Bret and Heather 32nd DarkHorse Podcast Livestream\_ What's G...

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**SPEAKERS**

Bret, Heather

**Bret** 00:08

Hey folks, welcome to the Dark Horse podcast live stream. This is live stream number 32, only 10 more to go before we discover the answer to life, the universe and quite possibly everything.

**Heather** 00:22

I'm not sure we have that much time.

**Bret** 00:24

I'm not either I'm just if that's getting that we should accelerate the pace. That's not a bad idea. Yeah, we could try to get to a little faster. All right. So I am sitting with Dr. Heather hying. As always, and we are humbled along here. 2020 is continuing a pace. And we happen to be important in the center of Well, let's just say pretty much everything at the moment.

**Heather** 00:46

It's the center of a lot of things anyway,

**Bret** 00:48

it does seem to be the center of a lot of things. So should we start there?

**Heather** 00:52

Let's start there.

**Bret** 00:53

All right. So we don't know what you all know. But you have seen Portland trending on Twitter if you're a Twitter person, and you have recognized that there was something afoot. So for something,

**Heather** 01:04

it's broken out into the mainstream media as well. Oh, clearly, clearly,

**Bret** 01:07

awareness of the Portland situation has begun to reach the outer world, especially now that the chairs job is gone. Right. Portland is, is where it's happening. Yeah. So what we have is a standoff that has continued for, I don't know, something like 54 consecutive nights, it very quickly began to focus on two federal buildings downtown. And basically, of late, we have seen federal agents not dressed in uniform, pulling people out of these riots into what are described as rented and therefore unmarked vehicles, taking them to an undisclosed location, which appears to be inside one of the federal buildings. And in general, the reports are that these people are held for a time. And then they are released, often without charge, maybe always without charge. I did see one instance in which somebody said they were ultimately read their rights. But in other cases, they have not been so in our last live stream, my conjecture was that these were indications that the rioters had triggered federal provisions reserved for terrorism that essentially suspend many aspects of the Constitution. And that in particular, one should pay attention to the NDA of 2012, which had two provisions in it, essentially allowing law enforcement to pull people off of any street anytime without explaining what they're doing, showing evidence against them. suspending habeas corpus rights and all of that, in response to that live stream, we got a comment, Zach, you want to show that comment? All right. As someone familiar with the process, I'd like to provide possible insight into federal pickups, it's far more likely that the agents are monitoring video surveillance and recordings of vandalism and directing the pickup units who surveilled targets away from crowds. Where I'm sorry, I'm having trouble reading it at this distance. I can't. Yeah, you pick it up.

**Heather** 03:21

It's far more likely that agents and monitoring video surveillance and recordings of vandalism and directing the pickup units who surveil targets away from crowds where they pick them up to get positive ID so that they can present the case to a federal grand jury. Furthermore, the fact that they are taken into custody without being read Miranda is not unconstitutional. Miranda is only quiet required prior to interview, not prior to detention, reads this comment.

**Bret** 03:42

So the officer who I have described talking with in front of one of these federal buildings on his last day as a DHS officer in Portland, contacted me in response to that comment and said that it was accurate. Now, he doesn't know anything about what's going on currently, because he's not stationed in Portland. And he's not part of that agency anymore. But his point is that when he was in on the planning of what was taking place, this was one of the things that was being contemplated. And so I'd like to explain what this means it does suggest that more than likely the interpretation that I had is at least not the one that the federal government is working from at at the on the ground level, which just

**Heather** 04:24

to clarify means that you said the what you were what we were saying suggested that the NDA hadn't had been implicitly at least invoked, and what we're currently coming to understand suggested that may not be the case. Yes.

**Bret** 04:37

Now there is slight ambiguity, because when the Obama administration defended the provisions of NDA, they said that those provisions shocking as they were did not actually provide any new powers suggesting that they already had those powers. But nonetheless, there's a question about whether or not a special terrorism category has been triggered, especially in light of the fact that the President has used that return this comment and the fact that a Federal officer who was stationed in Portland says that it is an accurate explanation of what was planned when he was here, suggested something else is afoot. Which is, imagine for a second that somebody is stationed on the roof of one of these buildings, they are watching crimes being committed, for example, vandalism, or projectiles being launched something like that. They could then indicate to people on the ground that somebody was in the midst of committing crimes or had been observed committing crimes, but they wouldn't necessarily know who that person is because of course, people are dressed with masks and other things that obscure their identity. So a team on the ground would collect individuals take them to a cell where their identity was, would be ascertained by some mechanism. I don't know what it would be. But let's say facial recognition, or fingerprints are I don't know what it is. But nonetheless, that that would then be used to to get a grand jury a federal grand jury to indict, which is apparently a very different process than it takes place when crimes are prosecuted locally. Now, I must tell you, there's a lot of this that disturbs me. On the other hand, what I think is missing from the Portland story, is the fact that there is no good solution that we've been left in a terrible bind by the local city officials. Remember, our mayor, Mayor Wheeler, is also our police commissioner. So he is in a position to play the George bridges role here in Portland and to frustrate the local police that they do not act. This is what we have seen for close to two months now, with attacks on federal buildings that are obviously quite illegal, that are dealt with, basically by appeasement here locally. Now, because the protesters have chosen federal buildings, there's a whole second layer, which is to say, the federal government is not hamstrung by Mayor Wheeler. So there is a division between what the local police are doing, which is to say very little, because they can't, and what the federal police are doing, which is to say they are now ratcheting up some sort of approach to protect these buildings. Now, if you're disturbed by the Federal approach, you need to ask yourself some questions, which is, why have the protesters chosen these buildings? Why would they choose federal buildings? In Part The answer, surely, because they want a federal crackdown? Why do they want a federal crackdown, because they're very interested in portraying this as some sort of egregious governmental overreach, when in fact, those of us who live in Portland, know that we have a problem, we have people being violent consistently over many nights, who are facing very few restrictions on their behavior. And it makes us wonder whether or not violence against us will be tolerated in the same way. Now, if I can just add one final thing, before we discuss this, I want you to run a thought experiment. Let's imagine for a second that I personally just me, became agitated about governmental corruption, which I am. And let's suppose I decided to do the same thing to these federal buildings that these protesters are doing. What do you think would happen to me? I think I'd be arrested. That's what I think. And what's more, you can run the same experiment, these protests happen every night, hundreds to 1000s of people show up. And you can just ask the question, suppose I were to approach the building as during the day, I don't think it's likely I would be arrested for attacking these buildings, I feel certain of it, I feel certain I wouldn't get away with it, which tells you that there's something about these crowds of individuals that are not triggering the same response to law breaking as I would. And initially, you could argue that this has something to do with the number of people that basically a proper law enforcement response was not easy to manage in the early days. But that surely is not the case of months down the road. Right there. Certainly there are tactics, there are things we do when lots of people decide to break the law together, even if they initially overwhelm the system. Once you realize that that's happening, you bring in more resources from elsewhere if need be, you come up with tactics and you enforce the law. So the result of this thought experiment, I think, is that it is what the people attacking these buildings are saying what they represent that is causing them to be allowed to violate the law, and others of us who might have very legitimate complaints about the way the federal government runs would not be given the same leeway.

**Bret** 09:35

I think this paints a very difficult puzzle and what I would like to know from people who see this as somehow a positive thing is what exactly it is that they're envisioning. There's no demand that could be met here, or should the protesters be allowed to burn down federal buildings in the heart of Portland is that what is being said? Because the protesters say, look, you know, They spray paint this on the buildings, they say property damage is not violence. So basically their sense is that they have a right to attack these buildings the city government tacitly agrees with that the federal government disagrees. It is its obligation to disagree. And the people of the city of Portland are caught in the middle. You have anything on this topic that you want to add?

**Heather** 10:22

Yeah, I mean, there's a lot to say. One thing that I know just a little bit about that I'm not sure that I want to add to your to you the story here is that apparently, I think it's city Commissioner Hardesty, who is as leftist as they get on the I think it's I think it's the Portland City Council. I'm not totally sure what her position is, has been decrying how ineffective Wheeler has been basically arguing that he has overseen this brutal police force that has been hurting people, and so is trying to wrest control of the police force away from him. And what she has in her position at the moment somehow is control over the Portland Police Bureau. And a couple of days ago, the Portland Police Bureau, I didn't prepare any of us I don't I don't have all of my details here. But the Portland Police Bureau who that has 18 or 20 sites around the city, as you would expect they would put out a statement saying not now not ever will we allow staging by either Portland city police or the federal officers to work from my radar. Now, the idea that the two essential city services are a overseen by two different officials is is is a little surprising to me. You know why? If the mayor is the police commissioner, why isn't he also in control of of the firemen?

**Bret** 11:50

So you met fire bureau or Police Bureau?

**Heather** 11:52

Wheeler is control of the police. Yep. But you said Why isn't he in control of fire?

**Bret** 11:57

Right. And so it's the fire bureau that has forbidden the shared access of the Federal officers,

**Heather** 12:03

but also by the police. This is the point that the local fire department has declared itself unwilling to and so that it never has allowed staging tactic strategy, anything by local police. Also federal officers. We've just put that aside for the moment. Yeah, it is. It is surprising, right? that there should be this kind of rustling near the top of city government. And the argument appears to be that Wheeler who was clearly spineless and incompetent and unwilling to keep his people safe, is being it's being argued that he actually is too far to the right somehow, like he's he's too much a law and order guy, this guy who's let downtown Portland, be be inflames have tremendous vandalism, etc.

**Bret** 12:53

And he is he is being marched to anarchie by the phony accusation of being authoritarian. And

**Heather** 13:02

this is making it ever less likely that he will actually step up and do anything, which is of course, part of why we have federal officers here in the first place. Because it's it's clear to outsiders into most insiders of the city, that not that this is not going to end well at in its current direction.

**Bret** 13:18

And Wheeler has said of the federal law enforcement staff that that he wants them to leave. And that to the extent that they have an obligation to defend these buildings, he says, Fine, go inside them and defend them from there, which is obviously preposterous. I mean, for one thing, incendiary devices have been launched into these buildings. So the abdication of responsibility at the city level has created a federal problem and now it is being portrayed as if the federal problem isn't, you know, the federal response is inherently an overreach. You know, it may be an overreach, but it that it would be inherent, that it was an overreach when the local authorities are simply not enforcing the law.

**Heather** 13:59

Right. So what do we say about this, this image that I think is spread far and wide now of Navy veteran wearing Navy vet garb, right, at which he says he did intentionally so that in the hopes that he would get interaction, you know, decent human interaction from the officers who he was facing, whom we see standing tall and proud and alone, and being beaten on by police until he finally turns around and reports later that he is that he is somewhat damaged as you would expect you would be? Yeah. We know something. You know, we have some thoughts about what's going on. You want to start?

**Bret** 14:37

Well, I would just say that it raises a question. I mean, it's, first of all, a very dramatic piece of footage that somebody dramatic is standing there and withstanding a physical attack that's quite powerful. But there's also a question about, you know, what was the interaction that resulted in that attack and

**Heather** 14:56

we've heard we've heard that they had been regular announcements for many minutes up to an hour beforehand by and I don't know if it was the police the federal officers to clear the area together the area they were going to start using if it was if they said tear gas it was federal officers vs local police aren't allowed to and that that that looks true to me in part because the scene is otherwise empty in the scene that is the scenes that we're seeing from that particular part of Portland at those times of night for the last consecutive what reason 54 days is always chaotic with lots of people running back and forth and everywhere and so this this looks to have been a scene that had been cleared and was attempted to be being cleared and you know that doesn't that presumably doesn't justify a beating but it also doesn't make that that man an innocent as he is portraying himself and this I mean this this is the thing is how much of what we are hearing is PR and how would we know like that? That's the question always we certainly experienced this at evergreen when we started to see the PR machine you know get prepped into gear and start making actions that they knew would play well with some part of the outside world Yeah, so obviously a tall strong independent man in Navy where I drew it patriot who was being beaten on this looks like the authoritarian madness that we are being told is rife in every police department across the country but I don't think that's what we were actually

**Bret** 16:39

well and you have to play it through so let's imagine that you decided to precipitate an event and so the police say clear out we're about to to come through the area you approach them instead you have some interaction where you refuse to go now might be that what they should have done is handcuffed him and dragged him off I don't but I don't we don't know the situation because what we have is exactly what fell in the frame. We don't have the context that happened before we don't have the contents of the interaction between him and the officers. And so the point is Yeah, that looks that looks bad

**Heather** 17:11

we have to we have two types of media and this that story that we've all now seen at least pieces of plays really well with CNN and with NPR and with MSNBC and some alternative story will play really well with Fox and Fox mostly you know, and and a lot of minor outlets that don't have as much play but basically all of these outlets fall prey to just reporting on the narrative that they always already agree with. Alright, that's that's what they do.

**Bret** 17:41

So we actually have some footage that will illustrate your point okay, so Zach, do you want to show the first the the the attack on the building Yeah.

**Heather** 17:57

So your frame this for us? This is a few nights ago last night so I think Portland

**Bret** 18:01

and Milan last two nights may even be last night and you'll see they've approached the building they've torn down the fence and they're now approaching the building and they've set off an explosion presumably that's from a large firecracker or something but these firecrackers are they're explosive that's that's one of the federal buildings that's one of the the two federal buildings that are under knightly attack. Okay, so you see that can you do the one with the officer now? I believe so. Okay, this is a Federal officer being physically attacked by rioters gets up the perpetrators get away Okay, so that's a physical attack and mind you that physical attack bad as it is doesn't really compare to the danger of people using slingshots to launch babies at these officers right I mean, imagine what a BB coming from a splint slingshot will do to somebody's head if it hits them so anyway that these these these people are playing with very dangerous tactics and with weapons many of which sound like they're not very serious firecracker slingshot, but they are very serious. Okay, but then take those two things on the one side now play the clip. Meaning clip this is I believe last night. You can see some installation art that

**Heather** 19:32

that goons at a PBX said goons had

**Bret** 19:34

a PBX protected on the building got people holding up their cell phones with the flashlight on as if they were holding up their lighters, singing We Shall Overcome. Now what's going on here? First of all, mothers have shown up to defend the rioters.

**Heather** 19:52

A group of people who say we are mothers, they are here to be mothers.

**Bret** 19:55

Fathers apparently or people who appear to be fathers showed up To join the fight. And so what we have is an allusion to past protests, very honorable protests, protests against the Vietnam War, for example, that are playing out in the midst of a violent and concerted attack on federal officers and federal buildings. So the point is the Edit tells you which of these things you're going to see. And therefore how you're going to feel about it. Is fascism coming to Portland? Or is the federal response the natural thing that has to happen when the local authorities have abdicated responsibility? Right? It's two stories that simply cannot be made to reconcile it plays

**Heather** 20:41

out a little bit in, in across temporal lines, right? The the more peaceful protests happen before dark. And violence really ramps up after dark. So yeah, there is there is the possibility that someone wandering in at one time or the other would actually not be aware of the other. On the other hand, at this point, given what we know is happening every single night in Portland every single night after dark into into the wee hours, this time of year, it gets dark, pretty late. How, how could you be that confused about this being a totally honorable and peaceful protest? It's it can't be it can't be at this point.

**Bret** 21:24

So I think the at this point is crucial. And I was talking to Eric last night and thinking about some things. And we were going back through some of the prior protests that have occurred, especially in this part of the world. And I was thinking in particular about occupy. And initially you and I were very enthusiastic about occupy because it seemed like Finally, this was something new and different, that was protesting things that needed to be protested like the TARP program, too big to fail. The obvious catastrophe of credit default swaps and leveraging and all of this. And the thing was, there was the sense that we hadn't seen anything progressive in decades, maybe at all in our lifetime. And suddenly there was motion where suddenly we were we were protesting the things that needed protesting. And the problem is inside, It then became clear that it went from a protest against thing, it was a coherent protest to an anarchistic protest, and I tried to persuade I mean, I wrote a couple of articles, in fact, trying to persuade them that anarchism was an answer to nothing, and that they needed to get back on track, which of course, didn't work. But my point is, there are those who are just simply waiting for anything that doesn't look like what they've experienced. And to the extent that the an Tifa riots are portraying themselves as progressive, there are a lot of people who aren't paying close attention who think Okay, finally, right. We're in the streets, you know, protesting for the right thing, when in fact, they're protesting for the wrong thing they're protesting for the uninvented can have all of the the liberal principles on which the nation was founded and to which we were headed. So

**Heather** 23:09

when you and you saw more than I did even in occupy, as you watched it unravel from the inside is specific rejection of the idea of leadership, right, a specific rejection of the idea that individuals should be in a position of leadership or able to not necessarily dictate, but have the role of being able to help run help facilitate situations and groups of people such that decisions could be made, the idea of hierarchy was itself anathema, right? And so this, this struck both of us as delusional, right? It is, it is this utopian vision that has no chance of actually happened. And we can do better, we can certainly do better than what evolution has handed us. And we have been, we have lived in much more hierarchical ways in the past with much more rigid roles around lots of things like race and like sex, then we need to, but the idea that hierarchy is itself, either we are either capable of getting rid of it, or it is worthy of of being gotten rid of both of those ideas are batshit crazy. Yeah, that makes no sense at all. And it tells you right there that the movement has no chance of success in the way that it's claiming it wants success. And also, one of the ways that it works tactically is it makes it very much harder to chase it down. Because Because who do you Who do you go after and you know, one person says, All cops are bastards, and another person says defund the police. Another one says abolish the police and other one says, We don't want any policing at all. And you go back to the first one. They said, Well, I never said that's not my position, and I'm anti fun, you know, maybe they aren't. Maybe they're there. playing at it. And so the lack of leadership is not only insane if you try to scale that up at a societal level, but it is actually also incredibly effective at a tactical level with regard to street level rights.

**Bret** 25:12

Yeah, it runs through your fingers as you try to pin down what it is that we're even talking about. So this is this is exactly my concern is that you've got a huge fraction of the energy here in 2020. On the nominal left, is well got to get rid of Trump. Here's a powerful movement that says it's liberal. And you know, any look they're singing We Shall Overcome. Right? That looks pretty good.

**Heather** 25:38

If it says it's liberal, it must be liberal, if it says its anti racist must be anti racist. If they sing those songs, they must be on our side, because the people who used to sing those songs made sense, and really easy to sing songs.

**Bret** 25:52

It is although there's too little of it. I mean, what song are we saying? 100%? Right.

**Heather** 25:55

This I mean, of course, we're going to, you know, and so singing a song is easier to fake than humor. Yeah, right. We at the point that they start faking humor, then we're really doomed. Right, I think but you know, we don't we don't see that really happening. Because you know, as you and Matt Taibbi pointed out, and as we've been pointing out for years, this is this is humorless. Yeah. So humulus movement, it is

**Bret** 26:15

a humorless movement. But the problem is the intersection with the election is setting us up for disaster because so many people, I mean, I hear it all the time, people say, Well, you know, when Biden gets in, this will die down. No, the Biden camp is actually partnering with it, they're picking up the energy from this movement. Now, either you think the Biden camp is going to betray the movement after the election, in which case, I would say small disaster, or they're not going to betray the movement after the election. And we're going to start making policy based on this absurd reinterpretation of reality. And we're going to have an absolute catastrophe on our hands.

**Heather** 26:59

So maybe, maybe that's a good segue to talk. Well, first, to answer a question that I got asked on Twitter that was directed at both of us and then talk about some of the other places, we're seeing the manifestations of this, which we've talked about in many previous episodes, but the idea that this movement is what we're seeing on the streets, and the riots in a few choice US cities at this point, no, no, it's it's everywhere. And it doesn't look like what's going on the streets of Portland everywhere. Far from it. It's much more white collar and genteel most places. And that's the way it's gonna sneak in on you and get you. You know, we've talked about white fragility before, we've talked about what's happening in arts. And we're gonna talk a little bit here about what's happening in academia still and again, and God help us always, you know, I hope not, but so I was asked on Twitter, this guy begins by saying, I'm a big fan, love what you guys are doing. But I do want to ask you, do you think that living in Portland? This is a quote from him? Do you think that living in Portland, which seems like ground zero for the woke solution is coloring yells hopes and fears for the future, for example, I live in a small town in Virginia, we thank god haven't had 50 nights of rioting in a row. curious if you think that the Northwest violence will inevitably spread virally throughout the country, or if it's a big city phenomenon. And you might one of my first responses to that, and we should talk about is, as we've been saying, for decades, but publicly since evergreen blew up, what happens on campus doesn't stay on campus, guys, it was never going to end. So this is a direct a direct result of what's been going on in campus. And the point of this is that it's going to spread and it is spreading, and we see the media captured. And you know, arts organizations increasingly captured in higher ed and K 12 schools and increasingly, the courts, and you know, it's Capture One by one by one. So it is it is quite possible that our lens is clouded that we are seeing us on the other hand, actually, you know, we live in a part of Portland where we don't have to run into this at all. We don't we don't see it, unless we choose to, to go to it and figure out what we can see with our own eyes as opposed to what's been filtered by other people. So you know, that's that's also a filter that people are saying, Oh, my God, you're important to you safe? Yeah, you know, it's it's a it's a very, it's a few very limited, very minor, very horrifying, very at risk of becoming giant sets of movements that are happening in both downtown and Eastern Portland.

**Bret** 29:34

Yeah, I think, you know, we should probably at some point catalog, the misunderstandings that we think people were talking to are having. One of them is that this is about symbolic stuff. This is very definitely about power over material things. Ultimately, this results in a transfer of material things through mechanisms that are not legitimate. But nonetheless, the horizontal nature of this whole movement means that it is now infused in every place that can make a judgement. And so, you know, hiring, firing the courts, every place that can make a judgement, there's now an expectation that these things will go in a particular direction. And you know, it can't work. It's a very short term strategy, but will it ultimately get to you, it will get to you. And you know, who's telling you that the people who said that it was going to escape, you know, the university system back when evergreen was the, you know, the type specimen. So I think it's just certain that if something does not turn the tide, that this will ultimately wash over everything, and it will, of course, render the US a feeble power, which will create a power vacuum, and then we'll find out what dynamics are really going to govern our lives.

**Heather** 30:56

Yeah. Okay, so should we talk a little bit about the, the stupid that's coming out of medical, academia and other academia? That sounds like fun? Yeah, it's always fun. Okay, Zack, put this up if you would, sweetie. Australian doctors push renaming Adam's apple, the Achilles tendon and other misogynistic terms. This is for real, this is not in the onion, or whatever Australia's version of the onion is, I can't remember at the moment. I mean, these things really speak for themselves, but oh, my God, God. There are a lot of body parts that are named for the people who just who were the first people in western science to discover them. And of course, until very recently, that was mostly limited to young landed white men. And, okay, fine. What are we doing? And the Adam's apple and Achilles tendon? These aren't even real people guys. Like, this is mythology. Right? This is mythology and Achilles was a great warrior. I don't know maybe he was real. But

**Bret** 32:02

what's the an example? The Adam's apple is an ugly lump. Achilles tendon. Oh.

**Heather** 32:11

We're gonna rename one of the parts that's actually only in only in man. So I don't even have much more on that. It's just so absurd. Well,

**Bret** 32:22

no, here's the what's more. I mean, it's funny, but it's so unfunny because the answer is people are not extrapolated. Right? Yeah. This is the level of thinking of the people who tell you they know what we're supposed to do next. Yeah, right. This is the level of shame, right?

**Heather** 32:40

And like, and the kind of language they use is often decolonize decolonize our language and in fact, the next example is is that to grammar? Boy Records English department to de emphasize traditional grammar, quote, in solidarity with black lives matter. Yeah, please. I just read the headline of what what you guys can now see. The chair of the Rutgers English department sent an email announcing plans to decolonize again, English by impart focusing less on grammar quote, this approach from the Department of English at Rutgers email to her people. This approach challenges the familiar dogma that writing instruction should limit emphasis on grammar and sentence level issues so as to not put students from multilingual non standard academic English backgrounds at a disadvantage. So we can steal man this briefly and say, I have actually taught with faculty who were really good at grammar level correction and didn't weren't really able to see the bigger. Why do we write in the first place we don't write to have perfect grammar we write in order to say something. Right? So it focus entirely on grammar is misguided, and will kill the spirit and creativity of the best students and actually all students I think, and so should writing instruction, be focused also on content and big ideas, and not exclusively on copy editing, but also on editing and actual content? Of course it should. And too many writing teachers don't do that. I don't know if it's because they can't or because they're lazy, or because they honestly think that grammar is the end all be all. But the idea, that grammar show that everyone shall not be held to the standards of of, of grammar, including this isn't just for undergraduate papers, so suggesting this for dissertations for PhD level dissertations. This is the soft bigotry of low expectations. This that is exactly what this is. Trying to help people help help people by assuring them that they won't be held to standards. That's not helping them. That's not helping them. Anyway,

**Bret** 35:00

it's beyond the soft bigotry of low expectations. Yeah, because it's actually a direct insult because the obviously correct thing is that these things are readily learnable. And we've done a terrible job of democratizing the tools to do it. And the right thing to do is to democratize those tools to pretend that there is something within certain populations that puts correct grammar out of reach is an insane insult.

**Heather** 35:26

I mean, it's it's Robyn D'Angelo all over again, like this, this department chairs either so confused and scared by the inaccurately named Black Lives Matter movement, or is actually personally racist, and really believes that people from backgrounds that aren't like ours can't do very well. It's one of those two things, I think, like what what are the other possibilities on the table?

**Bret** 35:47

This is it. But the other thing, which I never see anybody say is all right, or actually, I occasionally CPA will say this now, if you Institute these standards, you are so hobbling us nationally, that you are guaranteeing we lose our position going forward. Right? If our PhDs cannot speak with precision, because nobody has required it of them, then they will not speak with precision, what will happen to the quality of discourse? If people who are responsible for discourse, do not do it with precision? Well, then our thinking will degrade right? What happens in a school of engineering, when you decide that logic and math are white supremacist? Well, you stop doing logic and math? Well, what happens? Sooner or later, the bridges start falling down? How long do you imagine we can impose this nonsense on all of the systems that actually do make things work and not have them come apart?

**Heather** 36:41

And it's totally consistent with the idea that hierarchy is itself racist, or sexist? or whatever it is, do you want to choose right? The idea? If the idea of hierarchy is itself a problem, then you can't have better and worse, you can't actually have assessment of quality? Because quality itself if hierarchy doesn't exist, and quality doesn't exist? Yeah, right? There is there is no ranking possible on any level, which is a conflation of, you know, equal under the law. With AI, every single individual is identically capable of all things, which no one in their right mind would claim. Yeah, every single individual is not equal, and equally capable of all things. Even if we managed to completely equalize all opportunity from moment from moment one, we said, we vary. That's, that is the result of evolution.

**Bret** 37:32

So one way to think about this is the level of insanity of the claims that are now regularly surfacing. The level of insanity is a direct measure of the strength of the underlying Game Theory of this mode. In other words, kind of spill it out the feebleness of the argument floats on the fact that it is very difficult to oppose it without paying a price, right? And it is that thing, so it's this move where the idea is, here's the thing, and you have to say it, and if you resist, then you are the thing that is being alleged. So if you say, for example, that, you know, logic is not a white trait, then you are engaged in anti black racism. So the point is, people then say that it is a white trait, doing all kinds of harm in the process. But they do that. And what happens is they get an immediate it's it's addiction thing. How do you get addicted to your phone, somebody has figured out how to trigger these little releases of dopamine, and they get you coming back for more. So if you feel a threat, and then somebody is capable of removing that threat, you may figure out how to do the thing that keeps getting the threat to back off and what are you doing, you're becoming an accomplice to the movement, that's how you're getting the threat to back off,

**Heather** 38:58

but of course, it's utterly free to make a threat.

**Bret** 39:01

It's, it's in this context, it is free to make a threat it is free to attack a federal building, there's all kinds of things that have become free. And so what I think we're watching day in and day out at all sorts of levels is people serving their own immediate interests motivated by fear and emboldening the movement that is creating the fear it you know, it's it's the, the the child who sends the adults into the cornfield. And the thing is, eventually you have to confront the child because there's no there's no solution that comes from everybody, you know, saying what the child wants you to say, and that's what we're looking at.

**Heather** 39:41

Yeah, no, it feels it feels ever more juvenile. But this These aren't. These aren't reasonable children. Yeah, man. This this is a topic for many, many, many other conversations as you know, as we have had as we have raised our own children written about childhood and what childhood is and how it is the You make strong and resilient and awesome and humor filled and and loving children into adults. You do not cater to their every whim and you do not run scared when they throw a tantrum. You don't cave to tantrums ever and if what you do is you say don't do that or I'll x and they keep doing it and you don't do x. They do it more of course they do that is basic human psychology of course they do more of it. And that is exactly what we're seeing on our streets. It's exactly what we're seeing in boardrooms we're seeing in colleges it's what we're seeing every place this is really badly raised children in the bodies of adults acting like maybe they were taught to act by their parents who didn't know how to parent and never said no

**Bret** 40:47

and you know imagine that that's all taking place on a ship and what they're doing is they're getting us to allow them to take apart the ship on which we all depend including them you didn't just invoke a canoe to do wow no okay. canoe is not a ship it's a boat but it's not a ship I looked it up

**Heather** 41:05

I was just I was confused about the the sudden input of ship into the conversation

**Bret** 41:10

you know, it's funny because I actually really like canoes as a vessel but I agree with you there is a certain amount of trauma around the idea of canoes for us at the moment.

**Heather** 41:17

Yeah. Okay. Should we talk about racism in the great outdoors?

**Bret** 41:20

What could possibly go wrong? What

**Heather** 41:21

could possibly go wrong? Oh boy, this is just I mean, this is an episode of just a lot of ridiculous. Yeah, now you can show this sack. Oregon's natural spaces feel off limits to black people. We are told this is this is Oh, PBS. This is Oregon Public Broadcasting Oregon's NPR station. We're being told the parks and trailheads are solely reopening as they as they should be. We've got an extended anecdote from someone a black woman who explains that while she was excited initially, when she moved to Portland area to start going outside when she did go, she found that she was one of very few black people on the trails. And and then the logical leap felt that that was due to racism, and that she was experiencing racism from all the non black people that she saw. There is a quote in this article, I don't know exactly where it is on the page right now, quote, recent data from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department shows black people are under, under represented as visitors to state parks. They make up 2.2% of Oregon's population, and 0.9% of daily visitors and 1.9% of overnight visitors to parks. So it's a really white state, whole Pacific Northwest is really, really, really white, right? 2.2% of the population is black, that's about one in 50. Therefore, even if there was exact representation, due to race, on the trails, only one in 50 people you'd see would be black, you'd still feel like you were rare, because you are and that may be due to other issues that might need addressing, but that has nothing to do with whether or not the trails don't have enough black people on them. Overnight visitors 1.9% versus 2.2 total that doesn't look far off at all 0.9% of daily visitors. We don't know if that's actually not representative. There are no statistics here. And even if it were, what is it that the claim is that is keeping people of color black people off the trails?

**Bret** 43:22

Well, I read as far into this article as I could get myself to read. And the person and I you know, I don't want to belittle her perspective. For one thing, it may be accurate, but what she says is that it's the looks that she gets from people on the trails. What's the problem is we're now in the Evergreen paradigm, which is okay. That claim in and of itself, could mean that you're getting looks that mean something, or it could mean that you're getting looks, but you're misinterpreting them or it could be that you're not getting looks and you're imagining it, we have no way of knowing you would have to test this somehow. But the thing that's getting me is, I don't know where it is somewhere in one of our early live streams. I used this exact example to prove that the fact of a disparity in representation does not mean that it's racism, right? You will find blacks underrepresented in recreational cycling for example. Yes, is I've worked in a bike shop is that because bike shops are in some way reluctant to sell bikes to black people. Now bike shops are inhabited by liberals who probably if anything would feel extra good about doing so. So it's not the bike shops. I don't think I've never seen any evidence that a bike lane was racist I just it's very hard to see where the bias would be

**Heather** 44:43

you realize you're now introducing hypotheses into the world that some people will take and run with or bikeway there's

**Bret** 44:49

something but look let's be honest about this and let's steel man that position I actually do think there's racism somewhere in these biases, right and but in which bias the bias is That we would see racially on trails or bike lanes or something, right? Like, the racism is way, way, way, way, way upstream. Okay, it has to do with differential access. In other words, why do you and I end up on trails? Right? We came from families who did this? Where did the families get this idea? Well, they had a was in the culture of those families that, you know, they neither of them came from privilege, but there was a certain amount of access, there was a certain amount of expectation. And the point is different people end up valuing different things. Now, I think it'd be great if people spent more time outdoors, irrespective of who they were right, I think we need more outdoor space in order to make that better, right, so that you could actually get away from people given the huge population of the planet. But the fact that there may be some differential access, if you that has kept some populations farther away from trails does not mean that there's anything about those modern day trails that is in any way less accessible, right? So culture is the clear, conspicuous, likely place that some sort of bias would live, not at the trailhead,

**Heather** 46:05

right. And it's also true, and this is also a point that we've made multiple times before, that when you get looks, that don't seem right, and that aren't the lugs that you were hoping for expecting. You can think of yourself and what demographic markers you have, and imagine that it is due to the ones that are most likely to have bias against them in the population. And sometimes that will be true, you know, sometimes I get looks, or comments or yelled at or whatever. And it is because I'm a woman, and the dude Yella is is a dude. And that is what it is. And sometimes it's not. And with regard to sexism, you could tell in part when it is because of the nature of the comments. And sometimes you can't tell for sure at all. And with race, obviously, you could tell in the context of some comments, but I don't. Boy, you know, that's not what's happening on the trails. Like, you know, she doesn't say that they're, you know, no one is making explicitly racist comments to this woman and her son on the trails. But, you know, is she getting lots of surprise, shock, disappointment, interest? Pleasure, you know, any number of things that might also be mixed, mixed with or, you know, causally related to? Not, I don't think you belong here, but I didn't expect to see you because actually, in the Oh, no one's doing this math explicitly. But 150 people are black in Oregon, and frankly, fewer than that 10 dead on the trails. Yeah. And that has nothing to do with Therefore, I don't want you on the trails.

**Bret** 47:37

So I experienced this a little bit in a different place. And I just want to talk about, I think how you deal with this responsibly when you don't know what you're up against. Okay, when my last name gets invoked, I often see something flash across the eyes of somebody that I'm interacting with, right. And, you know, I'm betting that some fraction of the time it's Oh, Jewish right. Now, sometimes that might be an anti Semite. Very rarely, I would imagine. Right. But the point is, there's no content in just the flicker of somebody has recognized something that you can interpret with any sort of certainty, right? So you have to file it agnostically. What was the I don't know? And I assume it's nothing and even if it was some sort of mild anti semitism or suspicion or something, somebody harbors? A, what happens next is the interaction likely overwhelms whatever prejudice they walked into it with. And you know, we know this, we know that what addresses prejudice successfully is interaction.

**Heather** 48:34

And so prejudice? I'm not sure we were using the words exactly, identically. But let's establish first how we're using them before I say this. Prejudice can be due to bigotry or due to ignorance. Is it these are two different sources of prejudice in which someone is walking into an interaction finds out that your ex and goes Nah, I don't know about that. could be due to actual bigotry, I think you are less I have reason to think you are less because you're x, or I just have no exposure to you. And I have no idea and therefore I kind of don't know what to do. Yeah. I wonder and maybe maybe you don't want to I didn't ask you in advance. If you want to say something about the first time you met my grandfather?

**Bret** 49:14

Hmm. Yeah, sure. Let me just say prejudice wise, all I'm saying I'm just going as literal as possible. Just some sort of prejudgment, some sort of assumption about what I will be that doesn't come from any information. So

**Heather** 49:28

I think then prejudice can be due either to bigotry or to ignorance. Yep. And those two things are being conflated across the board in the current movement, right, you know, Black Lives Matter, and white fragility and how to be an anti racist and all of these things are imagining that, you know, I, I have made the claim many times and I firmly believe that the very few Americans are actually racist, but I think that a fair number are somewhat ignorant and I think a number of people who are falling prey to This Oh my God, I'm going to genuflect because I'm scared that I'm going to I'm a racist, so I must be racist. I think most of those people are not actually racist, but they're naive, they're ignorant. They don't have experience of the world of other cultures of other people. And, and that ignorance is actually so so so different from real bigotry. The conflation of those two is is, is demonic. It's awful.

**Bret** 50:22

We're gonna demonic because for one thing, a will for willful ignorance might be one thing, but just simple ignorance. The fact is a exposure erases it. And B for many of us, I mean, I've said many times, I have no doubt that I am ignorant on every axis that I am not a participant, I will always be somewhat ignorant of what it is like to be gay to be a woman to be black, because I'm not any of these things. However, I'm interested on all of those fronts to reduce that ignorance as much as possible, right? Yeah, what else can I do? So, you know, do you really want to, you know, persecute somebody that they're for being racist on the basis of ignorance that they're actively trying to address? No, that would be absurd, yet, that's where we are somehow. So yeah, your grandfather, you know, there was definitely a flash of recognition that he was dealing with a Jewish person, clearly he didn't have a lot of exposure.

**Heather** 51:18

So I think you need to set it up a little bit. He had. This is Northeastern Iowa. Throughout my father's and my father's siblings growing up, they were on a farm. And, and he had spent some time traveling around North Dakota and some of the other northern Midwest Midwestern states, but he was basically he was a, he was a German, Catholic. He didn't immigrate, but I don't actually remember I think either he was either second or third generation immigrant. And just had traveled a fair bit within northern white, North America is all and you were almost certainly the first Jewish person that he met at the point that I brought. You know, I think my dad, and you and I all went out there. My dad had flown out to Chicago, and we'd all driven out to Iowa to see him for maybe a Thanksgiving or something. Yeah, yeah. Yeah. I mean, that's sort of been the 90 sometimes,

**Bret** 52:21

it's not too much to say, except that there was definitely a palpable tension about something I tried. I took to be about that. And it didn't persist, because interaction doesn't allow it to persist, because,

**Heather** 52:35

you know, I remember it more explicitly than this. Oh, you do? Yeah. And maybe, maybe I'm wrong. Maybe Maybe my memory is wrong. But I remember him actually responding to being introduced to you by me with an epithet that he didn't think was wrong. I believe that he said, jewboy, he did. And I had this immediate reaction. I think I even like, put out my hands, like, Oh, great, like what? And that, you know, I never I'd never spent a whole lot of time with him. I didn't know him very, very well, but and you, as I remember, it, sort of put your hands out to me and said, No, not a big deal. Let's talk and you that the two of you, as I remember, it, then had a conversation for I don't know if it's 20 minutes or two hours, but something between those two things in which you didn't talk about Judaism, and you didn't talk about Jewishness, but you engage with each other as human beings. And and he wasn't less ignorant of Judaism as a result, right? Because that's not what you're about. And it's not what you it's not what you were talking about. But what he didn't know at the end of it was that you were a, you know, deep, rich, compassionate, human being with, you know, all of these, all of these insights and capabilities that he would hope for in the other partner of his granddaughter. And that identifying anyone by a word that is singular, and reductive is not the way to engage people.

**Bret** 54:07

Yeah. And it actually brings back up this question about the the proposal was at Duke that is changing its grammar. Oh, here's my concern, is that actually, this language thing might actually be about something. And that you don't say, Yeah, I do say, yeah, I mean, watch this. I'm even going to use language in order to explain my point. You'll see how it works. You'll catch right on, right. But the thing is, if you don't have imagine that you're faced with somebody who has a prejudice against you, but doesn't share a language, right, it's very hard to overcome that prejudice because you can't deliver evidence that actually tells them that actually you're of like mind about values or something like that. assuming that's the case. But then you we can extend this, which is, if you share no language, you have very few tools with which to do this, they might see you engage in behavior that is inconsistent with their prejudice, but the chances of that are pretty low because it requires circumstances to bring it out. But my point would be, the better the language that you share, the more tools you have to erode those prejudices and to fill in the ignorance with information. And to the extent that what we are going to do is take the rules away from grammar, for example, in order not to ostensively disadvantage anybody what we're also doing is taking away the expectation of a shared paradigm in which you can reach somebody, and if I would, if I can remind people of the story that I told about living in Jamaica, the thing about the Jamaican kids who were so fascinated by me, because I came from a different world, but I took them seriously. I would answer their questions. For example, they had lots of scientific questions they wanted answered was, they spoke two languages. They spoke patois, which I didn't speak well, I understood some, but I struggle with patois. It's very difficult. But they because television and school takes place in the Queen's English, as it were, speak my language perfectly, which means there was no trouble connecting with them, right? Because they could step into this idiom in which we could exchange information. And so I'm not, in some sense, I do think we might have to step into a world where we actually all do have a language so that we are not tripping over the border between English and Chinese, for example, and, you know, military matters are at stake, you know, I think we might actually need to have the ultimate tool to protect Planet Earth from our de facto sectarian differences. But that doesn't mean you can't retain the languages in which we prefer to speak to each other. But we cannot sacrifice our ability to update to some standard, not because that standard is best, but because we need some standard that we can all go to in order to exchange information with each other. And for us to tear that apart inside of the US. So we don't even have a common language anymore. is just so dangerous,

**Heather** 57:16

when it's part of what is being done with this. Careful and often explicit renaming of things in which words are don't mean what they appear to mean. And if you want to fix the screen,

**Bret** 57:34

maybe I want to I don't know what you're gonna say that's the price. How about if you tell me what you were gonna say? And

**Heather** 57:45

just, you just have to be unscreened? That's fine. There we go. But what we're talking about

**Bret** 57:52

language, yeah, needs to have a common standard. Yeah. So

**Heather** 57:54

you know, redefining racism out from under us that Robyn D'Angelo as is tried to do and has managed to successfully you know, import to a lot of places is, is a way of guaranteeing that we don't have communication between us. And I do wonder though, this is I suspect we're coming up on an hour and I have at least one more thing that we want to talk about before we before we're done here. That maybe just an asterisk for a later time. And you've said this thing before about feeling you know, chagrin, not happy about it, but you think that we might all need one language in order to talk and I? If so, again, just asterisk for later time. The Savior Wharf hypothesis, which posits that the language you use shapes what you think and what actually you can think, in its strongest form is generally not agreed on by as far as I can tell almost any linguist at this point, but a weak form of the superior Wharf hypothesis. There seems to be a tremendous amount of evidence for it actually, that the language that you use actually shapes how you think and your thought patterns. And this this goes far beyond just word choice. It's also about you know, syntax and semantics. And I suspect although I haven't ever seen it and discussion of savior Wharf, for instance, whether you have a boy What are they an idio graphic versus a alphabetic language, I can't remember the like the the words for it at this point. But whether or not use an alphabet, or have effectively pictograms that you're using is going to shape is going to actually shape how you think and I suspect using an alphabet will tend towards somewhat more reductive thinking, and less holistic thinking. Even within alphabet using languages having subject verb object versus subject object verb may have effects in terms of how you prioritize and imagine the hierarchy of objects and subjects in the universe. So it will be a tough sell and potentially destructive of cult some cultures to have To have the be a global language and have some languages disappeared. Yeah,

**Bret** 1:00:03

here's the thing, I would love to live on that world where the cultures aren't being destroyed. But like at the moment that everybody got connected to the same internet, and is now subscribe to the same view platforms yada yada yada on, we started doing this in earnest. And so the insulation that these cultures actually have from each other is minimal and degrading over time without a purpose. And so my point is actually we've got a lot of stuff riding on the fact that we don't have misunderstandings that cause us to, you know, nuke each other or invade each other. And so, you know, it's not without reservation that I say we would need a single language in order to properly manage the affairs of Earth. But I guess my point is preserving the thing that would be preserved by us not doing that. It's not happening, we're losing that thing, and we're going to lose it and then we're going to blow ourselves up, because we don't understand what the people on the other side are saying. And that just seems absurd waste to me.

**Heather** 1:01:03

Yeah. So maybe maybe we return to this. One more topic. We we had some stuff to talk about the guide to COVID-19. But we'll save that for another time. But I wanted to bring up this there's this there's a study that was done many years ago, that back in 2012 2013, was much discussed on the value of blind auditions. Specifically in the hiring of musicians for orchestras. And Christina Hoff Sommers has done an excellent takedown of the original study in which she explains why it does not actually say what people were thinking it said, I do not know exactly where that is, she does a femmes planers somewhere on that. But we were basically told that in order for all the bias that existed in orchestras, specifically against women to be solved, there need to be blind, blind auditions. That was published in The Guardian in 2013. Zach, if you want to show my screen? Yeah. So now in 2020. We have the New York Times, arguing that to make orchestras more diverse, we need to end blind auditions. Because of course, the audition process being blind means that not enough people of diverse race, gender and quote unquote, other factors will be taken into effect. So this is just this is the end of the scientific process. This is the end of reason. This is of logic and everything else. We can't have it both ways. You who are arguing that we need more diverse people in orchestras, you can't have it both ways. Ham

**Bret** 1:02:40

have it both ways. That is your white logic that says you can't have it both ways.

**Heather** 1:02:45

That is my use of the scientific method. Also white? I think we're done.

**Bret** 1:02:53

Yeah, I mean, no, at some level, that is why we're fighting over this. Yes. Because it's exactly right logic, then none of this stands. Right. If not logic, then anything goes and then it's all about power, which Yeah, is an absurd place to want to want to go No. And

**Heather** 1:03:06

also, I mean, so that New York Times article, they don't even say sex, they say gender, and which, you know, the original was supposedly about sex and getting more women in orchestras. And as Christina Hoff Sommers argued, it didn't actually work anyway. But again, a conversation for another time, these categories that you can opt into, in the progressive stack, that allow you to basically game affirmative action, which is what's being argued for here, people are going to be opting into them, and we know they already are, right. So trans is a particularly obvious one. There are real trans people out there, and they're very, very rare. And what we see making such a ruckus and a mess of things all over social media and on the streets and everywhere are the trans rights activists who are taking advantage of the fact that in many places, you don't have to even be considering surgery, surgery or even hormones aren't declare yourself trans all you have to do is adopt some really regressive gender norms, burn a dress, put on some makeup, call yourself a woman and boom, you're trans you get to rise in a progressive stack. That's regressive and nasty. And disability is another one because we've had an explosion of so many diagnoses and conditions, and many of them are invisible. And that means that really all someone would have to do if they wanted to game the system was declare themselves disabled with some condition that no one can see or perceive or is allowed to ask about. And boom, you've won yourself some more oppression points. So game a ball in every way. All right,

**Bret** 1:04:41

prediction good. The New York Times will soon embrace the idea not only of removing blind auditions, but adding Deaf auditions. Deaf starts. Yeah, for orchestras exactly, because

**Heather** 1:04:58

all they want to see as a demographic card model Exactly

**Bret** 1:05:00

auditions that are not deaf discriminate against oppressed people who do not play an instrument. Am I right? Yeah, I mean, given that we are suspending the laws of logic, I think this is logical as anything

**Heather** 1:05:13

I am reminded of when we were in college at UC Santa Cruz, yeah, in the early 90s. Having there be a talk show host on the campus radio station, who had a speech impediment that was so intense that he or she I don't honestly know, which could not make themselves understood to the people they're interviewing and the people they're interviewing would almost always have to take the questions. And after the person interviewing them would read them, ask them themselves, so that the people listening could hear this seemed like it had to be a parody. And this is a long time ago, but it was not a parody. And it's exactly what you're talking about. There are some jobs, that if you have a speech impediment, you should not have not ideal. And one of them is a job in which the only thing you are projecting into the universe is in fact your your voice. Alright, if you are in fact incompetent, as a musician, you should not be playing in an orchestra. I'm like, go ahead cancel me.

**Bret** 1:06:19

Alright, so before we close out here, I just want to point out that here in we there was a good piece that reveals the same thing earlier this week, which I guess we're not going to show but here's the thing, I know that the joke I made right, accusing you as you invoked science in accusing you of using a white thing. In the context, science is understood to be a positive thing. Like as between two scientists saying that it is a white thing is deeply racist. Obviously it's why the joke is funny, right? Yeah, if you are saying it in order to neutralize somebody's claim that something is accurate in order to advance this woke nonsense, then it is apparently anti racist. So the very same claim, as both valence is depending upon what you're doing, which is the height of your logic.

**Heather** 1:07:12

It's it's the natural endpoint of post modernism. It is

**Bret** 1:07:16

it we are we are going to be uploaded to the postmodern cloud. And board. Yeah, we're it's it's a regrettable place for us to spend the rest of our days few as they may be. Okay, I'm not happy

**Heather** 1:07:32

now. Yeah, no, I, I was hoping to have more hope.

**Bret** 1:07:35

More hope. Yes. Yes. Well, there's always the next live stream we could try to come up with some help.

**Heather** 1:07:43

Okay, so you want to say about unity 2020. Before we go to the next thought right now,

**Bret** 1:07:49

well, let's just say stay tuned to this channel. We have a big upcoming announcement. We are working on tech to make sure that the thing we are announcing we'll be firing on all cylinders at the point we bring it to you all but I think you're going to enjoy it. So stay tuned is the basic message big things are happening.

**Heather** 1:08:11

Next Sunday at 11am Pacific, we will have our private q&a for Dark Horse members, which you can become by joining at my Patreon and you can join our Discord server on either our Patreon and we have a clips channel it's now live as well at Dark Horse clips. Anything else? Anything else

**Bret** 1:08:30

our course podcast and Dark Horse clips it is no i think that's it. Please LIKE SUBSCRIBE, COMMENT, distribute, disagree with I don't know what else but don't set fire to Yeah, do not generate your cluster bombs. Right. And we will see you in about 15 minutes for the q&a. Until then,

1:08:59

and