Your Questions Answered - Bret and Heather 25th DarkHorse Po...

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**SUMMARY KEYWORDS**

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**SPEAKERS**

Bret, Heather

**Bret** 00:08

Hey folks, welcome back to the Dark Horse podcast live stream q&a section our 25th. Right? Yes. Okay. 25th. Good. We are now ready to, to address as to your cues. That's what we do.

**Heather** 00:25

That's what we do. That's

**Bret** 00:26

what we do.

**Heather** 00:27

Okay, we're gonna start with one that we passed that we read, but passed over last time because neither of us recognize the term. It was why is the Gini coefficient not part, Gini gi, Ni? Is the Gini coefficient, not part of the conversation, even though it explains clearly that inequality is the root of crime. The West is the 1% of the world, but we only see what's close to us. Thank you.

**Bret** 00:49

So I'm embarrassed to say I did not remember what the Gini coefficient was. But it is a measure of inequality, effectively a measure of the concentration of well being as measured by wealth in a society. So I would say it should be front and center in our discussions. But I would say you need to be slightly cautious about the conclusion that the coefficient reveals that inequality is the root cause of crime, because although I believe that that is likely to be true, there is a question of cause and effect here. So you could argue potentially, wow, Oh, my God. Yeah. Well, Maddie, people will, yes, the people will have, you could argue that other causes would create the concentration of well being and crime or you could argue that crime actually causes a decrease in wealth accumulation in certain sectors. I don't think either of these things are liable to be true. But nonetheless, you do. It is too simple to say that it simply reveals. What it does reveal is that there's a correlation between these things. It doesn't, doesn't tell you what the pathway is.

**Heather** 01:59

Good. Hard to stay on. On Track when your people have comes into the room. It's very frightening

**Bret** 02:05

when a wolf enters the room. Yeah, yeah. What are you gonna do floppy ears? Oh, right.

**Heather** 02:11

Okay. First question from live stream that we just did. Is it plausible that the epigenetic signals of our environment represents a primary genetic code and DNA a secondary one? Is the environment the instrumentalist? And are we it's instruments? Thank you for your leadership.

**Bret** 02:29

Did you get it? You understand what they're asking? Thanks. Okay. Yeah, it took me a while to parse it, but then I got it. I think this was an incredibly audacious question. Yeah, I think it is almost certain to be a blind alley. I don't think there's anything down this road, I think great liens have to be primary. And then epigenetics happens on top epigenetics, including things beyond the molecular epigenetic mechanisms that have become so fashionable to discuss.

**Heather** 02:55

But it's audacious in a way that is testable and scientific, unlike, say, Pan psychism. Yeah, right. So I mean, I, I, I'm, I enjoy the question. I don't think it's right. I don't know anyone who's investigating it. I don't know it is a live hypothesis in active in practicing scientists heads right now. But the idea that epigenetics is first, and genetics is, is is less fundamental, is an intriguing one.

**Bret** 03:22

Well, let's put it this way. I love the IV, I love the instinct to take the most fundamental assumptions of a system, and to just try flipping them on their heads to see what happens. Because every so often you do that, and the world makes more sense, not less than and you begin to wonder, is that assumption way off? Or

**Heather** 03:44

why just cancel out a bunch of terms that were plaguing me, right, exactly. So

**Bret** 03:47

anyway, keep up with that style of logic. And if you're right, and we're wrong, man, you're set. That is a great. That is a great idea to explore.

**Heather** 03:55

Yep. Next question. In Episode 23, at timestamp perfect and Episode 2332 minutes, 30 seconds, you said that intermediate understanding of evolution is not enough to analyze cognition across populations, because, quote, it's a different kind of inheritance. I know this is the worst subject, but please expand my heart you.

**Bret** 04:15

Alright, I'm going to expand a little This is something that really requires a great deal of care. The thing is, people do not understand what it means that something is heritable. heritable has a very narrow definition inside of biology. And so narrow is implies in this case, that the, the percentage of the variance in a trait that is accounted for by genetic differences, and certain very odd things happen when we define heritability, this way things traits that are fixed things that we all share by fidelity, by fidelity, for example, their heritability goes to zero which in common parlance suggests that they It's not genetically encoded, which is exactly not what it suggests. So anyway, there's let's just say there's a landscape of things that go on, in and around the concept of heritability. That is totally counterintuitive. And you would have to understand them. Well, in order to know what the claim that X, Y, or Z is heritable actually implies. So one thing, the example I think I use this with Sam Harris, on his podcast on when I was on it, you could take a trait, it could be skin color, it could be no shape, it could be any tricked, right? And it could be associated with a kind of prejudice in a society. And that trait could therefore have impact on how you were treated if you had it versus didn't have it. And it might then have impacts on how capable you ended up on some test that we gave you. And it would show up as heritable, it would actually be heritable, right? If I had a nose shape that made people think I was a dummy. And so they didn't put things that were mentally enriching in front of me as a kid, and I ended up less well off mentally than I otherwise would have, if that's a common pattern. And the point is my ex perfectly with no shape, right? No shape is variable. It's not fixed. So my nose shape tends to predict what I will experience and that then becomes a heritable component of intelligence. But the point is, to say, oh, such and such percentage of intelligence is heritable, or the difference between two populations is heritable. You don't think? Well, it may be it's heritable through the following route, I've got a nose shape that causes people not to treat me seriously in an intellectual way. And that has impact, right? That is heritable, but it doesn't mean what you think it means. It doesn't mean there's anything in the genes that specifies these differences. Now, here's the tough part. Okay. You probably ought to sit down. You're waiting for them to sit down. I'm giving them a minute to sure, find a chair, right? Or make one

**Heather** 06:56

thing any more than a map. Okay,

**Bret** 06:57

well, we'll just skip ahead if you're pause, and then you can come back to it if you're making your own chair. But the problem in this case is might I've lost my train of thought, Oh, I'm sorry, it was the chair that was the chair thing, no.

**Heather** 07:13

Difficult, the truly difficult thing in discussing heritability

**Bret** 07:17

is this. The truly difficult thing in discussing heritability is this. The fact of population level differences in intelligence has to have existed in history in evolutionary history, in order for us to have gained the disproportionate intelligence that we have as a species. In other words, there will have to have been populations that had less of it. And they will have to have been out competed by populations that had more. So I'm not denying the differences between populations could exist. However, that is not to say that in the present, those differences that we see, and the differences are real, the question is really about their cause, also, the degree to which they are representative across the board. In other words, you could test some very narrow kind of intelligence. And you could be thinking that it was overly important, or more important than it actually was given the various different kinds of intelligence. But nonetheless, the question is, do we currently have differences between populations that owe to genetic differences between them that account for disproportionate intelligence in some populations, and less of it, and others. And I don't believe that we have evidence that strongly suggest this. We have the population level differences. We have heritable differences between those populations. But what the mechanism of action here is, is really not clear. And so in any case, there's not enough room to really go deeply. But I would just say, you would want to run an experiment that we cannot run in order to know the answer to this. And the experiment involves a completely equal society in which the prejudices do not exist. And therefore we could see whatever residual heritability in intelligence differences existed when you had controlled for things like the different culture in the household, the different propensity for to have two parents or maybe two parents of an extended family contributing to the raising of offspring. So anyway, there's a lot of confounds here. And my personal expectation is that genetically encoded differences in cognitive machinery will account for very little approaching not. I can defend that further at some other times, but very common.

**Heather** 09:34

Given the correlation between socioeconomic status and reproductive strategies, if we want to increase equality of opportunity, wouldn't it make sense to implement policies that promote marriage and strengthen families?

**Bret** 09:46

Yes, absolutely. Families are a let's put it this way. human babies are disproportionately helpless. The term we would use professionally is altricial. They, as opposed

**Heather** 10:01

to precocial, the generic term being precocious, but it's nice, I get the same thing. But we're born helpless rather than skillful. We're born

**Bret** 10:09

super helpless, super needy. And we are not blank slates, but blacker than any other creature. And therefore, we have a lot more room to get upgraded by having more Intel more adults around to convey their particular kinds of insights and intelligence to us, which we then pick up so yeah, we're

**Heather** 10:28

more adults who are in stable relationship with us and with each other, and who love us and are interested in as, as children, as Babies love us as babies and children, and who are interested in giving their best shot at raising us having having more than one caregiver in your life. Who does that well allows you to calibrate the wisdom of of each or all of them in a way that if you only have one primary caregiver, it's much harder to do.

**Bret** 10:59

Yeah, absolutely. So I would also say, this question is obviously motivated by the claim that we can do away with the so called nuclear family and replace it with extended communities. And this is this kind of garbage utopian idea. I hear it now coming out of this movement. I've also heard it thrown about in polyamorous circles. And here's the thing, unless you understand what the argument is about group selection, and whether group selection is an important force in evolution, you're not in a position really to evaluate the likelihood that you could swap this other mechanism in, because the fact is, there's a very good reason that families do this job well. And when you say, well, we'll just swap in this other thing, in lieu of families, you are making a claim about something being evolutionarily stable that some of us would argue is absolutely not going to be evolutionarily stable. So this is why we need stem because it's an it's inherently a stem question. Yep.

**Heather** 11:59

Thanks, guys, for the clarity. What are the chances that repeated spaced out below threshold exposure to COVID-19? will end up conferring immunity, similar to diluted virus after pathogen? Greetings from Peru?

**Bret** 12:14

How are you calling spaced out? That's what I want.

**Heather** 12:16

I don't know what after pathogen refers to so I

**Bret** 12:19

know what the question means. I wasn't quite sure what the analogy for two passages fascinating is the laboratory technique. Oh, yep. So the question is asking if you didn't come down with COVID-19, but you were exposed repeatedly to SARS Cove two, would that exposure, trigger immunity, your immune system, seeing fragments basically what it's arguing is like a vaccine?

**Heather** 12:43

Well, we have there is some evidence and with COVID-19, it's so hard to know what we think is true is true. There's been so much bad data and so much bad analysis of the data that are there. But I have seen evidence that looks compelling to me from what I can judge of the data, that there's actually been some background immunity to Coronavirus and populations that were imagined to be naive to it, suggesting that exposure potentially to other coronaviruses might be conferring some immunity. And so if that's true, I think it possible that you might end up with some low level immunity to the novel Coronavirus. With this sort of background, low level of media. It's exactly the same thing you're talking about. You're talking about two different two different things. But but that first result that I that I just mentioned, is incredibly hopeful. The idea that exposure to some of the other rotating, you know out there coronaviruses can confer some background immunity for the novel coronavirus is exciting. It's actually one of the few really rays of hope in this whole pandemic. Yep.

**Bret** 13:52

Although I have the darkness that will absorb that ray of hope. As always, paper recently emerged that suggested that even people who had been infected, I think I'm understanding it correctly. I only briefly looked at it. But even people who had been infected by SARS Cove to didn't necessarily Ciro convert, and therefore we're testing negative on these antibody tests, which also implies a likely failure of immunity going forward. I think that's correct. Yeah.

**Heather** 14:23

Now you showed me I think you just showed me the abstract. But the idea would be that the T cells kicked in enough to allow the person who had been sick to get better, but then no memory cells were generated such that you might have had immunity for a week or two. I'm just making those numbers up, but after being sick with COVID-19, but if you didn't seem to convert, then you had no immunity, you know, within a month after being sick. This is just terrifying.

**Bret** 14:49

There's a lot of speculation here. One likely would be the T cells that did the work, which would then fail to create the B cells that would create memory cells that would give you lasting immunity. We don't know what any of the mechanisms are, frankly, we don't even know that this result is true. You know, you wouldn't really want to see this result replicated. But if this result is true, it does suggest a there may be more SARS curve to circulating out there than we know because it's evading our tests better than we think. And be that the idea that if you had it, your immune might not be true in this case, which would be

**Heather** 15:23

really bad. Yep. Absolutely. Thanks for the darkness man.

**Bret** 15:27

You're welcome.

**Heather** 15:31

racism. So this is written a little bit telegraphic Lee, I'm going to try to spell it out. Racism, according to D'Angelo is a system and all reliable sources constitute a belief in her world. Her whole claim is based on changing the term while maintaining the inherent gravity of the accusation. If true, how long until Webster is at all capitulate? It's a great question. And of course, one of the dictionaries already has capitulated. I don't have I didn't see this question coming. So I don't have the reference. But there is an article a week or two ago, suggesting that some high school kid had been writing into I don't know if it was Webster's, it wasn't the OED but it was one of the big, big dictionaries, and basically argued for a new definition that of racism that tracks with this sort of systemic vague unfalsifiable can't ever get beyond your own inborn Original Sin racism, definition that the many in the Black Lives Matter are trying to force upon us. And the dictionary did capitulate. So how long? Yesterday?

**Bret** 16:35

Yeah, that's not long. Yeah, it's it's a toughy. You know, all of these terms, I there's not even really a good answer to what you're supposed to do. Because the fact is, terms do naturally evolve what he what happens when somebody takes charge of that process, and they redefine white supremacy and racism right out from under you, and they define them as really mundane things. Now, are you begging the question here? I'm your answer is? Yes. The answer is no. But there is the thing that troubles me. Terms change. Maybe they change at lightning speed, and you still need to update the dictionary. But here's the thing, and actually, the question alludes to it. But I've said in the past is the problem is that the threshold for triggering these terms has been lowered. So you can't possibly avoid tripping over it. Right? Of course, you're racist. Of course, you support white supremacy, how could you not right? And then you've got a definition that supports the Oh, yeah, you're, you know, even you know, if you sleep silently, that's you engaging in violence against minorities or something, right? Yeah. But the point is, at the point that you say, Well, I guess, then, and the penalty phase, it goes right back up to the old definition. So it's not even that it's been redefined. Right. It's like, as soon as you agree that white supremacy is you know, it comes out of the tap, right? As soon as you agree to that. And the point is, it's as if there are crosses burning on everybody's lawn. And that ain't the way it is. So even the redefinition process doesn't quite capture it. Because the point is, we're going to redefine it for these purposes, and we're going to keep it defined the way it was for those purposes. And that's how we're gonna get you. Yep. It's a trick.

**Heather** 18:21

It's a trick. The scariest aspect of the site shutdown was the potential permission, this movement gave itself. If science is racist, the movement can or must be unscientific to avoid being racist. Was this intellectual looting the ultimate goal of the science shutdown? Yeah, so we did, I think it was Episode 22. Maybe, in which we talked a lot about the shutdown stem? And yes, certainly their hand in hand, and we know what is what is the benefit of shutting down stem? Honestly, to get us to reflect on our internalized and externalized racism? Or is it actually go after science and logic, and enlightenment values all together? And you know, there's nothing on the Black Lives Matter webpage that I saw, I haven't looked at all of their sub pages, that goes directly after stem. But they're proudly going after the nuclear family and promoting you know, trans lives over to other people's lives. And they were hand in hand with shut down stem, just not formally. It's all of a piece.

**Bret** 19:33

Yeah, it is all of a piece. So I'm reminded of your advisor Arnold pluggy, and his very wise file cabinet.

**Heather** 19:41

See as you walk past, yes, he walks past his

**Bret** 19:45

office. The note on the file cabinet said it's about power, unlimited resources, stupid. So all of these moves. I don't know

**Heather** 19:53

why people were scared of him. Now he is amazing. He's still alive. He's wonderful.

**Bret** 20:00

The This is all about power, all of it the pulling down of the statues, the redefining of the terms, the setting up a black only section of the lawn in the jazz all of the top, sorry, sorry. All these things are about power, getting Science Magazine and nature magazine to broadcast shut down stem. It's all about power. And it all comes with like a little fallback position. So as at evergreen where they did want every single white person to leave campus for a day, they did have a 200 seat workshop, which couldn't possibly accommodate all of us. So they could just say, Well, it wasn't for everybody. You're overreacting, right? So anyway, these things. The little protective fallback for shutdown stem is well, it's only for a day. But no, didn't you just get Science Magazine

**Heather** 20:54

reacting? Right? You're that productive every single day. Can you just take a day Brett to reflect on your internal racism? Can you take a day? Taking plenty? Have you made it really clear that you're not going to take that day? Yeah,

**Bret** 21:06

I think if anyone has been saying, but anyway, yes, the Don't be fooled by the little fallback positions. It's nonsense. Shut down stem really is about shutting down stem. And yes, this is rationalizing the saying of illogical things. The foregoing of analytical tools. That's what they're doing.

**Heather** 21:26

Yeah. We did that one. What advice would you give to professors at private universities that will soon face are currently facing what you two faced at evergreen?

**Bret** 21:39

trying really hard not to say quit?

**Heather** 21:42

I mean, it depends. A week ago, maybe I would have said it depends on where you are. And you know, I've I've given a couple of talks in which you know, one at Department of Justice in which I was asked, you know, what advice would you would you give, and I separated out between faculty admin and students, I find faculty the most complicit in this madness. And if you are faculty who do not have a complicit in the madness, administration behind you, you have no excuse and you can stand up. If, however, you would all doubt the administration that you have. And the reason I say as of a week ago, that was my advice. And as of now, University of Chicago even is willing to investigate one of its own esteemed professors for a tweet that is patently not racist. skepticism. Yes, for skepticism. Well, University of Chicago is the is the bastion of hope. And I don't know how you can be sure the administration has your back unless you have a clear, honest and deep relationship with an administrator who really can protect you. But no individual standing up against this madness, if the administration will, will fall in line to the new religion, don't stand much chance. How how if you do feel like you either need to because it's who you are, or you maybe can't afford to? How would you say you stand up?

**Bret** 23:09

Well, I'm going to give I've gotten over my little episode of, of darkness. And in any case, I'll give you I'll give you my real advice, but almost nobody is going to be in a position to do anything with it. For various reasons, the thing you should do is you should look around, you can figure out who else on your campus has courage, courage, and integrity. It's not a big list. You find those people though, and you reason with them, and you say what our colleagues would not hear when we approached them, but might be more visible now, which is Look, this ends very, very badly. And either you attempt to bootstrap a response that has some new effect, you try to figure out what response might halt the juggernaut at your college. And the problem is, you probably fail, but the logic here is the same one that nobody seems to like except me about the the first against the wall Club, which is once you realize that you can't actually buy yourself anything other than a brief respite, that you can sacrifice your own integrity, and you can get a brief respite, but you can't get any permanent refuge from what's coming. Then the point is what which would you rather Would you rather hold on to your integrity and say what you really think and see if you can arrange some kind of response that allows you to survive in spite of that even though it probably won't work? Or do you want to pretend to believe things that you don't believe for the rest of your career and effectively become, you know, a I don't know even know what you are at that point. Yeah, and effective, collaborate.

**Heather** 25:00

One thing I would add just today sort of logistical level and answer to this question, what would what advice would you give is that there is a growing literature that points out that things like the implicit bias test, and equity and diversity training are actually not just not effective, but but negatively effect counterproductive, counterproductive. I quite cited a couple of them in my piece on college presidents, which I might, if I think of it might dig up in place here. But I've got a piece on college presidents where I think some of these pieces are but but there's board that scholarship is actually growing, I think already by then. So that piece came up maybe two years ago, one year ago. And there was already a lot of evidence to suggest that the implicit bias test, which emerged from Harvard, was just not reliable, can be gamed, and the results are not reliable. But increasingly, there's evidence that these diversity, inclusion and equity workshops, the vast majority of them are counterproductive. And so perhaps arming yourself with some of some of that literature, you know, given that you're in an academic environment, trotting out peer reviewed literature, to the administrators who are trying to maybe to force you to take these kinds of workshops might be a first step.

**Bret** 26:19

Yeah, they won't listen. And the problem is that the purpose of these things isn't the advertised purpose anyway,

**Heather** 26:25

Oh, actually, one other thing. I was reminded actually, Chloe Valerie tweeted something to this effect today. And you know, she we've talked about her before on this podcast, you've been on the podcast, right? But she's, she's been on it. And she's just she's, she's a friend of ours. And she's fabulous. And her one of the things that she does, is offers di e trainings to diversity, inclusion and equity, di di trainings. But she does so with integrity and honesty and care with an actual goal. And I think effect of getting people to talk about the differences of their experiences, so that they can come so that you know, whatever the team is, can come together with a shared understanding of who they all are. And so she was the reason that she was in Portland and stayed with us and was on the podcast back in September of last year was because she'd been hired to give one of these trainings for a bunch of FAA people, right. And she's available. Like, covered I'd love to see her star rise in this regard to see her be a kind of golden Trojan horse walking into these trainings where people expect the same old divisive, anti racist garbage and instead they get Chloe and her theory of enchantment, that would be amazing. Yeah, also suggesting her its theory of enchantment. Chloe, Valerie is the is the founder, and she just does amazing work.

**Bret** 27:54

She's the opposite of a Trojan horse.

**Heather** 27:56

The what is that dominance?

**Bret** 27:58

I'm trying. it'll it'll occur to us when we're done with the q&a here. But yes, if you are inside one of these entities, and you are trying to figure out what you might do, it would be a very wise idea to take the genuine article and substitute it for the reeducation. Yeah, that is the intent of these other things.

**Heather** 28:23

It was cloud, Chloe, rather than the people brandishing the modern Little Red Book. Yep. For sure. Next question, could you please go deeper or guide me to a video where you explain how you break away from evolutionary truth and live a morally and ethical living moral and ethical life? So I, I know where this is coming from the it's not exactly breaking away from evolutionary truth, but in our evolutionary foundations, and the drives that we have that are evolutionary and that are that are real, but not honorable. It is it is one of the main themes of the book that we are writing that will be out and hopefully less than a year in spring of next year. Other than that,

**Bret** 29:03

well, I want to I want to challenge the question a little bit, okay. I think the key actually to doing what you're talking about involves staring directly at evolutionary theory. Because when you realize what it is that your genes are trying to arrange, and that some of the things that they have set you up for are magical and tremendous. And some of the things that they have set you up for a perfectly ghastly and that at some level, you are either going to make an his art failure, you're going to engage in the naturalistic fallacy and you're going to embrace everything evolution thinks is cool. Or you're going to reject it, you're gonna say, you know what, no, my values don't fit that I'm going to choose the things that I like from evolution. And I'm going to resist those things that my genes would have me do that I don't believe are honorable.

**Heather** 29:51

Right. That's it the basis tribalistic impulses, for instance. Sure,

**Bret** 29:55

I mean, you know, look, it's no secret to anybody who studied evolution that rape is an evolutionary strategy. Did you engage in it? Fuck no, that's that's completely abhorrent so that if you can see that much, that's one sentence, right? You're not on board with rape, then you are already dividing what it is that evolution might point you towards and choosing some and rejecting others. And the point is okay, that take that model and take it over the entire spectrum of things and you'll find it, there are things that evolution wouldn't have you do that are well worth your while. And there are things that it would have you do that you best not you must not, and that

**Heather** 30:29

understanding what what of our drives are evolutionary and have been effective at some points for some of our ancestors in the past and are therefore why they persist is an important piece of the puzzle and understanding how to then unhook those things from our current motivational structures. Yep. Many BLM and Tifa motives BLM slash and Tifa motives make sense to me within the US progressive lineage, but for some reason, the Robyn D'Angelo white fragility doctrine gives me strong Puritan vibes very creepy. Do you agree?

**Bret** 31:06

I mean, I see it as a mechanism, right in order. So when when you deploy all of these little Kafka traps, you trigger people who can spot the Kafka trap, you trigger them to resist and say, No, I'm not stepping in your damn trap. At which point you have to have a you know, what do you do next? And then thing is, ah, white fragility, saw that coming? Yeah. So, you know, is that Puritan? i? I'm not so sure. I think it's just sneaky. Which doesn't strike me as particularly Puritan.

**Heather** 31:41

Yeah. I mean, it, it reminds me of some elements of Christianity in terms of the original sin. And, you know, no, no escaping it and such but I wouldn't I don't I don't quite see the Puritan connection either. I do see creepy. But I think this is this is right, Brett, that it is, it has been adopted as a strategy on to be being warned by the sort of BLM and Tifa things and, you know, my part of me objects to this, the premise the first sentence in this question, which is that many BLM and Tifa motors makes sense to me within the US progressive lineage as, as people within the US progressive lineage, I think, you know, I find so much a pourraient there and yet, yet, I do see at at Foundation, a number of the things, you know, there there has been a history of, for instance, Marxism, in progressivism in the US, and that's never you know, we're we've all been Marxist. And that's not what what we are engaging in. But is that has that been a long standing part of some part of progressivism in the US? It has Sure. So you know that that much is true.

**Bret** 32:49

Yep. So I would say also, white fragility is two strategies. Okay. It's a strategy for the movement. It's also a marvelous strategy to advance the cause of Robyn D'Angelo. Oh, yeah, it was getting fantastically wealthy and famous and powerful. And it's weird because she's white. And so she's like, figured out how to sell out all sorts of people who are actually innocent of the crime. In exchange for it's like, she's transferred so much wellbeing to herself by becoming the, you know, the queen of this insane ideology instead of false claim. That's really well done. Robin. Yeah,

**Heather** 33:33

very, someone of someone year ago or so on Twitter said to me something about her being a scholar. I said, She's about as much of a scholar as Donald Trump is. But the two of them share, share something which is a deep rooted, narcissistic ability to look out for number one, and to really promote number one at the cost of all sorts of people around them. She's wickedly good at and I did see a response to my suggestion again on Twitter just before we began the live stream today that white fragility was akin to the little red book, someone said up, Heather, you're too late. Actually, BLM is now going after white fragility precisely because it was written by a white woman. And now she's being denounced, like, Well, you know, it couldn't happen to a more appropriate person.

**Bret** 34:19

If that's true. I don't know if this is to hate this, and I can't help but have some sympathy if they finally come for her. But God damn it. Like, I mean, you were warned. The left eats itself. Yeah, that's what's going on. Yep.

**Heather** 34:34

I did some research into the mcraven yang idea. Well, I like your intent. I don't trust this pair. I would suggest representative Dan Crenshaw of Texas and Eric Weinstein. thoughts, love and respect to you both.

**Bret** 34:46

Never heard of either.

**Heather** 34:48

It is really our producer. Also our son is in the other room laughing now.

**Bret** 34:53

Here's the thing. I'm not sure exactly what to say. Leave mcraven Yang is the right pair, they will have to be drafted, lots of things could happen. The most important thing to recognize is that the plan is viable if it can be populated by a pair that makes sense. So I have laid out criteria there are only three, I would say there's a kind of a fourth one haunting to the three Cartier for the to the right of center and the left of center are patriotic, courageous, capable. Okay, we need two people, one from the left one from the right, that have those characteristics be very desirable if they were also well known. So I would certainly trust Eric in this position. I'm not sure. You know, given that I advanced the plan, I'm not sure how it would strike people but whatever. He's on a very short list of people who would be highly qualified for the left of center. Part of that puzzle. I know Dan Crenshaw as well. But in any case, the important thing is that we defeat the duopoly that we defeat the duopoly with a plan that actually allows the power to move us forward. And who inhabits that plan is secondary. So anyway, suggestion taken

**Heather** 36:20

while you are about 35 minutes, okay, we'll do a couple more here. And then we'll switch to the other live stream questions. heterozygous Tay Sachs and torsion dystonia definitely boost IQ about 10 points, even controlling for ethnicity. Cochran? It all says it implies group differences in IQ. Why else select for homozygous bad stuff?

**Bret** 36:46

That's a good question.

**Heather** 36:47

I don't do you know the torsion dystonia example? Now, I don't know what that is I'm

**Bret** 36:52

only vaguely aware of it exists. You're basically right that you would select for Well, now there are a couple reasons you would select for bad stuff. In the case of these things, the reason that you would select for it is that it comes coupled with positive traits that outweigh the negative, I still don't think we have enough information about the the mechanisms involved and what sort of heritability we are looking at, there are lots of possibilities, and we don't have the answer. So it's on the table of possibilities. Can IQ points is significant, it is not decisive. But in any case, we need to look deeper into these things. And we need to do so with an upgraded understanding of what heritability is because otherwise we're just gonna keep tripping over the same kinds of errors where we think we were saying something when we say heritability that we're not.

**Heather** 37:47

Okay, violence and great apes compared to humans for evolutionary advantage, thoughts on non violence and cultural evolution, question mark thresholds where violence creates evolutionary advantage. You turn that into a certain question for me. I'm not I'm

**Bret** 38:02

not sure exactly. I sort of had the sense that the question is, you've got cultural mechanisms, increasing what many call pro sociality, and thereby decrease violence. And so they're looking for a comparison with great ape models, where presumably those cultural mechanisms are much less elaborate, which is true, although

**Heather** 38:25

they also group size is such a good predictor of both degree of sociality, and therefore violence, that, interestingly, humans have, by far the biggest group size of any primate but baboons which are not apes, have the next biggest group size have very high rates of violence? And then, you know, chimps tend to have bigger groups than gorillas and have higher rates of violence. bonobos, what's your sister to chimps, both both genus pan, have similar group size to chimps, but have lower rates of violence. So it's, there's, it's more, it's more than just group size. It's more than just great apes versus humans.

**Bret** 39:10

Yeah, it's complex. And in fact, the bonobos are a really interesting example. I'm not convinced we understand them very well yet. No, I agree. But the fact

**Heather** 39:20

that they're sorry. But you know, Leakey did not put anyone on the, on the job of spending decades at it. And I'm sure that there are at this point, some people trying to do long term behavioral work on bonobos, as has been done on the three other species of great apes on chimps, orangs and gorillas. But I don't even I can't call up the name, which says something, you know, for someone deeply embedded in animal behavior and yeah, and this sort of thing. So I don't think good longitudinal work on bonobo social systems has been done. We have a couple of things that everyone likes to trot out around sex for food trades and being less violent and you Almost being matriarchal and all, but it's, it's much more scattershot, anecdotal,

**Bret** 40:05

it's scattershot. I think some of that has to do with the practicality of studying bonobos existing over this much smaller range, places where it's hard to study them. But But I would just point out, I think, our understanding of what happened. So we split from chimps 6 million years ago, if

**Heather** 40:23

Yeah, from the most recent common ancestor of us, chimps and bonobos, right.

**Bret** 40:28

And so the chimp lineage split into two, much more recently, like 2 million years ago don't actually know when that is supposed to happen. But in any case, my understanding of the story is that the chimps and gorillas lived in overlapping ranges, and the gorillas in this range went extinct, which opened a niche for chimp like organism to move into gorilla space. So the fact that that had profound influence on the behavior of the chimp lineage that sprung off at that point is interesting, especially if it took them in the direction of reduced violence because of course, gorillas are less violent than chimps a lot less violent. So anyway, there's something to be said that hints at an ecological interaction with this that may have an important role that we haven't yet understood. So anyway, it's worth it's worth thinking about what the implications of that are, if I even have the story, right. I'm not a primatologist.

**Heather** 41:29

Yeah, I don't I I don't know that piece. And when you said it, it made me wonder, you know, well, was it the jumps that drove the gorillas extinct? Just as you know, homo, homo drove other, you know, Australopithecines and

**Bret** 41:42

such. I don't believe there's any evidence of that. I think it was ecological nature.

**Heather** 41:48

Okay, so let's find if I can figure out where it is. Here we go. Zack, do you have a line here on where the new questions are? Or can you just tell me what line I'm looking for? Oh, it's right there. No, no. No, that's not right. No, because you're right there. Yeah, but I only had 32 questions from before. So I'm just gonna go to line 32.

**Heather** 42:26

Oh, boy, if that is true, if they didn't all come in, then guys, I'm really sorry. We missed a lot of your questions,

**Bret** 42:37

we will try to collect them and return to them.

**Heather** 42:41

Yeah, these were not in in before. Alright. Here we go. A friend of mine told me that sex and gender are different. Sex being biological and gender being more fluid and social, true or bs? Sort of kinda, yeah. So. So if you're like reading 18 books on this note, I think we got one sentence well, so. Okay, go for the one sentence

**Bret** 43:09

is gender is the software of sex? Does that make it more flexible? Yes, but gender is the software of sex gives us the correct inference, which is that this is not a completely free variable. This is also subject to evolutionary pressures and evolutionary history. There is much more reason to expect variation between populations and how this parameter functions, there's also reason to expect that we have more room going forward to change gender than we do sex. But the to say that gender and sex are different, is not to say the thing that is usually implied when people invoke that, which is that gender is an arbitrary landscape that we are free to choose.

**Heather** 43:56

You recognize that wasn't one sentence, right? There was one that was about the eight sentences I was going to say let me let me let me also say, I have written about this a fair bit already, and spoken about it in various places. In non human organisms, the thing that we call gender in humans we call sex role, and it's effectively the behavioral component that is mostly predictable from what sex you are. And so for instance, in the much trotted out by the trans rights activists, generally not what I call true trans, but in the trans rights activists like to point out hermaphroditic sex switching fish sequentially hermaphroditic fish refresh like clownfish and damselfish and such which, as if that suggests that people can do the same thing and of course, it means no such thing. But what happens in these fish is depending on the ecology of the particular species, at the point that a male switches to a female actually switches to a female goes from producing sperm to producing ovaries has anatomical and physiological changes that accompany that, that are also about the sex, but also changes the behavior from male typical behavior to female typical behavior and the behavior is the gender it's the sex role. So are there things that men and women do that are sex typical sex stereotypical Have you wish that that are true across cultures? Yeah, less so across all cultures than within cultures are the things that we behaviorally do that aren't absolutely mandated by our anatomy and physiology like breastfeeding and gestating and Jackie living and things like this? Are things that are behaviorally following from sex more flexible and malleable than sex itself? For sure. But of course, a lot of the trans ideology that is being trotted out suggests that the behavior is the same. So I mean, they're, they're doing a kind of a Martin Bailey thing where they claimed, oh, we're only talking about gender. And then they'll also claim in the next breath that sex isn't real either. So sex and gender are different, but gender follows from sex. And yes, we can unhook some of the traditional expectations of gender roles. Oh, my goodness.

**Heather** 46:29

You should that's not in the room, we can unhook some of the traditional expectations of gender roles as we come to understand why they're there. Okay, hello, professors, the orienting reflex I referenced last time, this is the meme. So distraction, essentially measures the brain when engaged with novel stimulus, basically a zone of chaos, fight or flight, but becomes normalized. is social media desensitizing. us?

**Bret** 46:58

I don't immediately know why. The implication is desensitizing. I would say it is re sensitizing us to certain things and desensitizing us to other things, am I missing the meaning of the question?

**Heather** 47:14

I don't think so. I'm I'm not I'm not totally. not totally sure. What, what's going on? So that's the question. I'm sorry, I'm just looking back, I feel I suck. I'm concerned that you started us off in the wrong place here.

**Heather** 47:38

Okay. Shall we go on to the next question? Sure. would, would love to hear more detail of a hypothesis that Brett mentioned on Joe Rogan, how society repeats patterns of opportunity distribution?

**Bret** 47:53

What I said was IT projects them into the future. So for example, if you have a population, if black folks accumulate in one part of town for various reasons, right? Because they've been frozen out of economic opportunity, and the houses in that part of town are more affordable, something like that, you just have people accumulate. As we know, neighborhoods do tend to accumulate different ethnicities and all you have that. And then you have redlining, right and that redlining creates a viscosity and economic viscosity that prevents the accumulation of further wealth. At some point, the neighborhood itself has a small tax base, it can't produce high quality schools, the inability to produce high quality schools tends to hobble the kids who go to those schools, it's not hard to see how things that came out of Jim Crow became ever more subtle and more structural, and might cause people in that neighborhood to face a steeper uphill climb to get to a different economic strata. Right. So what it does is it simply projects the past pattern into the future. And thereby even if you do away with the racism, which we largely have, you still have a pattern as if that old racism was still in force, because what you've done is you have not brought everybody to the starting line and said, Okay, now that we've done away with the racism, and now that we've done away with all the consequences from it, let's, you know, let's run a race. Right? We never got there. And so since we didn't get there, we can now turn a blind eye and say, well, we did away with the racism everything else must be the result of innate differences, which it just isn't. We mean, that's not to say innate differences might not explain some of it, but we don't know that it does, because we haven't seen the experiment run.

**Heather** 49:50

I've been shocked at the proclivity of so many of my friends to subscribe wholeheartedly to the woke mentality. Do you think intellect and attention to detail has anything to do with the political choices People make.

**Bret** 50:03

So this was one of these things I often referenced that Eric once said to me, in fact, I think I've called it the smartest thing anyone ever said, which was truth is the second best strategy. And by that he meant that social affiliation, that is to say signing on to what the group that has power wants you to say in order that it will share its power with you, is often a much better strategy than truth. So what it is that I think is going on with those who don't sign up with this, it's one of two things either, they have correctly realized that they could get somewhere in the short term by signing on, but that they will ultimately be confronted by this thing in the end, so it's not a good deal. Or they are sticklers for the truth. And the fact is, I think all of us sticklers for the truth are, I don't want to call us broken, but we we do not have the circuit that allows you to just simply socially affiliate no matter what kind of nonsense It forces to come out of your mouth, right? Some people do, and the fact that they say, some crazy thing, and everybody cheers, assures them that it must be right. So anyway, that's gonna happen all over the place. You know, there's some danger. You know, in the case of Dave Rubin, for example, that he's hearing, you know, the tears of a bunch of people who are all concentrated in one mindset. And he thinks that what he's saying is making sense. And in fact, it seems to be making less sense over time as he's moving closer to a group that is united behind ideas that are not robust,

**Heather** 51:38

closer to a different ideology than one that he formerly formerly ascribes to, but seems to be a jump from ideology to ideology, rather than to more first principles thinking,

**Bret** 51:51

yeah, and you know, I've seen him of late attack Chloe, he's attacked Josephine, Mathias. There's nothing there's no reason we know both of these people. Incredibly decent, incredibly bright, incredibly insightful, and, frankly, open to other perspectives. Both of them have that characteristic in spades. So why, you know, on what basis could you possibly attack them? Well, to the extent that he is now moved in the direction of an ideology that can't abide voices, like there's, he now can't even hear what they're saying, yeah.

**Heather** 52:28

If the primary issue is lack of equal opportunity that disproportionately affects black Americans, could the issue then be described as a class problem that presents as a race issue? Any solution must address both question mark. Any solution must address both? Yes. I think his historically, it was much more of a race problem than it is now. But because of exactly what you say here, we have a socio economic problem. That is, unfortunately, you not purely by any means, but somewhat correlated with race.

**Bret** 53:06

So I would say, we have two populations for which we still have a significant race problem, right? blacks and Indians, and it is intermingled American Indians. Yes, it is intermingled with an economic problem. It's a vicious cycle. And it, of course, demands a solution that addresses both. But I don't think what what we don't have is a an active racism problem at large scale, right? I have a race problem without a racism problem. And that is deranging the conversation because no it it would take an hour to figure out how that would work. And we don't get an hour what we get is, you know, agree with us or pay the price.

**Heather** 53:56

Yeah. There's a four blind men and an elephant problem when arguing against intersectional lunacy. That's a good way of putting it. And I seem to be arguing with each of them over different aspects of the movement. Is there a good one good way to unify and help them see the whole animal? that's a that's a good question. You know, one of the things that I tend to do is go into the source material, which is why I was quoting from the actual Black Lives Matter page today. That anyway, it's changing. It used to have some differently egregious stuff that's that's gone now. But pointing out what is actually there and the inconsistency is within it is hard to totally evade. If the people that you're talking with are in any way good faith, it's hard to totally evade. That's an incomplete answer, though, by a lot.

**Bret** 54:51

Yeah, I mean, I think the problem is we all swim upstream to greater and lesser effect because The people that we are talking to are actively resisting comprehension. If they were even a little bit inclined to comprehend, which they've been trained out of by all of these Kafka traps, they would see it because it's obvious. They're pulling down statues of whom, right? They're vandalizing Stevie Ray Vaughan statues in Austin. That doesn't sound very reasonable to me at George Washington. Really? Yeah. Okay. I'm aware that he was a slave owner. But, you know, he also was an important force and, you know, farsighted for his era.

**Heather** 55:35

But you know that, that use of the word but in the last sentence is what makes you a racist. Right. But I know he was a slave owner, but

**Bret** 55:42

right. But I do know he was a slave owner. But I mean, you know, Conrad Lorenz, an important person in our field, you know, behavior. Yeah. He was a member of the Nazi Party. Right? Am I going to pretend actually know that? Yeah. Well, he regretted it later in his life, but it's certainly a fact. Yeah. You know, and George Washington was not a fan.

**Heather** 56:01

Really. agassi, the first director of the museum at Harvard was, I think, a bigot, an anti Semite. Yeah.

**Bret** 56:07

And ra Fisher was an anti Semite. You know, here's the crazy one, you know, Lindbergh thought we should support Hitler. And that does not invalidate his crossing of the Atlantic. Right. So anyway, history is complex. And the idea that you're going to pull down the statues? Why are you pulling down the statues? Because it shows that you can, its power.

**Heather** 56:31

Feels good in the moment. That's been all locked down for three months. And this feels empowering. Yeah. And you can't go to bars?

**Bret** 56:37

Well, and you know, it proves it proves what this thing is, if you can pull down a statue of George Washington on video and not go to jail, right? What have you just shown you've shown your boss, we get it?

**Heather** 56:53

Where are we at on dark horse do any news from potential candidates or from organizations that could help propel the idea forward?

**Bret** 57:01

There is lots of buzz, we need to get our ducks in a row. And we need to do it quick, quick, quick, but I am getting contacts from people, including high powered people who are very interested in seeing this happen, because I think there's an awareness that we are just in such serious trouble by any other means. So anyway, I'm heartened by the fact that people are taking it seriously. But this is us. This is now a public domain idea. And to the extent that we can elevate its profile, so that people understand that this is not a joke. This is not a you know, this is not tilting at windmills. This is actually an attempt to rescue the Republic, which is in desperate need of it. That's the thing that's going to make it work. So it's awesome. Let's let's move.

**Heather** 57:50

Would love to be part of the ITW circle, I crave these intellectual discussions, is there a meaningful way to kind of get on board and contribute? Well, really, the thing is that

**Bret** 57:59

it's not really a thing. There are sub reddits, you can join the sub reddits are a they're a bit fraught, they get invaded by people who aren't of like mindset. Some of them are honestly just out of step. Some of them are actually just trolls. But anyway, there there are ways but I would say, you know, I would pay attention to people who make sense, even when it's difficult to do so and figure out how to have those conversations with people around you. Those are good things to practice and maybe maybe something will emerge that does constitute a community of people who can abide by the same kinds of rules that allow for an elevated conversation. That'd be fantastic.

**Heather** 58:42

To spend an hour. Let's go through three more. The first one being a comment Long live the people will

**Bret** 58:49

yeah. Oh yeah.

**Heather** 58:50

The people wolf. You said you were armed in a previous podcast. Have you done any firearms related self defense training? I recommend Clinton Heidi Smith at Thunder ranch near Lakeview Oregon. Yes, I'll make a note of

**Bret** 59:03

that problem is everything under COVID is more difficult. Yeah. So

**Heather** 59:06

maybe I'll try to get two more and since those were comments, penultimate question, do you have any advice on how to spot and navigate rhetorical traps meant to paint you as a racist or phobe of some kind? I don't have an immediate answer to that. I feel like I'm beginning I'm beginning to have a sort of a I know it when I see it sense like a sort of spidey sense about it, but I don't have a rubric that I formalized yet.

**Bret** 59:34

Well, I've got one address people crazy though, right? People want to say something, does it well, will you agree that x right and even well intentioned people? Will you agree that x and the answer is well that kind of depends what you mean by that term there. I know from experience, that's where the bodies will be buried if they're buried somewhere. So anyway, you get very good about saying only things that you know you can defend right? And that causes a kind of cumbersome, roundabout speech that people don't like, though I get to the point. But what you're really doing is, look, this is not that era. This is an era for people who can figure out how to walk a tightrope that you can't see. And it's a learned skill. So I would just say, watch some of these things, figure out, you know, okay, I'm looking at a sign, it says something, you know, part of me agrees with the sign, and part of me knows that I can't agree with the sign, try to figure out which word it is that causes it to flip, just so you get good at it, just train yourself. And, you know, there's nothing perfect, but really the answer is, when many of us figure out how to evade these traps, the traps go away, right? If you can show that you can stare down one of these traps and not perish, then others will learn that thing as well. And so we need to unhook them one by one, and the mechanism to unhook them has to spread.

**Heather** 1:00:59

All right, we're gonna do two more, because the final one is a big question. I think we should get to new penultimate question. To what extent are Jordan Peterson's views on the sovereign individual free speech and meaning relevant to this crisis? And do you know if he's returning soon, because views are highly relevant, and he is doing better? And will hopefully, hopefully be back in the public eye soon? I think that's what we can say right now. Yep. Finally, why is not a branded movement emerged against this yet a way for us to stand together to say yes to equality, but note over categorizing humans or shutting down ideas and speech, pointing out the warnings that history has given us, this would provide us strength in numbers. This is a terrific question. Yep. And you know, there. I don't know that this is the right answer at all. And at the very least, it's only a part of the right answer. But I think that many of us who are most loud at the moment, also have a real aversion to branding, and promotion and self promotion and such and you know, are doing it insofar as we feel the need, but don't like it at all. And so, you know, this, it might be easier to get behind this if it was for, you know, a movement as opposed to individuals, but I also don't know, you know, none of us are expert in what kind of logistical thing that would require. So like, what, but maybe the question is, why hasn't it emerged organically?

**Bret** 1:02:34

Well, I think it is emerging organically. Okay. We just don't know enough to see it. But

**Heather** 1:02:39

you know, it doesn't have a chap cha cha cha has job. Doesn't it doesn't have it doesn't

**Bret** 1:02:43

have to part of the garden autonomous. I don't know if you noticed the sign I put up. I didn't know,

**Heather** 1:02:50

well, slugs must have eaten.

**Bret** 1:02:52

Now, so here's what I would say. It was clearly partially an answer to this puzzle. It was about figuring out how to continue to have reasoned discussion on topics where that was supposed to be ruled out by these various Kafka traps. And it was wildly successful. I mean, I cannot emphasize enough what it was like to be on stage, for example, in Vancouver with Jordan Peterson and Sam Harris, and look out for two consecutive nights at an audience of 3000 people who you wouldn't have known they weren't at a rock concert, if you didn't know who was onstage,

**Heather** 1:03:36

except no one's phones were out. Right? Everyone was wrapped.

**Bret** 1:03:41

And, you know, they weren't really there for the question of what is the nature of truth. They were there for something bigger, it was much more movement, like it was much more people interested in the idea of reasoned discussion and an era of have no reason. So, in any case, ITW had a part of it. I think rebel wisdom has a part of rebel wisdom has been curating different conversations. Some of them don't get along all that well. But nonetheless, there's an idea that the answer to this involves juxtaposing these things and seeing if you can't get them to play nice together. Yeah, right. Game B was an early version of Well, we've got structural problems, is there a way to actually plausibly get from here to an alternative stable solution that is wildly more successful at accomplishing what we claim to want to accomplish?

**Heather** 1:04:31

JAMIE Weil has got part of it apparently he and two of our friends who will be familiar to some people listening are starting a podcast with Jordan Hall and Daniel shmack and burger young along with

**Bret** 1:04:42

Big Think Yep. So all of these entities

**Heather** 1:04:46

but but none of that is a branding, right? Well we can point to these pockets of such intensely reasonable discourse that you know, when it comes to disagree with itself I can confront that and say okay, you know, can we live with this this dissonance or must be resolved. But But in terms of a, you know, there is no hashtag BLM equivalent,

**Bret** 1:05:05

right? But So one thing that I've been thinking is that all of these things, if it is, in fact true that we are going to bootstrap our way out of this terrible predicament, rather than just allow the dumpster fire to happen, then probably all those entities ought to coalesce in one way or another. And if they can coalesce, they're going to do it, hopefully, under a banner, right? At some level, they are all coalescing by virtue of the fact that the audience that is hungry for that kind of interaction bounces from, you know, from the portal to rebel wisdom to Dark Horse, you know, it's doing that trick. So the question is, what is the overarching thing? And in any case, I don't know the answer to it. But at some level, if there's a political dimension here, if we are going to try to save the republic through a novel plan that interfaces with our existing electoral system, then maybe that flies under a banner, it occurred to me I don't have the mug down here. But what game B was before it was game B was the emancipation party. It's not up there might be that'd be up there. But in any case, the emancipation party, that's a decent brand, because the point is, it's non political, right? It's non political as it was non political. And so anyway, there is room for a branding, I would be up for anything that caused the various loosely aligned populations who are following one or the other of these threads to come together and say, Well, actually, you know what, we've all been sort of separately preparing for something and it came way faster than we thought it was going to. So now what are we going to do? Can we figure out how to how to get along?

**Heather** 1:06:50

Yeah. I think we did it. Alright. So we may be back on Saturday, that would be the usual thing. But you've got at least one, maybe two pre recorded excellent interviews in the hopper. We will be doing a private q&a on Sunday. If you want to join that go over to my Patreon and join and you will see what's going on there. Probably we'll be back on Saturday, but we're not sure but look for a podcast out from you tomorrow the next day. Yep. You want to say what it is yet or not? Nope. Leave it Let it be a surprise. Yeah. All right.

**Bret** 1:07:28

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