Your Questions Answered - Bret and Heather 26th DarkHorse Po...

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**SPEAKERS**

Bret, Heather

**Bret** 00:09

Hey, folks, it's q&a time back here on the Dark Horse podcast live stream number 26. With Dr. Heather hying.

**Heather** 00:16

And Dr. Brett Weinstein,

**Bret** 00:18

that's us. All right, shall we? Shall we q&a?

**Heather** 00:20

Yeah, let's q&a. We're going to start with five that we missed from last time, we missed a number of them in the middle due to a technical glitch. So we're just going to jump into five before we embark on the ones from the previous live stream today. And, and then,

**Bret** 00:38

technical glitch, as opposed to emotional glitch. Is that what you're getting at?

**Heather** 00:43

Yeah, at the point that Zack and I both are pointing fingers at each other, we thought it was an emotional glitch. But it turned out to be a technical glitch and not not user error on either our parts. All right, at least that's the conclusion we've arrived at. Alright, so in queue for q&a number 25. We got this question. Hi, Breton. Hi, there. I'm an eighth grade teacher searching for advice to pass out to my students who are incredibly weary of the world they're growing up in especially now, what advice would you give them? In part, I wanted to just flag this as something that, you know, we've been, you know, we've got, we've got a whole chapter on schools, and another one on childhood and the book that we're writing, but this is this is a critical question. And maybe you want to read for just a minute.

**Bret** 01:25

Yeah. I mean, I think, really, for all of us who are searching for a silver lining here, you're looking at me, like I'm about to joke, no, I'm gonna do my best to actually give some sort of useful solace. I think, really, actually, this is true. And this is what I tell myself. And it's what I would tell my kids if they asked, and what I would tell your kids if they asked, the potential for change is directly correlated to the level of disturbance. And so to the extent that we find ourselves facing very uncertain things in the near future, it is also something that will tend to accompany a transition to something better. So in evolutionary terms, this is an adaptive Valley. Whether there's a peak on the other side, I sure hope there is but the potential for change is here, as is the uncertainty.

**Heather** 02:22

All right. It's, it's the beginning. It's the beginning of an excellent answer, I think. No, I think we we, we need yours to provide the complete excellent answer that's you've provided directions to the foothill,

**Bret** 02:37

we need yours, we have ours.

**Heather** 02:40

Next question, again, from number 25. Rather than today, drugs are always a controversial subject. Some are considered medicines, others controlled substances. I think if it helps someone, it's considered a medicine period. What are your thoughts about marijuana, fungi and psychedelics? Hashtag legalize nature. So this is something that we have addressed a few times, but because it came at a high money value from someone who clearly hasn't heard us talk at all about this, I thought we'd give it a minute or two. Sure.

**Bret** 03:08

So I would, I would say the number one thing is these things can be very useful, they can be a tremendous relief, they can provide insight, I would say number one thing, though, is don't treat them as recreational, they are very serious. And it doesn't mean you shouldn't have a great time and have a smile on your face as you do. But treating them as frivolous as a mistake, they are powerful enough to do great things, and they are powerful enough to mess you up. If you don't, I would say curate your experience such that it stands a good chance of being productive. But if you think these things aren't for you, they probably aren't. If you think they might be for you engage, cautiously, think carefully about the damage you may do to your health, you know, there's a difference between the molecule and the way it's delivered. In the case of marijuana, you can mess up your lungs if you smoke it, so maybe consider doing it some other way, which is now much easier than it once was. But a cautious, positive view of these substances and their potential, but advice to to engage them carefully.

**Heather** 04:18

Yeah, and I guess I would just add the hashtag that the person who has the question ends with hashtag legalized nature is an apt one, that at the point that something has even if it's been derived from a plant, but synthesized in the lab such that it has no resemblance at all to the plant or animal or more often fungus from which derived, the more likely it is to do harm and to have very little resemblance to the state that it might have produced. If you were imbibing it from the organism in which it came. So you can use that very broad rubric, that sort of rule of thumb is a okay you know avoid, avoid those things which require that you stick a needle in your arm or or snort, powder up your nose. And know that there is both long evolutionary relationship between humans and many of these species. And maybe more importantly, there is long cultural history. Not for most of us within whatever sort of Mutt like aggregate culture that we come from. But for many, many cultures, I have relationship with entheogens, in particular, and learning from what other people have learned from their use of hallucinogenic plants and fungus mostly is, is an important first step. And it can be incredibly valuable to do so yourself.

**Bret** 05:51

But don't lick a toad without consent. I would say written consent is probably safest.

**Heather** 06:00

Let me just say that on the very first, the very first time that I had students in the tropics before we were at evergreen, I just been hired on to teach Tropicana with every class and a little Field Station in Panama, I heard tell that some of my students were looking frogs. And I had to give them a hard time because these were not even the right toad. Oh, goodness, they were not the right tones at all. And, you know, I thought, you know, if you're going to seek these sorts of experiences out at least at least get the organisms Right.

**Bret** 06:34

Yeah. Yeah. Looking frogs and taking names. Yeah. Okay,

**Heather** 06:40

so just a huge Oh, this comment meant a tremendous amount to me. So I just want I wanted to share it. Just a huge thank you. I'm a conservative Christian, and I can't tell you how much I value your podcast as a gut check against my echo chamber. Because you both seem like intellectually honest patriots. Thank you. Really, really appreciate that.

**Bret** 07:02

Yeah, and we obviously don't know much about you beyond your comment, but right back atcha

**Heather** 07:06

Yeah. Have you guys actually been to jazz chop? That's what it says xx laughing the other room Have you guys actually been to jazz chop? Yankee Marshall a YouTuber has done a few live streams there. He's showing something completely different than what we're seeing on social media outlets recommend coke coming through the footage. So I have not yet but I thought it was worth mentioning that here Do you know of, of this YouTube channel?

**Bret** 07:31

I've seen some I don't know. That one. In particular. What I would say though, a I've certainly considered it. It's not especially close to us. So it's not like, you know, if we lived in Seattle, I would have been there for sure. But the problem is there may be I'm sure there is and I've seen lots of footage that suggests reasonable stuff happening all sorts of moments in the trans trap. But you know, we've got three isn't now four shootings, we've got video of white people, excluding other white people from Lawn so that the experience of black people can be centered on a lawn. I mean, it you know, the point is, look, is there insanity in the past job? There is insanity in the past job. Is there reasonableness? Probably a lot of it. But the fact that there is enough insanity that is easily easily found and filmed, tells you something about how reasonable the whole experiment is also, I would point to the the fact of them, excluding the police from a shooting at the same time that they demanded, the paramedics come in, you can't run a society this way. Right? Either you're prepared to have the police and the paramedics there, or you're deciding to provide those services yourself. And so anyway, this is a at some level, this is an absurd exercise. And it has revealed exactly what many of us told you at what. Yep,

**Heather** 08:58

they have at least done us the service of allowing us to call them the chess champion. So that's something right. Okay, final comment from the livestream 25 rather than today's and the number of people pointed this out, that actually while we were on air last time, apparently Jonathan Hertzog just announced his support for darcars duo he is running for a congressional seat in New York district 10. Apparently, that's interesting and important and good.

**Bret** 09:27

Yes, there was his support for the Dark Horse duo plan, which will probably soon get an official name in the neighborhood of unity ticket. But we are also supportive of Jonathan hertz live support of the Dark Horse duo plan. It seems only fair and supportive of Jonathan hartside. A joke. You know, it helps pass the time.

**Heather** 09:52

All right. Moving on to questions from the last hour. Thank you. This is just a comment. Thank you. The ITW has been a godsend for me Be that as it may, it doesn't look good for the home team. Yeah. What is the significance of singing in humans? Why do we have two distinct registers? Why can we do this? And then there's a language we didn't have time to look at. So I'm not sure what exactly the question is asking. And why is it so emotionally stimulating love from Scotland? So I actually I'm not sure exactly what the two distinct registers Oh, I know is referring to either male

**Bret** 10:31

or female or an octave apart is that but that

**Heather** 10:33

but but we but you know, we obviously have overlapping ranges. It's a rare man or a woman who have no overlapping ranges, right?

**Bret** 10:41

We saying we have overlapping ranges.

**Heather** 10:43

But that's, but there's nothing else around two distinct registers. I thought it might be like a fry or like a,

**Bret** 10:51

I don't think so. I mean, I take it to be male and female. So let's put it this way, you've asked a very deep question, which would require a book to answer, but let me simplify it a little bit. One, the distinction between singing and music is a new one. So it would have been true, until very recently, until the invention of musical instruments, that music was inherently vocal, and in general, contained lyrics, it was inherently lyrical almost all the time would also be true, that all that basically every intact human would have a direct relationship with music, they wouldn't just consume it, they would participate in the creation of it. And music wasn't static, used to be that even the songs that your tribe sung were songs that changed over time, right? So even the standards were never the same twice. And then, at some point, the invention of the player piano songs start to be the same twice. And then that gets really bad in the era of recorded music.

**Heather** 11:51

Oh, but it's far before that at the point that music is being written down in the Baroque era, there's that you have repeated music.

**Bret** 11:59

Oh, you have repetition? You've always had that. But the idea of exact repetition,

**Heather** 12:05

I think, I think that the point that the Baroque era was upon us or maybe even earlier, I'd I'd known far less about what came before the Baroque. But, you know, we we know, what could have been and was being played over and over and over again, from boy, Bach would have been 1600s? I think. So, you know, repetition has been going on for as long as the written word,

**Bret** 12:29

do you think music has been verb far longer than I think it has. But now it's watching you, you set yourself up. But so let's put it this way, there is something to be said about the player piano being the first point at which of the song might be the same twice. But I agree with you, you know, written music does invite the attempt to produce the same song twice, and a conductor might do the same rendition twice. So anyway, they'd be very close. But this is all of it as a departure from the natural state of music, which would almost always have been lyrical and would always have been vocal until I don't know, the invention of the first musical instrument. So the point is, the answer to the question is really going to be found in what is the evolutionary advantage of vocal music, right. And I'm going to leave you hanging there. But I would say one of the things you need to recognize in order to address this puzzle is the close connection that music has to the production of language. And anyway, I have a long standing hypothesis here, which needs to be explored at some point.

**Heather** 13:39

Yeah, we should we should devote an hour or more to this at some point. But this one thing that just occurred to me, which it never really occurred to me before, is that I mean, as you know, I was I was trained in classical piano played for practice for a couple hours a day for many years during my childhood. And so the Baroque period, sort of happened and I don't know a lot about what exactly happened before them. But Baroque was during, in part, the era of clavichord harpsichord, where there wasn't dynamic possibility, you didn't have the ability, as you did with the piano, the piano forte, which was the thing that that changed about the keyboard was now you can play softly or loudly, right? And it was very much as I understand it, you know, the Baroque led to the classical period. And in both of those, both of those cases, yes, the musician who was playing the music could change what was being played, but you really weren't supposed to stray and at least for you know, someone playing individual piano music from the Baroque, you know, like Bach and then the classical period, you know, Beethoven, Brahms, hyden, etc. We're very much supposed to be played as they were written, whereas then you move into the Romantic period and the 19th century like Chopin and Tchaikovsky and such, and you suddenly get a lot more freedom again. You know, sometimes they'd stuffed so many notes into a single measure that you could just, you know, do kind of whatever you want wanted dynamically and metrically. And it was almost like a return to what music was what music was before. Before I feel like the sort of the drum the, you know, the the metronomic enforcement of things from the Baroque period happened. I don't know, I don't know what all that was about, like why that happened?

**Bret** 15:29

Well, I mean, I think you're on the right track in the sense that the elaborateness of the instruments and the you know, the, in the case of the harpsichord in particular, the mechanistic nature of the instruments invites a more mechanistic playing style. So

**Heather** 15:44

you think that technology may have driven the musical style? Yeah. Anyway, none of which almost, is is about singing, which is its own. You know, it's it is the the original instrument, of course. Yep. And, and amazing. Okay. Next question, jury nullification, you lawyers. Those who are even taught the doctrine at all are taught to ignore it. How long can this Pandora's Box be kept closed? Do we pry the lid ajar by even asking the question?

**Bret** 16:14

Well, it's been asked. You know, and this isn't the first time if you haven't heard us talk about it. I know Eric has talked about it. jury nullification, for those of you who don't know what it is, is the ability of a jury to decide that even though so, courts do two things, findings of fact, and findings of law. So in a court, you establish what took place, and then you decide whether it was a violation of the law, the jury has the ability, the capacity to neutralize the law part. In other words, it can decide that you did something. And it can reason that even though it was a violation of the law, that it is going to rule as if it wasn't thereby freeing you, right? So this is in some sense of protection that exists in the law. Because we can all imagine extenuating circumstances in which one way in which a miscarriage of justice would occur by the application of the law. So the fact that a jury could potentially do that is a protection. However, basically, my understanding is that judges instruct juries that they do not have this right. And the hope is that the right will effectively never be exercised, because the mayhem that could arise from its exercise is massive. And in this case, we have the near certainty, that many things that are violations of the law and severe ones, will not be penalized, because we are told that certain people are in debt and others are in surplus, and therefore, you know, it's one more place where reparations can happen, your right to violate the law may go up, if you have certain demographic markers, that's a very frightening prospect, even more frust frightening is the prospect of the other thing, which may be it has a name must have a name that I just don't know, which is where somebody who has not violated the law is going to be convicted, because of some sense that they are morally deserving of being punished. And I am very afraid that both of these

**Heather** 18:23

processes are very proactive. It's not proactive. What is it's like activists at Yeah, jury activism, or

**Bret** 18:30

it's legislative jury activists. I don't know what you would call it, but the idea that juries will effectively be empowered to punish people who haven't done anything wrong. I mean, for one thing, we're seeing the equivalent of that without a jury, in these cases where people are getting fired, not having done anything wrong.

**Heather** 18:45

Well, you know, you know much more about the law than I do. But given that its findings of facts and findings of law, that are the two things that a jury is supposed to be deliberating on. Don't findings of fact have to come before findings of law? And if if you if the findings of fact, say there is nothing that happened here, do you even get to move on to the findings of law? Oh, no,

**Bret** 19:07

it's a Well, I'm not an expert here, either. But yes, effectively, the facts either have to support the possibility that there was a violation of law or not. So you could a jury that wanted to could neutralize this in either place, it can decide that effect that it could

**Heather** 19:20

it could, it could come to an untrue conclusion on the findings of fact front thus opening up the possibility of a punitive decision over and findings of law territory,

**Bret** 19:31

right. And of course, the judge is supposed to be the failsafe mechanism. You know, the judge that finds the jury engaged in deliberations that it shouldn't can declare a mistrial, but you know, where in the system is anybody immunized from being accused of racial wrongdoing in the modern era, so everybody is going to start recognizing that they might need to do what the mob demands. And that is, I mean, as I keep saying, it's the honor invention of America and wow, are we in danger? If this keeps going?

**Heather** 20:04

Yeah. Next question, can the emotion of awe unite us back again?

**Bret** 20:14

That'd be great. And I like the idea. I'm a little bit concerned that something about modernity, as made us hard to impress Yeah, right, that we are all privy to the most extreme demonstrations of capacity and beauty. And, you know, we've all been transported to the most marvelous beach on Earth, you know, which

**Heather** 20:39

is for them more than been photoshopped, right? So yeah, we all imagine that the perfect, beautiful person, and the perfect, beautiful place and the perfect, beautiful everything is not only something we've already experienced, even if we haven't, but that it's actually better than it is such that when we do experience, true awesomeness in our lives, we often don't recognize it as such, because it doesn't live up to the and photoshopped. unperfected version of itself.

**Bret** 21:09

Yep. That said, I do think that there are things that will galvanize us or could galvanize us. And one of them, I am hoping is the possibility that there is a way out of this that will in fact, make us feel good about ourselves again. And I am a little bit concerned that unfortunately, I find myself in trying to write what that would be like, it was very hard for me to deal with the word hope now. Because I feel that the Obama administration was such a disappointment in terms of what it accomplished, that

**Heather** 21:48

many of us felt his hope we signed on, and then we're quickly disappointed,

**Bret** 21:53

it is almost poisoned the concept of hope. And that leaves us grasping for synonyms that are never as good. This is

**Heather** 22:00

interesting. I didn't know you were you were thinking on this. I knew I know what you're trying to write right now. But I actually went looking specifically I was I was looking for something to read at the end of the last hour that would be hopeful, rather than, you know, rather than so much else. And I must have, you know, a pile of 10 books downstairs, all of which I think are extraordinary. And I couldn't find anything the closest I came actually. But I don't I don't have something to read from it was from Joseph Campbell, I went to the hero with 1000 faces. In part because we were talking about one of the things we were talking about, between this left livestream and the last one was, was the hero's journey, and trying to reveal to people that they can take hold of that for themselves. And that in trying to face this thing down, it is not sufficient to take individual action. And yet, it is in many cases, the only thing that is possible. And

**Bret** 23:01

well, I would like to propose something that we didn't get to in depth Today was a deeper exploration of what what you do when it comes knocking? And

**Heather** 23:14

maybe maybe we want to do that next time or Yeah,

**Bret** 23:17

I think we want to do it next time. And we want to take the time to do it, do it right. But there is something I do have the sense that the world is a much bigger place than it was and the hero's journey is simultaneously. It contains a great deal of truth. But it also may be at the wrong scale. And so the question is, can we figure out how to scale it up to a world with seven and a half billion people on it? That is simultaneously in crisis? And if you think about that, that's a frightening question. But it's also kind of a delightful opportunity. And so maybe that's where we are as we're trying to bootstrap. The the new twist on the hero's journey, because we need it.

**Heather** 24:03

Next question. While there are many domestic issues going on, I'm concerned that international issues are being ignored at our risk. Would you please have General Robert Spaulding retired on the podcast, he wrote a very revealing book recently about the Chinese Communist Party.

**Bret** 24:17

I'd look at it. It's I agree, I think we are missing the international component of this as we are hobbling ourselves at home, our enemies are licking their chops. Yeah, there's no question about that.

**Heather** 24:31

And the fact that half the country has the sense that anything that comes out of the President's mouth is inherently wrong and ludicrous means that for him to, for Trump to have said anything about Chinese involvement in this virus means that half of the country now has a knee jerk reaction to ignoring that as a very possibility.

**Bret** 24:54

It's a great example, right? We can't even talk about the facts of what this virus is and where it came from. Because Trump has taken a position and that causes others to be completely unable to hear. Even factual information.

**Heather** 25:06

Yeah, it's anti intellectual. Yep. Why are yawns contagious quotes? Are they similarly contagious? and other primates? Do you think ideas expressed before a yawn might piggyback on the yarn to be spread more effectively in a group? Oh, wow. So interesting. I don't know I'd never thought of that.

**Bret** 25:28

Well, I don't know about the last piece. Yeah, I did have a kind of a riff on yawns, but it's been years and I don't have it at the tip of my tongue. There is I think something about state of mind and that effectively, yawns are something that spreads because it's like a feeling of security sufficient that sleep would be acceptable and so you can imagine that you know, pride could be an indicator of trust even Yeah, it's an indicator of I perceive that this is secure and that spreads to the group and so anyway, that that raises all kinds of questions and it may be predicts certain things about the way it functions. But it is fascinating and yes, it is contagious in multiple different kinds of creatures. Now, I wondered at the time that I was working on this whether it was contagious between types of creatures, which would be very interesting yeah. And I don't I don't remember whether there's any evidence

**Heather** 26:26

Yeah, I have never seen an analysis of that anecdotally. It doesn't really look like it you know, when when we've been watching you know, wild primates for instance, and they they go on a yawning bout it doesn't seem to track into us or other things or you know, when our cat start yawning. spreads through them but doesn't spread to the dog. Yes, that's you know, that's anecdote, but I am. I would put money on but not a lot of money on the idea that actually that has not been looked at. Yeah, I'd cross species contagion of yawning, but within species contagion. Yes. Yeah. At least some so at least some other primates and seems to be at least domestic companions.

**Bret** 27:06

interesting how widespread it is, though, which suggests one of two things. It's all it's only mammals. Still widespread? Yeah. But yeah, but the question is, is it convergently widespread, or is it ancient, and we've all inherited it from some yawning ancestor? yawning tree shrew? Yeah, something like that.

**Heather** 27:26

Okay, next question. Do we need to make it costly for every coward that throws their towel and with either extreme, especially in media, academics and power? Let everyone know now we will not forget reasonable prevail, we will remember those who betrayed it. We will not forgive? So that's a Yep, that's a good question. It's just a little hard to read. Do we need to make it costly?

**Bret** 27:49

Yes, yeah. And that's why we have this term, and why we use it.

**Heather** 27:53

What term coward.

**Bret** 27:55

So if you look back in the various types of us talking, we have spoken frequently about the epidemic of cowardice. Yep, that is a message to those who did not stand up and to those who are looking at them to figure out what to do that that is not the honorable position. And the problem is what you cannot do is tell people stand up and it will be safe. So the fact is, the cowardice is really about something. But yeah, turning up the heat on cowardice is the right move. You have to do it on our blame. But especially what I would say is actually the cowardice that I am least sympathetic with is cowardice of people who can afford to do something else. The cowardice, for example, at the head of the Democratic Party is despicable. And it is. I can't say it's criminally treason, but it is in effect treasonous, because we are going to destroy the nation in an effort to let those people not say what they should full well understand. So yes, turn up the heat. I would say though, your last, I'm not seeing it.

**Heather** 29:05

But we will not forgive. We will not remember those who betrayed we will not forgive.

**Bret** 29:09

I would not say that. I would say we don't know where this comes out. And frankly, if we don't forgive anybody who has made an error in this era, there's gonna be very few

**Heather** 29:19

left. Yeah, so we will not forget. We will remember. Yeah, but we will not forgive is maybe a bridge too far. Yeah,

**Bret** 29:28

I think it is.

**Heather** 29:30

Okay, we're gonna get through at least a few more here up front. And we started with some questions from last time. Do you follow slate star Codex? That's actually that's not quite spelled right. I think it's called slate star Codex star, right. Any thoughts in the New York Times? doxxing. Scott Alexander and the resulting deletion of his blog. It's important. New York Times Fox up again. Yeah, sorry. I used to do that.

**Bret** 29:57

Show up on there. Yeah. No, it's It's despicable. And first of all, you know what, hey, we've got a podcast, there are 1000s of people watching. There's also a petition. Many of us have signed it. Yep. That you should sign to, to ask the New York Times, not to Doc's, Scott Alexander, as if that needs to be stated. But apparently, in this era, it does. So

**Heather** 30:21

let's just say, I was thrown because there's an extra letter in there that caused me to miss remember. So it is slate star Codex is a long standing independent blog, on all manner of rich and dense and intriguing intellectual topics, that is written under a pseudonym, to protect the identity of the author, who it turns out is a clinical psychologist, who, for whom, if his identity were suddenly to be revealed, the damage yes to Him, for sure, but especially to the mental health of all of his patients, who would suddenly be faced with knowing all of this backstory on their therapist, would be extraordinary. And to what end, the New York Times doesn't even have a justification for, for threatening to reveal his identity. There's no there's no journalistic justification at all. And we can't point you to slate star Codex now because the person who writes is Scott Alexander has now taken it down. It's it's really horrifying, actually, you know, they're like, yeah, like, it's just not here. Let's

**Bret** 31:20

put it this way. Here. The coup has knocked a singular property off the map in one month. Yep. Right. So this is telling you what this horizontal coup is going to do to us right to be able to take out that node in one go is just stunning. It's late start codec? I can't remember. Yeah,

**Heather** 31:42

I know. Can't remember it. 1000 times.

**Bret** 31:44

But yeah, anyway. I'm sure. Your search engine Well, actually,

**Heather** 31:49

I couldn't find a codec. codec. So that is right. It's just not start. Yep. Okay. Does Mark Anthony always went over Brutus. Does the Darkhorse duo need a Mark Antony and or dog ba to succeed?

**Bret** 32:06

No, first, I don't think anything is necessary. I think we're in a brand new spot. And people know we need help. And so anything that checks the boxes of does it solve the problem? Does it address my concerns? Does it put me in jeopardy is capable of doing the trick. So, narratively speaking, what is the best way to get there? that's a that's a question. And I don't know the answer to it. But I don't think I don't think this is a matter of hitting the narrative perfectly. I think this is a matter of the system is so broken, and the solution it's handed us is so inadequate, and the danger is so great that many people have years to hear if we can deliver them a version of the plan. That is clear.

**Heather** 33:00

Heather, in one of the earlier live streams, you mentioned that vitamin D supplementation isn't the same as getting vitamin D from sunlight. Could you elaborate on this thanks, and much love to you both. The I can't say a tremendous amount about vitamin D in particular, but the logic is is this that our modern, reductionist approach to health tends to focus on finding, isolating, quantifying, and then prescribing in the form of an actual prescription or just over the counter pills. The thing that is now imagined to be what is keeping you from health and this is that it is it is reductionism, that is the flaw here and also a kind of scientism since you lotto wherein a scientific approach allowed for the isolation and naming and quantification and synthesis of this thing. But no one took a step back and looked at the whole system, which is inherently complex and said, Okay, what is the value of this within the system? And does it have interplay with other parts? And of course it does. So we have any number of examples in which something has been isolated. And then it turns out that that is not the thing that was actually necessary in the way that we thought it was. But it was something that was easily easily found easily named, easily pointed to, and then turns out in isolation doesn't do nearly as much good. So it's possible that some of these will actually work in isolation. It's possible that vitamin D supplementation is just as good as as getting it through your skin, but I would I would put the chances of that close to zero. Just as well, you see that?

**Bret** 34:44

Well, I was gonna say we have a lot of these cases where the problem is, you're using the logic of simple systems on a complex system. And so for example, why am I blanking on the name for The loss of calcium from bones with a osteopenia, osteoporosis, right? In the case of osteoporosis, well, there's not enough calcium in the bones obviously give the person calcium, they don't metabolize it. Why would that be? Well, you're dealing with a complex system. And the whole reason that the calcium is lost in the bones in the first place isn't what you think it is. So the simple fact of dumping calcium on the system doesn't work. So

**Heather** 35:21

this is this is a perfect and pure example. osteoporosis is caused by lack of calcium, therefore, just add calcium, right? No, it's an evolved system. It's not going to work that way. Well, occasionally a system work that simply, maybe sure, but the vast majority of these things aren't going to work with simple supplementation. There's an excellent book, which are referred to in our book, which is reminiscent which points out the some of the error in this kind of thinking. And I forgotten the author, but it's called the tyranny of metrics. And it's a short book, it's really extraordinary points to how this kind of reductionist pseudo numerate thinking, has managed to finagle its way into medicine and education into all sorts of places where it has no business being.

**Bret** 36:07

Yep. And in this case, you know, we moved indoors, that blocked the sun, we produce vitamin D, through contact with the sun through a kind of photosynthesis. And supplementing is not an excellent way to replace it. Now, there are modes of supplementation that do seem to work that involve things like fish oil. But these are cultures that have a long history of having had to supplement because of very cold winters, for example. So the simple lesson,

**Heather** 36:37

a very, very high latitude. So like Cod, Cod, liver oil turns out to be a way to get the vitamin, the equivalent of the vitamin D that you need. Right? It was a discovery by Scandinavians and Vikings. Not because they knew they were looking for that thing, but because those people who ate a lot of that food survived better,

**Bret** 36:55

right? They did. And they may have carried some mythology along with I'm sure they did and what it was but, but the simple thing is, when you disrupt living systems, you invite consequences you don't see because these systems are complex, and there are things you don't understand about how they work. So the idea that you can just simply blaze in there and remedy them with the obvious technological fix often doesn't work. So yeah, go on the sun. Avoid sunscreen, don't get a sunburn by taking little breaks in the shade. I think the best most useful advice

**Heather** 37:29

given the status of things, is there any genuine recourse aside from networking and massing militias. I like being hopeful as much as the next guy, but we know what this is and where it goes for the helpless?

**Bret** 37:41

Well, yeah, there are two kind of depends where, where in civilization you stand, whether you have useful things to do. I think there are important plays to make that could take this disaster and turn it into something useful. But I don't know any of them that don't involve an outbreak of leadership, in which reason becomes a capacity of this movement. So

**Heather** 38:12

you're hoping for an epidemic of leadership?

**Bret** 38:16

I don't know that I'd call it an epidemic. Yes, I am hoping to see leadership emerge. And I am despairing of the fact that it does not seem to be doing so. But yeah, I really hope it doesn't. The militia answer, how can this be anything but a disaster? It's going to be civil war? And I don't even know, you know, at least in the case of the first Civil War, there was a geographic distinction. So that, you know, there were at least outcomes that made some sense, I don't know what outcome emerges out of a civil Civil War here that makes any sense. Who do you divide from what you know, or is it just a bloodletting? In which case? Can we not figure out how to avoid doing that? I'm stunned that we are here. Even though I have long thought it possible. I'm stunned that it has happened.

**Heather** 39:04

It's still surprising when it shows up. Yep. Seeing strong selection pressure for traditional, let me see, this written sort of telegraphic, like seeing strong selection pressure for traditional gender roles and antiquity, compensation for high child mortality and low life expectancy etc. I look for the same regarding anti homosexual norms to no result. What am I missing?

**Bret** 39:34

Can you parse that now and try again,

**Heather** 39:37

I can't quite parse it. I'm gonna I'm just gonna read it as straight as I can. Okay, seeing strong selection pressure for traditional norms. Startup again, seeing strong selection pressure for traditional gender roles and antiquity, parentheses compensation for high child mortality and low life expectancy etc. and friends. I looked for the same regarding anti homosexual norms to no result. What am I missing?

**Bret** 40:00

Okay, I'm beginning to get what that question means. I think it has to do with homosexuality, removing people from the breeding population in a way that mortality would be expected to. Right. And so this person is looking for some sort of cultural compensation. I think in some sense, this is missing. This is going, we've been threatening for so long to rent a hall and unleash a

**Heather** 40:30

person is trying to get you to give a 32nd teaser.

**Bret** 40:34

Okay, the teaser is look, homosexuals were always there hiding in plain sight. And the role that they were playing was an important one. So the reason that you do not see the expected compensatory cultural mechanisms is that what has happened is a disruption of the normal phenomenon of homosexuality as it exists in culture after culture. So some, at some point, it will be possible to rent a hall and I would like to rent a hall and I would like to deploy something other than a cryptic hint at what might be in that logical quadrant. But All right, we're not running out today. Nope. Okay,

**Heather** 41:22

this next one is just a comment. I tune in live and possible, always listen to YouTube uploads. Thank you for keeping true dialogue and dialectic alive. Thank you. Hey, there. And Brett, from your first hand experience, do you guys think the end game and ultimate goal of the critical race theory and affiliated studies and movements is some variant of African American independence? there's a there's a faction that may be trying for that, but I don't think it's it's actually dominant. I think it's more about amassing power and wielding power over all of us.

**Bret** 41:53

Yeah, I mean, I don't even know. You know, I've heard of voluntary separatist movements. Yeah. But again, I mean, how do we even if you thought this divorce was smart, and I think it's stupid, but if you thought this divorce was smart, what does it look like? We're not geographically separable. Frankly, we're not even separable as people because the intermixing has been extreme, you know, to our credit,

**Heather** 42:21

yeah. But I mean, this person isn't saying, could we do it? This is the endgame and the ultimate goal. Do some people over in critical race theory, and affiliate studies? Hold that as a goal? I think some do, I think, you know, they're desperately confused about what, what it means. But I think that it is, it is a faction,

**Bret** 42:44

faction or perspective. Yeah, I think it's mostly mythological. But anyway, yes, there, there will be those in the movement. But in some sense, the movement is a set of incoherent demands. And Yep, let's see what sticks is kind of the approach. Yeah.

**Heather** 43:01

Okay, just a couple more here, and then we'll go into the next. Next live stream. There is a time asymmetry in reasoning with spurious arguments by answering madness with reason. Are we putting ourselves at a game theoretic disadvantage? Maoists use dirty tactics? Will we be out competed by playing fair?

**Bret** 43:23

Great question. Yeah. I don't think there is a mechanism to win by playing deceitfully. I think it will break down into madness more quickly. And that in some sense, the only option is to respond to the madness with reason. And then to try to amplify the protection for those who recognize the reason and abandon the absurdity. So there is tactical stuff to be done, but it does not involve coming up with our own Kafka traps. That's just not going to work. Yeah. Okay, so

**Heather** 44:07

we're just going to do the last two at the 20 ish dollar level before switching over, okay. And there's a couple in the 10s that I really want to get to. So we will start there next time. This is my first time listening live. Thank you so much for doing these. Have you heard the news coming out of the UK regarding dexamethasone as a treatment for COVID-19? Do you have any thoughts on this from a biological perspective? I have sort of vague glimmerings of this and I don't really know much don't know your and so no thoughts yet. Presumably we will have more at some point. If it if it lives as a as a news item and doesn't just disappear because it turned out to be false. There's so many things in the COVID 19 era are happening. Okay. I like the hashtag Dark Horse duo plan, but we're that many sympathetic voters would still vote for their preferred lesser evil to avoid the spoiler effect. Do you think a vote pairing app or website could be useful in mitigating this

**Bret** 45:00

Well, let me tell you yes, I

**Heather** 45:02

know you. Do you want to get to that one?

**Bret** 45:04

Yeah, we have put a lot of thought into the spoiler effect, if you and what I can say is as we reveal the plan and all of its glory, this week, you will see that there is a failsafe built into the plan so that it cannot act as a spoiler. This is one of two major objections that people have, and we have a structural fix. So on the one hand, I don't think you need an app to deal with that the failsafe does not require an app that said, I do believe there are things that an app could be very useful for in this plan, and then frankly, building out the plan so that the proof of concept can extend to other offices, not just the office of president. So anyway, I'm very keen on the idea of a sophisticated app that will form the basis of a retooling of our democratic process to make it work according to the value spelled out in the Constitution, which I should point out. does not mention parties.

**Heather** 46:10

Okay, starting out, we hope, the first question that came in in the current live stream, we have a comment, keep up the good work everyone chip in a few dollars. Thank you. Next question. Can black trans woman get more intersectional points for converting to Islam? Yes, yes, I think they can. We'll see that coming soon. All right. Yep. Being wired, this is from echo. Being wired to like the smell of people genetically related to us, seems to give incentive to socialize and reproduce inside lineage that is preserving gained immunity. Many people move from ancestors niches, is this still relevant? And then a follow up question. If we all wear Maoist perfume? Well, we can.

**Bret** 46:57

So let's just say this is a tough question, right? There's a question about what society we would like. And one thing that people advocate for is a society in which we actually do stop taking racial distinctions seriously, and we blend into each other. And that's great. The problem is, there may be genetic reasons that your genome doesn't prefer that which are not actually relevant to your person and what it would want. And then there may be reasons that your genome doesn't want it, because it's actually in some way costly. So let me just say, you have different things intention, on the one hand, you have attention towards breeding with people who are closer to you in all probability, and that does not have to be genetic, it can be transmitted culturally as well. And then you have a force pulling you away from breeding with people who are too close. And then you have another factor, which I would say is, and again, this can be genetic, it can function culturally, or a combination of the two, which is hybrid vigor. So to the extent that one has certain things that function very well in one population and other things that function very well and another population, a hybrid may carry the values that exist in both those populations to one individual. So it's a very complicated puzzle. And I don't think we have a deep understanding of all of the nuances here. But let's just say, we are constantly being jerked around by our genomes. We are being jerked around in our actual interests, we're being jerked around in genetic interests that we should not honor and then we are being pulled in directions that we don't understand because they may contain values that we are unaware of. So let's not over simplify it is really I guess what I'm getting at?

**Heather** 48:51

Are we moving ourselves into oblivion? Yes, what my next question, what embeddings should be stressed to self correct?

**Bret** 49:02

I mean, the problem Stop it. Yes. The problem is, we have because memes, which came into existence with Richard Dawkins, Chapter 11, of The Selfish Gene in 1976. That's where the concept came from. The concept was a scientific concept, until it became an internet concept that then got kind of trivialized by what we all call memes, which are cute little gifts and things that have text associated with them or whatever. And the problem is, in some sense, there's a lot of stuff that actually at a technical level, is clearly mimetic. These podcasts are clearly mimetic, and so there's a whole landscape of podcasts that are actually trying to sort out difficult issues rigorously, at, you know, in a long form, so that is us struggling through a mimetic landscape tour. Reason. And it may be the answer to the insanity that arises in a world of people, you know, hurling trivial memes at each other. So yes, something in the pneumatic landscape is probably the answer.

**Heather** 50:14

Good. You're up next as well. What are the primary very significant disagreements that you and Sam Harris have?

**Bret** 50:21

You know, there are a few apparently, one or the growing? Well, I think I think one of the things traced themselves to a few routes, one has to do with determinism and whether this could be a fully deterministic universe. Another one has to do with free well, and I think that the freewill discussion is contingent on my being right about the the determinism question, if it's a deterministic universe, I don't even know what Free Will would mean. If it isn't non deterministic universe at some level than free will is possible. Sam says it isn't possible.

**Heather** 50:58

Yeah, I mean, there there are philosophical positions that allow for one without the other. It seems incoherent to me, but I've seen I've seen it written.

**Bret** 51:06

Yes, yeah. You've seen it written. And if it was in a deterministic universe, I don't know what that would. So anyway, there's that and then there's this question of Pan psychism, which I don't know where he falls out today on Pan psychism. But Pan psychism. The idea that consciousness because it is seemingly resistant to rigorous explanation, by standard means must therefore, in some sense, be written into the material that the universe is constructed of which I find preposterous may even predate matter. Right? So anyway, I would say those are, those are the biggies. And the funny thing is, in some sense, I don't think almost anything important depends on these things. Because, frankly, Sam

**Heather** 51:49

is very careful to argue that regardless of whether or not he's right, you need to behave in an honorable and ethical and moral way,

**Bret** 51:54

right, Sam lives like a guy who doesn't believe in these things. And he would probably tell you that so Oh, yeah. So in any case, there there are some disagreements they're probably worth sorting out because these are actually important philosophical questions, but probably nothing depends on it. Which is why Sam and I get along, in spite of our differences.

**Heather** 52:20

This from polymath nerd? Why is transgender identity even without transition celebrated but trans racial identity is considered an appalling appropriation of oppression not your own? Thank you Holly. It's a great question

**Bret** 52:35

well and in fact we I've now forgotten the woman's names that

**Heather** 52:39

was no no it's a different

**Bret** 52:41

kind of we had a an academic famously canceled over making exactly

**Heather** 52:46

who it was it might have been developed anyway.

**Bret** 52:48

So somebody made this argument in an academic paper I mean, you know didn't make the argument pro or con but basically said is this analogous and a firestorm erupted so let's put it this way the reason that we don't notice that inconsistency is because we have completely given up on the idea of consistent yeah consistency as a virtue

**Heather** 53:11

yeah yeah we've our people office back yes our

**Bret** 53:15

people wolf is back now wagging carrying

**Heather** 53:17

a large donut around off my chair Yeah, it's it's totally incoherent and consistent and it reveals the hypocrisy of the of the field the scholarship and if you can point that out to an individual it reveals maybe not their hypocrisy but if they don't think on it and get back to you and say I see that I have to accept both of these or neither of these as in order to remain consistent then it suggests very strongly that they are not working from first principles but working from received wisdom.

**Bret** 53:51

Yep. And if you can just do a thought experiment here too. It's possible Oh no, no, okay, well, try not to get us in too much hot water but it is possible that a person could transition from white to black so long as they took up an aggressively I don't want to say pro blacks I don't think this movement is pro black but and officially sanctioned pro black position. But if you were to imagine somebody transitioning Shaun King style to black and taking up a skeptical position of the movement, it would not function which tells you something about where we are that what is permitted is no longer about logic at all. It's about what you plan to do having done so. And anyway, that's not how logic works. Right?

**Heather** 54:45

You will be required to adopt these ideas if and only if you also agree with us over here otherwise you are prohibited from doing so. Yeah. Have you guys have you guys considered any questions submission systems besides Super Chat I vote with my wallet and I can't stand the thought of YouTube taking a 35% cut. Yeah, it's egregious, isn't it? I'm a software developer, and we'll be happy to build you a custom one. Well, Kyle, let us see if we can figure out how to be in touch with you. Because yes, Zack is saving that for us. And that would be that would be great. Because being more free from YouTube would be terrific. And obviously, if you guys are donating to us, it would be great if we got more of that money and YouTube got less they're getting plenty as it is. They've soft D monetized now your conversation with Eric Yeah. And your conversation with Yuri Dagon. Yep. JOHN McWhorter has remained unsolved to monetize that might look racist if they were to stop to monetize that one. So they didn't actually think

**Bret** 55:43

they did it. They sought to monetize almost all of them reflexively. And then I have to appeal. And the thing is, there is no

**Heather** 55:50

or basically, I mean, there's very little money coming in from ads. So most of it's from Super Chat at their mercy.

**Bret** 55:55

Yeah, we're at their mercy, which, you know, it's absurd. There's no, there's nothing to appeal to. There's no analog of a court. There's nothing it's just it's a company town.

**Heather** 56:04

There's all these these people who were indoctrinated in the latter day, adherents from the schools of Ed. There we go. Yeah. So yeah, we will follow up with you. Thank you. Next question. I'm an author, the children's book industry has become highly political, and activists are greatly influencing who publishes what to view various methods. Any suggestions on how to push back without getting canceled? Thanks.

**Heather** 56:33

Yeah, we talked about this. A little bit on one of our earlier q&a is

**Heather** 56:41

I haven't noticed children's literature, although directly, although I recently spent some time at pauwels in the ya section, the young, young adult section, and it's it's devastatingly bad. How to push back. You know, there, there are little glimmerings of hope. Some places at some publishing houses with imprint imprints possibly trying to create a buffer for authors. I don't know of any of that is happening in children's literature, or why a literature and it also, that's not of course, the first thing that would be authors went into the first thing you ran into is the agency's literary agencies. And when I went looking for literary agencies, boy three, three and a half years ago, for science fiction, I was amazed then at how many code words how many wolken, your section list code words, there were in almost every agency that I looked at. So it's, it is, I don't even know even if the publishers, even if some publishers get smart to this, how do you do an end run around agents, given that most publishers won't even look at a proposal from you? If you don't have an agent?

**Bret** 57:55

I think it's the wrong question. All right. The fact is, you have an ideology, it is logically incoherent. What are the chances that every university in the country would find itself in Thrall to it? There's zero, there are lots of us who know what's wrong with it. So what happened, power happened, there is something powerful enough to take every university and turn it in this direction. Right? That is going to be true, for were it true that there was a publication that resisted this completely, it would be wildly popular, right? Because people, they don't need yet another Vox, they need something that speaks in a different voice. And so the fact of the absence of the alternative view in some sort of standard form, tells you that what's really going on is something very, very powerful that is capable of taking every property and it will, right that's what we're facing. So in some sense, looking for a strategy. How in a world where this seems to be very widespread, do you accomplish x The point is now if you accomplish x, then you're going to become the thing that it has to go after in order that nobody can accomplish x. So in some sense, we have to fight this thing with an understanding that it is in some sense, a a spreading ideology that infects everything a horizontal revolution and that the idea how do you how could you construct a platform that wouldn't have this happen if you did, they would have to find a way and they will. So trying to navigate it as an individual, effectively hopeless, you can leap off into I mean, this podcast is an independent voice and it's an independent voice because because the tools to simply put something into the world and have you directly reach it exist

**Heather** 59:59

baby still universe. Don't, you know, at the whim of YouTube to some degree, right. And I was going to say, within the book publishing industry, being able to self publish became a thing that has not nearly as much negative connotation now as it did 30 years ago, 50 years ago was would have been impossible, really 100 years ago or so. But I think independent publishers are still basically dependent on Amazon. Right? I think that that then is the arbiter of whether or not you're woken up now and I see for instance, that and this is not a self published book, but Abigail shires new book, which is on trans rights activists, specifically and the contagion that's happening to teenage girls has been somehow vanished from from Amazon and you know, she's she's got a publisher, it's not I don't remember. Apologies, Abigail, if you're watching, I don't remember if it's one of the you know, the big four or five publishers, but it's, it's, it's an extent, reputable publisher that's been around for a while. So it's not just her fighting Amazon, but still, they're losing. So it's it, it is possible. And yet you're we're all still going through some some portal that does have an ability at any moment to say, Actually, no, I don't actually like what you're saying.

**Bret** 1:01:25

It's choke points is the problem, it will ultimately come down to Google as a choke point. Amazon is a choke point, your ISP has a choke point, the credit cards or choke points. And this thing is in all of those places, so it cannot resist. Now there is a question about why a podcast like this is tolerated. Right. And I, what we don't know, is if you duplicated this, and you tried it, if you didn't have our following, and our friends, the things that we have accumulated in the time since evergreen blew up, you might be able to drive us extinct without anybody making a fuss. And it may be that the thing that allows us to save what we say is the fact that the cost of taking us off these platforms is too high, it's it would put them into awkward position. So I don't know the answer to that question. I certainly do frequently feel Twitter's thumb on the scale. I feel Google's thumb on the scale. And there's no telling I mean, the slate star Codex example is a case where something the coup went too far, it went after a property that actually a lot of important people were paying attention to. And so now they've got an awkward situation on their hands. But that, you know, do you want to live in a world where the only people who can say true things are people for whom it becomes really awkward when you toss them off the platform or docks them or, you know, put them through a struggle session, you don't want to live in that world, you want to live in a world where we are all protected from struggle sections, because struggle sections are wrong. Yeah.

**Heather** 1:03:04

Okay, we'll get through a couple more of these. Can we please address? Can we please address the gender gap in college education and graduation rates? What does it mean for our nation's workforce and for family life? So the gender gap that the person is referring to, obviously, is the inverse of one usually invoked that we have? I think it may be closing in on 6040 60% of college, actual undergrads, and I think graduates are now female. And the gap is growing. And it is certainly, it is skewed differently into different degrees across different disciplines. But it is real. This is something that Christina Hoff Sommers has been on. For decades. At this point, I think it may be something that we talked about with her and Peter Bogosian on stage, when we were on stage with her here in Portland a couple years ago. And that's, that's up on that's online, we can link to it here. I think I think that we talked about this a little bit in that in that event. But what does it mean for the nation's workforce and for family life, it's going to be deeply destructive of it. Because you've got more men than women without college degrees going forward. And in the past, having a college degree was the thing that you needed to move into the middle class. college degrees are less and less valuable now because of what we've already been talking about with regard to what's going on the Academy, but they still have this sort of badge of success about them. Many women are going to only be looking for mates who have an equivalent or higher level of that kind of badge. And so there's going to be greater competition for men, which is going to cause greater failure of families, as men see that they can choose among the women who are valuing them, it's it's Chaos across the board. And there's no reason to expect that this. There's no reason to think this is in any way good to celebrate now, I feel like some people are celebrating this. But what is certainly happening even if that's not true, no one talks about it. Yeah, and we have on a few occasions, but the only gender gaps that we are allowed to talk about are the ones in which women are are still lagging. Even even when all of the trend lines look like, look like those, those gaps are going to evened out very soon.

**Bret** 1:05:37

There's something petty and deeply nihilistic about what we are seeing and then just simply go after that, which works And anyway,

**Heather** 1:05:48

yeah, I mean, it's it. Boy, I hope, I hope there's nothing too. But maybe there is something to the observation that higher ed is becoming a cesspool of irrelevance. Exactly as women are requiring more and more power within it. It is it is a it is a disaster.

**Bret** 1:06:06

I didn't say it. I'm not even sure I heard you say

**Heather** 1:06:09

no. Yes, you didn't. razz Simone for President. Wow, that was not my phrase. That was the next question here, which is Oh, president of the

**Bret** 1:06:22

federal disaster EME Overlord, maybe? You know, depending I've had Dallek, Well, look, the thing about warlords is they would have to duke it out. So

**Heather** 1:06:32

who's who's gonna be the competing warlord,

**Bret** 1:06:34

then? Well, that depends on you know, we need some different autonomous zones, each one will have to have a little battle for warlord and then as they meet, we'll find out you know, I mean, your Look, I

**Heather** 1:06:47

didn't hear you say I don't think. Okay, shouldn't Marxism be treated the same way Nazi ism is treated in academia and elsewhere? Shouldn't funding violent revolutionaries be treated the same as funding terrorists? And those assets seized? Wouldn't those two changes and all of this?

**Bret** 1:07:04

No. So first of all, I hate this because I don't want to be defending communism, I will make the same point that always gets me in trouble, which is that there is a critique inside of Marxism, which is not so easy to dismiss, there is a plan, which is crazy, that we know doesn't work. And I would argue that actually, somehow in this discussion, we are missing the central fact, which is that the world's most boring conversation, which is about whether or not a group selection is an important evolutionary force is the key to understanding why Marxism when translated into communism does not work. So somehow we are going to have to get up to speed on why this plan every time it evolves. And it doesn't have to come from Marx, you can have people reinvent the plan and decide, hey, wouldn't it be cool? If we all point in the same direction, redistributed everything? That plan is not gonna work? But I'll tell you what, I'll give you something tantalizing. The body is communist. The body is communist in the following sense. From each according to his ability and body, everybody.

**Heather** 1:08:14

Okay, this isn't a political statement you're making No, this is an anatomical and physiological Simon Oh, yep. Okay,

**Bret** 1:08:19

go from each according to his ability to each according to his need. That's how the body works, right? Why does it work? Because all the cells have the same genome, they have no reason to disagree over this plan, right? So the point is, altruism is built into the way you structured, I want that work with people because our genomes aren't the same.

**Heather** 1:08:37

Until you unrest is not communist a tree is communists, but a forest is not correct.

**Bret** 1:08:40

Correct. So if you understand that, then the point is, listen, you communists, you've missed this important biological fact. Do you want to get us to all point in the same direction? Do you want well being to be widely distributed? The answer to how you do that is through enlightened self interest and cooperation, it is possible, it is possible to build that system, but it will not be communist. That's not how you will get there, that thing is unstable. And the reason that you get gulags and other forms of oppression traveling in tandem with this mode is that the failure of it to work forces you to re incentivize things for people. In other words, what causes people to behave in a communist way is the threat of death or being imprisoned and all that stuff. We don't need to go down this road. We've discovered it already many times over. Let's not rediscover it. Do you want to redistribute opportunity? I'm all for redistributing opportunity, right? But if you get stuck in the redistributing wealth conversation, you're never going to get there. Right? opportunity should be broadly distributed. Any honest capitalist should tell you that, right? They want opportunity broadly distributed if they're honest, because that's the way the maximum amount of good stuff gets done. Right. When you have people sidelined, people who have incredible capacity and they're sidelined cleaning somebody's toilet, that's a waste. That's somebody who might have invented something awesome. Who's doing Something that, you know, a robot should do. Right? So distributing opportunity broadly great, but let's build it on a foundation that makes some sense. And that involves known things, right? cooperation that is based on enlightened self interest.

**Heather** 1:10:14

So one of the key misunderstandings then is that the body be a human body or a tree's body, or whatever, is effectively communist because all of the cells and systems in that body have shared fate. This is the concept that this is maybe one of the concepts I find most important from evolutionary biology that they have shared fate, whereas the trees in a forest have some shared fate, but not wholly shared fate, just as the people in a village or a town or a nation cannot have fully shared fate, whereas we all of us on the planet do. Yeah, right. So so we have we have a planetary shared fate, but that's too big, to to regulate at the same kind of level that we need regulation and good governance and effective governance at the more local scale, but bodies can act individual human bodies are effectively communist in a way that, that corporations and towns cannot be because there is incomplete shared fate.

**Bret** 1:11:21

Well, I want to add something to the mix. Shared fate is very important. But frankly, I'd argue nationally, we have shared fate, right? If we wrecked a nation, we're going to be collectively screwed. But there are two things that work in the body's favor in establishing corporal communism or whatever you would call it. One is the shared fate. And the other is the complete absence of conflicts of interest.

**Heather** 1:11:50

It's I mean, I put that under shared fate. They're distinct,

**Bret** 1:11:53

right? You can put a bunch of people who might have conflicts of interest in a rowboat, and they might still have shared fate if it goes under, right. But the body by having a genome that accounts for every cell means that your liver is more than happy to surrender whatever resources it means to to make your heart function, because it would be suicidal not to.

**Heather** 1:12:18

And so the notable exception, of course, being cancer.

**Bret** 1:12:21

Well, and cancer is basically I won't say this in every case, because there are cancers that are contagious and things but in general cancer, if it functions the way we think it does, is incoherent it's like Renegade cells that frankly, don't have an interest in being Renegade because they create a tumor that yes, it grows, but it's a dead end. So So yes, the body has an overwhelming reason. I mean, you know, the body cooperates to get the gonads into a position that they can actually produce some next generation that's that's the game. But they have every reason. Your liver doesn't want to freeze out your eyes. It wants your eyes to have everything they need to make them work great. So anyway, yes, that's that's the analysis great.

**Heather** 1:13:05

I've been consistently annoyingly sharing the Evergreen doc by Mike Nana. But next steps will the ITW band get back together? We need leaders but we also need direction on how we can best support this movement on our own. Your brother's say he was getting the band back together.

**Bret** 1:13:23

I believe I retweeted that very thing. Yeah. It sounded like he was getting the band back together. I'm looking forward to it. As I've said elsewhere, I miss ITW. I think I dw was doing very important work. I think it needed to evolve into a next phase. And maybe it has and it just hasn't been correctly understood. But I do think, boy, it's time where we're in such jeopardy. And what we really need are people who can say the difficult things and live to tell the tale and demonstrate it and then it needs to spread the ability to do that needs to spread

**Heather** 1:13:57

Yeah. I first learned of you on Joe Rogan after our kids and Catholic school in grade eight homework, asking how to decolonize the Canadian military. And grade four being told boys of periods two, I have watched and read all of Jordan Peterson, Eric Brett, etc. Thank you very much. So there's not a question there. But yeah, decolonizing, the Canadian military and in grade four. That's what like a nine year old, an eight year old nine year old being told the boys have periods to

**Bret** 1:14:35

hopefully hopefully what happens is all this garbage is going to backfire. Because even kids that young are going to begin to detect that the adults who are targeting them have no goddamn concept what they're talking about.

**Heather** 1:14:47

But that's coming at at best then we end up with an entire generation of traumatized children who never had effective adults in their lives. I mean, look and do this, this encounter. Look school, we're gonna be weeks but other kinds of ideology perhaps to be percolating through Catholic schools, not this.

**Bret** 1:15:07

Okay, here's the thing, I think it is a mistake to imagine that somehow we're shooting for a world in which children are not traumatized. We're all traumatized. Okay, we are losing the thread of the conversation. And the point is, look, trauma in isolation is bad. Trauma gives rise, though, to the ability to do the extraordinary, the unusual, the unexpected. And so if we could start thinking about the fact that modernity is actually traumatizing every child, can we turn that trauma into something valuable? Can we turn it into independence of thought into a high capacity? I mean, you know, you know, the way we joke with our kids has trained them to spot bullshit, right? Right. Like it's every day, it's a 24 hour a day drill. They know how to spot bullshit, and really, actually some high quality bullshit, but but the point is not so high quality. Oh, yeah. Is it? You know, you gotta mix it up, right? You don't. But in any case, somehow, we need those people who get it, to understand that they have a responsibility to convey to indicate to kids they encounter, Hey, kids, you may be hearing some bullshit. It'll be coming from surprising places. It's not always an advertisement, sometimes, you know, it may be your your teacher, and you know, you'll know the teachers who really know what they're talking about. Because for one thing, they're the ones who will entertain your questions and give you back an answer. That sounds like an answer. That's a good way to recognize a good teacher. If your teacher punishes you for asking questions. If they spout back something that sounds like nonsense, and you can't figure out what they said, that might not be the best.

**Heather** 1:16:55

That's right. Okay, let's let's get one more question. We get a couple of thank yous, we have a you didn't more bandanas. If you were gonna hold up a train station. This is my contribution

**Bret** 1:17:08

trains. I was thinking stagecoach.

**Heather** 1:17:18

Okay, let's do two more here. Do you think since a lot of this started in literature that starting with how we view stories might fix it? I'm not sure it started in literature. I think it started in the pseudo scholarship. But certainly it's taken over a fair bit of literature. And I do think that taking back myth and narrative and generating narratives that we can get behind will be an important part of this that we don't but one of the things we'll probably talk about next time, just allude to a little bit here is that one of one of the reasons that we in quotes or disadvantage is that there seem to be a lot of compelling narratives in the form of viscerally compelling anecdotes on the other side. And for the most part, the rejoinders that make sense, are in fact, these dispassionate, careful statistics based on actually at the population level, this is what is happening. And statistics are never going to be a good rejoinder to a good story. You know, humans, humans operate emotionally at the level of story. So we need to have good stories that we can tell.

**Bret** 1:18:38

So I'm going to take a slightly different tack I agree that this is fundamentally important. And you have pointed to the importance of high quality narrative many times, I'm going to argue that the failure of narrative is one in a cluster of failures that are crippling our ability to be decent to each other and to move forward. That there is a junk version of everything. Right? We are being induced into junk narrative, because we think that the purpose of narrative is entertainment. I'm not arguing that you shouldn't be entertained by narrative. I hope you are. But that's not its purpose. Right? We are being induced into a junk version of sex because we are told that the purpose of sex is basically getting off. Right? I hope you get off, but that's not the purpose of sex. Right? The purpose of sex has a lot to do with bonding. Right? We are told that the purpose of drugs is a thrill. pass the time escape, right? escape. No, these are very serious compounds that tap into the deepest parts of your mind.

**Heather** 1:19:47

And the most important things are also often fun. So right when you say serious, just just so you're not misunderstood, right? When you say serious, you don't mean it's going to be hard work and it's going to feel gray and you're not going to enjoy it,

**Bret** 1:19:59

right? No, no, no I need to point is the fun is nature's little reward to get you to do the work. That's the thing, the work is rewarding it's supposed to be. But it's not the reward isn't the point, the word reward is the thing that gets you to do the work. The point is the product of the work. And, you know, music, again, we think that the purpose is to entertain us, we don't even realize that we've lost track of the fact that you're not supposed to have your own music in your ears, and everybody is supposed to be able to pick the thing that, you know, tickles their mind, just so we are also supposed to have a shared and

**Heather** 1:20:32

musical is supposed to be bringing us together and not driving us further apart, not

**Bret** 1:20:36

just bring us together. But it's supposed to be in some sense, synchronizing the way we think around the same linguistic structures around the same melodies. And that those are powerful and important forces that we just unhooked not even thinking about what we were doing. And so you know, you've got music, drugs, sex, all the important stuff, we've been given a junk version, and we need, we need to narrow it, we need to resurrect the functional version. And the product of doing so would be a great deal more satisfaction, we are pursuing satisfaction directly and we're getting less and less of it. And pursuing a higher quality interaction with each other over these things would have exactly the opposite impact. And it couldn't possibly be more important.

**Heather** 1:21:24

One more question. Thank you guys. Your perspectives have changed my mind in many ways. So do you think life will ever go back to what we knew? Or should I start to adopt a new normal as much as I hate that term?

**Bret** 1:21:36

Yeah, the old normals done? I think we know that for sure. Yeah, it's impossible to imagine we go back, even if things formally went back to allowing you to interact the way you once did, I think we're all a bit rattled at what we've now seen, we've seen, we've seen a threat to our way of life. And this is true, no matter who you are, no matter which side of this divide you're on, we've seen a threat to our way of life, we have seen people open up possibilities that we didn't realize we're near at hand. And we've also seen that things can sneak up on us COVID-19 I increasingly believe is a self inflicted wound. But to the extent that a self inflicted wound can emerge from someplace half a world away, and, you know, bring us to our knees. We should have been preparing for that all along. It wasn't a secret that it could happen. And the fact that we didn't, and the fact that it's done this to us, and the fact that it may have unleashed the social unrest, all of these are evidence of what it is that we're not paying attention to during so called normal time. So in some ways, normal is over. And that's probably a good thing. Well, here we are.

**Heather** 1:22:54

I think we did

**Bret** 1:22:54

it. I think we're there. Thank you all for tuning in. We will be back. And all likelihood on

**Heather** 1:23:03

Tuesday when Tuesday. We'll have our private q&a tomorrow at 11

**Bret** 1:23:07

private q&a tomorrow at 11. And like, subscribe, share, tell us what you think. And we'll keep doing this. Be well everyone