

Victor Davis Hanson: Well security and personal freedom throughout western culture and civilization have had a tense equilibrium. Obviously, you don't want to err too much on one side and have an authoritarian state, and to err on the other is what the Roman's called *luxus* or licentiousness, disordered chaos. Chaos is a good Greek word. So, the consensus was something we called the mixed constitution or republican government. Not demagogic, democracy (one man, one vote, any given day of the week as in Athens), and not a Persian style or Mediterranean style autocracy. In other words it was a mixed constitution where the individual had particular rights, but that power was checked through a legislative, executive and judicial branch and what that meant to be specifically was that a person felt that he could inherit property, that he had rights to speak in the assembly, that he was treated roughly equally under the law, he had a right of habeus corpus; but on the other hand he didn't have a right to form a cabal. He didn't have a right to engage in behavior that destroyed the neighborhood security. He couldn't build nine stories on his apartment building. This is all true from Roman history. So after 2,500 years of trial and error, we came up with something what I guess is a logical trajectory of where we are in the United States today and that is reasoned freedom or responsible freedom: that you have rights that are innate and in exchange for those you have responsibility to be a good citizen and not to do what you're legally entitled to do just because it's legal. So, if you see somebody who's assembling a bomb in your apartment building, you have a responsibility to the state to report that, you just don't say that's his free expression. But it's always under adjudication, examination, depending on the mood of the times. Usually when we're faced with existential threats, then we say that the citizen has more responsibilities to the state than he does innate rights; and then when we're in periods of tranquility we have the luxury to say you can do or say what you want.

Victor Davis Hanson: The danger from freedom in the West is not necessarily a right-wing cabal or left-wing takeover, its self-censorship. It's something that George Orwell was onto in 1984 but especially *Animal Farm* and that is when the mass of people feels that for a variety of careerist reasons or psychological reasons that a particular narrative should be accepted by everybody. Then in a democratic society of 51% majority rules, they're very intolerant of minority voices that they feel are not socially acceptable, they're not hip, they're not cool. So we can see now that we're becoming medieval in the university, that to suggest that there is not a thing called man-made global warming that poses an existential threat in the next twenty years, to suggest that's not true is analogous to at the University of Padua or Oxford say in 1200 suggest that the earth in fact revolves around the sun rather than the vice versa. So, it's heresy and it was not imposed by the government, it was a collective idea. If I say in the university tomorrow even though I'm tenured senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, if I were to say I really have doubts that it's a wise thing to have race-based affirmative action rather than class-based, I'm going to face consequences. No government said you have to have micro-aggression warnings, or trigger warnings; that was all self-created.

Victor Davis Hanson: Contrary to popular opinion, equality and liberty are not synonymous but they're antithetical because obviously if you're going to make everybody equal, people are not born into the world equal, so you have to make a decision: you're either going to have to give them an equality of opportunity, which means that the harder working, the luckier, the brighter, whatever the particular element that allows them greater success, will be allowed to manifest itself and then you're going to have inequality. So if you start as the Greeks did when they founded a colony, they said they put a hundred equal plots of ten acres each, they assumed that after thirty or forty years, somebody might own all of them, a greater talent or greater luck, and so how do

you stop that person's expression, freedom, liberty? And the government then has to come in and say we can't have an equality of opportunity because it leads inevitably to inequality, so we're going to have an equality of result. We're going to say that you can only own ten acres whether you're lazy or you're hard-working or whether you're healthy or whether you're ill, and between those two extremes in the West we've tried to have a compromise. In the United States we say well, we try to have equality under the law. Aristotle says if you have equality under the law, everybody then feels because I can vote with the rich man or I can vote with the person who's attractive and I'm ugly, then I should be equal in all other respects. That trajectory is never-ending, so we in the West realize that you have to have some kind of mixed equality of opportunity, not equality of result, but you have to have mechanisms that don't allow the Steppenwolf or the *Übermenschen* to take over everything. And that's hard to do, to harness in the more gifted so they don't exploit the less gifted, without so restraining their talents that we lose their vitality.