Bret and Heather 52nd DarkHorse Podcast Livestream\_ The U.S....

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**SPEAKERS**

Bret, Heather

**Bret** 00:08

Hey folks, welcome to the Dark Horse podcast live stream number 52. Yep, that's right. 52 we are closing in days away from a presidential election I have to say I am guardedly

**Heather** 00:26

optimistic. Oh, wow. Okay. Yeah. For what?

**Bret** 00:29

That we will make it to the election.

**Heather** 00:32

That, that you and I the country, all of us, all of us.

**Bret** 00:36

I'm not saying I reached Tuesday, I'm saying I think the chances are, are fairly good. We will make it to Tuesday in tech after that all bets are off. But yeah, Tuesday, I think is a high probability. All right. All right. I'm not sure exactly what else to say, except for the fact that things seem awfully precarious. And

**Heather** 00:58

they really do. And I think we will we may come back on Wednesday with another live stream, depending on what is known what we think is known, the various values of knowingness and the universe as of Wednesday morning

**Bret** 01:14

suggestion. Yes, we call it a still a live stream.

**Heather** 01:18

Okay. All right, I think we could call it that regardless of when we came back but bear point i do think that it's worth spending a little time while talking about what's happening in our in our neck of the woods and also saying something about Portland just how Portland feels at the moment because I spent a couple of partial days this last week just walking around downtown just trying to just I just went to see what it felt like and it feels like everyone is holding their breath It's of course much more empty than it would normally be in a non COVID-19 year but beyond that, how you're to what can you attribute the emptiness obviously some of that has to do with protests and riots. And for a little while there in September it had to do you know it was completely empty I assume because we like I think everyone else was effectively locked in their homes because of smoke but and you know, most of the downtown business at this at this point are boarded up even the ones that have not declared that they are shuttered permanently although many have there is you know, there is the usual graffiti and garbage some of which is really unpleasant and the homeless people who I saw and actually interacted with this last week were reminded me more of the homeless people of 10 years ago then some of the people who feel like newcomers who have been increasingly showing up on the streets here but it really felt like it felt like no one could tell what was going on and basically you know, your your ridiculous prediction that we'll make it to Tuesday is how people are living at the moment

**Bret** 03:10

Yeah, it's it's stunning and it really is there's a feel to it and i think you know, one of the things we've discovered over many discussions with people in remote places is that we really have no good way unless we deliberately check in with how does it feel in Florida in Michigan

**Heather** 03:31

so when you say remote places you mean like in the outback

**Bret** 03:33

I know I'm by remote I mean remote from you.

**Heather** 03:37

So for for anyone trying to understand what it feels like to be on the ground in place x. You actually to some degree and this this is the value in the absurdly weaponized term lived experience, right? And what what is it to actually be there and and see with your own eyes and experience with all of your other senses, what life is like in Florida or Venice or wherever?

**Bret** 04:02

Well, I think I'm actually pointing to almost the opposite premise, okay, which is that when people say lived experience, right, they can say, well, you may have all the data in the world on what it's like to be black in America, but you There's nothing you can do that substitutes for my, you know, where I black, my lived experience, right? And of course, there's one way in which this is undeniable. And then there's another way in which we don't even know what your lived experience means, because we don't know what kinds of biases went into formulating it. We don't know how representative it is. We don't know, you know, any of the things that you would want to know it's not data. Which doesn't mean it doesn't contain something. But in this case, what I'm increasingly noticing, you know, sort of generally in the internet age, but increasingly as we go, quite obviously mad, the fact that one has no basis to assume that something that you would normally assume that other people had seen and felt together. There is actually a shared experience. Yeah, right. You have to check in. Yeah. And so

**Heather** 05:05

yeah, actually that yeah, that that fits very well with some some of the places we want to go here today.

**Bret** 05:09

Yeah, it's just it's a it's a key thing. Because if you don't if you just are on autopilot and your sense, you know, the problem is, it's born of a very normal assumption that is, in general rock solid, right? If you're standing with somebody somewhere, and you're looking at something, the chances that they can see it, too, are very, very high, right? Unless it's very tiny and difficult for you to perceive, in which case you would you would know that you had to say I, it's right over there by the thing.

**Heather** 05:37

Well, I mean, I think this points to at least two things. One is the necessity of intact and, you know, deeply nuanced theories of mind, right? Like humans are not the only organisms that have theory of mind, which is to say, the ability to attribute to someone else, a different understanding of reality, or a different emotional state or a different, you know, understanding of Yeah, well, a different understanding of reality really, than what you yourself have. There. I've mentioned here before the excellent book babbu metaphysics by the two primatologists, Dorothy Cheney and Richard Seyfarth Roberts, a fourth chance, a fourth, a married couple, who spent a lot of time in Botswana and Okavango River Delta, studying these baboons, who find terrific evidence for theory of mind and baboons. And of course, it's been noted in you know, in crows in I think dolphins, and certainly elephants and wolves and parrots, so a number of these, these other groups, all of which independently evolve an ability to ascertain that that what you believe is not necessarily that which I believe, right. And we also there's, you know, a number of developmental psychology studies that point to when, when it is in a child's life, they tend to begin to develop a theory of mind and actually remember when that moment is something before two years, for sure, but it may be well, well, before that.

**Bret** 06:56

Well, it does. It's not fully developed until much later. And so there's a series of elaborate experiments, which you're you're alluding to here in which you know, you can you know, a child who is old enough to speak, you can ask them to tell you what it is that someone else will have seen, and then you by adjusting when it is that that person entered and left the room. And so an adult would know Oh, they didn't see that development. Yeah, can tell. Yeah, usually,

**Heather** 07:21

I'm not sure the two year mark, I don't I don't remember, you're right, that is sort of the sliding scale of nuance and theory of mind. And I think part of our confusion are sort of global, our humanity wide confusion right now, at least for those with the internet, which is basically all of you know, the subset of humanity with whom all of us and you watching and listening, are engaging with our pretty much people who are have access to the internet is the internet to a greater degree even than TV which came before but TV did this as well, because it shows you real people, you imagine that they are you, they are part of your social group, right? That they are part of your social group. And they therefore have been sharing, sharing the same things and knowing the same things as everyone else. And so we we sort of dropped some of the usual requirements for theory of mind when we assume well, like you're part of my group, therefore, I know that you and I have seen the same thing. We might disagree on what it means, but at least we have a shared a common experience. And that's not true. It's not true. And I think you and I see this in particular, because we have people who are showing up to talk with us mostly virtually, but also when we're talking with in real life, who are coming from really across the political spectrum, right, like so. So we have people who see any critique of of Trump as evidence of Trump derangement syndrome. And we have people who see any evidence of the protests that become riots as evidence of, of secretly cryptically loving Trump. And yet, it seems like never the twain shall meet. But we can actually see that one of the commonalities there is, you actually have literally seen different things that we've seen, like in your feeds, in your, in your life, and in your media feeds, you're literally being shown and told and and that that those two things are also collapsed. The showing and the telling, is being collapsed into a single point by most media, including most journalists such that, you know, the analysis is wrapped into the showing such that you can't untangle it untangle

**Bret** 09:35

it is a novel kind of bias that I think we haven't yet named. And I think the problem here, like with many of these novel modern phenomena is that it is partly conscious and partly emergent. And so because it is these two things, you know, to the extent that you sound like you're alleging a conspiracy to, you know, to edit down to one set of facts You sound like a crazy person. And you know, to the extent that you think well, you know, you know, I thought on my feet. Yeah, fake. The point is you're naive. And the there The truth is really subtle in one way, which is that we have algorithms. First of all, we have publishers that appear to have suspended the most basic journalistic rules. And I think they think they've done it temporarily. I think they think, well, this is just such a dire circumstance that, you know, we're going to forego, you know, and it's a little bit like the argument for for lockdown. Right? The argument for lockdown is, look, civil liberties are really important. This is a novel contagious, dangerous phenomenon for which we need to temporarily, you know, change our, our ordering of the priorities. And the fact is, I think there's a great argument for that, it doesn't mean it's not being deployed cynically, right, right. And the problem is that the platforms, and the publishers are now adjusting the fabric of reality. And because they think they're doing it intentionally for a good reason, they have completely lost track and lost control of the degree to which they are changing the necessary parameters for even building a basic model of reality.

**Heather** 11:24

And this, it's, it's a particularly human, maybe not it's particularly any kind of organism with with theory of mind and technology. And that's not purely limited to humans. But we've obviously taken it to a greater degree than anyone else, kind of, of arrogance that imagines that doesn't understand Chesterton's fence, again, an idea that we've come back to and back to him back to in this in this live stream. And as we talked about a lot in our book, the idea that when you come upon a fence, and you don't know what it's for, but it's irritating to you, for some reason, you should not be allowed to get rid of it unless and until you can, at the very least bare minimum, come to understand why the people who put it there, put it there, what is its intended use, it's possible it has outgrown its use, right as possible, it no longer has the utility that it had, or that it was put up with good intentions, and it's doing something bad, or that it was an error in the first place and was put up with bad intentions, all of those things are possible. But when you find such a structure, you don't get rid of it without first trying to understand what it is therefore, in the first place. And frankly, a lot of modern psychology makes this makes this era a lot of modern medicine makes us very, you know, we just over and over and over again. But what you're what you're speaking to, with regard to well, you know, and you and I were, you know, have been advocates for for the lockdown in order to deal with the virus, especially early on. But it does come with this risk that once you take some civil liberties away, how do you get them back?

**Bret** 13:02

Right. And in fact, the Chesterton's fence thing is canonically going to run up against every counter intuitive, right? Right. counterintuitive rights, by their very nature, are a version of Chesterton's fence, you inherit free speech, you don't know what it's good for, because you haven't seen the alternative. And it seems like you know, what's really irritating? Some of these terrible things that people say, if we really don't want to hear them, and I really don't want to hear these terrible there's some truly viable, vile stuff being said, right. And in, you know, in this case, I

**Heather** 13:30

think, not only don't I want to hear them, but I don't want you to hear them, because it's bad for you. It's bad for you.

**Bret** 13:35

Yeah. Right. And the thing is, everybody gets that, including the people who formulated these rights. Right, right. They formulated them because there was a higher principle and until you've lived with the absence of this freedom, you don't really understand why you should be tolerating vile speech, right? And the answer is because not tolerating it eliminate speech you need to hear but is heterodox or counterintuitive or, or whatever.

**Heather** 13:58

Let me let me just say to you know, that the some of the frankly naive pushback that all here to the little sarcastic spoofing we were just doing of the anti free speech people as well, you know, why don't you Why don't you then object to, to obscuring what's available to children, while children are children? And it is exactly the adults roles and specifically parents roles to protect children until they're of an age where they can actually make decisions and choices for themselves? And when is that and how is that and the these are all judgment calls that we should be having conversations about as a society, but certainly within the family. That is, that is an expectation that children are protected from something as at the more so earlier on, and well, there was one other thing I was going to say to that but I don't remember.

**Bret** 14:50

Well, nonetheless, actually, maybe this is a good place. It's out of order here but we are losing track of things you know as as Douglas Murray says things We knew until yesterday, right? So I ran into maybe many of you have seen it on Twitter, Noam Chomsky was interviewed by the New Yorker, recently. Yeah, like in the last few days that could you put up the article

**Bret** 15:23

areas is known as Noam Chomsky. And he says in this article, I will say I didn't read the article through, but I certainly did track down this claim to make sure that it wasn't being misrepresented. He said that Trump is the worst criminal in human history. I would point out this is Noam Chomsky now, and he and the to the journalists credit, he and the journalist tangle over whether that could possibly be defended. And the journalist points out that in order to reach this, you have to make a number of leaps, including, you have to obliterate the idea of intent being relevant. And Chomsky says in the interview, he doesn't care. Basically, his claim here is that he's the worst criminal in human history, because the things he's doing put us in jeopardy, which is a nonsense claim that a guy like Chomsky ought to certainly know better than to say, but,

**Heather** 16:17

and certainly I would have like, I won't comment on the article, because I have not read it. I didn't know it existed. But if if, as you say, the headline is pulled correctly, from Chomsky, his actual beliefs, that does truly point to the RIDICULOUS MOMENT that we're living in, when people will make a claim, one of the most important left voices alive today could make a claim like that,

**Bret** 16:44

right? Especially in you know, the thing that Chomsky would be expected to be excellent. That is the recognition that both sides were putting us in tremendous Jeopardy, and then ultimately, one needs to escape this. And so I must say, I was completely shocked by his endorse endorsement of Biden, because of Chomsky. Yeah. Because, you know, we pick your existential threat, right? It's two different versions of catastrophe. And a guy like Chomsky is exactly the sort of person who traditionally when he's on his game, says, Yes, actually, the system does this, right. And here, in this case, he's just sided with one group. And he's put on blinders. And it's the same thing we've seen from, you know, Bernie Sanders, and, frankly, Andrew Yang, and you know, it's it's incredible how many people regard something about Trump as requiring them to surrender, the very capacity for nuance that made each of them special.

**Heather** 17:42

Yeah. You know, I wasn't, I wasn't on social media, and I wasn't paying attention to any of these types of conversations throughout the Obama presidency. And we, as we have said before, we're huge fans of Obama and excited about him at the point that he was running the first time, and really felt like things could be turning around and in some truly positive ways, in 2008. And I, by the time 2012, rolled around, reluctantly voted for him a second time, and I know you didn't eat out for him a second time. So we are we are not here as people who were blind to the disappointments of the president that brought the most hope in our lifetime anyway. But I, you know, I've heard and I've not dug into the history of the Bible on the right against Obama. And I think I know it existed. And I don't know what its tone was, I don't know what its tenor was. I know some of it was fabulous. It is disgusting. But I don't, What I don't know is, was it a mirror image of this with regard to the left's feeling about Trump? And I, I just don't know the answer to that?

**Bret** 18:55

Well, you know, it's a great question on the problem, you know, I've been forced by the bad behavior of people I once respected, to go back and try to rethink how I ended up concluding what I had about them and whether I was in fact blind. Yeah. And right, you know, in Obama's case, I'm pretty sure I wasn't. I mean, there was definitely at the point before he had been elected. And I actually believed that he stood an excellent chance of changing things, and that he would change them in a positive direction. I was clearly missing something. And I still don't know what it was. I still don't know if Obama is not who we thought he was. If he is who we thought he was, but something that we cannot see blocked him. Or I don't know what the explanation is, but

**Heather** 19:48

in which case if he is what we thought he was on something blocked him, then how can you imagine that any president could affect change in the in the United States at this point, right.

**Bret** 19:57

And in fact, this is one of the arguments that people deploy in various ways in favor of Trump, which is that because he's truly not of the system, he is truly wasn't until four years ago well, right. I mean, that's my point is yes, he muscled in on their action, which is at least a novel storyline. But it's not a positive change, right? It's a new, it's a new crime family on the scene, you know, given as good as it gets from the old crime families, or to the old crime families, but so I don't know where I miss things. But I do know that I mean, even the fact that I didn't vote for obama a second time, I didn't vote for him, because I was wide awake to his failure to be what we expected and hoped he would be and to all of the things he did that I thought were jaw dropping and dangerous. So but I was paying attention, and I didn't get what what you are asking about what you were on

**Heather** 20:55

social media during that time, I was Yeah. But I guess I, I really, I do wonder how new this thing that we're seeing with regard to the inability to deal with anything that Trump does, other than the fact that it's Trump, from the left has been mirrored on the right with regard to Obama. And if we go back eight more years, to Bush to no one in our sphere, whom we were talking politics to, at that point was a big fan of bush too. But there, it wasn't like this, right? It was not like this at all. And so I don't know if things changed with the rights response to Obama. Or if the left's response to Trump is actually a sea change, a truly novel situation. That is marking something that frankly, if this is if this is as new as it feels, to me not having seen, I haven't been privy to what might have been going on, on the right with regard to their hatred of Obama, then that points to even greater worries. To me about instability. That is that is brewing right now.

**Bret** 22:11

Right? I think I think what we are those of us who are tracking the meta phenomenon, right? The inconsistency between things that were once reconcilable, right, right? Those of us who are tracking that are I think, alarmed because it's a little bit like I don't know, what's the right analogy? Maybe it's why am I blanking on his name? The mathematician, schizophrenic mathematician, beautiful mind. Anyway, it'll come back to me. But here you had a highly intelligent person who became aware that he was perceiving reality in a fiercely broken way. And, you know, to his credit, was able to sort of build a correction, so that that thing didn't interfere with his ability to do Nash. Nash is to do what he was on earth effectively to do right to sort out stuff like Nash, equilibria. And other

**Heather** 23:17

Yeah, interfered with plenty else in his life. Right. But the point is,

**Bret** 23:21

if you know that your brain plays those tricks on you, I actually think this is one of the important values of psychedelics is that if you can knowingly engage some of the things that your brain will do under those circumstances, then you're a little better prepared, when things go haywire, for whatever reason,

**Heather** 23:41

yeah, whether endogenously or exogenously. Right. But, but in any case,

**Bret** 23:45

those of us who were tracking the metanarrative are, I think, beginning to be aware that we are watching something that is not just an analogy to collective psychosis. This is a very real process. And it really, you know, like, imagine that social media has paranoid schizophrenia at the moment, and then say, Well, how much does that explain about the discussions that I'm watching? Oh, unfortunately, way more than would be healthy. And GE is what's tied up in this, you know, pandemic policy, nuclear codes, you know, economic collapse, our view of race, and all of the progress that we've made on it over the last couple 100 years

**Heather** 24:29

isn't I mean, paranoid schizophrenia, it which, you know, itself may be a bunch of things, you know, with different ideologies. And you know, we're not, we're no psychologists, but I think it is actually in some way. One of its many features is it's a failure of it inherently involves a failure theory of mind, because there is additional narrative going on, at least sometimes in the head of the person, and they have to imagine that as they are spouting nonsense, To someone else that that someone else is also sharing their delusions. And so this is this is a breakdown of this, again, you're not unique to humans, but one of the fundamental, you know, superpowers of humans, which is attributing different mental states to others theory of mind, right?

**Bret** 25:15

And actually, you know, maybe the solution here, which I think we're a long way from, but we need to bootstrap it and quick, the solution borrows from interpersonal experience, right, those rare interpersonal experiences that actually mirror this exact breakdown where two people diverged, and their ability to see even what narrative they share together. Yeah. And the point is that results in, you know, literally being triggered, you know, in this way that makes the other person, the enemy and all of this. And so, to the extent that the real point is, you know, what, I don't know what you're seeing on your feed, but I'm just going to make the assumption I know you to be reasonable. Therefore, I'm going to assume that the crazy things that I hear you saying are the logical result of what you actually think is going on, and that the divergence between what you think is going on, or what I think is going on, is in some sense, exogenous? Yeah. And, you know, I do wonder, I know, there have been some experiments. But I do wonder why those of us who recognize the hazard here, are not obsessed with reverse engineering as much of the algorithmic stuff as we can, including, why are we not paired with somebody who the algorithm sees as our opposite, so that we can exchange information on what reality looks like through that lens just as a corrective? Yeah, I mean, I do this informally, yeah, I'm checking in with stuff I'm not supposed to be reading because that tells me something of what other people are seeing, but there ought to be a systematic way to do it. And I don't I don't at least see a wholesale effort at it and it really needs to happen.

**Heather** 26:59

Now I remember actually, our friend Jordan Hall, formerly Jordan green Hall saying to us cash must have been five, six years ago that he was he specifically made a point of going deep and you're not just surface level, not sort of just you know, Fox versus MSNBC, but deep into the the chance basically, of both sides to see what was being believed and what was being trotted out as fact.

**Bret** 27:24

Well, fascinating. You should mention Jordan, because guess what happened to Jordan this week? Oh, he got booted from Facebook. Facebook. Amazing. Oh, my goodness. So my conjecture here is actually that there is some some of you

**Heather** 27:38

will be familiar with him from Blue church. Red church discussion. Yeah.

**Bret** 27:43

Or rebel wisdom.

**Heather** 27:45

Yeah, he's done a number of rebel wisdom interviews. He's but fabulous thinker. And he's got some amazing essays on medium as he does.

**Bret** 27:50

But I think the thing is the thing that tossed me off Facebook, and it's now tossed him and a bunch of other people were tossed to and I don't know who they were, I'm not paying real close attention to Facebook. But the thing that I think is the thread that joins us is you've got people who are not dismissible as conservatives, right? If you're a, you know, a GOP, conservative, then I don't think Facebook is all that worried about you. Because at some level, you can be dismissed by those who need to ignore the things that you're saying, You're already

**Heather** 28:26

wearing the star,

**Bret** 28:27

right? Yeah, there you go. The real problematic cases are the ones who aren't buying this woke stuff that is taking over these institutions, but can't be dismissed as conservatives for whatever reason are either too heterodox or too liberal or something like that? Because that is the thing that breaks the damn narrative. And so,

**Heather** 28:47

yeah, we need they they need ideologues in order to effectively categorize and market to and control Yeah.

**Bret** 28:55

However, something is bizarre. I went back when I was left back into Facebook and began to look at who my friends on Facebook are. It's pretty interesting. There's some pretty powerful people in that friend group. And I'm sure Jordan will be able to say the same thing. So I have the sense that there's a battle going on and face powerful and techspace. Powerful. Yeah, very much so. And so anyway, this has got to be super awkward inside Facebook, we may never know what's going on there. But

**Heather** 29:25

well, when you you mentioned this to me off air a couple days ago. And you know, I said to you, I think maybe there's a power struggle going on, but I think at least some of these events, and maybe a majority of them, maybe a vast majority of them are attributable to the fact that in many domains, the adults in charge have put interns sometimes unpaid entirely sometimes underpaid, fresh out of college, super woke, you know, brim heads brimming with postmodernist critical race theory fill in the blank studies here. Non sense in charge of things like social media feeds and making decisions about about censoring accounts, basically, because these are this, this is work that requires a desire to spend a lot of time in those in those in those spaces. And also is, is kind of rote. But it turns out that this kind of rote work actually has tremendous power. So we've they we didn't they, the they would be adults, both ceded power in, in parenting, and helped create this, this mess among nearly an entire generation. And, and now many of the, the whelk young are in charge of effectively policing what we all are allowed to see.

**Bret** 30:44

Yeah, but it's even one step worse than this, because you've got that thread through which total nonsense of a woke stripe has reached a level of, you know, commonality and acceptance that it makes it dangerous. But then you have this other thing, which I don't think is inherently closely related to it, right, which is the corrupt, left, the technocratic, corrupt left, which is attempting to maintain its power. And my point would be is if you come at this from the question of Well, okay, what does a heterodox person conclude about all of the issues of the day, right? Two things they are likely to conclude are one, that the work stuff is dangerous, and not true. And to that the Democratic Party is not defending the interests of common people and is actually a cryptically corrupt force that maintains the status quo and keeps power held tightly on a small group. And the point is, okay, so the platform's are now inhabited by people motivated by the former and owned by people motivated by the ladder, and they've teamed up in this unholy alliance. And that is the really scary thing, because the the kind of power to adjust the way we think, or whether we think that is contained in the algorithmic technical layer is immense.

**Heather** 32:17

Yeah, no, it sure is. Can we talk about another scary Alliance?

**Bret** 32:21

Wonderful, let's talk about another scary ally.

**Heather** 32:24

Bernie Sanders endorsed Sarah and her own for mayor of Portland. Yes, he did. Sarah and her own for those of you not in Portland, or who have missed our earlier conversations is the contender for Mayor against Ted Wheeler, who is the incumbent and who has done a mostly just terrible job kowtowing to the protesters and the writers and making sure to leave the police with very little options in terms of shutting down the violence that's been happening in Portland where we have a 30 year high in terms of the more murder rate. We have your just, it's it's been it's been bad. And I'll say a little bit more about that later. So early in the summer, when the protests which nightly become riots and have every single night since they started in the end of May. We were thinking Well, okay, I'm Ted Wheeler is up for election. And we just had not been paying much attention to local the local politics. You know that that was one error that we made. The turns out that in the primary Sarah and around who came in Far, far behind, Ted Wheeler came in with enough votes that are run off as necessary. And now it's the two of them in not the most recent poll, but a poll, the penultimate poll that was done yet around was 11 points ahead in the mayoral race against Wheeler. And this is terrifying. We are now in a position of needing Wheeler who has been bumbling and incompetent and helped lead Portland to the brink of disaster. We need Wheeler to stay in office because the the the opposition is a dangerous Loon. And now we have Bernie Sanders boy endorsing her so let me just I want to read from a little text exchange I had with one of her staffers. Oh, sure. So this many everyone really I'm sure now is getting these unsolicited texts from people saying hey, you're registered wherever you are. We know that you're gonna vote for him and if you if you don't well, then what's wrong with you? So we've gotten them for the Democrats, the national level at the state level and at the mural level, and I got something from a staffer for a camera fan, I'm not gonna read the whole interchange. But in the in my in my final thing to her, I said, a strong criminal element is being allowed to destroy property and businesses do actual harm to people and terrorize many in a cloak of anti racism and anti fascism. That looks like a convenient lie to get people to go along. I can't vote for someone who supports and Tifa does he enter Oh, have published statements on what has been happening in the streets since George Ford's death. This is an early September, the staffer responded in full quote, Sarah is a progressive an educator and she stands opposed to fascism. The media, especially right wing outlets love to demonize Sarah because of what she represents a true challenge to the conservative establishment who is ready for change. Sarah doesn't want America to turn to an authoritarian state. So she opposes fascism, and calls herself an everyday anti fascist like so many of us that stand opposed to extremism might. Sarah is a working class mom, and an entrepreneur, a cyclist, an urban planner, who studied at PSU. Sarah isn't a radical, she's just unapologetic about being right when confronted with injustice that scares people who would rather see progress fail. I don't I don't even know how much of this is true. Like I don't know, in what way and around is supposedly an educator, I looked to backup that claim and I can't find anything. Also on some page I found she's listed as a professor at PSU and she doesn't even have a PhD. So I honestly don't know if any of these claims are true. I know. She's certainly schooling Wheeler. Yes. So but yeah, bigger bigger than to just try to fact check this litany of supposedly attributes This woman has. It's it's the same kind of twisted language that is passing for logic on so much of the left right now. Well, we

**Bret** 36:22

should also point out for you know, since very few of our our listeners are Portland residents who will probably even know who Sarah Iran is. That's why I gave a little preamble. Right. But I mean, you know, among the things that she has done visibly. She broadcast a tweet in which she shows a photograph of what she says is her favorite. Here's how I voted. ballot picture.

**Heather** 36:50

This is from when she was running for mayor in 2016. Right and people were sending her pictures of their ballots where they had voted for her for mayor. And this ballot had other slate of people.

**Bret** 37:02

Yes, except for the vote for her. They were all right in. Yep. And all the writings were I think Stalin was on their dollar three times now. Yeah.

**Heather** 37:17

Angela Davis, I think was there. It was it was a who's who? of, of cast Castro's desperately Yep.

**Bret** 37:27

So in any case, look, this is not funny. This is not funny. Last night, I believe it was last night. The perpetual Riot was in Vancouver, Washington, just north of the Columbia River here.

**Heather** 37:44

Not Vancouver, BC it's it's Greater Portland. It's basically

**Bret** 37:48

a suburb of Portland. And anyway, with less tax, I think, yeah, no income tax. But But anyway, the rioters were in the streets doing something that they've gotten used to doing, which is harassing citizens and insisting that they wake up, and

**Heather** 38:12

oh, we're awake. Yeah. And you guys recently it's,

**Bret** 38:15

it's a roving menace. And I think the idea is that at some level, they've settled upon spooking one neighborhood after the next so that people understand there's a mob in the street, and it regards you as the enemy unless you make certain noises. And so in that context, right to be broadcasting, and at the very least, I believe she rebroadcast this. This tweeted picture recently. So in the context of the modern of this current electoral cycle, for her to be playing games with famous despots, like, you know, if you're in a friend group, and they know you're really well, and they know that that's the opposite of who you are, it's one thing to make those jokes. It's another thing entirely. When we are actually watching something with many elements of a communist revolution, marching through the streets, intimidating citizens engaged in violence, damaging courthouses, all the stuff that has no moment to be on the ballot, running for mayor and joking about this stuff. And my guess, and I guess it's my hope, also, is that Bernie Sanders got bad info. Maybe he's got people on his staff who were who just think the farther left something is the better. Or maybe he you know, somebody looked at the websites of the various candidates, and she sounded more progressive because she makes an effort to do that. And that this was a careless endorsement. Yeah. But on the other hand, you and I and several others tweeted at him yesterday saying this was a terrible error and you're putting the people of Portland in jeopardy,

**Heather** 39:59

right? You think his endorsement potentially really makes a difference? Yeah, it's

**Bret** 40:02

a close race and the fact is, and a close race at this scale, of course his endorsement could make it could make the difference. And I don't know what happens if Biden wins and IANA. Ron wins. I don't know what happens to Portland, but it isn't going to be good.

**Heather** 40:17

Nope. Nope, it's not. So, baby, speaking of our narratives about Portland, and what it is that we understand to be true, as opposed to what is being put out there in the world. The Guardian published an op ed, I think it was today maybe last night by a woman who moved to Portland from London with her family in 2015. But finds it not to be the liberal paradise she was expecting. And this here actually I can, I can put it up briefly. And then I'll just read a couple of Here we go. So we left the UK for Portland expressing liberal dream, that wasn't the reality. And so she is a South Asian, presumably, I don't know if she says that in the in the piece. But she talks about being a brown person, which is difficult, but hard, easier than being a black person. So she even specifies at that level. And apparently her husband here. His mom lives in Portland, but they moved from London five years ago. And they're really thinking of moving back. So if I may have my screen back, Zachary. She her take is, as has been noted online well written, and I'm sorry, well written isn't sufficient. It's it reminds It reminds me talking about a tape being well written of the students of ours who when we would have them read The Selfish Gene. First up in an in a number of our programs by Dawkins would object to it on the basis of his tone. Like, you know, you can object to his tone, or you could like the way that she puts words together, but we're asking you to think about the content. And yes, the way it's written does have an effect on how you think about the content, but it can't be first and can't be the only thing that you have to say about it. So she just just a few quick quote she calls what has been going on in Portland predominantly peaceful protests, something with which we are well familiar. She says small groups who damaged property grabs national headlines, alighting the fact that actually there's been a lot more than property damage has been visit. There's been violence to people including killings. The quote scare quotes though riots were confined to a couple of blocks downtown. Nope, not true. The protesters were not threatening Portlanders. What? No, and I imagine that's a kind of a cryptic dog whistle to the man who was actually murdered by the guy who was then killed by police up near Olympia, Washington was maybe not a portlander I don't even I don't remember if that's true, but I sort of imagined that might be what that little wordplay is about their quote we took our seven year old to family friendly protests. Yeah maybe and I'll bet you got out of there before the sun went down Didn't you quote meanwhile the police were threatening so she you know she goes through all of this evidence of how peaceful it is by simply claiming how peaceful it is. And then she goes into the usual scare tactics the fear mongering so it made me wonder you know is this willful deception or she legit legitimately confused and now of course it's both of course she's involved in she's got deep seated fear of other in part actually like she's she's got the same deep seated fear of other she displays when she's talking about being in Eastern Oregon and not wanting to get into the car because you know, she reads it as people don't like the color of her skin. But this this strikes me as as fear that is, I don't think mostly mostly founded in the state of Oregon at this point. Like I like it's not mine to say at some level because I'm not her and I haven't been traveling in Eastern Oregon with my family with brown skin, but really so this like deep seated fear struck me as exactly the same style of deep seated fear that actual white nationalists have about people who look different from them. Or is it intentionally selective storytelling and spinning up what is true? I think it's some of both, I think I think he's got some of both there and just before you respond, let me just reread in Episode 48. So four episodes go I read from the beginning of my then brand new I say in the glossy Swiss magazine, schreiter. Mona, I want to share just the first paragraph again here.

**Heather** 44:34

Because lest you wonder what I think and I think you think also was going on in the streets of Portland. It looks like this. George Floyd doesn't you don't have to show exact George Floyd died to the need of a police officer in Minneapolis in the end of May. And people spill onto the streets of American cities outraged police brutality and racial bias and exhausted by COVID-19 lockdowns in Portland, Oregon, where I live those Tests turned into riots nearly every single night last summer, the homicide rate climbed to the highest it's been 30 years. One late night in mid August, a man was dragged from his car and beaten by a small band of thugs. The next day on a bluebird sky morning, some of the few stores nearby that were not boarded up had shop owners out on the sidewalks, cleaning up from the mayhem of the previous night. In this once bustling downtown, normally, human activity is almost entirely absent while the sun shines. And at night, the chaos resumes, fires are started, people are assaulted, human feces is literally thrown around. Some would tell you that my mentioning these facts is evidence that I'm on the political right. In fact, I am and hollows have been on the left. So that's my version. Her version looks almost nothing like that. And yet here we are living in the same city. And it's the negative. It's the negative.

**Bret** 45:53

That's the negative but photographic negatives? Yeah, like the photographic negative. So I want to point out two things. Yeah, one, I think I know what she's doing. And I think it works like this. There is a template, there's a narrative template of what those who are pushing in this direction, let's take them as honest and wanting a revolution that they believe will make things better, I believe they are crazy in this assessment. But let us imagine that privately, this is what they think. And so they are sparing nothing in the attempt to advance this narrative. So the point is, one way to score a point in their universe, is to put something into the world that advances this narrative. And part of this narrative is that the counter narrative is itself counterfeit, right? So if you pay attention to the Portland subreddit, for example, this is constant, right? It is a constant stream of things designed to suggest Portland is fine. It is being portrayed as not fine by right wing zealots and fascists The cause is Trump, the response is peaceful. It's constant. Right? So here you have

**Heather** 47:10

it was the counter narrative that was that was counterfeit. I think I missed her narrative

**Bret** 47:14

is counterfeit. But inside of that narrative, why is it that you are seeing all this stuff about something being wrong in Portland? If in fact, Portland is fine? And it's a bunch of peaceful liberals protesting against federal fascism? Oh, the answer is, that's a right wing talking point that's being advanced into the world, it's nonsense, you can go walk out into Portland, you see any fires, you know, this kind of thing. So I believe what he's doing is taking the template and it's a little bit like being jumped into a gang. Right? You're being jumped into a gang? The answer is, well, if you're going to be jumped into the gang, you have to, I don't know this phrase, you have to commit these crimes, or you have to endure this beating, or you have to advance this cause, or you have to bring back this thing, whatever it is. And so in effect, there is a set of things that you can do that make you one of the mob, and one of them is advancing this with whatever tools you have to bring to bear. And I would point out, you've got your corrective, right, you've described what you see, you can compare it to what she sees. And we also have, in this case, the marvelous comparison of what Douglas Murray saw. Yeah, because of course, he's coming from London, and Douglas Murray sat in that very chair and said, this is not normal. Yeah, I have seen these things. But I have never seen them in a first world city. Right. This is not normal. And and you

**Heather** 48:40

know what he didn't? Well, I have not finished listening to your conversation with this morning yet, but when we had dinner with him and what I have listened to, I don't think he said he's seen even these things. He said he's seen journalists worried and fearful for their lives. And obviously, we all know that journalists have been killed. But he I think he said that he hasn't even seen and he has been a lot of places with civil unrest. Graffiti, advocating for the killing of a journalist. He's talking about Andy No. And the authorities doing nothing about it, it just being allowed to stand. So that actually was I think you said novel in his experience.

**Bret** 49:22

Yeah, I believe he did say that that was novel in his experience. And obviously, it's a tacit sanction, yes. Which is frightening, right? Andy is among the only people giving a sense for what's actually going on in Portland on a daily basis. And of course, they want to do away with him because their whole phony narrative depends on you not being able to check for yourself and frankly, you want to know what's going on in Portland. Look at what's on Andy knows feed. It's documented it's video, right? It's not to say that that's the full page on the feed is certainly happening.

**Heather** 49:55

It's not everything that's going on in Portland. Certainly, it's been curated. But it's not fabricated, curated, but not fabricated,

**Bret** 50:02

curated but not fabricated. And because it is alone in telling the true story of what's going on in Portland, you know, the fact that it's curated, it doesn't even begin to get at what it's up against with respect to, to phony narrative. Yeah. So if I can take one little detour here, yeah, there's something I wanted to introduce which a friend pointed this out in a conversation some weeks ago, and it has stuck with me, there is a scientific result that increasingly, I think, explains one of the weirdest features of this modern chaos, which is the tendency of the claims to be most overblown in places where they are least likely to be true. Right? So Portland is the site of these riots over anti black racism. Portland is as liberal a city as exists in the country. Presumably anti black racism is less prevalent here than it is almost anywhere else. Why is it happening? Same thing with evergreen? Why was evergreen the site of this most incredible set of protests about white supremacy, of all places for white supremacy? To be difficult to find you would imagine evergreen would be top of the list. And you know, for me to be the first target

**Heather** 51:26

demonstrates just how difficult it was

**Bret** 51:29

difficult to find. So anyway, here's the question, Zack, could you put up the paper that I sent you?

**Bret** 51:41

So what this paper describes is an experiment Oh, geez, I'm not gonna be able to read it. Okay, any chance you can make a little bigger and scroll up to the abstract. The

**Heather** 51:55

delegates know. And scroll up so we can see the abstract. There we

**Bret** 52:01

go. So what this paper describes is an experiment that tested what people's perception initially about color having no connotation whatsoever, blue versus purple. people's perception of color as one color in the experiment became increasingly rare. So let me read the abstract to the extent I can do that from here.

**Heather** 52:26

You want me? Yeah, you wanna do I can see, why do some social problems seem so intractable? In a series of experiments, we show that people often respond to decreases in the prevalence of a stimulus by expanding their concept of it. When blue dots became rare, participants began to see purple dots as blue. When threatening faces became rare, participants began to see neutral faces as threatening. And when unethical requests became rare, participants began to see innocuous requests as unethical. This prevalence induced concept change occurred even when participants were forewarned about it. And even when they were instructed and paid to resist it, social problems may seem intractable, in part, because reductions in their prevalence lead people to see more of them. Wow. So this is like, like with the Noam Chomsky interview in the New Yorker, I have not seen this before. So I have not read the paper. I can't say what's in it, or this is published, you said 2018. Yeah. Or it can be said that to me off air. So there's probably been time for rebuttal. If there has been time for a bottle. And I don't know if there has been, I

**Bret** 53:28

looked, I did not, I do not find it a rebuttal.

**Heather** 53:32

Amazing. It's

**Bret** 53:34

amazing. So if we can just put this in context, you and I immediately spot in that abstract. A claim that If true, has tremendous implications for things like claims of injustice. In effect, what we've got is a kind of built in apparently neurological relativism, that as something becomes rare, finds it where it isn't. Now you can imagine that there are all kinds of reasons that your neurobiology would have such a feature, right? Imagine neurological relativism, you're searching for berries, right? The berries you will find first are going to be the ones that are obvious and right in front of your face. As those get depleted. Because you've picked all the good ones, you have to become increasingly sensitive. So diminishing returns causes your perception to need to get more sensitive, you need to effectively become visually very paranoid in order to spot the one that's halfway hidden by the least. I know Yeah, that's an incredible phrase, isn't it? But visually very paranoid and visually very paranoid. Yes. But okay, so you can imagine that this could result in you collecting more berries per hour, a kind of increase in your sensitivity, the problem or

**Heather** 54:45

it's, you've hit that point and the diminishing returns curve where you should go fish instead or go to a totally different part of the right or part of your locale. No matter

**Bret** 54:54

how that would play out. If you were looking for bears, right, right. Your sensitivity goes up, which means you keep finding the ones that are hot. harder and harder to find. And then eventually, you're seeing Phantom berries where they aren't, you're just seeing a shadow or a dark space in the thing and you're reaching in and you're getting nailed by a thorn, right? The point is that will, that calculation will hit you too. And it'll be like, I keep thinking, I'm gonna get something and there's no reward. I keep thinking I'm gonna get it, no reward, no reward.

**Heather** 55:18

Right? But there's physical feedback with regard to visually, Barry paranoia, right? There's no, there's not inherently, any actual physical feedback when it's clams that are entirely socially constructed around, I am sure that he said that to me, because he's racist,

**Bret** 55:34

right? So what you've got is a system that has, I think an objective analysis would tell you that there was a great deal of racism at the founding of the country, even people who wanted to know better still didn't, right. And that the degree to which racism is a commonly encountered phenomenon has dropped dramatically. And that at this point in history, we are in Objective terms, far better off than we were with respect to this thing that we all agree is bad.

**Heather** 56:04

However, not only that, but better than most of the world better

**Bret** 56:09

than most of the world. And we all know what the goals are, we was zero racism, right? So that's an amazing degree of progress. But the point is, what it accompanies is a decrease in actual examples of racism that you encounter, which if this paper is right, in general, which it suggests it seems to be by virtue of the fact that they weren't just looking at colors, they were looking at things like perceptions of threat and perceptions of injustice. Yeah. That what this suggests is that as the phenomenon in question becomes increasingly rare, people will find it where it isn't. Yeah. Which raises rather directly the specter that micro aggressions, and every analog of them is going to be formulated as you approach zero with respect to this being a common phenomenon. Right? And so what will that look like? Well, it will certainly in a in a case, where let's say there was zero racism in policing. And I'm not saying that there is. But let's say that we reached zero, right, there would still be bad shootings and things because to have people enforcing the law with guns guarantees, there will be a certain number of bad shootings will hit

**Heather** 57:19

something close to zero racism and policing before we will hit zero errors in violence in policing, right?

**Bret** 57:26

And then what you would predict is that people will read into events that actually weren't bad shootings, or events that were bad shootings, but were not racially biased, they read into it exactly this thing. And that, of course, could derange civilization, especially if you had an online amplification mechanism for these things. So, you know, think about the term white supremacy, right? White supremacy was a thing that everybody would have agreed was vanishingly rare 15 years ago, because we all understood it to be something pretty dramatic, right? It wasn't just garden variety, racism, it was an aggressive belief structure that, you know, crosses burning on lawns, and this kind of thing.

**Heather** 58:09

And cash, I want to say every but let's just say nearly every elected official United States would have been proud to get up and say, obviously, I oppose white supremacists, obviously, obviously,

**Bret** 58:22

right? It's the most obvious thing in the world. And now we're getting to the point where the absence of overt white supremacy, right, the relegating of that ugly, terrible phenomenon to a tiny number of people on the fringe, that doesn't matter. Right? That thing is now being read into all kinds of stuff, right? structural racism, and your failure to say anything about it is the equivalent of white supremacy. Yeah, which is insane. Right? So I would argue, first of all, we need to take the terms back white supremacy, I would argue that there is a floor a natural floor based on the common parlance interpretation of the words, that a white supremacist should, by definition, at the very least, have to be rooting for white people to rule over others, they would have to be rooting for white people to win, right? And that means that it can't be a feature of a structure. Right? It can't be a feature. If you are somebody who doesn't want to see one race win over other races, then that, to me suggests you can't be white supremacist, it doesn't mean you can't be ignorant, it doesn't mean that you can't be part of the problem. Right? You could be you could be ignoring important patterns. But that term would seem to suggest and a desire to see something rather than just a an indifference to it.

**Heather** 59:48

Yeah, I mean, there's there's a lot more to be explored here. One of my concerns with what you just said, though, is that there is widespread conflation between individuals and populations, right? But that most people actually don't understand when they have jumped that that giant gap between talking about individual versus talking about a population. And while that I find egregious, and really we should be educating people much, much better such that people understand the distinction between individual population level analysis and level of responsibility. What is less surprising to me is that well, maybe actually more more surprising in some ways is that scientists themselves contribute to this to this confusion. And I, I actually don't think I'm going to go here. Now, I think I don't, I don't quite agree with your saying, We need the terms back because I think I have been interested in getting, for instance, the term feminism back for a long time, and I sort of I sort of gave up, you know, I've been calling long before we were ever on any sort of national stage, I was calling what has been passing for feminism since the mid 90s, fo feminism, fa UX feminism. And, you know, with candy on the stage taking so much, you know, collecting so many resources and having so much power. I just I just don't know, if it's possible to take these terms back and the distend the distinction, I guess, and this is what I was going to say that, you know, can if an individual can be a white supremacist, does it necessarily follow that an organization cannot be? I don't think it necessarily follows. But I do think that it is absolutely necessary to whenever you're making that leap from a category that applies to individuals, and you are now applying it to, to, to structures to systems to populations to organizations, to be clear that that is what you're doing, and that it therefore may not hold this, therefore maybe an illegitimate move, because evolutionary processes don't work on the same in the same way between individuals and populations.

**Bret** 1:01:56

Well, okay, a couple things. One, let me clarify. It's obvious, I don't want to take the term white supremacy back I don't want yet. Right, what I want. So we were saying, right, I want to corral the term to a reasonable standard. And the important thing that we are seeing, I think we are seeing it overtake quality thought across the board is a demotion of intent, as relevant to the assessment of a the presence of a thought pattern. So you know, for, for tomsky, to say that Trump is the greatest criminal in human history, and for his explanation to be that he doesn't care about intent. The point is the hazard, right? This is garbage thinking, yeah, but

**Heather** 1:02:47

I actually think the opposite is also happening. And it's, it's causing maybe more harm. If that, you know, Chomsky can say intent doesn't matter. But for God's sake, I just so obviously wrong. And now, obviously, things that have been obviously wrong are now accepted. So we should still be paying attention. But I think this is a good segue to talking about the so called Karen act in San Francisco. The acronym stands for caution against racially and exploitative non emergencies. And it's obviously named for this epithet against white women who are middle class, upper middle class white women who are understood to be racially biased and calling the police on black men mostly when they shouldn't be. So boy, this this, this was just voted on the school board of supervisors unanimously passed this on October 27. And let's see here we have. This is just the ABC reporting on it. Zach. San Francisco leaders wanted to crack down on so called Karen's he was 911 calls to discriminate against minorities. So even the ABC reporting of it acknowledges the use of this really gross epithet. We aren't allowed to use other epithets for good reason, but newly created ones against groups who have been historically understood to be in power even when they actually Okay, so take this off. This is too distracting. Thank you. It is now somehow, okay. The actual ordinance amending the city's police code and allows anyone harmed by calls that are racially motivated to sue. So who's to decide whether or not a call was racially motivated now we our mind reading intent into 911 calls and anyone is going to think twice about making a 911 call. If they have an ability to see that they're the person who they would be calling against is a different race from them. This is this is going to have an effect that is actually dangerous. Oh, yeah. And so this this is mind reading intent. This is this is prioritizing intent, as opposed to pretending that intent to Didn't matter at all. So it's all very slapdash, and whatever serves our particular goals at the moment. So let me say that in the three months between when this ordinance was first proposed, and when it was accepted, they solicited feedback from the community. And there were two emails that I found in going through this that I found that I thought were just pointed that that exactly described what the problem with this is. And I will say that most of the feedback, most of it was negative. But the vast majority of it objected only to the name only to the epithet, and not to the actual ordinance. And the epithet is nasty and gross. And what the hell were they thinking, but it's hardly the biggest problem here. And indeed, Virginia just passed a very similar bill, that they didn't give a crazy name. It's called Hb 5098. And hate crimes in which it's a misdemeanor to knowingly give a false report to a law officer. But that becomes a felony, if that knowing false report is because of the the person that you think was perpetrating it is in any of these protected classes. So that's super dangerous, and Virginia just did the same thing. That's what the San Francisco bill has has done and or ordinance not bill wrote one person into the San Francisco Board of Supervisors during the open discussion period. This is one liberal democrat crap saddened that fellow Democrats are so blunted and blinded in their grievance that they wish to simply rearrange the parameters of institutional racism, rather than work to eliminate it. Sounds familiar? Does it not?

**Bret** 1:06:35

Yes, the turning the tables of oppression rather than ending oppression?

**Heather** 1:06:39

Exactly. And this one just a bit longer. But even more on point, I think the proposed caran Act is a bad idea. In most cases, it is nearly impossible to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that a call is racially motivated. This creates incredibly dangerous gray area in our legal system that can easily be abused. It will also cause more division in our communities, as people will undoubtedly read bias into the rulings. This will drive a wedge between the racial groups of our city and create prejudice were not existed previously, as groups start to blame each other for erroneous convictions. We are already dealing with this issue when it comes to police brutality, we don't need to add more fire to that pot. It will also promote segregation between racial groups as the potential for negative interactions start to carry more dramatic consequences, it will become safer to just avoid other racial groups and it will be worth it to work together, it will also create an incentive for criminals to target other races, because they will be able to claim racial discrimination. If a person calls the cops on them, and the cops arrived before a crime is committed. The criminal can easily say I wasn't trying to do XYZ, the color is obviously racist. This reminded me so much of the emails that you were sending in the 2016 2017 school year at evergreen, just each of these points are ones that you were making with regard to the changes that were being proposed. And and passed. At evergreen, it's the same garbage. It's the same,

**Bret** 1:07:55

same, it's the same playbook. And the worst part, which was mentioned in here is that this effectively creates a multi tiered. And now you can argue that there's always been a multi tiered set of penalties and permissions inside the law. But we all understood it was a bad thing. Yeah, right. This builds it in so that the fact is, you know, a it's basically painting a target on white women, right, because the point is, the trances that you had, you have an extra set of defenses that you can use. In this case, if you're black and you want to attack a white woman, then you have an extra set of legal questions that can be used to, to Muddy Waters. And so

**Heather** 1:08:38

so let me just like I don't know how to do it for the people who are just listening. But but for people watching, if we had the sort of ranked list of, you know, demographic characters that you that you have had that gave you full protection from the law, and historically, like white men were at the top and white women were second, and no black men were at the bottom, it was kind of like this. And it's been moving, right? And us liberals want this to go flat. And it's been moving. And it looks like they want it to do this. So it's not let's just let's overcorrect a little bit. No, they're trying to flip it. They're trying to put the previous the previous demographic indicators that caused people so much harm deaths, all of this into the position of power and privilege. And that's not what democracy should should be searching for.

**Bret** 1:09:31

Yes. And they are using the informal and discretionary aspects built into everything to do it. Right. So obviously the law here reads oh yes racially motivated. 911 calls are, you know, now going to be penalised? Well, that was already there, except that what you've done is you've added a particular slant, right? Yeah. You know, Calling 911 falsely is already a crime so anyway they're using this discretion and the thing is you know as I've said before it's effectively reparations built into every interaction at every scale every day of the year and you know this is not a viable solution to the problem even if you are strongly in favor of reparations you can't do it this way. Yep. And yet here we are.

**Heather** 1:10:27

And yet here we are. We are we are past our hour mark and unless you have something more I thought I would before before I read from a tiny bit of this book, just a page of this book do you have anything more that you want to talk about today? Besides you know everything?

**Bret** 1:10:49

Nope, I think we have we have done a decent first pass on everything

**Heather** 1:10:53

on everything and everything we chose to talk about so this is cynical theories by so I'm just gonna look up the subtitle here cynical theories of activist scholarship made everything about race, gender and identity and why this harms everybody written published this year by our friends, Helen pluck rose and James Lindsay. It is it is experienced some some weird machinations on Amazon, you know, they don't seem to really like it that much. So, you know, it's, you know, less so than Abigail shires book, irreconcilable differences, but still, you know, a bit a bit down, downplayed, and downgraded in. in the public eye, I highly recommended, I admit that I have not read all of it, but I've dipped into it. And it is exactly the remarkable resource that I expected, it would be at the point that they were telling us they're writing this. So at the very end, they have just a few what they say as a few examples of how you can recognize social injustice, while rejecting the solutions the ideology of social justice proposes. So they've got a number of principled opposition examples. Example one being, we affirm that racism remains a problem in society and needs to be addressed. we deny the critical race theory and intersectionality provide the most useful tools to do so. Since we believe that racial issues are best solved through the most rigorous analysis possible. we contend that racism is defined as prejudiced attitudes and discriminatory behavior against individuals or groups on the grounds of race, and can be successfully addressed as such. we deny that racism is hard baked in society via discourses that it is unavoidable and present in every interaction to be discovered and called out, and that this is part of a ubiquitous systemic problem that is everywhere, always an all pervasive, we deny that the best way to deal with racism is by restoring social significance to racial categories, and radically heightening their salience. And finally, we contend that each individual can choose not to hold racist views, and should be expected to do so that racism is declining over time, and becoming rarer that we can and should see one another as humans first are members of certain races. Second, that issues of race are best dealt with, by being honest about racialized experiences, while still working towards shared goals and a common vision. And that the principle of not discriminating by race should be universally upheld.

**Bret** 1:13:17

Excellent, as you would expect from those two,

**Heather** 1:13:19

as you'd expect from those two. Yeah. Oh, and I guess actually, one, one more thing we wanted to do today. If I can turn this into a link, and then have you show my screen, Zachary is totally different topic. We are here in Portland, as we have mentioned many times. And in response to the virtual schooling that looks like it may go on endlessly. And the fact that some of the public schooling options are not doing a very good job of educating a couple of friends of ours are starting in an alternative school, but they're calling a pod, but it's Wilding Academy, and it's here on the screen, and we'll put a link in the description as well. And it's for basically 12 to 15 year olds. Let's see. Yeah. 12 to 15 year olds, sort of Late Middle School, early High School. It's going to be based out in Gresham, but with a lot of outdoor time we are considering whether or not to have our younger son, move out of his public school situation into this. But regardless of whether or not we do that, our friend Sam and Robin, who are starting this up, are I think are going to do an excellent job. And we encourage anyone with kids of that age in the Portland area who are thinking that they might want something different for their kids educationally to look into it.

**Bret** 1:14:48

golden opportunity. Yeah. All right. We have reached the end of the first portion of Darkhorse podcast live number 52.

**Heather** 1:15:00

Yes, we have. So we will be coming back in 15 minutes to answer your superior questions that you asked this hour and next. You as always can join us on our Patreon online to get access to a private q&a every month, the last Sunday of the month. On Brett's in one, a couple of things are to join him for small conversations. The first of this month is tomorrow

**Bret** 1:15:24

is tomorrow at 10am if you are an attendee of that conversation zoom did something funny when I created the the schedule, which is it corrected in advance for daylight savings time, so the time reads incorrectly in the invite, but it's 10 o'clock am tomorrow.

**Heather** 1:15:44

If it imagines you're counting up hours as opposed to you know when it is in the schedule Anyway,

**Bret** 1:15:48

it was created at five times to make sure I wasn't making an error and it did it every time. So

**Heather** 1:15:53

okay, so it's gonna be 10am as usual for two hours. There's a Discord server that you get access to other Patreon owns. The Dark Horse podcast clips channel is producing clips almost daily at this point. So subscribe to that too. If and if there's if there are clips that you particularly like to see from any of these episodes, you can contact the moderator at Dark Horse moderator. Is that the web? Is that the email address? I don't remember I'm sorry. And we will see you in 15 minutes. All right.

**Bret** 1:16:26

Well, everyone