Andy Ngo discusses Antifa attacks with Bret Weinstein \_ Dark...

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**SPEAKERS**

Andy Ngo, Bret

**Bret** 00:00

Hey folks, Brett here. Welcome to the first official episode of Brett Weinstein's Dark Horse Podcast. I am sitting with Andy know who is a sub editor at Colette magazine, who has been documenting protests in the streets of Portland since 2016. And he became extraordinarily well known in the last two days as a result of an attack that took place on the streets of Portland, as he was reporting on anti fire. Andy, welcome to the podcast.

**Andy Ngo** 00:31

Thank you for having me.

**Bret** 00:33

So you've had quite an extraordinary run over the last several days. Do you want to tell us roughly what happened?

**Andy Ngo** 00:42

Yes, probably not. Every day that a podcast guest comes in with the top face like mine. What happened was, on the 29th of June, I was documenting a demonstration organized by an Tifa in Portland, Portland, for your listeners who may not be aware as a progressive monoculture, and it has very large movement of far less radicals, who call themselves anti fascists, and they organize under that name. And they were there to oppose right wing groups. So I came with my GoPro and steps away from the Multnomah County Justice Center, one of the most important institutions as a rule of law in Portland because it houses courthouses, the sheriff's office, central police precinct. When they were marching, they're chanting, no hate, no fear. The next thing that I that happened to me was, I got hit in the back of the head really hard. And I'm an extremely passive person. I've never been in a fight. So I don't even until now didn't know what a punch felt like. So it took a few seconds for me to register what happened, I was knocked forward. By the time I realized that and kind of regained my balance, the punches and hits just kept coming in from every direction. And when I thought it was over, it wasn't.

**Bret** 02:29

Let's back up. But you and I are friends. And I'm also a Twitter follower of yours. And you were quite concerned about what would happen to you at this protest. And you and I talked about whether I might join you, ultimately, I did not join you. I am pretty recognizable, and the ante if is not a fan of me, and I suspect that I've been there, it would have just created a second victim. But nonetheless, you knew that these folks had the potential for violence, and you went Anyway, why did you go?

**Andy Ngo** 03:08

You're right that I've been targeted quite relentlessly by an Tifa, particularly since the first of May, mayday. That was when I was amazed and punched in the stomach. And then docs, they released my family's address online. And then a few days after that attacked when I was at the gym, all of these incidents were reported to police in. Not much action had been done. Names of suspects provided, but no arrests made more than two months ago. So I knew what I thought I was going into a hostile environment. And I knew that the attacks on me before were meant to intimidate me into not documenting them anymore.

**Bret** 03:58

I think that's a key point is that the purpose of the attacks is to ensure that nobody documents what is taking place. In other words, you have people in the anti fire who dress in black, I think they would probably say that they do it for self protection, but it's clearly a mechanism to anonymize themselves so that they can commit crimes and get away with it. So you have a group of people who are massing, dressed for criminal activity, and they don't want to document it. And so I guess what I'd like to find out from you is what what was your mindset at the point that you decided to I mean, it's quite clear in the video that you walked not only not only did you go to the protest, but you walked right into the anti fur ranks.

**Andy Ngo** 04:55

Looking back now I feel naive, but I was thinking that If these people really knew who I was, they wouldn't believe all the things that some of the most devout ideologues were saying about me, for example, calling me a white supremacist, far right? propagandists for Nazis. Actually, that morning, before I went to the event, I put on a helmet because of the escalating tensions that have been happening. And I caught a glimpse on myself in the mirror before I left. And I decided to take the helmet off and leave it at home. I told myself I don't want to give anybody even the possible perception that I came ready to fight or that I'm a hostile person. That was a mistake. They went from my head and face and eyes in the attack.

**Bret** 06:02

With weaponized gloves

**Andy Ngo** 06:05

Yes. From what I could see before was blinded by what they say when milkshakes and eggs. The people punching me were wearing gloves that have fiberglass material on the knuckles, so they're much harder. I believe that's probably what caused the the cuts and abrasions. When the punches started happening all around me, I kept thinking, you know, I could see the Oregon justice, the Multnomah County Justice Center, I was thinking okay, at any moment, the police are going to come in and swoop me out. But it didn't happen. What ended up happening next was they beat me so badly that I lost control of my GoPro, which is brand new. And I that was the one thing I was looking forward to a lot was using it for the first time, a mass person grabbed it away from me and ran off. And then I thought, okay, they have that do they have what they want, they're gonna leave me alone. Now. I put up my arms to block my face from any more hits, and to also say, signal to them that this is a surrender. They took that as assigned to go in harder. So then came more punches, more kicks. And I hail of liquids that blinded me, really stung my skin. And they sprayed stuff all over me. And so when I was walking away, that you may have seen in the viral video now, I was just hoping that I was walking into a direction away from them, because I actually didn't know where I was going. And I was I just kept walking, walking. And I said at any minute now, the police are going to run in and help me and it never happened. I made it all the way across the park, to the front of the courthouse, and I lost my balance. And I sat on the ground. And a SWAT team and medics approached me. I let them know that I needed help. They said in order to get to the ambulance, in be taken to the hospital, I needed to walk back to the police precinct. So I had to go back in the direction where I was just attacked by this crowd.

**Bret** 08:34

So the police were there. They were nearby.

**Andy Ngo** 08:41

They were nearby.

**Bret** 08:43

And they did not act, they did not. So there are a couple things that I think need to be interjected here. You say they punched you. I think it has to be made clear to the audience. They sucker punched you. There was no question that you were not going to hit back. It would have been insane to do so and it isn't your nature and they will know that they sucker punched you wearing disguises to get away with it. They used weaponized gloves. So even a punch doesn't capture what happened to you the injuries on your face too. But this was an attack by cowards of somebody who they knew would not fight back. And I must say I find that absolutely despicable. And I think that something also needs to be said with respect to your presence there, which is I feel, you know, when I heard that you had been injured, and I knew that you had worried that it might happen. I sort of I couldn't help but draw connection with Christopher Hitchens having elected to be waterboarded in order to discover if it was torture, you know, it's not a perfect analogy, but in a sense, who wants to be waterboarded right, but somebody has to in order to be able To speak with authority about what it is who wants to be attacked by the antiva? Nobody. But to the extent that they want to pretend that what they are doing is fighting fascists, somebody has to document their fight. And the fact that that puts you in danger is the point. How is it possible that somebody like you, going into a protest with a camera is attacked with police nearby, and they don't intervene? That tells you something is very wrong with the system. And it is wrong in particular here in Portland. And I think the reason has a lot to do with the mayor, the mayor, who also in this case, happens to be the police commissioner. And I can't help but point out the connection between what happened here to you and what happened at evergreen. To me, the president of evergreen college, happens to be in a position to tell the police not to intervene in criminal activity, because the campus police are the ones with jurisdiction, and he happens to be their boss. It happens to be the case in Portland, that the mayor is also the police commissioner. And if there's one lesson that is absolutely clear from what happened over the weekend, it's that you can't have a mayor who has to face reelection in charge of deciding whether or not the police enforce the law, because what will happen is that a mayor pandering to a particular constituency will end up putting people in danger. I know that I have a family here and I feel in danger living in Portland knowing that the mayor will not enforce the law if certain people are committing crimes, but not others. And I think somehow this just has to has to end the police have to enforce the law. antiva are very clear that they have no respect for it, they chant all cops are bastards right out in the open, and then they commit crimes it needs to be addressed.

**Andy Ngo** 12:12

The police and authorities had ample opportunity to prepare properly for Saturday because anti fire had broadcast and the intense to, quote unquote, physically confront. And with the group's long history of militant violence. I don't understand why the police keep responding the same way which is basically just to let citizens be assaulted with impunity. I mean, I'm being in front of you today I'm speaking a little bit slower I from those injuries. That day to my head, the CT scan at the hospital confirmed that I have a brain hemorrhage. And I've never had a brain injury and it's only now the more than one speaking that I'm realizing, oh, there's certain minor deficiencies that I didn't realize while just laying in the hospital bed. Right?

**Bret** 13:21

So you're actually feeling some sort of neurological deficit from brain injury?

**Andy Ngo** 13:28

I do and it sounds it makes it sound like so serious. And at the time, I know that I was bleeding and dazed and all that but like I said, I've never been in a fight so I thought maybe wasn't as bad as what happened then I watched this video and there's at least a dozen people just kicking, hitting throwing stuff at me. And then I see Oh, it was that bad.

**Bret** 13:59

No, it was absolutely that bad. I mean, you were not only admitted to the hospital, but I visited you in the hospital. I heard them give the orders that you had to be awakened every hour to make sure you didn't fall into a coma. This was this was serious stuff. You were you received a serious head injury at the hands of people who are role playing some kind of bizarre delusion that fascists are everywhere that you are one and this. It just can't be and I must say when I when I went to the hospital, I was expecting that I wasn't even sure they were going to let me in. I was expecting the press to be descending on you in some form. And when I got there, you know, I was surprised that you were in the hallway. Right? You hadn't gotten a room yet. You know, I mean it was true that they required you to leave your name. To go visit you, but am I right that the press has largely so far not covered the story?

**Andy Ngo** 15:06

It's unfortunate that some stories have been focused on how the right pounced on this, and took advantage of this story for their own cause, rather than focusing on not just what happened to me, but the larger context of political violence, I have been escalating in the city ever since the 2016. election results were announced.

**Bret** 15:33

So there's a lot to be learned from this, I think, the parallels between what happened to you and what happened to me at evergreen are too many to ignore. And there is a way in which I know that the right did, I wouldn't say pounce on the story. But there's a way in which the story matches an accusation that the right has been leveling. But that was exactly the same thing that happened when it was me in their sights, and I'm not on the right. So I see this as very much a non partisan issue, you have people who say that they are on the left behaving very liberally behaving violently, and responding to an undue onst and delusional view of what's taking place in society. And the things that are supposed to kick in and prevent it from happening, are not functioning for political reasons. So you have a sense of what should happen next, so that this doesn't happen to somebody else.

**Andy Ngo** 16:35

The local authorities need to heed the warnings of the federal authorities when it comes to an Tifa into that since 2016. The DHS has described anti fur activities as domestic terrorist violence, but the group itself and the movements of both activities and that is something that the local police here, either for political reasons or what I don't know, don't take serious. In fact, unfortunately, very recently, the Portland city council actually voted to withdraw the city from the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force, citing concerns that the FBI and federal authorities unfairly monitor Muslims and left wing groups. So we have a city council and existential NC in the city who are not violent militants, but share a certain ideological alignment with an Tifa in their for believe their causes just immoral. And this is what gives them the legitimacy to continue to do what they do. They have a very, there's a much larger concentric circle of anti fascist sympathetic writers in the media who whitewash mainstream anti fur tactics into making it so that the public, don't even see what they do as problematic. But I hope what, what happened to me and I was very fortunate that an Oregonian journalist, at least caught part of the talk on camera that it brings to makes it very clear that this movement does not deserve to be called anti fascists. That's an absolute, that's a misnomer that they give themselves in the media has been compliant in calling them that. I've been looking into this movement for a while, and I would describe them as a paramilitary, like movement of extreme anarchists, and communists, and the modus operandi is violence and intimidation against their opponents. And it's not violence, then disinformation and misinformation campaigns to smear the reputations of their opponents, for example, somebody like me, who's written for mainstream publications, and works for a centrist magazine, smearing me as a Nazi, and therefore fit to be targeted, to be darks to be hit in in this case, maybe Even almost nearly killed. So

**Bret** 20:03

yeah, beneath human dignity is is the objective they paint you as beneath human dignity, and then they act according.

**Andy Ngo** 20:11

Yeah, that was me very so clear to me when, when all this happened and nobody came to help me as I was stumbling away, bleeding blinded. I could hear the people laughing at me behind me. It's called here. Yeah, yeah. And well, it's so ironic is that moments before there were chanting, no hate, no fear.

**Bret** 20:33

Well, there is some sort of a, let's put it this way, the the illiberal authoritarian left keeps resetting the bar of irony, Everything about it is ironic, you know, including the name, anti fascists, which I agree, is not what they are at all. And, you know, again, this goes back to this being a non partisan issue, we have a criminal enterprise operating in the open with the tacit approval of the political apparatus, which holds the police back from simply enforcing the law. And the result is totally predictable. I would also describe them as a paramilitary organization. In fact, in thinking about this interview, that was exactly the term that came to mind. And what also comes to mind is the fact that people across the political spectrum have seen the same thing. If you don't encounter an Tifa directly, you don't know what they're about. But once you've encountered them, it becomes very clear. So for example, Chris Hedges, who is like me quite far to the left has also had serious problems with Black Bloc anarchists, because they are hell bent on violence, in fact, it becomes a kind of excuse for violence is the false portrayal of this enemy that can only be confronted with these tactics. And in fact, there's a whole language that surrounds that they talk about a diversity of tactics, diversity of tactics, is a code for we are going to support those who wish to be violent, and behave in a way that allows them to disappear into the crowd and not to pay any price for doing so. And you know, who's on the other end of it? It's you, it could easily be me, it's Chris Hedges, it makes no sense for this to be tolerated. And it has a an absolutely chilling effect on discourse, the simple ability to say what is there are people dressed to commit crimes, who walk the streets, openly commit violent acts, and are able to get away with

**Andy Ngo** 23:01

their masters of doublespeak. It's, it starts in the name for one. And then it goes down to everything else. For example, like you said, that diversity of tactics, what that is really code for right, supporting others and maybe even engaging in violent physical confrontations. Another one they use is self defense community self defense that's in they don't mean it, how people understand it self defense to them is offensive, absolute action that is premeditated. So I

**Bret** 23:37

want to chase down a, an issue that I think is at the heart of how this whole system functions surrounding an incident like the one that happened to you. There's a way in which people's teams are encoded very deeply in their psyches at the moment. And these things are reinforced on social media, by the algorithms that cause you to encounter things that flatter your preconceptions and demonize those that you perceive as different from you. And it results in people looking at an event like what happened with you and instead of looking at it for what it is, you know, a transparent attack of violent attack on somebody who is simply reporting simply pointing a camera at something in an American street in broad daylight. That what happens is people Intuit what sources they are to pay attention to, in order to have sense made of this event. So the fact that you were on Fox News with Tucker Carlson tonight, The Wall Street Journal released a very sober editorial about what happened to you. It's not surprising that those two sources were the first people to pick up on the story at evergreen. It's The usual suspects. And the reason it works this way is because those on the left know that they are supposed to discount anything that comes across those airwaves. And so there's a way in which you've got people on Twitter, for example, blue checkmark folks from the left saying the most vile stuff about how you deserve this attack. And it's like, what would you have had to do to deserve an attack, there's nothing short of you actually having engaged in violence against your attackers that would justify it. And yet, you have people who are presumably educated and hold down a job. Speaking as if pointing a camera at a protest could possibly justify a physical beating, it makes, it makes no sense. But it has something to do with us having been divided, the press who hasn't shown up, or the press that people who see themselves as on the left pay attention to and the press that has shown up is the press that is, is watched by people on the right. And so the point is, how is it that an Tifa, and people at large in Portland could have such a wrong understanding of who you are? Well, there are two narratives about you. There's one narrative on the right, and there's one narrative on the left, I can attest as your friend and somebody who's interacted with you personally, that the narrative about you on the left bears very little resemblance to reality. You know, it has a few superficial analogies to your actual person. But in terms of you know, you're Vietnamese descent, you're gay, that gets reported those are facts, but But what is said about you is that you're a provocateur, right? And I think the point is, the question is, which story? Would you like to believe? Would you like to believe that Andy No, points a camera at things and you can interpret as well as anybody what the footage means? Or would you like to believe that, you know, Andy No, is trying to paint a picture to to demonize kids who are upset about real stuff. And the point is, those two stories are the can't be reconciled. And one of the mysteries simply a fiction. But for people who start by pursuing the story in one of those sources, they will come to the conclusion that somehow you invited this

**Andy Ngo** 27:38

it's unfortunate that some of the mainstream press reporting on this as well as the local paper record or going in has really chosen to focus on labels to fix to me, right wing, right wing provocateur, right wing commentator, it's sensitive to me that those my views and my professional work as a journalist, is irrelevant to the talk that happened to me by sort of contextualizing work that antiva hates a mine, I almost feel like they're kind of, in a subtle way, finding a justification for what happened to me, it's, it was the same thing, similarly to after the Charlie Hebdo attacks in 2015, by the jihadists, then those on the progressive last started raising up points like well, the publication was provocative, and the work that they published was insulting to Muslims and their prophet. And I don't see what purpose those points serve, other than in a way to say indirectly that you kind of had it coming.

**Bret** 29:11

You had this idea that you had it coming is it's I mean, I can't think of another term other than it's vile, right? And what troubles me most about it is that we're Americans, and somehow that is not carrying any weight with people, people view you and me as other. And I would contrast that you and I travel in parallel circles. There's a group of people who isn't behaving this way, people who I mean when we have gathered outside of the context of events when we've been, you know, at a meal together. Everybody knows that you and I are on different sides of the political spectrum. It's not a fundamental fact, it might be the basis for conversation. Why is it that you and I see an issue differently, but there's no sense that the other person is less deserving of the right to walk down the street safely. And that's a preposterous notion. And so I guess the question really is, what fraction of the public is actually still in touch with that idea that your politics actually have nothing to say about whether or not what happened to you in the streets of Portland is, is a tragic and frightening turn of events. Of course, it is. A human being, who was reporting which is as close to a sacred American right as there is, was physically attacked for having done so that is an offense to every person who actually cares about the ideals that the nation was founded on. There's no left or right about that. It's just simply despicable. Just before this interview, I encountered a couple of instances where somebody had actually forged headlines made it appear that publications had reported that you had faked your own attack. Now, I must say that when I looked at these things, my first thought was not that they were a forgery. My first thought was, oh, my goodness, how could these publications possibly portray this? I mean, I know because I went to the hospital, I saw you injured in the immediate aftermath of this attack, you didn't fake an attack that caused a brain bleed. That's an that's an insane notion. Well, turns out these publications didn't say that you did. But people who apparently were given no pause whatsoever by the damage done to you made it even worse, by viciously portraying you as the cause of the attack against you. I'm not even sure what to say what is what is that like to have people add insult to injury by just simply manufacturing, a reason to blame you entirely for something for which you have no blame?

**Andy Ngo** 32:39

And Tifa has no problem engaging in hoaxes, and disseminating hoaxes. They're particularly angry at me that back in earlier this year, I wrote a story for the New York Post where I investigated 15 plus allegations that were being pushed out by an Tifa and their allies. And by our lives, I mean, the democratic socialists of America and various other fine last movements and groups in town with claims that LGBT people were being targeted for beatings, robberies, murders, kidnappings on the streets of Portland, living here, you cannot find a more LGBT accepting place, and hearing that these things were happening. And yet, the no evidence was put forth. And so in the one incident that was reported to police, the narrative that was put out on the GoFundMe about being beat on the head by transphobes. With bats. That story was entirely different from that documented in the police report. So they're very angry that I wrote that piece. And now, perhaps they think it's a joke, or maybe it's just them trying to engage in another hoax. They're putting out these fake story, news stories, screenshots that I was involved in paying people I knew to beat me up so that I could do a fundraiser and get money off. First of all, that would be a criminal act of fraud. So if anybody has any evidence of wrongdoing on my part, make it public, please. I see accusations that I was provoking people and I would like specifics. There are cameras everywhere of activists. If you have evidence that I was not conducting myself in a professional way, please put that out for the record. I maintain that I was entirely Professional throughout the whole day, leading up to an after the attack.

**Bret** 35:09

I can also say that I've been at a protest with you before I've seen the video of how you behaved here. There is a question about the wisdom of walking into such a scenario. But it's the same question that one would have to ask a war correspondent. Is it smart to go to a war zone? Well, no, it's not. On the other hand, somebody has to do it. And I think the real point about the, the wounds on your face and the injury to your head, that's a warning to the rest of us. That's a warning don't do what Andy does. And what Andy does is he points a camera at things that other people don't, he reveals something true. And those who are participating in that true thing, do not wish it to be understood. They wish to portray themselves as the champion of victims, when in fact, they are eager to engage in violence and looking for an excuse and willing to Sucker Punch. And, you know, as far as I'm concerned, you don't need to defend yourself from accusations that you had to hand in this, I appreciate your willingness to invite people to present that evidence. And you know, my that would be my instinct, too. If I were in your shoes, but you didn't fake this attack, you went to a place where people involved in in madness, did what they do to witches. And the fact is, that's all of our business. It is. It is absolutely a threat to decent people in Portland, I wonder, you know, have I moved to a town where I can't be safe, because the political winds do not allow the law to be enforced against people if they just simply claim themselves to be on the far left. I mean, that That can't be. But maybe that's maybe that's where we've landed. If I can add one more thing, I do think responsibility for this falls to Mayor Wheeler. I think that's the reason that the police don't act. It's not that the police are confused about what needs to happen. And I would invite Mayor Wheeler to come here, I would be happy to talk to him about what happened in your case, I would give him a fair shake, although I think he has a lot to answer for him. But I think the biggest question is, we've now seen the result of the mayor's policy. And that result is unacceptable. And is it going to take a death? Is that what it's going to take in order for something to be done? Or can can the mayor read the obvious implication of this attack, which is the law has to be enforced against all parties, irrespective of their political beliefs and claims, and that's just simply the nature of a civilized society.

**Andy Ngo** 38:17

I want to point out for the record that two neighboring counties to Portland, have made their decision that they're no longer going to assist a Portland Police Bureau by sending their officers and they mentioned the danger that they own officers can be put in as well as the anti police climate in the city. This was made so clear to me back in February when I attended a policing Town Hall, where the mayor was honored at the table with the police chief, Chief Danielle outlaw. And there was a ton of anti far and far left activists who just swarmed this meeting. And they use the numbers to bullying and it reminded me some ways of those scenes we saw in evergreen of the crowds screaming that anger in what should be an orderly meeting, and they were calling for the police to be dismantled. And telling the mayor too, that he was too much in support of the police against so called victimized communities. So this is the message that he's hearing from the most vocal and angry people who unfortunately, are very good at organizing, particularly because they have no problems with using this Information and disinformation. And with Portland being the monoculture that it is there's really no counterpoint is providing a different, not just even a different perspective, like setting the facts around certain issues in the city around policing, for example. It's all about narratives. And I wonder, sometimes if these people have taken on the identity as anarchists or communists and put themselves in an anti fuzz, it seems like they they have they lost meaning and purpose in their life. And so they're looking for it through these extremist ideologies. And, you know, when it comes to religious extremism, fortunately, that's very easy to recognize when it comes to far right extremism, what the public is very good at. And I would argue, perhaps overly sensitive at defining what that is, when it comes to the far left. seems to be no agreed on definition. And even when you pass the last, what does it look like for the left to go too far? They struggle to find enough to give an answer.

**Bret** 41:33

Yeah, and, you know, it's a it's an obvious loophole. If you just simply self define as acting on behalf of marginalized people. Apparently, you're entitled to attack journalists in the street. And you know, that can't be it's just you There can't be a self defined option to violate the law to dress in such a way that you anonymize yourself. And it's obviously a game from the point of view of most of the by antiva. So let me ask you this. You're a journalist. You work with Colette. And I'm wondering how one does journalism in an environment that is this polarized and toxic and in which one side is entitled apparently to commit violence?

**Andy Ngo** 42:31

to call an uphill battle is an understatement. quillette. Being one of the few publications of its reach, that is pushing back against this has come under relentless attacks from very established journalists, accusing the magazine of being reactionary, Alt right, far right.

**Andy Ngo** 42:59

All these things to de legitimize it, and it's catching on a little bit in some of the reporting.

**Andy Ngo** 43:08

He's, again lies to do legitimize your opponents, and it's about and I think this is an expression either you or somebody else, but I didn't come up with it. But it's about creating Phantom enemies.

**Bret** 43:27

It's also about preventing you from seeing with your own eyes. Right? There's something about you know, if you hear that Colette is fringe far, right, whatever it may be, before you ever read a quillette article, then a, you probably don't go check it out. If you don't view yourself as right of center. In other words, what's being broadcast is kind of a a stigma that prevents people from looking any farther. It sounds sophisticated. Oh, well, of course, they would say that that's cool. And they're known to be reactionary, well, they're, I wouldn't know how to categorize Colette politically, I see stuff all across the map. And in fact, that's what you want is a publication where you can't quite peg where they are, because they're not ideological. They're actually exploring things and you know, I see stuff in Colette that causes me to roll my eyes for sure. But I can't name the publication where that isn't the case. And I think the most important point is the strategy that is being deployed prevents readers from engaging content they need to see and it prevents reporters from actually getting to the story because they can see a threat that is all too real on your face. Now, I mean, that's what this is. This is a threat to all who would expose what's taking place and that threat is strategically powerful.

**Andy Ngo** 45:18

We know some people have asked me, you know, how identify hates you? Why didn't you come more prepared and all that? I kept telling myself like, I am living and working in a major American city. I'm not in Afghanistan or Iraq. I'm not in a war zone. Why would I? Why do I need to come with, you know, a filings of security with a with Hellman's. any of that now? No, I look and I say well on. Unfortunately, there are days in Portland, where it is like a literal Warzone. Saturday was one of them. And it's easy to dismiss what happened as unremarkable as a local journalist with will name a week described it. That's, it's easy to have that view until what happens to me happens to you, then it's not unremarkable.

**Bret** 46:26

Yeah, it's not unremarkable at all. It's utterly remarkable. And you know, I had the same response at the point during the Evergreen riots where I was being literally hunted. And the police told me that they were actually powerless to do anything about it, because the President had ordered them to stand down. My thought was, this cannot possibly be happening in the US in what was then 2017. I'm being hunted in my own neighborhood, on my own campus in 2017. And the police can't do anything about it. Like that's just, it's an out of this world kind of experience, like, what did I fall off my timeline? What happened? And, you know, I think if there is a saving grace in what happened to you, it's that we all fell off our timelines together, we now have seen this, we will see the response. And if the response doesn't make any sense, then at least we will know where we are.

**Andy Ngo** 47:31

The silver lining for me, and this is of when I was in the hospital, I didn't think that this story would get big. I mean, what's newsy about some guy getting beat up happens all the time, right? Seeing this outpouring of support, and the disgust that a lot of people have, I mean, there was a lot of people took Glee, but fortunately, more people took discusses what happened. I hope that in my small role, if anything, that if I am able to just move the needle a little bit in the national discourses on far less militancy in this country, and the seriousness that the federal authorities, the local authorities, and our institutions for culture, and like, you know, pop culture and journalism need to release, see how dangerous something is. And we have elections coming up in 2020. And, you know, I shudder to think how the city will respond. If the elections didn't go the way they wanted it, people you came here after 2016. But in November here we had writing that cost a million dollars in damage, and it was so surreal, being downtown and seeing masked individuals run around with bats and weapons and breaking cause destroying properties, and no police and inciting fires in the streets. And it was it looked like a warzone then, and unfortunately, these incidents happen with frequency in the city. And I don't know what more needs to happen for something to change because as of now, everything's remained the same and how policing works. Well, I

**Bret** 49:32

think people who have never seen civilization break down, do not understand what it is that creates safety and security. And so they don't realize how close we hover to to chaos. And what you're describing is basically the result of a slight change in the rules when the mayor starts winking at an Tifa and letting them No through his actions, that they're going to get away with most of what they do, then they begin to think about what they might do. And that, unfortunately, is always the possibility, you know, it is the role that the law and its enforcement plays in keeping society viable is greater than we like to think. But it's clearly true. And we are beginning to watch it break down for obviously, political reasons. And I hope that your, your sacrifice causes people to rethink this. And you know, what we don't know, the echo chamber problem is very serious. What we don't know is how many people looked at what happened to you, people who naturally would not have ended up looking at your content and thought, Wait a minute, what do I not understand about what's going on? Maybe you know, this attack does not? what's being said about it doesn't make any sense. So how many people woke up? Is the question as a result of seeing you attacked in the streets of Portland? Do we have any idea? Do you have a sense from what you're seeing online about people having come to their senses as a result of this?

**Andy Ngo** 51:21

I was extremely appreciative that a 2020, Democratic presidential candidate, Andrew Yang, publicly expressed condemnation of what happened to me. That wasn't just kind, it was actually brave, considering the parties that he's running in, and many who, on his side who believe all the lies about me,

**Bret** 51:56

I agree, it shouldn't be courageous. But I agree with you that it is. I want to ask you a couple more questions. I fear bringing up the issue of the GoFundMe that was set up for you afterwards, because I know that one of the accusations that will come at you and is already coming at you is that you did this for the money, right. And I've been on the wrong end of that accusation. So I know how awful it feels when people say that. However, I do want to point something out about it. The purpose of attacking you was to make you and other journalists too insecure to report the story. The purpose of people deciding to fund you without you asking them to do it. I mean, it was set up by Michelle Malkin, is that right? She set up a fund and you know, within a day there was $100,000. In it, is that, right? Something like that completely surreal. It's completely surreal. On the other hand, I think this is actually it's, it's too bad that it comes in the form of money, it really has to give them the way modern society works. But what this really is, is a desire to counteract the attempt to make you very insecure, it is an attempt to make you secure for the risk that you took and the price that you've paid. And I think it's very heartening that so many people saw, hey, there is something I can do, right, they've attacked, and you know, there's something I can do to counteract it. And, you know, the thing about money is, at least it lets you quantify the degree to which that's a sentiment that everybody who donated has skin in the game. And they've said, Actually, you know what, you did a service and I see it. And so I have to say I'm, I'm thrilled to see the magnitude of the outpouring and, you know, it doesn't compensate you for a head injury, you know, head injuries have serious consequences. And that's before we even get to the psychological impact of having been attacked and having to correct your model of the world for that possibility. But anyway, I think it's a very, a very positive thing. How did it make you feel when you when you discovered how much people had donated to your cause?

**Andy Ngo** 54:30

It was hard to believe because it wasn't that long ago that I was just aspiring student journalists. Writing basically into the ether, you know, it would go into print and a student paid for it, but who read that, tweeting, you know, to nobody reading my tweets, and that wasn't that long ago and not to look now like there's so many people out there supporting me. I'm a very software To call person unfortunately, and sometimes I get me off quickly focused on those benefits, criticisms of me that are becoming louder and louder as I've become more prominent. And I forget those people who find value in the work that I do, and it's hard to believe that even when I see it in front of me through something you can quantify, right? Like, you know, something like money raise. These are issues I need to work on with myself. Living in Portland, I, I am quite persona non grata here, so I don't, usually day to day, I don't see real life support, it comes primarily online, through messages from people I don't know. So it's harder to visualize that support is something real, because the world is much bigger than Portland, right?

**Bret** 56:06

The world is much bigger than Portland. And I think what you're getting at, there is a vast group of people in the world who do not know what to do about this current situation, and the troubled by it, and they're frightened by it. And when they see somebody, do what you did, when they see what I did at evergreen, just standing up and saying, No, there's this chorus that comes at you that just says, keep going. I don't know how to do. I don't know how to do this in my context. But you do keep going. And it does. I, I know, I shouldn't ask the next question. Right? It's too soon. But I have to ask, do you know what you will do the next time? There's a protest announced in Portland.

**Andy Ngo** 57:05

I think I've heard discussions of some things being in the early stages of planning. One of the questions I was asked today was something along the lines of down to fo succeed, and in stopping New York, how new? And I wanted to say right away, no, of course not. But with the injury that I'm dealing with, and the changes that I have to make, in the immediate future, with how I'm living my life, I'm not able to go in and do the same things as I do before. And that fear of a mass mobbing happening again may affect my confidence in wanting to go in. Of course, I know that now. But the fundraising and all of that there, I have the resource to to actually source professional security and all that. But even with professional security, what can you do if there's 30 people coming with weapons and this conversation has been focused on me, there were other people injured. I didn't witness any of that that happened, asked to. I think I was the first person who was attacked. The crowd of demonstrators continued to march towards Pioneer Courthouse Square, and that's where there was fighting in some of the photos out there that people that were attacked by an Tifa with weapons like nunchucks and crowbars, and maybe a brick and a sock, these types of things like in Pioneer Courthouse Square that's like, the heart of downtown Portland right next to a courthouse and it's like, you see this anarchie and it's this next thing that we're gonna say is inflammatory. I'm going to say it anyways. Portland prides itself on being a sanctuary city, that I see really as a sanctuary for violent extremists. The mayor in the past, expressed his gratitude to the police for the restraint in not inciting the mob. And he said this, after the elderly driver was attacked, pretty close to where I was taco actually last October in that in that viral footage I'm sure you've seen

**Bret** 59:46

I sure did. I retweeted that.

**Andy Ngo** 59:49

That was a Black Lives Matter type group that was allied was an Tifa chased down this elderly driver and attacked him and Least went there didn't do anything. And the mayor said that was good. And so my only comments to the man is you, you know, you think that police intervening is an incitement. It's not what what incites the crowd? And what empowers them actually is inaction from police?

**Bret** 1:00:26

Yeah, I mean, this is incredibly simple. Yeah. The fact is, society is based on an agreement, that we don't attack each other in the street, even when we disagree. And that agreement only functions if those who violated actually pay a price for having attacked someone. So the answer is, you don't get a choice. If you're the mayor, you don't get a choice about whether or not the law gets enforced, it has to be enforced, even if there's a political price to be paid for it. And you know, I would hope Mayor Wheeler would follow your courage. And the point is he needs to face whatever political problem he has with with equal courage. And I'm, I don't expect him to do it. But but it's a requirement we're depending on that we live in the city of Portland are depending on the law being enforced, we are depending on blind justice, and the fact that you claim you're on the left shouldn't immunize you from it. All right, one last question for you. It seems to me that we exist in a special circle. And that special circle, as I mentioned before, does not require a person to be of one political belief or another in order to be treated humanely and respected and to have discussion. And one thing I've learned from, I would say, a lifetime of talking across political differences is that it is important that you seek out that which challenges your core beliefs, even if your core beliefs are right, it's important that you know what the other sounds like, and not in cartoon terms, but in in real terms. So I think you and I very naturally have no trouble talking to each other, knowing that those differences exist. We can be curious about what their nature is, but they're not. They're not deep. I think we agree on what a adjust world would look like. And we'd probably don't agree on how close we are to it or what might be done to get us further in that direction. But my question to you is, how is there any practical advice for people who may have thought you a problematic person to use the parlance now, discovering that you're a human being navigating a difficult situation with courage and integrity? What can people do, having discovered that there's something surprising on the other side of the divide to violate the boundaries of their echo chamber and discover what exists outside of it?

**Andy Ngo** 1:03:32

humanizing your ideological opponents is very easy. Particularly with social media, to dehumanize the other and you know, people accuse Donald Trump to that people accuse the right wing of doing that but you really see it practice across the board and it's easy to do it's much easier to beyond hating somebody ideas or what they believe in but to also hate them as well having that person actually become that physical manifestation of those ideas. And it's, it's easier of course to attack and try to break down a person than to break down ideas particularly with all the you know, I've failed to be able to convince anti fur militants that I'm a decent human being I when I was first mobbed by them in last November. I don't protest when they all surrounded me most of them didn't know who I was only few of them did, but those few then told everybody a story about who I was. And I was trying to look at them, the ones trying to look at them in their eyes, and just feel Hey, I'm, I'm a normal person, you know, like, and I couldn't even do that because they were wearing sunglasses. And I felt like I wasn't even talking to another person I was, regardless of what I said their response was just anger and hatred. And I was hoping that with my continued engagement with the group, through attending the events and documenting things in a completely professional, passive, non confrontational way that they would see, okay, we might not like the way he editorialize his his work when he's a columnist, or we don't like how he tweets, how he chose to was anything but you know, he's not a threat to us. Unfortunately, he went entirely in the opposite direction of them. Viewing me as a threat because of those ideas. And apparently, an existential threat, one that merits this type of response, not just to me, but I mean, my family is affected when family personal details are released out into the public. And these incidents are still lost, I was told being investigated. And it may be like that forever.

**Bret** 1:06:27

Well, I certainly hope that that this incident marks a turning point that they do find the people who attack you, and that they deliver justice to them in a court the way it is supposed to be done. The City of Portland will be much better off if that happens. And it will owe you a great debt for having exposed the danger of this cruel and vile movement. In the spirit of what you just said, though, I want to be clear, it is the movement that is vile, it is the de individuated mob, that is so dangerous. We can't speak about the nature of the individuals in the movement, some of them are clearly bent on violence, some of them may be rethinking it having seen an innocent person injured the way you were, only time will tell. But it is important to recognize the danger of the movement is different than the individuals that make it up.

**Andy Ngo** 1:07:37

That's an important distinction. And thank you for stating that. I'm reminded when one of my video clips of one of these people confronting me, menacing me went viral. An individual who knew this person from years back, messaged me and gave this person's life backstory. And it was one that was filled with mental health struggles in issues was families. And it's unfortunate that they've chosen to deal with that pain by manifesting it in, in physical rage. But just do those stories, this person is no longer in contact with this person, but you know, allows me to see, there was a whole different person behind that mask, well, behind the partial mask that enough of the thesis exposes this person recognize them the story that I you know, would never have known and would never be broadcast to the enemy. But I don't know what it has to happen for for change to occur, but I hope that I can play a part

**Bret** 1:09:09

in that. Well, I must say, I, to an extent have chills at the moment. This matches exactly who I've known you to be since I've come to know who you are over the last couple years. And the fact that even now sitting there with very visible injuries and ongoing serious health consequences from this attack, you're still able to see that there are humans amongst the mob. And that's, that's the important thing. Hopefully it happens on the other side, too. All right, well, thank you so much. And you know, for doing this, I know you have got to be absolutely exhausted after what you've been through and I know you missed one day Sleep, probably you're running on a serious sleep deficit. I can tell people your Twitter handle is Mr. Andy No, and G Oh, is that right? Yes. Where else can people look for you?

**Andy Ngo** 1:10:16

My Twitter has the most up to date information on my work. So say a publish. And from there, if you if you find what I do have value and you want to support me, there are links to subscribe. So I'm in Patreon and some other options.

**Bret** 1:10:33

So and there's also the GoFundMe set up by Michelle Malkin, which you can go to her Twitter and find that and maybe that that about does it. For my part, let me say, this has been an honor I'm very pleased to have had Andy here. And if you like this content, like subscribe, hit the notification button and I would love to have you back some point if you're willing to would be an honor. Alright, excellent.