federal debt for their education.

That's almost worth it.

Now, if you want to be a doctor, lawyer, engineer, you got to go to college, do the thing.

But, you know, you're our history majors just going to set you back \$100,000 five years and make you an idiot.

So last 30 second follow up question then.

So you are not hiring right now.

But I guess what would your advice be for a 19 year old who's hearing what you're saying and is saying like, well, but you're not hiring.

How do you suggest some what not suggest like what should someone do in that position if they just want to get hired in general, right?

Like we're not so easy.

Yeah, so easy.

Awesome question.

Love this question.

You will absolutely annihilate all the other folks vying for jobs.

If you just show up on time, stay a little late every day.

You have a good attitude.

Yes, sir or no, sir.

Learn, grow, do what you're asked.

Have a good attitude and you will annihilate because no one's doing the simple basic things.

All the stuff that was just kind of commonplace in our grandparents day, just part of being a human being are gone.

And so if like you just find somebody who will do what they say they'll do, do what's just the baseline of what what's expected.

You know, and so that right there of like, man, you find somebody like that, hold on to them and then you'll promote them.

And fast of like, grow up.

It doesn't really matter where that 19 year old lands get into a profession and you can set yourself apart from the throng with all that.

And then you just build yourself up.

You know, if you're acting in the way that I tell you to your competent, you tell the truth to show up before, you know, early, you stay late and you have a good attitude and you're teachable.

Man, employers will do anything they can to keep you and promote you.

And so then, yeah, that that's absolutely true for small business and small business is where you want to go.

No, the corporate route is harder and harder that that's going to be you can do the corporate route and maybe you make a little bit more up on front.

[Transcript] The Realignment / 393 | John Lovell: Confronting the Crisis Facing America's Men and Boys

But on the back end, your your ability to really get ahead won't be available to you unless you work such insane hours for so long that it's very hard to keep a family intact.

So I'd urge you to do a small business.

There you go. That's it.

Yeah. And the corporate is very hard to break into corporate America without a college degree.

So really, like the 19 year old.

Yeah, that's that's going to be a tough one.

So, hey, John, this has been really great different style of interview for this show.

But I really appreciate having you.

Can you shout the book out real quick?

All that good stuff.

Yeah, sure.

The book is the Warrior Poet Way.

It's now a national bestseller.

So we are thrilled and grateful for that.

People are really liking it.

It took me a few years to write.

So I'm glad that it didn't waste years of my life.

The audiobook I has read by yours truly as well.

You did a good job.

You did you did you did you're a YouTuber.

So I hope you do a good job.

You did a great job.

So I can recommend that for folks.

Thank you.

So anyway, that's the book.

You can buy it at all places where books are sold.

Please get one for friends and family and your buddies and your small groups.

Appreciate it.

Thanks guys.

Awesome, man.

Thanks for joining.

Thanks for having me.

Hope you enjoyed this episode.

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Thanks.

See you all next time.

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