Your Questions Answered - Bret and Heather 22nd DarkHorse Po...

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**SPEAKERS**

Bret, Heather

**Bret** 00:12

Hey folks, welcome back to the Dark Horse podcast live stream number 22. Section three, the Q and A, we are going to get to your cues with our A's. That's what we do here. Oh, boy, that sounds wrong.

**Heather** 00:25

That does sound wrong. Okay,

**Bret** 00:26

well, let's do like to take it back. So

**Heather** 00:28

we want to thank Eric for, for having the first of what we hope are many conversations that we have. Of course, we've been having conversations like this with him privately for decades. But we'd need these conversations to become more public. Now.

**Bret** 00:46

I'm thinking we should start a club, we can be the first members, the first against the wall club, what do you think?

**Heather** 00:53

I don't like it.

**Bret** 00:54

I kind of do like it. Okay. All right. Maybe I'm the only member of the first against the wall.

**Heather** 00:59

Yes. I guess I also before we start in on the questions from your Super Chat, and the first live stream, and the second, and then we'll get to the third. And we'll do as many as we can in an hour. I also wanted to thank our moderator, who is anonymous, but is a good friend and doing just a bang up job. And we appreciate you greatly. And we don't we don't see the chats, we only see the Super Chat questions. But we know from the assessment that the moderator gives us every time that you're fighting the good fight. Thank you,

**Bret** 01:34

indeed. Thanks so much. Okay.

**Heather** 01:37

So without further ado, we want to there was one question, there have been questions every time that we've missed that have been good. But there was one in particular, we just didn't even see last time it came in at the end of the Super Chat. That was excellent. I want to start with it. And it turns out that the same person has rewritten the question this time. So that gives me even more reason to prioritize this. Morgan writes, if the left wants to win, they need to care about the civil rights of the right. I have no public voice, no news, no social media gives me a platform, the left will have no mercy for me or anyone who thinks like I do if they win convinced me otherwise.

**Bret** 02:13

Yeah, this is really a question of how you parse things. That thing out there that is putting people against the wall, forcing them to bend the knee, all of the things that it is doing, that's not the left, most people may think they're the left, but this is the most intolerant movement I have seen in my lifetime. So the thing to understand is that essentially, left and right have become unimportant at the moment, because what we are looking at is a challenge to the things that unite left. And right now I got a challenge from Dave Rubin yesterday in which he basically said that what we are all seeing is a demonstration that the conservatives had it right all along, and that us liberals have to admit it. This is not the case, this country was founded by radicals and liberals who have upgraded the system again and again. And conservatives provide a necessary tension, the liberals left to their own devices would muck the thing up with a over Li great enthusiasm for change and for attempts to fix things and an insufficient appreciation for unintended consequences. So the tension between the instinct to improve things and the desire to preserve that which functions is the magic that makes America work. So that is to say, if you are on the right, you are united with those on the left who are making sense, no matter how few of us there may be, and I don't think it's as few as as one might be led to believe I think a lot of us have been portrayed as on the right in order that the left doesn't have to deal with us for the same reason. They don't want science empowered, they don't want cogent people on the left saying, Hey, wait a minute, this isn't making sense to me Get off your knees, they don't want that. So anyway, we're in this together, the Patriots, the people who understand the values that make the West, so powerful, and that make it the envy of the rest of the world. Those things are in jeopardy and we must all defend them. So there's no left to right. It's not that you need your rights protected as somebody on the right if you're an honorable person, then you're on board with with the rest of us. We've got to protect all of our rights. So

**Heather** 04:33

well, I'm going to push back on that a little bit, because I think that sounds wonderful. But it sounds a little bit like fantasy space. Because we are we do have different we share values. We share values across almost the entire left and almost the entire right. But we do I mean as you have most aptly of anyone I've ever heard describe what the differences are that we share values and we and we disagree too on the extent to which we have already achieved those values in society and on the coast. Some solutions that we that we seek to resolve the remaining inequalities and problems in society. So that there are real differences. And we do speak in terms of left and right. But I certainly agree with you that the leftists so called just like the alt rightists, so called our extremists who really bear no resemblance to in the case of the leftist, a liberal and progressive understanding of what it is that we should be doing in the world, just as the alt right so don't have any resemblance to what good faith conservatives believe. But I will say to to the writers question, so if you would put up this screen, I'm just gonna show a screenshot of a tweet I wrote a couple days ago, in a long tweet thread. totalitarianism always flies in on the wings of beautiful ideals, it lands gently flatters you and charms you makes you feel smart for recognizing how beautiful it is to not be fooled. It is dangerous, those ideals, they are not what they seem. And it got a lot of attention. But someone says to me, in response, you are definitely, definitely not on the left. And this person is trying to claim the mantle of being on the left and basically saying that I by speaking to the current moment as a totalitarian one cannot possibly be on the left. And that strikes me as simultaneously a horrifying misunderstanding of what it would be to seek to live in a liberal society. And also take it down, please. Also, sorry, I lost my train of thought there

**Bret** 06:37

is an embarrassing admission on their part, they revealed their misunderstanding of what the left is. I do want to push back on your pushback, though, I'm not saying there's no difference between left and right. Obviously, there is and the reason I would say I'm a radical is that I believe we need change now that we are in trouble in our current trajectory will be fatal if we don't have it, which puts me on the left. But I also have said, I want to live in a civilization that is so fair, and so functional, that I can afford to be a conservative, we should all want to live in that society. And people who are, who feel that they are always going to be in favor of change, are basically telling you that they're not really interested in building something wonderful. So we can safely ignore them. My point is just look, we are facing a very powerful enemy. And it is threatening the values that we share. So of course, we're on the same team, right? We're, we're allies by virtue of the fact that there's no disagreement amongst the good people about the values that are now under threat. So anyway, yes, we can let's, let's repel this threat and get to a place where we can again, fight over whether or not we need to make progress or preserve things as they are, that'll be wonderful if we get to that point.

**Heather** 07:53

Next question, there's a good argument to ignore race and genetics, a consequence seems to be persistent historical, anti semitism. Jewish success in many fields includes a quarter of Nobel laureates. And that seems to be either a general cognitive advantage or the Jewish conspiracy. But I think I think Eric, in particular, was talking about this in the last livestream a little bit, I think he addressed some of this.

**Bret** 08:15

Well, you know, here's the problem is that the answer to this one is uncomfortable, right? Is there something cognitively special about Jews, or isn't there? And I think the answer is, there is, but I don't think it's genetic. It's not certainly not inherently genetic. What I would say is, there is something about the level of oppression and enduring it in other words, there's something very anti fragile about Jewish thinking as a result of all of the challenges that Jews have faced. And the you know, I know from experience as a cultural Jew, not a religious Jew, I know that there is something in the culture about holding each other's feet to the fire, right? It was dinner table conversation, it was you know, Passover Seders. It was it was baked into what it meant to be Jewish so much so that it was baked in was actually big and you know, the thing is when you do that, when every interaction involves what I think people have actually frankly seen in our podcast here as pushing back on each other and it not being personal and you know, the affection being a constant and not washing back and forth in the ebb and flow of belief. Right? That culture works to make you insightful and what I've said and

**Heather** 09:41

it is Oh sorry, but it has might be a my observation growing up in a non Jewish family, but with my mother's dearest friend and business partner was Jewish and so we spent a lot of time with her and I came to think of her almost as a as a secondary mom. And I had many Jewish friends whose homes I went to do and spent time at and then Obviously, having spent a lot of time with your NATO family at this point, that the the consistent thing between all of these, all of these families, all of these Jewish homes, is the simultaneous love and respect and willingness to disagree and push back. And it is that thing, it's exactly the opposite of the concept of a safe space. And you know, these super fragile little beings that can't ever have disagreements, the opposite of helicopter parenting is the opposite of so much of what we've been taught to value and that we see being ascendant in modern culture. And so you know, why, why is that correlated with success in a world in which not just collaboration, but yes, also competition is going to be important? Well, it's it is effectively an informal scientific method, you end up testing your ideas, because anytime you say anything, that's wrong, you know that people at the table are going to figure out why it's wrong, or try to help you figure out why it's wrong. It just will happen.

**Bret** 11:02

Yep. And I want to push back slightly on the idea that you didn't grow up in a Jewish Home, because I think No, I mean, the point left, biologically, but I know it's gonna be good. It's a head scratcher. Yeah, but it's not really because look,

**Heather** 11:18

I suspect my mother and my brother are watching right now they're like, What? What are you talking?

**Bret** 11:22

Right? Well, here, this is what I'm talking about. The magic of human beings is that they are a generalist platform physically, we are a generalist creature with a mind that is not highly pre programmed. It's not to say it's a blank slate, it isn't. But it's the blank slate that has ever existed in nature. Right? That blanks that blank ish slate, allows a software program to be loaded onto the mind. And the fact is, your home wasn't Jewish in the sense that either of your parents were Jewish. But you were, you went to school with lots of Jews by virtue of where you lived in the world. Your mom's best friend was Jewish, your dad's work environment and computer science would have been filled with many Jews. And the point is, look, it's not that every aspect of Jewishness is fantastic. But the base never

**Heather** 12:12

had a Seder at home. But that doesn't mean that Jewish culture wasn't omnipresent in our lives, right?

**Bret** 12:17

And you know, we live like this elsewhere, right? Like we take, you know, tomatoes to be part of Italian cuisine. They're not, they are not originally part of Italian cuisine, but they've been

**Heather** 12:27

like, can't be they come from a totally different continent. Right. So the point

**Bret** 12:31

is, you know, should we, you know, should an Italian restaurant be limited to nothing with tomatoes? No, of course not. The point is tomatoes have been naturalized into Italian cuisine, the way a Jewish perspective, where I would argue, affection and affinity, are orthogonal from agreement. That is to say, we can disagree and has nothing to do about whether we love each other. And so anyway, I think you had a lot of that in your life. I think it's, you know, ebbs and flows through Judeo Christian culture. And the most important thing is, to whatever extent it's good, I'm not saying it's singular. There are other cultures that will have every one of those aspects somewhere. It's democratized. Right? Yeah, because it's culture and not dreams. It can be passed on it can be utilized by anybody, just like the scientific method. And so the democratization of the tools that work is the key. And to the extent that Jews have demonstrated that it is possible to be a small and often despised group of people and still thrive, maybe Jews know something about how to do it. So anyway, I know that's complex and weird, but I do think

**Heather** 13:37

I think we should come back to this frequently, actually. Okay, next question. Where does this go? If social media and everyone in the public eye continues to kneel and effectively show their juggler to the mob? How can the silent majority get the truth out to those who are on the fence or who truly don't understand the issues? So these again, these are questions from the first live stream, you know, before we were on with with Eric,

**Bret** 14:05

unfortunately, people want something they often want something from us. I know, I get approached frequently by people navigating these kinds of issues in their in their own life, you know, do I stand up? I'm in jeopardy, how do I do it? How do I make it safe? There's no good answer. And as I think we were pretty clear, earlier today, there's nothing that makes this moment safe. In fact, it could hardly be more perilous. I know of no feature of the environment. But that stands between what we are currently seeing and a flat out Maoist revolution that overturns everything right? It could happen. Will it happen? I don't know. But it could and if it did, what would that mean about what your fate would be for standing up? I have no idea. But what I can say is, there's no safety in cow towing to the mob, or at least no safety that you'd want it. It's a It's not a viable position for an intelligent person, you will hate yourself for doing it. And you will be reviled by history. So

**Heather** 15:09

I think the answer what do you do? I mean, this is, we are now in a different position than we would have been if this were happening four years ago, and we were unknown, you know, beloved at our college, but unknown to the rest of the world biologists. And, you know, we are doing what we know how to do, but we're, but it's still it's still too little. And we're trying to figure out what else to do. And, you know, the idea that, you know, Eric's gonna get the band back together, and to use his his framing on social media and, and, you know, bring together a bigger conversation is, is critical. But what about people who don't have any kind of platform, who are, you know, finding themselves in the zoom meetings right now, where everyone begins by announcing their pronouns and, and explaining how their inner racist is finally clear to them, and they're apologetic for years to come. And, you know, incidentally, to Eric's point, that he made in the last livestream, about it seeming to be often the people with the least actual intimate knowledge, in terms of friendship and family and experience of other of people who look different, who are doing this most This is actually a point that I have, as you as you know, that I have made many times that I observed anecdotally, I wouldn't even actually know how to begin to do the stats on it. But I sort of began to try to what we saw at evergreen, was that the people who were most loud and most most vociferous about their whiteness, and their racism, were exactly the people who I know, just because I know who they are, to have the least experience of the world to have traveled the least, to have the most, sort of the most limited homogeneous experience of the world. And I don't know if they were actually wondering if they're racist, or if they were just going wow, I just don't know. But the fact is that those of us who actually have traveled have lived have been in places where we aren't, we aren't the dominant phenotype, even though our skin color always carries privilege. No matter where we go on this planet. We can we can look into our hearts and say, can actually no, not racist. So stop making me pretend that I am something that I'm not because I know what happens if you start making me lie. So the people who can't look into themselves and say, well, am I I'm not sure, who can't come back with a resounding I'm sure are not are most likely to be the ones who are carrying the flags and, and you're basically making the loudest of themselves in the streets and trying to force the others to do the same.

**Bret** 17:53

Okay, so here's my advice. Good. The fact is, if you do what they want you to do, if you get on your knees, and you beg forgiveness, and you swear that they're right about what their claims are, they will not respect you, they will use you and then they will throw you away. At the end, your fate is not going to be an honorable one, you will either end up a servant or in a ditch. That means the best thing to do is to make your peace with the fact that there is no safety to be had. And then make your point about why it is that you are not compelled about this. Now if there's honor, on the other side, it will recognize that the strength to say what's true and to stand up to this, even though they don't like it is the sign of somebody with integrity, somebody with depth of character, and it will not protect you. It may put you on their radar. But what it means is that in the end, you will be able to look at yourself in the mirror. And I don't know, I don't know how you're going to do it. Frankly, as I've said before, for me, it's automatic, right? It doesn't really matter what the consequences. The consequence, personally, to me of pretending I agree with this stuff would be so catastrophic, that there's just it's easy. There's just no choice to

**Heather** 19:14

make you literally wouldn't be able to sleep. Yeah,

**Bret** 19:16

I mean, it's not even that it's like I cannot get to the point of saying, Okay, what would I even say right in that hallway. I don't know what the other speech would have sounded like I literally cannot imagine formulating those words. So if that's not where you are, if that is where you are, then this is easy and

**Heather** 19:34

great. Well, it's easy, but your livelihood might be at risk.

**Bret** 19:38

Alright, it's not safe. But it's the choice part is easy, because it's not a choice, not a choice. It's just not a choice. But if that's not where you are and it's not where most people are,

**Heather** 19:46

unless let me just say I mean two of our dearest friends, a couple of months before evergreen blew up. one of whom was at evergreen and one of whom is is my oldest friend in the world. Someone who You then went to high school with, she was visiting us. I sat at lunch with him faculty member at evergreen. And her my woman I've known since we were both in fifth grade, I think. And they were saying to me, this would have been, I don't know, march of 2017, something like this. We know that what Brett is doing is necessary and true and honorable. But it's not going to end well. It does. Does he know that? And neither of them were saying stop. them would, neither of them would ever. But they were so worried. And it struck me at the time, that that was sort of where I was, I was obviously I was, I was behind the scenes, you know, with your emails and such, but and you know, and living a lot of it more deeply than, than they were, but they almost I think they were almost asking me like, given that he must know, the danger. Does he understand the risks? And at the same time, these two people who both know, pretty darn well, we're saying we understand it's not a choice? Yeah, it was, it's not a

**Bret** 21:17

choice. It's not a choice. And, you know, I think this also has something to do with, with Jewish culture, especially growing up when we did, which, you know,

**Heather** 21:28

my oldest friend, our good friend from a long time ago, was also Jewish. He's also

**Bret** 21:32

Jewish, and I'm sure he,

**Heather** 21:36

his father is, is Japanese and Japanese American, his father was in the camps, the Japanese internment camps. So both of these people have familial history, you'll experience

**Bret** 21:47

deep, deep oppression. But there's something about you know, we were we were both born in 1969. So that seemed it during our childhoods, at least to me, like a very long distance from World War Two, World War Two felt like deep history, but of course, it wasn't right. It was recent. And anyway, the discussions amongst kids the discussions at the dinner table, all those things were kind of preparation for Well, what if this happens again? Right, it can happen again, it can always happen. And I think that there's just there's a circuit, people say, you don't know, you don't know, what would you would have done, you know, in Nazi Germany, you don't know. And I feel like I know, right, and you know, you could swallow? What would have happened? Well, I would have taken a shot at as many Nazis as I could, and I probably would have died in the process period, would not have ended up in the camp, right? Now, there's a way in which that's unfair, because Germans at the time, German Jews didn't have the experience of knowing where it was going. But having grown up at a time when I did have the benefit of seeing what happened in those circumstances, or just just not even a question. Now, there are things that give one pause. And it always

**Heather** 23:07

looks different, of course, right? Like so, you know, you get a history doesn't repeat itself. But it rhymes. Right? So, you know, how close does it have to be for you to recognize that it's the same thing? That's it's the same enough thing.

**Bret** 23:22

This is so weird to talk about, because it's so personal, but I feel like it doesn't matter. You know, and I feel like it doesn't matter because it has to lie. It has to lie. That ideology. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, it has to lie. And if it has to lie, then all you have to do is be resistant to being able to be forced into a line, and you're certainly safe from becoming part of it. You're not safe, but you're safe from becoming part of it. And so, no, I feel pretty much completely secure. That's such a thing could not arise and trick me, right? It's not to say I can't be fooled by anything. But if it's one of these power grabs, that forces you into an ideology that isn't right in order to do its bidding. It's just it's obvious what it's doing.

**Heather** 24:06

And some of it is zeal. Some of some of the easier advice to give is, look at what look at how cults function. Yeah. And if, if it yells at you, when you start questioning it, run away, if you aren't allowed to assess how it came to its conclusions, or disagree with any of its conclusions.

**Bret** 24:26

Right away. Yeah. James Lindsay has been lazier less.

**Heather** 24:32

And just unending like, yeah, just

**Bret** 24:35

yeah. And his point is, is his strongest point in this realm is at the point that it distances you from your family, you know what it's up to? If it doesn't want you talking to your family and friends, there's a reason and it's because it cannot withstand

**Heather** 24:50

pushback. Yeah, it cannot withstand scrutiny. Yeah.

**Bret** 24:53

So all I can say is, I think you'll feel better The sooner you make your peace with the danger and The sooner you become clear about what you believe and why and then you know, it's a very interesting story to be on the right side of. So, good luck.

**Heather** 25:10

Okay, we've got a couple of comments before more questions, so many questions here really construe three of them. This is a comment continuous equivocation tactic, choosing language open to a continuum of interpretation that the issuer of may judging contexts selectively vary their claimed as desired interpretation. It's often used to stock extremes over time.

**Bret** 25:31

That sounds exactly right. So yes, arguing or he or she is arguing that that is the known name for this thing that the continuous

**Heather** 25:39

version of the mountain Bailey Yeah, the continuous version of the mountain by continuous equivocation tactic. I wish it was sexier. But yeah, a continuous continuous equivocation tactic. Thank you. Yeah,

**Bret** 25:50

maybe if you wink at the end of it, you wake, that's not a sexy

**Heather** 25:55

the dog wink, wink. To support as long as I'm able, thank you, and I was gonna buy Mortal Kombat 11. But you all deserve it more, keep up the good work, both of you. Thank you.

**Bret** 26:08

Appreciate that. You could also invest in some Immortal Technique, I had a brief encounter with some of Immortal techniques, music, and I'm hoping he is stood strong and is on the right side of this fight. I have no idea what we're talking about. No, you don't do that. Okay.

**Heather** 26:26

I'm seeing many, including the republican governor of Vermont, where I live claiming that it's no longer okay to be not racist, and that we almost become equitable and anti racist. What do people mean by anti racist? You might also ask what do people mean by equitable, because until you've gone down this rabbit hole, you think it means you think equity is the same thing as equality, and it's not. equality is something we can and all should get behind equality under the law, equality of opportunity, and so far as it is possible. But equity is a way of changing, changing outcomes, after all of the opportunity has already ended, such that some people are lifted up in a very unequal way. So there's that, that there is a lot in the concept of equity that legitimately can be pushed back against, I'd be interested to hear good faith, defense of the concept of equity. But it is it is one of these things that's been slid in is if it's equivalent to equality, and it's not. And so then the other question is about anti racist I was how is not being racist, distinct from being anti racist.

**Bret** 27:36

So the problem with all of these things is that they are, they are Trojan horse concepts. And obviously, any reasonable person should be anti racist, until people define that term in such a way that you can't possibly be, it's because it is the enemy of anti racism, right? These things are all going to be turned on their head. And you know, it's the same thing with equity, equity, used to mean something very close to equality, and then it was transmuted into something that is actually so if you know, if equality of opportunity, is the desired goal, then equity is like the communist version or was like the communist version, which is equality of outcome. And now equity has been transmuted into something even far beyond what communism, communism doesn't work, but it's at least coherent. The claim is coherent. What is your ideology? Yeah, it's a coherent ideology that won't work for reasons that actually come down to group selection and Game Theory. But nevermind, we can talk about that another day. But the equity movement now is not even communist. It's beyond communist because what it is really advocating for is a state and you can you know, you could hear it in the the thing that Eric read from, was at Caltech, or you can hear it in what was being said to us at evergreen that equity will not be achieved until every single person graduating is equally capable, right? Or

**Heather** 29:01

ignores in the case of Cal in the case of just like the example that we know so well evergreen because of evergreen, which is the one you're talking about. Yep. The goal that they stated was that they needed to see equality of outcome as well. Yeah. At the end of a college graduation, having let people in a mere four years earlier, with extremely unequal beginnings now are those extremely unequal beginnings at the point that they're 18 or 20, or whatever they are at the point they enter college. Honorable And should we, you know, should we think that that's okay, in a free liberal society? No. But the idea that you can fix all of the problems that led to people entering college with unequal levels of degree of preparation, and educational background, and socio economic security by doing something over the course of course of four years in a college is missing. Understanding God, just everything at every level.

**Bret** 30:02

Well, here's the thing, though, obviously it's such a preposterous logical claim that that can't possibly be what they're saying. And so what they are saying, how is it that you could take a college of 4000 students and guarantee that on graduation, everybody is equally capable, there is no way to take the least prepared person and make them as capable as the best prepared person by the time they graduate. There is no feat of magic that could be done. There's no amount of money you could invest in the process that would make that

**Heather** 30:30

happen. Well, I mean, you could pull a Vonnegut level Vonnegut style Harrison Bergeron.

**Bret** 30:34

That's what you do. They are inherently talking about taking the most competent people and hobbling know that that's what they're talking about, because logically, it's the only way to get to the thing that they claim that they want. So at the point that you realize we're talking about hobbling capable people in order that nobody's ahead. The answer is okay. You obviously don't understand how the world works. You don't know what you're inviting.

**Heather** 30:56

And we know this we see this across I mean, this this hasn't shown up yet, but I'm sure it'll be publicly targeted soon. Is the whole concept of gifted programs of of educational programs for children who show particular promise, those are already disappearing, because they are deemed unacceptably putting resources towards those who already have a lot and what do they have a lot. They are capable. We are we are we are going to hobble our most capable children and imagine that we will continue to be a dominant socio economic force in on this planet in 20 years, oh, there's no way there's no way

**Bret** 31:33

we could be. No, it's preposterous and the fact is any school that obligates itself to this sort of madness will subordinate its graduates to any school that can resist any country that signs up for this will subordinate itself to any country that can resist so the point is, they are inviting the destruction of whatever works here. It's not it is it is madness. And it should be addressed as such.

**Heather** 31:57

Yes. Okay, wouldn't it be useful to generate templates for postmodern bs free ed i statements that's going to be equity diversity inclusion statements, I think it only started again, wouldn't it be useful to generate templates for postmodern bs free equity diversity inclusion statements, like new open source software licenses that are still clearly condemning unfair discrimination? Yes, absolutely. And the one thing that springs to mind is our friend the amazing Chloe, Valerie with her theory of enchantment, she's building a curriculum to encourage basically love and compassion over divisiveness and and hatred. But she also I, I think that this is okay to say when when she came in, was on the podcast and stayed with us she was in Portland not to come on darcars podcast last fall, but because she'd been invited to give an equity inclusion workshop for the some part of the FAA, the Federal Aviation Administration that was having its annual conference in at PBX at Portland International Airport. And this is part of what she advertises as part of her theory of and Chairman that she does. She is a you know, as you said, beautiful, young, young ish black woman who, who has that is one of the things that she does. And when she first told me that she was doing this before she came in, we'd met her earlier in the summer at the heterodox Academy conference, actually. And we've been in a lot of contact online when she told me I've been invited to do this. It's like oh my god, Chloe, you're you're you are a Trojan horse and a good way. Because you're going to deliver the actual messaging of of love and compassion, actual inclusion and the value of actual diversity, the actual value of actual diversity in a way that people will love to hear because of course, the message is resounding for all but the tiny fringe of of racists right? And, and then I'm gonna ask her, and I think she at that point, didn't know the answer. I don't think she does To this day, actually. Are they going to be shocked when you show up and deliver an actually inclusive message? Or do the people who hired you know what you are? And are they actually trying to subvert the postmodern bs paradigm that is taken over and I don't I don't know what it was, but it kind of doesn't matter because she reported it had to be the latter. Maybe I don't think it matters because you know, she came when she did her two day workshop and she reported such you know, such community tears of joy and of sadness, but you're just this this glorious coming together the left people feeling enriched and uplifted and hopeful. And that's what can be done. So I don't know of any other example. But yes, it can be done

**Bret** 34:47

well, okay. I don't know any other examples like that one. Yeah. But the basic idea here, this is I mean, we have been learning this trick all along, right, since May of 20. 17 and before and the question is, can you figure out how to phrase what you actually believe, explain why you actually believe it without succumbing to the stigma that is used to cancel people. And the very fact that we are here tells you that this has worked so far, right? Being able to outline why you believe what you believe, is a learned art. And in this culture where people are gunning for you, especially if you're in a position to reveal why they're being absurd, foolish and dangerous. It is an important one. So anyway, you're right, yes, those statements would be great. I would suggest practicing this and discovering what works and what fails and why. And what we need really is everybody to bootstrap the part of a response that they are in a good position to deliver and those statements would be a very good contribution. Yes, they

**Heather** 35:50

would. 35 minutes. Okay, I'm going to read three more from here. And we'll get back to them if there aren't a ton of questions in the other live chats. I'm also I've also pulled aside excuse me, there are a few questions directly speaking to the podcast that you put up with Erie dragon dragon dragon, I can never get it right. Yeah. So we're just going to put those aside for you're going to do a live stream q&a with him at some point soon. So I'll make sure you'll get those to answer those later. Do you have thoughts on the similarities between Instagram black squares forced public privilege apology is Washington feed, etc. And the two minutes of hate slash Winston believing two plus two equals five while still smelling rats at the end of 1984? I think I think this was asked pretty early in the first live stream and yeah, I don't think we are living exactly in a 1984 world. I think it's more brave new world. But there are obviously remarkable similarities, especially in terms of the tactics. I think Orwell got the tactics exactly right, without getting the resulting world described quite as accurately as what Huxley did.

**Bret** 37:02

It's a chi Mira, I would say yeah, and I would also say the important thing, especially with respect to Orwell, is that Orwell wrote extensively, not in narrative form. And to the extent that 1984 resonates and that we find passages in it absolutely shocking, because of their match for what we are living through. The point is it reflects well on his model of how things function, and he gave us a pretty good indicator of what he thought so

**Heather** 37:29

unless, you know, just, obviously, it's a plug for narrative, right that the vast majority of us wouldn't know who Orla was, if he only did his scholarly nonfiction analysis. Yep. But yeah. And then same with Huxley. I think Huxley also did some analysis that wasn't fiction, but certainly are well done. Next question, if one were to learn one of the hard sciences at a PhD level outside of institutions, one is this possible to if so, how

**Bret** 37:59

readily possible, readily possible, especially in this era?

**Heather** 38:02

Now you can gauge the level? He asks? Well, it depends what

**Bret** 38:06

you mean, I would say most PhDs are not very interesting contributions. And so, you

**Heather** 38:13

know, in terms of I would say, the the, the methods, though, of many of the sciences require, and this is this is because of the way the socio economic model of big science universities has gone not because of anything intrinsic to science, but most PhD level science over in the skin and biology and chemistry realms require labs with a lot of money. So that's gonna, that's gonna be very hard to source on your own. There's a lot of sort of the, the, you know, evolutionary theory and over in math space, and potentially in physics space that you can potentially do. Well, without the labs,

**Bret** 38:50

suffice it to say, there are things you cannot do, because the technology cannot be sourced individually. That is certainly I mean, if you're a physicist whose work requires a Collider, you need access to the collider, right, right. But there are many PhDs where you could figure out how to do the work, I don't know that it would be worth You know, there's a lot of time wasted in a PhD process, and you could do better and I think, actually, Yuri Dagon is a great demonstration. He doesn't have a PhD, but he has a very deep understanding of how the highly technical, biological realm that intersects his business life works. Yeah. And so look, autodidacts, are wonderful. The tools that are available to you, between, you know, people on YouTube, we're willing to teach you to do just about anything you would want to do at a technical level. And all of the source material that would tell you how to process think about the resulting data. Yes, of course, it's possible, but there's a lot about PhDs that is a waste of your time, and so you could probably do the equivalent in terms I'm getting to the value in three years. If you didn't have to please a committee that had other obligations and things like that.

**Heather** 40:11

Do you think today is overly nihilistic pop culture, which defies the bad guys, as in Game of Thrones, Joker, Rick and Morty bojack horseman is reflective of some of the postmodern theories surfacing today, as in the 1619 project. So let me just parse that a little bit, the 1619 project being this Ascendant attempt by the New York Times to describe the history of the United States entirely through the lens of everything was built on, on the on the labor on the enslaved labor of black people. The 1619 project has, I think, aren't a Pulitzer at this point. It is right? It is it has been adopted in several school curricula for I believe, starting next year. And it has been widely widely discredited by many historians across several many demographic markers, including at least political ideology and race. So there are there are many reasons to think that this is in fact a postmodern take on the history of race in America, which, obviously I'm here, you know, Eric's words ring in my ear, do we need to say that slavery existed, and it was bad? I don't think we do. But the 1619 project is obviously at one level, an attempt to describe that, but it does not appear to be a good faith attempt any more than hashtag Black Lives Matter appears to be good faith, and yet it is a Sunday on to justice, hashtag Black Lives Matters. So the question then, is the deification of bad guys in today's nihilistic pop culture? Does that contribute to the ascendancy of pomo bowl like the 1619 project?

**Bret** 42:07

You know, it's a it's a fair question, but I don't think that that's it's far from a description purely of what's taking place in pop culture. In other words, even in places where there's a lot of glory shown amongst the bad guys, it's very frequently the bad guys with honor that are the most interesting characters. You and I have a long relationship with the character Omar little on the wire, who was a bad guy. He was a gun toting robber, but he robbed drug dealers in any way. He was very interesting, complex character. So I do think it's gotta have a good man got stabbed, Gustavo? So the thing is,

**Heather** 42:52

similarly, we're watching we're rewatching right now, with our boys, the extraordinary series, Peaky Blinders, which, yeah, they're they're monsters at some level. I mean, that's nice. But, boy, are they complex and rich? And I think, really, I don't know. I haven't seen all of the things on the list here. I do think that we have a problem that maybe I would point rather than to the particular pop culture references made here. Rather to the deification of superhero culture, that soup that that sort of Marvel Comics, places the pure good against the pure evil. I think I'm less familiar with what's going on in that space. But I think that that, that is a big part of what has entered, especially kids minds growing up into a world in which they actually think that if evil always looks like that, they'll know what when they see it, and oh, if I've got a label that says, I'm anti that I'm anti fascist, or whatever it is, well, then I must be on the good side.

**Bret** 43:56

I think that's deep. I think that there's something about the cartoon ification involved in superhero stuff that does result in a tendency to take that in which there is gray and shove it one side or the other. I think that's important.

**Heather** 44:13

Is that you want to show a spouse again, thank you.

**Bret** 44:15

that resonates for me. Yeah, let's keep track of that idea.

**Heather** 44:20

Yeah, no, I mean, it's it's something I've written about a little bit. And I think actually the there's a there's another piece of it, which is something we've also talked about before, which is the Disneyfication. So quite different from the sort of, you know, I think, especially boys, but increasingly everyone grow up on these, these sort of superhero supervillain narratives. But then the, you know, the Disney narratives tend to be very, very simplistic in a way that appeals especially to girls, but increasingly to everyone as well. And both of these just inform developing minds with these with these narratives that are fictitious in the wrong way, right? Like fiction is powerful because it tells us something real and deep about ourselves. And it allows us access to those truths, that maybe a dispassionate analytical analysis would not just exactly in the same way that we know in 1984. And none of us knows the name of an essay that Orwell wrote about the same stuff, right? But it requires that the fiction is deep, and that it's complex, and the characters are plausibly real, and that situations could happen. And you know, even I say this as a huge fan of and writer of science fiction that even that stuff, which is, which is speculative, you know, specfic speculative fiction, the best of it is not does not have one dimensional societies, or systems or characters. And yet so much of literally the cartoon universe. Yeah, the superhero universe, Disney universe has incredibly simple narratives that leave people with a sense of, of utopia being possible, and it's not.

**Bret** 46:00

So I suspect we're gonna get a lot of pushback on this point. Because there are a lot of people who are deeply involved in these universes. And I do think that there is something important taking place there. But the really the question is, is there something? Is there a dimension removed in order for these stories to be extraordinary in the way they are? And is that thing having a developmental impact on people? And I do wonder, I know Martin Scorsese got in trouble for saying effectively that he didn't consider these things cinema.

**Heather** 46:26

And I didn't say that no, at all. And I didn't I didn't say they're not I don't think what you said was terrible. Yeah, I didn't I didn't even I didn't go that far. Right. I am saying I think there is a simplicity of character and world of development, that if it is a majority of what you're being exposed to as a child, especially if you're also being drugged, and helicopter parented and kept from all risk, of course, you end up coming of age, supposedly an adult deeply confused about the nature of what's possible. And you may really actually think that abolishing the police is a plausible answer to the problems of society. You may actually

**Bret** 47:04

I agree.

**Heather** 47:05

Okay, we're going to skip two questions from the next one, and then the next one on the next one. Let's say you've said, Sorry, we're not going to get to all of these again. I didn't hear discuss Marxism in the dark horse talk, Brett, do you believe or not believe that Marxist philosophy is driving any of this?

**Bret** 47:32

Oh, it's clearly has a relationship to Marxism. It's not exactly a version of Marxism, we've seen the association with it is, you know, if you're painting with a broad brush, it just does. And frankly, there's a lot of Marxism in academia. And it's sort of academic Marxism, you know, in the sense that, you know, there's this important stuff in Marx's critique of capitalism. It's just not it's not like everything Marx said was wrong. But the conflation of the critique with the prescription, the prescription is wrong, we know why the prescription is wrong, right. And the fact that a prescription that looks like that, and is even looks to be an extension of it is unfolding in the streets, that the demands appear not only to be tactically Marxist, but they also appear to be thematically Marxist, the direction they push is clearly a Marxist solution, or some Marxist non solution. It's an empty set, because it's so utopian that even you know, even somebody who believed in 20th century Marxism would know that this was not going to work. So anyway, yeah, it has a lot to do with Marxism, and I don't think we need to focus too much on that. I think frankly, Maoism is a better match. That Maoism is obviously a flavor of Marxism. But Maoism whether or not to Mao ism is great enough that that's where we ought to look for our best historical parallel.

**Heather** 49:06

Is there any evolutionary aspect intuition, or product of skill based behavior? Which it's not it's not a counterpoint. Right?

**Bret** 49:14

Right. So here's the thing. There's good intuition, which is well tutored. And there's naive intuition which is not well tutored. Intuition is the product of parts of your mind that you don't have direct conscious access to, which gives you a conclusion that is either based on lots of experience or not. So you know, there's a phrase in aeronautics. If it doesn't look right, it won't fly. Right. Okay, so like for example, the, the stealth fighter, nicknamed the hoblyn Goblin, right? It's a very ugly plane and it doesn't fly very well. It does. Avoid radar, right, but, but the basic point is Look, your intuition about what a flying aircraft Looks like is tutored by the fact that you've seen lots of flying aircraft and people who know flying aircraft well know what a dihedral is. And these sorts of things, they have an even better tutored intuition. And so they can look at a plane and kind of tell whether it's a plausible design. There's limits to it, there's stuff that you can do, you know, whatever it is out there in Mojave, though, something rather composites, you know, these are planes that don't look like historical planes that prove that these things are possible. But nonetheless, intuition is tutored by experience. Those who have a ton of experience in a realm will have high quality intuition. And it's there's nothing mystical about this. It's just simply the nature of your mind being only partially conscious. Yeah.

**Heather** 50:46

You've said previously that Trump is the wrong leader for the situation. What type of leader do we need? And is better to have Trump than an ultra woke leader?

**Bret** 50:58

That last parts of tricky one? Yeah. And it's like, you know,

**Heather** 51:02

it's really tricky. We did we, as much as Biden is a decrepid. Clown, and I won't vote for him. One thing we did see was the ultra woke on the incredibly numerous slate of democratic democrats who were running did get thrown off relatively quickly, although what we did see was candidates who, someone like Elizabeth Warren, who I had liked, very, very much became more and more woke, and thus lost more and more votes and became less and less of a viable candidate. So I I'm not I don't think we're there. On the other hand, what the democrats did arrive at is untenable as well. So I don't, boy, I

**Bret** 51:43

have to say he did. Who by one thing, right Biden, Biden. Yeah, he said he wasn't going to defund the police. Okay, so so Brad, that's a really low bar to get that one. Right. But at least you got it right. There's that you did it through a spokesman. So what the hell come on, dude. So in any case, what I would say is, what's the right candidate for the moment, a courageous, capable patriot period. Any courageous capable patriot will do it's good enough. A president doesn't need to be an encyclopedic Lee knowledgeable about everything a president needs to be able to delegate the job of figuring out what's going on and what might be done about it to other people, they need to be able to synthesize this and they need to have our values at heart and to understand how to implement right to figure

**Heather** 52:31

out how to delegate who to delegate to, they need to be able to recognize insight and insight across domains that they might themselves may not have insight into. And what you propose to the end of the live stream number 19 is exactly this. And you know, you proposed mcraven and Yang as a dual ticket where it doesn't matter who's on top, they flip. And they're you know, there are other people,

**Bret** 52:57

not only they flip they they govern as a team, unless there is some difference, they cannot resolve or something needs to be a call needs to be made. That doesn't allow for dialogue. But anyway, yes, smart, capable, patriot period, I don't care where on the political spectrum they are, if they match that description, and we get a chance to vote for him as the way to go.

**Heather** 53:23

The phrase right side of history annoys me. That means Well, nothing. If you care about principles, how history remembers he was irrelevant. Otherwise, everyone just lines up with whoever they think will win.

**Bret** 53:32

Bullshit. Sorry, I hate to break it to you. But the fact is, like, I guess I'm Jewish, I get to use Nazis as as an example. The fact is, the whole point of that phrase is not that my side is the right side of history, it's that there is a side that will be understood, in retrospect, to have been the right side of history, and that this is not based on who won. Okay, the Nazis would have been the wrong side of history, irrespective of who won. Man in the high castle is a very interesting narrative. I suggest it takes the other path through that moment of history and sees how things look. But nonetheless, the fact that you can look back on the Nazi era and say, I know who I want to have been, right? I want to have been this person. I'm in danger of being that person. So how do I restructure, so I'm no longer in danger of being that person. And only this person is a possibility? That's the question. And, frankly, I have seen the term right side of history, abused into uselessness. That's the problem. It's not that it isn't useful. It's very useful, but it's also fragile and it cannot withstand people abusing it. So I think that's what you're detecting. It's the abuse of it, not the use of the utility of the concept itself. So please, let's rehabilitate it or at least give it a break. It's not absurd on its face. It's absurd in the way people use it.

**Heather** 54:57

Are you familiar with media accounts from the Ukraine and elsewhere that claim Russian troll farms are working on social media to inflame the protesters, legitimate journalism or anti Russian propaganda? I don't I haven't heard these media accounts. The final question legitimate journalism or anti Russian propaganda? Always a good question.

**Bret** 55:18

Could be well, I don't even know that to be both. I mean, here's here's what we do know, we know that there are sock puppets all over social media. My guess is they're hired routinely by many, many different entities that have the resources to hire them and shape opinion about everything from whether you like this mac and cheese more than that, to whether or not you think these people are heroes or runaway Maoists or whatever. So

**Heather** 55:44

so you have to be in cryptically doing the work, the marketing work for, like Nike, yo to figure out if putting a Black Lives Matter fest up in their advertising is going to incite site people to buy shoes, and site is the wrong word there. But maybe not.

**Bret** 56:03

Every manner of manipulation is happening. We know that the Navy had a program for sock puppets, this was years ago, but they had a software to manage them and all this stuff. So look, there's sock puppets all over the damn thing. There are false followers that people can buy themselves in order to make themselves look more important than they artists, all kinds of garbage. And worst one of all, my opinion, far more dangerous than sock puppets and phony followers and stuff like that. Or the algorithms themselves. These, these are corporations, they have fiduciary responsibilities to their shareholders, they have little Maoist battles going on inside of their corporate headquarters, their algorithms are going to reflect all of these tensions, we can't see the algorithms, we don't know what effect they're having on our ability to talk to each other. They don't have we don't know what effect they're having on our ability to think collectively about what we're supposed to do next. If this is this is us collectively going mad, that's it. We are in huge danger because we are collectively going mad as a result of something that we know where it is, but we don't know what it is and what it wants and what effect it's having on our suspicions of other people and all that stuff. So, you know, it's not like Tristan Harris didn't try to warn us. He tried to warn us.

**Heather** 57:20

But I will also remind us of what the Department of Homeland Security Officer whom you spoke with a few days ago, said which is that his sense? And this is just yeah, this is one guy's sense. But who's who's working sort of the front lines of the street battles in the us right now. That something is trying to divide us.

**Bret** 57:38

Something is just many things are trying to divide us they're jockeying for position. Yeah, he said, he thought we were being played didn't know by what but he felt strongly we were being played. Look, I mean, we've got you know, the cult of Q and and also, I knew I didn't trust Q and he wasn't followed by you. Like what the hell's that? cutter? Well, exactly. Yeah, I guess the country without big enemies. Now we've finally gone and done it. Yeah, yeah, we've gotten the one thing everyone is going to agree on is that we're first against the wall. Right? They're all going to just that's gonna that's what's gonna bring them together.

**Heather** 58:21

Okay, we've got a couple of questions. almost an hour. Okay, I'm gonna we're gonna try to get through a few more of these. We got a few questions from a candidate for governor in Washington who's interested in defunding the police and not for an income tax who's trying to make a positive difference is trying to reach out. It's we get a lot of people trying to reach out appreciate that it sounds like you may be trying to make a positive difference, though. You've mentioned that the BLM group isn't trustworthy. Could you expand on that? It's hard to figure out for me what comes from BLM proper and what doesn't? That is exactly where does the shutdown stem actually come from? For instance?

**Bret** 58:57

Yeah, a lot of the stuff is gonna be cryptic, and some of it can be sorted out, some of its hiding in plain sight. I don't I don't know how close the relationship is between BLM and shutdown stem. What I can say is, the consistency of those two messages marching together through time is so great that it doesn't matter. The point is, it's one movement, it has objectives, right? Shut down stem as a side project, if the thing that is rioting in the streets. And the riots in the streets are a side project of something that wants power in all sorts of institutions. And it has its plans, and basically everything it's advocating. Everything it's advocating is a suspension of the rules that usually allow something useful to emerge. those rules aren't perfect. There's lots of noise, right? Not enough signal. But what they want is a suspension of the rules. Where do they want a suspension of the rules? Well, let's get rid of the police will suspend the rules that will suspend the rule of law, we'll suspend our comms razor, we're gonna suspend every rule that we usually You find frustrating, and that's gonna put us in charge. So we can't listen to that voice that wants to suspend all the rules that that way lies madness that way is Warlordism pure and simple. Yeah.

**Heather** 1:00:11

Okay, I've lost where I am again, because my trackpad isn't working. How? How would you respond to the claim that is not the scientific method that is flawed, but rather that people of color are systematically denied access to stem? I would say that in the past, people of color were systematically denied access to stem just like women were just, you know, like, like, as long as we've already said, like, a lot of people were poor people were people, people without rich families where women were people of color all of this. But I don't see any evidence of this is true. Now. In fact, I see quite the opposite. Now, is the quite the opposite, a fairly new phenomenon. Maybe, but does what is going on in STEM look open and inclusive and welcoming, even though the numbers of people aren't a match for the ratios of those demographics? In the general population? Yeah, it looks really, actually inviting an inclusive in part because what stem is, is searching for what is actually true in the universe? And why on earth in a modern liberal world, would you hobble yourself by not including some people in that equation, you pick, you pick the best, regardless of what else is true of them?

**Bret** 1:01:31

Well, it even goes beyond that. Because these sciences housed inside universities, universities are for better or worse, liberal institutions. People like it when somebody who is from a demographic that is understood to be oppressed, shows up in the room, because it relieves them in you know, even just cynically, it relieves them of the accusation that they are displaying racism. So it's welcoming right? Now, in my opinion, there are things that prevent blacks, for example, from showing up at the upper echelon of the sciences, but those things have a lot to do with deeper, more complex problems. So for example, what effect is lead in your water have on the likelihood that you're going to end up in a math department? Well, I don't know. But there are places with lead in the water, and you're much more likely to have lead in your water if you're black. I also got, what about the fact that taxes are collected locally? And therefore schools in poor neighborhoods suck more than schools in rich neighborhoods? What effect does that have on math preparedness? And what effect is math preparedness have on whether people show up in biology, chemistry, mathematics, physics, a lot. So So this could

**Heather** 1:02:49

be read as systematic denial of access to stem without it being at all at the level of the universities or what is going on within the disciplines of STEM, right. But if it's a vital level inequality,

**Bret** 1:03:02

societal, I would say it's just even an echo of past discrimination that separated us into neighborhoods that have different amounts of resources to spend on things like schooling and clean water, right, got another one?

**Heather** 1:03:13

Yeah, which is that I had this is years ago, and I was when we were in graduate school at Michigan. And we were both ta ng basically, you know, intro bio and more advanced bio, and most of our students there were pre med, because at a big, you know, an r1 university like University of Michigan, most of the biology majors are pre med or pre dental. And I had a number of black students and one of the classes I had, you know, enough that they in they were, they all came into the class friends with each other. And it happened to be all black men, my four or five, in a class of 25 or so. And I was it was some lab, I was overhearing them talk about their plans, and they were all going to med school. And none of them were looking to go into science, which is to say, you know, that the STEM fields, medicine isn't included in STEM often, because it's 70 of STEM is the pursuit of, of science for sciences sake, or engineering technology, whereas medicine is this applied thing and ended up in a conversation with these young men. And again, this is, you know, 25 years ago at this point. But when I asked them, Why are none of you interested in going into science because at least three of them as I remember, had had, you know, great facility in scientific thinking, which is different from being able to be a good doctor, though those aren't completely overlapping things. What they to a person said, and so of course, it's not going to be true of all young black men, but what they do a person said was, I'm the first person in my family to have this opportunity to go to college, there was no way that I am going to pass up the opportunity to pay off the debt that I'm incurring by going to college, and not be able to make enough money for myself and for my parents and for my future family. The fact is medicine paid at that point. Now it's not so true. But you know, in the in the mid 90s medicine pays science doesn't. It's not nearly as remunerative, remunerative. And it doesn't guarantee you a position from which you can be financially secure. And for people who were more likely to be coming from a socio economic disparities such that no one in their families had ever been financially secure. They were making choices to go into medicine rather than science, precisely because of past disparities. And they were choices in this case, they were completely choices. It wasn't they're being forced away from science into medicine, but they were choosing to go into medicine because it looked like the better financial bet.

**Bret** 1:05:39

Yeah, it makes total sense. So you've got lots of forces that might result in unequal numbers showing up in these various disciplines. What is conspicuous is that this movement is the best tool, the only tool to figuring out what's really going on and to what extent these patterns are resulting in that ultimate pattern of differential representation in these places. The tools or scientific, any movement that is pushing the unhooking of the scientific tools, doesn't want you to know what's really going on. It's not pushing some Afro centric alternative to Western science. It is trying to blind people by removing the tool that would allow them to know what's actually going on. Any movement that wants to blind you, is a cult, it doesn't want you talking to your friends, it doesn't want to talk to your family. Right? Those people are not to be trusted science is not to be trusted. That is an attempt to gain power by unhooking the things that might challenge science included.

**Heather** 1:06:41

Let's do two more from this one and see what's what showed up in the last livestream. All right, okay. What would you suggest to invite people into this conversation who might otherwise be right for it, but have an aversion largely because of things like the stigma against Jordan Peterson?

**Bret** 1:06:57

Well, I don't think we can do it on this q&a. But I do think the most important question, the thing that was very hard to get anyone to pay attention to at the Evergreen meltdown, was that there's an alternative story. There's a story that treats the question of why the differential representation happens with full nuance. What is it that happened to black America and why, right? I think that story is It's horrifying, in some sense, but it's hopeful, because it isn't the thing that people fear. So in some sense, we are drowning out a much better, more interesting, more tractable problem with fairy tales. And the question is, can we now talk about that alternative? Can we put the BLM version of events up against a scientifically robust competitor? Right Can we put them head to head rather than allow one to shut down the other? So I think we need to have that conversation.

**Heather** 1:07:59

Yeah, we do. I mean, I think I'm waiting for the new fiction that actually does this right?

**Bret** 1:08:08

You mean the new fiction like the new narrative thing new

**Heather** 1:08:11

good, compelling deep and rich narrative fiction? This is we don't have time slightly. Now people can write fast good good people can write fast I think that we've got some excellent documentary filmmakers doing some of this work right now. Which is compelling you know that they will often I mean like migraine is a three piece three part documentary really mixes the analysis and with the story and that is part of what is compelling about it to people. But I'm just I'm thinking of another another this is not this is like what's wrong rather than what can we do going forward but I'm reminded of a moment boy six months ago or so when Zach and I went to pauwels, this amazing independent gigantic bookstore in downtown Portland and we were looking for books, young adult books that Toby our younger son is 14 now might be interested in and we must have wandered the why the young adult aisles for 20 minutes and literally could not find a book written in the last 15 years that I was willing to take home. Actually that's not true. I took one I was I thought one was wonderful. And I took it home and I thought I'd read it first then I got about 50 pages and and it turns super woke and intolerant and it was you know it's like a space opera that went into some crazy space and this is what the entire young adult fiction bookshelves look like now you know you end up having to go back into you know, I picked up se Hinton the The Outsiders and you know, some other good stuff that you know, tells real stories about real characters with real trouble. And we, we could I think it's Have some good fiction quickly here. But

**Bret** 1:10:04

I don't think it'll work. I mean, I think the stories need to happen, you and I are in complete agreement that what changes minds is the narrative version, not the, the academic version. But the problem is, this is why people burn books. And it's all too easy with the kind of power I mean, like if they're getting science and nature and the triple A, S, and Caltech to broadcast fail t to their anti science agenda, then what they will do to any narrative that reveals them, is they will make it immoral to engage it. And the people who will engage it in that context are people who don't need it, they may enjoy it, it may enhance their understanding. But people

**Heather** 1:10:52

need powerful things about fiction as it sneaks in.

**Bret** 1:10:56

Again, I think we're just you know, if this dies down, if something happens that turns this around, and we get another two years might be able to get that fiction lodge someplace that would do the job. But a I don't, I mean, I'm assuming

**Heather** 1:11:15

we need we need someone who can see this higher up enough at some someplace like Disney. Alright, some someone who could actually make non woke anti woke, but but difficult and honest, narrative that is also compelling.

**Bret** 1:11:38

I mean, again, you're talking about every institution has this battle going on within it? If that's Twitter, and that's Facebook, and that's Instagram. Then how exactly does the thing go viral? If the algorithm decided to dive in, like,

**Heather** 1:11:55

well, so I we haven't we didn't we haven't actually seen Joker yet. So I can't really speak to it. But um, you know, I saw a lot of the lead up to it, and how enraged people were, that it was being made. And the fact is that it was it was a big hit. In part, because some people anyway, are now seeing the outrage as an indicator that that's actually some a door I want to go through. So maybe it may be encouraging, that is like a look, look, look to the outrage mob and see what they're telling you that you shouldn't look at. And then look there.

**Bret** 1:12:25

That's a good guide. Yeah, look at what they don't want you to look at. That's for sure. It doesn't catch on to the to the masses. But I actually want to take back my pessimism, because I now in light of what you've said, I I now know the path. Okay? Well, path is that the fiction has to be subversive? Sure, right. It has to be the antidote, it has to be the inverse of the Trojan horse. As you were describing Chloe, Valerie. Yeah. And the point is the fiction that the enemy doesn't spot as subversive of their message. But that will cause what we used to say the dimes drop for people that that fiction has a tremendous amount of power. And so the question is, do we have a? Do we have writers who are clever enough not just to write the fiction that we need, but to write it in a form that it doesn't get spotted?

**Heather** 1:13:17

Yeah, well, I mean, we've we've heard it recently, you know, like, this is what the matrix was, at some level,

**Bret** 1:13:23

while the matrix was the allegory of the cave, you know,

**Heather** 1:13:28

a lot more people than Plato does. Yeah. Oh, yeah. True. And it reached them now, rather than 2500 years ago, or whenever, whenever Plato was, I'm probably off by somewhere 100 years, but

**Bret** 1:13:39

like you're like, yeah, like, but nonetheless, there is something to be done. You're right, that people do things. I mean, you know, part of the problem with the movie, thing is that the thing that writes movies, and then deploys them is a hybrid of some sort of market force, and some sort of artistic force. And in order to do what you're talking about, you really can't afford it to be market driven. It has to be driven by by an Orwell like figure.

**Heather** 1:14:12

Yeah. Okay, one more here. Over the last several decades, academia and science have become bad at challenging power structures and self defense. Can resistance to irrational authority be introduced as part of standard scientific training? If so, how? Gosh, this is exactly what we were doing. Oh, yeah, this is exactly what we were doing. And it it it it has to be like this is the scientific method. The way that you do science is is inherently about rejecting irrational authority about rejecting any appeal to authority if it's made simply on the basis of this person in a lab coat made it Yeah.

**Bret** 1:14:53

So in effect, what this person is saying and I think they're right on the money is that science has become co opted has been co opted by market forces, which is true. Those market forces have deviated it from the thing that makes it most potent, which is that in science, if you are right, then you win. Right? You win by virtue of having more productive predictive power than the alternatives. And so that thing is the perfect location for people with problems with authority. Now, others, right, we were doing this at evergreen, it was only really possible at evergreen because evergreen, because it was founded by subversives gave faculty freedom to do what they thought needed to be done without any administrator being able to tell you you can't teach that way, or you have to teach this subject. So it was open to that and almost no place is and evergreen isn't now anymore, either. So in some sense, yeah, scientists needs to be part of the scientific education. It's a weird thing, because it's hard to teach people how to resist authority. This is why other and I talked so much about the necessity that anybody who is going to do high quality thinking have a relationship with some realm where whether you succeeded or failed is not the is not decided by an authority, it's decided by whether your tower stands up, or your motor turns over or some thing

**Heather** 1:16:21

that used to kill intact or your bicycle runs, or your table is flat, all these things,

**Bret** 1:16:25

you got to have a relationship with one of those realms, because then it will tell you when the authority in front of you isn't making any sense, it will tell you actually you should trust you should trust what you know, rather than Oh, if the authority says so then it's true.

**Heather** 1:16:37

Yeah. Okay, so I think we're going to try to answer just a couple more here. There's a question here about the extinction of the Irish elk. I think we're gonna save that since we're not mostly doing that kind of question right now.

**Bret** 1:16:54

So for those who are excited for us to come back to that, is that incredibly antlered? beast?

**Heather** 1:17:01

Yep. So there are a few here asking, How can I explain what's going on succinctly how, you know, what can I say to my friends, you know, what's, what's the soundbite? And I want to just put that out there. I think that's a little one we'll answer last but I want you to look Brett at this one that I've got highlighted. And should I read that aloud? And should we answer it? Before I tell you guys what that is?

**Bret** 1:17:24

Um, doo doo doo doo? Yeah, I think this is a this is one that should be discussed.

**Heather** 1:17:33

Okay. So this is the terrific. Love you both Eric as well. Are you armed? If not, I'd like to donate a firearm legally, of course, ship to your nearest gun shop, stay safe.

**Bret** 1:17:50

We aren't. And I don't like that we feel like we have to be that. That feels like a major loss already. But a, I think there's something that needs to be said, which is, at the moment we've got. We've got a violent mob, in the streets, demonstrating how much power it has. So far, my understanding is it has pretty well stayed out of people's neighborhoods. I believe it has stayed out of people's neighborhoods. Because of the Second Amendment, and this is not what the Second Amendment was written for. It's not really about personal protection. It's a hedge against tyranny. But I think the gun control debate now has to include the observation that the rational fear that people who would like the law suspended will have entering people's neighborhoods is it may very well be what is preventing people from engaging in the violent up ending of people at home, or their neighborhoods. So in any case, what I would say is, yeah, we we are armed. I think I gave a very glib response somebody a week or two back, asked if it was a good time to buy guns. And I said no, because the lines at the gun stores are too long. They have it because the supply is too low, and the demand is too high. But the demand is really high for a reason, which is that people are rightly frightened. They're watching

**Heather** 1:19:28

on this was before before the last two weeks. This is at the point that lockdowns were beginning to Hell yeah. And, and people were legitimately questioning whether or not supply chains would remain intact. And what what potentially months of lockdowns would do to people psychologies, yeah, and that's part of what we're seeing right now.

**Bret** 1:19:46

We're seeing it. It's just exactly what we feared and it hasn't, you know, can easily get far worse. So anyway, I would say if you are in the position we were in and you're thinking, should I or shouldn't I i I'd say unfortunately, given that we don't know how this plays out, and we can see what it's doing and how quickly it is growing and demonstrating its power, I would be hard pressed to tell you not to buy some weapons, I would also say know how to use them, you absolutely want to know how to use them, and you want to know how to store them. And so, you know, gun safe is the way to go.

**Heather** 1:20:26

Alright, final question. For tonight, today, whatever it is, I don't know how long we've been here. Yeah, so I asked one version of it, but it's it's this one, I'm struggling to explain to well, meaning friends, what is really going on here with these protests and BLM? They're fully bought into the guilt and shaming narrative. What can I tell them? Then someone else? I think it was someone else who was the same person asked, you know, what? What's a succinct description of this? And you know, this, this, the answer could then feed into and like, what do you what do you point people to, like, you know, especially given that the mainstream media did a really solid job of convincing a whole swath of the public that Jordan Peterson for instance, was some kind of alt right loon? Well, which is obviously not so good.

**Bret** 1:21:16

Well, I was just gonna say this is this was my point earlier about the people who have predicted what happened, the stuff that caught people off guard, but it's been predicted by some, the some who predicted it, you ought to listen to them, you ought to figure out how they did that trick, right? Jordan Peterson, predicted that people were going to be compelled by courts to use certain language and that the threat of losing your freedom was going to be invoked. Right, he was right about that. So if you've been told the Jordan Peterson is an alt right, gateway drug or something like that, you had it wrong, somebody lied to you. And now you can go back and fix it, you can go see what he said. Likewise, for us, you might have been told, we were racists who, you know, weren't interested in seeing oppression of black people and or something like that. Well, you were lied to. Now, you know, we predicted a lot about what what is unfolding in our streets right now. So you can go back to those things. And if you follow, the people who've gotten it, right, you'll find they're connected to other people who got it right. And you can sort of bootstrap your way there. In terms of what you say to your friends who are thoroughly ensconced in the stuff and I'm not promising promising you it's going to work because as we've said, elsewhere, and here many times these crises reveal character, your friends may have a character defect that is going to cause them to become pawns of this movement. And if they can't be awakened from that zombie state, then it's probably the moment that you need to go find better friends. But if you want to try to see if you can wake them up the answer is Look, if you capitulate to this if you start broadcasting it you are actually adding firepower that will be used against other good people right they're gonna come for the next people if you are surrendering to this in order to solve your own problem you are making a worse problem for other people and that's not your right and if you say that to people and they stare you down, walk away

**Heather** 1:23:25

but they don't that's I don't think this is responsive because people don't know that that's what they're doing well then you have to make a clear no but that's that's what the question is how is what do you say? How is it that you make it clear that this is not what it seems and that by by bending over backwards to acquiesce to this movement, you're actually making a problem for other people if the people who are bending over backwards actually believe that this is about anti racism and this is actually about ending systemic oppression? That sounds like a racist position Yeah, but so how what is what is the initial thing like I've got the only thing I've come up with an answer to this so far is both you and I you know, I've while I've been working on the book, I've done fewer short pieces but you know, both you and I have you know, active Twitter feeds that put things out there that act as ways for people to get into this I've got the names of a few other people who you could and should follow who often have good pieces so I'm looking at Zach you can put just briefly up there's a guardian article of all places, and the Guardian is pretty woke, but Thomas chariton Williams, who I read pieces from his essay about play about the cameras the plague a few episodes ago, as written get another amazing piece, and this isn't exactly about about, you know the hypocrisy of BLM. But it is it is like that Chloe, Valerie john wood Jr. just wrote an essay that I posted on Twitter. I don't think it's coincidence, but it shouldn't matter. And yet it does in the current moment that all three of those guys are black. All three of those people are black, but I follow Jim Lindsey as well. He's often got the incisive thing, but I don't On the right way in,

**Bret** 1:25:01

I don't understand why you're pushing back on what I said, because this is exactly what we did. We watched our college turned upside down and we said to people out loud, we said to them, this thing is not what it pretends to be. It is co opting.

**Heather** 1:25:17

But I guess that's the piece. I didn't hear what you said before you have to start with, this isn't what it seems. But then how do you demonstrate that it's not what it say,

**Bret** 1:25:24

here's the thing. You don't? They're not up to it. But no, but that's that's, then that's hopeless? No, it's not hopeless. It's not hopeless. The fact is, what percentage of our colleagues woke up?

**Heather** 1:25:35

Very few, very few. Was it

**Bret** 1:25:39

incumbent on us to invest twice, three times what we did invest in order to wake them up? And what do you think would have happened if we did?

**Heather** 1:25:48

Okay, but here's how about this? Almost not? If not, actually, none of our students succumbed to this, this actual mind virus. Right? And not just those students we had then but but past students as well, as far as far as we know, right? So it is possible to educate people in clear thinking, in first principles thinking in not responding to appeals to authority or appeals to emotion, or appeals to things that are wrapped up shiny and look nice, but actually have something really toxic inside? It is it is possible, but I don't know, I don't know how to do it in short term. I know how to do it. If I've got 10 weeks, and I get to spend two weeks in the field with me, right? But you actually do, but I don't know how to do it. If you've got two minutes or five minutes, or I'm sitting over drinks with people for an evening even. I'm not sure you can't.

**Bret** 1:26:37

And the fact is what we did in the classroom did this job because it was honorable and complete, not because it's the job we were trying to do. So to the extent that our students broke in the right direction. And it wasn't all of them. There are some students who flirted with this thing. Sure. But none of them came after us. For one thing, there was nothing to come after us about. Right, right. So

**Heather** 1:26:58

although the other side would have been empowered, if any of our students had stood up against it would

**Bret** 1:27:03

have loved it. But the war that would have broken out by between the people who were telling it like it was and the people who were pretending it was otherwise would not have worked out well for them. So it didn't happen. Yeah. But nonetheless, the unfortunate lesson, and everybody is looking for an escape hat from this, most of your friends probably are not up to this moment in history, they're going to break the wrong way. And unfortunately, this moment is so serious, that that actually, I think ought to guide your investment. I think we could have invested three times what we invested and not woke a single other person up to what they were doing at evergreen, I don't think they were going to be awakened. They were they were pre programmed to surrender to this thing, as are most people. So

**Heather** 1:27:48

this is just, this is just fascinating to me. Because I think, had we been having this discussion 20 years ago, clearly you and I would have been on the opposite sides of this question. That at the point that you and I met in high school and through much of college and graduate school, I was an unrepentant misanthrope, I thought very little of the average human, I much preferred the the companionship of non human friends. And while there are several humans whom I adore, and love deeply, three of whom I am lucky enough to live with, I really didn't have much hope for most people. I looked out there and thought, Oh, it's it's just hopeless. And you know, I mean, I've said this to you, what, what cured me. And that suggests that it was a disease that needed to be cured me that I needed to be cured from, but what kind of cured me of my misanthropy actually was teaching at evergreen was meeting the students, the 25 5075 students, 100 students, depending on how many programs there were in a year, and how many people I was teaching with, who almost to a person, or out the students who were open and generous with their time, and with their thoughts, and with their work. And were open to ideas that made them uncomfortable. And I pushed them and they pushed me. And I just came to think, actually, if you can do this with such stunning success, in fact, much more than 90% of every one of my classes, I feel like came away going like okay, I learned stuff, I feel I know more about the world, and I'm better able to navigate the world now than I did before. I had much more hope for humanity as a result of that. And of course, that that sense came crashing down around my ears when almost none of our colleagues stood up for us when only our students and a few handfuls. A few handful of staff, faculty and admin stood up for us when evergreen broke but that does leave me with a sense that actually I do think people are up to this. I really do. I think people are up to this but I don't know how to do it in short in short periods of time,

**Bret** 1:29:59

but I mean I don't think we're disagreeing. Okay? If you have somebody for three months full time, can you reach them? Sure, most of these people are reachable under those circumstances, but most

**Heather** 1:30:10

people can't reach them. So I mean, I think this is the like, most faculty suck at what they do. Yeah. And they don't give a damn about their students either. And so they don't manage to and then they claim they weren't bothering to. And mostly that's also true don't bother to reach students. And so that gives the sense that reinforces the sense that most people are unreachable because most people are unreached. And okay, but yeah, I'm

**Bret** 1:30:30

not even sure what we're what we're disagreeing about here. Because it's some level, I'm not arguing that if you could rerun these people's developmental experience, that they wouldn't be immune to this, I believe anybody could have a developmental experience that would cause you to be immune to this madness. But given where we are in 2020, these people have had the experiences they have that are making them ultra vulnerable to this. Can you wake your friends? Well, your friends are who they are arriving at this moment. Could you wake your friends, if you had, you know, a year with them off somewhere where they were insulated from bad messages over social media? Sure, potentially. But can you wake somebody who's you know, who's who's espousing these nonsense beliefs now, as a result of some mixture of they sound right to them, and they are afraid of what happens if they say anything else? Are those people reachable? No, they've been zombified. Right? I'm not declaring them unrecoverable at all I'm saying, Can you with your tools now reach them? Probably not, in most cases. But the really important question is, what is the right use of your time? And your effort? Right, and the right use at this moment, if you are facing this problem, is figure out who's gonna break the right way. And it's not totally bleak, right? The people who will break the right way, have strength of character, their high quality people. And so anyway, I think if you know, somebody is asking us this question, what should I do? My honest advice, at least for my part, my honest advice is you should figure out who is capable of being awakened from this, awaken them, and then make your peace with what happens with the others because you know, you could invest your you could invest almost all of your effort in trying to wake everybody who's not seeing it, and have very little impact. And at the moment, you do need to think about how you're going to protect yourself in all meanings of that term. You know, how are you going to survive in a world where every institution is being taken over by people who say this stuff? Well, either you're gonna say it too, and see whether or not they'll treat you well enough in the future world, or you're going to stand up and say what you know, to be accurate, and then you don't know what world you're living in. So I don't know I'm not giving up on humanity, obviously. But I at the present moment. We're behind the eight ball. Yeah.

**Bret** 1:33:14

All right. We're done. All right. I think we've done it. Well, folks, this has been a harrowing journey. We will see you soon. Please like, subscribe. Let us know what you think in the comments. And stay safe.