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So if you can't afford a subscription, there's an option. And Sam Harris Digg to request a free account and we grant 100 percent of those requests. No questions asked. Today, I'm speaking with Michael Sandel. Michael teaches political philosophy at Harvard University, where he teaches the quite famous course on justice that has been televised and viewed by tens of millions of people. And he's the author of several books, the most recent of which is *The Tyranny of Merit, What's Become of the Common Good*.

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And that is our focus. In today's episode, we talk about the ethics of success and failure in our society, the enduring problems with capitalism, how college has become a sorting mechanism for a new kind of caste system. We cover what I have come to think of as the pernicious myth of the self-made man. And we discuss the paradoxes which come from valuing excellence, all the while recognizing the role that luck plays in producing it. It's a very timely conversation as we struggle really throughout Western society to deal with the politics of humiliation and injustice and the rising levels of wealth inequality to which they are anchored.

[00:02:01.150]

Clearly, we're going to have to get a handle on this sooner rather than later. And now I bring you Michael Sandel. I am here with Michael Sandel. Michael, thanks for joining me. Good to be with you, Sam. So, you know, I will have properly introduced you here, but give me your short form bio. You're a man of many honors and talents, but how do you describe yourself in an elevator with a stranger?

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I teach political philosophy at Harvard. And you also, if I'm not mistaken, teach what's often described as the the most popular course at Harvard. This course on justice. Do you still teach that?

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I'm teaching it this semester. Adapted to include new examples of justice and ethical dilemmas arising from the pandemic and from this moment of racial reckoning.

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Nice. Will you have you have a new book, *The Tyranny of Merit, What's Become of the Common Good*, which I want to focus on. But another colorful fact about you, which I only just learned, was that in 1971, at the age of 18, you debated Ronald Reagan when he was the governor of California. That had to be amusing. But I also recall that you and I once debated I think I probably got the more seasoned Michael Sandel somewhere around.

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I think it was 2005. Do you recall that we we met at either Pomona or in Harvey Mudd College? Yes, I do.

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So so we've met once. And I remember that being quite a collegial and amicable debate on it surely must have been on religion at that point.

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I think that's right. I think it was about the role of religion in public life, if I remember correctly.

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Yeah. Yeah. Well, nice to meet you, albeit at some distance here on a new topic. And it's a topic that I think we substantially agree on, although I must say, there's something so counterintuitive about a criticism of meritocracy. It makes the topic itself surprisingly elusive. I mean, once you think you have the thesis in hand and you agree with it, it's almost like you wake up and can no longer find your purchase on the felt sense of the argument anymore, because there's just something so ingrained about this notion that the only flaw in meritocracy, which is to say, you know, truly valuing differences in competence and excellence and rewarding people along along that continuum is that we the flaws generally thought and felt to be that we haven't achieved it.

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We don't have a fair society with real anything like equality of opportunity. But if only we could give everyone the opportunity they deserve, well, then what could be wrong with just letting people rise or fall based on their own merits? Right. Let's start there. How do you think about this notion of meritocracy at this point? Well, you're right, Sam, it is a counterintuitive idea because Merete, on the face of it, it's a good thing, even in ideal, what could be wrong with trying to assign people to social roles and to jobs based on their merits rather than based on arbitrary factors or the accident of their birth or whom they know connections and so on?

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And if I need a surgeon, if I need surgery, I certainly want a well qualified surgeon to perform it, not someone who's poorly qualified. So on the face of it, merit seems an unqualified good. And yet. When merit comes to be a governing philosophy. A way of determining access to opportunities, it has a dark side. And the book tries to bring out this paradoxical feature of merit. I would put it this way. If we had a perfect meritocracy.

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If we could one day overcome all of the obstacles that hold people back. All of the prejudices. Wouldn't that be a good thing? Well, it would have this feature. That the winners of the race - this fair race - would believe, understandably, that they deserved their winnings. Provided that the race is run fairly. And that the losers deserved whatever place they wound up in. And here, when we think about a society and an economy and a democracy.

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Here's where the flaw in the ideal arises. First, it's a good thing to bring everyone up to the same starting point in the race. But if we could, it would be predictable that the fastest, most gifted runners would win. And we believe they deserved all of the benefits and the material rewards in the honors that the society bestows upon them. But a question, one question could be asked is, do we deserve in the first place the talents, the gifts that enable us to flourish in a in a market society like ours?

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Or is having those talents a matter of good luck? Take, for example, make it concrete. LeBron James, he's a great basketball player, just helped lead the Lakers to the NBA championship.

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He works hard to cultivate his great athletic talents.

[00:08:10.210]

But does he really deserve those talents and all the benefits that flows from them or is having those talents?

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Certainly, it's not his doing that.

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He's gifted in that way so that his good luck. But more than that. Sam, it's the fact that he lives in a society. That loves basketball. That, too, is hardly his doing if he lived back in the Renaissance. They

didn't care much for basketball then and they preferred fresco painters. So that, too, is a matter of contingency and good luck. So for these two reasons, it's a mistake for the successful to assume that their success is the measure of their merit and that they therefore deserve all of the benefits that flow from the exercise of their talents.

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And here's where the dark side of it comes in, especially when we think about our current society and our politics as the successful come to believe that their success is their own doing a measure of their merit. They tend to inhale too deeply of their own success. They forget the luck and good fortune that helped them on their way, and they tend to look down on those less fortunate than themselves, believing that their failure is their fault.

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And I think this is hubris among the successful meritocratic hubris, I call it, and the humiliation, the demoralization among those left behind accounts for some of the resentments that have gathered in recent decades against elites, resentments that we saw bubble up and find expression in the populist backlash of 2016. So there's a lot here.

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So there's the kind of the ethical case and then the political ramifications of. Right. Getting that right or wrong here. So you've just sketched that in brief and you and your book really goes deeply into it. We have this sense among the successful, certainly, that they desperately want to believe that their success is morally justified. Right. There's this notion of justified advantage, which just by the very, you know, logical nature of the claim begets this notion of justified disadvantage.

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Right. The people who are not winners, i.e. the people who are losing to one or another degree, also deserve their lot in life. And right. This leads to a kind of, you know, resentment and populist anger that we've seen and the attendant politics of personality and Trumpism and also this now pervasive and totally destabilizing distrust of institutions and expertise. Now we're living in a kind of shattering of our public conversation about basic facts, because so-called elites are despised to the degree that they are in the media and in academia and various institutions.

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And I'm quite sympathetic with much of this criticism because the elites have played their side of this terribly. And maybe we'll touch on some of those specifics. But before we get into the politics of all this, let's linger on the ethical case, because I totally agree that we should view differences in success in general as a kind of multivariate lottery that's being run. You know, it's not just a matter of the normal forms of good luck. Everything can be ascribed to luck in the end.

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I mean, you know, you're down to your genes and all that they do to determine who you are and down to the environment and all that it does in concert with your genes to determine who you are. And no one made themselves, no one created the society into which they were born. Take the perfect example of someone like LeBron James. He neither created his physical attributes that allow him to succeed as a basketball player, nor did he create the world in which basketball would be valued or even deemed interesting.

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And so he has won a kind of lottery. And yet there does still seem to be this problem in how we deal with differences in ability that we value and will inevitably value. Because you take something like basketball. I mean, if you value basketball, if you enjoy watching the sport, almost by definition, you will value the far end of the continuum of the bell curve of basketball talent more than you'll value the mean right. And so no one wants an NBA where everyone gets a chance to play and everyone gets a trophy at the end of the season.

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I mean, that annihilates the principles by which one would even capture your attention. You know, as a sport, if you could wave a magic wand and reset all of our ethical and attentional dials here, just what would be our experience? Take the limited case of basketball, you know, thinking about basketball value in basketball, buying tickets and rewarding the obvious merits of a player like LeBron James.

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If I were recruiting a basketball an NBA team, I would still go, Sam, for the best players. I would I would want LeBron James. I would want the best players. So that's not really the the question. The question is what moral desert we attribute to those who enjoy material rewards as well as honorific rewards for excelling in this or that way.

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So in in the narrowly contained realm of basketball, the the hiring practice wouldn't be different. The recruiting practice wouldn't be different, but when we look at the society as a whole and when we look at social roles and when we look at who gets to govern and who gets to have the greatest voice and who makes the most money. There's the tendency to assume, let's take the economy, there's a tendency to assume. That the money people make is the measure of their contribution to the common good.

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But this is a mistake because there are all sorts of contingencies that determine who makes a lot of money and who makes less contingencies that are in no way related to differential contributions to the common good. And when we ask about who governs us.

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We want in broad terms, here's the basketball analogy, we want to be governed by the people who were best at governing or in a representative democracy, we want to be represented by those who who are best at that role.

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Today, essentially, we are governed by only a segment of the population. Those who have managed to get four year university degrees overwhelmingly in democracies in the U.S. and in Europe. Parliaments and executive branches are dominated by overwhelmingly by those who have university degrees, even though.

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Those of us who have such degrees represent a minority of our fellow citizens, most most people don't have a four year university degree, nearly two thirds do not in the United States and in Europe.

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So if we're talking about governing, this touches, too, on your point about expertise, Sam, and the and the backlash against elites and experts. I think that the the we've confused talking about merit in governing, we have confused the virtues necessary to govern well in a democratic society with technocratic expertise and but that's distorting.

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That's much too narrow.

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So in many of the domains, once we get outside of basketball, the problem is that we have woefully misconstrued. What counts is the relevant merits. So that's why the basketball illustration is helpful up to a point.

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But when it comes to distributing economic rewards and when it comes to governing, what we tend to regard as merit actually misses the mark by quite a long way.

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OK, so I think it's helpful to grab the ethical side of this before we talk about just descriptively what's happening at the level of our politics and society at large. So I hear in part of this criticism a criticism of the notion that there's any direct causal connection between wealth and value creation, the cartoon version of, you know, blameless wealth that one would get in a libertarian circles. You know, perhaps above all this notion that the only way someone becomes spectacularly wealthy is to create a commensurate amount of value for the world.

[00:17:57.950]

I mean, that that is how a free market would reward, you know, human excellence and value creation and the way that gets deranged. And obviously, you know, we don't live in the cartoon there way is this. This is not reflective of reality, but I think there is a core truth to it right now. You might say that we value the wrong things, right? So someone can open an Instagram account and flaunt their body. And if they're young and beautiful, they'll have millions of people following them, or at least some of them will.

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And they may be able to leverage that into vast wealth, as have the Kardashians. It's not to say it's their only assets, but there's no question they are being rewarded by some notion of, if not value created for society. It's the capturing of attention. There is a machinery here that is working based on what people the choices people are making and the resulting effects in the market. And money is flowing in what is deemed to be the right direction.

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That's a case where we I think we might say, OK, well, people are just valuing the wrong things and other people are becoming amazingly wealthy based on this distortion and priorities. But then when you have something, you have someone else who has become immensely wealthy by a purely creative act that has just brought nothing but joy to the world. I mean, someone like J.K. Rowling, she writes her books, people line up at midnight to buy them in in front of bookstores all over this world.

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That was a fairly pure register of the value being created. And she became among the wealthiest writers in history as a result. What are you suggesting could change about our current system with reference to someone like J.K. Rowling? I mean, shouldn't we reward her in precisely the way the way we have and esteem her in the way that we do based on her creative output?

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Well, there are two reasons that the answer might be yes, that we should reward her. And the way we do, though, it's important that you drew this distinction just at the end of the question, Sam, between rewarding her monetarily and rewarding her with a scheme. And the answer may be different in the two cases. But the the if she is providing something that is valued and that is worthy of being valued, then she should be rewarded certainly with esteem for having done that.

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Now, but there are two reasons we might want to reward her, one is to encourage her and people with creative gifts like hers to continue to exercise them by writing books that we love to read or our children love to read. That's a reason that reason has to do with providing an incentive to her and others like her to continue doing what they're doing because we like the stories that that she writes. But it's important to notice that that reason, the incentive reason, has nothing necessarily to do with whether or not she morally deserves.

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All the money she makes writing Harry Potter stories, that's a further question. And so the second question is, should we reward her in the sense that not only does she get a lot of money for selling a lot of Harry Potter books, but we also consider that she morally deserves. The money that she makes thanks to the market success of the books, and that's the further question, that's a that's a

harder case to make now. This is why your mention of esteem matters.

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You might decide that she deserves esteem for having written beautiful and compelling Harry Potter stories. And yet it could very well be a further question whether she should make. Ten times more than other writers or people in other professions or 100 times more or a thousand times more or 10000 times more, it's it's hard to claim that it's a matter of moral desert. She deserves to make X times more that where X is in proportion to her actual earnings relative to other people, where as I think it's easier to say, she's certainly worthy of admiration for the creativity she brought to bear writing these stories.

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If I could just add, I think you put it very well when you said part of the objection. Is that we value the wrong things, part of the objection to assuming that the money people make is the measure of their contribution to the common good.

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It's important to keep hold of this question because it's a question that that the free market libertarians you mentioned beg they ignore. But here's a simple concrete example to test it.

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I don't know, Sam, if you were a fan of Breaking Bad or otherwise, you know, Walter White started out as a high school chemistry teacher and he didn't make much money.

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He had to work when he wasn't teaching at a second job at a car wash. And then, as we know, he broke bad and became a meth dealer. He he used his talents as a chemist to make perfect methamphetamine and made millions and millions selling this methamphetamine because there was a great market demand for it.

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So here would be the test for the the the pure, idealistic, free market libertarian, assuming there were a competitive market in high school chemistry teachers and in meth cooks.

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And Walter White made thousands of times more cooking and selling meth than teaching high school chemistry, would we conclude from that that.

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His contribution as a meth dealer was thousands of times greater. More important. Then his contributions as a high school chemistry teacher, probably not it be pretty hard to make that claim.

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So part of what I'm suggesting is that really to understand the question of merit when we're talking about the economy and economic rewards, we have to we have to address the question about whether we are valuing the right kinds of things in in the design of markets and in the allocation of rewards.

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There are so many things that distort this notion of value or the notion that this is a linear relationship between the value being created by someone's efforts and their monetary rewards or their rewards in with respect to esteem. I mean, you just take the case of, you know, someone who's saving your life. You're having a heart attack. You know, the paramedic shows up and saves your life. Well, in that moment, this is the, you know, the most valuable job on earth for you.

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Right. But that doesn't suggest that we could have a society that paid paramedics 20 million dollars a

year for working their trade. Right. Because it's it's more of a trade than, you know, finding the the outlier in the NBA can be thought of as a trade or, you know, the outlier with respect to writing novels. I don't see how we get away from this seemingly crazy outsized reward structure for the people who are on the far tail of the continuum for things we we value.

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What you know, rightly or wrongly, there is this larger criticism we could explore around, you know, a society that that is just captivated by the wrong things. And that's a much longer conversation that will will outlive both of us. How do we want the things we should want in the end? How do we live lives all together and that we won't regret that in hindsight will seem sane? And how do we avoid, you know, just colossal waste of time and opportunity collectively?

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But in a world where people can freely spend their time, attention and money on things they want and in a system that maximally incentivizes a creative and, you know, hopefully ethical response to those wants. Right. I mean, if we want to be able to give everyone at all times what they want, what they really want as quickly and as efficiently as possible, something like capitalism seems like the best answer we've ever arrived at. And something like global technocratic capitalism is where we've landed.

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And again, we can point out flaws in this. I mean, there, you know, obviously negative externalities to various business practices that, you know, free markets don't account for. And we want some kind of regulation, you know, environmental and otherwise. But it's hard to see that, you know, if you are going to be writing novels that are so creative that people want to open theme parks in order to explore the consequences of your ideas.

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Right. And people by the tens of thousands show up at those theme parks every year to buy the merchandise that is derivative of your of your ideas, other than just deciding that someone like J.K. Rowling needs to pay more in taxes, that we should have something like a wealth tax or a tax that's so progressive. You know, very, very wealthy people pay the preponderance of their wealth back into the system. If we just had our tax codes straightened out, wouldn't that be a sufficient remedy for this particular lottery problem?

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Well, that certainly would be one way of responding to it. By considering a revamping of the tax system. A wealth tax would be one possible way of dealing with this.

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But I would also say if we're thinking now practically and moving into the world in which we live, I think we should have a public debate about whether it's fair or desirable to tax earnings from Labor, the work people do in the real economy at a higher rate than earnings from interest, dividends and capital gains. Why should we tax workers at a higher rate than than investors from the standpoint of merit or dessert and contribution to the common good? More dramatic example of this same would be I think we should have a debate about whether to trade off the all or part of the payroll tax, which, after all, is a tax on the labour paid partly by the worker.

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And partly by the company and make up that lost revenue through a financial transactions tax or at least one on speculative financial activity unrelated to improving the real economy or high speed trading, the actual way in which enormous income in wealth is generated. The the the characteristic way is not the J.K. Rowling way or even the LeBron James way. It's to do with for looking at broader trends over recent decades, the financialization of the economy. We see this in the U.S. and Britain, which is the tendency of a greater share of economic activity and GDP and and especially of corporate profits accounted for by financial activity rather than providing goods and services that people use.

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Now, there'd be nothing wrong with this or with the outsized rewards that people in the financial industry reap if that increased financial activity corresponded to the productive contribution to the real economy. But increasingly, the financial activity that has exploded in recent decades, especially with financial deregulation in recent decades, contributed little, if anything, to the real economy.

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The social purpose of finance is to allocate capital to productive activities new businesses, enterprises, factories, homes, schools, hospitals, roads and so on in the real economy. But most financial activity in advanced financial systems such as the U.S. and the U.K. is not that productive kind. It's been estimated by those who know more about it than I do, that only about 15 percent of financial activity consists in investment in new productive assets for the economy.

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85 percent consists of simply bidding up the price or betting on the future prices of already existing assets or increasingly synthetically created derivatives and other the fancy financial instruments that have precious little to do with making the economy more productive.

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So in some ways, the standard defense of a laissez faire free market distribution of income and wealth drawing on J.K. Rowling or LeBron James misses what's actually going on for the most part with the with the growing inequality in in our economy. And so in debating the tax system, I think we should we should confront that directly. Hence, I would suggest, in addition to a wealth tax, a financial transactions tax to offset to enable us to reduce taxes on work in the ordinary sense.

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Now, if I could just add one more thing about this. You know, this isn't only for the sake of redistributing income from the wealthy to those who need it more, though that would be one advantage.

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It's also to prompt a broader public debate about the earlier topic we were discussing, which is whether the purpose of an economy is to help shape the way we value. Different contributions to the economy in the society or whether the point of the economy is simply to accept whatever valuations seem to be implicit in the existing system, and I'm hoping by these and other proposals to prompt a broader public debate onto the terrain that you said rightly is contestable and we could be debating about for a very long time.

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What does it mean to value the right kinds of things? What does it mean to to encourage certain contributions to the common good and to discourage others?

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I think that should be a part of our public debate.

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And one way of making it a part of our public debate is to raise questions, for example, about the role of speculative finance by comparison with the productive contribution of people who produce valuable goods and service truly valuable goods and services.

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Yeah, well, that's a obviously a very important distinction. I mean, there's so many areas of the economy where if we could be fully transparent as to the contributions being made by that economic activity, we would want to rethink, you know, what we're incentivizing and how we're rewarding people because there's so much rent seeking behavior and there's just so much administrative bloat in, you know, whole sectors of our economy are suffocating under this apparatus we've put in place.



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And we take the medical system and just what you know, just how much time doctors have to spend dealing with insurance companies. We spend more on medicine than any society on Earth than we do not get the return on our investment. So, yeah, there's a lot to straighten out there. But even even the pure case is hard to think about and puts us up against certain moral paradoxes. So, for instance, just imagine a society where we had decided, OK, we we've gotten past this this notion of of mere equal opportunity, because we know that even if we could open the doors perfectly and give every child starting right now an equal opportunity to get into Harvard, say, well, they'll still be massive, massive differences in their ability to avail themselves of those opportunities because of all of these other disadvantages.

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But the paradox here is that the thing that's under our control, the environment, if we perfectly tuned that, if we gave everyone from utero onward all of the same environmental benefits. Right. This is magic, right? We can't we obviously can't do this. But even if we could, where that would land us is in this dystopian counterfactual world where now what we'll have to spectate on are the the massive differences in genetic endowment. Right. I mean, if you perfectly secure the environment against disadvantage, well, then all you will see is a kind of tyranny of genetic differences and will be in some kind of gatica like dystopia.

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And that would be if with the best of intentions, we could create a perfectly equitable and enriched environments for everybody. You can take that case and do with what it what you will with it. It almost seems like a kind of mirage here to figure out how to actually solve this problem, given a perfect ability to do so.

[00:37:18.100]

Well, I think I think what the what the mirage of, like, field of this thought experiment brings out. Is that even a perfect meritocracy? Would not be a just society. Because the winners would still be determined by factors that were not their own doing, and yet to make matters worse. The closer we came. To providing truly equal opportunity, the greater the tendency for the successful to believe that their success was their own doing, the greater the tendency to forget or to overlook or deny the luck and good fortune that helped them on their way.

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And the greater the tendency to look down on those who are flourishing less and to say their failure must be their fault. So what goes along with the meritocratic picture?

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Is a sense of human agency so thoroughgoing? That we tend to attribute moral responsibility for one's fate, for where one lands in life, notwithstanding the persistent contingencies that you've just described in that we've been discussing.

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The attitudes towards success and failure toward winning and losing as we became as we approach more closely perfect equality of opportunity, those attitudes towards success and failure would become all the sharper, all the more pronounced. And what I'm suggesting is from an ethical point of view, and you've rightly invited us to distinguish the ethical from the political dimensions of this. Ethically, the hubris leads those on top to forget not only the luck and good fortune, but also their sense of indebtedness and as well as looking down on those less fortunate than themselves.

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So that's the ethical problem.

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That's the dark side of meritocracy, morally speaking.

[00:39:41.260]

It's the hubris rather than the more we appreciate, the more we would be alive to the role of accident and luck and fortune, the more open we would be toward a certain humility.

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Toward success, toward winning.

[00:39:59.130]

And this openness, humility to humility can open us also to a greater sense of responsibility for those less fortunate than us, those who struggle, those who may be left behind through no fault of their own. So that's the ethical side of it. But politically, even though we haven't realized the perfect meritocracy that you've just described and that we've been imagining.

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It has so this idea of this picture has so dominated public discourse that it has shaped the response to the deepening inequality of the last four decades.

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And I think it's no accident that meritocratic modes of public discourse and moral argument have strengthened their hold at the very same time that inequality of income and wealth have deepened with the kind of market driven globalization we've had in recent decades.

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And this has fueled the the anger, the resentment. Those who have lost out, it's one thing to feel that you've lost out because the system is unfair, the system is rigged, that's a worry about fairness, but humiliation. It's a deeper kind of demoralization because it's a system where the the attitudes toward success and failure lead those who struggle to believe.

[00:41:33.270]

Well, maybe I don't work hard enough.

[00:41:35.910]

Maybe I'm not talented enough to land where they landed.

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That's deeply demoralizing. And maybe that's why they're looking down on me.

[00:41:45.870]

One of the most potent sources, Sam, I think of the populist backlash that we've seen and most dramatically in 2016 is the sense among many working people that elites look down on them.

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And this has a specific meaning in the context of American politics, because for four decades, the meritocratic promise was, yes, there may be deepening inequality, but you can rise.

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Everyone can rise through individual effort and training, provided you go to college, then you two can compete and win in the global economy, what you earn will depend on what you learn. So the response in this includes Democrats and Republicans. The response to the deepening inequality was to offer individual upward mobility through higher education, which on the face of it seems inspiring.

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I'm all for improving access to widening access to higher education, but as a remedy for the inequality that we've seen.

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It's a pale, inadequate solution and it contains what seems an inspiring message. You too can rise if only you go to college contains an insult. An implicit insult in the insult is this. If you don't have a university degree and you're struggling in the new economy, your failure must be your fault. And this politically is folly when we recall that most most people don't have a four year college degree. So instead of focusing on arming people from meritocratic competition, I think we should be focusing more on affirming the dignity of work and having a public debate about what it would mean truly to enable everyone to flourish, whether they're in blue collar jobs or whether they're in and well whether they're well credentialed people in professional jobs.

[00:43:55.120]

So let's focus on the problem of college, because this is in some measure the whole problem in microcosm. But it's also the the longest lever that has separated the fates of winners and losers in our society. A college, you know, on your account, other people have hit this topic. Daniel Markovits was on the podcast a couple of months ago. Yeah, I'm a college has become a kind of sorting mechanism for a new caste system in our society.

[00:44:27.900]

And again, as you point out, this is not just a problem with, you know, one party or the other. This comes from from everywhere that this is the way you will successfully compete in this increasingly global state of economic nature. And it's not only something that is offered more or less to everyone and everyone who will claim the opportunity can sort of get it in hand. But there's something, you know, generally fair about how all of this shakes down, because, of course, the elites write the best of the best in any field will wind up and should wind up at the best universities because how else would the best universities select their student body?

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And if they you know, if this gets gamed occasionally and occasionally, perversely, with people buying their way in, there's opprobrium attached to that. But in the general case, it's hard to even optimize that because the schools are fantastically expensive to run. And, you know, if you're not going to give alumni any any advantage, well, then why would they be donating year after year to year into Harvard's endowment? So it's. There's something that while it's not ideal, many people look at this and think, well, how else could it be?

[00:45:52.590]

So I ask you, you know, in our closing chapter here, what is the problem with college and how should we fix it? The main problem with college is that we and by we I mean the society as a whole, not just the higher education community. We have made colleges and universities. If you'd like to continue listening to this podcast, you'll need to subscribe at Sam Harris. Doug, you'll get access to all full length episodes of the Making Sense podcast and to other subscriber only content, including bonus episodes and Amma's and the conversations I've been having on the Waking Up app.

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