

## Episode 2

### The Secure Masculinity Podcast

# The Oscar Slap! A Masculinity Researcher's Take on Hypermasculinity and Clean Comedy.

Hi friends. In our second episode, I like to discuss what happened at the 2022 Oscar ceremony, where Will Smith slapped Chris Rock on stage. This is not a discussion to shy away from and say, "I am sick and tired of talking about this, can we move on already?" Rather consider that this is something to embrace and understand and that there is a reason it has sparked so much chatter. Let's explore it.

The reason is that there are changes that we need to make, and these two men have become a catalyst for these much-needed changes. Odds are, you've voiced your opinion and have heard of some opposing ones from friends and family and media, and some, even from psychologists. Now let's hear how a masculinity researcher views, analyzes, and puts it together using hundreds of thousands of pieces of data.

Here are the topics we'll discuss

- Was Will Smith justified?
- Was his action toxic masculinity?
- Should anyone defend Will?
- Is Jayda to blame?
- Does Chris Rock bear any responsibility?
- Should we give a pass to the comedians because they're just doing their job?
- From now on should people who don't agree with the comedians communicate their displeasure through violence.

- Did Will Smith ruin his reputation?
- Should we cancel Will Smith?
- How about those who consider Will a role model, including teenage boys? Did he disappoint them, or did he give him a free pass to be violent?
- Where should we go from here?

The first thing I like to start by is setting the records straight and stating that I'm against violence at all costs and in every form

For the sake of honesty and preventing to sound all high and mighty, I like to disclose that even getting to this point has been a journey for me. There was a time that whenever I had a disagreement with someone, I'd fantasize about being Tony Soprano's daughter so I could just ask my father to fix it. Thankfully I've emotionally matured way beyond those pitiful days and have gotten to a point that I strongly condemn any violence for any reason including the act of physically assaulting Chris Rock by Will Smith and nothing I say in any shape or form offers a full or partial justification of this act.

Now that, that's out of the way. Let's talk about what happened.

If you don't know this next story, it is very important for the context. Will Smith and his wife of over 20 years apparently don't have a conventional arrangement in their marriage. This is an important topic to discuss at a later time on this podcast. After working with over 7000 men globally to this date, let me tell you that forced monogamy is one of the pillars of divorce and dysfunction in marriage. Simply put, not everyone was born to be monogamous, and the immorality labels have forced people to be dishonest, cheat and dishonor themselves. This is a massive topic prone to misunderstanding so I will not get into it any further in this episode but that has caused lots of controversy for this couple and their unconventional arrangement.

Apparently, the couple has discussed their arrangement publicly and although both have had relations with other people, a good portion of the public has concluded that she's cheated, lied, disrespected, and most importantly has emasculated him. That is public perception, whether it's real or not, doesn't really matter for this discussion.

Now, let's zoom out. Traditional masculinity AKA the culture of patriarchy teaches men that a strong man **is in charge** of his wife and children. He is in charge of the household. Everything they do is a reflection of his strength and his ability to **control** them. A real man makes sure that she doesn't step out of line. If she does, it reflects poorly on him because that means he wasn't strong enough to handle a woman.

If we're being honest, all of us are aware of this rotten millennia-old rule. Its practice has been heavily reduced all around the world not just in some countries but it's still the predominant perception of what it means to be a real man, to be strong and an effective head of household. I never understood why two adults and a kiddo need a boss but the entire foundation of patriarchy is based on control and domineering.

With this understanding of masculinity interwoven in the fabric of society, when a man happens to be secure enough not to have the need to control another adult and is civilized enough to recognize a woman as his equal, and is smart enough to tailor the rules of their marriage based on their dynamic and desires as a couple and not follow a dictated script then it's inevitable that he'll be strongly challenged on those decisions, especially as a public figure.

Now let's zoom back in. I don't consider myself celebrity-obsessed or enthusiast or even remotely curious. However, for years, even I have been bombarded by countless images, memes, comments, unflattering, and unsolicited opinions about what a weak, simp, and emasculated beta cuck Will Smith is and what a horrible ball-busting and emasculating witch his wife is.

**Side note:** I sure hope you have a stomach for this podcast because it's going to get even more raw and real. We can't heal until we dig out all the stink and clean it up and with millennia of expired crap, we have a lot of work to do.

Now back to the Oscar kerfuffle!

What do you think are the chances that Will Smith has been immune from seeing these relentless and hurtful attacks on his masculinity?

Odds are in his mind he thinks thousands upon thousands of people think that he is emasculated by a horrible wife and weak enough to have allowed it.

How much of that do you think he actually believes? Well, he doesn't believe that his wife is horrible, hopefully, and that's why they're still together. But I bet if I had a chance to talk to him if he can go deep inside and be honest, he would

confess that a part of him does feel embarrassed, hurt, and perhaps even emasculated. If not by her, by all these unflattering comments about his masculinity.

I've never met Will Smith and don't know him but my perception of him is that he has carried himself with dignity throughout his life. Seems like he's one of those celebrities who has managed to avoid the traps and pitfalls of fame, Hollywood, paparazzi, and wealth as much as possible. He seems like a person who has had the ability to self-reflect and seeks to better himself. Not everyone cares to do that.

Regardless of how hard he has tried to be the kind of a man who rises above indignity, something broke in him on that night. We're all part animal and part spirit. The animal is defined by limits and the spirit is limitless. Those who have honored both dimensions and found a balance are those who've mastered navigating this earth. That doesn't mean they've found a way to stretch the limits of the animal or look down upon it, it means they've found a way to fully respect it and not belittle it.

I don't think there is a man in this world who won't eventually break under public and relentless attacks on his masculinity from every Tom, Dick, and Harry. On top of that, add the regular pressure of everyday life.

Are you starting to catch my drift?

Let's zoom out again and look at another angle of our perception of masculinity. Patriarchy has groomed us, to associate the strength in masculinity with violence. In our culture for a man to be masculine, and to be strong, violence is always a part of it. Let me give you some examples.

I have worked with many men who are victims of domestic violence. This is the biggest group of victims who are blamed in society for being victimized, because of our persistence to associate masculinity and strength with violence.

This group, the male victims of domestic violence are ridiculed by everyone, including the authorities and police because we think if he was strong enough, he would've just hit her back, or he wouldn't allow her to abuse him. Because of our view of these men, the majority don't report and just deal with it. That's less painful compared to being publicly attacked and ridiculed and called weak.

Another example is the male victims of rape. Unfortunately, many grown men, not just little boys, or teenage boys, get raped every day, usually by another

man. This is another group that is very ashamed to come forward because we, as a society don't provide a safe space for it. The way we shame female victims of rape is to ask them, what did **you** do? What were you wearing? Did you drink alcohol? Were you flirting with him? We insinuate or outright call her a slut for somehow inciting the violence. For women, we attack their morality.

For male victims of rape, we shame them in a different way. We attack his masculinity. Why couldn't you push him off of you? Why couldn't you defend yourself? Why couldn't you stop it? Why didn't you beat him up? You are weak!

These damaging views are so ingrained that even the victims may think that way about themselves and feel ashamed about it.

What's masculinity's kryptonite? Yes, friends, you guessed it, **Weakness!**

Our perception of a good man is a strong one and a good woman is a moral one and both are defined in our own twisted ways; so we shun and shame who we consider and label sluts and weak simps.

It's important to understand that subconsciously most of us associate masculinity and strength with violence and associate lack of violence and lack of force with weakness. On top of that add the fact that most people don't understand the difference between force and strength.

So we teach our boys that you need to control your woman, your emotions, what comes out of people's mouths about you or about her, and if you're not violent, if you're not overpowering, if you're not domineering, you're weak and less of a man so we shame you to man up and be a real man.

Even a man as strong and level-headed as Will Smith when he heard the last straw that broke the camels' back, reached a boiling point and was reduced to reclaiming his masculinity with violence.

It's so easy, narrow, and ignorant of those who say all Chris Rock did was to tell a joke as a comedian and look at the disproportionate violent response by Will Smith. Oh, how disgusting! On top of taking advantage of scoring points with their sanctimonious moral high ground, they're essentially implying that this happened in a vacuum.

Then there are those who applaud him for defending his wife and claim that he was justified. It's very honorable to have your spouse's back, defend them, and

not allow anyone to talk bad about them. In part, he did that but Jada wasn't physically in danger and there was no need for a physical confrontation. This was mostly a futile attempt at reclaiming his emasculated manhood in the eyes of those who associate masculinity with force. He wanted to show those who have been disrespectful to him that he is controlling the narrative and he is in charge. Unfortunately, nothing reveals an out-of-control person more than anger and violence.

Now let's talk about those who called it an act of toxic masculinity. Since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we've started a spiritual, emotional, and mental **evolution** on a wide and consistent scale. That means we're waking up from medieval times and we're rejecting and reevaluating the teachings that were passed down countless generations to us.

The spiritual awakening is happening even though there is a good number of people who are terrified of change to the point that they take it as an attack and resist it and want to conserve the past as much as possible. But nature and evolution are stronger than any human opposition.

A lot of what used to be an acceptable behavior is rightfully viewed as toxicity and it's time for it to go away. It makes sense to view what Will Smith did as toxic masculinity. So those people are not wrong, but let's zoom out and look at the big picture again.

Physical evolution is millions of years old but spiritual evolution is only about a century old, so it is in its infancy. This means that men are stuck in a dichotomy of outdated but engrained violent masculinity and the new spiritual and civilized version of masculinity.

Will Smith is living in a society where he is ridiculed for lack of violence and damned for showing violence. The man is stuck between a rock and a hard place, and he is far from being the only one. He is just representing what many men's experiences are. This is exactly why this discussion is necessary and this incident is not something to move on from and get sick and tired of talking about.

Think about it. What are men supposed to do? Which way are they supposed to go? Whom can they please and how they're supposed to feel?

Men are constantly bombarded from every angle by traditional masculinity teachings that most of them grew up with and modeled by their fathers and

grandfathers and the new way of evolving and awakening from medieval behavior that society is refusing to tolerate anymore.

So if we're being reasonable, it's fairly understandable for even a man as self-aware and strong as Will Smith to get caught up and be consumed by all of this.

For the past 4000 years, patriarchy has caused so much damage by creating insecure masculinity alone. Eradicating insecure masculinity is the goal of this podcast and in each episode, I'll address a dimension of it.

Patriarchy has created a pseudo stereotype of a man and has groomed every little boy to live up to that stereotype to get respect. If he does, he earns the respect that he was promised and all the perks that come with it including feeling superior over women. That stereotype has lots of codes of conduct that he has to abide by starting with castrating his natural human emotions. Another good one is the inability to ask for help and exercise full self-sustenance and many more. If he strays from any of these codes he is weak and condemned and ridiculed. He is less of a man, he has to find his balls and man up and become a real man.

What is he if he is not a real man? I wonder. What is he if he needs to man up? As you see, patriarchy defines masculinity as a quantitative character. He can do something in the morning to become a manly man and the same man can do something in the afternoon to become less of a man and it is the entire society's duty including women to let him know of that and shame him to man up or else! This is a very comprehensive topic and I won't get into it anymore today.

But understand that if you keep attacking a man's masculinity and call him less of a man, simp (which is a disgusting way of disrespecting men), and emasculated long enough, he will break no matter how spiritual, strong, open-minded, and sophisticated he is.

We broke Will Smith and he was reduced to reclaiming his masculinity by the use of violence.

I can hear some of you say "excuse me? Now it's my fault? So whenever I misbehave it's everyone else's fault?"

When an act of violence occurs, the sole responsible party is the one who made the decision to commit the act. No one forces anyone to respond with violence. If you don't like what you see and hear, there are a million options available, and violence should never be one of them. So, it is the sole responsibility of

Will Smith to make the decision, get out of his chair, go on stage, and assault Chris Rock and no one made him do it. Let me be clear about that. That never changes but we as a society need to do more and look at the atmosphere we create in which our girls and boys and women and men are shamed to tailor their behavior to our liking. We are also responsible.

### **Now let's address the next question is Jayda to blame?**

Well, she shook her head, she looked unhappy about the joke, she must've nudged him. It's her fault in the first place if she hadn't cheated, emasculated and disrespected him this would've never happened. If she could take joke and not be a bitch about it he wouldn't have gotten up. She she she she she!

What millions of people around the world saw was that a man told a joke, another man who was sitting in front of him and looking straight at him and didn't tilt his head to look around, first laughed but then it took him a second to realize what was said and then he made a decision on his own to get up, go on stage and assault another man. And what did so many of us do?

We blamed a woman.

Well, first we looked around Yoko Ono wasn't available, but lucky for us, Jada Pinkett Smith was, and we love to sink our teeth in her flesh every chance we get, she must taste awfully sweet otherwise, we wouldn't be so enamored.

The rampant disease of woman-blaming started with the most faulty of us, Eve. The weak woman who ate that goddamn apple and is blamed for all of us getting kicked out of the kingdom of heaven and living on this miserable earth. This is another deeply engrained gift of patriarchy to humanity and another deep topic that deserves its own spotlight. But that is why we never shy away from woman-blaming.

The idea that I, as the woman have the capability to emasculate a man, to strip him of his masculinity, the idea that I have the power to make him less of a man, must sound ludicrous to all of you to some degree.

The concept of emasculation is a falsehood fabricated by traditional masculinity that views masculinity as a quantitative parameter. Masculine identity is not quantitative and doesn't oscillate all day long as we like to believe it does. It's not a yo-yo so stop acting like it is.

When a woman in a monogamous relationship, cheats on her husband, she has disrespected him, broken his trust, shown that she can't be trusted, broken his heart, & disrespected herself but she has not emasculated him because that concept doesn't exist. He may be heartbroken, angry, or feel disrespected and betrayed but he has not become less of a man. He can't. A man is a man is a man PERIOD!

This damaging insecure masculinity which the failed concept of emasculation is a part of it is in part responsible for the silent epidemic of male suicide whereby 80% of all suicide deaths are men and no one is talking about it.

Gentlemen, no one can emasculate you. No one has that power. I don't have that power. Even you don't have that power. Stop allowing to be manipulated by the concept. You can be a good man or a bad man, you can be an honest man or a dishonest man, but you can't be less of a man or a manly man. Next time someone tells you to man up or be a real man or says that you were emasculated insinuating that your masculinity is a yo-yo, push back.

So to answer the question is Jada to blame. No, she's not

Btw did we ask Chris Rock to issue a public apology to Jada for making fun of her medical condition?

**Let's discuss whether Chris Rock bears any responsibility. Yes, he does.**

I heard many people, especially one that stood out was someone on CNN going on and on and on that he's a comedian and that's his job. And we should be able to take a joke.

I believe this situation is also a great opportunity to address the comedy industry that's been personally under my skin for some time.

Since when comedians were permitted to declare open season on anyone and any situation with full immunity? No it's not just a joke. Words have power, they have energy, they can be used as a form of weapon. A comedian's responsibility goes further than just making people laugh.

This is not just about Chris Rock which by the way I've watched his work and I respect him. Chris made a documentary about black women's hair a few years ago that gave people the information they didn't need to have and even as a

white woman, I witnessed the unwarranted effects of it on black women at the time.

And then he made a joke about Rihanna's panties and Jada at the 2016 Oscars. Then this year he made a joke about yet again a black woman's hair who happens to suffer from alopecia. And for those nut jobs who say "I didn't know she had alopecia, how could he?" Well, If you're walking on the biggest entertainment stage and making fun of someone you better have done your due diligence first or don't take on something you're not cut out for!

Who doesn't understand that especially in this day and age how much focus is on the concept of beauty to a crazy extreme that even aging is deemed a disease and an enemy that needs to be antagonized and fought? Just in the United States, we have a 60-billion-dollar anti-aging industry created by a bunch of charlatans who are selling us crap in a silly and futile attempt to fight nature and reject ourselves every day that we wake up older than the day before so they can fill up their bank accounts at the expense of our insecurity. At a time like this, when a woman is so secure and strong that she has had to shave her head because of her medical condition and she has made the decision to sit on the front row of one of the biggest entertainment industries events in front of cameras for the world to see her and we make fun of her hair and it's just a joke?

Personally, I think Chris Rock should get out of black women's hair but as I said this goes well beyond him. Just like Will Smith, Chris Rock is also an agent of change. I like to take this opportunity to address that.

Since when did insult become funny, and we even created an insult comedic branch for it? Why are we laughing when comedians operate on shock factor and outrage? A man comes out and says, "I'm a victim blamer" and we laugh out loud because he is a big shot. Why is it even possible for him to use transgender people as the butt of his jokes, be paid millions of dollars be feverishly supported by us and when the transgender community objects, he comes out and says I'm not transphobic, I have a transgender friend? Really? Taking a page out of racists' book? Oh I'm not racist, I have black friends. Why do we laugh when Michelle Wolf makes fun of Sarah Huckabee Sanders' makeup? Why is that funny?

Let's go further. How about rape jokes? Lots of other male comedians feel free to tell rape jokes. I have something to say to them. Hopefully, this never happens to you, but if God forbid you, sir, you, yourself get raped, then come

and tell us how hilarious that was until then how about you refrain from telling rape jokes? Because those who have been raped, never found it to be funny.

While we're at it let's address the new generation of those female comedians who are so enamored with blowjobs and cum on their faces, that 45 minutes of their hour special is dedicated to that? When did rape and male ejaculation and personal insults and intolerance become funny? How did we reduce our standards so much and become so desensitized that we even passionately defend them?

How about violence in comedy? Does anyone remember Kathy Griffin holding Donald Trump's bloody decapitated head as a symbol of art?

There are things that we need to be pushed back on.

It's time for comedians to be accountable and clean up. Maybe they can take a page from Hannah Gadsby, Jerry Seinfeld, Sebastian Maniscalco or Nate Bargatze and so many more who are extremely talented, very funny, smart, and don't need insult or vulgarity or sugar-coated bigotry to generate laughter.

But regardless it's never okay to physically confront a comedian and get violent with them and I hope comedy clubs of all sizes beef up their security so if someone is offended, they don't get a chance to assault the comedians.

Now, let's talk about those people who view Will Smith as a role model. He's successful in his career and his life. He has a beautiful family. He's rich. He's good-looking. He has a lot of things that from the outside, many people strive to have, and he has achieved them all; and with a glaring exception, he's always carried himself with dignity.

There are two kinds of people who look up to Will Smith. One group is extremely disappointed and angry and never expected to see a display of violence from him and another group who are invigorated that yeah he reclaimed his masculinity and even gave them the green light to attempt to solve their problems using violence.

I would invite both groups to consider this:

What happened that night on the Oscar stage was a man being pushed to his breaking point and making a horrible decision that was out of character for him.

Allow your role model to be a human, and act like it. And if he's broken, he can still be your role model and show you how to be accountable for his actions, heal and build himself back up when he is ready and on his own timing so then you can do the same when you feel broken and do something that you regret and can't take back.

You can't have a role model that doesn't have faults, never shows vulnerability doesn't feel pressured, and is never sad. If your role model is an honest, and real human, you will see him break down

That shouldn't make you view him any less.

And that is a great segue to move to the next question. Should we cancel Will Smith?

It's my intention to avoid including politics in this podcast as much as possible. But occasionally, some references are necessary for context. Cancel culture is the new tribalism. All sides do it. Some of those who claim inclusivity and pretentiously put their pronouns after their names are all-inclusive until they disagree with you. That's when your behind is excluded faster than the speed of light.

Then there are conservatives who claim that cancel culture only belongs to the left, however, remember people burning, smashing, and even running over the Dixie Chicks CDs with a tractor back in 2003? The left hadn't heard about cancel culture back then. Remember them throwing their Keurig coffeemakers out of their balconies and no one canceled Liz Cheney faster than the GOP. So when it comes to cancel culture, trust me, no one has a leg to stand on. In the past few years, this has become a way of life for most of us to just cancel each other and be done with it.

We even take pride in doing so. We want to create distance between us and those yucky people so we can shine brightly and show how much better we are. We can't stand shoulder to shoulder and see the humanity in each other despite our differences. It's them or us. Liberals don't want to get mixed up with dumb racist conservatives and conservatives don't want to get mixed up with weak unpatriotic snowflakes.

It's very effective. Just slap someone with an ugly label and it feels acceptable and totally legit to dismiss and dehumanize them. Think about it, who wants to be associated with a group of dumb or weak or racist or unpatriotic people?

No one!

The fact is that there are a group of criminals and predators who are so toxic that they should be shunned from society. A morning show anchor who has a bag of sex toys in his office and as he walks the halls of the office building, he creates terror for the female employees who have the misfortune of crossing paths with him, should be canceled.

If you're in a position of power and grossly miscue it to commit crimes abuse and assault others like Peter Nygaard or Harvey Weinstein or Jeffrey Epstein societies should lock you up and lose the key.

At the other extreme of the cancel culture spectrum, are tribalists who don't even allow room for any constructive criticism. If one of their tribe members changes their position on an ignorant behavior and apologizes for it to the public they rush to put their two cents in “ don't even apologize bro, don't give in to the haters, they want to silence you, the attack is real!”

These tribalists are in a constant victim mindset. Constantly feel that their way of life is in danger and any criticism of any misbehavior feels like an attack to them. So whether you're in the camp that cancels everyone immediately, or whether you're in the camp where the slightest criticism is unacceptable, keep in mind these are all fear-driven behavior.

We should be able to offer and receive constructive criticism to grow without canceling each other or feeling under attack.

So should we cancel, Will Smith? That's a big fat no.

### **So where should we go from here?**

I believe this is an incredible opportunity for growth for all of us, and we shouldn't waste it by joining opposing camps. This is a time to come together and solve major issues such as how we view masculinity and how damaging it is and while we're at it, let's clean up comedy.

This is not a time for punishment either. Punishment bears no healing. Let's reserve punishment for the unredeemable(s) such as notorious criminals. The rest of us need healing and accountability is a good start.

Maybe this is an opportunity for us and perhaps Will Smith if and when he is ready to start a broad conversation about healthy and positive masculinity and

maybe it's an opportunity for Chris Rock if and when he is ready to start a movement for clean comedy. Maybe even other comedians can be honest that they too need to make a shift, that is if their ego is not bigger than their brain and we all can help each other recover from our mistakes, be better and not cancel each other.

The academy of arts and sciences punished Will Smith who raced to get ahead of them by resigning, a 10-year time out so this young man can go to his room, sit and think about what he did.

Well, if we're being honest, this helped no one but the academy. Punishing one of their own just to save face, especially one they've paid to be a bad boy for life not to mention financing countless bloody, gory, extremely violent movies portraying glorified hypermasculine heroes seems a bit hypocritical.

No one more than Hollywood has spent millions and has made billions of dollars by associating violence with masculinity. No one more than the Academy has supported and portrayed the tallest man, with the biggest muscles, biggest guns, loudest cars who pulverizes 6 men's faces with one kick as a hero over and over and over again. On one hand, we capitalize on violent masculinity, and on the other hand, we give time outs and proclaim that in real life that we don't condone violence. Hypocrisy never ceases to amaze me.

Regardless, I invite the academy to invest in a well-designed campaign to promote healthy and positive masculinity that can affect billions of boys, men, and future generations, this time in a positive way.

Friends, thank you for being here with me. Remember the goal is to respect our differences and instead of rejecting each other, work to connect for a healthier society for all. That's done by reshaping our mindsets to a more open one to allow love, acceptance, and accountability for ourselves and each other. This requires brutal honesty and bravery.

**And as always remember a healthy mindset leads to a peaceful life.**

