Your Questions Answered - Bret and Heather 31st DarkHorse Po...

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**SPEAKERS**

Bret, Heather

**Bret** 00:08

Hey folks, here we go, You caught me drinking.

**Heather** 00:12

I was just gonna say now with these earlier times, we'd never really have an excuse to be drinking for the q&a. But today, if it were just a little bit later I, I'd be thinking about it join you there as passionfruit margaritas I made last night. We're pretty good.

**Bret** 00:25

All right. Welcome back to the 31st q&a live stream for the Dark Horse podcast. We are going to now match our answers with your questions. Let's see how we do.

**Heather** 00:37

All right. So we're going to start with three that we didn't get to from last time. This one is in reference to the black intellectual Roundtable. Love yesterday's chat, it's curious that religion was not mentioned, which seems like it could be a major contributing factor, no common moral framework or commonality in which we mostly operate. Under question mark. Each generation seems less so and even anti religion. So it's kind of more of a comment than a question, but I thought it was worth bringing up. Yep. Because it wasn't right. I mean, no, no one brought up religion. I know, at least I know john wood, Jr. To be religious. I don't I don't know all the religious positions of everyone on that panel. But I know there there's at least some Yeah, interesting. Yeah,

**Bret** 01:21

I would say this is a topic of discussion in a lot of interesting circles. And I think we are going to have to learn some sort of a new trick. There's what religion does, traditionally, and there's what religion is, and the what religion is thing has become too complex. And what religion does has been ignored, because the is part has become incoherent. So my suggestion would be, we need to figure out how to address the needs that religion is targeted at, evolutionarily in some new way, because this is not a moment, you know, starting a religion doesn't make any sense. taking any of the various religions and trying to get everybody on board, that's not going to make sense. So in some, we need to have something that galvanizes us and causes us to have the expectation of of adhering to something larger than ourselves. And we I think there is something to be said for the fact that we have seen society become narcissistic and solid cystic in the absence of a belief structure that would tend to frustrate those instincts,

**Heather** 02:34

indeed. Okay, next question. When arguing what's behind Black Lives Matter, I often run into what I call the Mr. Burns syndrome, where people say, I sound like there's an evil mastermind behind it, though there isn't it still sounds conspiracy theory ish. Thoughts?

**Bret** 02:50

Yeah, that's the problem is that, you know, it's in part the big lie, if you which is that because all that out what that is? Well, the big lie involves that if you tell a gigantic lie, frequently and forcefully that people sort of assume there must be truth to it, because it's hard to imagine that you would be making up something so transparently false and did this

**Heather** 03:15

originate with Hitler? Did he just sort of publicize it and provide the world's most egregious example? Yeah, I'm,

**Bret** 03:22

I'm headed on, because I believe there's some ambiguity about that. But it's certainly the context is hit Larian. So I think we are all experiencing this, which is, as you speak about what's taking place, you know, there's some sort of horizontal revolution taking place in every institution that does sound conspiratorial and preposterous. And there's a temptation to imagine that Well, normally that doesn't happen. And so whatever comes next will be, you know, it will die down, it will fizzle out it will this will that, when in fact some of us are saying no, it won't, because the amount of power that this thing has discovered it has is immense. And it is not normal for something that has discovered that it is powerful to just abandon that power. So you know, it will change, but we're headed somewhere very dangerous, because of what we have discovered. The process looks like and as you say that it does for somebody who's not paying attention to the analytics, it does sound like you're being alarmist. So all I would say

**Heather** 04:26

alarmist is different from hypothesizing that there is a deep dark force behind the thing that's leading it right. You know that that could be one way to be alarmist but it's not required by it. And I think it's a misunderstanding. It's sort of a it's a it's the comic book if occation of our understanding of what heroes and villains look like that. The idea that you can't have bad things happen in the world, absent a villain behind the scenes, rubbing his hands together and you know, making it all happen. Well, your most most changes in history haven't happened that way. But those that have certainly get a lot of play, and they're horrifying. And in part, it's easy to track them because they appeal to our also evolutionary desire for narrative. So when you have a human being who you can blame, and you can track what they did and when they did it and what they why they said they did it, whether or not you actually know why it's an easier story to tell.

**Bret** 05:21

Yeah, that's true. So there is something about the complete absence of leadership in this movement. That means at some level, we are all reduced to talking about a process, right? And talking about that process does, you know, it's much harder to navigate, rather than being able to say, Well, here's the quote,

**Heather** 05:40

yeah, no. And it's, I mean, it's part of why it's been relatively easy for a number of us now recently to say, okay, white fragility is the book that's being held up that that was written by a woman. And here's what's in the book. And it's nonsense, and is divisive and is dangerous. But also, you know, the official website of Black Lives Matter, is an official website without anyone's name on the masthead, as far as I can tell, but it itself is changing, right, like so you know, a couple of episodes ago, I went to it and showed a number of the, you know, the, the pro trans before pro women sentiments and the anti nuclear family sentiments, and that thing has now been taken down. And before then before I before we're ever doing these episodes, there was anti Israel sentiment, which has long since been taken down. And so it's this, you know, it's this moving target. And unless, unless this is almost your full time job to sort of figure out what it is that they're promoting, and make sure that you keep, you know, the screenshot everything, then there's cover, they've got cover by not having clear leaders, because everyone is flawed, every individual human being on the planet who has ever lived, whoever will live is flawed will have made errors at some point. And therefore, if you're really, really, really trying, you can find something with which to disagree. This protects against that.

**Bret** 07:02

Yeah, no, it does. And it means that, you know, how does one read the elimination of the attack on the concept of the nuclear family being eliminated from the website? Did they realize how insane that was? Or have they just decided that that draws too much fire? And so they've disappeared it? And do they still believe it? Which I certainly assume, then that's the thing a leader, you know, you could you could ask them, right, right? What happened to that thing. But as it is, even now, if you say to somebody, look, I support the idea of black live, Black Lives Matter. As we've said many times, Black Lives are undervalued. Black Lives Matter is a statement that outlines that that we would support under normal circumstances. However, we can't support the movement, because the movement is very closely associated with this organization. It doesn't disavow the organization. And so the organization has a list of things on its website, you send somebody you say, look at actually they're against the nuclear family. Did you know that right? And somebody goes, and looks now and it's not there. And it looks like you've misunderstood, right? Or you're, you know, you're going on hearsay, when in fact, it was right there.

**Heather** 08:12

Well, I mean, we we did show that on screen in one of our episodes,

**Bret** 08:15

I'm glad we did. Yeah, I'm glad we did it captures it. So that anybody who wonders whether or not some of us are imagining things, we'll know that it was very different or

**Heather** 08:23

engaging in hyperbole. Yep. You know, we can we can then say, you know, when you ask hasn't been taken down, because they've seen that that's not a tenable position, nor is it consistent with the stated beliefs of Black Lives Matter movement, or do they take it down, because it makes it more difficult to continue to get recruits who are confused about what the organization actually is? I certainly suspect strongly that it's the second. But that's, that's, you know, that's just interpretation on our part. Whereas is it up? You know, is there something on the website or not, you can point to it and say, yeah, it's right there. Yep. Okay, final question from Episode 30. That we wanted to get back to before embarking on those from the last hour. I just watched Benjamin Boyce is full documentary of the Evergreen incident. How did you survive there? As long as you did?

**Bret** 09:18

You want to take it or shall I? You can

**Heather** 09:20

start. I just thought it warranted a short response. Because we get we get this a lot because the stuff I mean, Benjamin was there too. And Benjamin graduated, and he learned a tremendous amount. And

**Bret** 09:30

he also was subjected to some crazy stuff inside his classrooms

**Heather** 09:35

that we didn't that, that we, he was subjected to some crazy stuff inside his classrooms, some of which we didn't actually have any idea about until the end because obviously in our classrooms, we weren't subjecting anyone to that kind of,

**Bret** 09:47

so we weren't subjected to it. But the key thing to understand is how different the experience of an evergreen Professor can be from a normal professor at some other college when your students are taking One class full time and you're teaching one class full time, you have this high level of engagement that's involved in the college that isn't connected to what's going on in the wider college. So we had actually an extraordinarily positive experience because by and large, we had excellent students, our classes overflowed with waiting lists. So we had full rooms full of people who were excited to have professors who invested in them who cared about them individually, because that's the experience they had in our classrooms, they tended to bounce between my programs and your programs. And sometimes when we taught jointly, we would have an even larger roomful of these people. But basically, the short answer is, we had a community of students, that was fantastic. And so our experience, day to day was one that was invigorating, and it was simply fun and rewarding to go to work and interact. And you know, only when stuff bubbled up, you know, in faculty meetings, or in other such contexts, did you get the sense that something was very deeply wrong, which, you know, it was, it was light until bridges showed up, right? There were little hints. But by and large, people still talked about the fact that in order to teach, you had to make people uncomfortable that uncomfortableness was where learning happened. a core value of the institution was teaching across significant differences, which meant that you didn't have to look like the people in the seats in order to convey things to them. And to learn from them.

**Heather** 11:29

You didn't need to think like the people in the seats in order to convey things to them. Yeah, look is easy. And why are we stuck here. But more important, is think is thinking

**Bret** 11:38

basically, all of the elements of being human, there was a recognition that we were all going to be different, and that that didn't mean that we couldn't have an educational environment, that function and then those things.

**Heather** 11:48

In fact, there was there was not that much racial diversity at evergreen. I mean, like the entire Pacific Northwest, it was it was pretty white. But there was an incredible socio economic diversity, and developmental history, diversity. And the number of students we had, who were non traditional age was quite high. In fact, the average age of students at evergreen was 2425, compared to 20. At most, at most schools, number of students who were paying their own way, who had no familial support whatsoever, was high people who were veterans, people who were single mothers, people who were coming back to school after having raised their own families, people who've been homeschooled people have been unschooled.

**Bret** 12:28

There was a very, there was a large Indian population.

**Heather** 12:31

Yeah, the native Native Americans had in fact, there were there were a number of what like branch campuses, on reservations around the state of Washington. And it we used to say, because neither of us thought that we were going to become educators. That wasn't, we were interested in ideas and generating and spreading ideas. But the idea of doing it primarily, to and with undergraduates was never, you know, the thing that we thought that we were driven to do, until we ended up at evergreen and found this model that allowed so much in so much engagement, and really the back and forth and playing with ideas and just learning from one another, that we wouldn't have wanted to be anywhere else, it would be very, very hard and limiting and feel just impoverished to try to teach and a standard, you know, 15 minutes a week, three times a week kind of situation. Again, like that, it just it just would not Yeah, wouldn't it wouldn't create learning community

**Bret** 13:37

well, wouldn't be satisfying job.

**Heather** 13:40

Okay, let us start with questions from the last hour. Do you think? Do you think it's possible that the rise and perversion of postmodern thought that is infecting our major institutions and sensemaking apparatus is part of a calculated plan by outside forces to destabilize the US from the inside out? Would it would be easier for a foreign power to take control in the midst of a civil war? Yes, it would.

**Bret** 14:05

Yeah, I would say a number of things are true. We've been watching this school of thought, gain power since the 90s. Right. And so it's very unlikely that this was seated by a foreign power with intent that it's too long a period of time for it to have unfolded. However, it doesn't mean especially in our modern environment with algorithms and the like. It doesn't mean that somebody is not taking opportunistic advantage of our conflict over these things and amplifying certain sentiments. Because it is in their interest that we be divided. I mean, the fact is, divide and conquer is well understood as a core strategy for winning. This is dividing us very finely and in a way from which there is no obvious recovery. So it is all almost certain that our enemies will have noticed that and that they will be attempting to amplify it to what degree that's what's going on? I don't know. But I will say my discussion with the DHS officer that we talked about in the first hour. One of the things he said several different times was that he believed we were being played, that we were being pushed towards racial conflict, and that that was not inherent to who we were that it was somehow being imposed. I asked him who he thought was doing it, he wasn't sure. But he had the he had the sense that that's what was going on.

**Heather** 15:35

One hypothesis implicit in this question might be that the effectively postmodern takeover of the Academy in the West in the US in particular, could have been encouraged, facilitated with resources from outside. And that's it, that's a testable hypothesis, the idea that the rise of these grievant studies departments, gender studies, and African American Studies in Latin x studies and, and all of these things started, I think it started in the 90s. But it really took off sort of mid aughts through through now. And those departments don't bring in any money. And in general, what we've seen is a move within universities away from, you know, basically towards a business model in which you are, you're valued as faculty and as a department on the basis of how much external funds you bring in, since a large fraction of those funds then goes to make the college route or the university run. So how were those departments being paid for? And I don't I don't know the answer to that. I don't know how it was that so many such departments got created. And once they were there, then they were they had effectively already gamed the system, because now when you count up departments and say, oh, we're gonna have a vote and see who wants to pass this measure across the entire campus? Well, now we've got, you know, 12 departments that are there bullshit, but they already exist.

**Bret** 17:03

So I want to I don't know the answer to the question. But I do wonder if there's just a perverse incentive around creating those departments. That basically,

**Heather** 17:15

I mean, that's Sorry, but I that's the that's what we have been assuming. Right? That's, and that's still what I think is likely true. But I actually it occurs to me that I have no idea, right, the way the funding might be coming, like where did the funding come from, given that those departments cannot pay for themselves?

**Bret** 17:32

Well, I don't know that they cannot pay for themselves in the sense that students, it doesn't take very much, if you have six departments that basically are, it's a pseudo replication of the idea that all there is, is power. And that looks that way from the point of view of women that looks that way, from the point of view of this group, that group one after the other. It's all the same point, right? The I don't, my guess would be that the faculty in those departments are not expensive, the space to teach is not expensive. And that basically, to the extent that large numbers of students think that they want to learn that what they want to learn when they get to college is about their own experience, you know, close up with a microscope or something like that, that basically, this brings in tuition dollars gives people something that it isn't hard for them to get a degree in. And so in a sense, they will make the trade. I could also I think

**Heather** 18:28

I was disagreeing with you up until that last point. The idea that these are effectively gimme degrees, that if you if you get into some school, and then you decide I'm going to major in one of those things, I think it's pretty hard to fill out.

**Bret** 18:42

Yeah, right. It's rough. So

**Heather** 18:46

yeah, without any rocks. And actually without EOS either. Yeah, but neither rocks or jocks. But what you do have are equally inexpensive to run by your rubric departments, things like philosophy and literature, that do actually have standards, at least they used to, and they still ought to because we need the humanities. Those met many schools are are getting rid of those departments. They're slowly weaning you know, the faculty away, but the difference is that it's harder and harder to attract students to those departments because it's just as hard to make a living with a degree in philosophy, almost as it is to make a degree with a living in Chicano Studies. But it's actually you're actually going to have to do some work to get a degree in philosophy. And you know, it shouldn't be just as hard because philosophy is real. And you know, we we we certainly we know some remarkable philosophers who I am quite sure when Christina Hoff Sommers was on, on a faculty somewhere that she was actually educating people. And I believe that Peter Bogosian still is when you know, so long as he's allowed to buy PSU, as just two philosophers that come to off the top of my head whereas I I don't believe that students emerge with much more than a sense of their perennial victimhood from the grievant studies fields.

**Bret** 20:08

Right. And so if you're talking about, you know, fields that are inexpensive to run the, the grievant studies fields offer people, I mean, basically by saying, right up front, the only thing that counts is lived experience, you're effectively declaring that there's nothing to learn, and therefore, let's hear what you faced. Yeah. And

**Heather** 20:28

it's, it's, it's a gimme for students and for faculty to I mean, this is this is what lazy faculty do, like they create a situation which they have to do nothing. and demonstrate that they know nothing, which would be hard, because in many cases, they do know nothing. And, and, and they're all Yeah, they get paid. And the students get a degree. And it's a handshake in which something of value in the market but have no actual value in reality has been exchanged. Yep. Next question. just jumping all over the place. Suppose suppressing COVID saves the lives of people who would have died had they been infected before treatment became available? When hospitals are not at risk of being overwhelmed by what mechanisms can suppressing the spread, save lives?

**Bret** 21:18

That's a curious question.

**Heather** 21:20

Yeah, there's a some I can't there's an assumption in here that I think isn't right, but I'm not quite sure what the assumption is. Yeah. Maybe the assumption is that the only benefit? The only way that lives are saved by suppressing the spread is because you don't end up in hospitals, which are overwhelmed.

**Bret** 21:39

No, no, I think I think I get it this. Okay. This goes back to the very early discussions of flatten the curve of herd immunity. Notice you haven't heard much about herd immunity lately, because sophisticated people have largely given up on the idea that this is the solution. Yeah.

**Heather** 21:55

So well, and, and much of the world is flattening or destroying the curve. And we've decided to try it a second curve of even greater magnitude,

**Bret** 22:03

right? which ultimately, I think the, the question is predicated on the idea that ultimately everybody gets it. And if the hospital isn't, isn't overwhelmed when you get there, then when you get it doesn't dictate whether or not you're going to survive. And there's some truth in that. But what I would say is, let's imagine that a vaccine is possible. We don't know that it is not possible, we don't know that it is possible, but it is plausible that a vaccine can exist, and it will take time to get to one that works and from works, we need to know that it is safe enough to administer. And so that might be 234 years out how it saves lives is what is the number of people that we can prevent from getting the disease through the date at which we have some mechanism to prevent you from ever getting the disease. So that's one thing.

**Heather** 22:51

And and we know that there is there are morbidities, that don't extend all the way to death. Right? After that, where you will go,

**Bret** 22:59

that's exactly where I was going is that the other thing is that we are under counting the massive harms that people are experiencing, even when they get it and recover. It's not everybody, but it's enough people and the harms are substantial enough that we really need to be thinking carefully about this. And then I would add one more thing to it. Other countries have proven that they have some different kind of wherewithal in order to deal with this. Some of them had easier puzzles to solve like New Zealand, but nonetheless, they solved it. What are those countries going to do? If one by one the countries of the world that have the wherewithal managed to knock this thing out? Do you think they're gonna let us cross the border? Not right, we're gonna be able to travel. We're not

**Heather** 23:41

we're not allowed to cross the border now almost anywhere, as I mentioned, one or two episodes ago, and that's not going to change if we continue doing this. I

**Bret** 23:49

mean, I'm talking permanent. If we don't beat this thing, are we ever gonna be allowed to travel to New Zealand? Again? Probably not. I mean, would you if you were New Zealand, would you allow if America had a problem continuing and basically this thing settled into a circulating cycle where it was ever present, you wouldn't let this thing back and no rational country would. And so this, what does that mean with respect to how the part of the world that screwed this up is going to be allowed to interact with the part of the world that figured out how to deal with it. So at some level, let's rip the band aid off, let us actually confront this the way it needs to be confronted to stamp it out. We do not want to wait for a vaccine, we want to stamp it out and it can be done. It's harder now because having screwed that process up once we have quarantine fatigue, or whatever you would call it, but nonetheless, it's only going to get harder and the costs to us are only going to get greater if you know if we are the holdout amongst the first world that can't figure out how to stamp this out.

**Heather** 24:54

Next question refers to something that has come up before and I still don't know exactly what it is celebrate it. Maybe You know, what is your opinion on using a sortition? To fill political positions instead of our current method? Would you like to see a successful unity? 2020 start the conversation of moving towards sortition Thanks for taking the time to do this show. I don't know what sortition is.

**Bret** 25:14

I don't know what sortition is either. Let us say that sortition. I'm wondering if it has something perhaps to do with rank choice voting? that that would be my guess. But I don't know. So I would say rank choice voting is very high on the list of topics discussed inside the communities of people interested in fixing the way our political structure works. So I don't know about sortition have to look into it. But in terms of things that one can do within the constitutional structure we have, there is a lot to be said for for reorganizing how we count votes, for example, in primaries, etc. So anyway, look for that. You will hear more discussion soon.

**Heather** 26:02

I see confusion online about uni 2020s goal of dealing with opportunity hoarding and rent seeking, as some view these as abstract assertions. Can you provide specific examples of these behaviors and practice and how the current duopoly enables them? So let me before you answer that, it's a big question. And we're not going to spend that that could be a whole hour. But I also I don't know if it was in the q&a last time. I also actually stopped you at one point and said let's just let's talk about rent seeking is because some number of people are going to just think rent and think you know, cancel rent, which is one of the you know, like abolish the police defund the police cancel rent. So that we have talked about that recently, as well. And in an attempt to, to deal with the obvious problems of always speaking in abstractions.

**Bret** 26:49

Yep. So let us talk a little bit about rent seeking as it exists and why unity 2020 which does not have a platform, nor does it aim to have a platform would address it. We have many instances in which we have a solvable problem that persistently remains unsolved, so are incredibly cruddy way of paying for and allocating the right to health care is a primary example. Why can we not figure out a system in which your health conditions are dealt with as a matter of distributing the hazard over a risk pool, it's not complex, what the problem is that is to be solved, nor is it complex, what the solution is, the problem is that we have a an industry in charge of something which markets cannot be allowed to do, because they will inevitably do it poorly. So if you are in the insurance game, and I don't mean if you are providing insurance, which could be done well. But if you are in the insurance game in the sense that you are an insurance company, in competition with other insurance companies, you will inevitably discover that the way to win the insurance game is to insure the people who are least likely to need insurance and dis insure the people who are most likely to need the insurance. So the job of insurance, which is to neutralize the risks that we face. When somebody has done nothing wrong and has gotten a cancer, we can distribute the cost of paying for the treatment of that cancer across the entire population. Basically, you don't know whether you're going to get one or you're not going to get one. But we can all agree that I would like it not to be ruinous if I get cancer. And so we can distribute the risk across a large population. But if my insurance company is in the profit making business, and it discovers Well, actually, we'd like to give the insurance in case you get a cancer to people who are least likely to get it. And we would like to dis insure the people who are most likely to get it because that's the way to enhance the profits, then what we end up doing is disenchanting lots of people who are equally deserving of being protected from this hazard. So, in essence, the solution involves neutralizing the market forces that surround insurance. Now, who do you think opposes that? People who are making a profit insurance? Why can't we solve that problem? Why do they have a vote? Well, they have a vote because of the way that things like lobbying influence policy. So persistently, we are scratching our heads. And we have two parties that pretend that there's some big disagreement on how to make the system work. Right? That's going to explain why they fail to solve it decade after decade, when in fact, they fail to solve it decade after decade because they're both in the pockets of these insurers whose racket involves making money by preventing people from having insurance who should have it. That's the racket, right? So that's rent seeking behavior. The insurance companies are providing some service, right? But they are also getting a ton of profit from something that is not only not pretty Writing in a useful service, but it is interrupting the service that they're supposed to be providing. So why would a unity 2020 ticket address that, because if you got patriots in the White House, then what you would have are people who had no incentive to keep the system going, and we're in a position to call it out, right? There's an awful lot of power in that. It never happens, the parties arranged for that not to happen so that we never solve the problem so that their real constituents who include the medical ensures never have to face the terrible system that they've built. So I hope that explains it.

**Heather** 30:36

Next question, what is the best method to deliver funds to you where you retain the maximum percentage?

**Bret** 30:41

This is about us in particular, I think, probably PayPal, probably PayPal, is that right?

**Heather** 30:50

I don't actually know what percentage PayPal takes it depends. patreon doesn't take very much,

**Bret** 30:55

well, PayPal doesn't charge anything if the payment is goods and his friends and family rather than goods and services. And the only reason that you want goods and services, the only advantage to you is that it contains some consumer protections. If you buy something on eBay, from somebody who's fraudulent, you have some protection that comes from the fact that you paid them with that service, for which there's a fee, but there's no fee if you if you do it, friends and family. So I think that's that's the answer by virtue of the fact that last I checked, there's no fee at all, if you use that mechanism.

**Heather** 31:31

Patreon is better than YouTube, YouTube takes between 35 and 40%. Which is remarkable. And it's been noted here before, and we are actually beginning to think about working with some of the wonderful people who have offered their services to develop some kind of an alternative to Super Chat. So people can ask questions, and we can actually retain a higher proportion of, of what you guys are generously donating to us.

**Bret** 31:57

Yep, I would point out that YouTube is a perfect example of this rent seeking issue and it you know, it has the full complexity because YouTube is clearly providing a real service you know, at massive server farms that make all of this possible allow you to deliver videos anywhere in the world at high quality yada yada yada, but the fact

**Heather** 32:14

we don't even have, you know, a price list anywhere, like no one actually knows exactly on any given video or any given question exactly what percentage they're going to take is is pretty remark

**Bret** 32:24

No, it's it's all opaque. And, you know, to the extent that there's an appeal, it's like, you click appeal, and it's either granted or it isn't by somehow, you know, judging this guy or whatever. But But the point is, I think it's now some fraction of what YouTube does is providing a service and it takes a cut, and that's fair, and then some fraction of what it takes is pure rent seeking. And, you know, I don't know it'd be interesting to know what those two numbers what those two percentages were. But yeah,

**Heather** 32:57

arrest could have been done by the police and did not require terror laws. agents were marked with police and DHS badges. The cops used unmarked, the cops use unmarked cars. The tactic seems valid de escalation. I understand the fear for abuse. But do you think it is actually happened? So this with regard to the discussion last hour about NDA, yes. So well, NDA, but more specifically, Trump declaring an Tifa a terrorist.

**Bret** 33:23

So I do believe that there are abuses happening clearly, according to a standard constitutional view, because at the point that the police take you off the street, they read you your rights, then you are under arrest at that moment and taking you I can't say that police do not take people into unmarked cars. I don't know enough about it. But for one thing, there's going to typically be a way to verify that a car is a police vehicle, if these are rented vehicles, right? How do you know the difference between somebody kidnapping you, or the government kidnapping you because they've got their fingers crossed behind their backs to obviate the utility of the Constitution? Because Oh, yeah, Barack Obama signed the NDA 2012. And you should read it really carefully and consult the ACLU as to what it means and, you know, yeah. So anyway, yes, I do think abuses are happening. Again, I would say, I believe the meaning of it is likely to be that they are signaling you have triggered that mechanism. Right? So why would they take people put them in the federal building, and then released, right? There's something Yes, they're engaged in abuses. But there's something symbolic about the abuses they're engaged in, they are alerting people, you triggered those provisions. Therefore, frankly, anything could happen to you. And this is, again, exactly why I didn't want terrorism invoked in this context, because now we are in this murky gray area that many of us have been trying to call attention to for well since 2012.

**Heather** 34:58

So next question is Similar. The feds don't appear to seek to shut down the Portland riots. If they did, they could have arrested and incarcerated without bail 10 per night 500 riders will now be off the battlefield. Your thoughts?

**Bret** 35:13

There is no question that Mayor Wheeler is hamstringing the Portland Police and that he is doing so this

**Heather** 35:21

is about the feds in particular, right? It was the feds don't appear to seek to shut down Portland riots.

**Bret** 35:29

Well, okay, so there's a question about what the feds would be doing. I'm not sure that the feds is being used, specifically here, because the feds The reason that the feds are involved has to do with these federal buildings, which are inherently protected by federal officers. Now, Feds could be brought in under other circumstances. And then there's a question about protections and all but it would have to be the Portland Police are the state police who were doing the arresting, and there is resistance there is local political resistance to doing any such thing. Because Portland is so heavily democratic, and there is a basically it's Virtru signaling by our our city and state government. And that is the reason that the federal government is on the front lines, that was the dog here is the dog. So anyway, really the right thing to happen is for the city and state agencies to do their job and to protect Portland from what has become a nightly violent riot. But the political will to do it isn't there, which is,

**Heather** 36:40

but I mean, and this is, frankly, this is a misread by the politicians currently in power. They they think that they are dependent on these Yahoo's for their reelection. And I mean, they must tell us else, the destruction, this is going to cost so much money and time and an already economically devastated city because every city is economically devastated because of COVID-19. And just, just anecdotally, I will say that when I go out and have to ship something to ups, or you know it ups or the post office, or just whenever I have an interchange with someone that is brief, and no one's waiting behind me for the interchange to end as quickly as possible. I am finding ways to ask, how are you doing? What do you think? What do you think of what's going on. And so far, to a person in which I am trying to not betray anything about what I think everyone who I have spoken to, across a wide variety of demographics has said, I think there is reason to wish that our policing was better. And what has been allowed to happen on the streets of Portland is a travesty. And it needs to stop. And I wonder where the leadership is.

**Bret** 38:04

I agree that that's where people would likely be but the problem is, the nature of the movement is such that it puts pressure on anybody who gets to vote in private. They do. But so a, I don't think that this works like that, where people are going to say things publicly, and then privately feel very differently. And that will be registered in the vote, because what's happening is people are being placed in a position where they have to agree to these, these false syllogisms. And then having agreed to them out of fear, they then convinced themselves that that's what they believe. And so right or wrong, Mayor Wheeler is understanding the threat not to come from the rioters, but to come from the people who wish to signal that they also believe that Black Lives Matter, which, of course, is complex for all of the reasons that we have said every time we've discussed it. Right? Lots of people are signaling that. And, you know, it is creating a power vacuum that the feds are now going to take advantage of. And, you know, basically we the citizens of Portland have been left in a very vulnerable position by that dynamic.

**Heather** 39:16

I guess I'm just saying that I think that there's actually a tremendous number of people who aren't, who don't have their feet being held to the fire by this by the, by the ideology inherent and what the writers are doing. And and I think, frankly, I think this is this is split along pretty cleanly along class lines and not at all perfectly but I think most working class people are watching this saying what the actual hell, like I need to make a living I need I need to have a job. I need to have a downtown in which I can I can walk and be and have public transit that functions and this is none of that and what is going on with leadership and it's You know, the, the look of these protests, the look have looks just like it did on campuses, it's these privileged kids who don't have meaning in their lives. And yes, it doesn't look like they're going to be able to make as good a go of it as their parents had. And that is a tragedy, and we need to address that. And that's what occupy was about. But this this isn't mostly poor people, or black people on the streets protesting. Yeah.

**Bret** 40:29

On the other hand, you can see in the little episode with, with the majority report, that, you know, you and I have attempted

**Heather** 40:39

to, which is, which is a privileged white organization, I'm sure, right, this is like an upper middle class, this is exactly these people.

**Bret** 40:45

Well, whatever it may be, yeah, you can see that what we have tried to do is we have tried to understand the complexity of the situation. And the complexity of the situation is you do have violent rioters in the streets nightly, for some 50 nights in a row. Yeah, there is a reason that the protests are out there, it has to do with dysfunction in our system, that's real, you have abuses by federal powers, you have a failure of leadership at the local level. So we have not carved out a position on either side, what is now happening to us, what we have is a an internet program that is now painting a target on us, that paints us as part of the Federal abuses, right? In a case where we already have violence. So they are putting our family in actual danger, which means where we timid, we would avoid this topic so as not to be in that danger, right. And others will detect that they don't want to take these positions because they don't want to be in danger. So the point is, the room to have any sort of nuanced position here is being dried up by threats that are being delivered in public. So you know, I agree with you, the sentiment would be there. But I think people are also detecting that there will be nobody there to support them. If they attempt to take up a nuanced position, like Yes, I'm troubled by the undervaluing of black lives, but these riots have to stop.

**Heather** 42:16

Well, I guess. I mean, we need me to move on. But I, I guess I'm saying, no, it does exist. Well, I believe that a lot of people do actually have this position. And they aren't people doing this. They aren't people with voice. There's no way to find them unless you happen to walk into a store where they're working with these. These are retail clerks I'm talking about really, and so that's a it's a weird, totally scattershot, haphazard, non non survey survey. But, you know, thinking of this one woman in particular at a UPS Store, who no longer has her second job at PSU, where she was on the janitorial staff. she's a she's a Latina woman, you know, probably in her 30s. I don't know, probably she has family. I don't know, I didn't, I wasn't able to explore that much with her. But I didn't even bring it up. In her case. She just started I said, Oh, it's quiet in here today. She said, Yep, at least I have this job. At least I have this job. I don't have my other one. I kept it through COVID. And now because it was in the heart of the riots, it's gone because they won't open it up because it's not safe for us to be there. And she was she was eager to talk. I was the only one in the store. And she she she just went off. I thought yeah, I'm grateful for the job that she has and cannot believe. And he went and she and she said she said in this conversation Look, it's not that I this Latina woman haven't experienced abuses and racism Of course I of course she has. Right. But not this way. Yeah, this is not how you do it. At all. 45 minutes. Oh, boy. Okay. Here we are. Okay, the next three are actually a poem. I'm going to try to read even though they're all sort of stuck together. And then we'll do two more here and then we'll move on to the next live stream. You already 2020 both, both parties have decided on a candidate that sucks. If only there was someone who could out compete these schmucks. I'd vote for any patriot with courage and a brain. corrupt septuagenarians logistically insane. What's that? You say I have a choice which stymies both their plans and puts the Oval Office out of reach of both their hands a ticket titled unity on that my head I'd hang. I'd vote for Yang mcraven or perhaps mcraven yang the old corrupt establishment will hate this plan for sure. And if we don't defeat them their corruption will endure the articles of unity may be our best way out and choosing the best way is what elections are about that from the militant moderate Hell yeah,

**Bret** 44:49

I love it. That's a beautiful that's a really good poetry.

**Heather** 44:52

That's really good. And I'm glad I didn't mess it up. Yeah.

**Bret** 44:56

That takes get huff to write poetry that somebody can read on first. And get the cadences and everything right.

**Heather** 45:02

Well, I mean, I did see it during our breaks all the time. But But yeah, it's

**Bret** 45:07

it's good good stuff. Thank you Well done. Alright,

**Heather** 45:10

two more questions here and then we'll switch sorry to not get to so many of the so many other 20 $30 questions really enjoyed the black intellectual roundtable will there be more? Also, I didn't fully understand Brett's final recommendation about what he thought they should focus on. Was it corruption?

**Bret** 45:30

Okay, first of all, there will be more, I'd like to do another Roundtable, I'd certainly do another roundtable with the same folks. But there are also other folks who weren't in on that one who I think would be great as well. And you get a very different perspective. So anyway, that's potentially something that might happen in the future. There will certainly be follow up conversations with individuals who are present in that Roundtable. Right.

**Heather** 45:51

Let me say before you address this, the second part of this question that you're going to be a Coleman Hughes has invited you on his podcast, you're going to be doing that soon, I think.

**Bret** 46:00

Yes, I believe this week.

**Heather** 46:03

I was going to stick with soon

**Bret** 46:04

soon. Yes, definitely soon. Okay, soon. So anyway, yes, the conversations are continuing. And I look forward to it. I'm trying to remember how the roundtable ended and what the questioner is asking about. But yes, there wasn't enough room to explore unity 2020 in that Roundtable, but the basic point was, we have a chronic problem, the chronic problem comes from the corruption of our system, which prevents normal democratic mechanisms from addressing it. In the absence of those mechanisms. People are registering that they are frozen out of well being, and they're reacting to it in a predictable way. And the solution to this is to put them back in a position that policy serves their interests, and that we can continue advancing the ball with respect to making the country truly fair and inclusive. So my argument would be that's the only thing that makes sense. Voting for Biden doesn't make sense, because Biden is going to end up amplifying he's going, he and the DNC are going to cynically partner with this movement, which is going to amplify racial tensions. And it is going to provide cover for the rent seeking elites that have corrupted policy for so long. So I do think it's the right solution, because in effect, the conclusion in that roundtable and what you've heard us say here, is that we are, in effect, in effect being divided, which is to someone else's benefit, rather than being united and galvanized for the purpose of making America deliver on its promise.

**Heather** 47:42

Why don't we hear any talk about getting the money out of politics? We used to, we used to talk about that a lot. And and it has not been the main the main thrust for the last few elections. Since was it not for mccain feingold? Is that the original?

**Bret** 48:01

It is. But I also think, earlier in this process, it might have been as simple as getting the money out of politics, the mechanisms through which corruption now functions are many and varied. So in essence, you need an anti corruption set of policies that deals with all of them, because anytime you leave a leak, that leak is going to be used to enlarge itself and ultimately will be returned here. So get the money out of politics is, I think, a useful but inadequate version of what we are now talking about, which is addressing all of the mechanisms of corruption that prevent governance from function.

**Heather** 48:43

Okay, one more here, because it's a, it's a timely comment, just found out that my long term girlfriend is pregnant with our first here's the end 2020 end of the conversations that will lead to a better future for all. Congratulations, and here's to that indeed. Yep. Alright, skipping to the questions that have come in this hour sack Have you drawn a line I'm not seeing where where we're supposed to be. So while Zack is drawing a line, I'm going to go back and pull in one more question from last livestream. Which is this in your last stream, Brett said that there's a kernel of truth within critical theory, what is this kernel? And what reason do we have for believing it?

**Bret** 49:29

The kernel of truth is this. Everything that you know, that you believe that you think that you conclude that you surmise, all of it has come through perception, right? Whether you were perceiving words on a page that reported an experiment that you weren't present at, or you were running the experiment and you saw the results, and you took the data, whatever, you know, had to come through your perceptual apparatus because it has no other mechanism for having gotten into your mind. So that creates a hazard. Because perceptual apparatus is not there to literally report the world, it's there to efficiently report the world in a way that is useful most of the time, right? So that has biases built into it, which we call heuristics. Those heuristics can cause prejudices. However, that's sort of the end of the kernel of truth, right? The kernel of truth is biases a problem right down to the level of what your eyes tell you is in front of you, right? Sometimes it's so unambiguous that there's no problem right? The tables here in front of me, I can see it looks, it looks like an actual object, even though the rendering of it is in my mind. However, there are lots of things that aren't like that. So the remedy is the scientific method, the purpose of the scientific method is to allow you to detect what is true in spite of the fact that your perceptual apparatus doesn't registered correctly on first pass. That's what the method is for. And so to the extent that critical theory proceeds from the observation that bias is potentially and everything that you perceive, the right answer to it is yes, that's why we need more and better science to detect the places where we have misunderstood the world and we can understand them. And that has, you know, that's true about everything, including racial bias. So, the kernel of truth is, perception is dangerous, because it has heuristics built into it. But then critical theory immediately goes off the rails by then arguing against a scientific approach rather than for

**Heather** 51:36

next question, are the values of equal rights and worth in liberal philosophy only metaphorically, true? Or are there objective underpinnings to them? Jordan Peterson presents individualism and religious that is metaphoric tones.

**Bret** 51:51

Yeah, you know, I've been thinking about this, and I think you can see what's going on in the question about a colorblind society. So the idea of a colorblind society has of late been marked, because it appears, so the way it is marked is that it is as if people who suggest that a colorblind society is desirable, have said that they don't see race, for example, right, which is obviously an insane claim. The point though, is colorblind, it does not mean you can't see race, it means that at the structural level, it plays no role. So when you think colorblind, think of blind justice, right, the statue with the blindfold over horizon, and the scales. And the point is, it's not like the court can't know what your background is. But your background can have no implication for whether or not you know, for how the law is applied. Right? Something has to be criminal for all of us or for nobody. And you know, this fails. We've seen, for example, during the crack epidemic that crack and cocaine were punished very differently. And there was a different racial makeup of the people likely to get ensnared in legal proceedings over using and trafficking in these things. So there are biases in the law, but the idea that the law aspires to be colorblind is the right objective, it has to be the right objective, there's no other decent way we're going to be able to run civilization. So what I would say is, it is not that the claim is that there are no differences. Obviously, there's a difference between men and women, that differences are rooted in deepest biology, right? Some of it is superficial, some of it is very deep. However, you know, the crime of murder. If you kill somebody, the law has to treat you similarly, if you're male or female, right? It doesn't have an implication about what you know whether or not you're entitled to take another life. So I don't think it's a claim about us all being alike. It is a claim about how the system has to view us when it is rewarding and punishing us.

**Heather** 53:58

Yeah, we've touched on this before. It's a it's a conflation of equal means the same as Yeah. You know, or means identical to. Yeah. Our human sisters who shared dad's rich x more related than brothers. Second question, if we switched and embryos why for another? Why would the baby have almost the same gene genotype and phenotype as a twin brother with regular dads? Why? So that's one question I don't quite get with that. First one. are humans sisters who share dad's rich x more related than brothers is is a fun one, right? So the idea is we got 23 paired chromosomes and at the 23rd position, the x which looks very much like all the other 22 pairs, is a much bigger chromosome than the Y

**Bret** 54:45

bigger and has much more information even right it's it's bigger by

**Heather** 54:49

mass molecular mass, and it has more coding genes on it. And so, that means that actually, females have larger genotypes, then have are larger genomes than than males? And therefore, given that there's a larger genome to be had with. While there's a larger chunk, it doesn't inherently make you more related. But it means that there's because it depends on exactly what? No, no,

**Bret** 55:21

I think the answer to the question the answer

**Heather** 55:23

is yes. But I'm not actually I could just get stuck in the, in the nitty gritty. Here. I

**Bret** 55:28

think we can get there. Okay. Tell me if I'm wrong, but I always do.

**Heather** 55:35

You always do me if you were

**Bret** 55:36

born, if you're a human, or if you are a eutherian. mammal that that'll cop to, okay. Yes. And you are, you were therefore born with your father's on recombined X chromosome, because he doesn't have a second X chromosome with which

**Heather** 55:57

is can the x recombine? Actually, that's an interesting

**Bret** 56:01

itself, I believe, if you're female, and you have 2x, right? But if

**Heather** 56:05

you're male, can your x recombine with which to recomb. So if you're a female, you have an unreal combined x from your ad, right? So you don't have to say on recombined. That's all

**Bret** 56:14

right, I'm just saying. So it's clear, it's clear where the logic comes from. So the x is going to be one of your exes will be recombined, which means that if you and a sister share the same father, in other words, your full siblings, then you have an identical x, which does drive up

**Heather** 56:29

well. But the Y is also on recombined. So full brothers also have identical y's are two sons of identical wise as well. So that's, that's where that now I'm like trying to figure out what the larger genome, but the x that is 100% inherited from the dad for two full sisters, as opposed to a smaller genome, but a y, which is a smaller percentage of the genome. That's 100% inherited from the Father by two full brothers, which, which one is more fully related?

**Bret** 56:57

Yep. No, I agree. That's, that's a confound. And so the problem here is this depends. Depends on how you do the calculation, because the Y being almost devoid of genetic content, intuitively seems like it contributes less to the calculation, right? Having an identical y that contains almost nothing seems like it could contribute very little. So it's

**Heather** 57:18

a few important things in motion. Yeah. Just Just a few,

**Bret** 57:22

right? It's like the nuclear trigger, you know. Switch? Yeah. But anyway, so I think it's a different difficult question to answer, because you have to define your terms. And so how you calculate relatedness, you know, as we've pointed out in a prior livestream, the fact that you and a chimpanzee might be 98% related, but then they say that you're only 50% related to a full sibling, obviously suggests that those aren't the same calculation. So anyway, it depends. Define your terms. And we can answer the question, although it would probably take a little puzzling on a piece of paper. But

**Heather** 58:00

yeah. Now, do you track the second question here? I don't quite if we switched. If we switch two embryos, why for another, why would the baby have almost the same genotype and phenotype as a twin brother with regular dads? Why? Oh, yeah. So I don't know. I don't know what regular dads why I think I'm not sure what regularly

**Bret** 58:19

inherited, I think is what it means. So the question is, if you if you could, without disturbing the embryo, and that's a big if, but if you could pluck out a why and substitute a different human why it would have almost no implication for the embryo and the developing creature because and, you know, mind you, this is such

**Heather** 58:39

as far as we know, right? As far as we know. But because the reason this cascading series of events towards masculinization, but the way in which that masculinization occurs doesn't seem to be highly variable between wives, right?

**Bret** 58:54

It's basically a single signal that says go down this pathway rather than that pathway. And probably it doesn't matter which mail you got that signal from the point is the content of what kind of mail you're going to be is the result of things on the autosomes That is to say, the non sex chromosomes. So yes, my prediction based on your question, because this echo wouldn't be almost they would be effectively identical twins.

**Heather** 59:19

Cool. George Knapp was just on Jerry. I don't know who George Knapp is do so here's a fun one for you. The question continues, do you believe that we have been visited by aliens? Why or why not?

**Bret** 59:34

No, I don't believe we've been visited by aliens because there's not substandard Well, I will say you go down this rabbit hole. Yeah. And there's lots of evidence of UFOs right? Lots of it. But UFO just means on identify which means you don't know whether it's your own government playing games, some other government playing games, misunderstanding But well, dude, just between you, me and the small number of people who may see this. There is some pretty interesting stuff that is now being acknowledged about, for example, military pilots who have encountered phenomenon appears to defy a natural explanation. Sure. So what that's do I think that's aliens having visited the earth? I do not. I'm open to being persuaded that it is

**Heather** 1:00:29

No, I mean, I think, you know, I said no, right away. But we got a question a while ago about I think we got a question. You know, do you think there's other intelligent life in the universe? And my sense is, it has to evolve whether or not it still exists now, just in terms of statistical likelihood, and the conditions necessary and all this for consciousness, I think it would be stunningly unlikely for there not to be some other form of intelligent life in the universe, I am more certain of that conclusion than I am at the conclusion that there have been no aliens visiting Earth, I think it's really unlikely that aliens have visited Earth. But there's a whole lot that doesn't hinge on that. Like, there's just a lot of stuff that we can't know that we don't know. And I also have very little vested in the answer. So I mean, that'd be cool. I think, you know, unless they're here to kill us.

**Bret** 1:01:25

Now, it's, well, two things. One, I don't know what you mean, other intelligent life? Is there intelligent life in the universe? I think it's, it's probably

**Heather** 1:01:34

Well, our dogs in the room. Well, I

**Bret** 1:01:37

mean, but with respect to the UFO thing, if it was true, I mean, look, if it is true that aliens have visited the earth, then the evidence of that suggests that they are actually actively visiting, right? In other words, these phenomena that are difficult to explain through normal mechanisms would suggest active visitation, if there was active as a nation, which I do not believe there is, but again, we let it be dissuaded.

**Heather** 1:02:10

That's a that's less likely that there is active ongoing visitation?

**Bret** 1:02:17

Well, I mean, you know, depends what you mean, you've got, where would they have come from? Right? Not the solar system? Yeah. elsewheres. Right. So if they had arrived here from somewhere over some very great distance, and we are seeing them in not only historical times, but you know, with some regularity, we see these phenomena that are not explicable. And again, I don't think that these are aliens from elsewhere, visiting mirror, but if they are, I think the point is, oh, that's an ongoing something or other. So here's the question, maybe, yeah, if there's an ongoing something or other, okay. Wouldn't it be worth our while to try to reach them and get their help? For example, for example, were there aliens who were interested in us for some reason, right? Right. You know, a star man waiting in the sky, who he'd like to come and meet us, but he thinks he'd blow our mind. Well, maybe the point is, well, we're willing to have our minds blown, right? Because maybe they have the secret to fusion power. Do you realize how much better the planet would get if we could get fusion power and government properly, right, we could solve we could not only halt global climate change, we could reverse it. We could do all sorts of things here. They probably do. Right? Well, exactly. Right. We know it's possible. So if they're here, right? I'm not saying they're here. But I'm saying if we thought they were here wouldn't the thing to do be to try to talk them into revealing themselves and helping us out? Because we're in big trouble? I'm not kidding. It's like the right number of lottery tickets to buy is one. Right? If you're wrong about the way the universe works, one lottery ticket allows some force in the universe to solve your problems. Zero does not

**Heather** 1:04:06

send the guy who I think has never bought a lottery ticket. Yeah, right. Right. Yeah. Nor has our dog or if I need, okay. loved your interview with Dr. Mu. And I'm preparing for my eventual route resorptions since I had braces when I was in my teens, what are your thoughts on evolutionary optometry? Oh, so this is this is a question we sort of asked on whenever we were first talking about this, and I don't I don't really know who's doing this work. Although we've seen a few we've received a few emails suggesting there might be some good people out there. And we've talked about this a bit.

**Bret** 1:04:39

Yeah, it's long overdue. I mean, the fact is, as you know, okay, there's, there's Where's I mean, but

**Heather** 1:04:45

the question presumes that it already exists. And we just don't we're not in on the conversation yet. I mean, we've talked about it but I

**Bret** 1:04:50

there is some discussion of it, whether there's anybody actively working in ophthalmology who has an evolutionary bent. That is You know, above laughable, I don't know, I've yet to encounter them. If they exist, I would love to know what what they're up to, because I do think we are screwing up our eyes badly that we could be doing vastly better. And that, you know, this is just one more way in which we squander human potential by pretending that all sorts of evolutionary things aren't evolutionary. So we welcome it if it's out there, maybe we'll hear about

**Heather** 1:05:23

Yeah. I don't know what the next question means. SJW equals pork Cory Yakuza? Sure I'm butchering that in Japanese, which means PC mafia. Seems like a more apt name. What do you think? PC mafia? I just I just can't say anything about what the Japanese mean. So you know what the connotations are?

**Bret** 1:05:48

I yeah, I think you know, we're gonna have to politely sidestep that and say, this has its own phenomenon. It's dangerous. We would welcome people within the phenomenon waking up to the danger and attempting to pursue actual justice in some way that wasn't going to destroy everything.

**Heather** 1:06:09

Well, both of you interview at Richard Hart. He's recently released a product that is the Dark Horse of cryptocurrency, it's easy to use. welding. Zach, you want to highlight that? The one I've got half assed highlighted.

**Bret** 1:06:25

I did say when I was on Peter McCormick's podcast is crypto podcast, that I thought the key thing was that crypto remains too hard to use for it to catch on. And the analogy I used was the difference between PGP and proton mail, right? proton mail works because you don't have to exchange keys and all it does it seamlessly. And so I was saying that crypto needs that layer in order for it to actually achieve its potential which I quite believe so anyway, maybe maybe Richard hertz got it.

**Heather** 1:06:57

Yeah. Someone has given a lot of money to ask to say would love to talk find me on Facebook Landon, Doc. So I don't know exactly what to highlight that to. The theoretical physicist, Dr. sabet, Sabina, Sabean, Sabir Sabine Sabine hossenfelder would be a great interview guest on the subject of philosophy of science. her recent book is titled lost in math. See also her blog and her YouTube channel? I know I'm a little bit

**Bret** 1:07:28

younger for a long time. Yeah, yeah, quite, quite like her. Most of the time. There's some places where we differ. But anyway, yeah, I think she's a fascinating, fascinating person.

**Heather** 1:07:39

From my perspective, many of these postmodern movements at their core personal traumas being acted out unconsciously on a mass scale. How do you combat something that at its root is emotional and logical? Thoughts don't seem enough thoughts? Yeah, I agree with us. And you know, we're I think we're often talking past one another. When we, you know, we are simultaneously saying, okay, but you know, this thing is, you know, it has its origins in post modernism in these traditions, and then it was being taught and indoctrinated at universities. Well, who are the people who are particularly attracted to it, some some of them were actually interested in inquiry and investigation of the world and the role of bias in it, I presume, but because as we already said, because the main, the main product of such investigations is you're a victim, and you always will be a victim, and there's no escaping that, that will appeal to those who are feeling themselves to be victims and have not yet found any way to escape from it. It's, of course self perpetuating. But it does it in our explanation of it from the point of grievance studies, and the scholarship and the scholarship and quotes behind it does miss the individual psychological level, and the fact that we have so many people who are unregulated dysregulated do not have any way to confront their own psychologies and emotions and make real connection and meaning in the world.

**Bret** 1:09:11

So I would just point out the connection of this to the rent seeking thing. Because Yeah, what you have is a bunch of people making a profit by not only failing to serve the interests of people, but in many cases, actually maiming them psychologically and otherwise. Yes. So you know, this happens from orthodontia through pharmacological treatment of psychological disorders, you just have all of these profit making centers that actually do a lot of harm to people and have left them in many ways, incapable of doing what needs to be done, which then leaves them feeling betrayed, and they're not wrong, that they've been betrayed, but they have missed diagnosed the nature of the betrayal. So yeah, let's deal with Rent seeking.

**Heather** 1:10:02

Okay, let's do we do three more sure. Okay. Are there any schools left that resemble what you loved about evergreen for evergreen was actually was unique. There was there was no place else that did that there are some schools that did the block system you three weeks at a time intensive with one group of students and one faculty. But being able to be with the same group of people full time for a quarter or two quarters that entire academic year, and have that be the extent of your academic work for the year. There's nothing else like that. You actually, and that there were a lot of there are a lot of new pedagogical structures that evergreen created when it was formed in the late 60s, early 70s. And some of them I think, weren't as important. Some of them have been used elsewhere. But that thing right there, which was being dismantled, in the last year or two that we were there as well was just begun to be dismantled, really meant that there was no place else actually, that was evergreen, like in its most unique and important feature.

**Bret** 1:11:14

Yep. Now, if you were to try to set something up that did that, I would say we learned a lot about what didn't work about it to our community was incredible. And that depended on the fact that actually, we were really interested in figuring out what could be done with the freedom that we had, which was essentially totally, what I would suggest is if you're going to set up that structure, the key thing you have to do is you've got to find the people who actually are going to run with the freedom and take it somewhere useful from the point of view of students, evergreen brought in people who, you know, was very hard to figure out who was going to be good at the job of taking a blank canvas and turning it into some new educational environment. So we got a lot of credit teachers, but we didn't have a mechanism to get rid of them. And so they accumulated and what you want to do, I think, and we tried to advocate for this for some years before the end was bring people in provisionally give them three years to figure out whether or not they can make the structure work. And if they can't, it's not personal, but they don't they shouldn't be in those spots. And if you accumulated people who inside of three years could figure out how to make the most of that freedom. You'd have a great faculty.

**Heather** 1:12:30

I mean that nominally existed, but in fact, once you'd gotten hired to a tenure track position, you were almost guaranteed to get tenured. Yep, that's true. Why is unity 2020 a better option than pressuring our reps to pass anti corruption legislation?

**Bret** 1:12:47

Because you won't be able to pressure them because the people who have successfully corrupted the system will have vastly more resources with which to exert pressure in the other direction. So the reason to go after the White House is that it has the what's called the bully pulpit. And the bully pulpit is a powerful position with which to, to drive the money changers out as it were.

**Heather** 1:13:18

Okay, I said we'd do three more questions. This is to be the last one, but I just found one down below, it's on a totally different topic that we'll end with. Okay, two more now. argued with the person who said all left leaning people are parasites on humanity, similar to Dawkins on religion? How do we distinguish between evolve parasitic relationships versus evolved adaptations? Considering that both lasts a long time?

**Bret** 1:13:40

Okay, this is tough, because the question is, What level are you doing the analysis? In other words, parasites are adaptive, if you analyze them at the parasite level, right? at the level of the host, they are maladaptive. So in some sense, you have adaptive phenomena are those phenomena which are coherent and advance their own interests. And you can have mind virus stuff on a short timescale circulate in human culture. And how are we to determine that? Well, those strategies will be self defeating over some period of time. So for example, to the extent that this ideology we are seeing in the street is very powerful, it is not stable. And so it's going to descend into a kind of madness, you will notice that it will not produce the utopia it's proposing it will produce chaos, right? That tells us that it is not an adaptive structure, short term, it is gaining power, but the structure it creates with that power is going to be authoritarian and it is going to produce vastly more injustice than the system is replacing. So you can take that as a prediction.

**Heather** 1:14:55

Okay, last question. You said in Jamaica, you studied reptiles I have tons of animals thriving in my garden. Any cool tips about these dewlap flashing guys, you could share I've heard in the Caribbean, they're a case study for convergent evolution. So I scrolled through and found the question about lizards inside.

**Bret** 1:15:11

Yes. Well, I'll tell you what, I'll tell you a story. So anyway, I was working with Bob in Jamaica. Bob Trevor's, the great evolutionary biologist. Hi, Bob if you're watching anyway, so we were capturing lizards and we were counting things like scale number to see how symmetrical they were and we were measuring basically it was a question of parasite load and desirability to mates right so males have this flag on their neck called the dewlap that they show and the they challenge each other you know, you'll have one nano and one log in one animal and another log in they'll start flashing their do laps at each other and it's like game on and they'll wrestle him do all these things and so anyway, we were also we were taking the animals and we were measuring things about their symmetry and all of that so I was very much in the habit

**Heather** 1:16:08

so sorry. So you were you were engaged in the test of the Hamilton's duck hypothesis, which is a test that females are choosing males based on their low parasite load and their color in this case their brightness will be an indicator in inverse correlation with parasite load the brighter the lizards the lower the parasite load, but you were also testing questions of fluctuating asymmetry what is that females were interested in particularly symmetrical like bilaterally symmetrical males Right,

**Bret** 1:16:34

right. Thank you for the English English translation that was vastly clearer than what I was saying. Okay, but anyway, the point was, I was in the habit of grabbing lizards and inspecting them. And one day, I think Bob was getting ready to go out for the evening or something. And I came into his room to talk to him and he pointed me to the fact that there was an animal on his dresser flashing it's do lap to itself in the mirror. And I went to grab the animal and he was like, don't do that. Because in some sense, this animal had come up against its ultimate match. I mean, no matter how the guy is so good He's so good. So right and it was just like, no matter how many decimal places you went, they were dead even.

**Heather** 1:17:25

He seems to protect by every moment. Yeah, so it's like that Marx Brothers routine from duck soup.

**Bret** 1:17:31

Oh, yeah, that mirror one yeah. Beauty. So anyway, I did not collect a lizard and we watched it for a good long time and really

**Heather** 1:17:40

increasingly filing falls off the dresser.

**Bret** 1:17:44

I did wonder briefly if it was going to catch fire. But anyway, yeah, so I don't know that there any tips other than Yeah, watch them they're fascinating creatures. Their fights are interesting. Oh, I know. I did one of the more interesting things I did while I was in Jamaica was I decided I was going to watch one animal for 24 hours just to see what life looked like and it was fascinating.

**Heather** 1:18:09

So consistent I didn't know you did this 24 hours without you going to sleep.

**Bret** 1:18:14

Well the animal went to sleep so sleep I went to I went to bed too because it was clear wasn't gonna move till sunrise. So So anyway, you know, this is a male it had sex three times in 24 hours which I was very surprised by it. So these animals have two penises, one on each side and it alternated sides. So

**Heather** 1:18:33

that's not a that's an animal trait. That's that's a squamate trip. That's, that's all snakes and lizards have that?

**Bret** 1:18:38

Yeah. But anyway, the whole thing was pretty fascinating. Yeah,

**Heather** 1:18:42

so so so you pulled up sort of a primatology move and a primatologist work really, really hard because they basically have to put their monkeys if they're watching monkeys to bed at night, and then get back before the monkeys get up in the morning and start heading across the forest. In this case, you the the animal bedded down for the night, and like where do they sleep? What do they know? The whole okay. And so a I'd be curious if they go back to the same hole every night. They're territorial. But when you came back the next morning, presumably it would just was still in the hole. And then you waited until it emerged and it didn't emerge. And it was clear you hadn't missed anything. Yep. Unless something fancy was going on inside the hole. You never

**Bret** 1:19:17

know. You never know when that could have been a portal to another dimension. Oh, yes.

**Heather** 1:19:20

All right. I think that's it.

**Bret** 1:19:23

All right. Well, thanks very much, everybody.

**Heather** 1:19:27

We'll be back on Tuesday a bit later, probably at the previous time, like 330 or so. On Tuesday. All right.

**Bret** 1:19:34

In the meantime, check out Matt Taibbi, the black intellectual roundtable if you haven't seen it, Mike mu the most fascinating orthodontist in the known universe and look out for more content because there's more coming. All right, be well, everyone