Your Questions Answered - Bret and Heather 46th DarkHorse Po...

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**SPEAKERS**

Bret, Heather

**Bret** 00:19

Hey folks, welcome back to the Dark Horse pod cast and animal extravaganza. That's right. Yes, this is the q&a section we are going to answer some questions. I see some good ones here on the screen. Yep.

**Heather** 00:35

All right. We're gonna start with some from last episode that we didn't we missed a lot in the last episode. But so we're going to pick up a few from there one from the discord server and then launch right into the ones that came in last hour before finishing with 2025 minutes of questions from this hour. All right. From all your travels, what is your favorite language or dialect? And why also Fairfax for president? That is a Fairfax with the white nose back there along with Moxie.

**Bret** 01:08

He would make a terrible person and he would he's he's got the discretion part. Everything is at his discretion. But yeah, it will be an autocrat. And yes, his, his discernment is perhaps a bit lacking

**Heather** 01:19

and wise for his ears.

**Bret** 01:21

Which ain't saying much. Yeah, yeah.

**Heather** 01:25

All right, you got one? No, actually. So I thought this was interesting, because, you know, we've talked, we have been a lot of places and neither of us is particularly adept at picking up other languages. Yeah. But we've we've dabbled in many, and we always try to try to learn enough wherever we are, to, at least make it clear that we're trying. And long ago, when we were in Madagascar, I had the thought that actually it seems like maybe every language out there does something best like there's or or maybe no, the it's not quite that it's that for every concept, there's some language that actually has it drilled down on most effectively. And so in mala Ghazi, for instance, they have this word SEPA, which means sort of, you know, romantic partner, but it doesn't, it's not yet married. So they, you know, they do have, of course, marriage and Madagascar. But it also doesn't have the sort of triviality of boyfriend or girlfriend. It's also it's gender neutral. And it doesn't have the sort of clinical thing of partner. And you know, really, if you are romantically involved in someone and not married, you refer to your SEPA, and it seems to do so much better job than any of the words that we have in English. So that's that's not an answer. But I want I wondered if you had an answer for this one.

**Bret** 02:46

I do. But I first want to say about SEPA. I also recall a discussion I'm turning over which Malagasy person this discussion was with. But it turned out that the reason in all likelihood that SEPA does such a good job of being a non trivial version of a boyfriend, or girlfriend is that the economic obstacles to marriage are so substantial that many people are effectively married, but haven't gotten the resources to have the ceremony. And therefore it's sort of the higher, higher standard.

**Heather** 03:23

Yeah, in fact, you have you have people with children's and grown children who themselves might be beginning to start families. And the parents may still be cbos because they have not garnered the resources required basically to throw the big party including the sacrificing of the zebu and some of the some of the areas of Madagascar that are required in order to really effectively declare to your whole family. Look, we are we're taking this seriously and we're married

**Bret** 03:50

to the sacrificing of the zebu, followed by the grilling of the zebu, which, you know the party really gets

**Heather** 03:55

zebu being the Malagasy cattle Yes.

**Bret** 03:59

Now my favorite would be Jamaican patois. I love it. It's marvelous. It's very hard to simulate, for me at least. hard to understand. And I must say I ran into the most marvelous discussion. You'll never guess who had the most marvelous discussion on patwon. Bob drivers know john McWhorter. Oh, of course, I'm sure of course, lexicon Valley podcast, recent one, and maybe his most recent one was on patois. And in fact, the argument he made solve the long standing paradox for me, which was about why Pat was from various Caribbean islands are so similar. And his point was, it's not from those islands, which I thought was absolutely fascinating. And where it was from, is stunning. So I would recommend people go check out the lexicon Well, let's put it this way. I didn't know that. It's slave castle was a thing in Africa but the slave trade obviously had all of these elements to it. Oh, wow. And okay, so anyway, this story is well worth well worth lesson.

**Heather** 05:11

Yeah. So you know, we always make the mistake of spending too much time on the on the early questions, but this is not a favorite language but I do remember being particularly charmed as well, in Turkey with Yeah, so we we spoke no to I mean, just the again a few words none of which I could call to mind right now. But But when we would be walking on the streets, we would inevitably be asked, What do you want come up

**Bret** 05:43

by people attempting people attempt to get out of their kebab shop sticks

**Heather** 05:46

of meat? Yes. Or always being invited in for Apple tea, including even at a gas station or

**Bret** 05:53

calling gas station? Yes, we were we were getting gas, which was no reason not to be hospitable. The Turks are lovely.

**Heather** 05:58

And so we went in we had some apple to Apple tea.

**Bret** 06:01

Yes, that's the thing, man. That's not Turkish. No, that's not Turkish. That is a really lousy impression of

**Heather** 06:08

now somewhere in here. I don't think we've ended up getting to it otherwise, but someone asked us to please not avoid the fact that it is Talk Like a Pirate Day today. are not sure I can do it.

**Bret** 06:23

Of course, you know how pirates talk. Everyone knows how pirates talk.

**Heather** 06:30

Okay, what are the possible evolutionary explanations for tickling?

**Bret** 06:34

Yeah, oh, man, I can't I can't believe I'm going to deploy this here.

**Heather** 06:39

You don't have to I just I wanted you to see that someone was thinking about it. promising to talk about it for a while in various venues. Yeah.

**Bret** 06:45

Let's put it to you this way. Let's talk about the nature of the puzzle. And then I hate Fairfax. Because the nature of the puzzle is this tickling has many interesting features. Can't tickle yourself, right? You just can't. It's hard to tickle. It's hard to be tickled if you're in the water, that's interesting. Or if you're scared, if you're scared, presumably on a battlefield, we're tickling a thing people would be sneaking up on their enemies and tickling others. Right? Exactly. And they would fall to the ground writhing in agony and then immediately be stabbed or shot or something. So anyway. I believe you are on the verge possibly of getting the giggles No,

**Heather** 07:31

I just I don't think that we should put you in charge of military strategy.

**Bret** 07:36

Of course you should because you know why? Because I know that tickling is not on the menu of possible

**Heather** 07:42

so unlike all of the other military leaders, you will not breakout tickling as something to to do on the battlefield.

**Bret** 07:49

Many and Empire has fallen because someone has thought that tickling their enemy was the key to defeating them and discovered that it just didn't work in that context.

07:57

everything needed. Were pointed sticks, pointed sticks. Yes, yeah.

**Bret** 08:01

So I tell you what I'm going to promise to deploy what I this is a very, what I think is a marvelous hypothesis. I've had it for many years, and everything I've seen has increased my confidence that it will turn out to be true, but I should deploy it in a proper form rather than deeply buried in a q&a here. But do notice the pattern, the pattern is enough to tell you what might be going on, in my opinion.

**Heather** 08:26

Do any other animals that says animals, mammals, do any other animals tend to find their identity in their color, even though they're the same species like humans with rice? and mammals? Nothing came to me exactly. Although there may well be different colors within within non domesticated species. But the example that really sprang to mind was, you know what, I know exactly, you know exactly how I'm going. The bastimentos right. So the Bocas Del Toro archipelago in Panama has many delights. One of them is that it has on it a species of dark poison frog, which was the first clade of frogs that I was studying with regard to their sexual selection and territorial behavior and parental care behavior. And it's it's only a dinner babies it's aphasia, I think pumilio and they have in the bogus archipelago, so many morphs, it's really incredible. So in Costa Rica, where they are more commonly called the blue jeans frog, the bright red on their backs, they have bright blue legs, if you flip them over, they have these like pale neon blue dots on their vendors on their stomachs. And in mainland Panama, they tend to not have blue jeans as much. But on these islands, they have every color under the sun. There are yellow ones, they're orange ones, there are green ones, they're I don't think purple but sort of deep blue and of course there are red And each of them come with spots sometimes without spots other times. Pretty much all the actually apps medically colored dendrobatidis, the dark poison frogs have these pale blue neon blue dots on their stomachs. But when under normal circumstances, you don't really see frogs flipped upside down. They look so different from one another. And they do seem to be mating assertively based on color. And so that's a that's a long winded way of getting to an answer. It's not a mammal, but it is an animal of an organism that is make doing make choice decisions based on based on color. And you have something there you want to

**Bret** 10:42

Well, I'm trying to find one of these posters, but I want to make sure it's of the right species. Before I forward it to Zach. That look right to you.

**Heather** 10:57

Yeah, well, no, not all of those are not really Oh, all right. Some of those are familiar, but not all of them. So.

**Bret** 11:03

So, Kyle, who has done a lot of work on Kyle summers made a choice in these frogs has found a positive assorted of mating.

**Heather** 11:11

Yes, I should I have not gone back and looked at his papers. But that's what I remember. Yes. So let me just say whether that is the sort of meeting meaning, what you are like with regard to whatever character it is that you're thinking about, you tend to choose the same thing. Negative assortative mating being whatever character you're attending to, you tend to choose the opposite thing in a mate. So yes, I believe that Kyle has found Kyle summers has found positive assertive mating with regard to color morph in aphasia familia in Bocas, Del Toro archipelago of Panama, that was a lot of words that probably are meaningless to most people. No,

**Bret** 11:45

but let's just put it this way, there are good reasons that this could happen. For example, color morph may be arbitrary. But it can be an indicator of lineage. And there are reasons that creatures might prefer to mate at some distance from self, but within lineage. So that is an awkward fact. But it nonetheless, it's not hard to find a logic by which that would evolutionarily be favored. And I would just say, in my dissertation, I deployed an argument whereby this might even work in plants, right, and the example I used was hydrangeas. And the thing is hydrangeas, their color, the color of the flowers is dependent on soil pH. And my argument was that plants could use the eyes of insects to choose a mate. And they would do this if you had a let's say, blue more of hydrangea. Blue morph indicates what soil type it is growing in. So a plant that has successfully grown in let's say, acidic soils, has gotten to the point of flowering and is looking for a mate. Well, it seeds are very likely to end up in acidic soils, because if you had to guess what soil type the seeds would land in from an adult, if the adult is in ascitic soils, the offspring are liable to end up there. So it wouldn't want a hydrangea that was well adapted to basic soils. And so how do you figure this out, if you don't have eyes and you can't see your mate because it's a pollen grain you're looking for? Well, you might put up a blue flower to whatever extent there's a bias in insects towards blue or a particular insects toward blue, that insect would tend to go from a blue hydrangea to a blue hydrangea rather than from a red hydrangea to a blue hydrangea. And this could provide some bias whereby a plant with no eyes could see a potential mate and choose one over another

13:36

flowers.

**Heather** 13:39

pollinators doing the flowers bidding as they do in many regards, but specifically having their eyes borrowed. Yes, very good

**Bret** 13:44

plants borrowing the eyes of insects very nice.

**Heather** 13:49

If unity is unable to run a ticket this year, where should my vote go to best support the success and efficacy of the Unity movement in our future? Which White House helps the odds more unity 2020 for the win short or long game? This again from last episode? Fantastic

**Bret** 14:03

question. What I want to say to you is I think the most important thing to do is not to vote so as to put unity in the best position going forward. The problem is that you could get into a situation where harming the nation, you know, accelerationist level thinking where the faster things get bad, the greater the chances that we can switch to something better because people will be motivated to do it. And I think this is too dangerous. So what I would say is, you need to escape the duopoly is claim that you are obligated to do what it says right? You got Tweedledum on one side and wield dumber on the other. They each want to tell you what you're obligated to do based on the really cozy little situation that they have erected,

**Heather** 14:50

set new. Yeah.

**Bret** 14:55

But in any case, I think what you want to do is vote your conscience vote What do you think is best for the nation going forward? And I don't think this is a simple thing in this case at all. I think the duopoly has set us up for disaster either way,

**Heather** 15:11

and different kinds of disaster. Yeah,

**Bret** 15:13

I will say I did write a piece before it was clear that Trump was going to win in 2016, I wrote a piece in anticipation that Clinton would win, because that's what I thought was going to happen. And the point of my piece, which has now been misunderstood by Dave Rubin, who mentions it in his book, as if I said something I didn't. But the point of my piece was, there was literally not a single thing you could do in the 2016 election, you couldn't vote for either of the major party candidates, you couldn't vote for a right in as I did, you couldn't not vote without harming some constituency, we were given nothing but bad choices. And you had to pick one, which meant that effectively at some level, you owed somebody an apology. And that that I argued was the enemy that any system in which doesn't, which doesn't give you a move in which you don't owe somebody an apology for having made it is a sick system, and we need to fix that. So in that light, I would say do your best vote your conscience don't listen to the goddamn duopoly because it's what put us in this mess in the first place. And yeah, if we can't win this time, the question is, unity until we get

**Heather** 16:26

there. Yeah, he doesn't die with the year

**Bret** 16:30

Nope, absolutely not.

**Heather** 16:33

My question is only a few sentences long, but doesn't fit into the Super Chat limits, even at the $500 level, please consider another tool in the future happy to code one up for you for free, if needed, I believe in what you're doing. So I wanted to include this just to say that someone else who who watches regularly has offered to do just that, and is in fact working on a platform. So we may continue to, to receive Super Chat questions even after that, but basically, YouTube is predatory. They take 40% of what you donate here. And and they obviously are also in a position to censor if they want to. So we that that other system is in the works. And we'll keep you posted about that.

**Bret** 17:17

I would also say though, I can tell you're not on Twitter, because Twitter teaches you how to get these things down to a very short snippets.

**Heather** 17:28

And know that not all questions can be shortened to very, very

**Bret** 17:31

short snippets. No, I do know that I do know that. But I also know that that one can often get way farther than you think. Sure. I learned this in a in a spectacular form. I once sent a letter to the editor to the New York Times. But they have very strict limits. I think it was a 500 word limit or something like that. It's probably less than that. Or maybe it's less than that. But in any case, I wrote my letter that's like that's

**Heather** 17:59

almost as long as it's not bad. It's gonna be more like 150 words, or

**Bret** 18:03

maybe 150 words. But in any case, I wrote something and it was more than twice the length they would accept. And I said about trying to figure out how to get it down to the word limit. And I did and the thing that I was shocked by was it it actually tightened it up quite a bit. Yeah, a lot of extra verbage in there.

**Heather** 18:18

Yeah. Well, I won't tell my horrifying editing story right now. But But yeah, often you really can't tighten things a lot. And then there's a point at which you try to tighten it further. And it D coheres and you lose all meaning.

**Bret** 18:31

Now I believe that in this case, much like with Twitter, this person could break their question into a couple of different ones, and they could file them together and we would see them come in together. Yep. So anyway, that's a possibility. Or you can wait till the better platform emerges.

**Heather** 18:50

That's right. Okay, so I've told the people on discord that once a week, we will if they if they want to pose questions amongst themselves and vote on what question they would really like to have answered, we will do so. So this is the discord question for the week. You have both talked about the negative effects of casual sex culture and how sex is for bonding in pairs. In light of this, how should people be dating? and What place does sex have an individual's life prior to marriage or the equivalent? What advice could you give to younger people as the age for marriage rises in the Western world?

**Bret** 19:21

Well, first thing to say is there's nothing to recommend casual sex, you should dress up a bit

**Heather** 19:28

and then dress down.

**Bret** 19:30

I guess that's sort of Yeah, yeah. Almost required.

**Heather** 19:33

Sort of an oscillating level of dresses. What you recommend you start out

**Bret** 19:37

dressed a bit more formally than than all the casual folks, I guess, but

**Heather** 19:43

alright, so neither of us has ever said and I at least have not thought that the idea of sex outside of, you know, a formal institution of marriage or even priorities. I think we got cooties outside our window. Yeah. All right, right? All that is Zach. Yeah. Why don't you go have Toby make sure that all the cats are inside and lock them down. Okay? Yep, yep. All right. That's, that's close, and it's the middle the day. So

**Bret** 20:18

I think that's great. It's not 100% certain it could be dogs, but

**Heather** 20:22

we definitely we definitely have coyotes here. Yep. Okay, um, are we talking about casual sexual sex, marriage, maybe that just Katie's having sex, I don't know, could be hard. I don't know what they sound like when they have sex. You know, sex sex. What we'd have spoken against is extremely casual sex and the idea that what, you know, men at their sort of second worst, so you know, not not rape, but seeking the sort of the CIO and go strategy, which is what one of your students wants to call that, right? Is not particularly interesting, and certainly not honorable, and women aspiring to do the same thing is neither interesting nor honorable, either.

**Bret** 21:09

Bad for society.

**Heather** 21:10

It's bad for society. And it's also just not it's, you know, it's just the physical, it's just the physical stuff. And so in, in engaging in sex with someone with whom you don't imagine that you will be spending your life with can be an absolutely wonderful way to to explore your body and your sexuality. But that is different from saying you need to save yourself for marriage, or that go into a bar because you want to pick someone up because you're horny, and that you know that you'll never see them again, 12 hours later, you know, both of those extremes can be recognized as extremes without you And leave a lot in the middle to be discussed.

**Bret** 21:51

Yeah. And I mean, I also just think somehow, I don't know why we are always playing defense on this question. The the ethos of the moment is so backwards, that it is as if, you know, this sort of is another case where the term that's been deployed sex positivity is a misnomer. And the fact is, sex positivity takes one view of sex and what its value is and how to get there, but I would just suggest, just as a proof of concept, ask yourself this question. When has sexual Liberty been greater? I think the answer is never and all sorts of levels the stigma is gone. From pornography and masturbation, we have apps to facilitate you meeting people that you'll never see again and going home with them all sorts of stuff is being normalized sex work how satisfied do people seem I think they seem really unsatisfied I think they are sexually frustrated and that the very thing that they thought was going to address it has done the very opposite it has taken the magic out of this landscape and replaced it with its junk sex

**Heather** 23:10

writing sex. Yeah, no, it's and this I mean, this is a point that we make in in our book that we are writing and it was a point that was really well made with a lot of backup from from data from various sorts actually in 2019 or 18. I can't remember which Atlantic article that was called I think the sex recession which you know, adds to what you just said that actually many young people are actually having a lot less sex right that there's you know, that there's obviously a rise in casual sex and one nightstands and all of this but that is actually a lot you know, people people seem to be replacing what used to be real human, you know, amazing, important tactile content with screens. And with with with sexting, as if, you know, as if there's any way for that to do you know, even a 20th the same thing in terms of connecting you to another human being.

**Bret** 24:04

Yeah, and you know, people are being synchronized that this, the competition in the porn industry to get people's attention has resulted in this move in the direction of extreme stuff, in many cases, insane stuff. Yeah.

**Heather** 24:19

dangerous things that for the most part, women don't want to anything to do with at all

**Bret** 24:23

do me a logically, ill advised things. So anyway, it's obviously not working. It's obviously compromised things that do work. And I think I think the problem is that the term casual sex itself, and the fact that you feel the need to separate an objection to casual sex from the suggestion that sex needs to wait for marriage. What it is, is divorcing sex from meaningful relationships is a mistake, right? The configurations I mean, as we pointed out with the point About mala Ghazi cbos. These are people who are bonded and may produce children but aren't married because marriage is difficult to accomplish, right? So there's lots of room for stuff. But I would say, as I've said about hallucinogenic drugs, the thing is, it makes sense to seek satisfaction, sexual satisfaction is awesome. But that is not the same thing as treating it casual, right? The fact that it's very pleasurable, does not mean in fact, the route to it being pleasurable involves one taking it seriously. Right? This is the whole message of tantric sex is the taking it very seriously as a way of elevating pleasure. And so the, the junk ification of everything, a friendship, of sex of the whole landscape is not serving anybody. So in terms of advice, my advice would be figure out who also aspires to something better and opt out of the, the consensus together. That's what I would say just

**Heather** 26:09

All right, next question. The next one refers to the fact that is rashanna. Today, that Jewish New Year, Sha Tova and Shabbat Shalom, thank you all for your service towards unity. To me unity is more than president and vice president it's people engaging each other with civility regardless of personal beliefs. If unity 2020 fails, we need to amplify amplify voices like Chloe, Valerie and john wood Jr. Amen.

**Bret** 26:35

Absolutely. Absolutely. That's absolutely the case. Yeah, and Shana Tova to you as well?

**Heather** 26:42

Is that how it's pronounced? I got Shabbat Shalom, right. But yeah, shout out. Shout out to VA.

**Bret** 26:46

I believe so.

**Heather** 26:47

All right. I put it at them.

**Bret** 26:49

But yes, unity is a posture towards your fellow man before it is anything political or particular to a given race?

**Heather** 26:59

That's right. Do you think men have a wired in instinct to protect women with this instinct have a negative effect on the effectiveness of a mixed sex military unit in a combat situation? We tend to not use the word instinct for the variety of mostly not very interesting, semiotic reasons. But do men especially in a combat situation, tend to protect those who they may view as less capable or more needed protection? Yeah, for sure. And I'm not sure to me that is not the main reason to be perhaps concerned about a mixed sex combat unit it's more about the potential for sort of distraction and and and jealousy and sexual competition perverse incentives inside perverse incentives inside the thing Yeah. But, but this this is a possibility to

**Bret** 27:57

Well, I have hypothesized elsewhere. That this is why ships are female.

**Heather** 28:04

Like ships are called female names given female named

**Bret** 28:07

Maya. My argument is that the, the, what the term even be, it's not anthropomorphizing. The femoral Paramore phising of ships for more fuzzing, more fuzzing is a mechanism to trigger men's built in tendency to want to protect women especially women on whom they are dependent. And that basically ships that have a female place in the mind tend to survive better than ships that don't that's the argument that we would evolve to view them in this way because it does give them the kind of protection that results in the people on those ships making it to to shore

**Heather** 28:53

yeah great prediction hard to test because I don't think ships are ever given male names at this point.

**Bret** 29:01

Right yeah, and

**Heather** 29:02

I don't know if I don't know if through history I don't we'll probably hear about it if there are but not being an expert of ship history. I don't know when that started and if we have any records from before then where there were ships named with male names

**Bret** 29:18

actually it does strike me that we do now use ships male names

**Heather** 29:21

Do we know oh, I guess well like battleships like we named them for for military leaders. Okay. And the Nimitz Yeah.

**Bret** 29:27

Okay, so Yeah, a little harsh, but has to be the you know, we're not losing as many ships as we want. But

**Heather** 29:37

I wrote a letter to senators about putting unity above partisanship and filling RPGs seat if you like it, feel free to share. So I'll just I'll read it's ga n d t.substack.com. Or if not, do you what do you think of crickets as a source of protein?

**Bret** 29:56

Well, here's the thing. crickets are among the staunchest critics of humor I find they are absolutely unforgiving when it comes to comic timing as a source of protein they are potentially a good source of reading but you got to get them down and that's not that's the tough part they're a little yeah

**Heather** 30:18

no I mean insects as a source of protein yes we probably all should be and those of us who have been in places where there were for instance you know fried grubs available from street vendors and have tried them and who grew up with Western dietary sensibilities are none too keen to incorporate those into our diets? At least I'm not so it's a you know, it's an individual versus population level analysis where i i i prefer my ribeye thank you very much except

**Bret** 30:51

except that I believe the market is now delivering this isn't gonna produce team bars that are filled with cricket powder I believe that's the thing I believe I did not make that up okay.

**Heather** 31:06

Frankly, we don't really eat protein bars right like so we we tend to towards Whole Foods that resemble as much as possible the organisms that they came from or mixed in home in a culinary fashion as much as possible and so the the packaged and processed foods aren't for the most part a part of our of our diet. If they were I would definitely advocate for giving that a try 100% you probably can't tell you know off it's often soy protein like in you know, from people who probably don't sit around snacking on soybeans much. And

**Bret** 31:44

you know, as insects go crickets are not disgusting. Yeah, it's not deep

**Heather** 31:49

fried grubs. Yep. Now, like you find on the streets of coca and I go to our cockroaches, cockroaches, childcare, but answer probably easy, but that's more chocolate than anti expect, I would imagine. Yeah. In his debate with Dawkins, Brett made the analysis that presuppositions society is not an error, but a feature which assists in spreading society's genes. Will this also be the case for homosexuality in modern times

**Bret** 32:12

you have is a leap in that question. I believe it is probably a warranted leap. But what I would say is, I don't it is difficult to know what to make of homosexuality in modern times, I think we are in a scenario that is so novel, that it is not likely to serve the role that it may have served in the past. And I'm not going to say more than that, because again, this is one of these things that needs to be presented as a full argument, not an off the cuff response to to a question, but I do believe you are very much in the right neighborhood of very important discovery.

**Heather** 32:57

This is just a recommendation I request after you finish your book, I'd love to see you to make a nature documentary about humans approaching us as any other species, maybe intercut videos of parallel behaviors from other animals and really get into the weeds.

**Bret** 33:10

Yeah, I was with you until, until the weeds part.

**Heather** 33:13

You know, like weeds.

**Bret** 33:14

You know, the thing is, their very nature as weeds makes them less exciting than some, you know, don't

**Heather** 33:21

you that weed is a social construct. Yes, actually, we actually is I'm not saying that to be snarky and mock woke ism, it's actually a social construct. There is no evolutionary thing that is weed. It is a plant that is somewhere where the person talking about has decided doesn't belong. weeds

**Bret** 33:41

are botanical noise.

**Heather** 33:44

But it's it's social. It's it's that doesn't include now it's not enough. Oh,

**Bret** 33:48

now does because noise are the patterns that you are not enjoys our time. My brain is still full of a bit of smoke.

**Heather** 34:00

So noise noise is the pet sorry, noise is the pattern that noise?

**Bret** 34:03

I know. Let's put it this way. Here's my argument that I used to make to students about signal and noise. Okay. All you got is patterns, right? Everything is patterns. The pattern, you're interested in studying that signal, the patterns that interface with your measurement, but aren't the ones you're studying. That's noise but you could study those patterns too. So the point is, the designation of a particular pattern as noise is not inherent to the pattern. It's inherent to your interest in knowing about that or your need to exclude it in order to see the pattern you are interested in. Which is exactly the same thing that you are arguing is going on with weeds and I agree it is right you're trying to cultivate these things relative to the things that you either are trying to cultivate or prefer to look at. These other species are there notice they are the undesired botanical patterns. I can't believe I Haven't convinced you because I believe that was a very solid argument.

**Heather** 35:02

I'm gonna I'm gonna go like 85% on this one.

**Bret** 35:05

Not nearly good enough. Okay, all right, I'm I'm going to set about convincing you will work on less maybe come back to it we are botanical noise is my claim double down okay let it go Okay,

**Heather** 35:18

where do you say that you have met so we're gonna spend a couple more minutes on this one before we switch to the next one you say that females produce large gametes and males small gametes and this is one of the clear differences between the sexes. How does giant sperm fit into this I love your podcast don't ever stop greetings from Denmark, Denmark cool. I don't know anything about giants bourbon never heard that before. But the large versus small is a bit of a semantic shortcut. So what the distinction really is, is lacking in cytoplasm and able to move so tends to be small because it lacks in cytoplasm and able to move it's Zippy remote tile that's sperm, and full of cytoplasm. And, and sessile, which is what eggs are so giant sperm, whatever, whatever that is, I don't know if that brings a bell for you. There may well be some gametes that are male gametes that are much bigger than would be expected. But if they still lacked cytoplasm, they are still most the 100% fitting into the male gametes model have no cytoplasm, therefore no ability to render themselves zygote by selfing, for instance. Now that said, Are there errors? Or is it possible their sperm that end up with cytoplasm in them that are errors? Sure. It's a complex system. Yeah, the history of, of, of, of sexual reproduction. Is it possible? Maybe, but I've never heard of them.

**Bret** 36:50

So I just want to point out that this is actually we have just landed in the same place as the discussion from if you'll think all the way back to live stream 45. Our last live stream, we had a discussion about squadmates snakes, in which there was a reversal of the system from ZW to x, y my correct you remembering that? Yeah. So I asked the question when we were talking about that, what had swift? Did you have a consistent line of male and female that had switched its chromosomal mapping mechanism? And I

**Heather** 37:26

said Probably not, because it almost certainly evolved separately from a environmental sex determination system rather than moving from one chromosomal sex determination to another.

**Bret** 37:36

So the question is, if it had a reversal, in other words, if you had a system not like you're describing where you had chromosomal sex determination, and it's flipped from CW to x, y, that is to say, whether males or females are the heterochromatic sex, then you would have had to have a shift in what style of gamete was produced, because as you have been pointing out for months and months and months and months on these podcasts, the motility of gametes is the consistent diagnostic character,

**Heather** 38:12

motility and presence or absence of cytoplasm, those two things, those are the two characteristics.

**Bret** 38:18

So I don't like presence or absence of cytoplasm because it's obviously continuous. But so i don't disagree that we see a discrete difference in well, an

**Heather** 38:29

egg eggs can move a little bit. I mean, neither of these are perfect binaries modal motile versus not cytoplasm versus not, they're not perfect binaries, whereas male versus female, pretty much is right.

**Bret** 38:40

But I guess my point would be the, you can do a relative calculation of size and motility inside of any species. And a reversal might well involve something like sperm that are suddenly disproportionately large, you can imagine a small error in the developmental process of sperm that caused that and allowed a flip,

**Heather** 39:06

I'm willing to say that that would be possible. If it were possible that you would have a switch in the type of chromosomal sex determination system. I don't think that that thing has ever happened. I don't think that we have any evidence that the bazel state of being of having environmental sex determination hasn't produced separately, all of the examples of genetic size determination that we have it is to say, you know, even so the example from last livestream was we've got this parthenogenetic Python, and it turns out that in Bo IDs, which includes both the boas and pythons, there's two apparently different evolutions of the it's going to be they have the x y system, I can't remember which it is. Yeah, I think I can't remember which which most snakes have. Maybe I think most snakes have the ZY system, cw system, and Bo IDs Two different types of evolved an x y system. And it is not imagined that one of those systems evolved from the other but rather that all three of them evolved from the bazel state of having environmental sex determination.

**Bret** 40:12

So I agree with you on the likelihood of these things evolving I don't know why you would imagine that you never get a reversal. I mean, for one thing these implants chromosomal reorganizations are common, like triploid E's and

**Heather** 40:28

plants are weird.

**Bret** 40:30

No, they're not.

**Heather** 40:33

Well, the whole non segregated germline thing makes them makes it a different kind of analysis

**Bret** 40:37

are different. But you know, none of it's weird. You got plants, it's all weird. Okay, it's then it's all weird, but my point would be major chromosomal reorganizations are commonplace in plants. For reasons we get in animals, they're tougher, but we see evidence of lots of reorganizations and we don't know how they happened. So my point is, you've got some big hidden landscape of chromosomal major chromosomal changes that were not catastrophic,

**Heather** 41:04

it might end up I mean, we're, we're really in the weeds for most people here, but it might I wonder if it might not accompany changes in ploidy. So we're so we are deployed, we've got 20, humans have 23 chromosomes, each of each egg or sperm is 23. But every other cell of your body has 46. That's 23 is the haploid. Number. 46 is the diploid number. I believe that chimps are one off 22 and 44. I think I don't think it's the other direction, but they're one off of us. Yep. Whereas frogs, for instance, have just an incredible rate of polyploidy of just like doubling or tripling octolings of their ploidy numbers. And this has all sorts of cascading effects, most of which I think we don't yet know and I wonder if somewhere in these sort of, you know, ploidy, doubling and tripling, there might be the opportunity for some kind of funky switch. Toggle of Gen X, X perturbation is

**Bret** 42:03

exactly what I'm getting. And you might even do an explorer mode thing, where the ability to flip is retained in a latent form. Yeah, a ploidy shift allows it to become manifest. This does remind me I there were a couple of corrections I wanted to make and I should have done them on the main live. Oh, yeah. One former student of mine, Desi rose contacted me and said that there had been Partha parthenogenesis in turkeys feed thought I looked into this a little bit. And it turns out so you and I have looked at this separately, what I got two was that we see evidence of embryos that are produced this way, but nothing doesn't

**Heather** 42:49

go viable. Yeah, chickens. And this is an I didn't I, I wanted to talk about it too, on the main live stream, and then Ruth Bader Ginsburg up and died. And that sort of threw everything into into chaos. But the little bit that I looked into, suggest that yes, some domesticated fowl, and there may be some example from a pigeon as well, which obviously isn't usually domesticated, although sometimes our effect Yeah, right. So it seems that the ability to produce eggs absent any males, has been noted in many cases in chickens and turkeys. But that maybe never, or if ever extraordinarily, rarely do those eggs end up becoming being viable enough to hatch. Yep. So there is embryo but that pathogenic embryo there and doesn't seem to be viable,

**Bret** 43:36

right? My prediction would be what a it's conspicuous that it's domesticated and human associated birds that show this pattern Yeah, but they'll be I would suggest that that means that if we look long and hard enough in nature and zoo animals, eventually we're going to find that we're going to Okay, that's one correction. Second correction, which is I'm I'm I'm groping for some mechanism that connected to this, but I find nothing. Oh, it's not gonna

**Heather** 44:04

be Wolverines. Oh, no, it's

**Bret** 44:07

not Wolverine. Okay.

**Heather** 44:08

Can I go Wolverines? Then you got you please. Okay. So we had I had said, I thought Wolverines were hibernating. I don't know what do they do do something so i think i think they don't, I have not looked into it fully fully. But what they what they do do which is sort of the vision that I had in my head is that they build these ice stones, these snow dens and that they do store sperm they do so they made earlier and they store sperm and then an implanted a particular the zygote becomes fertilized and implants at a particular point. Or actually, I'm not sure if they just if they store sperm or they delay implantation or both. I'm not sure which it is, but they control the timing of the reproduction, regardless of exactly when they've made it in the summer. And then they give birth in the snow dens in the winter and the mothers don't hibernate, they continue to go out, but their babies persist in these in these snow dens and are born in it. at the right moment such that at the point wherever they are longitudinally, when they can come out and begin to make a life for themselves, presumably while being taught by their mothers, they can do so so they do not I had said I thought that hibernated, and I don't think they don't know

**Bret** 45:13

instead it is these structures built at the fringes of the habitat making them edward snowed dens. Wow. Okay. All right. Yeah, yep. You know, yeah, it is what it is. That's good. Yeah. Okay, my other correction. I made allegations in our last podcast, cast aspersions to cast aspersions in the direction of Duke Newsome. It turns out does not exist. Because his actual name is Hawk Newsome. Yeah. And so I must apologize to you Hawk I blew it. I still think people should check out the podcast the braver angels podcast with john wood Jr. hoch Newsome

**Heather** 45:57

and not Gavin Newsom.

**Bret** 45:58

I don't think Gavin Newsom is even aware of it, but I could be surprised. But Bob Woodson anyway, that discussion john wood Jr. at foxnews

**Heather** 46:08

Jr. as well. Might be

**Bret** 46:11

I don't know if Bob Watson, but anyway. huge fans of john and Bob and Huck Newsome being the guy from that famous piece of video at the Trump rally where he was very generous and reached across the aisle. Okay.

**Heather** 46:33

Okay, so Oh, boy, how long? How far are we in Zack? Okay, so we got to switch. But I did want to just,

**Heather** 46:44

we will pick up a few more of these next time for sure. I did want to read this one. This was just the fun imagine it takes 60 minutes for a virus that doubles every minute to fill a jar, or percentage of the jar will be full at five minutes to the hour. If you were an average virus, when do you realize you're running out of space? And then it says credit l Bartlett and and I didn't realize when I first read this, that the number that goes is the answer. But I wanted just to just to quickly do like the back of the envelope logic that allows you to quickly get there because this is the kind of question that I see I like Oh God, let's figure it out. And I think a lot of people because of their atrocious math education, or like I have no idea how and even begin to get there. So the question again, is imagine it takes 60 minutes for a virus that doubles every minute to fill a jar. What percentage of the jerell be full at five minutes to the hour? So

**Bret** 47:35

I think this question needs to be rephrased as cells or something. virus doesn't. It's very hard to do this with virus. So

**Heather** 47:45

as a total abstraction, yeah. But I can I can read it as cells or bacteria. Bacteria is easier. Yeah. bacteria. We know the model from bacteria and an exponential growth. So I would you know, for me, I would just Cluj, this is clearly an elegant mathematical way to answer the question, but I would include it because you only have to go five minutes back. So at the hour at 60 minutes, at zero minutes back, you're at 100%. It doubles every minute. Go back one minute, you're at 50%. Go back two minutes, you're 25% go back three minutes, you're at 12 and a half percent, go back four minutes, you're six and a quarter percent, and go back five minutes, and you're at three and an 8%. And so you're about three, five minutes to the hour. That jar is going to be full at the hour, but five minutes beforehand, you're still only 3% full. Yep.

**Bret** 48:32

The lesson here being one should spend a good deal of time thinking about exponential growth before you decide how comfortable to be about any process that has that exponential aspect to it. Bingo.

**Heather** 48:45

Yep, that's exactly right. All right. Okay, next first question. In the new hour is from Holley math nerd, our friend Holly who just put problematized a number of things that your brother Eric put out asking for so on Twitter, everyone who is not following this, this account polymath third should look for her Twitter thread problematising God What does she do she does a programming language she does pickles she does pants as a response to Eric saying Okay guys, how would you pitch this thing as as a problem in in woke world and she just does a brilliant job because she's suffered through what three something diversity classes, diversity training classes, as a college student,

**Bret** 49:36

and I'll bet all of those diversity classes were the same.

**Heather** 49:41

Yes. She asks, please talk about the Princeton investigation by the Doa the Department of Education as an effective pushback tactic, a hilarious troll or both. So I thought we might end up getting to talk about Princeton today in the live stream. I don't know if we want to say just a thing about it here since we've met Never get to it and the main live stream and save a longer discussion for later probably. But so I mean, the the very brief version is the president of Princeton. I remember how to pronounce his name, whatever it is, at the moment, you know, where we are actually visiting fellows at the moment in response to the claims of the intersectional lists in the post modernists and the woke and all these critical race theorists, that there is racism everywhere and they can't escape it, uh, ceded to their claims and said, yes, you know, Princeton is and has long been a, you know, a source of systemic racism, and we apologize, yada, yada, yada, I'm not quoting him directly, of course, to which almost immediately, like within 24 hours, the Department of Education, wrote Princeton, a stern letter saying that if in fact, it was a font of systemic racism that was in blatant violation of several laws in the country, and they really needed to get their act together as the federal government was going to come get them. And obviously, this is all a little bit of a caricature, and I'm not reading from anything but effective pushback tactic or hilarious troll are both

51:13

kind of both. Yeah,

**Heather** 51:14

I mean, it's it's funny like it, it's one of these things where it gets done, and you think, Oh, yeah, how is it that all of these places are claiming that they are in severe violation of the law and, and the laws that do anything about it? Well, because everyone knows that they're lying, that they're not in severe violation of a law. But if they're gonna continue to claim this, they don't get to have it both ways. Either you admit that you aren't actually engaging as systemic racism at the level that these loons that you're letting run the institution, or are telling you, you are? Or you accept that the effects of your actions if your claims are that well, then there's going to be an investigation.

**Bret** 51:59

So it's actually perfect. It reminds me a little bit of something that happened during the the Evergreen meltdown, where, you know, the the rioters were accusing people very prominently, they were accusing the president of the college of being full of racism and by gesticulating with his hands engaging in micro aggressions against people of color or something like this. And at some point, the president experimented with getting ahead of this and saying that he was taking steps to deal with his own racism and instead of embracing this, they were like, aha, we told you he was a racist in here he's admitted it.

**Heather** 52:40

Yeah. Why? Why think you can beat these people at their own game. How about point out that their game is dumb? Well, their

**Bret** 52:47

game is heads. I win tails you lose. Therefore, anybody who thinks they're gonna win?

**Heather** 52:51

It's not just, it's not just unfair. It's also just insane. And Damn, and Hello. This This one is neither insane nor dumb. No, no. All right. Jordan Peterson discuss with Jonathan Hite. Yeah, Jonathan Hite. I know. Jordan Peterson discuss with Jonathan Hite, a study in plus one called pathogens and politics that claims pathogen prevalence predicts authoritarian attitudes. Have you heard of this? Do you have thoughts? So but for those not in academia, or in science, academia plus one is an open source, peer reviewed journal scientific journal? That's quite good. I don't know. I haven't heard of this before. discussion. Probably if it's a discussion between Jordan Peterson Jonathan Hite. This is from a while ago since Jordan hasn't been public for a little while, at this point called pathogens and politics that claims that pathogen prevalence predicts authoritarian attitudes. That's, that's interesting. And you know, it calls to mind of course.

**Bret** 54:04

The disgust?

**Heather** 54:05

No. Why can't I think of the parasite, parasite and sexual selection work that you were Yeah, that you were working on with tubers and lizards, you know, the idea of looking for correlates of of pathogenicity in other in other social behaviors, but females

**Bret** 54:26

are evaluating males for evidence that they are free of pathogens in species where basically, the males are only delivering gametes, and therefore the females would be doing this in the hopes of getting immune systems that are either particularly effective or particularly well targeted to the pathogens in the current environment, I should say. I think that hypothesis has some merit to it, but it is not the overarching explanation for these like species. Yeah. But anyway,

**Heather** 54:58

so do you know about this conversation Hi, I'm Ben Pearson. I don't Yeah. Sounds sounds fascinating. But I can't say more than that. Follow. Follow up. So this is a follow up to echos last question a question from last time, which was about the one that we couldn't quite parse around immigrants marrying immigrants coming in and marrying people of the dominant culture, and what the sex, the sex ratio, but the sex representation would be, if we don't even have the language to speak about this. So she says follow up most Eurasian, Euro, African and euro Caribbean people I know who were born in 1970s 1980s have European moms, some born later have European debts? Also, mixed couples get more disdainful looks when the man is European. Do you see a pattern? Is it specific to Europe? Thank you. So it goes in in Europe. And that's I mean, that's that's an interesting observation. And I just I haven't seen it myself. I haven't I haven't noticed this.

**Bret** 56:17

In fact, yeah, I would predict it the other way, actually. So I'm very curious about what the actual pattern is. Yeah. explain something that may or may not be a pattern, right. And I would also want to know if it was local to some group of immigrants or if it was General. But surely that data exists somewhere? Yeah.

56:41

Does that settle? Yep.

**Heather** 56:42

Okay. Heather, you said what we can't do is have discretion held within particular demographics. Surely you see the issue with giving children full autonomy? Can you be certain that should not extend to any other demographic? So obviously, children is is different. And some people now are arguing that they're not and that's not correct.

**Bret** 57:06

Well, anybody who is not in a position to make good decisions,

**Heather** 57:11

right, but then, you know, so then discretion, that all of these have slippery slopes somewhere along the way, right? So it's not in a position to make good decisions. What about people who were deemed not smart enough to be able to have children and therefore had their reproductive rights taken away from them, when they were not able to make a decision on their own? You know, there's a there's a long history of a racial bias in that in the early part of the 20th century, and I think that 19th century in the US, and, and even I think, amongst lower class, white people in the US so

**Bret** 57:57

well, but I'm not sure why we ended up inheriting responsibility for I'm just saying that policy of the past, you know, is there room for policy? You know, does society have a right to exert discretion over the reproduction of people who do not have the capacity to take care of offspring? Because they are mentally compromised? Right? I believe it is, I would argue, obvious that society has some right to navigate that question. I don't want responsibility for, you know, navigating on the fly exactly where the, you know, the line needs to be drawn. I have no idea. But yeah, but I don't want to grant that because there have been abuses of this discretion in the past that discretion is suspect because it's clearly not

**Heather** 58:45

Yeah. No, I'm actually I'm, I'm thinking about you. I won't I won't give anything away for privacy reasons. But I'm thinking about a woman we once knew whose whose firstborn daughter was developmentally compromised quite a bit. And upon becoming of age upon becoming a young woman, was also quite an attractive young woman, but really did not have the ability to understand the new sexual attention she was getting. Nor the her mother, the woman we knew, felt would she have been in any way capable of of taking care of a child herself. And she the mom, the woman we knew, made the difficult decision, but she felt 100% absolutely the right decision to provide for her daughter, an endogenous form of birth control. I don't remember what it was but something wherein she would not get pregnant, no matter no matter what. And, as far as you know, we have we've lost touch with her for the last couple of years, but there was no there was no sense that she was worried about, about her daughter having having sex forced on her, although obviously that's a risk always. But it was that she was finding in her new sexuality, this sort of freedom that she had had not felt before. But she was constrained by her very developmental deficits and would not have been capable of making decisions that would preclude pregnancy. So that was a within family decision. That was still wrenching because the daughter had no way of even understanding what was happening to her. But it seemed absolutely important. But you know, I feel completely comfortable with a mother doing that, as opposed to the state coming in and saying, we're going to do this to all children with an IQ of less than 70 years, I

**Bret** 1:00:39

agree the right, the right, where the best place for this to be resident to somebody who has the person's interests at heart by virtue of being family. Yeah. That said, there's obviously a landscape here that requires nuance and discretion. And yeah, I'm sure that will get pushed back. But nonetheless.

**Heather** 1:01:02

What is your hypothesis on new technologies, such as smartphone and their profusion of information on brain development? Oh, we've got a lot of thoughts on this.

**Bret** 1:01:13

Yeah, I mean, it's obviously destructive, doesn't mean every aspect of it is, you know, the ability to access information, the ability to tune into things that are true to see how life is in other parts of the world, the ability to find rare people to interact with that you would never encounter otherwise, there's lots of positive stuff. But overarching Lee, it's a novel phenomenon that has perverse incentives throughout the model that deploys it and it is creating psychological chaos.

**Heather** 1:01:53

Yeah, we'll leave that there for now. This is written very sparsely, but I think I know what the question what it actually says is Rogan, retracts wildflour, wildflower, Rogan retracts, wildfire arrests, citation bots, question mark. So he had he probably know more about the story than I do.

**Bret** 1:02:15

Yeah. He, in his podcast with Douglas Murray, he had said that there had been arrests of protesters who had set fires. Now, there, you know, I believe that what actually happened is ambiguous, there is at least one instance of a fire that was quickly put out by civilians, I think, that was started by fireworks in the context of art police plausibly linked to protesters, but let's just say that the, you know, what we were complaining about on our last livestream was that we don't have a trustworthy mechanism for determining whether or not you know, certainly the pattern that you reveal the smoke being right up and down the five suggests some sort of anthropogenic process.

**Heather** 1:03:03

Let me just say instantly with regard to that, two things. That's upon looking at that again. So this, again, is something we talked about in Episode 45. And I showed these fires all starting on September 8, just in this line, this this north south line in Oregon, and up into Washington. I think that was farther east than the five. But the fact that it was a line looks makes it look anthropogenic very much. So that said, and actually, I got a question, I think over email that caused me to remind me that Oh, of course, one of the other anthropogenic, but not, you know, intentionally nasty sources of fire is powerlines. And in fact, in some places where the winds were picking up preemptively the power grids got shut down, so there wouldn't be fire started. So that might that might have been along another road, I think, I think it was not actually the five. But it might have been along another road, which probably would make more sense anyway, because the five is by far the, you know, the biggest Interstate, the busiest one. But it might also have been, you know, that that high wind event and a bunch of power lines banging together doing whatever it is that they do and when that that's because of sparks and causes fires.

**Bret** 1:04:15

Sure. There's also elevational stuff. So to the extent that you have a line of every so often, if you fly into desert Northwest, you notice that you have volcanoes sticking up in a line, yeah, and the Cascades, and that obviously impacts weather and you could have a phenomenon where lightning was accompanying some weather system passing through

**Heather** 1:04:38

though that's a non anthropogenic reason for a line. Okay. Yeah.

**Bret** 1:04:43

But anyway, so I don't think we know how these fires started in many cases. In a few cases we do though, we do know in a few cases, we do know I don't know that it has anything to do with the protest, but we write there's very conspicuous stuff surrounding the fire down in Radford Southern Oregon. Yep. So anyway, Rogan clearly got it wrong. He followed some wrong information that suggested that we knew more than we actually know. And he did the right thing, which is he retracted it. You know, he put up an Instagram post, which I tweeted, I said, this was what an honorable person does when they discover that they've made a an important mistake. And so anyway, I thought it was a good model. But, you know, people, of course, are gonna take it to be evidence of, you know, some problem with Rogen. On the other hand, no

**Heather** 1:05:32

evidence of its evidence Quite to the contrary,

**Bret** 1:05:36

right. In fact, he's a decent, he's a fundamentally decent guy. And he puts out so many hours of content across so many different topics that it's surprising how rarely he needs to do something like this. So anyway,

**Heather** 1:05:51

very much some Yeah. I'll fight you naked. says I'm not a trumpkin. But police now. I'm not a trumpkin. But peace between Israel and UAE, Israel in Bahrain, Saudi is possibly joining soon. 5000 troop drawdown Serbia Kosovo peace deal. Wow. Yeah, that's that was all the question. And I agree. Yeah, dude is doing some good work. And I didn't see that coming.

**Bret** 1:06:20

Yep. I agree. It very much complicates the argument that, you know, everything Trump does is is bad. He

1:06:30

does, rather rather Yes.

**Heather** 1:06:35

Ever felt, Aaron, five minutes. Okay, we're gonna get a couple more in here. Have you ever felt that you were going to be forced to violence? How often is that the only option? Realistically? Could you if you had to practically or morally? That's a lot of questions. Yeah.

**Bret** 1:06:52

Well, you got your answer.

**Heather** 1:06:57

No, I don't have a answer. I might, I might respond and riff with you, or or I might let you answer. And then I'll, yeah, come back to another time.

**Bret** 1:07:06

I think there's a high likelihood that this comes to sort of widespread violence. And I, you know, I'm desperate to avoid that outcome. I don't know, there's a question.

**Heather** 1:07:19

So this question is about an individual. This is not about the societal level stuff, this is about, like, You or me, as individuals being felt that we are forced to as you can answer the society level question, or even in

**Bret** 1:07:33

rereading it, I still think the answer is the same. Okay. You know, forced violence by what, by an individual, that could happen by a larger force, that could and may well happen. You know, one doesn't know there's this phenomenon, that most people are emotionally devastated if they have to kill, right, it's something that people discover that they are not suited to it. And so one never really knows until you've been in that situation. Whether or not you're, you know, in the group that can handle it or can't, but I do have the sense. How can I say this? I don't get myself in terrible trouble. But I guess I would say, I don't. If I had to kill, it would be because it was the right thing to do. You know, I think I would be if I killed somebody, if I hit somebody in the car through my own negligence, right, which could happen to any driver, I think I would be really messed up by that fact, for the rest of your life. Right. But if I killed somebody out of necessity, I don't think it would trouble me if I killed somebody because they were, you know, a threat to me or you or children. Right? I think the answer is it's actually philosophically so clear that I would not be troubled by the fact of having to end somebody's life.

**Heather** 1:09:06

I think. I don't think that's true. I think analytically That's true. But I think you would still, I think almost any of us would still have a hard time coming to grips. You know, if we'd never done it before.

**Bret** 1:09:24

Well, actually hard time coming to grips with,

1:09:26

I mean, ended someone's life.

**Bret** 1:09:29

I really don't know. My sense is one has an absolute obligation to tread ultra carefully. They're up until the point that you have no choice at the point that you have no choice. It is hard. I don't see the philosophical implication if something is a threat to one of us, a lethal threat.

**Heather** 1:09:51

I'm not disagreeing with your conclusion about what the appropriate behavior would be. And we haven't defined what the threat would be but you know, that there are there are three That would warrant violence that would end someone else's life. Yes. Clearly, but the idea that, yeah, what I'm objecting to is your characterization of your expected response afterwards as I wouldn't be bothered. Yeah, you would, then because you, I just, some people wouldn't. And you would not be plagued with should I have or shouldn't I have if it was, if it was if it had been clear? And of course, you know, part of part of what these conversations often are, is that there's gray area? Was it clear? Was it not? But if, if it was clear, and especially if there was a witness who could say to you, yes, that was clear, you need to do that 100%, then there wouldn't be any gray area around? Should I or shouldn't I have, but even with no gray area I needed to I did it, it's done. Still, there's a before and after and your life have killed someone, I haven't killed someone.

**Bret** 1:10:57

I'm not saying it doesn't have an effect. I'm saying I so I

**Heather** 1:11:00

guess it doesn't have an effect. And I couldn't, I wouldn't be bothered, don't strike me as having total overlap?

**Bret** 1:11:06

Well, you know, for one thing, this is a question in advance of it ever happening? It's not a question in the aftermath of it. So of course, that's a transition right there. So I'm not arguing it doesn't have an implication. But my sense is, first of all, I spend a lot of time thinking about the fact that I, I aim to change the way civilization functions, because I think we're in a tremendous amount of danger. That results in the following realization. If you change things, you run the risk of making them worse, you run the risk that there will be downstream consequences that do include people's death, right? So that has to be something that you reconcile yourself to, you know, and all I can say is, I am being as careful as I possibly can to decrease the chances, but that the situation we are in, you know, we are living unsustainably in a system with rules that are inadequate to protect us from processes that are already alive, well and putting us in jeopardy. So I don't I just, I don't see the difference for one thing between you pulling a trigger out of necessity, because somebody is a threat to you or your family. And doing this in the abstract. In fact, I think people to the extent that people see a distinction they're actually miscalculating, right? people's death is a result of policy constantly. Right? And to the extent that they don't treat it seriously, because they don't actually get confronted with the names of individuals who no longer live because of some decision they made. They are profiting from a distortion. And so anyway, yeah, I hope we don't find out but I actually do think if the answer, it doesn't even have to be 100%. Certain The point is, from where I stood, was this necessary, given the information I had? I think, frankly, that's the fish and nothing turned out somehow to be an error. Maybe that would be wildly Well,

**Heather** 1:13:25

I mean, of course, that would change things. But I just I think that you are, you're imagining a fully analytical response that doesn't include an emotional response.

**Bret** 1:13:34

No, I'm imagining that the analytics actually have an implication for the emotional stuff as they

**Heather** 1:13:45

request. Of course they do. I just I don't have valuable contribution. Okay. When you kill odds are you will have anger for the person.

**Heather** 1:14:03

Yeah, so I don't know if people can hear what Zach just wrote from read from the chat. When you kill, you tend to have anger towards the person that you killed for putting you in that position. I think I think that's right. Okay, let's do two more. How might explore modes manifest on the brain, human or non human? Does the hypothesis predicting the particular types of neural circuitry or psychological experience?

**Bret** 1:14:34

Yeah, well for talking about the human brain, sure, I would say consciousness, consciousness, consciousness and consciousness as a, an emergent social phenomenon, not a purely individual phenomenon, that in effect, the ability to model a scenario and figure out what is likely to work and then exchange that information with others who might have different insight into what might happen that that is the ultimate explorer mode. And it explains why humans are so good at moving from one niche to another without having to undergo a morphological or physiological evolutionary change. So yes, 100%? Yeah. All right.

**Heather** 1:15:19

So actually, we've got three here that I think we can do pretty quickly. I don't like the abortion question, I prefer the discussion as to why in our day and age, so many people get pregnant, who don't want a child solving that question and social problem, we'll fix over 90% of the issue. Do you have thoughts? I think I think that's right. And you know, I am obviously not someone who feel staunchly about the right of a woman to terminate a pregnancy, at least in the first trimester, and probably at least halfway through the second. No, probably halfway through the second has anything to do with me, celebrating casual sex, and the so called sex positive movement. It is precisely as a kind of a, it should be a last ditch safety net. And what we should be doing is reducing the number of abortions that are ever, ever called for in the first place. So I mean, that is part of the conversation that we that we have

**Bret** 1:16:25

100% I mean, we have a culture that treats this issue, the issue of sex and what it is and what it isn't, and how one might engage with it, treats it so frivolously and for such, obviously economically corrupt reasons that we just have lost our ability to say, you know, Does, does civilization have a right to have a culture surrounding sex that results in people having healthy sexual relationships? It does, it hasn't, it has an obligation to do it and an abiding interest in it. And that we've allowed the market and other forces to pollute This is very destructive. And it is you're right, the at the point you get to abortions. Late in the pregnancy, we're talking about many levels of failure that didn't need to be.

**Heather** 1:17:21

Okay, we've actually got four more here, including one very large dollar amount question. And three of these are really just comments. So I'm gonna read the comments, and then we'll end with this question. Okay. You were wrong about confirmation times 10 justices have been confirmed the same day 53 confirmed within seven days, the average confirmation time historically is 25 days. RBG was 45 days. So I don't know if any of That's true, but that's the claim here.

**Bret** 1:17:47

So I am going entirely based on what I understood Biden to say I only viewed his speech once so either I misunderstood Biden Biden misrepresented the truth, which would be shocking to me. You know, it's not like he was saying these things off the cuff. But anyway, I would love to know what happened here. Presumably I misunderstood something and I will, I will look into it and figure it out. Okay.

**Heather** 1:18:12

Finally got it. Blm Riot fever looks exactly like a bunch of angry toddlers who advanced their toddler play cage in the manner of a Roman legion to pseudo formation. Will they ever realize all the best? and Brett, your wife is saying you have emotions and are a sociopath and would still care even if you had to kill them?

**Bret** 1:18:31

Ah, is that what you were getting it a bit? Yes. But I don't think this is I don't think this is where I mean, I'm not a sociopath. I'm really, really far from it. But no, but I mean, just I would ask you and this person and all those who agree with you, yep. To think about the question of the circuitry that you have to have to contemplate meaningful change in the way human beings conduct their affairs. Right? You were signing up for this level of responsibility, which doesn't mean I don't take it very, very seriously. But it does mean that I'm not going to allow that the emotional motional circuitry of causing harm has already been engaged. And maybe what I'm arguing is that if you engage that circuitry, that way, however you end up is the result of the process that one would go through. If you killed somebody, and it was the first time you ever felt that responsibility.

**Heather** 1:19:33

Okay. All right. Okay, final question from Daniel. How is it possible that only Trump was briefed on SARS Cove to seems like the briefings that resulted in the stock sale investigation would have included the same Intel Pelosi as third in command and chair of the house Intel committee seems unlikely to not have had that Intel?

**Bret** 1:19:53

Yeah, I agree that it is very likely that the Intel was widespread. I must say there must be more here than I know about.

**Heather** 1:20:04

Yeah. So this this person contributed quite a bit to say this. And I think I think the subtext is why are we as many others are? Putting repeatedly putting so much of the responsibility for the response to SARS, SARS, cov. Two on Trump, given that many other people must have known what, what was true,

**Bret** 1:20:30

oh, disproportionate power over the situation. That's why I don't trust Pelosi at all. Did she play games here? Yes. If she constantly playing games, yes. Is Trump's response, in part the result of an impeachment that shouldn't have been? Right? Yes. So it's not, I'm not making excuses for the Democratic leadership. But I do think the President had a unique position from which to do the right thing. And

**Heather** 1:21:00

frankly, he didn't in part, because he doesn't seem able to surround himself with trustworthy advisors, he ends up alienating all the people around him with the with the barest exception of a few people in his family. Yeah, and a leader needs advisors that they trust, and that who can speak uncomfortable truths to them, and who are not at risk of being fired at a moment's notice, because they said the wrong thing, or hurt the guy's feelings. And I mean, this really, in some ways, seems like the biggest weakness of him as a president that he is that there is no trusting that he will learn from and be able to do the right thing, another situation, because if the if the next situation looks entirely different from any prior situations, he, he doesn't have advisors around him, who, whom he trusts and who speak the same language. And who can say to him, You know what, you're going to need these three experts, and I don't know who they are. But my good friend, this or my trusted advisor, this tells me that these are the people you know, and it's not it's not that we're arguing for authority and experts on everything, but, but having no ability to seek the advice of others. And to add that into your model, even or especially when they disagree with you is huge liability. Yeah,

**Bret** 1:22:21

I would point out though, if we zoom out on this question a little bit, I do find it interesting. We take a lot of crap for how hard we are on the Democratic Party. And there's often this question about, well, why are you so hard on the democratic party? You know, are you really cryptically? You know, in favor of Trump or something like this? And, you know, it's an interesting question. I'm hard on the Democratic Party, I think because I'm sick and tired of being it's fucking captive, right? They have been taking my support for granted for virtually my entire adult life. And I'm angry about it right? The Republicans were hostile to me, but that was their role. Right? They were in opposition to what I what my values told me was right now less so than they once were, in many ways, right? The Republican Party has become more hospitable to many of the rights that I hold dear and all but in any case, I do think the fact that some people see us as holding Trump uniquely responsible and other people want to convict us of letting Trump off the hook and holding the democrats responsible is evidence that actually really doing what we're supposed to be doing, which is analyzing these things and trying to apportion blame as it fits and you know, try it, you'll find out what happens, you'll be in the same spot.

**Heather** 1:23:38

Yep. Yep. All right. Well, believe it or not, we actually we will return to some of the questions that we missed from the first the first Super Chat from today, but we actually got through I think all of them from this hour. So that's, that's a first I believe. We may be back before Saturday. Not sure if so it's probably going to be Wednesday, not Tuesday. If you join my patreon, within the next 44 hours, the $11 up level, you have a chance of writing a question that we might answer in our next private q&a. All right, currently,

**Bret** 1:24:21

Wednesday has been cancelled.

**Heather** 1:24:21

All Wednesdays are just this Wednesday. I

**Bret** 1:24:24

think it's just this upcoming Wednesday we will go straight from Tuesday to Thursday somehow that is yet to be describing. Yeah, well, not worse than it is that I think it's actually perfectly in keeping.

**Heather** 1:24:36

Okay, fair enough. What else let's see. Either our Patreon for the discord server find our clips channel. Brett will be having his once monthly conversations at the beginning of the month for Patreon supporters of his at the higher levels. We will be back at some point. At the latest next week, same time, same place. Maybe before that

**Bret** 1:25:01

Hell yeah. Hang in there. We're gonna make it through together somehow.

**Heather** 1:25:06

There it is. All right.

**Bret** 1:25:08

Well, everyone