Episode 105: 40 Years On John Lennon, Extreme Risk Protectio...

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SPEAKERS

Paul Friedman, Kelly Sampson, Michael Epstein, Kris Brown, Karl Rhoads, JJ Janflone

JJ Janflone 00:00

Hey everybody, this is a legal disclaimer where I tell you that the views, thoughts and opinions shared on this podcast belong solely to our guests and hosts and not necessarily Brady or Brady's affiliates. Please note, this podcast contains discussions of violence that some people may find disturbing. It's okay, we find it disturbing too. Hey, everybody, this is JJ, and I want to thank you for joining us for an extra special "Red, Blue and Brady" episode today. So what we're talking about today is the 40th anniversary of the murder of John Lennon. I'm sure a lot of you know -- but just for those of you who don't -- on the eighth of December in 1980, John Lennon was shot and killed, in front of the entrance of his home in New York City. His murderer was a one time Beatles fan who had traveled from Hawaii to New York with a 38 special revolver, that he had purchased just six weeks prior from a shop in Honolulu, Hawaii. The shooter had purchased his gun legally, as he had a permit and no police record. And while it wasn't legal for him to bring the gun into New York State, he did manage to transport it via plane not once, but twice. However, the shooter had planned this killing over several months and he had shared his plans with his wife. Had an extreme risk law, sometimes it's called a red flag law (we'll talk later about why that's bad) been in place at the time, this shooter may not have been able to maintain his access to this firearm. Today, we're still living without John Lennon as his, obviously, his family. And the shooter himself was given a sentence of 20-years-to-life in prison in New York and remains incarcerated. To talk about that day, as well as everything

that's happened since I'm joined, of course with the fantastic Kelly Sampson, our "cohostess with the mostest" who is also counsel at Brady and our Director of Racial Justice Initiatives. We're also joined by Senator Karl Rhoads, who served in the Hawaii State Senate since 2016. And from 2006 to 2016, served in the Hawaii State House of Representatives. We also of course, have Kris Brown, who's president of Brady. And Michael Epstein, an Academy Award nominated documentary producer, director and writer, who in addition to some fabulous documentaries about John Lennon and Yoko's life, also has a really great podcast out. And Paul Friedman, Mr. Friedman is actually the one who put all this together. He's the founder and executive director of Safer Country, a gun violence prevention nonprofit that's focused entirely on keeping guns out of unsafe hands. Now there's there's so much to dig into. So I want to go ahead and get started, and I think, can I just kick it maybe directly to you, Paul? Can you tell folks a little bit more about about yourself, about Safer Country, and about what gave you the idea for this podcast altogether?

P Paul Friedman 03:00

It's great to be here, I want to thank you very much for opening up your podcast for this conversation. And let me just go back a step and say that I got involved in the issue of gun violence in 2016, when I was invited to become the Executive Director of the Virginia Tech nonprofit, created by the families of the victims of that horrible tragedy. And after a couple years, I realized that I had the opportunity to create an organization, Safer Country, that could be more political and be more dynamic in that space, snd so I did so. In the course of doing that I charted out the mission of keeping guns out of unsafe hands, and looking at how we can improve the background check system, but also how we could help advance this issue of extreme risk laws, the Extreme Risk Protection Order laws, often called ERPOs, it's also commonly called a "red flag" law. And there are some other names for it, but we'll get to that later. But the bottom line is that this law is all about enabling law enforcement to intervene in a crisis, and to remove -- temporarily -- a gun or guns from someone who's perceived by a court to be a danger to themselves or others. And it's a it's a very important law, which is now in 19. states and the District of Columbia. Virginia passed the law at the beginning of this year, and it became effective on July 1st. And with that in mind, I thought it would be a worthwhile thing to do a forum on that subject in June, to try to raise awareness about how that law would be implemented in Virginia. And in the course of doing that research for that Zoom forum, turned out to be a Zoom forum, it wasn't intended to be of course at the time. That's when I learned the John Lennon story, always something that was in the back of my mind -- gun violence, John Lennon -- you know, I grew up as a big fan of The Beatles and John Lennon. And I distinctly recall the tragic day 40 years ago, when the news came out that he was, he had been killed. And I was looking into that, just out of curiosity, and that's when I discovered that he had

told (the shooter), had told his wife, in advance, of his intentions to murder John Lennon, something I hadn't been aware of. And when I read that a bell went off in my head, and I said, "Well, this is an incredible story," and it goes to the heart of this new law. And it occurred to me then that, had that law been in place in 1980, perhaps that murder could have been prevented, you know. It occurred to me right, then that, you know, that was a stunning thought. And I thought, you know, "imagine that" was the first two words that came to mind, and so I decided I wanted to create a public awareness campaign around those two words. And I was very pleased to speak to Kris, and share that idea with her, and as a result, we're all here tonight.

JJ Janflone 05:57

Well, and I'm very happy that we're all here tonight. And Paul, that you spearheaded this. Because that was actually too, when you shared the story with me about the background of John Lennon, I thought that I knew everything that there was, sort of, already to know about that particular story. And so I was very surprised to see, sort of, these intersections of both the work that a lot of us do in gun violence prevention. And then Michael, we're gonna have you talking a minute too, about about sort of the life and then what the death of John Lennon meant. But first, I want to just, we talk a lot about, on this podcast, doing sort of "Schoolhouse Rock moments." So moments when we sort of walk things back a little bit, and get very close and careful about defining our terms. And I want to have Kris, maybe if you're comfortable, if you could, Paul gave us a great quick primer, but if you could go into a little bit more detail about those Extreme Risk Orders, which sometimes we call ERPOs, and which sometimes, unfortunately, are called "red flag" laws. If you could maybe break that down a little bit for our audience about what those are and how they developed, that would be really great I think.

K

Kris Brown 06:53

It's a pleasure to be here, really happy to be part of this podcast, and for Paul for reaching out, and connecting with us from having this great idea. Because we all know for our cause, there's a human elements, obviously, at the end of every single action that we take, real lives are on the line. And there are people wonderful people that have been injured, and have lived with those injuries over the course of their life, like Jim Brady and there are icons, we have tragically lost, like John Lennon. And I just want to say, I too am a huge fan of The Beatles. But also, my daughter was born on October 9, which is the same day that John Lennon was born. And it's one of the things in our family that we cherish and celebrate, along with her birthday, every single year. So it feels like we're doing a tribute to someone who is really important, in so many ways, to our life, so thank you for that. Extreme Risk laws, Extreme Risk Protection Orders, red flag laws, they go by many

different names, actually. And one of the things that Paul and I talked about is, can we find a really good name, to capture what these are? And I think that's well worth the effort, because it makes a material difference in the lives of real people, and could have made a huge difference in John Lennon's life, actually, meaning he could be alive today, if there had been such laws in place. And quite simply, and everyone who's a lawyer or non-lawyer out there, forgive me because I have to be very general right now, to encompass what many of them do. And each state has taken a slightly different approach, they're all not the same. But at a very high level, what they do is provide for a court process, so that guns can be removed from individuals who are at risk, typically, by law enforcement, but sometimes at the request of a family, family member, and other people who are close to that individual. In those circumstances, the provision for that under state law typically, is that a court order is issued, subject to a hearing, often an ex-parte hearing, but it means that basically an affidavit or other kinds of legal evidence are put forward, about the kind of risk that person might be to him or herself, or others. Roughly 19 states and DC -- Paul, you can correct me if I get the numbers wrong -- have enacted these laws. We have seen these orders go into effect, and have huge benefit. Connecticut, the state with the longest extreme risk law in effect, a study was done about a year ago, on the impact of that state law on various kinds of outcomes. What they found is nearly a 50% reduction in suicide, in that state, as a result of that state's extreme risk law. So we can't understate how important these kinds of laws are to public safety, and importantly, not just to an individual potentially harming others, but harming themselves. And that's really an important component of this -- and that's why I'm so glad we're talking about this -- because across the country, that the most important thing is to get the word out about these laws, and how people can actually explore, when necessary, working with law enforcement and others in exigent circumstances to save lives, and getting that kind of order in place.

K Kelly Sampson 10:36

We have talked about how this is the 40th anniversary of John Lennon's murder, and unfortunately, we know we live in a country where tens of thousands of people are murdered every year with guns. And so I'm wondering, what do we gain, and how does focusing in on what happened to John Lennon, in 2020, help us understand gun violence, and also ERPOs?

P Paul Friedman 11:00

Well, I'm gonna let Michael talk a bit about this, because Michael knows so much about John Lennon. But I'll just start by saying that the comments from Kris and myself already show that there are quite a few people in this country, and around the world, who care

deeply about John. And I think talking about a story that relates to him is going to relate to them, be resonant with them. But, Michael, I'm sure you have some thoughts on this.

M **Michael Epstein** 11:21

Well, I think it's an excellent question. And, and it saddens me, it makes me angry actually, that we haven't made more progress, in the 40 years, to address a death that could have been avoided, a loss, I think that is universally felt. I mean, I think it's important to note that Yoko and Sean, feel differently. Family members of the victims of gun violence, bear the burden of that loss in a different way, say than the fans who miss John. But he wasn't my father, or my husband or, you know, in a fandom, in a weird way, especially with the Beatles, right, I mean, people sort of take ownership in ways. But the idea that that 40 years on, we're still having to have this conversation. I'm thrilled at the legislative progress that's being made at the state level, and the kind of action, directed action. But I hope that, you know, we all feel this loss, 40 years on, of what might have been, of what we lost, of the voice that was lost. And as Paul was saying, this is such a preventable death. I was myself, I remember watching Monday Night Football, and hearing the announcement from Howard Cosell. I was just barely old enough to have been doing that. I was in middle school, and it just hit me like a, I mean, like everybody, you know. You just couldn't, you couldn't believe it, and then you couldn't assimilate it. And as Yoko has said, "the death of a loved one is a hollowing experience," it hollows you out. And I think in particular, of gun violence, and somebody like John, who we can talk about it, JJ, if you want, you know, who was who is coming off of five years taking care of Sean, and who had stepped back and who had, sort of, recentered himself, and was emerging, full of promise and hope, getting ready to start the next phase of his life and his career. And, you know, the first single off of Double Fantasy was "Starting Over." I mean, that's where his, his head and his heart was that. And to have somebody take him with a gun -- that he was easily able to obtain, and that he never should have -- struck me then as deeply unjust. There's something wrong, that we allow that; there's something wrong that we tolerate that, or that we excuse it, that we don't, that we're not emboldened to act somehow. You know, like Paul, I learned later, much more of the specifics, because you know, initially, the assumption is, "he's crazy," it's a, it's a scattershot, weird thing. People often blame New York for it, because New York, at that point, was very violent. But in fact, it was, it was an imminently preventable death. I mean John, John was coming home, after having been in the studio with Yoko. He had released Double Fantasy. They were mixing Yoko's single, which was "Walking on Thin Ice" with jack Douglas. They had done, that day, an interview with RKO Radio, and they left, and they left around five o'clock to go into the studio with Jack. And the shooter was there and had John sign. I mean, you know, John was, John loved New York. He loved the United States but he really really loved New York because he had freedom here. He could walk and nobody really bothered him. A little bit, you know, asked

him for his autograph periodically, but he didn't get mobbed. And, and Yoko was free here. I mean, they fled England, which I talked about a lot in the films, because of the raceism in the misogyny that was directed at Yoko. There was a Japanese woman, who was, is strong and fierce, and brilliant, and an artist and wasn't going to play the game. And she gets blamed for breaking up the Beatles, because she fell in love with somebody, and he fell in love with her, and New York was freedom. And so he had none of that guard up that day. And, you know, came up and asked him to sign his copy of Double Fantasy, and he got in the car and went to the studio and instead of going out to dinner, he wanted to come home to put Sean to bed.

P **Paul Friedman** 15:35
Michael, he stayed, he lived at the Dakota.

M **Michael Epstein** 15:38
Yes.

P **Paul Friedman** 15:38
Could you talk about that place and why, maybe, there wasn't more security there, for someone whose as famous as John Lennon?

M **Michael Epstein** 15:44
Well, you know, I don't know that there was much security for anybody, at that point in, you know, we didn't think that way. The Dakota is just off of Central Park. It's at 72nd Street on the west side of New York. And you know, it's this, it's called the Dakota because when it was built, it was literally as far away as the Dakota territory. There was nothing that far North in the 1880s. But it's this grand, beautiful building that housed everybody from Lauren Bacall to Leonard Bernstein to Paul Simon, and John and Yoko. And he, he loved in. He would go to Cafe La Fortuna around the corner on West 71st Street. There's a great story that Jack Douglas, who is a friend and was the producer of Double Fantasy tells. There used to be a clothing store -- I don't know how many people are from New York or emember this -- right on the corner of 72nd Street and Columbus, called Charivari, which was, kind of, very fashionable, polka tour, crazy kind of clothes, you know, kind of stuff that you only wear if you're in New York. But anyway, John tells the story about how he walked in there, and they had this silver jacket with his big fur coat, a big fur collar, and he tried it on and he loved it, and he paid for it, and he just walked out. And for us it's like, you know, I bought a jacket. But for John it was I got to go into a store, I tried a jacket on, I

liked it, I bought it and I walked out. How fantastic is that? Because none of that was possible as a Beatle in London. And in fact, before he moved to New York had retreated to his massive estate, in Tittenhurst park, to escape it. He didn't want to escape it. The idea of being in New York and being with New Yorkers, and walking in Central Park with Sean and, you know, there's any number of stories of people who found themselves playing in the playground and then all sudden realized, 'Oh, wait, that's john lennon and his son, just on the swingset.' You know that, he loved that. And so that night, it wasn't unique that he didn't have his guard up. He never did. He never thought to. And this was a man who planned it, who came specifically from Hawaii, with a gun he had bought in Hawaii. He bought a Charter Arms undercover gun and brought it to New York. Actually, as Paul you reference, he came in October, planning to kill John and gave up, went left, I think first went to Virginia to buy bullets, but eventually went back to Hawaii, with his gun and the bullets, and told his wife, told his wife said "Here's the gun. Here are the bullets. I'm gonna kill John Lennon." And you think about everything that you are all talking about, that Kris was talking about, you know, if there had been a vehicle, if there had been an avenue, if there had been a place for that person to go and say "I'm worried about my husband," you know. There was no, nobody to go to almost, right? And if she had gone to the police, he didn't have a criminal record. There was nothing that anybody could have done at that moment, even if she had done something. But you, you know, people tend to do what's available to them, right? They don't have necessarily the imagination. So if you have these kinds of laws, and people know about them, and you have somebody say, "I'm angry at John Lennon. Here's the gun and the bullets I bought to kill him." You can go to mental health professionals, you can go to the police. And you know, the the thing that always, I found so distressing about this story, was that years later, when he spoke to somebody he told (the person who killed John) that he had deep seated resentment at his wife for not intervening. He was angry at her for not going to the police, for not going to somebody and saying, "This is my" you know, "my husband has a gun and he's going to kill John Lennon." And you just think, as you said, Paul, about all the possibilities, all of the things that were unsaid, the love that was missed, the songs, and that's very selfish of us. I mean, you know it at the end of the day, it's still someone's husband, it's still someone's father. And I think that's true of a lot of gun violence, we tend to politicize it in a way that I think's important. But it's, at a key level, it's a loss of a loved one for somebody.

P **Paul Friedman** 20:06

You know, what makes John so powerful is not just that he was a brilliant singer and songwriter for the Beatles and on his own, but the message of peace and love that he sent out to the world, his opposition to the Vietnam War, and all of that, created a bond with people that's real.

M

Michael Epstein 20:22

Yeah, you know I, in preparation for this chat, I went back and I know John had said something at some point, in the early 70s. If I can, I'm gonna read it. He talked about, he said, "Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King are great examples of fantastic nonviolents who died violently. I can never work that out. We're pacifists, but I'm not sure what it means. When you're such a pacifist, that you get shot. I can never understand that." And you think about all of the people who who worked so hard for peace and for equal rights, and for civil rights, and who, whose lives ended because of gun violence. Medgar Evers, Martin Luther King, any number of people, and John, you know, is an icon for peace for many reasons, and for him to be taken and brought down by gun violence, senseless gun violence, is something I think 40 years on, Kelly, to get back to your initial question, something that's still impossible to reconcile. It's just still impossible to line up. You know, it's not cancer, or a plane crash, or something that's still tragic and a loss. This feels so unnecessary -- and gun violence, I think, feels unnecessary -- every single time it happens.

K

Kelly Sampson 21:41

One thing that I picked up, when you were just talking about how New York and the United States writ large, sort of represented freedom. I think there's a real irony there as well, because we often hear guns and carrying them, and a lack of restrictions on them sort of put in a context of, "Well, this is for freedom. And this is how you get freedom." So that was just very striking to think about the ways that because of, you know, a gun, his freedom was ultimately taken away, even though he had come to this country as a place where he could experience life and live a really full life. So that was just very striking as well.

P

Paul Friedman 22:18

Kelly, that's a great, great point. And, you know, we ought to be free to go to malls, and to theaters, you know. At night, we ought to be able to go to religious institutions, and not be afraid that we're going to be gunned down. That's a freedom that's really important in America, and we've lost that. We don't have that confidence anymore, and it's tragic.

JJ Janflone 22:41

I do want to if, I can, flag something too that Michael said, that I think is really important at the beginning in talking about these different relationships we have to people, particularly public figures, famous people. There's a, there's a sort of John Lennon that

fans have, and then there's a John Lennon that friends would have, and coworkers would have, and family would have those are all different John's, right.

M Michael Epstein 23:03
Exactly

JJ Janflone 23:04
There was no guard, there was no, there was no expectation. I think that's the key here, right? There wasn't, there wasn't it's not a concert, we were worried about a crush or any of that stuff. You know, Yoko in an interview that I did with her for the first film, I did a film called Lennon NYC for public television, that covered this. I mean, you know, we didn't go into depth about everything. But she said that she was in the hospital, and JJ I think this is what you're, this standing next to the person and having to go through it. And, and unfortunately, when when we lose people, we end up having all these different definitions and all these different visions we had, of what they are sort of, competing altogether. But I think it's really important to remember that when jJohn Lennon is shot, Yoko Ono, the person who loves him is next to him. And she's got to live with that still. She goes with him to the hospital. She has to live with that. And one of the things that strikes me, I mean, we hear so many survivor stories, Paul I know you do. Kris, Kelly, we've been through it where survivors have told us about having to be next to their loved one or be next to their friend in a classroom, and how they're never going to be the same person they were five minutes before that happened. They haven't been shot, but they've been morally, fatally injured, in many different ways. But part of the story that always gets me from that day is hearing too that, while the shooter was was sort of waiting outside of the Dakota for John Lennon to return, that at one point, even Sean and his nanny come by, and he has an interaction with them. Yeah.

M Michael Epstein 24:41
She told the doctor to not make the announcement because she thought if he didn't, if he didn't make the announcement, then somehow John would still be alive. You know that, that just brought me to tears. That idea, you'd do anything, even working with magic, to somehow kind of, keep your loved one present. And as she said, you know, he was an artist. What? Why would you want to kill an artist? And that's a question that, you know, there is no answer to.

JJ Janflone 25:12

Too when we're going back to the idea of an ERPO law or protection law. He only purchased the gun for the purpose, he said quite explicitly, of committing this crime. He bought it six, I believe only six weeks before he went to New York the first time. So again, you have him telling his wife about this, where she could, you know, now, in very specific places, under specific rulings, could go in front of a judge and say 'this is the situation,' could call law enforcement and say 'this is the situation.' He just purchased a gun, this is what he's saying. But unfortunately, at the time, and in many states still, there's very little option that she had there.

M

Michael Epstein 25:47

And why would you not want to prevent that kind of violence, ever? Why would you not want to have a legislative, a legal path, for somebody to say, "this person has told me they are they're intending to commit murder with this gun?"

P

Paul Friedman 26:04

Well, that's, that's a great segue for Karl who we want to get involved in this conversation. Let's talk about how you decided to bring the law to fruition in Hawaii, and how it's working out.

K

Karl Rhoads 26:18

But I think it's, what I've learned about guns over the years is that the shortest distance between two points is not always a straight line. And there's a lot of weird nonlinearities about what is actually useful and what's not, and just starting with what we (I think it was Kelly) talked about, or we've already talked about in this conversation is that having a gun, in many cases, is actually more dangerous than not having a gun. Now, it's not always true. And that's what makes setting policy for firearms very difficult, because, and there's definitely an urban/rural split, where there are things that you, where you need a gun in the country, that you really don't in the city. And in the city, they're not really used for much of anything, except for senseless murders, I suppose with the exception of, you know, Sony breaks into your apartment in the middle of the night, I would certainly feel like you would be justified in shooting them. But, so there's a lot of, there's a lot of nonlinearities, and guns aren't always bad. But I agree that there should be, there is, as you've already pointed out, in many states, it is a "red flag." are "red flag" laws that at least give a person a fighting chance to... And there's still a lot of things that can go wrong. I mean, if his wife, I don't even know his name, the campaign not to give publicity

to people who've killed people with guns, has worked, because I don't even know the guy's name, even though he's alive. But anyway, if his, if that law, if the law that we have now had been in effect then, there's still, it was still a little bit of a long shot that anything would have happened. But at least if you have it, there's a chance, there's a chance that someone says, "Wow, that's, that's really kind of bonkers. We better, we better contact, we better find out find an attorney who can file a petition and see if we can have his guns taken away temporarily, until this mood passes or until he's gotten help." So it's not a, there's no panacea there. But you know, one of the reasons I supported it was I thought, actually, when I passed, when we pass the bill in Hawaii, I didn't realize that it was much more effective against suicide, than it is for other killings. But even for non suicides, it gives people who want to intervene, who love somebody enough to intervene, they don't want them to go kill somebody, it gives them a chance. And I think that's why it's important.

M Michael Epstein 28:42

Can I ask a question to Karl, that Kelly asked or brought up earlier, if you don't mind, how did you balance freedom? Right, because this is the endless debate that we all encounter. My freedoms, and my freedoms are absolute, and Kelly put it in the context, obviously, of New York City and personal freedom. But I'm curious how you legislatively balanced individual freedoms or rights, with public safety here?

K Karl Rhoads 29:07

Well, it was debated. And what we finally settled on was the first motion that you make is, I don't know how many of you are lawyers, ex parte motion, which means the other party doesn't have to be there, you just go straight to the judge. So there, we put up, the final version of the bill puts in a provision that says you can file an ex parte motion, which means you don't have to talk to the person that it's about. But that only lasts for 14 days, and within 14 days, you have to go in you have to serve the, you have to serve the party, you know, that has the gun, who we're concerned about, and then the judge will get testimony from both sides and make a decision from there. So the short answer is due process. So there's no constitutional right is absolute. But if you're going to take it away, generally you have to have due process. And that's how we worked in the due process in this situation.

K Kelly Sampson 30:02

I kind of want to narrow in a little bit more on Hawaii, because Hawaii does, compared to a lot of states, they do have pretty rigorous gun laws on the books. But I'm wondering if

you could talk a little bit about why you got involved in pushing for ERPOs, specifically, and what it was like to, kind of, try to get that passed, and ultimately succeed.

K **Karl Rhoads** 30:22

Well, actually ended up being pretty easy to pass, which I, I if you had asked me that question, before we passed it, I'm not sure I would have said that's the way it was going to go. Because I've been involved in other gun violence protection laws that were harder to pass. What appears to me, (and I'm not, I don't think I can really claim to be an expert in the area, but I have been involved in Hawaii for quite some time now) I think one of the most difficult problems of gun violence protection laws is the guy who initially seems to be perfectly normal, no priors, no mental health issues, which we already check for when you buy a gun. But what we don't do in Hawaii, and what most jurisdictions don't do, because it's it's prohibitively difficult in terms of human resources is, you know, every few years, rechecking them to see if they still don't have a prior, still don't have a mental health issue. And getting to that, getting to those people are, I think, one of the most difficult problems we face in regulating firearms. And so the red flag seemed to me like a, like I said, I don't think it's a panacea. But it's a way to get to that problem without having to make (in Hawaii, the police departments are the one who wants to process gun permit applications) and it's a way to get to that without having this huge bureaucracy that has to go back around and look at everybody who has a gun license, all the time. We don't, we have very low gun violence here. But we have a lot of guns, we have more guns than people. So it's, as my father, a mathematician, would say this is, making everybody re-permit their guns every five years as a non trivial problem, a non trivial problem. So that's, that's why I was interested in that. There was resistance to it. The House has 51 members in Hawaii, and I think 11 of them voted no, which is a pretty substantial number when you consider the partisan makeup. I mean, there's only when that bill passed, there was five or six Republicans in the entire body. And three of them voted no. But that meant that, you know, seven or eight Democrats voted no.

P **Paul Friedman** 32:26

Karl, can I just ask you to talk a bit about what you learned about how often it's been used this year since the past, January 1, I believe? And whether you feel that it's being used efficiently and being promoted enough, so that people know about it?

K **Karl Rhoads** 32:42

Well, it's only been used once. And that was a case that was filed in connection with a domestic violence case. And if you get a domestic violence TRO, you get your guns taken

away, too. So the "red flag" petition ended up being dropped as moot. Admittedly, this is a weird year, and I don't know, everybody's minds have been other places, so I'm not sure this is a good year, they really give us a good idea of how often it will actually be used in a normal year. But yes, it's not just gun protection, gun violence protection legislation where you have to communicate that it's out there and you can use it. There's a lot of things like that. Would I like to see it more widely communicated? Yes. But having said that, that we cast the net pretty wide, we allow, the petitioner can be law enforcement, family, household member, medical professional, educator or business colleague. So it's pretty broadly cast and the major institutional players have been informed about it. The bar, the attorneys that practice in Family Court, where these petitions would go, have been made aware of it. The Department of Health, for the medical professional side, have been made aware of it, as has law enforcement. But yes, it would be great if we had the money to do a PSA, do 20 PSA's a day to let everybody know this exists? That would be ideal. Is it going to happen this year? No.

JJ Janflone 34:08

Well, and I think that that goes to sort of the question, too, that Michael brought up is that how do you balance this idea of people's freedoms and people's abilities with the actual process itself? Because I think sometimes the pushback, or at least the pushback that I've heard, because I manage a podcast on gun violence prevention, so people send me things from the internet. So like the angry tweets that I get generally are reflective of, I think, this idea that if you pass some sort of restriction or you pass something, that immediately will be used across the board with very little distinction. And I think we've seen across the board, Paul, you know this better than, and Kris, both of you would know this better than anyone, that it's, it's not used that often. And that there is a process where you do have to go to court. There is, like, an adjudication process of who makes the decision. It's not, I don't get to call a hotline, and the little black helicopter comes out of the sky and makes that distinction. And I think that that's really important to just, just to point out.

K Kris Brown 35:05

Yeah, JJ that is really important. I just want to make a couple of points in response to some of the things that have been raised. But I didn't want to interject because this conversation is just so interesting. But I do think that we hear, time and again, in every state, and so hearing about Senator Rhoads and Hawaii is interesting, because every state has a slightly different flavor. But there's a common theme. And for the groups that are opposed to these kinds of orders being put into law, it's always the same refrain, which is "You're denying me my due process rights, and you're taking away my Second Amendment rights. Those are rights enshrined in the Constitution, you can't do this." And I

think the thing that's important to understand Hawaii has, by Senator Rhoads's description actually, a really helpful law, in the sense of how many different constituencies who are encountering an individual who's at risk, to potentially seek an order. Some states limit it only to law enforcement. And the problem with that is, they're not the ones who are on the frontlines of seeing the person at risk, and so there's a huge amount of education that has to happen. But the bottom line is, there is no constitutional right that is limitless. You can't shout "Fire!" in a crowded theater, and that's an infringement on some people's First Amendment rights, right? That is an acknowledged infringement. Why do we say, under case law held by the Supreme Court, over years and years that this is an appropriate balancing, because it protects the public interest. This is no different, and in fact, the "infringement" if you will, that we hear often from folks who are opposed to this doesn't exist, because no state (nor the District of Columbia), has passed the law that doesn't provide due process before these guns are removed. Ipso facto, by definition, if an order is issued, a court of law has received evidence to indicate that the individual subject to the order -- is at risk to him or herself or others -- plain and simple. And the fact of the matter is that actually, many orders have been issued in states across this country that have also funded, significantly, the educational efforts. And that part of it, I think, cannot be understated. For us to be able to get these orders out to help people, people need to know that they exist, and need to, to be able to seek this kind of remedy. We have an epidemic of gun violence in this country that is a uniquely American problem. That's part of the point and, Michael, what you said just really resonated with me, everything you said. But it makes me so sad to think that John and Yoko left England, in pursuit of basically the "American dream" is what you're saying, almost an ideal, right? The best of what America could offer someone because, lord knows America doesn't offer that, the "American dream" to a lot of people, but they came to flee persecution, to flee a lot of things, right. And ultimately, they came into a nation riddled with guns, and left one with a lot of problems, but that wasn't one. And that's just really, really sad. Because when I listened to "Imagine" one of my favorite songs, I just think about what you said that, with his, quote, he was a pacifist, and he's talking about these other people shot with guns. I can't imagine, I know how I feel, thinking about him and his wife, and how it ended when I listened to the words of that song. But as you said, Michael, I can't imagine what Yoko and Sean think, it makes me want to cry. Anyway.

P Paul Friedman 39:14

It's important to know, in terms of legality, that these laws have been challenged in court, and none of those challenges, based upon a violation of due process, has succeeded. We just had one recently knocked out of the court here in Virginia, for our new law. So these are not unconstitutional laws. They have stood the test of time over the last few years. So anyone who thinks that this is somehow unconstitutional or against the intention of the

Second Amendment. You know, the Second Amendment, we're guided by the Heller decision, the majority decision was written by a conservative icon, Antonin Scalia. And yet he articulated the fact that regulation could take place for guns, and he articulated a number of reasons why that can happen. And so it's clear that he even supported the concept that this is not a pure right. It's not a freedom to just take your gun and/or buy a gun and do anything you'd like with it. There are rules in our society and and we're fortunate that this rule is one that's allowed to go forward. There's freedom of speech, and there's still libel and slander laws. So you can't just say and do anything. That's true. Senator Rhoads, I had a quick question for you. What what's the, you know, we've been talking about freedoms, and core challenges, and due process and all those things, for Hawaii if, and obviously, this has only happened once. But what's the law on the books in terms of getting your gun back right for these people who are so upset about having a gun taken from them, even if they say to their wife that they intend to kill John Lennon?

K Karl Rhoads 40:47

Yeah, shouldn't laugh. It's not funny, but it's' there's some irony there. There is

M Michael Epstein 40:52

No, no, so I'm just curious, what's Hawaii's answer to it? Because it's...

JJ Janflone 40:58

Can I, I wanna, I just, I want to piggyback on that question, too, for the same reason, Michael. Because I, in reading that the person who killed John Lennon had also been a domestic abuser. He had, he had beaten his wife, and that was known. And so just I'm wondering too, about the intersection, sort of we see with other laws, too. Because Hawaii, as you pointed out, unfortunately, is unique in that if you have a TRO, that your guns are flagged, that's not that's not the case in every other state in the US, too. So I'm curious about that as well about what that process is, so.

K Karl Rhoads 41:28

So yeah, so for getting it back, there's a process in the bill already for getting it back. So if at the 14 day, if you file ex parte motion, and when the judge, the judge has to hear it within 14 days. If he doesn't hear it, within 14 days, you get your guns back. If he hears it in 14 days, and he says, hey, there's not enough evidence here for us to take your guns, he gets the guns back in 14 days. If the, if the judge, on the other hand, says "you're a risk," a

severe risk (it has to be pretty severe) we're gonna give you an order to take it away, the maximum order I can give you is to take it away for a year. So at the end of that year, then the process basically happens again. And if there's still reason to keep them away, then they stay away. But you can get them back after a year. I'd have to go back and check the details. But I'm pretty sure even before the year is up, if something changed, you can the respondent can go back in and say, you know what, "I did have psychiatric problems. I've been treated. My psychiatrist says I'm okay. I want my guns back." I believe that's possible, too.

M Michael Epstein 42:31
Can you appeal the judges decision?

K Karl Rhoads 42:33
Sorry?

M Michael Epstein 42:34
Can you appeal at any point in that process?

K Karl Rhoads 42:37
Normally, you can appeal anything. But this is this, is a family court, I guess you could, yeah. Now that I think about it, I don't think there's any, it's not specifically in the bill. but I think that just is because the general rules about appealing are there. So you could appeal to the Intermediate Court of Appeals, which would have to take it, and if they ruled against you, then you could still appeal it to the Hawaii Supreme Court. And they don't have to take it, it's like the US Supreme Court, you could deny certiorari. But yes, there is an appeal that's implicit in it. With regard to the intersection with domestic violence cases, our laws have changed quite a bit since 1980. He my understanding is that he did purchase, it was a handgun, so back then even handguns needed permits, but it wasn't until 1981, the year after that. And I don't believe that it was in response to john Lennon's death, but we expanded (not 'we,' I was I was a senior in high school that year) but the Hawaii State Legislature expanded the permit process to include all guns, long guns, pistols, everything.

P Paul Friedman 43:39
One other criticism that is often, that I've heard, is that people are afraid that someone

will assert that their neighbor is a threat for some personal slight, that they were affected by, or some untoward reason that's not accurate, and that the law enforcement will unfairly come down upon that person. But we have protections not only in law already, but in the statutes to deal with that, don't we Karl?

K Karl Rhoads 44:09

You know, certainly I, I don't know, I think, I think most states have more restrictive statutes than we do. But we don't allow, it's family or household member. It's not just your next door neighbor.

P Paul Friedman 44:21

And if someone were to file a false police report, then they would be held accountable for that most of the time.

K Karl Rhoads 44:26

Well that's, that's specifically in our laws that, if you, if you know that what you're saying is incorrect, it's a, it's a misdemeanor. Which is punishable up to a year in jail and a hefty fine -- I forget what it is -- $5,000 maybe

K Kelly Sampson 44:40

I just want to flag one thing for listeners, while we're going through and debunking some of the myths that we hear about ERPOs -- and to make it clear that when/if you are reporting and ERPO, or calling in about a loved one or coworker -- that is not making a criminal report. So when we talk about a person having an order issued by a judge or having to appeal, these are not criminal matters. So if you're concerned about mass incarceration, or anything of that nature, while state laws vary, and various people can make those reports, and it is not a "Minority Report" situation where you could say, "My loved one is talking about committing a murder," and therefore the police are going to swoop in and treat them like a murderer, this is very much a civil case. And the only way that it would start to get into a criminal realm would be if the person is not supposed to have a gun in the first place. That's a different story. But if it's a licensed gun owner who has their gun lawfully, and for whatever reason, they are telling you about committing a crime, don't let fears of, you know, having them branded as a murderer or something like that, keep you from reporting, because this is a very different sort of thing. This is not on the criminal record, you're not making them a felon or anything like that. So I just wanted to flag that.

JJ Janflone 45:50

Ideally, you're hoping to prevent violence. Right?

P Paul Friedman 45:53

Well, let me just add real quickly that we talked earlier, and Kris, you brought this up, and we had discussed it. Now ERPO, you know, we say it in the community, but it's short for Extreme Risk Protection Order. And this also here in Virginia, we had a Substantial Risk Protection Order law, so it's sort of "SRPO" if you would. Some states have firearm, Firearms Restraining Order, "FROs." Others have Gun Violence Restraining Orders. We have, and of course, Brady calls it an Extreme Risk Law, so does Everytown, we really need to find a way within the community, that's fine we can use all these terms. But externally to the public, we really do need to think about a word a phrase other than "red flag" law, which has been flagged by the mental health community as something that they're not comfortable with. We do really need to find a name, whether it's a Gun Violence Protection Order law, or something more clever than that, to try to communicate. Because marketing is a critical aspect of this, and you can't engage people if if you're speaking in ways that are not connecting with them. They don't understand.

JJ Janflone 47:01

I mean, I think that that's incredibly important to point out and I think that that goes into the fact that, on the Brady end, for example, right. So a few months after John Lennon is killed, we also then see the attempted assassination of Ronald Reagan. And with it, there's a secret service agent that is shot, there's a DC police officers that was shot, and then of course, Jim Brady is shot, which then gives rise to Jim and Sarah Brady's (our namesakes) fight for gun violence prevention. Which I think, Michael, goes to your point too that, in the space of a few short months, we saw a really dramatic shift in how I think we treated public figures. The fact that you could, more or less, sort of walk up to Ronald Reagan on the street, you could walk up to John Lennon, to now, where I think there is almost this presupposition we see, when Governor Gretchen Whitmer, there's a plot to assassinate her and everyone sort of treats it as "Well, that's what happens to politicians. That's what happens to public figures" is that you have people who try to harm you. And so I think we start to see this this very violent shift involving public figures and firearms. And so I, to make them this this sort of ramble into a two part question, Kris. I'm wondering what it's like for you to sit and go, and then just a few months after, when we have this public outcry, we then see Jim Brady shot, and when he does pass his death is ruled a homicide from that initial shooting. And then on sort of your end, Michael, you know, what, what do you think, if you, I don't want to ask you to speak for John Lennon, because that's an

incredibly unkind thing to do to anybody. But what do you think, you know, even sort of his reflection might have been based on just a lot of the writing that he did. So really unfair questions to both of you, I know, but I have a microphone so I feel like I have power.

K Kris Brown 48:47

So much has changed in our society in those 40 years. Obviously, all of us remember, who were alive at the time, which may mean that some of us on this program are excluded from that, where we were at these seminal moments in history. I remember, like Michael does, exactly where I was when I learned that John Lennon was shot and killed. And I remember exactly where I was when I learned that Ronald Reagan and Jim Brady, and others whose names aren't often spoken, were also shot. And those kinds of situations resonate in public consciousness, not just here in America, but globally. We've had other people on the podcast, who remember where they were in Italy, or in the UK, and all kinds of places because we have a uniquely American epidemic. And it persists today. The only thing that I can say about it, that I hope gives some people hope, about where we've come and the commitment of many who have suffered the worst. And that's what inspires me, honestly, is that we have people among us in this movement who suffered grievous injury, horrific loss of people they love, and they will never get them back. But just like Jim and Sarah, they get up every day and they try to make a difference. And Jim and Sarah Brady certainly did as unelected individuals who committed their lives, to the enactment of a law that will benefit people they've never met. And I think when you look at the cause of gun violence, like so many other gun violence prevention, like so many other causes out there, there is no one particular solution. It's a multiple pronged solutions, given the fact that it's a public health epidemic, and it needs to be treated the same way, as when we had car fatalities, right? And people were dying, we didn't look to say, "Well, is it seatbelts that will work, or is it airbags, or is it a speed limit, or is it bumper rails on the highway, there is a guard to make people wake up, when they're crossing lanes." They said, "Yeah, let's do all of those things." Because the point is, we want to save as many lives as possible. And the same thing is true here. So we've accomplished great things, we still have a real problem, there's no doubt that we need help at the federal level. And with Joe Biden in office, certainly we're in a much better position, on a number of things including this, to make a difference. But we need everyone to continue to lift up their voice, and we need leaders in state Houses. Thank you, Senator Rhoads, for what you've done to really push this, because a huge amount of work will happen in the states, and is happening in the state. You know, the 19 laws that we're talking about here, that's a rather new phenomena. I mean 14 or 15 of those were enacted in the last two years. That's pretty amazing, and in a number of states, where we have Republican lawmakers and Republican governors signing those. That should give us a lot of hope for the future.

P

Paul Friedman 52:05

Florida is one of those states, Kris and nationally, if we can get a law to provide federal grant money to the states to encourage and incentivize passing this law, and give them some resources, to promote it the way Karl spoke about it, they don't have money in Hawaii. Of course, all of our states are more strapped than ever due to COVID. We need federal funds to do this sort of thing. And hopefully, a future, the coming Congress and president will be able to carry through on that, if we're fortunate.

K

Kelly Sampson 52:33

Kind of on that note, as we're thinking about what can we do, how can we get involved? We're sitting here 40 years out from losing John Lennon to gun violence. And I'm just wondering from all of you, or anyone who wants to chime in, where would you love to see us be 10 years from now? And even 40 years from now, when it comes to gun violence in the United States, peace in the United States, and all the things that we've talked about?

M

Michael Epstein 52:56

Yep, Kelly, to answer that question and answer JJ's question from while back, I remember very distinctly, not just the assassination attempt on President Reagan and Jim Brady being hit. But then shortly thereafter, the pope also. And I remember thinking, "Well, this is enough, this is finally going to be the moment," and how many times in the 40 years have we all said that? And I think it comes down to what we as citizens, neighbors, you know, community are willing to tolerate. And, and you know, to answer your question, in 10 years, I hope we no longer have to tolerate this kind of violence that has no, makes no sense, that has no purpose. Not that violence ever really has purpose, but this, this feels uniquely egregious, and a kind of like, psychic assault on us. And that, we've come to a point, I think, where we just simply will not tolerate it anymore. And I think what people should remember, you know, I think of John's song, obviously. You know, the reason he and Yoko wrote, "Imagine" was that the hardest thing to do, the very first step of change, is to imagine the world you want. Like nothing can happen before you imagine it. Like that's the first step, and it's often the scariest step, right? Because you can be alone, or you can be made a fool, or you can be attacked. But if you don't imagine it, you can't achieve anything. And Yoko, one of my favorite quotes from Yoko is "the dream that you dream alone is just a dream. And [the] dream we dream together is reality." And, you know, that feels to me, what this movement is right now, what these laws are looking to do, put real concrete change, and saying that we're not willing to tolerate this kind of violence, we're not willing to tolerate this kind of indifference to the violence. I think that's really what it is. So to answer your question, I hope in 10 years wheat we're not as callous, and we have less reason to mourn. And we're not as indifferent, or as tolerant, of the kind of senseless

violence that we seem to be.

K Karl Rhoads 55:22

I would just say, well I'm, as you may have gathered from our conversation so far, I'm not a particularly optimistic person. But I do think there's some really low-hanging fruit on this issue at the national level. And I think it's, I think it's not beyond the realm of possibility that in the next 10 years, we'll have, for example, universal background checks for all gun sales. There's a couple of other issues where pretty much everybody agrees, like on universal background checks, something like 80% of gun owners think that universal background checks are okay. So there is some hope, I think that there will be some sort of baseline level that the federal government puts in place, because it's, I mean, Hawaii is unusual and it's unique in that we're isolated, and so what we do has a very big impact. But if you're, if you're Illinois, I grew up in Indiana, if you're Illinois, and you could just drive over to Indiana, and buy a gun, and go back and shoot somebody, you know, it doesn't, it doesn't really work. So the feds, for the contiguous states, they really need to set some sort of a baseline. But I don't think that's as far away as, I think that's a possibility in the next few years.

K Kris Brown 56:26

What I'd really like to see is the reality-distortion machine that is the National Rifle Association, gone. Just gone. And they're on their way to doing that for themselves because of avarice, greed, you know, the common stock that we've seen lately, and to think the Attorney General of New York, who had brought a case against them, and they're still spending millions of dollars to try and defend that. I do think that's very important, because here in the United States, we have people who have perceptional differences around issues that they agree on. Politics too often gets in the way of solving these problems, and we don't need that anymore. Actually, we just need to pass these basic laws that everyone agrees on, and that Democrats and Republicans, regardless of other things they may disagree on, that the American people disagree on, actually come together to serve the public interest on this cause.

P Paul Friedman 57:30

That's, that's all beautiful. And I and I respect all of your views. I really appreciate the optimism, Karl, that you brought, even with your pragmatism and the beauty of your thoughts, Michael and Kris. I just want to add that, you know, in the 60s growing up, we lost JFK, we lost RFK, we lost Martin Luther King, and we lost the people we spoken about tonight. You know in 1981, I also lost my great aunt, I was in Florida, on vacation between

college and law school, and had lunch with her. And then she went on her way to another part of the state, where she was killed when they entered her hotel room, criminals entered her hotel room, shot through a door and killed her behind the door. We have average people being killed, we have famous people being killed. We have children at schools being killed, whether it's Connecticut or Florida. And we have people being shot down every day in the inner cities, and other, insmall towns and throughout our country, counties, cities, people who turn to violence and turn to guns to solve their problems, they're at the first sign of a problem often. So beyond the laws, you know, I hope that as we move forward, we're also able to try to find a way to reach into communities and reach into families and educate people and give them alternative ways to solve their problems, rather than violence and guns to prove that they're 'macho' or powerful, or just to use them to make a point. We have to change the attitudes in our country too, not just the laws. But we have to start somewhere, and the laws are good place to start. So I'm happy we have this law, and the others who've spoken about.

JJ Janflone 59:08

Well, before we can get unoptimistic, I've been trying, I've been trying to end every conversation I have in 2020 on a somewhat happy note. I would love everyone could just, sort of, share where folks who just, sort of, so many conversations on this podcast are just the beginning of other conversations to be had, right? This is just the introduction. This isn't the whole thing. So I'm wondering if all of you could share where people can find out more about our fantastic panelists, more about their work, and I think, Paul, let's start with you. And then if you can say maybe just a little bit more about the Imagine That campaign that y'all are doing, because I know it's the soft launch. I think that would be great to start off with.

P

Paul Friedman 59:45

So you know, our group is Safer Country. You can find us at SaferCountry.org, or if that's a problem for any reason, www.SaferCountry.org, and we sort of lay out the basic concepts there of what we're trying to do. Imagine That is, is something that we're just formulating and I think that it's developing because of this experience we've had this half year, we hope to together, together create a safer country.

JJ Janflone 1:00:12

Thank you so much, Paul. Senator Rhoads, where can, if folks want to, kind of, learn more about how Hawaii has done it right, and try to force their state to do it right too, where

can they?

K Karl Rhoads 1:00:22

Well, being a good politician and being self-promoting, there's actually, there's actually quite a lot information on my website, KarlRhoads.org, K-a-r-l-R-h-o-a-d-s .org. And I have worked on this issue a lot, and if you look in the news section, you will find a pretty good history of, of not even just the last, not just the years that I've been in the legislature, but some of the stories. There was a good Vice story a few, maybe a year ago, about the history of gun control and gun protection legislation in Hawaii that's very interesting, if you're interested in this sort of topic. And I would say that, you know, when I, when I hear bills that are gun protection bills, when I was prepping for this, I look back at one, I think it was actually this bill, it was the red flag bill, and the number of individuals who came in with testimony in support. And in Hawaii, anybody can testify, right? So sometimes you have very long hearings. 32 individuals supported, 382 opposed. So if it's something you're passionate about, then be positive and go in, and when your legislature hears a bill, make your make your opinion known. And don't forget that the guys who think everybody should have a gun under all circumstances, they're very well organized. And sometimes the only way you can counteract that is to be well organized yourself.

 JJ Janflone 1:01:35

Thank you for that. And and Michael, How about yourself? I mean, one thing I do want to want to plug is you've got two, I think, fantastic documentaries that talk about John Lennon and John and Yoko. So there's "Above Us Only Sky," which I highly recommend and then "Lennon NYC." But where can we find sort of the rest of your, your work?

M Michael Epstein 1:01:54

"Above Us Only Sky" is the making of Imagine. So it's that period, just post-Beatles, when John is recording as Plastic Ono Band, but he's, he's making Imagine and there's a lot of, remarkably, previously unseen footage there that Yoko made available. And it tells the story of why England no longer was feasible for them. And why they essentially, as Kris said earlier, you know, they came to America as immigrants, I mean, seeking a kind of opportunity, freedom, freedom from hate, really, that they were experiencing, that Yoko was experiencing. It was crushing. And then Lennon NYC which just charts John and Yoko's time after they arrived in New York, have a small one bedroom apartment, remarkably, on Bank Street, down in the Village, until he's he shot and taken from us in 1980. So "Above Us Only Sky" on Netflix, if you get it. Lennon NYC is kind of harder. It's on

public television. It was made for American Masters, on what would have been John's 70th birthday, on the 30th anniversary of his murder, about a decade ago and it just rebroadcast. You know, they're both great. And also, I should say there's two other things if you really love John, unfortunately, it's only in the iOS, so if you have an iPhone or an iPad, there's something called "John Lennon the Bermuda tapes," which benefits the Imagine There's No Hunger campaign. And it's this kind of, a little known story about John's trip to Bermuda in June of 1980 where he almost got blown out to sea. He saved the crew, he saved the boat. He sailed it through the middle of this terrible storm. The crew all got seasick except for John. And all of the net proceeds (minus Apple who has to take their pick) goes to a remarkable charity called Why Hunger?, which is a great five-star charity that seeks to empower local communities to to get healthy, nutritious food. I guess finally off of the John Lennon thing, just because you mentioned at the beginning. And it's, so it took me 15 years of my life, I have my own little podcast, that is a true crime story. So if you're into true crime, and you're looking for something during the holiday, because your family's driving you crazy, and you want to fall into a ten minute episode, it's called "Murder In House Two." So if you're into true crime, Murder In House Two, that's very off topic for tonight. But I guess the most American thing is to plug yourself right?

JJ Janflone 1:04:28

Well, I mean, that's a, it's a very artist thing. We all, everyone's got, everyone's got to self promote. But I think no, and I one, I have listened to the first episode of Michael's podcast and I love it, so I can't wait to keep listening. Again, things I didn't know about until Paul put this together, I'm learning so much. So I owe Paul and all of you a great debt. But it's, this is a thing that Kelly and I have talked about in other podcasts too -- even the idea of food insecurity -- food insecurity is tied to gun violence. These things are not separate. Militarization is tied to violence. We can't separate these things out into into little niches. And I think John Lennon did a very good job actually, and Yoko as well, in a lot of, I think, the art project she's done since, in articulating that people are not sort of, compartmentalized this way. So Kris, what can you tell our listeners about Brady?

K

Kris Brown 1:05:23

Well, obviously, they can go to our website bradyunited.org and find out information on all aspects of gun violence, certainly find out more about all the podcasts that we've done (I think over 100 now, I think, if I'm talking correctly, JJ) are on there, and a treasure trove of other information. And they can, I'll get in trouble with my comms team I don't say this, follow me on Twitter (@KrisB_Brown), and also follow Brady (@bradybuzz). We have all kinds of information that we're putting out and really showing, to JJ's point, the intersectionality of this issue, to every other issue that most of us care about. It's deeply

connected to a lot of other things. So please, follow up and learn more, and I think this discussion hopefully will encourage people, as Senator Rhoads said, your voice can make a difference. You've just heard from a state senator who's said every voice counts. And I think everyone in elected office who has ever sat through a hearing, and been upset that more people haven't come forward, would feel the exact same way. And our issue is one of those, where every voice, every person counts. Let's make a difference around something we care about.

JJ Janflone 1:06:39

All right, I want to I, you know, I want to thank you all so, so much for for coming on. This was absolutely lovely.

M

Michael Epstein 1:06:45

It's a pleasure, it's an honor. Thank you for having me.

JJ Janflone 1:06:49

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