Bret and Heather 23rd DarkHorse Podcast Livestream\_ Truth in...

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people, police, racism, problem, dave chappelle, cases, black, compelled, point, movement, moment, world, claim, demand, explanation, talking, meaning, piece, anecdote, populations

**SPEAKERS**

Bret, Heather, Clip

**Bret** 00:09

Hey folks, welcome to the Dark Horse podcast live stream our 23rd 23rd.

**Heather** 00:17

I'm once again.

**Bret** 00:17

Wow, again prime that does feel feels All right, I'm sitting with Dr. Heather Hyang as always, and we are facing so many very heavy topics that we are going to try to grapple with together. Last time we started what I think is a very healthy tradition in light of how things are going in 2020, where instead of diving right into the ultra timely, ultra heavy material, we start with something amusing a joke, an anecdote, something just to set the mood so that we all feel okay, so with that the floor is yours.

**Heather** 00:55

Great. Thank you so much. That's hilarious. I'm so amused.

**Bret** 00:59

Alright, so folks, actually, this has been a lesson on a different topic. The lesson is married as much as it gets a bad rap. People say it's just a piece of paper, why do I need the government to sanction my relationship? Marriage is a marvelous thing. And among its best features are it makes it really complicated and expensive for someone to leave you. This is so complicated. So

**Heather** 01:23

presumably also so expensive. Yeah.

**Bret** 01:26

I haven't checked, but that's what I've heard. Yeah. But just sort of thinking through all the steps that would be required. Let's just put it this way. Heather, however expensive. You have heard divorces, I think it's way worse than this is fabulous. Great. All right. So we do have a lot going on. We have

**Heather** 01:48

good lord. Okay, it's it's only noon. 30. where we are, there's been no alcohol or drugs of any sort for a very long time.

**Bret** 01:57

Somebody could have drugged us, we don't, it would have had been one of our children or animals. I mean, I wouldn't put it past any of them. Okay, okay. So we have things going on, we have an autonomous zone having been declared in the center of Seattle, which I would say would be absolutely beyond belief if we hadn't already seen this block and a half from our own home at evergreen in 2017. So that's going on, we have a shooting that has just taken place in Atlanta that is suddenly trending on Twitter, there's all sorts of things that need to be discussed and carefully. And of course, there's never any time to parse these things and figure out how to get into them in a way that everybody can get their footing. So anyway, I think you have a sense of where we might, we might begin with that material here.

**Heather** 02:44

Well, actually what I have what I've written up, what I want to start by showing us and I've written up isn't directly about either of those things. But it obviously speaks to the current moment. So I think we're going to start by showing a video that you would pointed out to me, that's a bit over two minutes long. And, and then I have a little monologue, and then we'll launch into everything else. So Zack, if you want to show the first video that I sent to you, we are all people.

**Clip** 03:15

My family, all of you all my family. I love each and every one of you. I cry at night.

**Clip** 03:32

Because we're all scared, black, white. Doesn't matter. We're all scared. We're living in fear. You got to stop living in fear. I am not your enemy. You are not my enemy. You have to share this land no matter what. By the end of the day, you have to share this land no matter what. I'm here for you. I'm here with you. I'm not angry. I know that you I love all of y'all. I don't care if you fight. I'll give you a footer. I don't care. I'll give your life away. Or my family and I love you and I respect you. And I want to understand y'all, I want to understand all of you. I want to I want to understand you. I would love to be joking. I would love you so badly. I would love to see the bad side of everybody here. Everybody here. Everybody hear that you can change your whole perspective of how you do someone because of their size, because of how you see them in different ways. Someone might have a bad day you think they're a bad person? No, no, no, we all got bad days. We all got bad days. Only on our bad days, because we all have some degree. How are you and your good days? Do you want to make a change? Do you want to make a change? Come on What are you? kidding?

**Bret** 05:33

All right. So that video is one of a couple very much like it that we have now seen. And before you get to your comments about it, I just want to put a placeholder here and say, I not only want to talk about what that video means, but I want to talk about what role it is or isn't playing in our discussion of the current moment. So we'll return to that later. All right,

**Heather** 05:59

so in this video, we have people clearly using their first amendment rights. And the the response that I had that Brett had is why are they stopped? What What is going on? What is that, and once again, I want to remind us of the First Amendment as I did a couple of episodes ago and 20. It reads, quote, Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for redress of grievances. Not only his speech explicitly protected in this beautiful sentence that moves us from the most private thing, the thoughts in our own head to the most public. But so to his peaceful assembly, and petition of the government for redress of grievances, one could argue I believe that these peaceful protesters patently peaceful protesters, and then particularly the man who was speaking in the last clip was making an appeal to the government or at least to agents of the government. And he is asking for redress that is resolution in the form of asking for understanding. He's asking that we treat one another as human beings. Why was he hauled off? What pasta possible justification could there be? I see none. So we'll return to that. That is one abomination. That is happening now. Here's another one, no less important, but harder for most to grapple with. The mayor of Boston, signed and promoted an executive order yesterday on June 12, of 2020, declaring, among other things that quote, whereas the covid 19 pandemic has revealed, reaffirmed and cast in sharp relief the emergency nature of these pre existing inequity is caused by systemic racism. In cases where race and ethnicity are known, the rate of reported COVID-19 cases for black Boston residents is Twitter in 68.8 per 10,000, compared with two and a 13.2 per 10,000 for Latin x Hispanic residents, and 89.8. Pretend, pretend 1000 for white residents, and quote. So let me begin by pointing out that the numbers cited the executive order from the mayor of Boston looks Stark, but not just for black people. They also look Stark for Latino people. And yet we're not as a nation focused on Latino people. That is not apparently the moment this is not apparently the moment for Latino people to speak or to expect a redress of grievances. It is also true that numbers absent absent statistical analysis, which would be simple to do, if you had the actual data are insufficient to claim on equal outcomes. Although I grant that at first glance, it certainly appears that blacks and Latinos in Boston are suffering unequal outcomes compared to whites. And we know that that conclusion is borne out by actual analysis from other places there is racial disparity in health outcomes regarding COVID-19. But then, of course, it is also true that there are sex disparity in health outcomes regarding COVID-19 more men than women die of this disease. And we don't see the equivalent hypothesis that sex disparities and COVID-19 are due to historic and systemic misandry. Why? Well, in part because the idea that disproportionate effects of COVID-19 on men is due to misandry is patently ludicrous. There has been abundant Stark sexism, just as there has been abundant historic racism and not primarily against men or against white people. But I posit that we also don't hear that hypothesis, nor are we seeing differential outcomes by sex focused on right now, because it doesn't conform to one of our currently sanctioned narratives. Consider that if women were suffering from COVID-19 at higher rates than men, we likely would be hearing that it was due to sexism and not as one hypothesis but as the answer. The problem with compelled speech then should be obvious, especially with the First Amendment still shining at us beacon like across the centuries. But as Orwell illustrated in 1984, the power and compelling speech is that in time, thought is compelled as well. Those who want to compel what you think may well start by compelling what you say. This in a nutshell, is the problem with compelled speech. If we are all required to shout and proclaim hashtag black lives matter at all times, meaning that we are constantly focused on race as the explanatory factor into Society. And similarly if we are told constantly that all divergent outcomes between men and women in which women come up behind is due to sexism, we have arrived at compelled thought. Humans, I believe, have inherently scientific minds, which means that we can propose multiple explanations for an observed phenomenon and try to distinguish between those explanations. All children do this. Many children have this intuitive scientific tinkering drilled out of them in school and by authority figures of all kinds, looking for what is actually going on takes time. It's messy, and it will offend many of those who have arrived at a conclusion that they themselves like, they will try to stop the investigation. They may even try to tell you that it is racist to investigate. compelled speech restricts scientific tendencies, and so leads to compelled thought.

**Heather** 10:48

If the Overton window has shrunk so far, that an observation of a pattern has only one allowable explanation, that we have neither freedom of speech nor thought, and we have abandoned science. If the Overton window has shrunk so far, that an observation of a pattern such as disparities and health outcomes between black and white people with regard to COVID-19, has only one allowable explanation, historic and systemic racism. The not only do we have neither freedom of speech, nor freedom of thought, but we also have little chance of actually figuring out what is going on. We also have little chance of actually fixing the problem, unless the one officially sanctioned explanation happens to be fully explanatory. For all observed patterns. In all cases, I can guarantee that racism is not the only explanation for racial disparities and health outcomes. I can also guarantee that racism is insufficiently precise to be actionable And this, in part is the goal of the activists. It is presumably not the goal of the mayor of Boston. I want to believe that he is trying to do good and to do right by his people. But having a single vague explanation that can be wielded like a cudgel to simultaneously silence dissent and which cannot be operationalized. That is the route to totalitarianism. It is also as James Lindsay has described very much like the argument that any natural phenomenon which cannot currently be explained by science must only be explicable by God. This is known as the God of the gaps. God fills in where science can't. Today's activism has created a racism of the gaps. Racism fills in as the go to explanation whenever any other explanation isn't immediately obvious, and sometimes even when it is. James Lindsay again on Twitter today said this racism of the gaps is an allusion to the God of the gaps argument where many people will say the explanation for some unknown phenomenon. How did life start must be good. It's a bad argument, a filler? Why is there disparity must be systemic racism? What else could it be? So systemic racism is usually a way to say that complicated and unknown, or inconvenient and suppressed. Reasons for differences in outcome must be racism in the Vegas sense. We see a difference James Wright don't need to find out real reasons. And that must be racism. It's fraudulent, and culty. He finishes. I would say if we really want to be able to redress grievances, and make the world as honorable, equal and fair for everyone as possible, we can't have compelled speech and we can't have compelled thought racism of the gaps must stop just as sexism, sexism, other gaps must stop racism in particular, and more precisely, contemporary effects of historical racism is very likely an explanation for many observed inequalities, and even a primary one in some cases. But if we were not allowed to consider alternative hypotheses, then we are doomed. We will not be allowed to discover what is true, and we will be buried in confusion and chaos. Finally, this week, UC Berkeley professor who remains anonymous, sent a scathing letter to some of his colleagues decrying the compelled speech taking over academia and the world. He is himself a person of color. His identity has been confirmed, but not made public by one of the people who received the letter. And he too, finds the cry of racism to explain every single difference in outcome between races a dishonest and untrue conclusion. He cannot stand the people who call themselves scholars and electricals are falling in line, either Canada. We have all by now seen images of people kneeling practically genuflecting in service of the new gods, or there's so many new converts in the world. Truly, as the Berkeley professor says in his letter, it's hard to know what kneeling means when you have to kneel to keep your job.

**Bret** 14:16

Wow, yeah, racism of the gaps is right on the money. That's what we're seeing. And this actually dovetails very well with what I think the secondary meaning of that that video that we saw is, so I would like to back us up slightly and put something on the table. So late last night, as I was trying to get one of our cats to come in. I went for a walk with the dog. And I was listening to Sam Harris most recent podcast episode on the meaning of this moment. And there was a lot in it. It's really well done and I recommend it The purpose of the of the piece is largely to do something that I've advocated many times I've said in order to have an or to make compassionate policy, you have to do a dispassionate analysis, right? It feels counterintuitive. But anyway, he does a very good job of going through these statistics that accompany the use of lethal force by police, and what it has to say about the presence or absence of racism. And it's really, it's remarkably careful. But the place he starts is someplace that I think a lot of us have landed independently, he alleges that we are actually losing our minds, and that this has something to do with the internet. And we've talked about this. And anyway, I think I think all people who are trying to grapple with the meaning of the moment are landing on this formulation. But the question is, okay, we're losing our minds. But can we say anything more about it. And the reason that that video of that, apparently peaceful protests are being hauled off, I mean, hauled out of a crowd, specifically, because he's the one talking that really looks like an egregious violation of his first amendment rights. And it's not the only video that looks like this. But what struck me most was that I had not seen them. Right. I came to that video, because Sam Harris said something on his Twitter feed about what is the meaning of these videos in which apparently peaceful protesters are addressed by the police. And I thought, I haven't seen those videos, I've seen videos in which the police are very aggressive. But I also know that the protesters are being very aggressive, what's he talking about? And so I went looking, and I found videos on Camille Foster's Twitter feed, and I looked at them, and they were exactly as described. And I thought, this is so relevant at this moment, that the fact that I am not running into it is telling us something. And I think what it's telling us is the Twitter's algorithm, whatever it is, thinks I'm a conservative, because I say a lot of things about what isn't right over on the left, and it has misunderstood me.

**Heather** 17:03

And also it thinks that if you're conservative, which you're not, but that if you were conservative, you would be on interested in seeing things that confound your current views,

**Bret** 17:15

right, or maybe even to say that it thinks is the mistake, because what it is doing, I would suggest is it is simply feeding people that which confirms what they already believe. And so here's my very simple contention about some large fraction of what is taking place at the moment. Everybody is plugged into an apparatus that is sitting in between us the way conversation used to. And what it is doing is it is feeding us things that confirm what we actually believe much of which is real. But that in effect, people, smart scientific people who know very well, that the right way to think carefully, is to be falsifications. Just to look for things that disconfirm your beliefs are being fed an overwhelmingly verification message. And that is causing everybody to be dead sure they know what's going on, when very few of us have any clue.

**Heather** 18:12

And one thing that is so different about this moment than the moment of 20 years ago, or 40 years ago, is that we had editors and people have complained about editors. And the move towards social media is seen by some as a populist revolution in which anyone can have voice. But if you want to watch Fox News, and also want to watch CNN, you know something about the editorial biases of those networks, and you can choose to watch both, and you know that you are going to get still skewed, still edited, still presumably biased, but versions of the biases and edits of those respective networks. Whereas on Twitter, if you follow a wide variety of people, as you and I do, you follow, I follow Camille Foster, and Sam Harris. And, boy, there's so many other people who once you found this, I went looking what there are many people who I follow, and I don't follow 1000s of people specifically so that I can see what these people are saying. There are many people who you and I follow who have been posting these videos, and neither of us were seeing them. That tells us that this is not the same as being able to go and decide I'm going to read the New York Times, and I'm going to read the Wall Street Journal. I'm going to watch CNN and I'm going to watch fox. It's not the same thing we have had our choice taken away. But we have we are being given the appearance that we have more choice than ever

**Bret** 19:38

we have the sense that we are correcting for this, but you have no idea how quickly you have to swim upstream to counteract the algorithm. And so this is having an absolutely bewildering effect on us, I think and for me, the iconic instance of this is Dave Chappelle his new video right? So I haven't I have not seen it yet. So it's titled 846. Eight minutes and 46 seconds is what? Derek sjogrens ne spent on on George Floyd's neck. And this piece is not really a comedy piece. And you know, Chappelle talks about that. And I must say, I know you share my feelings about this. But I think Chappelle is he he's a, he's a genius. And his genius extends to many different things. He's figured out a way to, to be authentic, but to look through the eyes of someone else, and allow them to see the authenticity of something that they are predisposed not to see. So anyway, there's no shortage of love and gratitude for what he's delivered. This piece that he's put out, very popular piece retweeted by Joe Rogan very enthusiastically, Barry Weiss, I think it was punishing us for something I don't know what but in any case, the the Chappelle piece is wrong. And it's wrong completely, authentically. And so anyway, in some sense, so

**Heather** 21:17

you're speaking you're presumably many of the people watching have seen it, or you guys have the luxury of Sure, stepping aside and watching and i don't at the moment, yeah. What what is wrong about it? What I don't I don't, I'm asking that out, because I've seen it and don't see anything wrong, but because I actually don't know what's in it.

**Bret** 21:32

What's wrong with it is that it doesn't take into account what Sam Harris painstakingly goes through, which is that our intuitions about what is going on, have very little to do with what the data suggests is going on. And so the point is, now I want to be very careful that people do not misinterpret what I'm saying. I think there's something very real about this moment, and this protest. And one of the things that's driving me crazy, is that the message is so wrong, the focus is so wrong, that we do not understand that the tremendous frustration that is boiling over in our streets, and frankly, threatening the Republic and maybe more that that frustration is simply being delivered with a false set of labels. And so we don't even know how to interpret it. So my point to you is that Chappelle looks at the protest. And he says, effectively, you goddamn Right. Right. Of course, people are angry. Of course, they're angry. And he talks about some of these cases that we've seen on video that just seems so upsetting, right? But the problem is that those cases are at best anecdotes. And of course, even if those cases are exactly what we think they are. The fact that those cases may not be disproportionate suggest that race may not be playing the role that we think it's playing. And does that mean that black people are not perceiving some sort of substantial obstacle that is blocking progress that I would argue has stalled progress. Now they are detecting something. And when you see somebody do something egregious on videotape, and you feel this force holding you back, and you put two and two together, and you say those two things are the same thing. Right? You may not be right, it may be that those things have nothing to do with each other.

**Heather** 23:29

And as I have said before, the visceral anecdote will always be more powerful than the dispassionate statistic,

**Bret** 23:35

right? And we can take a non racial example, I said in my talk, how the magic trick is done, that a woman who's walking down the street, who takes some look that I give her to be full of some kind of meaning that she finds creepy, doesn't know whether it was actually a creepy look, or am I just awkward, and I gave the guy who walked down the street next to her the same weird look, right? You can't tell if all you have is an edit. And so what we have is inherently an inherently biased set, it is much more interesting, in some sense, when the thing matches some narrative about some very powerful force of racism that is alive and well in the US. And you know what, there is a force of racism that is alive and well in the US, but it's small, right? Most people are not encountering it every day. And the number of you know, one of the things that Sam reveals is that actually in 2019, the number of police shootings was at an all time low. The number of killings by police in Los Angeles in 2019, was at an all time low. And so there's something there's some question about, are we moving in the right direction? Are these things racially biased? These are questions that are addressed by tools that we know now here's the crazy thing. What did we see this last week. Those very tools are under attack. Shut Down stem, why is shutdown stem marching with some cartoonish presentation of the role racism is playing in America. Because if you have the tools, then you can test the claim. So those who are advancing false claims have an interest in shutting down those tools, shutting down any claim that has been demonstrated with them any doubt that has been established and so

**Heather** 25:29

on. This emerges in part, I don't have the quote, I will, I will paraphrase it and hopefully I don't butcher it. But the the Audrey Lorde quotation from I think it will have been the 1970s in which she says you don't, you can't tear down the Masters house with the Masters tools, which is ridiculous and disempowering message actually, as as so much of the material and the messaging common coming across the transom from these these movements, these so called anti racist movements are often actually disempowering for exactly the populations whom they are purporting to try to raise up.

**Bret** 26:08

Right. And to the extent that, so my claim about Chappelle would be that he is he would present the story as it really is, if he could see it, but he is also subject to a world of algorithms that have categorized him some way. And so somehow, I think he's missed the point. But he's still Dave Chappelle. So in some sense, as much as I hate to see him present something that I think is incorrect. It's also hopeful, because being Dave Chappelle, he's capable of seeing it, right. And so what would be amazing is if there was a dialogue in which the point was okay, Dave, we heard what you have to say, here's the CounterPoint, that would be a remarkable dialogue.

**Heather** 26:55

Yeah, no, it certainly would. And this is going to seem wrong, but I feel like responding with an anecdote. But I think that the point here is that here's, here's one of my interactions with the police, from when I was in high school, in the would have been the mid late 80s 87, maybe when I was newly driving, and my point here is going to be, I got to see, I got to see firsthand that there was disparity, at least for a couple of police officers in LA in the 80s, between how they treated a black person versus, versus a bunch of white people. And, and it stuck with me, and this is, you know, this has been one of the things that I have, I have told you, I've only said it publicly once, actually, before now, but my point ultimately, is, things have gotten a lot better since then. And the way to assess that claim is through the statistics, the various statistics that you say that Sam Harris was going through in his most recent podcast. So it's you know, it's just a it's a short little anecdote, I'm I'm driving in my 10 year old car, on Sunset Boulevard, on the curvy part of Sunset Boulevard in West LA, where it's the speed limit is 35. But if you enjoy driving, and if you're breaking the law, you might go 50. And I come around a curve and someone else is doing the same thing. It's all the day. And it's the only time this ever happened pretty quickly. Four of us in a pack of cars are driving stupidly fast on sunset. And we come around one curve, and there's a cop waiting as cops off and we're in a car, turns on a siren pulls out behind us, you know, directs us into the next into the next side street and pulls us all over, as he should have, we were being irresponsible. None of us knew each other. We just

**Bret** 28:55

spontini spontaneous street racing,

**Heather** 28:57

taking his street racing, right. And none of us knew each other. None of us were driving fancy, expensive cars. And none of us knew until the moment that he forced us all over as he should have done. And it was a white cop with a white guy with white cops in the next job, got the car, and he ordered all of us out of the car, barking equally at each of us. And we got out and I was the only person in my car and I'm white. And there were a couple of people each have to have the other cars and they were white. And the fourth car had young black men in it. And the cop proceeded to speak very gently and politely to me and to the other white people and the other cars and quite differently quite aggressively at quite a quite a lot of volume to this young black man. And the fact is in this case, we had all been behaving exactly the same way. We were all guilty of exactly the same crime. Right. And as far as I can tell the outcome of this Is that he led us all off with warning. So the formal legal outcome was it was equivalent for everyone. But the fact is that one of four items, in this case, one of four drivers, doing exactly the same thing got singled out for treatment on the basis of what there was only one thing that I could see that was different about him, and it was his skin colour. That would have been I think, 1986 1987. And it that was an anecdote, and I had no access to the statistics at that time. But I understood in my gut that there was something about driving while black, that was real, that would never be true for me. Question is, to what extent have police improved? And has it become ever less acceptable to be racist in American society in the years since then?

**Bret** 30:46

Yes. And so I, you know, I think driving while black registered with a lot of us, we got it, that there was a different experience, and that this was something so universally shared by black people that even though white people were unlikely to encounter it directly, we inferred that something there was something we could not see a force we could not see, this is exactly the opposite of what will happen in a world where the algorithms feed you that which you expect or want to hear. And so we are now watching a movement that and I saw a remarkable footage of the protests in Paris, this is spreading, this is now a global phenomenon that is ostensibly reacting to a systematic pattern of lethal violence that is racially motivated amongst police, that is not reflected in the data. Right? That is a frightening prospect for two reasons. One,

**Heather** 31:45

so can you spell that out a little bit more? I haven't seen what's going on in Paris, I'd like to know exactly what I'd like you to just maybe even just say that in different words, I

**Bret** 31:52

what I think is taking place is that there is something deeply wrong. You can feel it in this Dave Chappelle piece, right? Dave Chappelle has had it, he is sick and tired of being told there isn't a problem, and he has landed in the wrong spot, because the message is so overwhelming that you can see the problem in lethal violence by white cops against black citizens. Right? That he is now he just simply didn't check it, he didn't go falsifications just right. If he had, what he would find is that the data do not reflect this pattern that it is true that blacks are disproportionately killed by cops, but not disproportionately relative to their disproportionate share of crime. Now, the discussion I want to have is, what is that disparity in crime about and I think a lot of people, including a lot of frankly, sophisticated white thinkers believe that this has something to do with black people being different. I don't believe that that's where this is coming from. So what I said on Twitter the other day was that this patterns that we are seeing have very little to do with modern racism, and have a lot to do with past racism. And that this is different for two populations. As I've said elsewhere, black population and the Indian population in the US have a special situation. Other populations deal with racism, there's a level of ambient racism, it doesn't prevent them from succeeding, these two populations have a special obstacle that they face. And so what we are seeing and distinct from one another, quite distinct, but they share a feature, right, which is both of these cases, there was a systematic effort to erase the onboard culture to neutralize the onboard culture. Because that onboard culture was dangerous to the role that white people that European people needed these populations to play so so just at

**Heather** 33:58

the most, at the most surface level, the the explicit taking of Native American children, and putting them into white schools, basically re educating them so that they would forget anything that they had known in their home culture and putting newly enslaved Africans who have been brought over obviously against their well into groups of people with whom they did not share a culture or a language so that they could not communicate and they could not effectively keep almost anything, the culture from which they had been stolen,

**Bret** 34:29

right, the breaking apart of families, right? the mixing of people who were from different had different traditions to begin with, so that everything starts out as a Pidgin and then becomes a creole. But it's not it's nobody's original culture. No

**Heather** 34:42

one's saying says that historic racism hasn't been a remarkable force throughout throughout the 16th 17th 18th 19th century. But it's

**Bret** 34:51

not even this is racism with a special mechanism, right? This special mechanism takes the cultural program that people have a disruptive The connection with the thing to which it's evolved. So in some sense, black people and Indians were removed from what you and I would technically call the environment of evolutionary adaptiveness for their culture, right? So your culture matches your environment, you remove people from their environment, either by transporting them across an ocean and a ship, or by putting them on a reservation and taking them off their ancestral lands, right? Already, they have a new problem, right? their culture is not adapted to the place they've just landed. And then you go through systematic process of disrupting that culture further in order to make people compliant and docile and unable to resist and all of those things. And then something happens, there's an awakening, this is wrong, maybe you stop doing it, but you don't fix the problem, right? And so, anyway, I believe that those things echo through to this moment in a most profound way. And that it is resulting in the detection in these populations, that something is wrong. It's no secret in these populations, that something is very secretive, very seriously wrong. But the question is, what do you say if you if the problem is subtle, right? If the problem is one of somebody busted my software, and then they loaded some software, that works somewhat for me, but it also works for them, right? And now I have a problem most people don't have because I have to disentangle those two forces, right? That's

**Heather** 36:23

you're talking about human software now? Oh, yeah. Okay, so let me back up and make that super clear, because I was thinking computers until the end of that sentence. No, no,

**Bret** 36:31

yeah. Yeah. I mean, computers were very rare until the 20th century. That's how I understand it. Yeah. But in any case, so there is a real problem. But I think the point I'm getting at is, it's not that it isn't a serious problem. It's every bit as serious as people perceive. But it isn't housed in these simple things. What's the problem with being black? It's that you know, you're in danger of being slaughtered on any given day by a police officer. Know, for one thing, we can check that we can check it with the tools of STEM. Right? Why are we shutting down stem? Because you can check it with the tools of STEM? And,

**Heather** 37:06

and because there's only one explanation allowed? Because we have compelled speech, which moves us into compelled thought, right, and you must destroy stem in order to not have people say, Actually, there are a lot of possible explanations. Let's figure out which one is true. Let's figure it out.

**Bret** 37:24

Yep. So so that that raises the question then of what is taking place. So the the tough thing, I think, if you're being fed some analog of what I'm seeing, right? The temptation is just to say, Well, okay, this movement is phony, the claims are wrong. This is jeopardizing the Republic, let's just shut it down. Right. And there's no awareness that the claims are wrong. In my opinion, the named movements that are at the head of this thing are illegitimate, they are pushing a phony story, and they were pushing the most absurd remedies I can imagine. I mean, the idea that we are talking about abolishing the police.

**Heather** 38:09

And you've got maybe this is where you're going but you've got a video that you're going to have Zach show with another one of these proposed remedies. So we

**Bret** 38:16

can we can go with a number of these things. Maybe we should in fact, hey, Zack, can you put up the New York Times piece here? So first of all, we have been an endless arguments, we hear people say defund the police, abolish the police. Hold on second. And we're always when we say abolish the police, do you realize that there's not a neighborhood in America where that would not be a catastrophe, no matter how bad your police are, there's no place where removing them would be a net gain for the people who live there. And then we're told so actually, I've come up with a name for this that Steve is recline if occation of language right so as recline takes up something like kill all men, and he says, Well, that's not really what they mean. So in this case, we've got you know, the police and then he you know, somebody is going to come in and they're going to as recline affect the thing up and tell us that that doesn't mean abolish the police that it means something else, like reform them or you know, demilitarize them or something like that. But then we find out in the New York Times, actually, lo and behold, we were right all along. Okay, you can now put it up. Here we go. Okay. Yes, we literally mean abolish the police. Okay. I knew that you knew that because we've actually had the police abolished on us temporarily, but

**Heather** 39:37

New York Times under its new leadership has gone ahead and given us the evidence that we were looking for. Thank you. Well,

**Bret** 39:45

I mean, you know, in a sense, they have done us a service because they've You know, this is one of the arguments that those of us who are fiercely in favor of maintaining free speech, even for abhorrent perspectives have said which is when somebody is advancing something truly awful. You want to hear what they have to say you don't want to shut it down, because that actually prevents us from being fully horrified. Right? So this article in The New York Times actually says, look, we're talking about literally abortion, the police, they can't be reformed, it doesn't anywhere mentioned the net effect question,

**Heather** 40:19

or what they propose with regard to law and order instead?

**Bret** 40:24

Oh, well, they have lots of lovely proposals. But my point is, we're this the least bit reasonable than the point is, we are going to provide this mechanism that makes the police unnecessary. And then we're going to abolish the police. That's not the point. Somehow, these people are they're so confused or so disingenuous, that they're actually advocating we abolish the police first, right? This is madness, this could not possibly be a dumber idea. And you and I have seen this in person. We have had the police withdrawn from a riot where they were shouting my name, and they were apparently hunting for me one car to the next. And the police were withdrawn from the situation. We saw people inside of 24 hours of that order, battered by student protesters student on student violence with weapons for the crime of disagreeing. We saw the whole thing unfold. And the fact is, it's happening again, it's happening in the center of Seattle. And, you know, I mean, on the one hand, I'm kind of pissed off because I feel like we lived it so that other people don't have to, and yet we're doing it again. But all right, Zach, can you show some degree

**Heather** 41:35

this stuff that's going on in Seattle is squarely in Governor Inslee is. Court like that goes on his ledger, because he did nothing when evergreen happened and he's doing nothing. Now. He didn't

**Bret** 41:47

even mention it. When evergreen happened. He went radio silent and was radio silent, I believe, for years, never mentioned evergreens was happening in office, we went

**Heather** 41:55

to his office with your students asked for an audience God instead to have his two of his aides. It's on civil rights and AIDS on higher ed. Yep, spent two hours talking to them. We're told that we get a response,

**Bret** 42:07

no response, no response. No was never responded. And then when

**Heather** 42:10

he was asked about somehow he's still the governor of Washington.

**Bret** 42:13

Anyway, but he was asked about the the Capitol Hill autonomous zone in Seattle. And he responded that he didn't know about it. Right, which is an amazingly amazing claim. But anyway, we should talk about what the Capitol Hill autonomous zone actually means. But let's just say that, at the very least, there's a battle over interpretation. You've got lots of people claiming that the autonomous zone is is chaos, it's anarchy run amok is anarchy well, and that it's chaos, and then you have other people claiming that it's being mis portrayed. And it's actually a lovely place, and it's demonstrating everything it needs to demonstrate, basically, the police shut down their precinct and walked away. You can see this as it was happening. I didn't know what the hell was going on. I was watching aerial footage of the police taking their computers and things out of this building. It's like what are they about to do? But all right, yeah, exactly. You show us that video from the No, the other one

43:19

was kind of fit with it, I guess. Like me, when I walk around anywhere I sweat, like have a glandular problem. It's a horrifying condition, I promise you, nevertheless. So this is where we are. If you might recall again, I'll tell the story of telling remind you, we're standing right over here by this fuck Trump sign when they do the second grade. And it was a fucking thing. So here it is. This is just another wall of our art our our expression of our feelings.

**Bret** 44:20

All right, so that remarkable piece of video I mean, it starts out with him showing that in the Capitol Hill autonomous zone, they support the arts. And so there was a beautiful mural there I noticed a lot of sentiments were clearly expressed.

**Heather** 44:35

repeated for greater artistic expression. Shoot,

**Bret** 44:39

shoot all of the police did it say that was good? Fuck 12 this is one of my key imagine how screwed we'd be if they got rid of 12 I mean, we're already in an awkward relationship with 13 they're going to get rid of 12 now. Alright. By the way, fuck 12 is about what is it? It's the letters of the alphabet 12 it is That's wrong. 12 is just like 1312 Yes, 1312 is a cab and 12 is the police. So in any case, the the person shooting this, this mural is obviously relieved of his camera at which point he suddenly remembers that law and order hack actually has a positive effect as well as a negative one. So that's that's a remarkable thing. But lots of things are going on in the Capitol Hill autonomous zone, including apparently, extortion from the business owners, they're being forced to tie effectively pay protection to have their businesses not damaged. But let's talk about the larger issue. Okay, because what's really going on here, I think, now, we don't know why it is that the police walked away from this neighborhood when they did, but it was clearly planned. My guess would be that they walked away in hopes that the protesters would do would run a mock and that that would therefore explain to the world why the police needed to crack down. I think the, the protesters realized that they had an opportunity on their hands. And that opportunity involved if they can just restrain their impulses in this instance. And if they can behave themselves, it will demonstrate to the world that they are correct, that you can just remove the police and everything will be fine. And then suddenly, that plan will start spreading At which point, absolute mayhem is going to break out. Now they're not doing a great job, because of course, the problem with trying to maintain your discipline when the police have been withdrawn, is that it creates a power vacuum and bad people will take advantage of a power vacuum. So what we have is Raz Simone having come in and he is patrolling the thing with weapons and harassing people. And so it's becoming exactly like evergreen, I mean, it's really evergreen 2.0 at greater scale with worse weapons. And, you know, I still say I'm, I'm a little bit impressed that it hasn't broken down worse faster. But this is really where we are we were in a battle over interpretations of what is taking place, if they can maintain message discipline, so that the world sees basically, you know, a Kumbaya phenomenon going on there, the world will misunderstand and may attempt to duplicate the success that is demonstrated in the Capitol Hill autonomous zone elsewhere. And it is other autonomous zones are now being set up. I believe in Portland, one is being set up. And actually, let's just cut to the chase. What is this all really about? So I'm going to make a claim, my claim is going to be and I said this back when evergreen happened, that the real plan. Actually, let me step back. This is two things that have come together. Okay, this movement that we are seeing is two things come together. One of them is occupy 2.0. And although we participated in occupied by occupy 2.0, I don't mean anything that I would remotely sign on to. Okay, occupy started out as a complaint about the bias in our system. It started out as a complaint about too big to fail, which was used as an excuse to bail out the people who had caused the problem, you know, the TARP program, etc. But it morphed into an anarchistic nightmare, it became foolish, it lost its way. This is now the 2.0 version of that anarchist nightmare. And it is fused together with Black Lives Matter, Black Lives Matter, which is, according to its slogan, a good match for something important Black Lives are undervalued. And I believe that is true, we can see that based on the failure to invest in black communities. But these two things have come together an economic complaint about a rigged system. That morphed into an anarchist nightmare. And an actual complaint about real bias that is hard to put your finger on against black people that has now become an excuse for all sorts of other things. And the plan that is unfolding is actually this reparations at all times in every venue, right? every interaction is going to have a reparation in it. And the reparation is first and foremost about blacks, but it's really about the intersectional

**Bret** 49:37

the bit you will receive reparations on the basis of where you fall intersectionally and as you have pointed out, there are very real trans people who face very real obstacles in life, but trans is the one place where you can opt in to intersectional points. So you have this movement proposing reparations everywhere, and the reparations everywhere is a very frightening prospect because was a you can't a actual reparations program, which I wouldn't favor but nonetheless is at least a coherent proposal that would be done with society deciding to take resources and distribute them in a particular way. If it happens in every interaction, it is the absolute destruction of meritocracy. So let's take a look at that other kind of relationship. of everything. It's the it's the inversion of decency. It is just so yeah, let's, let's see that other video. Okay,

50:31

I want you to find by the end, by the time you leave this autonomous zone, I want you to give $10 to one African American person from this autonomous zone. And if you find that difficult, if you find is hard for you to give $10, to people of color to black people, especially, you have to think really critically about in the future, are you going to actually give up power and land and capital when you have it? If you're if you have a hard time giving out? $10? You got to think about, are you really down with this struggle? Are you really down with the movement, because if that is a challenge for you, then I'm unsure if you're in the right place. So Fine, an African American person, or white people I see, I see every single one of you. And I remember your faces, you find that African American person and you give them $10 cash app, Venmo $10 in your pocket, that's my challenge to you do it.

**Bret** 51:44

Alright, so that video contains a lot. One thing is, the reaction of people when they are actually asked to hand over money individually is much less enthusiastic when then when they are trying to force other people to do it. So that's not surprising at all from a game theoretic perspective. But I think we really need to just understand that the proposals are so insane, so dangerous, that we have to not take them seriously. We have to understand that even if the movement is motivated by actual frustration about really, really important things, that the presentation is basically threatening to scuttle the entire operation for no reason. So imagine for a second what the world would look like if if this movement succeeds in advancing its vision. What does lawn order look like going forward under the you know, the world after the police have been disbanded? Can you show the proposals, the the demands that were issued from the Capitol Hill autonomous zone? I sent it to you Well, we can talk about what they were. So the demands long list of demands, you know, signature move, signature move long list of demands,

**Heather** 53:15

and then I haven't seen this list yet, but often at the top of the list is a demand to be able to take as much time as you want to make further demands.

**Bret** 53:22

Yes, the the width to I

**Heather** 53:25

want as many wishes as I can have, right, right.

**Bret** 53:27

I'm not sure if that one is in here or not. They may have just forgotten that. But given that they but they reserve the right

**Heather** 53:32

to demand in the future, I'm sure.

**Bret** 53:36

Okay, but on this list, he's got Yeah, you can put it up. So scroll down. And if you toggle the list, boy, I can't can you get on the other screen?

**Heather** 53:52

So I can read just the okay. Yeah.

**Bret** 53:55

Okay. So it says, given the historical moment, we will begin with our demands pertaining to the justice system, the Seattle Police Department, and attached court system are beyond reform. We do not request reform, we demand abolition

**Heather** 54:10

of the police and the court system. It's literally both law and order. They demand abolition,

**Bret** 54:15

believe me, it is both law and order. And they also demand further down. If you scroll down, there's a highlight up, there's the highlight. We demand retrial of all people of color are currently serving a prison sentence for violent crime by a jury of their peers in their community. So they would like to retry all people of color is

**Heather** 54:42

there so this is the first time I'm seeing this? Are they demanding a retrial for people of color who are serving sentences for nonviolent crime or just those who are serving sentences for violent crime and that's an extraordinary demand right there well stands alone without a demand for retrial of people who actually were found guilty of committing nonviolent Prime?

**Bret** 55:01

If I remember correctly, they effectively are widely defensive. Yeah, they demanded a certain number of people be just simply released. Which, you know, in the case of marijuana and nonviolent marijuana offenses, I'd be all for that. But But in any case, they are proposing, I mean, imagine how this would look. Okay, you start retrying people of color who are currently serving a prison sentence for violent crime. Right? How fair do we think these trials would be? They have no chance of being fair right now? Well, they have no chance of being fair right now, there's certainly going to be a bias in favor of assuming

**Heather** 55:42

that there was so much bias in the first trial, that it should probably be overturned.

**Bret** 55:47

Right. But also, you know, they effectively I mean, elsewhere, I've seen just the advocate advocacy for the complete abolition abolition of the prison system. So we're talking about a turning a lot of very dangerous people loose, actually dangerous people who in many cases, may be psychopathic, may not be in any way recoverable, right. So at the same time, you're talking about eliminating the police or the mechanism that would disincentivize those people from harassing, murdering everybody, you know, anybody who resists, but they also might generate themselves effectively, an army. In other words, given the tenor of the moment, I would imagine that your chances of being exonerated in a retrial would have a lot to do with whether or not you said the right kinds of things about the movement and its its necessity. So okay, you can take that you can take that down now. Okay. So, anyway, the basic point, I guess, is, the proposals are not, if they were advanced in a brainstorming session about how civilization might be remade, they would be immediately shut down on the basis that they are not tenable. And the people who advanced such terrible dangerous ideas would lose credibility in an honest brainstorming session about civilization. And the fact that we don't have the power to do that has to do only with the social incentives surrounding this moment. Right, anything that points in one direction is considered not only legitimate, but obvious and important. And anything that goes in the other direction is presumed to be null and void and the result of pure racist,

**Heather** 57:49

it's such a simple game. So obviously game a ball. And yet, those of us who are saying just that are because we are all within this game that we never wanted to play so easily accused of by simply saying that we must be doing so by reason of racism. All you have to do is cloak something in the language of Black Lives Matter or shut down stem or whatever it is, whatever the tagline is, at the moment, and you can get away with almost anything else, you can slip in almost anything else, as long as it fits generally, under that guise. And anything that runs counter you, you are not allowed to investigate to think about to consider.

**Bret** 58:28

So then the question is, I find us in a very dangerous predicament, which is, okay, we're beginning to figure out, we're beginning to be able to discuss just how preposterous The movement is, which does not mean that the fuel that is driving it isn't based on something very important, right? The frustration about an economic system that is rigged against many people, it's rigged against millennials, through debt, it's rigged against certain populations based on where you where you are born and grow up. What kind of schools are there? The frustration is real. It is bewildering to everybody, either you It seems to be that either you land on the i'm in favor of these protests side, and therefore I accept their discussion of what has taken place and what should happen now, or I reject these protests. And I don't believe that this is unfair, I believe civilization is pretty fair. And I'm not listening. the right position is in the space that has not existed until now, or has struggled to exist and so far have failed to get a foothold, which is how can we discussed the actual problem without embracing this lunacy. And it is lunacy. The idea of removing the police is that is basically a gun to the head of the Republic. So I think Sam did an excellent job of extending the Overton window, statistically speaking so that we can look at the claim of lethal police violence and whether or not it appears to be racially motivated. Eric put out a very interesting essay at the beginning of his most recent portal. I haven't listened to the whole thing. So I can't recommend the whole episode yet, because I never do that if I haven't listened. But But anyway, the essay at the beginning is quite excellent. Yes, yeah, it's about something he talked about when he was on the Dark Horse podcast several days ago, the culture of meritocracy inside the black community, which is a very interesting topic. These are forays into the no man's land that exists between the two wrong perspectives. civilization is fair, and civilization is so biased that we have to pull the plug on right. The forays are really important. We have to figure out how to discuss these things, we have to figure out how to protect people who do discuss these things, even when they're wrong, they have to be protected so that they have the ability to explore without being immediately blown up for making an error. Right. And I think the iconic example is Dave Chappelle. I mean, I sort of feel like, it's great, that an honest broker, who does get the frustration clearly right, he clearly gets the real problem. And who has gained the trust of so many people? If he can be compelled that actually there is a way that the story does add up? That isn't one of these two other versions? That will be that will be a huge gain for all of us. Yeah. Yeah.

**Heather** 1:01:54

Well, we're at about an hour, it's about an hour, or at for now.

**Bret** 1:01:59

I think that's where we're at for now. Okay,

**Heather** 1:02:02

so we wanted to, say make a couple of, say a couple of things about changes that are afoot. We are going to, as usual, read answer Super Chat questions that came in this time on on the YouTube live stream. And also those that come in on the following one and the q&a that we will do, starting in about 15 minutes, we have also added to my Patreon, a couple of tears, such that we're trying to basically establish a way to show support to have membership in the dark horse live streams. So we haven't posted this on yours yet. But we will do so that at the $5 month level, you will have access to a private live stream that we will do in which in which we answer questions that are not otherwise out there. And at the $11 a month or more level, you will have priority asking such questions that we then answer, but we'll do these once a month private, live streams to people who are interested in hearing more from us.

**Bret** 1:03:11

All right, I have one more thing and then we will take our break and return to do the q&a. The one more thing is I want to make perfectly clear a Dave Chappelle, you'd be absolutely welcome to come talk to us about this. The second thing is Dave Chappelle. I think you've got this one somewhat wrong. But that doesn't make me right. I'd be equally up to have you compelled me that I've got it wrong. So one way or the other. I think the important thing is that the discussion happened. All right, everybody. We will see you in about 15 minutes. In the meantime, be well