Your Questions Answered - Bret and Heather 63rd DarkHorse Po...

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**SPEAKERS**

Bret, Heather

**Bret** 00:28

Hey folks, welcome back to the Dark Horse podcast live stream number 63 January 16 2021 We are now going to answer your questions as has become our habit

**Heather** 00:44

yes all right

**Heather** 00:45

we do that yes yes yes we shall I sorry I'm distracted have lost control of the animals

**Bret** 00:52

lost control the animals you can to have dog treats so that's for the dog. You're not playing on this walk. They're

**Heather** 00:58

really really not what I was hoping that we could get her to jump for treats on camera, but she was she was mostly not paying attention. I

**Bret** 01:08

see. Yes.

**Heather** 01:09

Yeah. All right. Here we go. few questions from last time first, then a question from the discord server and then launching right into questions from this last hour. This question is from the temperance movement. Regarding Europe's portal and Dark Horse podcast fans Discord server. Woke ism has similars did not reread these before. Starting today. Woke ism has similarities to the temperance movement against alcohol of the 1860s and 1920s. That gave us prohibition that was also strongest strongest in the Anglosphere. Does it offer any useful lessons? I have not heard that before but I've heard it called the new Puritanism. Yep. And obviously, prohibition is sort of a you know, a piece of Puritan approach to the world restrictionist in such,

**Bret** 02:07

I mean, I think there is a kind of a lack of self awareness and an appeal, you know, it basically does have to do with a sort of utopianism and you know, an acknowledgement of the imperfection of the system that that is not an indictment of its capacity to be to be excellent is going to be key to navigating and anybody who wants to hold us to an impossible standard is going to find that we haven't met it and therefore use that to justify whatever crackdown they're interested in. So yeah, I do think there's something there as for anything prescriptive I'm not sure I'm not sure that the parallel is close enough to know what to take from it but yes, what they're doing if they got their way it would backfire. No question about it. Okay,

**Heather** 03:04

I guess I'm not totally sure what you just said that was that was comparing Welcome to the temperance movement just in in that they're both fail

**Bret** 03:13

well guaranteed to fail because of an unrealistic pneus about you know, purity you know, purity is up against alcohol the right solution is to prohibit it completely. Right that that's the same sort of childish thinking that one sees in woke ism. And so yes, I see a parallel No, I don't think it's especially close but it's going to backfire. Because any, any any aspiration to some kind of perfect standard is going to suffer the same failure.

**Heather** 03:52

Okay. Yeah, I think that I think there's a fair bit more to do here, but I'm not I'm sort of not sure how to riff with that. So let's let's just move on. If you see something Oh, no, I just I, I've just thrown by that answer. So let's just move on. Okay. Not gonna lie. I understand BLM a lot more since Trump voters were declared second class citizens. I don't agree with their communist rhetoric, but understanding that I was but I now understand that I was never part of the system.

**Bret** 04:26

Can you repeat the first? Unfortunately, we've lost our speech. I can't see the question. Yeah,

**Heather** 04:30

Zack, is there any way for you to show not to people are you there? Yeah. So you know dad can't see this anymore because we had we get more unreasonable Not gonna lie, understanding BLM a lot more since Trump voters were declared second class citizens don't agree with their communist rhetoric, but understanding that it was never part of the system. So you know, basically, you know, someone who, you know, I'm guessing is is white saying I am recognizing what it is what it feels like to live as a second class citizen, and, you know, without, without making any claims about, you know, the history being the same or any of that, that there is there is an analogue and getting outraged at the persistence of oppression is one response that we can understand. Yeah,

**Bret** 05:25

I mean, you know, I think in some ways this is this has been our message all along is that there is something to which people on the fringes are responding, the system is not responsive to us, it, frankly, doesn't give a damn about us, we are an inconvenience that it deals with only as needed. And the idea that our reaction to the corruption of our system is to divide into two factions that appear opposed to each other, rather than to recognize that the enemy is the corruption that messed up the system in the first place, is an absurdity. But yeah, of course. And you know,

**Heather** 05:58

and I mean, terrific, if more of us can take that, you know, can can recognize that and say, Ah, okay, we are we are having enemies created for us in order to divide us, you know, those those who are not the elite wielding power? And that is that is them winning. And you know, some of it at least is likely to be by design.

**Bret** 06:19

I said something, I think it was in the the Jeremy Lee Quinn episode that I've now seen a number of people pick up on, I said, We are fiercely divided so that we will not be fiercely united. Yeah, you did. Sounds good. And, you know, I really think that is what's going on is that the anger is at something and we have been manipulated into believing it's about something else, so that we won't discover our common interests. Yeah,

**Heather** 06:45

know exactly what, you know, what occupy was doing. And I think, you know, I know precious little about it, but what I think the at least the origins of tea party were trying to do is right,

**Bret** 06:55

the very, very origins were a lot were very similar to what inspired occupy. And, you know, it's almost as if we need a unity movement, you know, like unity, you should start such a thing. Yeah. Now, unity movement is different than unity tm, which is what the blue team has been,

**Heather** 07:16

oh, they trademarked the word or the word and the color. They've

**Bret** 07:20

captured it and rebranded it. So that unity is now about making more on the deplorables. But

**Heather** 07:26

well, we can all get behind that can't wait. No, we cannot. The lack of security at the Capitol. So this these are questions from last week when we were talking about the interaction that had happened three days prior? Yeah. The lack of security at the Capitol was either gross and competent negligence, or an intentional soft target for political theory theater. Love you guys. Thanks for your efforts. And just a second question. The second statement that is similar to that, again, from last week, on a scale of one to flat earth, how much of a conspiracy is it that the capital was deliberately woefully understaffed under protected to create pre tax for Patriot Act style power consolidation? Can we seriously not protect our capital?

**Bret** 08:08

I would say we don't know. There's certainly conspicuous stuff about the way the capital was left on guarded, including, please to have it be better garden in light of what might be unfolding in advance that were unmet. Yes. So yeah. There is a lot to wonder about. There is also apparently, you know, in an Tifa leader who has been arrested who was part of it. So any that's actually been demonstrated this Yes. And so anyway, what I would say is I don't think we know what happened at the Capitol. I don't think any of that actually alters the conclusion. That apparently annoyed some people in the first part of the podcast about what the right patriotic thing to do at this moment is in order to make us strongest going forward. I think the answered that question is still clear. It's, you know, as I said, up top it's destined to anger almost everyone at one level or another, but Yep, but yes, this is where we are something unfolded. We may never know the full story of what happened and why. But the basic point is, we're here and we're vulnerable. And the first thing to do is to protect the ship. Yep.

**Heather** 09:27

All right. Final question from last week. Oh, this is going to have been just this is just a comment, and it's going to have been a response to the question about how and what we feed our animals. musher here looks like there's some dogsledding in Oregon find a musher and see if you can get in on a bulk buy of raw fish or raw chicken. My 25 cibse never heard of it that way, but I guess iberians get a mix of dry food and raw chicken or fish, but you do need a dedicated freezer. That's one of the one of the few things I miss Is that we had a chest freezer when we lived in Washington state we don't hear

**Bret** 10:03

Yes, we fled our chest freezer. We fled our chest freezer sweat our chest freezer, unfortunately, forced to flee our cast freezer.

**Heather** 10:10

Yes. We actually sold it to our neighbors. Well.

**Bret** 10:16

It was a methodical fleeing.

**Heather** 10:17

Yes, very careful. Okay, this from the discord server this week, Heather, in the last q&a number 62. You mentioned acupuncture and chiropractic rather seriously, whereas I, the person asked, and the question then got uploaded. Whereas I understand that to be pseudo scientific, and generally quackery, am I missing something. So, I would love to spend a lot more time on this, actually. But let me say that the first time, I just tried acupuncture for the first time a couple of months ago, and chiropractic, maybe six years ago, or so in both cases, when they were suggested by people I respected, I had this responsive, really give given what I've described to you, you think that could help, because I sort of had the same the same sense. And I think, like I said in the q&a last week, in every field, there are people who don't know what they're doing. And in some, some fields are more prone to having those who don't know what they're doing obscure that fact, with a lot of woowoo. And that can make it seem like the entire field is based on nothing. And I think chiropractic, for instance, has a legitimate reputation of being too often interested in like cracking, cracking, vertebrae, and it's not safe. And those, you know, extreme manipulations are generally not warranted. And I have no i did visit a chiropractor who turned out to be interested in those sorts of manipulations, and I didn't go back. And they're messed up once. Yeah. And then I also found someone, actually, this is up in Olympia, who was just absolutely terrific and, you know, really, really understood what the body was, and use some combination of, you know, diagnostics with with x rays, and also did a lot of traction, through you know, various parts of your spine. In my case, it was cervical spine, so sort of, like neck traction, but also manipulations that were very gentle note, you know, no sudden cracking movements that really responded to an understanding of all of the systems together. And I guess that is what any of these, any of these traditions that are either ancient, or you know, or newer, but are persistent and, and seem to produce results tend to be more holistic than reductionist at, you know, holistic, also has this sort of woowoo reputation, but the reductionist model of medicine has Yes, gotten us the successes of things like antibiotics and vaccines and surgeries, it's also gotten us in part to a place where we have a very hard time getting diagnoses that are appropriate and have a very hard time seeing people as singular complex systems, as opposed to a collection of parts, and we're getting them out of merchants. So it's a lot more to say about chiropractic. With regard to acupuncture, I will just say this, that the the, the guy that I was sent to is actually both trained in traditional acupuncture. And I think, I think it's Taiwan, if memory serves, and he also has an MD from Stanford, and his father has the same and they themselves are ethnically Chinese, I believe are Taiwanese, and that, you know, the fact that there's a lineage tradition there of both having the western medical approach and the Chinese acupuncture approach. And having this having this doctor, say to me, you know, I can speak both languages. I don't practice Western medicine at this point. But I, you know, if you know, you, me, you're trained as a scientist, if you want to hear this in the language of science, I can do it that way. Or I can, you know, speak in the language of acupuncture. The fact is that, you know, they don't exactly translate into each other's languages. But there is now a robust, peer reviewed Western literature demonstrating the efficacy of acupuncture for some sorts of situations, you know, I'm sure it is used, and actually, as Dr. Hong, who I've seen, has said, you know, you know, I talked to him about some other thing that I was experiencing. So yeah, I don't think that's what acupuncture will, I don't think any points will do any good for that. So you need you need a practitioner who understands the limits of what they're doing, and also, if possible, who's capable of speaking across disciplines and so, you know, is interested in and willing to put their work to the test of for instance, science.

**Bret** 14:52

So, I agree with a lot of what you said but I also think it you know, it misses the most important aspect of This, okay. So what I would argue is that the central problem is that our Western scientific Medical viewpoint is mechanistically based. And these alternative practices are, some of them are garbage. Those that are not garbage are metaphorical truths. And what that means is that there are patterns to be deduced about what therapies work. And the explanations that are delivered for why they work are non literal. And that the problem is Western medicine has a particular reaction to that, which is that which is not literal is not true, which is false. And that the problem is that the reason that you say there's no translation is because there is no translation there, nor should there be. So that is to say, you know, acupuncture is based on the flow of something called Qi through the body, she does not actually exist, but a model of ci allows a practitioner to actually alter what they do. So that is more effective at alleviating the condition. There is undoubtedly some mechanism under it that is that could be elucidated. And

**Heather** 16:20

there's clinical evidence that for particular kinds of injuries, acupuncture is effective, and more so than the pharmaceutical response of Western medicine in reducing pain,

**Bret** 16:30

right. And there's also the flip side, which is that our Western mechanistic, it's only true if its literal version of this has plenty of garbage in it. Right. So the idea that the need for orthodontia in a large fraction of Western children is the result of bad genes, having gotten into the system and therefore leaving people with unfortunately shaped jaws that need to have their teeth forcibly reorganized. That's just pure nonsense, as is the idea that chemical imbalances are, you know, spreading through the population like wildfire, as

**Heather** 17:09

is the IB done for it. But treatment with neuroleptics and antidepressant right? It's people basically

**Bret** 17:13

telling you they have the cure for something they're not particularly inclined to find the root cause of same thing for the rampant need for glasses amongst young people. These are all the result of evolutionary novelty, the subject of our book. And the point is, these novel influences result in our ill prepared bodies malfunctioning, and an ancient tradition that basically allows itself to attempt to cure that which it does not mechanistically understand, especially if it's a long standing tradition, there is bound to be a lot of truth in it, even if that truth is not housed at the mechanistic level that science can easily recognize it. But when you begin to understand how much we clearly have wrong in the western, you know, pointy headed, scientific way of doing this, and how much is apparently right, in these metaphorical traditions that are long standing and have delivered an awful lot of, of therapy. The answer is well, yeah, questioner, you're you're missing something, what you're missing is that a metaphorical tradition may be able to alleviate your pain for reasons that none of us can mechanistically explain. And that doesn't mean it's not alleviated, or that it was, you know, all in your head or anything like it,

**Heather** 18:33

right, there can be empirical results, even absent a theoretical explanation for why they work,

**Bret** 18:40

right? Literally false, metaphorically true, is good enough, if it allows you to function in ways that you couldn't before. And so anyway, I hope that one day we see some kind of an enlightened approach to medicine in which we begin to honor just simply the understanding the clinicians used to have about cause and effect that didn't, you know, it was great if you had the mechanism, but let's face it, medicine was born. Long before we had the ability to peer into all of these systems in detail was gross anatomy and nothing below that level. So anyway, noticing patterns is good enough to get you to therapies that work, ancient traditions are liable to have a lot of truth in them if they're expensive. And anyway, there's nothing there's nothing wrong with recognizing that. Yeah.

**Heather** 19:32

Good. Okay, first question from this last hour. I have not read this. It looks like it's two parts. From 1950 excuse me from 1950s 1970. Black homeownership increased from 30 to 70%. Black homeownership is currently 70% but at a higher debt ratio. I don't know if that means a higher debt ratio than it was in 1970. Probably You could say the last 50 years were also bad for blacks. So the past may not be great, but it is greater. What has changed in American 40 years is that stocks went from mostly having voting rights and dividends to mostly not. Not sure what that sentence means. This transition the stock market from being an investment to a Ponzi scheme, evidences that Google voting and non voting stock price or the Google voting and non voting stock are priced the same. Very interesting. Yeah, very, very interesting. I think I understand now. Yeah. So to the extent when it is it is kind of two questions. But

**Bret** 20:37

yeah, well, the idea being voting rights and dividends meant that the value of the stock was very closely tied to the actual value of the company, whereas there's a game that gets played. Yeah, with respect to volatility and profit, where basically what it is that's being traded,

**Heather** 20:55

it's all the new vehicles. That's not the right term yet. Yeah. All right, all the new financial vehicles that have been created. Sure,

**Bret** 21:02

and, and the, you know, what I would say is, you know, ultimately, the market internalizes all of the things that you could actually analyze. It internalizes them into the actual price. And what's left is luck, and insider information. And so the,

**Heather** 21:19

just, it's just like, what the models then right, it's just like, you know, you know, I, I feel lucky, I guess, to have stumbled upon this paper that we were talking about in the last hour, where they actually, you know, left some of the bodies on the surface for me to be like, Ah, well, you know, your assumptions are unjustified, and your assumptions, you know, your results were mandated by your assumptions. But, you know, if, if everything is hidden, then then the rest of us are left with no information. But what did you just say the insider trading insider and

**Bret** 21:49

insider information? insider information is one of these things like regulatory capture where there's a narrow definition where if you didn't violate the law, you know, if it's not provably insider information, then yeah, it's just information. But the fact is, you know, there's a threshold, there's lots of information that people trade on the basis of that no one has ever convicted for doing so. But it's clear that the information was not available generally.

**Heather** 22:16

Yeah. Yeah. And I think, you know, to this person's first point about black homeownership increasing from 30 to 70%, from 1950 to 1970. And we're taking we're taking your word for that, that sounds like totally plausible numbers to me that it stagnated starting in 1970. Or, you know, maybe it continued to go up and it's gone back down, which actually be my guess, you know, that didn't go up to like 90, but I guess that percentage is about what percentage of black families own their homes? I actually don't know what that percentage means. Because 70% actually seems high. Like I would have, I would have guessed that fewer than 70% American families, but large, yeah, and their homes. So I'm not I'm actually totally sure exactly what these percentages are referring to. But certainly, if, even if, say black and white homeownership were equivalent at the percentage level, but the debt ratio was higher for black people, they're, you know, they're in a worse situation. And I mean, I guess the, I don't have the numbers at my fingertips at all, but the number that we, you know, will frequently hear about is that just, you know, household wealth, family wealth is far lower in black families than white families. And that that, you know, that is, you know, presumably not entirely, but there's a large fraction of explanatory power in that due to slavery and Jim Crow.

**Bret** 23:42

Yeah, well, that Yeah, in my opinion, this is where the whole conversation should have gone rather than pretending that everything is modern racism, that's just hiding in every interaction The answer is well, how much is actually causally related to these things which actually are unique, right? But doesn't require active racism in the present

**Heather** 24:02

and you're just you're losing your audience you're losing a bunch of people who should be your natural that sport has been terribly ruined but allies Yeah, like there are a lot of people out here who see the ongoing effects of historic racism and are not going to sign on to your it's racist or it's anti racist, getting the canoe garbage or

**Bret** 24:22

in fact, one of the things you know, over both conversations that Jeremy Lee Quinn and I had we both remarked on the fact that we have been led to believe by those on the extreme left that you know, there's rampant white supremacy everywhere and the one thing you don't meet is actual people who will defend you know, one race winning out over another

**Heather** 24:47

he found one New York's in the wild that one in the wild. Yeah.

**Bret** 24:51

So you know, finally after looking for a very long period of time, he met one in the wild so you know, it isn't and I would never have said they don't exist, I would say Very, very rare, which means what has been reflected in our experience meeting people across the political spectrum is that if there's one thing that people agree on, in principle, it's that nobody should have an advantage over anybody else. No population should be advantaged over another based on some immutable demographic right, characterised, we have, you know, great differences over how fair we think the current system is at that level. But in terms of people who also wanted to be unfair, they're very, very rare.

**Heather** 25:28

I think I think there are legitimate disagreements about you know, what would confer advantage? Sure, as well. And you know, that that that will become a sticking point, if we ever get mature enough to get back to a reasonable conversation. Well, LC,

**Bret** 25:43

you know, as I have frequently said, you can often cover half the distance if you can figure out what part you actually disagree on. And if you can get everybody in the room to say, look, whatever the truth of modernity is, we don't want people to have advantage on the basis of their skin color, right? We can debate whether they do or to what degree they do, but we shouldn't be you know, the reasonable people all agree that you shouldn't get an advantage based on your skin color. Yeah. And the point is, then that leaves the question of like, Okay, well, how fair are things at that level? Yeah, that's a discussion that's much easier to have rather than having to fight you know, the whole thing. Right? So yep, in any case.

**Heather** 26:25

All right. Um, this is a this is a new Pledge of Allegiance that looks like I pledge allegiance to the official narrative the United States of America and to the corporate media for which it stands. One nation under thumb divided by echo chambers with chaos and injustice for all. Amen. And a woman a woman Yep. So that's that's good. And you can hear in my that's good, the butcombe in which is the a man and a woman which you know, there is a lot of garbagey stuff going on with whelk policing of language and language in the house, like in Congress, but there's a man and a woman thing I think, wasn't that and I think it was john McWhorter who tweeted something saying, Well, I don't I don't remember exactly why but basically, this is a colloquialism that comes out of Southern Baptist preaching i think is what he said the basically this is this is something that is said in black churches in the south This is not some neologism of the of the whelk. Yep. So yeah, get over this particular one.

**Bret** 27:28

Yeah, no, I think actually it's great that it turned out that way Yeah. You know, it's a it's a mini act of civil disobedience you know, with a you know, with a wink, which is how it should be done. Yeah.

**Heather** 27:39

Because like, yeah, I'm also relieved Yeah, like it's, it's hard. It's hard to find hope and the idiocy that is spotted by the woke astan by the citizens of focus down, but they've certainly confused the presence of men in words for being gendered a lot of times Yeah. And it turns out that this isn't they're doing like this is not they did not, this was not them thinking that the men and amen was about men,

**Bret** 28:09

they're making an error of historic proportions.

**Heather** 28:15

They are all right. My thesis was totally different. Okay, my thesis a game theory approach for the relationship of the California red legged frog and the invasive bullfrog. The ladder dominance, the former, this is this person's hypothesis, I think, a lot of dominance, the former accepted ephemeral sites, I will be adding Brett's design constraint case for mapping this relationship. Do you have thoughts? Okay, so we've got the invasive bullfrog that came in from the east and is basically where it exists. It is mostly decimating populations of any frog that is taking up similar has a similar niche. And in California, it's the red legged frog actually pretty good frog. It's all the way up to Washington. So that's all on the west coast. Unless we're I just I don't I don't have my phibian book right here. I don't remember if that's a subspecies or its own species. Invisible frog dominance. the former's is hypothesis exceptive. femoral sites. That would be interesting. I don't know if that's true. I don't think you don't need to talk in terms of game theory. And I don't know exactly what you're talking about with regard to design constraint, unless it's just like what kind of trade off it is. Yeah. Yeah, I guess that's it, but it's, you know, that's, that would be, that sounds like an actual, excellent predictive ecological hypothesis. And you don't have to use you know, any additional terminology to say, Okay, I think actually, the red legged frog will out compete the bullfrog and ephemeral sites, I'd be curious to know why you think that and it might well be true.

**Bret** 29:50

So I would just point out two things. There could be a trade off, that has shifted, for some reason that would cause Because this change in who is competitively dominant, I would be especially likely to imagine humans, you know, if humans were changing the relative prevalence of ephemeral to persistent pawns or something like that, which is something humans are likely to do. That's one reason you could get their shift.

**Heather** 30:18

Well, I mean, but know that when the shift is the bullfrogs are new, they just got brought in recently.

**Bret** 30:23

That's what I was gonna say is that the alternative would be that humans have solved a dispersal problem.

**Heather** 30:28

And it solved a problem for the frogs, not the people or the other frogs. Right.

**Bret** 30:32

Yeah, solve personal problems that the frogs couldn't solve for themselves. Yeah, like they got over the Continental Divide, right. And that basically the frogs who are competitively dominant, that is the bullfrogs are in the circumstances in they are paying a cost in some place that it doesn't matter relative to their new competitor, right so it's a it's a they're getting away with something that has a cost in their natural habitat, but is it's a freebie where they are so anyway, so Yeah, something like that.

**Heather** 31:06

And you might I mean, you might expect even if this didn't exist at the beginning, when the when the bullfrogs were first introduced that California red legged frogs and and those few others that are directly competing with bull frogs, would begin to experience character displacement, or begin to do niche partitioning. And you know, find those edge places or edge characters, where they can compete successfully and the bullfrog is just even marginally less good at it. And that's, that's where you win. Yep. All right. One of two, why are these separated? Yeah, I don't know why. Okay, so if consciousness can emerge from a complex system, like a human, why can't it emerge from things more complex than humans independent of our ability to interface with them? Things like stars, planets, weather, and even concepts such as love, truth or justice? The Old World Gods personified Michio Kaku used to talk about the ant versus the highway in regards to tears of civilization, and humans barely even registering as type zero. So before you riff on this, I want to say that stars, planets, and whether or not more complex than humans not by a lot, that they're far, they're far simpler.

**Bret** 32:22

Yeah, that's pretty much where I was going. Yeah, yeah, they're far simpler. And therefore it is unlikely to emerge on the kinds of timescales that we're talking about. On the other hand, you could make a credible argument that life emerging from Stardust results resulting after selection in brains complex enough that consciousness emerges, especially downstream of sociality, that that is stars more or less manifest in consciousness. So the point is, the very process you're looking for is the very one we've got. So it's not like

**Heather** 33:00

the same logic where you're like, you know, the dog is run by sunlight. Right? Like,

**Bret** 33:04

everyone I've met is bright, the dog and

**Heather** 33:07

me and all of us, like we're all solar powered. You just have to take it back far enough.

**Bret** 33:12

Right? Absolutely. Including nuclear reactors. Yeah, yeah. We come up with a puzzle on how nuclear reactors are solar powered, but they are.

**Heather** 33:21

So but how about you know that? So you know, the old world gods, the old world, Gods personified doesn't quite fit unless you unless you take a really long, long perspective. But then concepts such as love, truth or justice, well, you know, those are manifestations of our consciousness. Yeah, that's, that's, that's what those are. That's what those are now. Yep. All right. Next question. Western culture may be entering its senescent phase. Where do we currently see antagonistic pleiotropy? I love the idea of birthing something new. But won't human culture always be a complex adaptive system? If yes, isn't antagonistic, pleiotropy with late harms inevitable?

**Bret** 34:07

Yep, I've made that argument a few times on here. Sounds like maybe you weren't present for it. But the basic idea is the exact same phenomenon. And in this case, we can identify what, what the influences are that do this but the very fact that a technology and novel technology can be very profitable for decades before we ever discover what's dangerous about it means that because our political system is influenced so heavily by what is profitable by the time we figure out what's dangerous about it, we can't undo it. So that process will result in society d cohering. Hence the idea that we would need to bridge something new solving the senescence problem in exactly the same way a biological system does it and the point is, what that would look like is not kaboom, we all disappear in some other society replaced With us, it would involve basically the selective export of that which we understand which is useful. But isolating out the part that is legacy code. And so that could look like us, you know, taking a good look at where we're headed and realizing, you know, down that path is destruction and destruction is not good. And therefore, in the interest of the future, we should rally against a 2.0 version of what we've got, which had lots of stuff, right. And anyway, it would be very natural. And the problem is everybody's so busy making a killing from the present system, that they are loath to give up the opportunity for such a small benefit as having a future. Tiny benefits such a little benefit, mean they won't even live to see it. That's

**Heather** 35:54

terrible. to Heather, which did you find more mentally challenging sitting in meditation with tech, not Han, or getting your PhD love from Berlin, Germany? My answer will no doubt irritate those people who actually meditate on a regular basis, but I didn't I. So for those of you who missed the reference, I was lucky enough to be part of a, what was called a Buddhist artists retreat when I was 18. When I was still in high school, that tick, not Han, was leading and we did three sitting, walking, sitting meditation, walking meditation every day. Bye. But you know, this wasn't one of these, you know, month long, or even week long retreats of total silence and you know, effective, like, you know, 12 hours a day of meditation we did, I don't remember how long they were, but 45 minutes or an hour each. And, and yes, that was that meant that there were some between three and four hours of meditation every day. But that amount of silence, and the ability to silence the not just the ability to but the encouragement to really silence your brain for that amount of time really suited me very, very well. And I think actually doing that training helped make me an even better animal behaviorist than I would have been otherwise, probably. And they just, they just don't compare. So you know, honestly, when I hear people talk about how difficult meditation is, I always imagine that they're talking about these, you know, these retreats of effectively, endless meditation at almost every moment of every day, for days on end, something which doesn't appeal to me, and I've never tried and imagined would be very hard. But this that wasn't hard at all. And certainly the whole process of graduate school and getting the PhD had its challenges. So to say that was harder. How do you feel about Andrew Yang running for New York City Mayor? Is this a signal that the US won't be ready for unity or a third party run in 2024? Can you try to get data on the events of January 6 in DC to Andrew so we can move beyond mainstream media race talking points? Well,

**Bret** 38:13

I'm frightened that Andrew running for mayor is not a good idea, and that it will spend the very special value that he has frivolously so you know, I in order to do what he did, in the presidential race, he has to have characteristics, you know, he had you know, he's he, he's not somebody who loves the spotlight, and yet he was able to capture people's imaginations and to get them fired up. And, you know, the question is, what is the downside of that superpower. And one of the downsides, I suspect, has to do with him being too much of a believer, and the idea that he's going to be able to win the Office of mayor of New York City, which he might and rescue New York City, which you probably can't, and that his ability to do good in the world would be enhanced by his attempt to do this. I'm doubtful, so maybe he sees something that I don't. But look, there's a lot of talk about third parties and things and I frankly, I think we would be wise for all of those of us who are thinking about something in this direction. To put our heads together and figure out what the best move is, I think, you know, a wouldn't be a moment too soon, obviously and be there has never been greater openness to you know, at least not in. in living memory. There has not been greater openness to this ever so Let's strike while the iron is hot. And you know, Andrew would be perfectly well suited to such a thing if he was open to it. But, you know, I think, frankly, he, he bought the DNC is lying about what they were up to, and why he needed to be a good soldier. And he played that role. And somehow he's not learning the lesson of that they use them and then spit them out. And I don't know, Andrew, if you're out there, think very carefully about what you're doing. And let's consider a bigger play.

**Heather** 40:36

I understand your reasoning. But he Trump did not commit an impeachable offense, doing the wrong thing for the right reasons. That's a terrible precedent.

**Bret** 40:45

Well, I don't agree with that. I think a this is not a jury trial, right? The Congress is empowered to do this. And it will not do so lightly under any circumstances. And, you know, Eric has been pointing to this legal concept of direction by indirection in which what the President said, was clearly to be taken as an invitation to a show of strength relative to federal power. He was not doing this on the basis of his having proved his case in any court. And so, you know, the fact is, he has greater responsibility to the nation than any of the rest of us to be very careful about what he encourages people to do. He very clearly encouraged people to march on the Capitol, did he encourage them to act violently? not explicitly, but he did encourage them to act strongly. And I think if you look at his speech, it's very clear what he meant. And, you know, at some level, this is all about his I hate to say it, but it's very fragile ego, he needs to have won the election, and therefore, anything is legitimate in his mind, that points in the direction. So anyway, I disagree with you. I do think he did something impeachable that a conviction would not be a miscarriage of justice, that it is both necessary and reasonable. And, and I hope to see it, but again, I would hope to see it in a way that spares the nation, and therefore Trump of the trials that I suspect would be an abomination that will follow from him returning to private life and not having the protection of a pardon. Alright, well done. Thank you

**Heather** 42:54

for the question. Here we go. I feel like people who are warning about the dangers of woke ism, and those who warned about the apocalypse of climate change, walk a similar path, as anti woke already fallen in the trap of sounding too hyperbolic to be honest. Well, the question seems to assume that we will be on board with the idea that climate change could be apocalyptic as hyperbole, which we aren't we don't agree with the fact that we question some of the models that have been generated. That the conclusions of which are part of what the evidence is for there being possible climate change apocalypse on the horizon, does not mean that we can't also point to a considerable amount of evidence suggesting that we've got a real problem, and that there is really no excuse for not fixing that problem quickly.

**Bret** 43:49

And in fact, you know, I'm, I'm proud of what we've done on Darkhorse, talking about the evidence that there is something very serious and novel going on including yamo craters, including glacial retreat and the plumes of co2 being released. We've also talked about the fascinating and possibly very positive sign that there may be a negative feedback that retards the release of methane from the Arctic as a result of sea level rise, creating greater pressure that holds the the clathrates stable. And, you know, so yes, there is there is hyperbolic stuff in the climate stuff. And the more model based it is, the greater the number of bodies that can be buried, on the other hand, their stuff you can check yourself and the fact is, I think all of us who have lived you know, in places for long enough to monitor the trends know that something is changing now do things change without human beings they do, but it's changing in a predicted direction is concordant with a reduction in glaciers etc now, okay. Cars are speeding up. Yeah, the changes are speeding up. On the other hand, you know, Kilimanjaro should be free of glaciers by now and it isn't. Right. So this gives you an ability to calibrate what you really need to be careful of, though, is that the positive feedbacks can take you from one place to someplace way down the road very, very quickly. And so, you know, really, I have my eye very closely on the danger of a positive feedback with respect to methane released from the Arctic, that is where this is going to get away from us. Right? Quick,

**Heather** 45:33

we have no no known brakes, no, no possible.

**Bret** 45:37

Now this will take us this will take it completely out of human control. And so anyway, you know, I'm not looking forward to when I told you so on that front, we need to stay far short of that, which means we need to, you know, we need to do all kinds of things I've advocated for us, you know, going full speed ahead to get fusion power, because fusion power is the one technology that would actually allow us to reverse global warming, not just halt it, but reverse the process. So, you know, if you get nothing else from this, I would argue that is a nuanced, I think, balanced presentation of the various things that belong in that analysis. And you are right, when one enters climate change circles, you very often get only, you know, you get confirmation bias across the entire landscape. And that's

**Heather** 46:27

a very anti scientific conversational tone.

**Bret** 46:30

Right? And it is, it is certain to be true that to the extent that there will be data that goes both ways, and there will of course, be data that goes both ways that the field is inhospitable to the data that goes against its central conclusion,

**Heather** 46:45

you won't find it published, right? Even even if there are and there surely are many, many, many good. And honest scientists who find things that they didn't expect and don't really doesn't match their understanding the universe, even if they are trying to get those things published, it's probably harder and harder to do so. Right? Yeah.

**Bret** 47:04

So in any case, there's a nuanced way to do this. The field is not being good about it that is dangerous in and of itself, the parallel between climate and woke ism, I'm leery of, but I would say yeah, we've said from the beginning, there's an element of truth. Right? That, you know, for example, what we said a few minutes ago about that there is a lot of stuff downstream of slavery, and Jim Crow, that has impact today. That's not the same thing as saying racism is rampant today. Right, right. It's saying the consequences of past racism are still with us, which is a very different conversations. So yes, you know, nuanced in all things were nuances. reasonable. Yeah.

**Heather** 47:50

In regards to truth in media, I think we need something new. A cabal of untouchables, were they uncapable of the job of recognizing truth tellers of all types, people like the two of you awarding an incorruptible badge of honor.

**Bret** 48:04

Well, the problem is spotting people who are capable of the job, and you know, not getting up ended. And I would just say, That's not it's not an easy job to figure out. Who's for real and durable and uncorruptible?

**Heather** 48:21

Yeah, it's not. It's not it's really not. What are we at sock in terms of time? You're about 15 minutes. Oh, good. Okay, I'm going to do three more here, because we had a ton of questions this time, some really good ones do three more than go over to this hours directions. Questions. Why is the Prime Directive not a valid answer to Fermi's paradox? Alternatively, if there's a genuine cover up, then it's possible. We have interactions all the time, but the public facing data is total garbage and worthless.

**Bret** 48:52

Okay, I think I understand this question.

**Heather** 48:53

So the Prime Directive being basically don't don't talk about Fight

**Bret** 48:57

Club. Yes. That's it. Which I don't see its relevance here. No, prime directive is

**Heather** 49:04

you go man

**Bret** 49:08

is don't mess with. Don't mess with the culture as you encounter traveling through the galaxy. Right? Yeah. Is there a better way of putting

**Heather** 49:19

probably? Yeah, so Well, basically don't mess.

**Bret** 49:25

Yeah, the answer is in order for the prime directive to be the answer. They would have to be agreement across the galaxy.

**Heather** 49:32

Exactly. It might explain why we haven't run into some, but not all, presumably.

**Bret** 49:38

Right. Yeah. Or we, you know, some cultures could just be mad and given us the cold shoulder. I don't know. Yeah. silent treatment, something. Okay. But okay, your point about the public facing data? Well, sure. It could be that there's a conspiracy that keeps us from knowing about evidence of extraterrestrials. But, you know, it's not the kind of thing you would want to believe just because it could be true.

**Heather** 50:05

Yeah. So that would require quite a lot of thought required quite a lot of work. And you know, and like, if we can try to do like theory of mind on these, almost certainly fictional extraterrestrials, what's in it for them that they're engaging in some secret secret thing with the earth? And and if we don't have an answer there you know what why is it that whoever the officials would be on Earth are so interested in obscuring this from like it just there's a lot of narrative there that needs to be consistent with one another for that to make sense and it's not totally impossible but yeah, it just requires a lot of a lot of epicycles Yeah,

**Bret** 50:50

on the other hand, there's been a lot of interesting stuff that has emerged in the last couple years. So who knows? We'll see. Yeah,

**Heather** 50:57

but it's Yes, definitely not parsimonious as a hypothesis. Is it possible that asymptomatic cases are more transmissible because people don't act like they have the virus and thus are more likely to transmit it? If yes, if there's if there's infectiousness, if you are an if if viral load is anything of an indicator of infectiousness, for instance, right. And it does seem that viral load is pretty comparable between never symptomatic, pre symptomatic and fully symptomatic people, which is frankly shocking to me, then, then, yes, the fact that people who don't feel sick are less likely to do the things they're supposed to do and quarantine themselves and all of us could increase their infectiousness as a result of their behavior rather than as a function of anything that's intrinsic to the virus itself. Yep. Or is there any chance that these new COVID strains are more contagious, not because of a major shift in their composition? But because humans overall health stats have been lowered due to lock downs and inactivity? Well, that is interesting. No, I

**Bret** 52:07

don't think so.

**Heather** 52:08

It's an interesting hypothesis, though. I mean, but but you know, before you go, it's also true that, you know, millions of people have died worldwide. Yeah, at this point, millions of people have died now, who, presumably there's lots of people who just haven't run into it yet. But a lot of people who ran into it, who were easily taken out have been taken out. And so at some level, you would also expect at a global level that people are more resistant, rather than less.

**Bret** 52:38

Yeah. So good point. I also think that so I shouldn't say this, because given the level of scientific malpractice, we've seen, is it possible for those who are telling us about these new strains on their increased transmissibility have botched the job? In some Yes, massive way? Yes. In which case, yes, we could be seeing, you know, the sort of gross demographics of spread could be about a weakened population, something like that. I

**Heather** 53:08

do also wonder why suddenly, we're hearing about all of these new mutant strains,

**Bret** 53:12

right? And guess that it fits the pattern of is there an audience? Is there a powerful audience that wants to hear about new strains that justify, you know, various interventions?

**Heather** 53:24

Maybe so the thing has been evolving from day one,

**Bret** 53:27

let's just say the story about new strains has not made sense. I'm not saying that the new strains don't exist. And I mean, new strains will exist constantly. And it is very plausible that he would get something like increased transmissibility. But the story that is circulated about it is said in a way that doesn't add up. For one thing, the idea, you know, that it's a British thing, and we've seen hints of it here, but we're still going to get it under control know if it's right.

**Heather** 53:58

But there's a few of them now there's there's a really bad one being reported at a mouse. And, you know, it's not clear well, is that was that what was there in the spring? And was killing so many people? Or is it somehow not somehow knew it's it's evolving all the time. And every time it spreads into a new place? It's going to then continue to, you know, it's adaptively radiating as things that evolve, do? Yep. And at what point do we call it a new strain? Or do we choose to recognize that? Well, the fact that we are right now, like at a point in time, identifying all these new strains strikes me as very, very strange,

**Bret** 54:35

I agree. It is odd. And again, to our previous point about we really needed a number of populations that existed in enough isolation that we could study this stuff in detail and know exactly what it meant because really, we're just flying blind.

**Heather** 54:50

Yeah, yeah, that's true. And actually this uh, this, this paper, looking at people in Brunei wasn't an isolated population that I was talking about in the first hour but had, it was as close as I've seen for a pretty big population to being able to actually track a pretty large number of people. So I think some of these efforts did happen. Mostly not here. Mostly on the US. Hale professors, do you have thoughts on revisiting the legalization of dueling? The folks are getting riled about what we call fighting words.

**Bret** 55:29

dueling Yes. Well, I mean, you know where it has its place to be sure to be sure. All right, maybe it doesn't have its place. But yeah, I don't know. It's a serious question. Yes, I think it should be revived, ceremonially. ceremonial, dueling, ceremonial, doing nerf dueling or something like that.

**Heather** 55:52

I'm feel certain that I spent a lot of my time a lot of my childhood nerf dealing with my brother. Is that right? Yeah, yeah, we definitely have nerf bats. pummel each other quite a

**Bret** 56:00

lot. Am I correct? Neither of you were killed?

**Heather** 56:03

No, neither of us were killed. All right. So that Yeah,

**Bret** 56:05

does, you know, say positive things about the form?

**Heather** 56:09

That does, although I think neither of our forms were particularly. We weren't skilled. We weren't trained, no dueling, no trained in the art of bogging each other.

**Bret** 56:18

Yeah.

**Heather** 56:20

All right. Men in predatory reproductive mode, leave paternally imprinted genes in favor of embryonic development. Is predatory mode genetically determined? What genes will men with predatory inheritance? But using investment strategy leave? How can genes now the dads intent in the moment of the Act? Does dad even know? Thanks for all love? You both Keep it up. So this is from echo. This is in response to, you know immediately. I think it was in the last q&a, we were talking about genomic imprinting. And the idea that a baby is a baby's genome actually keeps track keeps track as if it's conscious, which of course it's not, of which parent various copies of the genes came from. And that maternally imprinted genes, for instance, tend to put the brakes on excess pulling resources from mom and making the head too big before birth. Whereas paternally imprinted genes tend to try to pull more resources from mom. And you had specifically been talking about mating system perhaps being a mitigating factor here. And the question here is, well, how, how are the the genes that might be paternally imprinted? Going to keep track of or know what, you know, what kind of mating system dad is in? While the answer to that might be things like, you know, keeping track of different kinds of sperm that are showing up in the mom? But also, how do like, regardless of what kind of mating system, in general, like, what about the individual man and his intentions? How could a paternal imprinted gene possibly know? Well,

**Bret** 58:05

I mean, look, so there's a question about what we know. And I don't know the answer to the question about how it's done. But I do I do want to correct one thing. Okay, I am somewhat dubious that head size would be downstream of a imprinted gene, because the baby in question that is to say, the offspring of the male has every interest in the mother surviving birth, because it is very unlikely to survive with the mother dies in childbirth. Yeah.

**Heather** 58:33

So I don't think I made that out. But I don't have the reference.

**Bret** 58:37

I'm just snaps, it could be but there's going to have to be some sort of subtle logic to make that work. But in general, the logic is that a a father's genes of a father is not sticking with the mother. In other words, if this is the only offspring of his that she is going to bear than his interest in her distributing her resources across her entire brood is lower. Right, right. So anyway, there's a lot of really important stuff downstream from that logic, and that logic is very robust, right?

**Heather** 59:09

But to what degree can social system and meeting system actually can genomic imprinting actually be informed by the mating system in which the players live?

**Bret** 59:21

Right? And so this is why I want to say what we need is a proof of concept, right? We need a demonstration that something mechanistic can do the job. Yeah. Rather than a demonstration of what it is that does the job, right. So what I would argue is, for example, there are a courting is a ritual enforced by females to make sure males are actually interested in commitment, that is to say, if it takes months to end up engaging in reproductive behavior with somebody that's a that's a A long con and a very expensive one for a male to engage in, if he's just going to fleet, right, whereas a

**Heather** 1:00:07

test not just of intention, but of actual stability, like even if you really want to be able to stay with her if, if everything in your world is constantly in chaos, she's gonna see that at some point, right? Yeah, and this and this, what you just said about courtship, you know, this, but, you know, like, I discovered courtship and these little tiny poison frogs that I studied, right, like, you know, courtship has a role to play across any any sexually reproducing organism in which there is going to be parental care by both players,

**Bret** 1:00:35

right? So given that, and given that there are physiological changes that accompany the state of mind that result in extended courtship. In other words, a person in love is in a physiologically different state, right, that physiological difference state we now know, has chemical signatures. So I think those chemical signatures be used to imprint

**Heather** 1:00:59

the careful imprint imprint isn't quite well, you know, I

**Bret** 1:01:02

think I do mean imprint. In other words, if a male is going to produce during his lifetime, two different kinds of sperm, right, those that accompany a fleeting relationship in which he intends to invest nothing, and therefore his interests are in that offspring taking as much resources as it can safely get from the mother and not saving any for his, his offsprings half siblings or a relationship in which he intends to invest, in which case his interests are very symmetrical with hers, then the point is, the presence or absence of those chemicals that come along with with love, could be used to basically turn on and off different genes, right? Just the same way. The whole argument that

**Heather** 1:01:47

I think it's not exactly imprinting, but like a tag, like a, like a vasopressin mediated epigenetic tag, or go on sperm, that indicate, you know, in love or not right

**Bret** 1:02:00

now, I would argue this is an exact analogue for what we imagine happens in the case where a gene just simply decides whether it comes from the male parent or the female parent, right? Which

**Heather** 1:02:11

is the usual meaning of imprinting, right? So anyway, whether or not separate from the other meaning that most people have imprinting, like, the duck sees Conrad llorens, right, imprints on him as his mom. Yep. Yep.

**Bret** 1:02:23

So anyway, proof of concept. It's very, yeah, to build a system that can recognize these things and react differently without changing the underlying genetic sequences is the point. Yeah,

**Heather** 1:02:33

cool. I like it. The world will not compromise, they will persecute their opposition to the ends of the earth among the woke, there is no forgiveness only vengeance. I fear that certainly among the extremists, that is true, I think. I think they need to be shown that there is a more interesting and wonderful way. Because, you know, at the moment they feel Ascendant, and that they're winning, and no, there's they're not going to be in a forgiveness. If that's if that's where they are like, you're right. But there has to be some reveal of why this is actually this is not the promised land is not going to bring them the the peace and love that they are hoping for

**Bret** 1:03:19

No, but in some sense, I think they have to be stopped, because of course they do. What will happen if we don't is that

**Heather** 1:03:25

they but but some of some of they have to be stopped can be done by changing some fraction of their minds?

**Bret** 1:03:32

Well, it depends. Yes, it can. Some fraction of the audience for that stuff can be, you know, the truly committed are very unlikely to, to reverse course, but there are

**Heather** 1:03:42

people I don't think that's true. No, because we've seen we've seen people who were sort of mildly playing along, and, and sort of woke up at some point. Yeah,

**Bret** 1:03:53

that's what I mean, that's that's what our audience

**Heather** 1:03:55

might know. Like, I think that's not fair. And I think that leaves people feeling even more boxed in, if you say, you know, those who, those who speak this, this ideology are lost to me. And you know, there's sort of no redemption. I mean, I just we have to, we have to offer redemption at all stages and assume that it's possible, I'll just offer it's not ours to offer, but like, assume that just about anyone, and I won't say anyone, but just about anyone is capable of doing a turnabout. And I'm not including in that, at the point that the writing is really truly finally on the wall for everyone having people come forth and say, oh, it turns out I was wrong all along. It's like no, there. There will have to be some some effects for the truly bad behavior.

**Bret** 1:04:43

Yeah, I don't think I don't think we disagree. I think a lot of people are saying things they don't exactly believe or they are speculating on what might be true. And there is some core that's driving this. Yes. But you know, yes, yeah. People have to be have to have the ability to realize that what they're saying is nonsense and to come around and yeah, we should welcome that.

**Heather** 1:05:06

Okay, Zack, where are we at? You're okay, we'll go a little farther. I'm not sure these next questions. I'm not sure what to do with them. What role do you think apophenia is playing in the Warped worldviews of the fringes of both left and right love from New Orleans. I'm now going to look up apophenia.

**Bret** 1:05:29

Yeah, okay. I think Quadrophenia is playing some role in the perception belief system of the who and possibly the CDC

**Heather** 1:05:41

apophenia the perception of or belief and connectedness among unrelated phenomena? I guess it just sort of a conflating. Yeah. Causing correlation. And, you know, seeing

**Bret** 1:05:53

and what was the question? What is it? What is its role in? A you don't want to riff on the Hussam? Oh, I got it. Okay. The punchline of that joke was and the CDC.

**Heather** 1:06:05

Okay, yep. Got it. Oh, wait, here we have the question was, what role do you think apophenia is playing in the world? worldviews are the fringes of both left and right, left New Orleans. I mean, I guess apophenia sounds like, you know, as a, like, a fancy sounding word that just sort of sounds like scientific illiteracy, and, you know, failure to do logic. And so I'm not, you know,

**Bret** 1:06:30

not I think it goes beyond that. Okay. I think this is alluding to the tendency of the mind to find connections that are very tenuous, and to establish them in something other than an agnostic

**Heather** 1:06:43

form. It's all of our God given pattern recognition, without any breaks and care. Yeah. So

**Bret** 1:06:51

there are there are results, for example, about birds, chickens, becoming superstitious about patterns that we know to be random, because the experiment made them random on a conveyor belt with stones and pieces of corn and all Yeah, so the tendency to find pattern where it isn't, is a common one. But I think the point is here, when the mind has really good, high quality information, and the signal to noise ratio is high, it does a much better job, when the noise dominates signal than the mind is looking for any indication of what might be. And so it's very prone to fall into this nonsense. And so I think the collapse of our academic architecture and our media architecture, and the whole sense making apparatus is leaving the mind laughing about trying to find some pattern that would make sense. And frankly, I think we also see that, you know, we've talked at length about the fact that people who may be just simply feeling not at home in their own skin, because the era is, is broken, deciding, I must be that I was born in the wrong body, this kind of thing. That is the conclusion. It's a plausible answer. If everything feels wrong, then maybe it's because I've just, you know, I'm a woman, and I've been walking through life as a man, right? that's a that's a hypothesis. I'm depressed. And I have a chemical imbalance, right? I'm depressed. And I have a chemical imbalance. Exactly. And so anyway, I think I think it has a lot to do with this. And that, understanding the fact that that property goes up as the quality of your information goes down.

**Heather** 1:08:31

Yeah, well, and I mean, those examples reveal how easily at least one sector of the economy can take advantage of you know, that we got a pill for that. They got a pill for everything, including lots of stuff they've created themselves. And, you know, pharmaceutical companies seems tailor made for for apophenia

**Bret** 1:08:54

Yeah, I don't know if your your I guess your illusion was intentional to that. I think it was the first iPhone, commercial. There's an app for that. Remember this now, back before we were all used to the way the smartphone would work? The idea was, oh, there's a lot of things you want to do. And there's an app for Oh, yeah. I want to keep track of your you know, pets medication schedule, there's an app for that right. So there's a pill for that. No,

**Heather** 1:09:22

I think No, no, I mean, I I think that many people have suggested that there's a pill for that. I don't think I'm anywhere close to the first there were no I think well predates iPhone as much as iPhones have also contributed mightily to our current problem. Please get Michael Tracy on the show. He's a lot of insight on the current topic. Thanks. Yeah, we've so talked about this and that's this year to figure out if you're gonna do that. Should online journal geography is linked to comments from cited authors. Fine Hello, online journal bibliographies link to comments from cited authors. File mimetics, the evolution of anti evolution policies. Science, I don't know if there's two different questions. I don't know. I don't know. I don't know what this means.

**Bret** 1:10:17

I don't either. Yeah. Okay. So like the title, the evolution of anti evolution policies?

**Heather** 1:10:22

Yeah. So it sounds like there's potentially an interesting article in science than the first part of the question. comments from side authors? I don't know. I don't know about that. It's interesting, you know, do you want to turn? Do you want to actively transform, you know, use the additional functionality of the online environment to really make a paper or something that has become a conversation as opposed to, you know, it was an outgrowth of just the limits of hardcopy journals where you would have something published, and then if it was contentious, or if some of the people cited, you know, either some of the people cited said, You got my work wrong, or some other people in the field said, I think this is crap. The next issue of the journal would have a rejoinder and there'd be another one. And then at some point, hopefully, it would stop. And you certainly have a quicker back and forth, it's possible now. And also the online journals make it much easier to track down articles because they're, you know, references because they're generally hotlinked. But comments from authors who were cited, so that feels like it's a slippery slope that is beyond anything that has yet happened. And I don't know, I don't know if it is happening. Maybe that's what the reference here is, is a place where it's happening.

**Bret** 1:11:47

I don't think so I think it's in reference to our discussion, and the idea that the abuse of source material is revealed by your work. But if the authors of that source material, were in a position to say, hey, actually, you use my reference badly, that would be good. Yeah. On the other hand, I agree with you. It's a slippery slope issue, because at the point that, you know, let's suppose the paper gets hot, right, and people are suddenly citing it. Well, then the authors of all of the articles that have been cited by it have an interest in intervening and getting their paper looked at, and you're going to have some kind of a Yeah, an appalling no one

**Heather** 1:12:21

there, there also becomes an expectation perhaps, you know, and if we're, you know, for most scientists, they don't get cited enough that this would become onerous, maybe. But if, if you can comment, whenever you are cited, the expectation might quickly become if you haven't commented that it is it has the imprimatur of your like it has your your temperature it has it has your acceptance on it. And that is certainly not the case now, and that would be that would be a dangerous thing to set in motion, I think. Yeah, the idea

**Bret** 1:12:54

you could have an intermediate thing, okay, you could have something where a an author that believes their work is being misused has a mechanism to highlight and signal the editors of the journal, I believe my work is being misused. And if the editors of the journal find the complaint credible, then it depends. That would increase.

**Heather** 1:13:16

So I like that. You've now added to the workload of the generally unpaid editors of journals. And you know, we already have a totally legitimate and long needed push to basically make all the scientific literature open, open source, it's not quite the right language. But you know, how it's never been clear what the economics of that are, you know, this work is largely unpaid done by academics, the peer review is done by academics, sometimes there's your paid but often not. And, you know, publishing, all of this takes a lot of work. And if the scientific literature is to be made available to the people who funded it, which is to say, for the most part, you're the American taxpayers, which it should be, we then need additional federal funding for the creation of the scientific literature publication machine.

**Bret** 1:14:10

Yes. Yeah. So we need academics who suck less we do read them better. Oh,

**Heather** 1:14:18

yeah. Yeah. Okay. And, and federal funding for science journals.

**Bret** 1:14:24

Well, yeah, that's part of treating them better. Now. Yeah. work that way.

**Heather** 1:14:29

married men have cats.

**Bret** 1:14:34

Some married men have

**Heather** 1:14:36

cats. Some cats have married men.

**Bret** 1:14:40

Yes, one needs to know meaning there is ambiguous but yes. Yeah, all right.

**Heather** 1:14:49

Okay. Let's do three more How about and we'll stop for for today. I've heard you guys talking about Coronavirus. Yes, yes, we have either a lot Coronavirus seems to be misrepresented as a cold Instead of a blood disease, also I've read that this virus is impulse and affects the consciousness. What are your opinions on this?

**Bret** 1:15:09

I certainly believe that respiratory virus is almost a holdover to the early discussion when the fact that that is the way it is typically contracted, dominated are thought about the the particular pathology. And now, you know, one of the things that was revealed pretty early on, was that there are a huge range of symptoms of this thing that extend to many, many different systems in the body. And so yes, many of them that respiratory, yeah, many of them are respiratory, and you know, it will affect consciousness, will it affected directly? I don't know. I doubt it. But will it affect it? indirectly? Sure. I mean, even

**Heather** 1:15:54

in some cases, I mean, given that it affects the senses, and we are living right next door to you know, the sort of info eight consciousness in in the brain? Yes, presumably, it's possible?

**Bret** 1:16:09

Well, I think you I think you've just landed on a certain one, which is given the number of people who lose their sense of smell and taste, that cannot help but affect consciousness. Likewise, happy hypoxic 's. You know, being comfortable as you are in jeopardy of your blood oxygenation level, dropping to a critically dangerous level, will also have effects on that. In other words, you're not super capable, but you may not know it. So anyway, these things will all have indirect effects on consciousness. Is it invading the neurons involved in consciousness? Probably not. Yeah, it would be unlikely to

**Heather** 1:16:48

Yeah, and our first I think, like 16 episodes, were all almost entirely about about COVID and Coronavirus. And we made a habit of going back when we made errors that we knew about in the next episode. So although we haven't gone back and listened to them since at least I haven't I don't think about we stand by that. And with the understanding that everyone's understanding of what it is, is changing and has changed. But that we were careful then. And we you know, we have many, many hours of talking about Coronavirus.

**Bret** 1:17:22

Yep. And I think actually, one of the things I'm proudest about is the way in which our model improved over time and actually gave people what I think stands up as a description of how to maintain your life in the midst of COVID and not get sick. So anyway, it wasn't perfect, but but I think the proof that paying attention to this stuff and wielding tools that are perfectly at home in a, you know, public non professional context was enough to get a pretty good model that was way ahead of the CDC. And anyway, yeah, it's good stuff, I think.

**Heather** 1:18:05

Okay, what is the evolutionary juxtaposition between comedy and tragedy? Also, what role does comedy play in terms of creating a shared reality and building trust inside communities amongst each other? You sort of answered your own question. I haven't. Yeah, it does exactly that. Yeah. No, sorry, did you want to say that there

**Bret** 1:18:24

is no evolutionary juxtaposition of comedy. I mean, in some sense, comedy, almost requires a recognition that what is at stake is limited. And tragedy, the thing that seems to characterize a narrative tragedy is that the bottom drops out, and that things that could have been navigated because of the tragic flaw of the hero or whatever else, everything is lost. So I guess I would say both of these things are narrative forms. The reason that they are narrative forms is because there are important lessons that they carry, and probably each is capable, you know, a comedy presumably, leaves us better able to understand our, our own personal foibles and therefore be better to each other a tragedy allows us to understand that there may be a great deal more at stake than we can see from our limited vantage point, and that we would be wise to pay attention to those hazards. But I would say you look any any standard form exists because it taught certain things that were worth the cost of that form. And maybe there's something beyond that, but I think as a starter that that doesn't,

**Heather** 1:19:50

yeah. Alright, two more. Basically just comments here. I hang out with people in real life who find racist jokes hilarious. My best friends are Mexicans. They laugh at jokes that are funny but true. We are not racist. We are just funny people. PS we grew up on the Chappelle show Cheech and Chong and Blazing Saddles.

**Bret** 1:20:11

actually want to correct that a little bit. Those don't sound like racist jokes. Those are racial jokes. And I would agree, I mean, the, you know, the number of Jewish jokes that Jews tell, you know, that have some sort of content about, you know, about what Jews are, like, is many and to lose this

**Heather** 1:20:33

is, and whereas, you know, Jews aren't telling anti semitic jokes, right? They may be telling Jewish jokes. Yeah,

**Bret** 1:20:41

yeah, absolutely. Yeah. So anyway, look, we've lost our best tools. And frankly,

**Heather** 1:20:49

this is why I jumped to this one that, you know, it's about comedy again, right? Like, right, comedy is necessary. It's not just useful. It's necessary. Yeah.

**Bret** 1:20:57

So, you know, we navigate this stuff in ways and the idea that we're going to scrutinize everything and, you know, figure out which things are still tolerable, because, you know, yes, you know, racist jokes will be a subset of racial jokes, right? Yeah, they will be within that set. I don't know anybody who can tell you the rule that says where the permissible stuff stops, and the impermissible stuff starts, which means we have to be a bit generous with each other in order to find out where that is. And wouldn't it be interesting to discover that border and what better, you know, you're going to need humor in order to figure it out. So anyway, yes, we are trying to write rules for things that are so mysterious and subtle that it's folly in the first place.

**Heather** 1:21:49

And indeed, yeah, one last question. Yeah. Brett, are you yet in 2021?

**Bret** 1:21:55

I think so. It's a little harder to tell. Because when you're the one lagging, it's not like there's fanfare and people aren't, you know, setting off fireworks in the night when you transition between one year and the next. But I do feel that I am now solidly in 2021 and that it sucks every bit as much as 2020 did so far.

**Heather** 1:22:15

Well, welcome.

**Bret** 1:22:16

Thank you.

**Heather** 1:22:17

We've been awaiting you. We're hoping that you have some solutions. Ah,

**Bret** 1:22:21

yes. Well, I've got some stuff. I will sort through it and see if there's anything solution like in it.

**Heather** 1:22:28

Good. All right. Very good. Very good. Here we are. Got the end again. Yes, at the end. So all the usual stuff. You can buy Darkhorse merchandise at the store, you see it on screen there. Join us at our Patreon, please. Private q&a will be the last Sunday of the month. And your conversations are the first Saturday and Sunday of the month. And you have access to our Discord. And you can find clips on the Dark Horse podcast clips channel. and various other true things.

**Bret** 1:23:04

Yes, hang in there we are By my calculations more than 1/6 of the way through winter. Yes, we are more than 1/6 of the way through winter. So it's it's it's rushing by at an incredible rate we will with all

**Heather** 1:23:23

almost a third of the way through. Yeah,

**Bret** 1:23:27

I guess we are closer we're closing in on on a third. But in any case, chances are we're going to survive winter again. So that's goodness.

**Heather** 1:23:37

Yeah, yep, it is. Well, everyone, we will get most of you. It's winter.