

PICTURE THIS VIDEO

CGC RACISM EVENT

INTERVIEW WITH DARYL DAVIS, RYAN LO'REE

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PRODUCER: FREDDIE DORN

MEDIA ID: 210614-001.MP3

00:00:00;09

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

BRUCE BOND:

00:00:17;13

Daryl and Ryan, thank you so much for a very enlightening, educational, and inspiring evening. I'm really lookin' forward to responses that we're gonna get from our audience. I have a few questions for you, though, about this event, and events like (CLICKING SOUNDS) it. So how would you-- my first question is, how would you describe the value of this Common Ground Committee event and events like it?

00:00:41;24

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

DARYL DAVIS:

00:00:44;24

This is very, very valuable, because as I said on-- on the previous thing, that, you know, people did not wanna talk about these kinds of

things. Race issues. It was taboo. You know, we don't discuss it. You know, keep it in the closet. Keep it under the carpet.

00:00:58;08

And now we're having to confront it. You know, when-- when I get hired to speak around the country, sometimes I would do it with a former Neo-Nazi. He and I will go out together (UNINTEL PHRASE). I would say two, maybe three times a year-- the student activities boards will book us for their college campus.

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And then the administration will step in and say, "Oh, no, no, no, no. We can't have them here. You know, i-- it's too controversial." Listen, this is an institution of higher learning. And the reason you go to college is to get an education on how you navigate society when you graduate, and you become successful, and productive (UNINTEL) your society.

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These things exist outside of college. This is

what you need to learn about. Not just the academics, but learn about life. The obstacles you gonna confront, and how to overcome them. And, you know, there's nothing controversial about talking about it. You know, it's here. It has to be faced.

00:01:54;07

It's like saying, you know, "Well, I don't wanna talk about the coronavirus because if I don't talk about it, then it doesn't exist." No. I-- i-- (LAUGH) you know? So when you provide (CLICKING SOUNDS) this platform and Common Ground, this is a wonderful opportunity for us to share things that a lot of mainstream media and other places (VIBRATING SOUND) will not put forward, not tell the whole story.

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So, you know, I am very, very appreciative of your giving myself and Ryan and others (NOISE) this opportunity to-- to-- to-- to show you these things, because if you don't show the real thing, people make their own opinions. And I can

guarantee you. They're-- they get-- their opinions do not outweigh our experiences.

QUESTIONS:

00:02:38;24

And-- and I would say the same thing--

RYAN LO'REE:

00:02:39;17

That's very powerful.

BRUCE BOND:

00:02:40;15

Yeah, Ryan, go ahead. Go ahead, (CLICKING SOUNDS)  
Ryan.

RYAN LO'REE:

00:02:42;07

I mean, right along the same thing is-- and I've seen some of your guys' previous-- conferences and things that y-- and seminars you guys have held, and the good thing is what I l-- I like is the show is that there is bipartisanship in this country. There are people from both sides of the fence that are working together to, you know, come up with solutions.

00:03:00;14

And I think that's very, very important, because what we see so much in mainstream media all the time is that everyone hates each other. That

nobody wants to get along. Not one side on this side wants to work with this side. And that's really just not the truth. There are politicians, there are people in the communities that maybe look at things differently, but say, "Hey, how can we come together to find a solution?"

00:03:21;09

And I think that's something that Common Ground shows to the community, is that there are be-- people from different political spectrums that wanna find peaceful solutions, wanna find things that we can do to help our communities out. And-- I think that's very important. I think that's what tonight shows, is that somebody like me with a past that-- you know, I was a former white supremacist, can work with Dar-- somebody like Daryl, who, you know, is a Black man, and who has, you know, made this his life. Not only music, but, you know, pulling people (NOISE) away from these groups.

00:03:50;11

And to say that we can come together to try to

pull other people out, and-- and to make a change, and that's very, very important to see, and-- so I just-- I appreciate all of you for even allowing us (POLICE SIREN) to have this platform here. Because-- many places, like Daryl said-- you hear that you were even a former white supremacist at all, and they quickly turn you away.

00:04:09;15

Now I am finding that some other higher education-- they're starting to turn more towards formers and saying th-- they have a place that-- that they could really help us. I think-- sometimes they say the best cop-- was the best criminal. You know, I think a lot of that works in the same way, whereas I may have been a white supremacist in my past, but I know how these groups work. I know how their inner groups work. I know how they recruit. And it's very important for us to look at these formers and say, (NOISE) "Hey, they have a way of knowing what these groups are going to do next. What they may do.

What can we do to intervene and help, and to--  
and to pull somebody out of these groups?" So I--  
I appreciate it.

BRUCE BOND:

00:04:45;24 Well, you're very welcome--

DARYL DAVIS:

00:04:46;10 Also--

BRUCE BOND:

00:04:47;11 Go ahead, Daryl--

DARYL DAVIS:

00:04:47;14 Also, you know, the fact that-- that-- you know,  
we're talking about extremes. I'm a Black person.  
(DOG BARKS) Ryan is a former white supremacist.  
The idea that these two polar opposites could  
come together is no excuse whatsoever that  
somebody cannot talk to one of their family  
members at the dinner table, because somebody  
voted for somebody else.

00:05:11;07 That's ridiculous. That is trivial, Mickey Mouse  
stuff, compared to what Ryan and I, coming  
together, do. So we set that example. People can

come together and talk, and not have families divided over-- over who voted for who, or f-- or best of friends.

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You know, these politicians are only gonna be in-- in office for four years, eight years at the most. (DOG BARKS) But this person has been in your family for decades. You've been friends with this person for years and years. Why are you gonna let something like that-- you know, you-- you don't have to agree. But-- but accept one another's, you know, choices.

BRUCE BOND:

00:05:48;16

Right. Yeah-- so, you-- you pointed out that d-- and so anyways, demonstrating how it should be done, and that-- that it can be done, and how it should be done, are two important elements of events like this. What are some of the other key things that you think are-- are-- are important about these kinds of conversations that you and-- that you had with us tonight?

DARYL DAVIS:

00:06:10;24

I think-- it-- it allows people to do some introspection and say, "Hey, you know what? If those guys can do it, maybe I can do it. Maybe I might talk to my neighbor. The-- you know, that I have an issue with-- because-- you know, I don't like the way they dress, or th-- I don't like the way they do this, or"-- you know, whatever. You know, it-- it-- it's in-- it's, like, inspirational.

RYAN LO'REE:

00:06:34;23

Yep. I've also seen in work in ways where, an event like this, for instance-- a white supremacist that's in a group will found out about it, but maybe they're thinkin' about leavi-- leaving that group. They wanna get away from that group. And they maybe think it's almost impossible for it to happen. And then they see something like this and realize that, "Man, I can get away from these groups. Let me reach out to an organization like this. Let me reach out to somebody that's doing work like Daryl and Ryan,

and make that change."

00:07:03;10

And so then that-- that's that instant that we didn't even have to sit down in a one-on-one conversation with them. They've just seen an-- you know, an event like tonight that-- that helped them to start the deradicalization process. So I think it's also somethin' that's very, very important is that we don't know everybody that's watching, but I can guarantee somebody from a white supremacist group out there most likely kept an eye on what was happening tonight.

DARYL DAVIS:

00:07:25;12

Yes, and I-- I-- I've seen that happen many times. Many times.

BRUCE BOND:

00:07:29;20

Yeah, that's v-- that's very powerful stuff. I-- one last question for you. Just this event tonight, for you all, for each of you individually. And we'll go to Ryan first. What was the most important thing that came out of

tonight's conversation, do you think?

RYAN LO'REE:

00:07:48;04

You know, it's-- it's-- (EXHALES) I-- I-- I think period, just showing that-- the empathy, and the-- and the five steps, and things that we all, you know, wanna take fr-- from life, and what we want in life-- is very important to see those connections that we all have, no matter who we are, and where we are in our lives.

00:08:08;07

One of the biggest things for me is bein' able to get out there, is to talk about-- and for people to take away from this all, is, like, the policy change. A lot of people don't understand that the work that we do (THROAT CLEARING) actually can put us into a very dangerous position.

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And that's not because somebody from one of these hate groups could, you know, pull a trigger on us, which can happen. And Daryl can tell you some pretty crazy stories (LAUGH) that he's went through in his own life. But it's-- it's--

because we go in to speak to somebody that may become a terror. They may do something violent.

00:08:37;10

And we didn't necessarily know that they were going to do that. And because the policy's not set up the right way to protect people doin' interventionist work like this-- y-- you know, we can find ourselves into a very bad situation. So I think it's very, very important for people to take that away from this, and understand that policy doesn't protect.

00:08:56;02

A lot of the funding doesn't protect the CDE side of this. We've been so focused on the-- the war aspect, and the intelligence side of it all, instead of really tryin' to get-- to what we call the softer side of all this, which is, you know, countering violent extremism. It's the people that are there, on the front lines, every day-- trying to pull people out of these groups.

00:09:18;02

So I mean, if there's anything I want everybody

to take away from that tonight, that would've been one of the most important things, is funding, policy, and making sure that people that are doin' this type of work are protected the way they should be.

BRUCE BOND:

00:09:29;02

Yeah, d-- I think they painted a pretty good picture here of the complexity and the different facets that really need attention, and maybe not all of them are getting the attention they need. D-- I think you guys brought that pretty clearly. Daryl, how 'bout you? What do you-- for you, what was the most important thing that came out of the event tonight?

DARYL DAVIS:

00:09:45;00

We let people know, you know, that, hey, they can do this. They don't have to be on the front line. You know, they can-- you know, i-- if you're not comfortable d-- you know, being direct, right-- you know, boots-on-the-ground like Ryan and I are, then you can be on the back line. You can be on the side line. You can be online. But be doing

something to support the other people. 'Cause we all have to work together. It's-- it's-- it's multi-faceted.

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You know, it's just like-- you know, you go see your-- a great movie. The movie is great because you think it starred, you know, Paul Newman and-- Meryl Streep, or somebody. Two (LAUGH) fantastic a-- acto-- actors. Yeah, they are fantastic. And they made the movie. But what about the director? The people behind the camera? The people setting up (MIC NOISE) the staging and the props, and everything? The lighting? All these people contributed to that movie getting an Oscar, all right?

00:10:40;00

And this is what, you know, Ryan's talkin' about. You know, we're out here, you know, naked. We still need the support of people on the side line, the back line, and being online, helping us-- do the front-line work. And they are just as important. It has to be a team. So people can

take away-- they don't have to be boots on the ground. They can still contribute.

BRUCE BOND:

00:11:01;07

Well, you guys made that really clear tonight, like (NOISE) I said, and-- particularly, you know, toward the tail end of the conversation-- I-- I just found that very inspiring, and I think that-- our audience-- ate that up. And I'm really lookin' forward, like I said, to getting their response.

00:11:16;24

You guys did a wonderful job tonight. Ryan and Daryl, thank you both so much for being a part of this event. We're so appreciative, and-- and I-- I just feel we're doing a-- the whole event is gonna do a great amount of good for a lot of people. So thank you so much, (UNINTEL)--

DARYL DAVIS:

00:11:31;16

Thank you, Bruce.

RYAN LO'REE:

00:11:32;07

Thank you.

BRUCE BOND:

00:11:33;10                   You're really welcome. All right, guys--

00:11:34;21                                   (OVERTALK)

BRUCE BOND:

00:11:35;11                   --I'll talk to you soon--

DARYL DAVIS:

00:11:35;24                   Okay. See you soon, Ryan--

00:11:36;24                                   (OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

\* \* \*END OF TRANSCRIPT\* \* \*