Your Questions Answered - Bret and Heather 28th DarkHorse Po...

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**SPEAKERS**

Bret, Heather

**Bret** 00:08

Hey folks, welcome back to the Dark Horse podcast live stream q&a number 28 828. Amazing. Yeah, amazing. Oh, I said Hey folks, didn't I? Oh, well Matt Taibbi on his, his podcast made the point that people use the term folks too much and I'm trying to cure myself but it's not easy because I say it. So anyway, that's

**Heather** 00:35

all these with that? It's, it's one of the things you do. Yeah.

**Bret** 00:38

Well folks, bear with me. Alright, shall we get to the q&a?

**Heather** 00:43

Yeah, let's do it. So I'm going to spend about an hour as we do. We're going to start with just a couple of comments from what we missed last time as I began to do go spend about a half an hour on questions from the first live stream today arranged mostly by monetary amount and then we will skip to the questions coming in right now and try to address them as many as we can in the order in which they come in that is our rubric, which seems to split the difference between the various pros and cons of the various approaches. So from Episode 27 we have just a logistical question which actually I should have turned into an announcement I'm also covered in cat for how do you recommend a listener download just the audio portion of these videos so you can listen to them while driving or data signals are spotty at best? So we have the the not the q&a is but the main episodes are on are available as podcast under Brett Weinstein's, Dark Horse podcast on our face ratify Apple, the whole thing, right? Yep. The q&a is aren't I don't have a tech answer. But probably if we say that again, here in the chat someone Well,

**Bret** 01:51

there is a way you can, you can download youtube videos, there are many services that will allow you to do it, and then you could play them in a video player, I believe

**Bret** 02:01

that would work in a video player while he's driving.

**Bret** 02:05

You don't have to look at the video, turn it upside down and the CD was even download. We're told that Spotify Premium would would allow you to do it. Also the problem is that costs money I would imagine. Yeah. Yeah.

**Heather** 02:22

All right. Next question from last time. So I'm reading this even though I sort of inadvertently addressed some of it last hour, what parts of ROM de Angeles book do you agree with? There are parts I agree with? How do you hold a dominant culture accountable without slipping into tearing all the white Jesus statues down to the sign of white supremacy? So I I really I did my best to steal man, maybe the most egregious point in it by saying, Well, if you if you go back, if you replace the word racist, with benefiting from structures that have in the past been racist policies, then yes, people with white skin are in fact still benefiting from those structures today. I maybe will say more about this, depending on whether or not I've got a little essay that may come out soon. And if not, I'll share more of this. with you guys. Later,

**Bret** 03:14

I would say two things. There are parts of her book that I agree with the ISB and number. There's a price marker on it. I believe that that is the price. I don't believe it's worth it. But I do believe you think

**Heather** 03:25

they're factually accurate, factually, that's, I agree with you mean, you think that this is actually a description of reality? To the

**Bret** 03:30

extent that there is a factual description of the selling price, I agree that it is the selling price, but my point would be why the hell are we in a situation where we're answering the question, which parts of this incredibly insane book Do we believe in? Is that a game now? I mean, which parts of mine comp Do we believe the know the book is so bad that searching for the good in it is an insane exercise search for a book that is at least somewhat good before you try to find the problem. And

**Heather** 03:56

I'm gonna push back on this because many people you and I are lucky now, not three years ago, but that we we presumably never have to face one of these things. Again, one of these trainings, when you know, a colleague coming up to you with sad eyes and saying, Can you just read the book, you then you'll understand, just own your white supremacy, right? Like a lot of people are still having to do this. And so being armed with Okay, here's a point that makes sense. And that you know, and now that you've know that I have demonstrated my attempted good faith and understanding what is in this thing. Let me explain to you why overall, it is divisive, demonic, destabilizing of good political structure and all the rest.

**Bret** 04:34

I disagree with this. That book is a Trojan horse. And the idea that we are in some way required to spend our effort finding what might be acceptable in it is preposterous. This is a bad person who's written a dangerous book. And the fact is, there's a limited amount of time in a life. You're going to dedicate it to books, find one that actually Sleep helps you this one to read it to find the good in it, you are likely to absorb garbage arguments. So my point well

**Heather** 05:08

I guess I'm just like I just read it as you know, I, you know, I looked at parts of it when it came out, but I actually because I was asked to write this piece, I actually finally just sat down to read the damn thing which drove me a bit mad. But I did say over the last couple of days, and yeah, I wasn't reading it to find the good, but I was reading it to figure out, you know, what, what, what is there? And what are the kernels of truth in this that is being used, brandished as this as this marker of fealty in this movement is true that you can point to and say yes, that thing is true. That is real grievance. That thing is true. But this approach is nasty and reprehensible.

**Bret** 05:51

Well, but you also pointed out what I think neither of us knew. There's a piece of tape of Robyn D'Angelo, speaking at evergreen that Benjamin Boyce has shown and I believe Mike Naina in his documentary also shows it Yeah, actually

**Heather** 06:05

just shout out to Benjamin Boyce. So I went to Benjamin when I told him I've been asked to write this piece and said, I know you've talked about Robyn D'Angelo, his appearance on campus on evergreen campus. Can you point me and your he's done in a number of places and he also directed me to the actual the full video. And man is that one when a piece of work? Yeah. So she was she was there in spring of 2016. While we were actually in Ecuador, it was just it was the same month as the boat accident that I almost died in Galapagos. And we see many of the usual suspects on campus, speaking their willfully ridiculous truths. And we see her actively dividing people. And in her language, some of the stuff that's not even in the book, which wasn't out yet, like the book came out in 2018, when she was already doing her damage all over the place. We see I see, I hear in what she says even some of the turns of phrase we then saw from our own colleagues just months later, that then took an entire college down, right. So this is incredibly powerful. This

**Bret** 07:05

is my point. Yeah. That was a talk. Yep. now and I've been at evergreen when she was there, I would have gone to that talk. And I would have asked pointed questions. And I'm, you know, convinced that I understand my own mind well enough that I would not have been persuaded by her nonsense. But it's obviously lethal to people who don't have the proper tools to figure out how to escape the logical traps, right? I'm just saying, if you're not expecting these traps, they'll catch you off guard, and you'll sign up for things that seem safe and they won't be. So I for the very same reason that I think it is not safe to have a visitor campus and lecture people on the racism that they don't know is in their own minds. It's not safe to assign people the job of figuring out what good exists in our book. It's a garbage book.

**Heather** 07:53

Fair enough. So these two just comments from last time that I wanted to share because I was so I was so touched by them. Thank you. I have a 17 year old son who was about to march off to college, I would lock him in his room if I could. And YouTube, you know, speaking to the the craziness on college campuses, specifically, and you to help me figure out I want to apply for a PhD in biotechnology. I got the position on Friday. Thank you so much for the inspiration. Keep up the great work. Congratulations. Awesome. That is awesome. Congratulations. All right, on to questions from the last hour. I have a friend who wakes around three to 4am for about an hour then goes back to sleep. She has suffered some trauma and anxiety. I'm aware that some cultures might different sleep patterns, what could be going on here? And it'll extend the question in the private q&a. So we don't want to just touch on this a little bit and then probably we'll come back to

**Bret** 08:43

it. Yeah. It sounds like a very normal pattern actually. Exactly. That a an unbroken night of sleep is an unusual thing and perhaps not the healthiest thing there is something to be said for a break in the middle it's very common that people have good good sleep cycles do this

**Heather** 09:00

and in so far as it's been looked at, by anthropologists, many hunter gatherer societies and I actually don't know if there are exceptions to this I just don't know how many anthropologists have looked specifically at sleep cycles but several on I can't recall at the moment which which people which people's do exactly this it's usually not quite so late in the night but they'll you know, sitting around sitting around a fire Yep, go to bed, sleep for three or four hours and then get up and actually do some some work or just conversation which is a kind of work in many cases for an hour or two and then go back to sleep for another three or four hours. And this also apparently, is known from some era in second millennial Europe. I can't remember exactly what I do not know my sort of Medieval and Renaissance and enlightenment European history very well. But there's some evidence that many people were doing that. Then whenever that exactly then was

**Bret** 09:58

Yep. Now I find out related note that if I am sleeping, and I wake up in the middle of the night, and I make contact with the clock. Now this is obviously not a natural pattern. But if I figure out what time it is in the middle of the night, and there's a bunch of hours left to sleep, having gone to sleep again, having seen the clock, I tend to wake up at exactly the right moment. So I'm at the right place in my sleep cycle. And that probably has a huge positive impact on all sorts of things waking up in the middle of your sleep cycle, because your alarm clock suddenly decided to be out of bed is at least very stressful.

**Heather** 10:33

It's It's so damaging. So that would have been perfectly possible to do under some but not all circumstances in pre industrial era, where even if you were not sleeping outside, you could easily go outside and look at the moon the position. And so this requires that you not only know what the phase of the moon is, but what that phase means about where the moon will be in the sky. And you can't do it as reliably The closer to new it is. But you know, given the full moon rises approximately at sundown, depending on how close you are to the equator. And you know, rises an hour ish later every every night as it wanes and approaches again, rising around sundown as it approaches fall. If you know that Yeah, nothing that all sounded like a lot of words. And how would you exactly for a model of that? Well, of course you would anyone who spent a lot of time outside, you know, doing, say research in Madagascar or backpacking or just you know, in the backcountry, comes to understand these patterns and you internalize it. And it is a clock it's not doesn't have the precision of a clock. But it is a

**Bret** 11:35

clock. Yep. And there are also Oh,

**Heather** 11:37

sorry, yeah, it won't work around the new moon. It won't work with cloud cover. Really, right.

**Bret** 11:43

There's also in every place on earth local patterns, which you couldn't globalize, you can't say this is the pattern of things that you learn if you're there

**Heather** 11:52

sounds of the birds and insects and such. Yeah,

**Bret** 11:55

when I was working on bats, when I was radio tracking, active bats, you go out at night, you're up all night, and the sounds are very different at dawn and dusk and in the middle of the night. And, you know, you would have some idea how many hours had passed based on on what you were hearing. And

**Heather** 12:13

like, I mean, like in every place that I've been in the tropics, where you know, I'm particularly attuned to the frog calls. That while I have focused on the diurnal frogs, the nocturnal frogs are much more common. But to in the morning, there's very little frog call that the so called nocturnal frogs tend to start calling around dusk, and they, and so near the tropics, you call it basically 6am to 6pm is daytime. So they'll start calling around 6pm or so by midnight, they're pretty much done. And then you'll start hearing, maybe some of them again, around 5am or so. So if you wake up, there's no frog call at all, you know, at least you're sort of in the middle of the night in the in the depth of the night.

**Bret** 12:54

Yep. Sorry. No, that's all right.

**Heather** 12:57

Where were we? In the past, most everyone participated in making music through folk or religious, later state traditions, religion, morality, history, and pedagogy were incorporated and diverse. Do you think modern recorded music has adequately filled this role?

**Bret** 13:11

No, not you know, it has destroyed our relationship to music, and therefore the relationship to each other that we used to have through music. And it's a tragedy. And it's not the only one of these either. The loss of a romantic dancing tradition, I think, is extremely destructive and has resulted in all kinds of carnage that we don't even think of as related. So anyway, yes, all sorts of things. You know, it's a, it's a Chesterton's fence, if you were lots of things in which it was a little hard to put your finger on exactly what the utility of X, Y and Z was, you eliminate the thing because you couldn't tell and suddenly, you've caused some kind of pathology that you don't even realize it's connected.

**Heather** 13:51

Yeah, so not so the recorded music is not just not live, so you're not exchanging information directly with the musicians and you're not participating in making the music yourself. But it's also a static form of music. So you go back and hear exactly the same thing over and over and over again, and that never would have been possible before. So there was information there was valuable information in the ways that songs changed and not just you know, not just lyrical content, not just actual words, but in the ways that the tempo changed maybe maybe you know, maybe the key maybe the tambor maybe the pitch, you know, all of these things,

**Bret** 14:31

a song is actually a living entity that develops over time, and we have turned them into static entities where you, you know, you know exactly how much cowbell there is in the song and you know, your demands for more of it or go on heated? Yes.

**Heather** 14:47

Are there evolutionary ties to songs or portions of songs being stuck in our heads? If so, what's the utility? Also, thank all of you at Dark Horse I love the show.

**Bret** 14:56

Well, actually, I think these two things may be related. Yeah, that's why I put Hear You have the ear worm phenomenon may well be about the fact that your brain gets trained to a particular instance of a song such that it gets recorded in your mind in a way that it would be recorded much more generally. Right? And so anyway, it's likely that that has some interface with it. But I would guess I mean, it'd be very interesting to find out whether hunter gatherers who have no contact with modern music, ever get your worms who are day travel, or any one of a number of other things. Yeah, be great to know

**Heather** 15:29

the questions anthropologists should be asking.

**Bret** 15:31

Well, I have long argued that we better figure out what it is that hunter gatherers dream about, to the extent that we do not know what normal dreams look like, it would be really important to figure that out before there is no one left to ask.

**Heather** 15:45

Yeah. But there's going to be a lot of cultural variability on whether or not they even encode, what happens in their dreams is something that can be recalled. Right? And it's not i'm not saying maybe they don't remember their dreams. I'm saying, you know, we all we all all humans, I will I will posit without having the evidence to back it up. But all humans, I will say remember some of our dreams and not others. But I suspect that the ability to recall consciously when asked or when even just asked to think about it privately, is going to be culturally informed by whether or not there's such discussion in your in your meal? You? Well, I

**Bret** 16:22

would say unless it's taboo, which it may be, I don't know what to be anywhere, but unless it's taboo, everybody's gonna have the experience of recalling some dreams, and there will be some discussion about it.

**Heather** 16:33

I'm not sure that's true.

**Bret** 16:35

I would I would be shocked if it wasn't again, there may be a taboo against it. For reasons there may be good reasons that some cultures aren't involved in it. But it, it seems highly likely that absent a prohibition the discovery that you have awakened with some sort of narrative experience just prior would, would naturally come up sometimes. And so anyway, I think you would get an answer to the question anywhere that it wasn't taboo. But I would be curious, for example, whether people who have never had the experience of flying, for example, ever have the experience in a dream. Is that normal? Does the experience Oh, yeah,

**Heather** 17:13

absolutely. How

**Bret** 17:14

do you know?

**Heather** 17:15

I mean, I don't but I feel like flying in dreams isn't about airplanes. It's about birds.

**Bret** 17:21

Well, yeah, I would, I must put it this way. I take notes.

**Heather** 17:25

When plenty, plenty of plenty of people who live in countries with a lot of Air Flight don't fly and yet still flying. But

**Bret** 17:34

even so we all have the experience in you know, movies and things. So we don't know how much we've got sort of contagious fodder for dreams. And I do know from running the experiment in many of my classes of asking people to try to report what their dreams are like, that the variation in what dreams are like, is absolutely spectacular. So dreams don't look anything like mine.

**Heather** 17:55

Okay. Well, I think there's there's an interesting disparity here that I think it is far more likely that flying in dreams is universal, but that speaking about dreams is not universal across cultures. And you think the opposite you

**Bret** 18:07

don't think the opposite? I'm not I would. I would not be shocked if flying is absolutely universal. But what I'd like to know is that that is the case before I just assume it is because it's a ubiquitous feature of modern brains.

**Heather** 18:20

Yeah. Cool. Let's say we ended up talking about dreams in the question about songs. Right? That was the songs question. I think, question. Do you have opinions on in this together? america.org? Do you know what this is? Brett, I pulled it up. But I haven't had time to look at it. declaration of interdependence, you know,

**Bret** 18:43

declaration of interdependence. That's what it says the title I have used for document I have written myself. Yeah. Be curious what they have got. Yeah, they do use that title. I don't know. I love that title.

**Heather** 18:55

So I will put this in yellow and we'll take a look and try to revisit this next q&a. Okay. And similarly, there's a couple more like that. Someone asks if we could revisit a thread. Let me know your thoughts to predation. Given how much money they throw at the problem, we will take take at least a quick look and revisit next time. Also a Patreon message about guerilla artwork that we will spend a moment next time looking at Okay,

**Bret** 19:26

guerrilla artwork. Actually, I have an interesting story about guerrilla artwork. Maybe we'll return to it.

**Heather** 19:31

Okay, I mean, we can we can do this one now. I sent a hurried Patreon message about my gorilla artwork revising and abridging as someone still drenched in the filth of our societal subterfuge, what siren of truth can I sound without simultaneously amplifying my perceived ethical shortcomings? So I That's sounds cool, but I don't I don't really know my

**Bret** 19:51

sympathies. I love that question. Yeah, no, it looks totally the solution to this involves narrative. It involves art. It involves music. You're on the right track. So yeah, let's put some thought into what messages might be amplified and how it could be done. Okay, cool.

**Heather** 20:08

Next question. I think a current problem is using current morality for past choices. Absolutely. Couple that with conflating those past choices with current morality and pulling it into the present is very harmful. Basically, I don't think we should have a societal book of grudges Happy Fourth, yeah. No. And this is when you were talking about monuments? You know, I agree with everything you said. But I also just thought, I cannot believe we're here. Like, why why does this require any discussion? at all? haven't we been over this one? Many, many times in exactly this form, the idea of erasing history as a response to you know, as if these kids mostly right, are suddenly recognizing that atrocities happened. Like, okay, as we know, this atrocities happened, that doesn't mean that the response is to tear down the people who were adjacent to them, or who did them. Well.

**Bret** 20:59

Alright, now I'm gonna push back a little bit. Okay. Some monuments are despicable and need to come down in some way. Right? So you remember the, the Nazi Eagle that famously was blown up and destroyed on film after the war? Yep. That Eagle can't stay. Yeah. Right. And there are also statues,

**Heather** 21:25

hold on, interrupt you. It was blown down then by the people who were conquering Nazi Germany and getting rid of the threat

**Bret** 21:33

to their toppling statues now. But

**Heather** 21:36

they were responding, that that was a history was being made in Nazi Germany. Yeah, they made now they are responding to something that happened hundreds and you know, 100 203 years ago. My point is that the Nazi Eagle that was destroyed. And I'm not saying that all monuments need to stand, obviously. But when was it the Americans who destroyed the Nazi Eagle? I think, right? They marched in to a regime that was actively proclaiming that thing as virtuous. And in the moment, like that was side by side in time and space, and this is side by side in space, but not in time, there is a remove,

**Bret** 22:12

right? But that remove means very little to me. Right? My point is that these people believe this is the moment at which they are confronting such a regime. Now they are wrong. They are making up history in order to justify this, but the problem is the Well okay, but when are you and when aren't? That's the question. So they are doing something. And my guess is if we looked at all of the things that they are confronting, that there are actually statues which are deliberately a finger in the eye, right? And that those statues are a problem. And the problem is that just like they are going to tear down people. And this week, okay, we've arrived at Steven Pinker Yeah, right for Steven Pinker is going to be torn down. Now. I haven't I think Steven Pinker is wrong about some important stuff. Nonetheless, the idea that Steven Pinker is a vile racist, who must be torn down is a bit preposterous, it's totally preposterous, right? So the point is, there are statues out there, which are truly problematic to use the vernacular. And there are statues out there that are debatable, and there are statues out there that must stand in somehow in the space of a week. We are, you know, we're dealing with tearing down the Steven Pinker's and the George Washington's, right. But the point is, you know, it's a never ending game of Would you believe you know, from get smart. Or the idea is they keep upping the ante of these, of these claims that something is so terrible, that it is finally time that we can recognize it and tear it down. And the point is, everybody's on the list.

**Heather** 23:44

But I mean, I feel like you're making the point of the person with the question and my point as well, which is that if you go back into into history, and try to use the morals of today, on the historical figures, you will always find them lacking, you will always find modern people lacking as well. But especially the longer in history you go back, the less likely they are to resemble the morals of today. And the easier it's going to be to decide they're not worthy of our respect. And that is a naivete. That is patently dangerous, right?

**Bret** 24:18

But the fact is, we fought the Civil War. We fought the Civil War. We fought the Civil War, because many people understood that the the justifications for slavery were absolutely despicable and unsupportable. And so the point is, memorializing the Confederacy was wrong at the time, it's still wrong. So it does not mean

**Heather** 24:41

that so I'm not I'm not positive with that, but I'll accept.

**Bret** 24:44

So anyway, all I'm saying is, there is no algorithmic way to do this, right? You try to write the algorithm and there's going to be Carnage that is the result of it. And so in light of that, we have to have a good faith discussion about the costs and benefits of various things. And if Maybe that, you know, the Nazi Eagle should have been moved into a museum about despicable things, right. But the tendency to see the symbols of a culture that has transgressed as themselves transgressive and to want to do something about it is a normal human thing. And the problem is that the reaction, which is that all of these things should be preserved because they're simply historical. And in their context, they were okay, that can't be right. So it's a difficult puzzle. And, you know, I mean, we're tearing down, George Washington, Steven Pinker, and in the center of Portland, a bonfire was lit under this beautiful statue of an elk,

**Heather** 25:42

which is now gone. They've taken it down, they've taken

**Bret** 25:45

it down. So they when they the City of

**Heather** 25:49

Portland had to spend to take down 120 something year old, beautiful statue of an elk because elk are racist, I don't even know. It's impossible.

**Bret** 26:00

It's impossible. It's just incoherent. It's simple destruction. And my point,

**Heather** 26:04

so I, you're going to say and I think I will agree with you that even a rubric around decisions about what monuments from the past may have outlived their virtue and, and and utility should not happen at the hands of a violent mob. You ever. Oh, so so you do agree with that?

**Bret** 26:28

Oh, yeah, I'm not for seeing people pull down public monuments because they've decided disagreement that the disagreement is whether or not some of these monuments need to come down by some process in which we discuss what it is that they're memorialized. Okay. Oh, yeah, I'm not advocate. Boy, this is the second time this week that people have thought I was ready to pull down monuments?

**Heather** 26:49

No, I mean, but you are arguing for for the fact that some monuments will need to be pulled down? Or or? Or would be, we'd be better off with somebody who was pulled down. I don't think I disagree with you there. I thought that you were actually arguing I can actually find some truth in this. But sometimes monuments will. Sometimes society might be better off, if people who are not in charge of deciding what monuments get to stand and not are the ones who actually say, you know what, I'm done. You're not listening. And I'm going, I'm going to take it into my own hands. Now, this what's happening on the streets is insane and incoherent. But the idea that it always has to be in the hands of the gatekeepers is also not safe.

**Bret** 27:32

So this is part of my point is that algorithmically, this is very difficult to do. But you have to have a process. It doesn't have to be an algorithmic process. But you have to have a process that at least knows what the objective is. Right? So anyway, I blogged about Eagle.

**Heather** 27:45

Sure. It's already been done. Oh, yeah.

**Bret** 27:50

Fair point is

**Heather** 27:53

do the reservations become states? That's the question.

**Bret** 27:59

I don't I don't think so. Yeah, I think it creates problems. It's sort of like reparations, which is I get what problem it's solving. But I also get what problems it might create. Yeah, but I would say that doesn't mean that there's not a you know, as I've said many times, America is not great. Until it's great for everyone. It has lots of greatness in it, it has been great for many, including you and me. Yep. But until every population is included in that it's not that. And so yeah, we have to figure out what to do so that Indians and black people are not left behind by the American project. Of course. Yeah, of course.

**Heather** 28:40

I don't know. I feel like you're I couldn't just decide to live on a reservation. Is that right? I think that's right. In which case, making them a state with with equal representation to the other states in Congress on such would be it seems to me, and I can't point to the place in the founding documents that would prescribe against this, but that seems to me deeply anti American, that if not all Americans could live there. And yet they have equal representation, that that would not fly.

**Bret** 29:14

Oh, right. I

**Heather** 29:14

think you would, you would need to open them up when

**Bret** 29:17

they're not there. Yeah, I think that's right.

**Heather** 29:26

Hi, everyone in this page, indeed. Hi, YouTube. First off, I want to thank you both for all that you're doing. My question is about unity. 2020. I love the idea, but what are you planning to do about the electoral college issue? If we win the popular vote, but lose to the electoral college? What then?

**Bret** 29:41

Alright. This is a discussion that those who are involved in this effort daily and we are spending much more time on it than a full time job would require I mean, really every spare moment and many beyond that. I think you need to stop asking us What the exact details of the plan are, it does not make sense to be fearing them. At the moment, we have to be able to engage strategically in a strategic landscape. And that means not simply talking about the various details about how we intend to solve this. At the moment, the question you have to ask is, if you took intelligent people who have access to libraries and online resources about what the various constraints are, and those people are looking at this and saying, yes, this is a genuine possibility in this election cycle. This is not a joke. It's not a symbolic act. This is something we actually intend to accomplish, then, do you really would you want the details of what we intend to do if that also crippled the effort? Is that what you want? Because I don't think you do. I don't think you want us to draft candidates too early if it cripples them if it causes the effort to fail. I think you want us to do this properly so that it actually works so that come January we inaugurate people who are ready to lead and I would ask you to please think about whether or not you're willing to compromise the effort in order to answer all of your questions right away or you would rather see the effort function over time and be pleasantly surprised.

**Heather** 31:13

Next question is totally different. It's a series of questions right? was the first human man trans creating the first woman from his rib? Is the story creating a hierarchy of biological men above women? Also convergence give birth by conjuring a spirit

**Bret** 31:29

Well, some of these stories may be somewhat exaggerated or completely not true. That's that's a level of exaggerate it's like full exaggeration to the point.

**Heather** 31:40

Really, really. ravenous isn't the right word? corvinus gap between the two?

**Bret** 31:46

Yeah, kind of a big a cavern

**Heather** 31:49

or be the adjective How do you adjective is ravine.

**Bret** 31:56

ravine like Oh good. Yes. So yeah, look, let's put it this way. Let's Yes,

**Heather** 32:03

I mean, of course, it creates a hierarchy that that particular origin story which is pyramids, creates a hierarchy of of men above women and men came first 100% and you know, convergence give birth by conjuring spirit. Yeah, no, well can't happen. Unless if you're a Komodo dragon. Actually, very virgin Komodo dragons could do it. And I think that they do it by conjuring spirits. We did some anthropology of butter dragon.

**Bret** 32:26

Well, what we need to know. No, it's not. So Jesus being a guy being there, for an x y bearing human could not have been given birth to by a virgin, contouring a spirit or otherwise. So anyway, we're, we're here bird, we're Jesus, a female, we could ask the question was this a parthenogenetic? creation of a human,

**Heather** 32:56

which has never been noted in mammals or birds which have chromosomal sex determination. There's parthenogenesis. There's reproduction without two individuals coming together with gametes in other vertebrates, but never mammals or birds. So Komodo dragons being one of one of them. I didn't just make that part up. Yep.

**Bret** 33:14

Nonetheless know, the obvious most person most parsimonious explanation for all these things is that some narrative stuff was necessary in order to take the payload of these stories and link them to something that people could remember and pass on. And so yes, the stories are fictionalized substantially.

**Heather** 33:37

ravine like underlying this woke moment? Are we seeing the replacement of merit with a notion of merit due to social tribal connection? Are we seeing the replacement of personal virtues or the virtue of only power games? Yeah, I mean to the first one, in fact, the very concept of meritocracy is on the chopping block. And there are those of us who will say, just because meritocracy of pure and true meritocracy may be impossible. Under current socio political constraints, does not render the idea something that we need to give up or should give up. There are those on the on the woke side, who will say actually no merit, you know, the very idea of meritocracy is itself embedded in white supremacy and racism and all this, and therefore, it's not worthy of our consideration. So yeah, not only are we seeing exactly that, but it's explicit. Then the second one replacement of personal virtue, so the virtue of only power games.

**Bret** 34:36

Yeah. I mean, that's the thing is the post modernism that lives at the heart of this thing claims that everything is about power, and then it attempts to create a world in which everything is about power, and it's powerful. Yeah, it's almost that simple. That's right.

**Heather** 34:50

Give up big government, Brett. That's not me talking. You know, it's not my bread. I'm like you it's the top of the slippery slope that led us here. First place otherwise keep telling the truth and standing up for free speech.

**Bret** 35:04

I like it. I'm not a fan of big government. I'm a fan of some various things which you may not have heard of. One of them is called subsidiarity. subsidiarity is a concept that actually weirdly comes out of Catholicism. And what it means is that everything should be regulated at the lowest effective level. So it is not a fan of big government, but it is a recognize it has a recognition built into it, that everything has to be governed at the right level. And that means that there are actually some things that have to be governed globally. Did he say globally? Yeah, I did say globally.

**Heather** 35:34

He said it,

**Bret** 35:35

it happens that we are watching a heatwave in the Arctic, right. This is really frightening if you know what's frozen in the Arctic, all those methane clathrates that are frozen in the Arctic that could be suddenly released. If we warm too quickly. It's looking like we're headed there. And you know what, this is going to be an emergency unlike all others, if we see the, the methane gun set off, as it were. So we have to be dealing with questions of atmospheric chemistry and ocean pollution at the global level, because that's the level at which these processes function. On the other hand, we do not want to see your local school governed at a global level, we want to see it governed at a much lower level.

**Heather** 36:17

Quite possibly smaller than the federal level.

**Bret** 36:19

Yeah, right. Or maybe go absolutely, absolutely. So anyway, what I would say is, the idea of decentralized governance has reached those of us who are paying attention or thinking about how the structure is out of work at the moment, we have an emergency that we cannot solve. By simply appealing to decentralized governance, we have a governance structure, it is out of control due to rampant corruption, and it needs to be recaptured just to stabilize the ship just so it doesn't sink, then we can talk about what might be rethought. And we should be thinking about those things we, we don't live in 1776, we live in 2020. And the realities have radically changed. So you know, the values at the heart of the founding are exactly right. Or at least they were a start on the path that leads you to exactly right. But the mechanisms, some of them are great. Some of them are showing their age, some of them weren't quite right to begin with. And as far as I'm concerned, the thing that matters is that the values get carried forward and that everybody gets brought in on them. And so we're gonna have to do that. But yeah, decentralized would be great. To the extent it's possible, we should do it. And to the extent that we have to deal with some things with a larger structure, we should just accept it.

**Heather** 37:38

Yep. I've used Bret statement of we must defeat the Biden Trump ticket and telling others about unity 2020 I think it's a very effective slogan I do to

**Bret** 37:48

defeat Trump Biden 2020.

**Heather** 37:51

Why do you think why do you to think reelect him, Donald Trump would be a bad idea. I know he's not very presidential, but bring bringing industry and jobs to the US and getting troops out of the Middle East. Sounds good. Please, elaborate, and thank you.

**Bret** 38:06

Let's put it this way. We have seen the man's inability to lead at moments when it is necessary. There are things he has pointed towards Yes, pulling people out of the Middle East, is sensible, if it can be done safely. Certainly, we've created tremendous hazards for ourselves. And we've burned an awful lot of treasure in the middle east on adventures that did not work out. So it's not to say that every single thing points against the man, but we need a leader who can deal with COVID-19 Trump botched this badly, people died in great numbers, right? We need people who are able to figure out how to listen to experts, and what to do about it and how to deal with the fact that some of the experts aren't trustworthy. This is just simply necessary. So

**Heather** 38:54

now he's he's he's slid over from being completely embedded in the system that has someone else's interests at heart, but which is completely informing the president to saying I trust none of them. And, you know, maybe the right president actually needs to, from scratch, figure out who it is that they trust, and accept no one who was handed to him or her because, because that's what's been done before. But the idea that there will be no one whom he comes, consults, no one whom he trusts, with the possible exception of a couple of people right in his immediate family is clearly led to so many mistakes and just a failure to govern.

**Bret** 39:34

Yeah, and we have an economic crisis. We have a viral crisis. We have a unrest crisis, and we may be on the tipping point of an environmental crisis. So we need somebody who is a careful thinker and who has the right leadership qualities written in at the bottom level of their code, and I'm sorry He had the right qualities to beat one of the two major parties. That's a major accomplishment. But he doesn't have the right temperament to lead the nation at this point. And he's got to go.

**Heather** 40:13

Okay, let's get through just a couple more here. And we'll skip to the other thread. Guys, I love your show, but I think you should debate supporters of critical theory as this feels like an echo chamber sometimes. I believe voucher is one of them. And I'm sure he would jump at the opportunity. So I don't know who vouch is. But I will say that we spent decades debating supporters of critical theory because we were academics. Yeah, we were seeing the germs of this when we were undergraduates, and we were fighting against it then with no platform, and there wasn't the internet widely available at this point and the early 90s. And we have done so I think just once explicitly publicly in debate here in Portland, actually, before we moved here a couple of years ago, very well, it was Yeah, it was it was quite interesting, actually. And actually this, that's where we met john wood, who he was, he was not he was not he was not one of the people on the other side who was moderating. And he's now with the braver angels organization, terrific, and was an organization called bridging the divide or bridging our divide that ran it. And it was, I mean, there's audio out there of it, the video was was pretty bad. And I think it was fascinating. But the fact is that you spend literally decades talking with at various volumes, and in various levels of private conversation to entire faculty meetings, this stuff. And at some point, it's actually not contingent on us to keep on talking ad nauseum to the people who will not respond in good faith.

**Bret** 41:48

Yep. You know, so you, frankly, I mean, there are different levels. I also had a, I wouldn't call it a debate, it was a friendly conversation with fattiest Russell, who's a postmodernist

**Heather** 42:01

on his podcast,

**Bret** 42:02

no on Oh, voice and exit, did a thing and it was hosted by I can't remember who libertarian of some kinds out there somewhere out there somewhere. Anyway, Nick Gillespie at reason is also a postmodernist by his own diagnosis. And we have not discussed with him actively, but he's in our circle and would be happy to do it. But yeah, there's I mean, either

**Heather** 42:28

of those, I mean, I know, I know, Nick, better than I know Nick's work and thinking better than Thaddeus is, but that's, that just feels different. Right? He's like, right there just because it's good, that they've come to very different conclusions, both of them about what is wrong with with the current thinking and academia. But they, like we are open to discussion and to hearing things. And you know, the one extreme conversation I've had with Nick, actually, you know, he, he told me things I didn't know. And that's Yeah, that's what I look for it every conversation. It was wonderful. Yep.

**Bret** 43:05

But there are concepts out there so bad that they don't merit investigation, right? There's a point at which, you know, you realize that time zones exist and that the Flat Earth Society might be off track? And how many times do you have to engage the Flat Earth Society? Yeah. So anyway, critical race theory is is that which doesn't mean it started there. It didn't it started as an investigation of systematic biases in our court system, which is still exist and are important.

**Heather** 43:33

Okay, we got a three part question here. And then we'll skip over to to the next one. What is the evolutionary significance? I'm going to read all of them? What is the evolutionary significance of humanity's confusion about the hard problem of consciousness? Suppose you study the dead civilization on another planet? Could the presence or absence of this search say something about the presence or absence of consciousness and an alien civilization, and suppose a powerful AI claim to be conscious? What the independent emergence of the hard problem of consciousness in that mind, providing the basis to suspect that it's confusion is sincere?

**Bret** 44:10

I'm trying to parse all that.

**Heather** 44:11

Yeah, that's, that's a lot. So I don't know that we are obligated to respond to all of them. Let me start by addressing the idea of a civilization on another planet. I'm not sure. You say suppose you studied a dead civilization. on another planet? What would that what could you learn about the presence or absence of consciousness and alien civilization? I think if you use the word civilization, and we could spend years talking about exactly what that means, but if you're talking about civilization, and they have consciousness, you know, we see the rudiments of consciousness in organisms on this planet that wouldn't be understood to have civilization but they have sort of the glimmerings of culture. Elephants and toothed whales like dolphins and great apes and wolves and such and I Think. And again, we could spend a lot of time talking about this, that that will be true every place that you find civilization in the rest of the universe, that consciousness is a necessary precursor, because it is about the exchange of ideas. And absent exchange of ideas, there is not going to be the possibility for civilization.

**Bret** 45:19

Well, what would you do, if you found you remember this extraordinary piece of footage where somebody pours concrete down a leaf cutter ant, nest and then digs it up, and you have this elaborate structure with all of the various chambers connected by all of the various passageways 3d

**Heather** 45:40

sculptural map,

**Bret** 45:42

if you found that on another planet? Would you know that it wasn't a kind of civilization?

**Heather** 45:49

No, not necessarily, because I'm

**Bret** 45:50

pretty sure there's no consciousness involved in that.

**Heather** 45:53

Yeah. So we're getting into you know, what? What is it that you need to see, to distinguish between sort of a, an organism that is so you social that really individual organisms don't have much being unto themselves such as it is the super organism that is the unit that matters in terms of whether or not it's how it behaves? Or are you looking at something that has, as we do, glimmerings of eusociality, where, but still absolutely retain our individuality and make decisions that are often distinct from and different from what the rest of the society is doing?

**Bret** 46:31

Yep. And even a very large organism could throw you if you weren't familiar with the tree of life that it had come from, you know, an organism is a hyper organized thing with lots of division of labor and exchange of information. And the I think the problem is definitional. Defining civilization is easy enough, when you're talking about, you know, the earth, and you're basically limiting yourself to the versions of it, that we have seen

**Heather** 46:56

what both of your both of your examples, use the concept of the individual as what causes us to be confused, right? That is a single organism, a civilization will know it's a single organism. Well, what if you didn't know it was a single organism is an ant nest? civilization will probably not but that's because it's like a super organism. And those individuals aren't really fully individual. So this all gets at the, at the question of what is an individual and how, what happens when individuals come together and have to share information. That's the origin of consciousness, and then they can become, I want to say civilized, and that's not right. But then they can create civilization. But it does it, the premise is, there are individuals with agency,

**Bret** 47:37

right? But even then, Eve, I mean, all I'm demonstrating here is that I can wreck your definition of civilization, no matter what you throw at it. Because even a single organism, you know, we have our gut flora, and those gut flora exchanging information with us. And it's a partnership. And we also have our mitochondria. And our mitochondria are separate individuals that have been become so synonymous with us that we are, you know, we are hybrids that regard ourselves as singular, but we are not yet so all of these things mean that any definition you throw is gonna fall apart in some cases, and sometimes very central cases. So it's not just the edge cases. Yeah, everything's an edge case when you get right down to it. So that's not helpful. That's my point. I'm trying to be helpful in order to point out why you can't do this. But is here, I should also just say, I don't think you or I think that there is a hard problem of consciousness. That's not to say that there's not a difficult problem of consciousness, but a hard problem suggest that there's some sort of special boundary that prevents you from elucidating. In the case of the hard problem of consciousness, it is usually claimed that the nature of consciousness is itself difficult to explain. And the fact is, it's an evolutionary adaptation like everything else, which doesn't mean that we have the explanation nailed to a fare thee well, at the moment. But you know, it hasn't been long that we've had the explanation for and I nailed down either, so give us some time on consciousness.

**Heather** 49:12

Yeah. Okay, we're going to switch to the next thread, or the q&a, the questions from this livestream, the Super Chat questions for this live stream. So I think you've drawn the line, at least one off, but I think that this is the first one from this livestream. Yeah, pretty sure. For one thing we already answered the question the question right above it. So it must be from the previous live stream left evangelical movement be. I'm gonna just read it first. I don't know yet how to parse it over the punctuation belongs left evangelical movement because of rigidity of dogma. Now fellow progressives remind me of same in their insistence I work on my racism and not challenged black voices had any success in changing anyone's mind. friends have good intentions. Course intentions don't matter. So just they were just trying to save characters to get the question. And this person left the evangelical movement because of the rigidity of dogma there and is now finding a similar rigidity in the ideology of the left.

**Bret** 50:14

Yeah, I think it's even worse than that. I was reading a subreddit. And somebody posted a comment about the frightening situation that they face. This was somebody who had come to the US from broad from a, a country with a dictatorial regime. And their point was, my family has seen this before. Yeah, I don't know what to do. It's very frightening. I know what it is. But people who haven't seen it before, don't know what it is, and they're falling prey to it. And anyway, that's alarming. Yeah. And the comments that followed, that comment also reflected other parts of the world in which people have seen this, and their descendants who are now here are recognizing the analogy, and people are rightly concerned about it. I also detected something in this thread that I thought was pretty important, something I had never put together before, which was that the communism that happened in the Soviet Union resulted in slavery by a different name, that effectively rural people were enslaved to create the productivity that kept the Soviet Union going, and never put that together. Right. I knew it was terrible, but I didn't understand that basically, they had reinvented slavery as a mechanism to make that civilization work. And I'm not sure

**Heather** 51:34

that's very far off from the Great Leap Forward, either. No, it's the 60s in early Maoist China.

**Bret** 51:41

So in some sense, I guess what I'm saying is, to the extent that this movement imagines that what it is, is the final complete an invention of slavery, it may be the reinvention of slavery, and that that is something that we have to track very carefully. Yeah.

**Heather** 51:57

So embedded in this question was had any success in changing anyone's mind?

**Bret** 52:04

I don't maybe we should announce this year, we actually have a podcast and 10s of 1000s of people, sometimes 100,000 people. And in a matter of a couple of days, we'll see episodes of this podcast, and my guess is they're convinced of something.

**Heather** 52:19

So the premise there is that not everyone arrived in lockstep.

**Bret** 52:26

Right, and they never do. But anyway, I guess my point would be, look, you know, our stories weird. We stood up, people in our immediate midst were horrified. Some people in our immediate midst were encouraged people far and wide. were encouraged some far and wide. were horrified. But you know, yeah, absolutely reaching people is it happens, and it changes things. So I don't know what more to say. But yes, I think I mean, unless you're asking some question I'm not quite spotting.

**Heather** 52:55

Well, I mean, I do think the question is more, more about not the fence sitters and the quiet ones, who were waiting to figure out what they thought, but the ones who are vocally woke. Were vocal, social justice. Army.

**Bret** 53:13

I have been approached by a number of people who said I had it wrong. I thought you were the villain. And then I discovered it wasn't true. Um, so yeah, yeah. Most people it's not to buy it's by far not the bulk of the people who but then

**Heather** 53:24

those people also are not the majority that they would want us to believe.

**Bret** 53:28

Yep. They are not. Yep.

**Heather** 53:32

self awareness and ability to abstract, obviously, adaptive, advantageous for survival of each organism. But could it be a liability for the species, or at least for the ecosystem? wants to top the food chain? Does it have diminishing returns?

**Bret** 53:47

Yeah, can I take a shot? Yeah. Okay. You're a robot with a computer that has software running on it, that software has a lot of heuristics in it. That means things that aren't written out fully, literally, they're things that work approximately right if they're in the circumstances that they're built for. Right. So your whole visual system uses various tricks to parse the way photons are bouncing around the world, but it makes objects that are real, appear real, and you know where to find them by experience, right? So those heuristics are because they are not the object itself. They can fail if they are faced with data, they can either fail because the data is noisy or worse, they can fail because there's something systematically off about the data. And the problem that you are identifying is that we are wired to deal with a social world in which the illusion of self is useful, but empowered to actually bring something of the self into the world and treat it as the important object. Many people fall into that and they do not understand that they are a tiny blip on a long history. trajectory, and that it is a gift to be alive for, you know, 8090 years. But that that is not the point of the exercise. Right? The point of the exercise has to do with that long trajectory of history, and that becoming obsessed with yourself that solipsism is actually a hazard to the entire project. And we are seeing that in the streets. There is a kind of narcissism to this movement that just simply does not understand where it is embedded in history. And because of that, the whole project is in jeopardy. I

**Heather** 55:32

would love to hear commentary on the Trump speech from Mount Rushmore seems his speech writers are alluding to the work of James Lindsay and Helen pluck rose. Well, this further satirize critique of satirize is the right word there sanitize maybe is what was meant. Have you I have not seen the speech? I am

**Bret** 55:49

not sure if I've seen the speech because I saw a speech by him that I had not seen this morning and I actually clipped him we were going to talk about it was he at Mount Rushmore? And that's what I don't know is where that speech came from. It may well have been his Mount Rushmore speech. But this particular clip, a minute or so contained a lot of truth. And my sense is that we are caught in some dynamic where the woke left is now handing the president truth just as we have handed over science, and we have handed over reason, and we have handed over the logic behind governance and all of these things. We are handing over all of the most important stuff to one side that is also fiercely ideological, and this is a terrible error. But at the other hand, you know, I don't want to be part of the group that just because the president says it thinks it's wrong. That's not how it works. Right? If we're going to hand over science to the President, and the President is going to defend it, then well, when the President defends science, you know, he's, he's saying the truth. Yep.

**Heather** 57:02

Next question. From echo. You said communism can't work because genes will openly or secretly work at least partly for themselves? Would it work in a nation of clones, maybe with different clone types for each function? like ants? Yes, let me know. So that was your answer. I actually had a just an aside. So ants aren't clones. But they are. Most mostly female workers who if they share both a mother and father are three quarters related to each other the sisters are, which is more closely related to each other than they are to either their mother or would be daughters. And so they're invested in protecting their queen their mothers so that they can get more sisters at a purely genetic level, they win more when they get more full sisters than they do by breaking out on their own and producing kids of their own. And so you end up with a huge social society, which is quite close knit and has very little reason for competition within it, although obviously competition does happen. So there are no at clone societies. There are for instance, well, like nemid offer us the whiptail lizards in the Sonoran Desert, go parthenogenetic. And they have totally, they're still not clones. They're, they're actually parthenogenetic. So they're 100% each kid, each daughter is 100% related to its mother, but they self they don't clone. And so you lose genetic variability with each reproductive event.

**Bret** 58:32

But in each of the cases of the parthenogenetic species, there's some place to borrow diversity from so even down that road, we're not going to find with the right tools, the right model, right with tails, and aphids, and all the others. But anyway, the thing you're looking for the answers is simple. Yes, right. The body is communist. That's what it is. It's communist because all the cells are clones. And it works. And communism can work. Hey, isn't that good news, you know what you need to make communism work brutality, you need to reorganize people's motivations by threatening them if they act according to their individuality, which is why communism is so frightening.

**Heather** 59:08

And you need to keep up the brutality day in day out forever, for your

**Bret** 59:13

rent, or you need to build it into people's developmental environment so that they can think for themselves, you turn them into sound like cultural zombies. So anyway, it's a very bad idea. And that doesn't mean it can't be made to function. I mean, this is, it's just, it's very clear. The fact is, for life to be worth living, the human has to be liberated to discover what is good. It does not mean that everybody uses their liberty. Well, they don't most people squander it. But having liberty is the gift that we should be trying to give to other human beings. And communism wrecks it, because it requires brutality in order to overcome the individuality that would cause the game theory to break down. That's a very dangerous situation. So It is not a glorious solution to any problem.

**Heather** 1:00:04

do multiple identical twins get along? Any studies? dooms? So I don't know this could mean pairings of identical twins where you have more than one set of identical twins within families. Do the different sets get along? Or we talked about multiples, like triplets, and quadruplets? Do they get along? Either way? I don't have the answer right.

**Bret** 1:00:22

Now there were doublemint gum commercials that suggest that identical twins often get along and look lovely. That's

**Heather** 1:00:30

probably the target audience for those like a preteen teenage boy,

**Bret** 1:00:35

probably. But here's the thing, twins, identical twins do get along very well. And they have a very good reason to get along very well. They get along really well, for the same reason that your liver and your heart get along. They have no reason to disagree. And then, at some point, we will delve deeply into the story of caltric IDs. I think we've mentioned it once before, but caltric and monkeys have a whole different twist on this identical twin thing and no, it's not identical twins. Yeah, they

**Heather** 1:01:00

go ahead and get it twisted.

**Bret** 1:01:02

They get it twisted, they get it twisted.

**Heather** 1:01:04

This is marmosets and tamarins. Yeah, like chickens, which are

**Bret** 1:01:07

marvelous they are so creatures. Yeah. And actually

**Heather** 1:01:10

include this person. Yeah. And they include the smallest extinct species of Monkey, the pygmy marmoset tiny, tiny little guys as adults with long tails.

**Bret** 1:01:19

I put in a lot of work. And I got a great picture of a pygmy marmoset in our last trip to the Amazon. That was this year. What do you mean this?

**Heather** 1:01:28

We were in the Amazon in 2020. That's That can't be right. Yeah. It's got to have been decades like Oh,

**Bret** 1:01:33

my God. Yeah. Before Coronavirus.

**Heather** 1:01:37

We're about an hour. Okay, let's do four more. How about? Where could a genuinely valid scientific study quantifying? Wow, I just lost my place? Could a genuinely valid scientific study quantifying how much influence past racism and its current incarnation? Is having any specific community in the states be done? If so, would it be desirable to do so?

**Bret** 1:02:00

Yeah, I see no obstacle to this.

**Heather** 1:02:03

I don't see. It is not clear to me, as my experimental design brain is working here. And I'm trying to figure out what all the inputs are that you would have to track? And and in what way over how much time with different degrees of accuracy and I don't see how it can be done? Well, I think you would start because I think he would have different kinds of error in different places, so that you couldn't just say, it's all kind of imprecise, but it's all it's all accurate ish, I think they would be different, different degrees and directions of error, what it

**Bret** 1:02:42

tells ourselves 50 years into the future, okay, 50 years in the future where whole genome sequencing is available at a trivial price.

**Heather** 1:02:52

So seems a lot about what happens in the next year or two.

**Bret** 1:02:56

All right, let's pick the timeline in which we're still around 50 years from now, technology has continued to advance for genomics, so that you could do an excellent phylogeny of people. And you could actually track the fine grain relatedness. And you could figure out what percentage of each person came from what prior population. And let's say that you could reconstruct the history of slavery so you can see which individuals were enslaved where. And then you could do a statistical analysis of the ways in which people live, and you could compare it to the percentages that go back to each of these ancestral populations and groupings. And you could just simply test hypotheses of cause and effect. Anything impossible there?

**Heather** 1:03:47

I'm not sure I don't I don't. I'm not sure how operational it is. operationalized?

**Bret** 1:03:55

Oh, I don't think it is operationalized. Well, I'm just trying to see in principle, if such a thing is if it's a valid line of inquiry.

**Heather** 1:04:03

Yeah, no, I think it is. But I mean, this is this is exactly where we will tend to butt heads and it's not butting heads, it's just I read the question is very much one about can the empirical science be done? And I'm not sure it can be? I don't think it's operationalized. And so

**Bret** 1:04:19

well, I think I agree with you about that. I'm sure it's not operationalized. Well, today, it's not practical. In the future when the technology supports it, does it become possible? I don't know. Yeah. But I think it's theoretically possible. So

**Heather** 1:04:34

then the second part of the question, so we're still on the first of the four questions. We're going to still try to get to here it would it be desirable to do so assuming we have moved forward, which means we're also in a different, you know, social value, but we want to,

**Bret** 1:04:48

I think I got this one. Yeah, I believe it is necessary that it remain allowable. Right. You have to be allowed to investigate any empirical phenomenon. I don't think it would be desired. But I don't think the answer would be helpful, right? Because I don't think it does anything for you that is useful in terms of actually remedying the problem. And ultimately what you want is a society in which the downstream consequences of, of racism, Jim Crow, slavery, all of those things has been neutralized, where we are all in on the same story where opportunity is distributed as widely as possible and where the degree to which it is not evenly distributed is randomly distributed, right? In other words, bad luck cannot be totally stamped out. But it should not be more likely that you encounter bad luck. If you're black, for example, that's not bad luck. That's something else. So the ideal solution does not depend at all, on the answer to the question of how exactly have the the downsides flown to different people through time, right? They're independent. So as long as the right solution doesn't depend on the answer to that question, I don't see the advantage in pursuing it in fine detail, there might be some things in it, that would be desirable to know, right, because we would like to know what the harms of those things are, and how they have travelled through time. But the fine grain analysis probably isn't worthwhile. But again, the ability to study it, somebody else may have found some reason that it would be valuable to find these things. And much of what we have derived value from in science comes from what we call basic science, which means science you do and you don't know why you're doing it, you just think that actually knowing the answer to how something works might be helpful in the future, for some reasons, and so it's worth the investment. So it's got to be allowed, I don't see the advantage. But the most important thing is that the remedies are not dependent on the answers to those questions. And so there's nothing that should stop us from going to the remedies immediately.

**Heather** 1:06:54

Want to lodge an asterisk? But we don't have time to do I have one? You got one? Cat probably ate it. I'm not sure that we need to allow everything that is possible. And maybe I'll just leave it, leave it there. We were told by a would be advisor in graduate school, that some questions shouldn't be asked. And they were exactly some of the questions that we were interested in asking. And it struck us as destructive of science, to be told that you just shouldn't ask some questions if people imagine that the answers that you get might be politically unexperienced. But there are things there, Chesterton's fence is being torn down all over the place by scientists trained in reductionism, who cannot begin to imagine the effects of things like cloning, for instance,

**Bret** 1:07:46

Ah, well, I'm not talking about everything needs to be allowed at the level of gain of function research or Okay, so power what what you bought your full investigation investigation of any phenomenon? So look, I would I would accept a caveat based on what you said, there are certain phenomena that in order to investigate them, you may take a risk that is unacceptable, in my case, no, but an empirical science so

**Heather** 1:08:09

that it isn't as easy and lovely I statement. It requires judgment, which requires gatekeepers, which requires that the gatekeepers themselves be regularly judged and assessed as to whether or not they're doing an honorable job. And

**Bret** 1:08:23

so you've defeated me in open combat here, you are right, that my statement is incorrect. There are things we must forbid ourselves. But what I meant to imply was that at the level of investigation, nothing should be forbidden because of what you might find out. Yes, right. Things might be forbidden, because it's too dangerous to find them

**Heather** 1:08:40

because of what finding them out might allow you to do.

**Bret** 1:08:44

Well, no. Okay. I would say that the only place you can really draw this line is that if the finding out is dangerous, then society has a right to prevent it. If the knowledge might be dangerous. The problem is you can't draw that line well, right? Because as soon as you say, oh, there's certain knowledge that would be too dangerous. If we had it, then what you've done is you've established the need to judge which knowledge is dangerous. And then five minutes later, we're screwed. Yeah,

**Heather** 1:09:13

yep. So asterisk, right. Maybe we come back to this. Yeah, that's a good one. Yeah. Okay, so, Penn penultimate question. This one just a logistical one I think from what I understand that Bret and other Patreon have different purposes so what are they? Also how can a Patreon find the mentioned discord? You know, we haven't really specified they just they're both doing their thing. We're doing the Dark Horse membership over at mine, because flipping back and forth in logging into the two of them was proving was driving me a little bit crazy. So we're doing that at mine and the part of Brett's that he is really tending to the most are the once monthly, longer conversations for the patrons at the higher tiers and We don't yet have the discord links up there, but we will do so. Maybe not by end of business today, Fourth of July, there is no business by the end of the weekend for sure. Okay, we'll have that up. Yep. anything more to say about?

**Bret** 1:10:16

Well, I should probably say I do feel a little bad. There's some stuff, we set up the Patreon my patreon A long time ago. And we guessed at sort of what the tear should be. And it's more complex to change things.

**Heather** 1:10:26

I believe it might have actually been a suggestion of Joe Rogan. On the very first time when we went when we went down to LA with our kids when we left Olympia, and he was in his old studio. And after we met him, we spent some time talking Afterwards, he was terrific. He's just a great guy. He was a great guy. And then I think he said, start a podcast and and get a Patreon. And people want to hear what you have to say,

**Bret** 1:10:53

That's true. He said, start a podcast and I said, I have the name. It's going to be the Dark Horse podcast. And he said, don't do that. It's got to be your name. Right? Why he does. That's why your name is on it. That's why Brett Weinstein is dark horse podcast was the the compromise position. Yeah. But anyway, yeah, I think he did suggest it. But anyway, in setting it up, it was very hard to figure out what the tear should be in. Some of them have worked out less well than others. But what I would say is the result of that Patreon is the podcast. Now there's other stuff too, but there's a lot of podcasts coming out. And that is really what this has gone to support. And you know, it exceeds anything promised in the Patreon. So to the extent that I have fallen down on things like newsletters, the podcast, hopefully is is a worthy compensation.

**Heather** 1:11:40

Yeah. And we really, really do appreciate this. It is allowing us to do this. And as the Super Chat questions, yeah, we appreciate it. Two more questions. I would love to hear your thoughts on Jordan Peterson and his current condition. Is there any possibility from showing up on the podcast as well as others from the ITW? Well, you had Eric on last week, yep. Or two weeks ago, whenever that was,

**Bret** 1:12:02

I would love to have Jordan on I tried to contact him. He is out of the country, I believe. I won't say more than that. I don't know. I know. Michaela was on Joe Rogan recently. And Michaela and Jordan did a podcast together. And I haven't seen either of them. So I'm a little hesitant to say where things are, because I don't have the most recent updates. But we'd love to have Jordan on of course, and he is welcome anytime.

**Heather** 1:12:25

And he's still doing better. He's continuing to do better, I

**Bret** 1:12:30

believe was a very close call for the entire family. And I believe everybody has squeaked by and we couldn't be happier. It's really important. And I hope people

**Heather** 1:12:40

we need his voice right now.

**Bret** 1:12:41

We do. Yeah.

**Heather** 1:12:43

Okay, final question. What do you think about creating an anti woke pro humanist Coalition for the exhausted majority? If something like that becomes popular, when people stand up against the mobs, they'll know there are people out there that got their back?

**Bret** 1:12:55

Yep. That's kind of what we were suggesting is that you figure out how to bootstrap these things. And my guess is they would coalesce ultimately, that to the extent that different communities figure out how to get their reality check from others who are not so sure about what's going on, that ultimately those communities would find each other. And we might be able to deploy reason at scale. Wouldn't that be cool?

**Heather** 1:13:17

deploy reason at scale? There's a tagline for something. Oh, yeah. All right. For this fourth of July. That's it. Why reason at scale?

**Bret** 1:13:26

Yes, deploy reason at scale. Please check out the articles of unity. Sign up with us, follow our Twitter account. And let us please get some leadership in the White House. It is it is way overdue. If we can do it in January, be much better off.

**Heather** 1:13:43

We'll be back on Tuesday,

**Bret** 1:13:45

Tuesday. Until then, be well.