



1
00:00:04,210 --> 00:00:02,750
for a minute and I'm again talking with

2
00:00:07,309 --> 00:00:04,220
dr. Jeff [h__h] from Rice University

3
00:00:09,350 --> 00:00:07,319
author of this new very interesting book

4
00:00:11,870 --> 00:00:09,360
we're talking about secret body which

5
00:00:14,169 --> 00:00:11,880
you can see there on the screen and we

6
00:00:19,220 --> 00:00:14,179
just had a really interesting chat about

7
00:00:21,349 --> 00:00:19,230
really how bravely autobiographical this

8
00:00:23,330 --> 00:00:21,359
book is and some of the things that he

9
00:00:26,179 --> 00:00:23,340
covers in it so definitely check that

10
00:00:28,429 --> 00:00:26,189
out but next Jeff what I want to talk

11
00:00:31,880 --> 00:00:28,439
about you know again but I say brave I

12
00:00:34,760 --> 00:00:31,890
mean people get a sense for what I mean

13
00:00:38,450 --> 00:00:34,770

when you know the book is just says hey

14

00:00:42,799 --> 00:00:38,460

here's the problems with non self

15

00:00:46,580 --> 00:00:42,809

reflective Christians and again you know

16

00:00:49,790 --> 00:00:46,590

pretty much got this right out of your

17

00:00:52,430 --> 00:00:49,800

book so if you would if you feel up to

18

00:00:55,250 --> 00:00:52,440

it it's kind of throwing you right into

19

00:00:58,430 --> 00:00:55,260

the fire here but again let's let's talk

20

00:01:01,340 --> 00:00:58,440

about some of the tough stuff and if you

21

00:01:03,319 --> 00:01:01,350

wouldn't mind maybe reading this excerpt

22

00:01:05,390 --> 00:01:03,329

from the book and then we can talk a

23

00:01:08,330 --> 00:01:05,400

little bit about that is that okay yeah

24

00:01:10,010 --> 00:01:08,340

sure yeah so this this is the from a

25

00:01:11,990 --> 00:01:10,020

chapter in the book in which I'm

26

00:01:15,050 --> 00:01:12,000

struggling with essentially being an

27

00:01:17,230 --> 00:01:15,060

intellectual in our modern or

28

00:01:20,899 --> 00:01:17,240

contemporary American culture a

29

00:01:24,080 --> 00:01:20,909

university culture and rural America and

30

00:01:27,260 --> 00:01:24,090

goes like this I go home to rural

31

00:01:29,899 --> 00:01:27,270

Nebraska every year for decades now I've

32

00:01:32,660 --> 00:01:29,909

been deeply struck if not emotionally

33

00:01:35,480 --> 00:01:32,670

wounded by the immense moral abyss that

34

00:01:37,730 --> 00:01:35,490

separates my university community from

35

00:01:40,819 --> 00:01:37,740

the general culture of rural America I

36

00:01:43,880 --> 00:01:40,829

am thinking of practices and ideals like

37

00:01:47,510 --> 00:01:43,890

self reflexivity historical

38

00:01:51,370 --> 00:01:47,520

consciousness religious pluralism gender

39

00:01:54,200 --> 00:01:51,380

equity racial and sexual diversity

40

00:01:56,330 --> 00:01:54,210

environmental sustainability the

41

00:01:58,880 --> 00:01:56,340

importance of privilege empirical data

42

00:02:02,569 --> 00:01:58,890

and thoughtful debate over received

43

00:02:04,490 --> 00:02:02,579

opinion and blind propaganda and above

44

00:02:07,249 --> 00:02:04,500

all the secular public space that

45

00:02:09,770 --> 00:02:07,259

guarantees both freedom of and from

46

00:02:14,460 --> 00:02:09,780

religion okay you're punching pretty

47

00:02:17,369 --> 00:02:14,470

hard there do you want to elaborate it

48

00:02:19,589 --> 00:02:17,379

well I mean there's so much there we

49

00:02:23,070 --> 00:02:19,599

could elaborate on Alex those things I

50

00:02:25,110 --> 00:02:23,080

just read off those are in any basic

51
00:02:27,059 --> 00:02:25,120
mission statement or value statement of

52
00:02:29,789 --> 00:02:27,069
any University or College in the country

53
00:02:32,100 --> 00:02:29,799
for the most part certainly not all of

54
00:02:35,399 --> 00:02:32,110
them but I would say most of them share

55
00:02:38,130 --> 00:02:35,409
all of those values and yet those are

56
00:02:41,850 --> 00:02:38,140
the same mountain they profess to share

57
00:02:45,180 --> 00:02:41,860
those values I am highly highly doubtful

58
00:02:47,520 --> 00:02:45,190
that they really do but okay I'm with

59
00:02:50,400 --> 00:02:47,530
you the tuitions I've worked in half I

60
00:02:54,869 --> 00:02:50,410
mean those we've nurture and defend

61
00:02:59,940 --> 00:02:54,879
those values but those are those same

62
00:03:02,880 --> 00:02:59,950
values are demeaned as as liberal I mean

63
00:03:05,580 --> 00:03:02,890

liberal has become a bad word in in our

64

00:03:07,800 --> 00:03:05,590

public culture I even though it was a

65

00:03:09,930 --> 00:03:07,810

perfectly fine word 20 or 30 years ago

66

00:03:11,190 --> 00:03:09,940

you know I mean we still speak of a

67

00:03:13,860 --> 00:03:11,200

liberal arts education

68

00:03:16,770 --> 00:03:13,870

none of us and higher education think

69

00:03:20,580 --> 00:03:16,780

that's a bad thing but that is a bad

70

00:03:22,800 --> 00:03:20,590

thing to huge swaths of rural America

71

00:03:28,020 --> 00:03:22,810

and so I'm trying to put my finger on

72

00:03:31,229 --> 00:03:28,030

that problem on that that that rip right

73

00:03:35,339 --> 00:03:31,239

through American culture and in I'm not

74

00:03:37,440 --> 00:03:35,349

sure I'm not sure the rip is is is where

75

00:03:39,479 --> 00:03:37,450

you're putting it I mean it certainly is

76

00:03:41,550 --> 00:03:39,489

I don't want to kind of get to you know

77

00:03:43,559 --> 00:03:41,560

just provocative for the sake of being

78

00:03:46,229 --> 00:03:43,569

provocative because we get it you know

79

00:03:48,300 --> 00:03:46,239

we get what you're saying in terms of

80

00:03:49,979 --> 00:03:48,310

the funding Christians right and like

81

00:03:54,030 --> 00:03:49,989

the crazy Christians and get all that

82

00:03:55,920 --> 00:03:54,040

but we get that there's a lot of crazy

83

00:03:58,289 --> 00:03:55,930

atheists out there and there's a lot of

84

00:04:01,289 --> 00:03:58,299

crazy liberals out there and any side

85

00:04:03,839 --> 00:04:01,299

can go and get a little video of the

86

00:04:05,430 --> 00:04:03,849

craziness of the other side and show it

87

00:04:08,550 --> 00:04:05,440

out there and all of a sudden you know

88

00:04:10,770 --> 00:04:08,560

it's just this kind of division let me

89

00:04:13,050 --> 00:04:10,780

tell you a little story from my life you

90

00:04:16,259 --> 00:04:13,060

know just just last weekend I attended

91

00:04:18,270 --> 00:04:16,269

this funeral ceremony for kind of this

92

00:04:20,460 --> 00:04:18,280

soccer friend so my daughter plays

93

00:04:22,480 --> 00:04:20,470

soccer and a soccer dad you know but I

94

00:04:25,180 --> 00:04:22,490

know pretty well a really nice guy

95

00:04:28,059 --> 00:04:25,190

like ting I go to this guy's funeral

96

00:04:30,999 --> 00:04:28,069

ceremony celebration of life ceremony at

97

00:04:32,950 --> 00:04:31,009

this Evangelical Church in Southern

98

00:04:33,730 --> 00:04:32,960

California so you live in the buckle of

99

00:04:37,300 --> 00:04:33,740

the Bible Belt

100

00:04:41,140 --> 00:04:37,310

I live in liberal liberal Southern

101
00:04:44,490 --> 00:04:41,150
California and I'm as evangelical church

102
00:04:47,140 --> 00:04:44,500
and it is full first of all I mean

103
00:04:48,370 --> 00:04:47,150
you're stunned by the fact that they can

104
00:04:50,409 --> 00:04:48,380
fill up a church with four hundred

105
00:04:51,850 --> 00:04:50,419
people for somebody these days you know

106
00:04:53,860 --> 00:04:51,860
that doesn't happen on a Saturday

107
00:04:55,899 --> 00:04:53,870
afternoon and they go through this guys

108
00:04:58,689 --> 00:04:55,909
and it's so it's an amazing life

109
00:05:01,180 --> 00:04:58,699
it's a quietly amazing life of little

110
00:05:06,010 --> 00:05:01,190
things that he's done and helped people

111
00:05:08,529 --> 00:05:06,020
and the the the two gay soccer moms who

112
00:05:10,779 --> 00:05:08,539
he initially meets by writing this

113
00:05:12,760 --> 00:05:10,789

letter saying hey you know proposition

114

00:05:14,950 --> 00:05:12,770

nine is coming out for gay marriage and

115

00:05:16,990 --> 00:05:14,960

we should we should really rally against

116

00:05:20,469 --> 00:05:17,000

this you know and it's terrible and they

117

00:05:23,290 --> 00:05:20,479

kind of gently take offense and this guy

118

00:05:26,260 --> 00:05:23,300

completely goes inside and says you know

119

00:05:28,990 --> 00:05:26,270

what I'm wrong I'm wrong about that you

120

00:05:31,330 --> 00:05:29,000

are really great people and I need to

121

00:05:33,520 --> 00:05:31,340

re-examine what I believe and he turns

122

00:05:35,920 --> 00:05:33,530

out to be this tremendous friend like he

123

00:05:37,810 --> 00:05:35,930

was to so many people and he helps these

124

00:05:41,230 --> 00:05:37,820

people out constantly place like they're

125

00:05:43,959 --> 00:05:41,240

number one handy man like perfect uncle

126

00:05:47,170 --> 00:05:43,969

that just does everything for him the

127

00:05:49,360 --> 00:05:47,180

guy lived an amazing life and I'm

128

00:05:52,300 --> 00:05:49,370

sitting in this church listening to a

129

00:05:55,480 --> 00:05:52,310

lot of evangelical [h__h] that I can

130

00:05:57,430 --> 00:05:55,490

barely get through about empty tomb and

131

00:05:59,890 --> 00:05:57,440

about your we better come over to our

132

00:06:03,510 --> 00:05:59,900

side and all the rest is o'clock crap

133

00:06:08,820 --> 00:06:03,520

but I'm struck by the fact that this guy

134

00:06:12,550 --> 00:06:08,830

through all that found a way to live and

135

00:06:15,249 --> 00:06:12,560

grow his spirituality in a way that we

136

00:06:19,629 --> 00:06:15,259

all would look at and go that's a

137

00:06:22,689 --> 00:06:19,639

beautiful thing so I don't know you know

138

00:06:26,999 --> 00:06:22,699

I get the anger at the crazy Christians

139

00:06:29,399 --> 00:06:27,009

and the non self-reflective thing

140

00:06:31,499 --> 00:06:29,409

but I just think the other side of that

141

00:06:35,540 --> 00:06:31,509

that liberal side the community that

142

00:06:39,239 --> 00:06:35,550

you're at is so filled with ridiculous

143

00:06:41,399 --> 00:06:39,249

atheists I am a biological robot in a

144

00:06:43,980 --> 00:06:41,409

meaningless universe kind of non

145

00:06:46,739 --> 00:06:43,990

thinkers non self-reflective people as

146

00:06:49,019 --> 00:06:46,749

well and I wonder which is worse because

147

00:06:51,480 --> 00:06:49,029

my buddy in the evangelical church he

148

00:06:53,999 --> 00:06:51,490

got it and he got something out of that

149

00:06:56,969 --> 00:06:54,009

experience that even though I don't know

150

00:06:58,769 --> 00:06:56,979

how he did it and I couldn't there's

151

00:07:02,129 --> 00:06:58,779

something there that I don't think he

152

00:07:04,619 --> 00:07:02,139

could have gotten in the Academy yeah

153

00:07:07,499 --> 00:07:04,629

well you're using a lot of words I would

154

00:07:10,469 --> 00:07:07,509

never use Alex no I don't talk about

155

00:07:11,760 --> 00:07:10,479

crazy Christians anywhere in the book no

156

00:07:14,010 --> 00:07:11,770

no I do that's me

157

00:07:15,989 --> 00:07:14,020

and I get I get called on for Christian

158

00:07:17,659 --> 00:07:15,999

bashing but to me it's just you got to

159

00:07:20,969 --> 00:07:17,669

look for the truth you know so but

160

00:07:22,619 --> 00:07:20,979

because Jesus isn't historical Jesus

161

00:07:24,269 --> 00:07:22,629

real how much of that is a cold thing

162

00:07:27,209 --> 00:07:24,279

all that but I'm sorry please continue

163

00:07:29,850 --> 00:07:27,219

yeah I think you're drew I think what

164

00:07:31,709 --> 00:07:29,860

you just articulated is is frankly part

165

00:07:34,649 --> 00:07:31,719

of the problem it's it's a false

166

00:07:37,320 --> 00:07:34,659

equivalency you can always find examples

167

00:07:40,549 --> 00:07:37,330

on any side that are extreme and easy to

168

00:07:44,879 --> 00:07:40,559

make fun of but I I think it's an

169

00:07:48,779 --> 00:07:44,889

equivalency to point to the kind of far

170

00:07:50,369 --> 00:07:48,789

right-wing propaganda that really

171

00:07:53,749 --> 00:07:50,379

controls so much of our public

172

00:07:56,639 --> 00:07:53,759

conversation today and higher education

173

00:08:00,570 --> 00:07:56,649

which is really about having

174

00:08:02,759 --> 00:08:00,580

conversations and yes there are excess

175

00:08:04,889 --> 00:08:02,769

excessive moments in higher education

176

00:08:05,429 --> 00:08:04,899

but it's really not the same thing at

177

00:08:09,629 --> 00:08:05,439

all

178

00:08:12,799 --> 00:08:09,639

so I I don't see that frankly from where

179

00:08:15,570 --> 00:08:12,809

I see I think we need a lot more

180

00:08:17,399 --> 00:08:15,580

calmness and and and and we need to talk

181

00:08:19,469 --> 00:08:17,409

about these things and that's what I'm

182

00:08:23,189 --> 00:08:19,479

trying to do in the book I'm trying to

183

00:08:25,829 --> 00:08:23,199

call out where I think the the split is

184

00:08:29,339 --> 00:08:25,839

and I'm calling on intellectuals like

185

00:08:31,079 --> 00:08:29,349

myself to not just talk to each other

186

00:08:33,750 --> 00:08:31,089

but to go out into the public culture

187

00:08:36,290 --> 00:08:33,760

and talk to their families talk to the

188

00:08:39,269 --> 00:08:36,300

public culture about what it is we do in

189

00:08:40,920 --> 00:08:39,279

in the higher education which i think is

190

00:08:43,080 --> 00:08:40,930

really still the answer

191

00:08:46,920 --> 00:08:43,090

and I think this lack of civil discourse

192

00:08:50,310 --> 00:08:46,930

and this this constant demonizing of the

193

00:08:53,010 --> 00:08:50,320

other is is precisely what we don't do