

Demetri Kofinas: 00:00:00 Today's episode of Hidden Forces is made possible by listeners like you. For more information about this week's episode or for easy access to related programming, visit our website at hiddenforces.io and subscribe to our free email list. If you listen to the show on your Apple Podcast app, remember, you can give us a review. Each review helps more people find the show and join our amazing community. With that, please enjoy this week's episode.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:00:48 What's up everybody. My guest on this episode of Hidden Forces is Irshad Manji. Irshad is a public intellectual of the sort that we desperately need more of today. She's a prolific author who's appeared on probably every single news program of consequence over the last 20 years, including 60 Minutes, BBC Newsnight, The O'Reilly Factor, Real Time With Bill Maher, Christiane Amanpour, Charlie Rose, Bill Moyers and many others. None other than comedian, Chris Rock, who I think many of us admire for his humor and credibility on the subjects of identity politics, woke culture and political correctness, has said that Irshad's latest book, which is titled, Don't Label Me, should actually be labeled as genius. I don't think I can give a better endorsement than that. After all, Chris Rock is Chris Rock, but I will say that every single conversation that I've ever heard Irshad have with anyone discussing the subject of her book, which is essentially how to have honest conversations about sensitive and consequential topics that don't devolve into moral combat leaves me feeling more inspired and less angry every time.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:02:05 This conversation was no exception. It was one of the most pleasant, honest and meaningful conversations that I've ever had on this show. I hunger for these types of conversations as I know many of you do. There's no reason why we can't have them. There's no law of biology that says that public discourse between human beings has to devolve into a series of battles and skirmishes between two monolithic viewpoints or that conversation are just another opportunity to try one another in the court of public opinion. If we accept that a pluralistic, democratic society is the best way to safeguard the values and freedoms that have allowed us to cultivate and stakeout our individual identities, then how can it be that in order to protect those identities, that we should have to curtail the very freedoms that gave rise to them in the first place? We're the fortunate inheritors of a tradition that, literally, millions of people have taken up arms to maintain. As difficult as conversation can feel, it's supposed to be the easy part. If you ask me, it's actually fun and rewarding.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:03:17 When I hear people bickering on cable news or attacking one another on social media, I don't find it entertaining. I find it juvenile and petty, but the conversations on this show sustain me. They keep me going, honestly. It's why I started the show, to begin with. I missed having meaningful, deep and relevant conversations with people who value discourse as much as I do. The fact that there are people like you on the other end of this microphone who want to listen in on these conversations and who drive value from them, that's more than I could ever ask for. I hope you all enjoyed today's conversation. I hope it serves as an inspiration for the types of discussions and free exchange of ideas that we can all have, and which we need to have if we want to make it through, would feel as like a very dark time in America today. With that, please enjoy this week's episode with my guest, Irshad Manji. Irshad Manji, welcome to Hidden Forces.

Irshad Manji: 00:04:27 I'm actually excited to be here, Demetri. I have to just do a quick imitation of you if you don't mind.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:04:33 No, no, no. Please go ahead.

Irshad Manji: 00:04:35 What's up everybody. I say that to myself after every opportunity to listen to your podcast. It just makes me chuckle.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:04:45 You know what's funny, I have ... You, of course, know this. Your most recent book, you actually read the audio for the audiobook. I don't know if you do that for the other ones. You've been on tons of podcasts. You've done tons of interviews and media. I'm sure you've met lots of people at airports and other places who speak to you thinking or feeling as though they already know you. I'm sure you probably already have this experience, but in cases where I've met people who are listeners or if I take a phone call with someone who is a listener, who hasn't met me before, this often comes up. This thing about, "What's Up Everybody." It's funny. It's become my shtick, my gimmick.

Irshad Manji: 00:05:24 Well, it's your signature, really. It's utterly endearing. I know that whenever I hear it, the podcast has officially begun. Don't stop. We, your listeners, love it.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:05:37 Yeah, I don't know. I'm glad. I don't know how it started. I think it was from the very beginning I did it. I think I just needed to figure out some way to begin.

Irshad Manji: 00:05:46 Yeah. Yeah, to induct.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:05:48 That wasn't boring. Irshad, I'm so excited to have you on the show today. I'm disappointed as I was telling you that we couldn't do this in person. If we did it in person, there would likely be a giant wall, a glass wall, between us or whatever the ... some kind of-

Irshad Manji: 00:06:03 That's right. In the COVID era.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:06:05 Yeah. Exactly. Some kind of plastic walls. I can't think of, actually, more unsafe environment to begin if either a person who have COVID-19, then a studio talking directly at each other, but I really miss doing the interviews in person with people. It's the thing that I missed the most from the pre-COVID period. I can't wait for us to get back to doing that.

Irshad Manji: 00:06:28 I'm with you on that. There's nothing like good old fashion person-to-person conversation. So much gets clarified that way. So much is learned that way. To do everything through Zoom or some other video conferencing platform, obviously, you get the job done, but there is something quite magical about the human to human experience that is missing. I'm with you. May this pandemic be over before too long.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:06:57 Yeah. Especially if the conversation is about conversation.

Irshad Manji: 00:07:01 There you go.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:07:01 Yeah. Spoiler, actually, I brought you here to have this exact discussion. You're a very successful author. Also, just like as I mentioned, you've done the rounds.

You've been everywhere. Every single show that one can think of, which I think was when you were most prolific in terms of your media presence was in the early to mid 2000s and it was primarily dealing with issues of reform in Islam. Is that correct?

- Irshad Manji:** 00:07:28 That's right.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:07:28 Yeah. Your most recent book is titled, Don't Label Me. Really, the subject of the book is the reason why I brought you on here, but before we get into that, I'd love if you could fill me and my listeners in on your background.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:07:44 Sure. Hard to know where to start because I feel like I've lived several lives already, but I'll quickly say that I was born in East Africa, in Uganda. My family and I, along with hundreds of thousands of other families of South Asian heritage, were booted out of Uganda by the military dictator general, Idi Amin. At a very early age, I knew about prejudice. It turns out that he expelled us because we were brown skinned. We were not black enough for the continent of Africa. It was at this time that the very legitimate aspiration to independence that was sweeping the continent of Africa had corroded, congealed into the fever known as Pan-Africanism, which Idi Amin nicely summarized by declaring, "Africa belongs only to the blacks." Well, that's interesting because my family and I had been in Uganda for three generations. We had no passport to any other country. We were Ugandan through and through, and yet, because of our brown skin, we were told we did not belong.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:09:00 We fled. The only country, at the time, willing to accept us was Canada. That's where I grew up, mercifully, on the West Coast, just outside of Vancouver, British Columbia. As I grew up, I attended two kinds of schools. From Monday to Friday was the regular secular public school of most North American kids, and then on Saturday, every Saturday, for several hours at a stretch, I attended the Islamic religious school. Many of your listeners will have heard the word, "Madrasah" or it's anglicize version, "Madrasa." That's where I would go once a week for eight hours at a time. I started off having some pretty basic questions, but my basic questions also turned out to be highly inconvenient ones.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:09:51 I remember the question that got me expelled from the madrasa at the age of 14. My teacher that day was instructing us in why we could not take Jews and Christians as friends. I said to him, "Well, wait a minute. They are people of the book. Some of my favorite people, in fact, at public school are Jews and Christians. I'm trying to understand, sir, why are they haram to have us friends. Why are they forbidden to have as friends?" Probably because I had asked far too many questions over the years as it was, he snapped and he told me, "Look, either you believe or you get out. If you get out, get out for good." Well, I had to make a choice in that nanosecond. My conscience told me that what he was ordering me to believe was a lie.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:10:50 I stood up and I was in my chador. I walked straight past the boys' section, which was scandalous in it of itself. Get this, Demetri, I'm not proud to admit it, but I have to keep it real. I kicked open the hefty metal door of the madrasa, kicked it open. Out of frustration, I yelled, "Jesus Christ," and I walked right out.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:11:17 How old are you again?

Irshad Manji: 00:11:18 I was 14.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:11:19 Amazing.

Irshad Manji: 00:11:20 Well, maybe, if that's amazing, the thing that I am proud of is that when I got home. You see, my mother had already received the phone call of my expulsion. I'm so proud that she did not force me to go back to the madrasa and grovel for forgiveness. She knew me better than that. She said to me one thing. She said, "Look, you are a smart girl. I have faith that you will think through what you're going to do. Now that you are no longer welcome at the madrasa every Saturday, what else are you going to be doing with those eight hours?" Because she expressed her faith in my ability to think responsibly, I decided, I'm not going to go to what we called back then the arcade. I'm not going to go to what we had back then, which were roller rinks. I was going to go to the ... That's how old I am. Yes. I was going to go to the closest thing that we had to Google at that time, and that was, of course, the public library.

Irshad Manji: 00:12:35 That, Demetri, is where I soaked up all the information I could about my religion, yes, but about other religions too, and various cultures. It was during that time of self-study that I came across something absolutely mind-blowing. It's sadly something I would've never learned at the madrasa. Something positive about Islam. I learned that Islam has its own tradition of independent thinking, of debate and descent and yes, reinterpretation, which meant that I could, in fact, be a questioning Muslim and a faithful one at the same time. I didn't have to make a false choice between those two. I was able to integrate them and that word "integrate" of course, led to my integrity, my wholeness. In so many ways, it is a spirit of that discovery, the discovery of integrity that led me, ultimately, to write this book, Don't Label Me, how to do diversity without inflaming the culture wars.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:13:45 That's almost an unbelievable story.

Irshad Manji: 00:13:46 Almost unbelievable.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:13:47 Almost unbelievable that have-

Irshad Manji: 00:13:50 You have to ask my mom how true it is.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:13:52 I believe you. I believe you. I believe you because it's you. Because it's you.

Irshad Manji: 00:13:56 Yes.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:13:57 That's also how it's in the point, it is you. I find one of the things I so much enjoy about this job is that I get to meet such exceptional individuals. It's not a coincidence that people become activists or people follow the path that they follow or blaze the trail that they blaze, because there's something deep inside of them that wheels them in that direction.

Irshad Manji: 00:14:19 You won't be surprised to hear that after I came out with my first book, which was entitled the trouble with Islam today, a Muslim's call for reform in her faith, many of my critics resorted to the argument that I may "traumatize madrasa misfit," and that it was out of revenge that I wrote The Trouble with Islam

Today, but I had to remind them that while that's a neat theory, the reality is that with or without my expulsion from the madrasa, there were and are so many human rights abuses being committed in the name of Allah and it's for that reason that I knew that after 9/11, when the world, sadly, was finally willing to pay attention to what is going on in the name of Islam, it's for that reason that I knew I had to write that first book.

- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:15:14 It's really hard to speak out or hold your own culture or people or ideas accountable, because not only do you make yourself an enemy to both sides, but you can get easily use as a tool by people who have malicious designs or intentions. It's so challenging. It's one of the most difficult things in the world. I'm sure you experienced that.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:15:43 Frankly, still do. Because I consider myself something of a social seamstress, by which I mean, whenever there are opposing sides and each side has something valuable to contribute to the overall picture, if you're going to reconcile those warning sides, you're going to have to thread a needle. As a social seamstress, to this day, I thread the needle to stitch together the opposing regions of our human tapestry. That is very difficult because as you say, you don't satisfy either of the sides. Both of them will try to use you to push their own agendas. One of the things I've learned over the years, and I teach this to my own students now, is that if you don't have a vision for your life, someone else will have an agenda for it.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:16:42 Interesting. It's also interesting that the way that our media is constructed and debates are constructed today, there is room for self-promotion, plenty of room, but it's very difficult if you want to put forward an honest agenda or push a point that isn't aligned with the dominant mainstream narratives, whatever those might be. If you want to introduce nuance, it's extremely difficult to do. Is that how you describe yourself? How would you describe yourself and what you do to a room full of strangers?
- Irshad Manji:** 00:17:16 I practice or at least do my very best to practice a leadership tradition called, Moral Courage. Moral courage means doing the right thing in the face of your fears. Now, the question, of course, is always, well, what is the right thing in a deeply polarized culture? One person's right is another person's abominable, but what I have found is that whatever you wind up deeming to be the right thing, it has to start with an honest attempt at engaging your other. That's because nobody has a monopoly on truth, not one person. Even your harshest critic has something to teach you, as I have learned over the years. It is only when I have lowered my emotional defenses enough to try and hear where they're coming from. That not only have I grown, but here's the beauty of listening and going first in the listening department, I have learned how to take the information that they've given me about their values and reframe my own arguments in a way that they can finally hear.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:18:34 In other words, yes, you grow by listening to many of your critics, but you also become a much better communicator of what you believe in. It's one thing to preach to the choir. Almost anybody can do that. It's quite another to win the trust and the respect, which is not to say agreement but the willingness to look again, the respect of the whole doubts. Sadly, far too few advocates of any

cause are willing to go there because it's work. It's laborious. It means, taming your ego.

- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:19:15 I was about to say. I was about to say, ego is a big part of that.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:19:18 Yeah, huge, huge part of that. A lot of people assume, Demetri, that the word, "ego" is self-helpy or somehow airy-fairy. The fact of the matter is that, anybody who has a brain, and I don't even mean that sarcastically. I mean, literally, anybody who was born with a brain is born with an ego, because the ego is the function of the primitive part of our brain. In times past during the hunter gathering times of our ancestors, ego was necessary every day because it is what kicked in when our very existence was being threatened. If you heard a wrestle in the bush, who knows what that could've been. The ego rose, basically, to signal to you that that could be a threat to your life. You've either got to get ready to fight, freeze or flee.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:20:20 Yeah. The ability to separate yourself from the other-
- Irshad Manji:** 00:20:21 That's right. That's right.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:20:24 ... to understand yourself as a separate entity in relationship to.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:20:29 Here's the problem. In relationship to. Now, that is great in a situation of mortal danger. It is not good in a situation of mere discomfort. That's the problem with us caving to the ego today is that when we are being disagreed with, the ego tricks us into believing that your very humanity is being questioned. Your existence is being jeopardized. You better get ready to fight, freeze or flee, but the reality is, your idea is just being disagreed with. Take some time, just literally a couple of seconds, to slow down, to breathe, to decelerate the blood rush in your body. That buys you the wherewithal to override the primitive part of the brain and tap into the more evolved part of the brain, which allows for reason to co-exist with emotion, not be bulldozed by emotion. Of course, we're now all steeped in technologies that are deliberately designed to amp up our emotions. I think that's a huge reason for why we now live in such a noisy world.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:21:48 Ultimately, it's our responsibility to use these technologies constructively, but man, given how our brains are wired and given how these technologies are designed, they really tap into the weakness of human beings.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:22:04 Yeah, and totally agree. It's something that we've talked about at length on so many prior episodes, whether it was our episode with Shoshana Zuboff on surveillance capitalism-
- Irshad Manji:** 00:22:13 Right.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:22:13 ... or so many others. There's also another technical component here, which came up in my mind while I was writing the rundown and the section of why I care, what I'm interested in to discuss today. That has to do with the ways in which we've become conditioned to expect to have frictionless experiences. I think that this speaks to, again, this idea that we shouldn't have to feel uncomfortable. That if something isn't working for us, we should be able to excuse ourselves from that conversation, which that also is incoherent because

at the same time, many of the people that say that, then put other people in a position that's extremely uncomfortable or where they feel threatened and at the same time, you have concepts like White Fragility, which suggest that white people, when they feel uncomfortable around conversations dealing with race, even if they're being attacked as based on their race, that is actually evidence of their privilege. It's almost like this giant gas lining mind effing thing, you know?

- Irshad Manji:** 00:23:24 Yeah. Yeah. Absolutely. I'm glad that you raised this poisonous concept of White Fragility. I say it's poisonous. It's toxic and it's misleading. Let me first say why it's misleading.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:23:39 Well, maybe you could also tell our listeners what it is because not-
- Irshad Manji:** 00:23:41 Sure. Understood.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:23:43 ... everyone is going to know what it is.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:23:45 Absolutely. There's a book that has steadily risen up and ultimately, top the best seller list, cheering the anti-racist and protest that have been sweeping the nation. That book is called, White Fragility. It claims that white people are so entitled to feeling comfortable that whenever hard conversations about race need to be had, white people will always meet those conversations with resistance, with defensiveness, with denial, with hostility and even with a venom. Now, I have to say, sure, some white people fit that bill, but it's not because they're white, Demetri, it's because they're human. Let me explain what I mean. Compare that to the Muslim fragility that I encountered when I traveled the world talking about the need for liberal reform within my faith of Islam. I quoted from the Quran Islam scripture to back up my case. I talked about our own tradition of independent thinking, which means that we didn't have to turn to outside foreign influences in order to rediscover the best that our religion has to offer. All of the raw materials for reform were already within the faith and yet, so often, too often, I experienced denial, consternation, condemnation, vitriol and on occasion, violent threats.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:25:31 Now, that would qualify as Muslim fragility. Are we really to believe that only white people are fragile? To the degree that white people are fragile, according to this concept of white fragility, it's not because they're white. It's because fragility is a human condition born of the ego, which is a universal power within each of us. If we're not aware of it, it becomes not only pervasive. It becomes pernicious as well. Of course, none of this is discussed in White Fragility. As a result of the comparison that I've just given you, that there is such a thing, also then, as Muslim fragility, as black fragility, as queer fragility, male fragility, female fragility, you name it, that we cannot simply put this on white people and reduce such a huge swath of humanity to that one negative characteristic. I said that this concept of White Fragility is misleading. That's what I mean by that, but it is also toxic. Why? Because when we focus on demographics, we immediately erect walls in people's minds. This, again, is because of the way the brain works.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:26:57 I'll give you a classic example. Take the phrase, "Black Lives Matter." We know that black lives certainly need to matter. According to some statistics, black lives are disproportionately on the firing line by police brutality, but by naming this

movement Black Lives Matter, it immediately sets up in the minds of those who don't already agree with that phrase that "Oh, Black Lives Matter huh? Okay. I guess that white lives don't matter." Organizers of Black Lives Matter have often said, "No, no, no, no, that is not what we mean." What they have failed to do, Demetri, is work with human biology. They have played right into the ego's trap. I think that this movement would have made much further strides many years ago. Had it been called something like black lives matter too as in white lives matter, yes, but black lives matter too. Or if they, indeed, had adopted the phrase, "All Lives Matter."

- Irshad Manji:** 00:28:15 I know, believe me, I've said this before and I've gotten a lot of flak for it. I know that a lot of people, when they hear this, they think, "Oh, Irshad just wants white people to be off the hook." This is an ego gratifying delusion on the part of people who just bat away the idea that you need to name things in a way that doesn't make people defensive. Because again, it is not just white people who are made uncomfortable when we focus on demographics. There's a very interesting social psychologist at Yale by the name of Jennifer Richeson who has written papers on the fact that when African-Americans or Asian-Americans are told that Hispanic-Americans are growing in number, people from those two groups, African-American and Asian-American become more conservative. They are triggered to become more conservative because they fear losing status. You see, it's a universal human thing, which is why this focus on both black lives mattering or white people being fragile is destructive. It certainly does not advance the cause in ways that are frictionless. That's for sure.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:29:40 Yeah. Well, stereotyping is a thing we all do.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:29:43 All of us. That's right.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:29:46 That's a guess to suggest that this is somehow just a racial issue or gender or whatever the particular issue is of the day or the focus is of the day. Just misses the point, because this is how the brain processes information.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:29:59 Exactly.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:29:59 It's uses heuristics.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:30:00 Exactly. Heuristics, shortcuts. That's exactly right. Let me just say one other thing about that because I love the fact that you point out that we all stereotype. I think that it would go very far to building trust. If people who scolded other people for having bias since we all have biases, if the scolders were the first people to step up and say, "I have biases too." Let me tell you what my biases are. In other words, if the scolders grab some humility-
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:30:36 Self-reflection.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:30:36 ... and made them ... Self-reflection.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:30:37 Self-awareness.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:30:39 Introspection, self-awareness, and made themselves role models rather than finger-waggers.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:30:46 Well, the great example is to bring it back just temporarily to the point or now, we'll move forward because I have so many other thoughts about White Fragility. The idea that the discomfort of white people in the context of these conversations, first of all, people can feel discomfort for all sorts of reasons. Even if the discomfort by someone is because there's a sense of guilt, that is not a cause for demonization of that person or ridicule of that person.

Irshad Manji: 00:31:12 Right.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:31:13 The idea that White Fragility is something to be criticized or pointed out or called out, but at the same time, white people need to bend over backwards to make other people feel comfortable who represent a group that we deem to be an oppressed group. This is, again, another contradiction. It's a hypocrisy. There needs to be a level of self-reflection around that. Actually, I would like to talk about that later when we talk about language, because I'm astounded by what's happened to language today and the extent to which we need to cuddle the people around us and phrase things correctly and be very careful to the point where I didn't even have this experience when I was a kid. There were things that we were taught about what we should and shouldn't say. If we got bullied, we should go to the principal, but there was also a social consensus among children. If you'd said something racist, something that people generally agree it was racist, you wouldn't be attacked by the mob, but what actually happened was something that was more natural and organic, which is that people wouldn't play with you. It would just be an organic shunning. It wouldn't happen in the way the things are done today.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:32:26 Also, race is not a scientific concept.

Irshad Manji: 00:32:30 No, it's not.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:32:30 It's a very fuzzy idea.

Irshad Manji: 00:32:32 Right.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:32:33 As you experienced when you were living in Uganda, there are shades. Who is black? Who is white? Who is a person of color? These are all categories that many people have more or less experience with. This goes back to the issue of labeling people. I may not feel entirely comfortable with the label of being white, to be quite honest with you.

Irshad Manji: 00:32:52 Absolutely.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:32:52 When I was growing up in the US, I went to a school that was very waspy, very Catholic, the people were of Irish, Polish decent. I felt that they were white. I thought of myself as not them. I have to get onboard with all this language, all of the stuff, instead of being allowed to simply arrive at it organically and in a way that feels appropriate and authentic for me. If that's not going to be exactly what you think it is or you think it should be, that should be okay. Because otherwise, we're not actually making progress as a society. What I'm simply doing is that a fear I'm kowtowing and I'm adapting the language and the servile rhetoric that I need to in order not to be punished. When the opportunity

changes or when the tables turn, I and not me specifically, but I or my representative called, Group, is going to try it against you.

- Irshad Manji:** 00:33:44 Exactly.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:33:44 This is not a white-black thing. This happened in Iraq after the fall of Saddam. It happens in every country. People constantly divide. We said, stereotypes, heuristics. This is how the brain process information. We create groups. Any group can subdivide into a smaller group. In a family with a lot of children, there are groups within that family. It's an absurd thing.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:34:06 You've pretty much written, Don't Label Me for me in that sense.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:34:10 I hope I can get some of the royalties.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:34:12 Yeah. Yeah, your check is in the mail, Demetri.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:34:15 Yeah. Yeah.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:34:16 Yeah. You've heard that one before, right? Look, I want to pick up on one thing that you said moments ago, which is that I have to kowtow. So many people feel today that in order not to be "canceled," in order to not have their professional reputations besmirched or outright obliterated, that they're just going to have to climb up and conform. I think that this is the worst thing that can happen in a society that deems itself to be free. You don't have to kowtow. Now, I'm not saying that you have to be reckless and lash out at people who are asking you to have more sensitivity in how you refer to some people or how you frame your points. There's no need, at least early on, for lashing out. What you can simply say is, "I don't feel that people are really captured or described accurately by labels."
- Irshad Manji:** 00:35:21 Let's say, I'm a so called straight white guy. If you're going to treat me, simply as a caricature, a cartoon of a straight white guy, then to be honest, you're not really seeing me for who I am. You're assuming that what I am is the same thing as who I am, but in order to really know who I am, you have to engage me as an individual. "Let me tell you something about me that you don't know." Simply, by virtue of the labels that you have assigned to me, but I think that would be a fascinating experiment for all of your listeners to undertake. No matter who they are, straight white guys, queer Muslims, whatever it may be, to just tell somebody who assumes something about them, here's what you don't know, merely by assigning your labels to me and watch a really interesting conversation bloom from that. Without ever having to scold somebody for labeling you, you've made the point that labels distort. They never capture who any of us is in all of our complexes.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:36:40 Well, they also rob us of our right to self-discovery.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:36:43 That's right.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:36:43 I don't have to define myself. In fact, by defining myself, I live at my capacity for self-discovery. I also limit my capacity for evolution. If I already come with a preconception about who I am or what I am or what I believe, well, first of all,

I'm less open to really learning what I believe and what I feel. On the topic of racism, it's a perfect example, because if we adopt the definition of racism that it is the product of a culture of racism and that by virtue and this is something that and I would generally agree with this idea that and when I say it's something that folks like Robin or I can't remember her name now, but the DiAngelo is the author of White Fragility-

- Irshad Manji:** 00:37:28 The author. Right. Right.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:37:28 ... would support which is that by virtue of being white, you are, by definition, racist because you live in a white supremacist culture. I have, I think, issues with some of the words there, but generally, I do agree that we all operate in a certain culture and that we just naturally imbibe some of these cultural norms and cues. If that's the definition of being racist, then you can't simultaneously use racist or term racist as a derogatory word-
- Irshad Manji:** 00:38:00 Right. Right.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:38:00 ... that can threaten someone. Because if I'm, in fact, going to be open to racist impulses that I have, right? If I'm going to be open and honest about those impulses, I need to feel safe.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:38:10 Exactly.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:38:12 This is going to get to another important thing. I've broken these down. We're going to be here for a while. That has to do with intentionality. Right now, we live in a culture where there seems to be this odd idea that's taken us by storm, which is that intentions aren't really important. What really matters is how the other person took offense or how the other person experienced what you said, but if that's the case, then if every white person in Americas inherently racist, then it means that there's no really differentiation between people who are racist but one actually live in a world where we move towards a more equitable, less hurtful society. If I engage in a conversation on this, if I say something racist, if I say something or something that someone else takes as racist, but I didn't mean it that way and not only did I mean it that way, but actually, I want to understand what you mean, because I genuinely actually care how you feel.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:39:06 Right.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:39:07 Because guess what, there are a lot of people that actually care how other people feel.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:39:10 For sure. Let me just say about exactly what you've said. We run into another wall in the way that anti-racist activism is so popularly conducted today. If you, Demetri, genuinely want to understand more about how to become in the lingo of the movement and ally, so often, you're not even allowed to ask that question because in reaction to that question, you will hear, "Well, it's not my job to educate you." That is the ultimate irony, as far as I'm concerned. Here, activists want people to be educated about these issues, but when many of them say, "Great, I am at your behest. Teach me." They are then told, "I'm tired. I'm exhausted. It's not my job to educate you." Hold on. If that's your reaction to somebody who earnestly wants to learn, then don't be surprised if they feel so

demeaned by that interaction, that they will not feel motivated to learn about the issues on their own.

- Irshad Manji:** 00:40:30 As I detail in Don't Label Me, this is one of the reasons out of many, but certainly one of the reasons that so many young, liberal men have turned to extreme right-wing politics because they have felt shamed and humiliated by the very people who pursue justice, but they have been in your excellent language of earlier in this conversation, they feel gaslighted.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:41:04 Dignity is a huge thing. I've talked about this-
- Irshad Manji:** 00:41:07 It's a huge thing.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:41:08 Right. It's-
- Irshad Manji:** 00:41:08 Sometimes, it's everything.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:41:10 Look, take you and a great example, at 14 years old. You walked and stormed out of your class and you never came back because you felt that, partly, your dignity was on the line here. You believed something and you were being told that you had to accept something you didn't believe. You just didn't accept that.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:41:29 Right.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:41:30 I think that it's very difficult for people who have a strong sense of right and wrong and dignity. I've brought this up in various instances on this podcast, although we've only done, I think, maybe four episodes dealing specifically with this issue, this larger, broader issue of correctness, wokeness, cancel culture, et cetera. I've talked about it in other episodes. When I grew up, I was a fiery kid. I didn't allow myself to get bullied. When people tried bullying me, I fought back. That's just one example in all sorts of places. Since I was a kid, that's who I am. I'm not going to start getting bullied right now. If you push me, and there are lots of people are like this. You're not going to get a very good reaction. Anyway, it's like the Lord of the Flies movie. It's like the kids took over or some of the kids took over the island or whatever.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:42:24 One of the things I actually want to do, Irshad, is because I do want to discuss your book and I want people to understand what it's about, but I've also written out a number of things that I wanted to cover with you in this context. One we did, which was all these labels like white fragility, toxic masculinity, white privilege, et cetera, rape culture, et cetera, and how some of these words are turned around and used in a very racist way and make other people feel very threatened. I think we've covered that, but there's these other ones that are really interesting. One has to do with freedom of expression. Something I want to talk, first, with you about, but I want to highlight some of the other ones because I think they're important. The second one has to do with power. I just think this is not discussed properly. I think that the way that we talk about power today, i.e., power is vested in white men who are heterosexual, broadly. Therefore, power is really a biological marker of identity or rather, biological markers of identity are consistent with certain levels of power.

- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:43:26 It doesn't matter whether you're the chairman of Goldman Sachs and you're white or if you're a white guy living in a trailer on welfare. That doesn't really matter. What matters is, your gender, your race, your heterosexuality and other intersectional markers of your biology, which is asinine on its face, but we'll get into what that's about because I'm curious, though I don't know exactly, but I have some ideas. One of the very general ideas that it said, "Divide and conquer game." Intentions, we mentioned that. We actually talked about that. Another one is, again, the sheltering language. The way in which we cuddle conversations and want people to feel safe and create safe spaces, et cetera, et cetera. This is something we talked about with Jonathan Haidt. Let's start with this thing about freedom of expression. Because it's something that, I think, strikes at the heart of all of this. How important is freedom of expression to you? What does that mean?
- Irshad Manji:** 00:44:27 Freedom of expression, for me, is at the very heart of how I live and how I hope other people feel free to live. As I mentioned, my family and I are refugees to this part of the world. I am enormously grateful for the freedoms that we have in our society to think and express ourselves, whether we exercise those freedoms is another issue. I know I insist on doing so, partly out of gratitude, and partly, because I worry that those freedoms will atrophy, that they will just seize up and become so brittle that they disappear in our lifetimes. Yeah, I didn't fight for those freedoms, Demetri. I didn't strife for them. I didn't shed blood for them. I was giving them when my family and I landed on the shores of this continent. I have to say that every morning I wake up and ask God to help me stay worthy of these freedoms, it is the very essence of pluralism.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:45:32 Now, let me explain what I mean by pluralism. I don't mean multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is the philosophy and some would say, ideology under which we preserve differences between and among groups because differences are valuable, but what multiculturalism does, it reduces, again, people to the groups that they are thought to belong to. It doesn't see people as individuals in their own right, full of their own complications, full of different thoughts that might diverge from the consensus within the group that you assume that they're a part of. It's exactly what you insist on being, right? You insist on thinking for yourself, Demetri. You don't want to be lumped in with everybody who looks like you or has the same heritage as you, as if all of you think and believe the same thing. Sadly, under multiculturalism, that is the assumption that is made.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:46:35 Pluralism is very different. Pluralism is not relativism. It is not anything goes. No. If you're a pluralist, you absolutely do stand for what is right versus what is wrong. You stand for what you believe is conscionable and you oppose what is unconscionable. You fight for what is acceptable and you reject what is unacceptable as you define it, but this is key. You do all of that with the humility to recognize that any position you take is contingent. It is temporary. It is based on the life experiences that you've had so far. If you have more life experiences, you have the right to change your position. Your temporary position is also based on the arguments that you've heard so far. Well, what if you hear better arguments down the road? That, too, is a reason to change your mind, but you can't hear better arguments if you don't have freedom of expression because all kinds of ideas are lost to self-censorship. For me, freedom of expression is the lifeblood of the examined life itself.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:47:59 Well, it's also the intellectual tradition of our republic. The ideas of people like John Stuart Mill who, of course, is writing after the founders but this gets the heart of liberalism and what is liberalism, because there's this weird conflation of what is this modern leftist movement with liberalism because it's profoundly anti-liberal.

Irshad Manji: 00:48:25 Exactly. It's very illiberal.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:48:27 It's illiberal. Also, something you said earlier, maybe think about this. It might have been the fact that when you engage in the marketplace of ideas, we come to more developed use about things. This is also integral to our epistemic tradition, our enlightenment tradition. This is how we come to views about things. This is exactly what you did when you left that class on Saturdays and substituted it with going to the library.

Irshad Manji: 00:48:55 Right.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:48:57 You did it on your own. This information was accessible to you. You didn't need someone else to authorize it.

Irshad Manji: 00:49:04 Right.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:49:04 You learned it on your own and you came to your own view.

Irshad Manji: 00:49:07 Exactly. For those who may be thinking, right now, well, there they go again, equating western culture with universal culture. Let me be very clear. Even in Islam, freedom of thought is meant to be treasured. I can hear the laughter already. Of course, the way it's practiced often stifles freedom of thought, but this tradition of independent thinking that I discovered in the public library, which is associated with Islam actually saved my faith in my faith. As many of your listeners will know, there was a time about 1,000 years ago when Islamic civilization led the world in curiosity, creativity and ingenuity. Precisely because at that time, freedom of expression, freedom of conscience were valued within the faith far more so than they are today. I worry that what has made Islam so brittle over the years, the fear of critical thinking, is something that is infecting. Yes, I do use that word deliberately, infecting causes today that as varied as social justice on the one hand and free expression on the other.

Irshad Manji: 00:50:33 Look, I just told you that I'm a huge advocate of free expression, but I also recognize, Demetri, that there are many on my side who advocate free expression only because they want it for themselves but they don't want other people to have it.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:50:49 Right.

Irshad Manji: 00:50:50 If they're criticized, many free expression or free speech advocates will say that if they are harshly criticized that they're somehow being canceled. No, you're not. You're just being criticized. Grow up. Pull up your big boy and girl panties and deal with it.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:51:07 Yeah. What is this phenomenon that we're seeing? What do you think this is really about? This-

Irshad Manji:	00:51:12	Power.
Demetri Kofinas:	00:51:12	Power.
Irshad Manji:	00:51:13	Power.
Demetri Kofinas:	00:51:14	Who is seeking power?
Irshad Manji:	00:51:16	Just about everybody.
Demetri Kofinas:	00:51:18	Just about everybody. People that can access it through the normal channels and feel that this is an easier or more accessible way of wielding it?
Irshad Manji:	00:51:27	People who are told that they can't access it through conventional ways. This is the very important distinction that I've just introduced. People who are told that they can't. You see, in universities, for the last 20, 30 years, a lot of so called minority students whether they are black or queer or Latinx as the phrase goes now, whether they're-
Demetri Kofinas:	00:51:51	What is that?
Irshad Manji:	00:51:51	Latinx. It's meant to be gender-neutral. Instead of saying Latino or Latina, it's now referred to as Latinx so as not to offend those who don't want to be identified with one or another gender. My point, simply, is this, that a lot of young people in America have been "educated." Because really, what I mean is, indoctrinated in what is called, Critical Theory. In some cases, it's called, Critical Race Theory. What it teaches is that, those of you who are not white, straight men are victims. You are seen by other people only for your categories and therefore, you have no power. The only way then to get power is to fight for it, but in this case, fight for it for your entire group and not just yourself. Because the system, they are indoctrinated to believe, because "the system" is built to cater to the needs and the wishes of white straight men in order to get power you're going to have to overthrow the system.
Irshad Manji:	00:53:16	That includes such quaint ideas as freedom of expression, which is why so many on the left today and not just students of color, also white students and I hate those labels, forgive me for using them.
Demetri Kofinas:	00:53:34	Yeah. It's a great example. You're forced to use it.
Irshad Manji:	00:53:36	I'm forced to use it. Exactly. All kinds of young people are now forced, if you will, compelled to think of freedom of expression as a joke, as a cover that powerful people use-
Demetri Kofinas:	00:53:52	An excuse.
Irshad Manji:	00:53:52	... in order to keep their power. That's right. An excuse to not change things. No wonder there's such an easy drift into illiberalism because it's not, in fact, about justice. It is about, I'm going to use a phrase here, just us. Do you see what I'm saying?

Demetri Kofinas: 00:54:11 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Irshad Manji: 00:54:13 Justice is one thing, but it easily becomes tribalism, as in, just us. That is why I'm saying that it is about grabbing power, not really about seeking justice for everyone. I'll say one other thing before I give the floor back to you. You've really got me going now.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:54:34 I'm happy about that.

Irshad Manji: 00:54:35 Which is that the work that I do, Demetri, is about changing the game. I'll explain what I mean by that in a second, but what I see going on today is that the game isn't changed. It's just that the uniforms of each team are swapped. Meaning, if you are deemed to be on the team of the powerful and someone else is deemed to be on the team of the powerless, then the powerless team simply wants your uniform. They want to wear the uniform of the powerful. That is only swapping jerseys, but it's not changing the game. Because the game is still created by ego, right? It's not about dismantling the systems that we are told has led to oppression. It's simply about, now, the oppressed wanting to become the oppressors. Well, I'm sorry, but how is payback the same thing as progress? It's not. This is why I'm saying, the game isn't changing. Only the jerseys are being exchanged.

Irshad Manji: 00:55:49 That's why I make it a point to emphasize that whether you are advocating for free speech or whether you are advocating for social justice. If you are letting your ego lead you into the trap of becoming dogmatic of not listening to your other, of actually assuming that you have the truth and nobody else does, then you're not a game changer at all.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:56:18 Totally. I have so many thoughts about this. One of the things that just entered my mind was something you said very early on, which was listening to other people and the importance of doing that. It made me think, also, about how the practice of doing that makes you a much better partner. It makes you a better partner in business and in your personal life.

Irshad Manji: 00:56:38 Absolutely.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:56:38 It makes you a better friend as well.

Irshad Manji: 00:56:41 My marriage dissolved, Demetri, because to be blunt, my partner believed she had the full truth. Of course, there's always a different ... I'm coming from a biased place, obviously, but here's my point. There was a time when I said to her, "I have never met anybody more prideful than you." It's one thing to be proud of who you are. That's beautiful. That's great. Don't let anybody shame you for being who you are, but it's another thing to be prideful, which means that you never say you're sorry. You never admit that you have responsibility for the collapse of something including a relationship. If you're going to engage with your other, in order for that to be successful, your other is also going to want to have to engage. If that other does not want to engage and exploits you for your willingness to listen, then nothing will be resolved.

Irshad Manji: 00:57:47 Unfortunately, that's what happened in my marriage. I learned the hard way that sometimes you do have to walk away. I'm not suggesting for a minute that

by going, first, in the listening department, all will be fine. No. I'm saying that sometimes it won't be fine and you've got to have enough dignity to know when you need to walk away, but if you don't go first in the listening department, you'll never know how much can change. You'll never know whether that other person was willing to engage once they saw that they were not going to be judged for coming from the perspective that they come from. It is a fine balance. These are skills that I teach in Don't Label Me, but it is important, therefore, that relationships really do become relationships, not monologues that are then assumed to be conversations.

- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:58:47 Well, this is a really great point, I think, to transition soon to the overtime, because it highlights the real world difficulty of actually trying to have honest conversations. Because one, you have to be open. You have to be radically open to self-examination, right? At the same time, you also need to be able to know when and how to hold your ground. You need to be able to know what's right and what's wrong and where to say thus far, no further.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:59:19 Right.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:59:19 There's no quantitative model that's going to spit out an answer for what to do here.
- Irshad Manji:** 00:59:25 That's right. There's no algorithm. There's no formula.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:59:27 Yeah. No one has got the right answer for you. Anyone that says they do, they can tell you what's right or what's wrong, and wants to punish you accordingly as an authoritarian-
- Irshad Manji:** 00:59:35 Exactly.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 00:59:35 ... with authoritarian impulses. This is why it's so essential that we have a respect for conversation for free expression, and that we have some model in our head for how to arrive in a consensus. It doesn't mean we're going to arrive at ontological truth, but if we have a template for how to work through our problems, whether that's in our personal lives or whether that's in the political arena, we can actually survive. My fear is that we are in a really dangerous place. I know that a lot of pundits on television and in the media exploit this type of language. Because for so many years, people both on the right and on the left, use hyperbole to stir up emotions and tell people the republic is lost or you are being attacked by fascist or whatever, but I'm genuinely concerned. I'm genuinely concerned because as the tensions ratchet up, there is the real potential for a next phase transition in authoritarianism, not just in this country and elsewhere. It's also important to note that America is the most powerful militaristic super power on the planet. We cannot afford to screw around with our republic.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 01:00:57 We have a responsibility, not just to ourselves and to the people who fought for the freedoms that we now take for granted, but we also have responsibility to everyone one else in the planet who would suffer in the even that we lost control of this republic. When I say that, I don't mean to suggest anything about the current president, because I think people's obsession over Donald Trump does us all a collective disservice. Because what we're talking about here, the

issues here run much deeper, are broader and much older than anything that one individual can do and whether it's this president or whether it's a future president, what worries me is the instability of our social and political fabric. We're not doing a good job of stewarding that. It sounds like you wanted to say something there.

- Irshad Manji:** 01:01:47 Yes. You've given me the most beautiful segue. We're not doing a good job of stewarding that. Here's some data to your point. Last year, a scholar by the name of Liliana Mason who studies the politics of identity and how that translates into partisan politics, she released a paper that found that 18% of the democrat surveyed and 13% of the republican surveyed agreed that some or more than some violence is justified if the other side wins the 2020 election.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 01:02:28 Very scary. Very scary.
- Irshad Manji:** 01:02:29 Okay. That's like one in five people. That is huge. For that reason alone, I'm not writing off the possibility of civil war. No matter who is pronounced our next president.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 01:02:43 Yeah. Civil war doesn't have to be the union-
- Irshad Manji:** 01:02:46 That's right.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 01:02:46 ... and the confederacy lining up at Gettysburg. That's not how it has to be a civil war. A lot of people hear and the word, "civil war" and they think, "Oh, come on. You're exaggerating." There are various ways in which society can come into physical conflict with each other.
- Irshad Manji:** 01:03:01 Here's an example of how to outwit this tendency toward violence. In Don't Label Me, I tell the story of Genesis and Lewis. Genesis is an African-American Hip-Hop artist who wants the Mississippi state flag to change. She wants the confederate battle emblem in that flag to be replaced by something else. Why? Because when she sees that flag, she is reminded of how her ancestors were enslaved and the fact that her own grandfather was murdered by the KKK, simply, for protecting a group of black voters the first time they were able to cast their ballots. Now, Lewis is also a young guy and he is white. He is an entrepreneur. He wants the state flag to remain as is because he feels a sense of home when he sees it. He belongs to a club called, The Sons of Confederate Veterans. He is directly descended from a civil war soldier who fought on the side of the south.
- Irshad Manji:** 01:04:10 I bring up all of this because you can see how each of these individuals could take history very, very personally. Genesis, one night, as a Hip-Hop artist, launched an inflammatory protest against the confederate flag. A viral photo of her protest then generated a ton of hate mail towards her. As she was scrolling through her social media feeds, she saw a message from Lewis, in which he said, "Look, I don't want you to die. I don't want to kill you, but I have to say that I disagree with you." You know what she did? She actually invited him to her backyard to sit and discuss this issue. She started off the conversation with a very from the heart question. Nothing intellectual at all. She said, "Lewis, when you see that flag, how does it make you feel?" He answered and because she

asked him that question, he felt the moral obligation to reciprocate. He asked her, "How does it make you feel?" She answered.

- Irshad Manji:** 01:05:22 Over the course of three hours, Demetri, they got to know one another. What he realized, Lewis, what he realized after that conversation and as a result of it is that he cared more about Genesis than he did about the confederate flag itself. What he did about that is that over the course of a few months, he reflected. He introspected. He asked himself questions. He had contentious conversations with his own father about it. Without anybody asking him to do this, not even suggesting that he do this, he took down the confederate flag that was flying in his own backyard. He neatly folded it up and put it in a box called, Things of the Past.
- Irshad Manji:** 01:06:14 When I asked him why he did that, he said, "Irshad, I had never gotten the kind of respect from the other side that I felt when Genesis asked me why I believed what I believed. It was because of that respect that I came to appreciate, I'm not going to lose my heritage if that flag is changed. I'll still have my heritage. I can still be proud of it, but I'll be prouder, still, when we have a flag that doesn't make other people feel terror in their hearts. He said that he was taking a position that he feels Christ would've taken. That's how seriously he took his Christianity.
- Irshad Manji:** 01:07:00 My point is this, before deciding that somebody who looks like Lewis, scruffy red beard, dirty baseball cap, calls himself a Christian, before we decide that on the basis of his appearance and his labels, he must be a racist. Let's engage. Let's actually find out the backstory. Let's see where he's coming from and you'll be surprised how often. Not always, but how often. When you take the time to build that trust, then emotional defenses are lowered, so that those who would, otherwise, feel that they're being persecuted for their point of view, then understand that not only are they not being judged, but they're being encouraged to educate you. When they feel that way, they will suddenly have the psychic bandwidth to then hear where you are coming from. That's the bottom line. This iron clad law in human psychology, if you wish to be heard, you must first be willing to hear.
- Irshad Manji:** 01:08:12 Notice that listening is not about being nice. It's not about being civil for the sake of civility. There's actually enlightened self-interest in it.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 01:08:22 It's a beautiful story, Irshad. It's from the book and there are other stories like that as well. Including your friend Jim, it's a similar story of how someone that you can love and that walked you down the aisle, in fact, can also vote for someone whose political positions you could so disagree with. I think that it's important to recognize that those two things can happen. I think it's our jobs to understand how people that we may disagree with on certain moral issues that might be important to us may still yet be good people. We need to be able to figure out how to resolve those incongruities because this is how we move forward in society.
- Irshad Manji:** 01:08:59 This is exactly right. That's the key, moving forward. I often say that we can stand our ground and seek common ground. That sounds like a contradiction, but in fact, it's not. Here's why. You can have your position, but by engaging with somebody who profoundly disagrees with that position, if you believe even

after that engagement, that on the hole, you still are right in having your original position, great. Stand your ground, but in opening up the space for your other to be heard by you, you have just created a way to also seek common ground. Think about it like this, standing your ground is about the what, the content, the actual issue. Seeking common ground is about the how, whether you engage or whether you shut down potential conversation. If you can balance your what with your how, that is what I call effective citizenship.

- Demetri Kofinas:** 01:10:04 I love it. Look, the thing that we were talking about earlier that I want to discuss into the overtime or at least to start with and then we'll get into other issues as well is this concept of power. Because I think, to me, it perhaps is the most important thing that we could discuss because I think that we're getting played here. I think there is a much larger game being played and there are dynamics of divide and conquer happening in society. I would like to explore with you what you think is really going on here. One of the sources of this manifestation and things to that effect, for regular listeners, you know the drill. If you're new to the program, Hidden Forces is listener supported. We don't accept advertisers or commercial sponsors. The entire show is funded from top to bottom by listeners like you.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 01:10:55 If you want access to our premium content, which includes transcripts to every conversation we've ever had on the program, copies of my rundown, which are elaborate show documents created by me ahead of every episode or if you just can't get enough of the podcast and you want to hear more from my guests including my conversation with Irshad and the second half of that discussion, head over to patreon.com/hiddenforces and subscribe. Not only is the content worth it, but it's a great way of showing your support for the show and the work we do. Irshad, stick around. We're going to move the second half of our conversation into the overtime.
- Irshad Manji:** 01:11:35 Happily.
- Demetri Kofinas:** 01:11:37 Today's episode of Hidden Forces was recorded in New York City. For more information about this week's episode or if you want easy access to related programming, visit our website at hiddenforces.io and subscribe to our free email list. If you want access to overtime segments, episode transcripts and show rundowns full of links and detailed information related to each and every episode, check out our premium subscription available through the Hidden Forces website or through our Patreon page at patreon.com/hiddenforces. Today's episode was produced by me and edited by Stylianos Nicolaou. For more episodes, you can check out our website at hiddenforces.io. Join the conversation at Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @HiddenForcesPod or send me an email. As always, thanks for listening. We'll see you next week.