Bret and Heather 53rd DarkHorse Podcast Livestream\_ Biden, T...

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**SPEAKERS**

Bret, Heather

**Bret** 00:09

Hey folks, welcome to the Dark Horse podcast, our 54th live stream third 53rd live stream. A bit of advice, I think probably you ought to sit down for this because things are afoot in the world. I don't know that any of us saw this coming. But it has happened. We have seen Joe Biden nominally win the presidency of the United States. Is that your understanding?

**Heather** 00:35

That is certainly what has been declared by most of the news outlets as of I don't know, an hour or two ago.

**Bret** 00:43

Yeah, an hour or two ago. So we're obviously going to talk a great deal about what the implications of this are. And I must say, strangely, although we have been in slow motion for days watching this, this eventuality emerge one state at a time and then one percentage point at a time, the fact that it is still a bit stunning, I must say, or maybe fact if it is the wrong way to describe it.

**Heather** 01:16

So what do you think? What do you think is actually is actually emerging? And what will happen?

**Bret** 01:22

Well, I have the sense, I mean, we saw obviously the very odd press conference at the landscaping shop

**Heather** 01:30

outside of Philadelphia this morning. Yes, not everyone paying attention. May may be aware of this, though.

**Bret** 01:35

So there was a press conference, a press conference with Rudy Rudy Giuliani, who was in front of a rather robust hose reel, with a nice hose reel. I mean, this was definitely like heavy duty. This was not a homeowner version. And anyway, he delivered a a speech about anomalies that are alleged in the electoral process, especially in Philadelphia, and brought out several poll watchers and had them describe the experiences they had had, and vowed to continue fighting in the courts,

**Heather** 02:18

their testimony, so to speak, suggesting that they had not been allowed to do the jobs that they were brought in to do.

**Bret** 02:25

Right. And so anyway, there's a question about what one makes of it. My sense is that, well, a we're obviously in a very dangerous situation that many of us saw coming where we have an election that many people do not believe is legitimate. And we have court challenges which are being issued as networks are declaring victory in the election, we have the danger of courts delivering us a a verdict, which will then cause who dis believes the process is fair to flip to the other side. And anyway, there's a question about what will happen, I must say, I expect that what will happen is Joe Biden will be inaugurated, I think Trump will step down.

**Heather** 03:27

And which means that that we were wrong, if that comes to pass, right, like we both thought that Trump would win, not having voted for him ourselves. But having understood that neither of the two, the two main candidates for president came without real danger. But we, certainly a couple of months ago, I felt that Trump was quite very likely to win and just in the last few weeks, I'm not I'm not as sure as I was. And what is true in the last, I guess it's four, three and a half days now since the polls have been closed, is that I am less and less sure that we have intact democratic processes at almost any level. And that is terrifying.

**Bret** 04:18

Yeah, it is. It is terrifying. And you know that we could take this apart in lots of ways. I would say, baseline would be the recognition that there are literally trillions of dollars at stake in a US presidential elections. And that's an awful lot of incentive for shenanigans. And the fact is, we're dealing with, you know, at the upper echelon of these major political parties, we're dealing with absolutely ruthless people who will use any tools at their disposal. And so you know, at some level Personally, I wouldn't put it past that I wouldn't put it past them to engage in fraud. But then there are lots of reasons that you know, there are things that people would do that they don't do because they're illegal and the penalties are high. Are we in that situation? Am I you know, I don't think we can know.

**Heather** 05:09

And some people won't engage in fraud when it comes to tampering with democracy, because they're actually patriots Oh, and actually have a moral center that tells them that they do not behave that way.

**Bret** 05:20

huge number of people would not engage in float run. In fact, I think most people wouldn't. But the problem is, there's a question about whether the process selects for

**Heather** 05:29

indium, exactly the opposite. And that process is, as we've said, about so many things, the process itself is evolutionary. And it is not as clear here what the response might be, but it will involve an understanding of evolutionary forces as well.

**Bret** 05:46

Absolutely. So I would also point out that whatever has happened in the election, let's assume that the election is being conducted honorably, that the counting is being conducted honorably, I've seen a lot of debunking of claims of fraud, and a lot of the debunking is fairly compelling their explanations for lots of stuff that people are initially concerned about, which doesn't mean that that's true for everything. But

**Heather** 06:15

and there will be error, for sure, in in a vote that is this huge, without there inherently being an indication of fraud, right? error, error will exist and

**Bret** 06:26

error will exist. And you would expect it to be equally likely in both directions, you know, which is why recounts cause numbers to shift, because there's always a certain amount of noise in the system. However, I would point out the following thing. The tech platforms are absolutely monolithic in their support for one side, over the other. And they have both tremendous power, they have no legal restrictions. And we have seen lots of evidence of them playing games with controlling, you know, who gets to say what, when a warning is appended to this person's perspective for that person. So the fact is, the heavy hand on the scale of the tech platforms is undeniable. Right now, whether it's permissible, we can argue about but we can't argue that that, you know, wasn't there because we saw it up close. Now, what I think is clear, is that this was a squeaker of an election. Right? Now, it may not be in the end, all that close at the electoral college level. But obviously the reason that we're hanging on what are we Five days later here, four days later, you know, still, you know, arguing about precincts and what percentage of the ballots are counted. And all of that is that this is a very close election. And so I think it is clear and a

**Heather** 07:53

huge number of people voted, which means it's both sides. It's it's very close. And the numbers if we are to believe the numbers now are something like 70 million to 73 million votes at the popular vote level for Trump versus Biden, which is a the opposite of a landslide, right? The opposite of a mandate. That even though Trump voters and Trump supporters are pilloried, and lambasted and denounced and called reprehensible, and all of this, almost half of the people who went out to vote or stayed in devote and took their ballots to the ballot boxes of the mailboxes, still voted for him. So this this, I've already seen claims that this is a mandate against socialism, for essence. But what what it certainly is not, is an indication that the entire country is in lockstep

**Bret** 08:54

quite the opposite. No, quite the opposite. What were the numbers you cited,

**Heather** 08:58

I believe it's something like 73 million and 70 million at this point 73 million for for Biden and 70 million for Trump. But of course, there will be those who disagree with those numbers on the basis that some of the votes are fraudulent, or some of the ballots are fraudulent. But those are the those are the numbers ish that I'm seeing. So a very,

**Bret** 09:15

a very divided, very active election, a large number of people voted. But what I would argue is that given the role that big tech is playing in our lives, I think the chances that their influence which they obviously wielded played a decisive difference in the selection, the chances are very, very high. Right. So whatever it is, that we conclude from this, we really ought to recognize that nobody ought to be crowing here about their victory and what it means because what it means is actually quite frightening. And it's, you know, it's not a mandate for me. Anything it's chaos?

**Heather** 10:01

Yeah, it's chaos. It is at some level, a reveal of continued influence peddling having an effect on elections as you would think it must, all the time. But this, in fact, was one of the things that Trump went into office the first time arguing against that he didn't he didn't have the kind of influence to peddle in order to get people on his side that all of the mainstream candidates from the Republican Party and the Democratic Party have had, and are fighting hard to retain.

**Bret** 10:36

Yeah, now we talk a lot about influence peddling. And people I get a lot of correspondence people are I think puzzled by by the term. But I would say that there's something that I think

**Heather** 10:51

I'll should be I didn't I didn't know that. Should we define it, then? Well,

**Bret** 10:54

I mean, it's just, you know, it's selling your power power earned in a democratic process, selling your power to moneyed interests. And I think part of the problem is that influence peddling is supposed to be illegal, right? And in a narrow sense, it's illegal. But in a broad sense, it's most definitely not illegal, which is to say that mechanisms evolve that remain, you know, inside of the legally tolerated behavior, but that clearly amount to influence peddling.

**Heather** 11:26

Yeah, a lot of quid pro quos, this for that could be seen as influence peddling. And if you're simply exchanging one good for another one vote for a future promise, any number of things, some of those will be strictly illegal, and some of them the law won't have anything to say about at all.

**Bret** 11:44

Well, you know, I remember from a civics class when I must have been, I don't know was I nine years old. And I maybe the one time in my life, I heard the term log rolling, which was a description of what would sometimes be termed how the sausage is made that log rolling in a in the American political context is basically involves trading votes, which is was you know, this was described in a civics book, it was not it's not illegal, and I don't even bad necessarily, I've

**Heather** 12:19

never heard it before. And I don't get the metaphor.

**Bret** 12:21

Well, the I don't know exactly. even know what it's a reference to the idea of

**Heather** 12:25

imagining people on rivers, as you know, in logging camps moving downstream. I just, I don't I can't even fathom what actually means.

**Bret** 12:35

Yeah, I don't know. Maybe it has to do with the turn of the logs. I mean, you've raised some, you know,

**Heather** 12:40

on a river with them, right. But I don't understand

**Bret** 12:43

what the idea was, like, rolling. I mean, it's possible I imagined the whole thing. But

**Heather** 12:50

this is the this is the moment you were paying attention in school. It was

**Bret** 12:53

one it was on the list. But the the idea was that people in Congress trade votes for them. And there's nothing inherently wrong with this. In other words, you know, you can have people on two sides of the aisle who decide hey, you know, I really want this thing I think it's good for the country. You don't feel that strongly about it. You want that thing, and I don't feel that strongly about it. How about we team up? That's a natural process. And so the point is, that's not influenced peddling. It does great into something else. quid pro quos, you know of a different sort. quid pro quos between elected officials and moneyed interests are, of course, they are illegal, but there are, you know, an indefinitely large number of ways that you can do it, that it can't be proven. And I will tell you, the question of, you know, deniability plausible and otherwise is so central to the questions of influence peddling that, you know, we really need to all get on the same page about it. But the fact of the house having impeached the president, which I would argue was the result of a more or less out in the open conspiracy against the president since he took office that found something that actually was very disturbing. Of course, you know, the abuse of power by the President was real where the President was trying to get hunter Biden of all people investigated in Ukraine. And so, anyway, you've got something very troubling on both sides. You've got a political apparatus that's out of control, hell bent on destroying a democratically elected president that then does find something disturbing, you know, arguably justifying an impeachment, but what is it that was you know, at the core of the abuse of power by by Trump was a question of influence peddling. By hunter Biden of his father's influence, right? And then what comes spilling out at the end of this electoral cycle is evidence of how deep the rabbit hole goes. Now, does any of it necessarily say that? You know, Joe Biden was aware of it? No. On the other hand, you know, it is suggestive of some thing that we just don't see that's going on all of all the time that does involve, you know, foreign powers, and it involves our interest as Americans being compromised, because there's some sort of an economic exchange going on behind the scenes that we're just never made aware of. Right. Very dangerous stuff.

**Heather** 15:41

It is. Here's something else it's dangerous. You ready? Oh, yeah. Yeah, I think you've probably seen this. Hold on just a second. Okay, here we go. Zack. show my screen here. sound so just report this is a tweet just reported White House staff are starting to look for jobs. Employers, considering them should know their consequences for anyone for hiring anyone who helps Trump attack American values. Find out how at the Trump accountability project. The Trump accountability project says remember what they did, we must never forget those who furthered the Trump agenda, we should welcome in our fellow Americans with whom we should welcome in our fellow Americans with whom we differ politically. But those who took a paycheck from the Trump administration should not profit from their efforts to terror democracy apart. The world should never forget those who, when faced with a decision chose to put their money their time their reputations behind separating children from their families, encouraging racism and anti semitism and negligently causing the unnecessary loss of life and economic devastation from our country's failed response to the covid 19 pandemic. I will give Trump no no props at all for his response to COVID-19. It was the worst series of actions of his presidency. But the other things on this list are either false or extreme exaggerations. And that's not really the point here, though. Is it? Yeah, that's the point. The point is, can they hear it themselves? Do they have any idea and incidentally, I would recommend, you know, so I've put myself I've signed up with a with a throwaway email account, to find out what they're up to as they start to be up to something this Trump accountability project. But at the same time before you respond, here we have Alexandria ocasio Cortez AOC. asking, is anyone archiving these Trump's sycophants for when they try to downplay or deny their complicity in the future? I foresee decent possibility of made deleted tweets, writings, photos in the future. Okay.

**Bret** 17:54

With 329,000 likes, yeah.

**Heather** 17:58

And just one more before we talk about this, your brother Eric, quote, tweeted AOC in that tweet and said you should google Section A of the reserve index, perhaps there should be a minimal history example that woke people into the left, you don't seem to understand the left its history or its objectives. You sound like the other team, you aren't the left, you're the other guys. This, of course, is something that he and you and I and many others have been saying throughout know, our critique of this horrifying nonsense that is happening on the far left of the party is not evidence that we are on the right, it is evidence that we are actually over the left from when the left meant openness and inquiry and the ability to disagree with people without conflating that disagreement with a complete dismantling of them as human beings. So the section of the reserve index, apparently this section A is been disappeared now through no nefarious means. The Reserve index, actually, I'll just pull it Oh, God, where did my thing go? The Reserve index, just you don't have to show the SEC. This is just Wikipedia. It's you know, there's a lot there's a lot here is and I was going to read it, but now I can't find it. So the reserve index as opposed to the security index security index is the list by the FBI of people that the FBI considers dangerous, who might commit acts inimical to the national defense and public safety the United States in time of emergency. The Reserve index on the other hand, again, I'm just quoting Wikipedia listed all left wingers and individuals suspected of being a communist by the 1950s. For instance, there were 5000 names under the security index while the reserve index had 50,000 in the Chicago field office. Some of those people were Martin Luther King, and I feel like I don't see it here. No, but I feel like Robson was on that Paul Robeson. Yeah sense and it was Hoover, Jagger Hoover who put Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. On the reserve index in retaliation for and again, I'm just quoting Wikipedia, his civil rights work and worldwide popularity.

**Bret** 20:13

Yep. So it will not surprise you at all. You didn't see it. But I saw a tweet also and could not restrain myself I had to respond back when you put up my response to her. I said you are an elected representative in a democratic republic and you are setting the stage for retribution against fellow citizens for the crime of holding a different opinion. It's unAmerican, you should stop it and counsel others to do the same. And for anyone who doubts that I wrote that I apparently misspelled Council. There are two different ways. Yes, again, it's about Yeah. So here's the thing, there's a battle coming about this. First of all, this is a terrible instinct, this is an absolutely appalling instinct that you are going to hound the people leaving office and punish them for the very fact of being on the other side. And

**Heather** 21:07

mean, not only does it forebode truly awful possibilities, but at the at the at a minimum, it reveals that they thrive on division. Oh, right, that the the extremists really on the left side of the Democratic Party, thrive on division have no interest in reestablishing that we're all Americans and all human. And we are all in this together and should be seeking a better and more prosperous and more equal, but not equitable future. It just it puts the light all of that they're not interested in that. Yep.

**Bret** 21:45

Now I will say Trump is far from innocent in this, of course, his his whole locker up thing during the 2016 campaign was appalling for the same reason. But at some level, we have to recognize that we as Americans, have every interest in preventing this arms race, right, where we treat the other side as criminals. And we start to recognize the mechanisms that allow this to be justified. So if you chase down what AFC goes on to say in her next tweet, you know, it's about accountability. And there are these syllogisms that are used to protect this absolutely vile behavior, which have to do, you know, you will hear you know, that there is freedom of speech, but there's no freedom from accountability, right? And on the one hand, that's true. On the other hand, it's what's implied, right, accountability is one thing, nobody is saying, we shouldn't remember who supported him. And frankly, you and I have advocated that one way to make the system more sensible is to get people who say crazy things, to write it down, right, so that they can remember what they once thought. But that's very different than collecting information on people, and then using it to adjust their ability to earn a living. The fact is, you have to leave room for honest disagreements, I would point out that the side that is now going around demonizing the Trump administration, and you know, that term sick offense, that does not suggest that they're even talking about people who were formally part of it. They're talking about people who liked it.

**Heather** 23:24

And are they in fact talking about 70 million Trump voters?

**Bret** 23:27

Right? Are they in fact talking about something like that, and in a world where we are talking about all kinds of crazy stuff on the far left, right, about how to sort of informally restructure all of our interactions so that the right people end up benefiting? This is just part of they

**Heather** 23:42

talked, they talking about us, not Trump voters, but people who said with regard to his rule on for instance, critical race theory, yeah. Good one, keep that up.

**Bret** 23:52

Right. And in fact, we've seen the tech platforms who are effectively partnered with this ideology. We've seen them treat the Unity movement the same way when the Unity movement was decidedly not Trump, not Biden. Yep. Right. So yes, the dangerous here are, are many and the echoes of history and the punitive nature of politics when you have a system that is less dynamic and less fairness oriented than ours are hard to miss. Yes, it is. So Oh, the other thing I wanted to point out, so you've got the, you've got these little syllogisms about, you know, intent doesn't matter, its consequences that matter right now, I can defend that sentence. But I also know what it means in these cases, and what it means cannot be defended.

**Heather** 24:49

And there are also obviously places in for instance, the legal system where intense does matter. Well, so the idea that intent doesn't matter has been has been used. to advance the cause of critical race theory, and, you know, very illiberal practices in so called diversity and inclusion trainings, where all it takes is for me to have taken offense to demonstrate that you were intending to give offense and that you have racism in your heart or whatever it is, right? Right. And no, sorry. That's not how that works.

**Bret** 25:21

Not only is it not how it works, but it basically empowers anyone who wants to including bad actors who wish to abuse this power to convict anyone they want by simply accusing them. So it is absolutely the unint. You know, I would argue nothing matters more than intent, right. And that doesn't mean so intent doesn't matter matches certain aspects of this, right? If somebody runs over, you know, your kid, right, your kid is gone. So in some sense, intent doesn't affect that parameter. And from the point of view of you're grappling with the loss, it doesn't matter. From the point of view of what we do about the person who hit your kid, either through negligence or intent, it's all the difference in the world, as it must be right, you get a crazy system if you erase these things. And so anyway, one has the sense that we are dealing either with people who don't give a crap about the system that they are destroying, because they actually don't agree with us about the things that it is built to achieve, or that they don't understand it well enough to understand what they are in hooking.

**Heather** 26:32

Yeah, and either of those is, is terrifying. And there's also a crucial distinction between the analogy you just gave and what we're actually seeing, which is that in the case, that your child gets killed by someone in a car, and you are forever after without your child, but the person driving the car will suffer different consequences, regardless of whether or not they were negligent, or intentionally trying to kill someone. The fact is, that a dead child is an objective fact. And that a large number of the claims that are being made against people and against, for instance, those who you know, worked, or were somehow sick events in the Trump administration, are not objective facts. They are claims, some of which are actually very few of which are actually falsifiable and falsified, and many of the rest are simply these sort of, but my feelings say, I'm hurt right now. And I'm offended, and therefore what you're doing is terrible. And so not only has intent being his intent being intentionally erased, but the actual conclusion the you know, the thing for which they would erase intent is very much a subjective matter. And they would they would make claims, like, you know, asking for evidence of racism is itself evidence of racism, such that you can't even believe that the conclusion is what they say it is.

**Bret** 27:55

Yeah, that's, that's quite right. And, you know, let's put it this way, there's a mixture, the reason that people would do this as a mixture of things, some of them are quite used, and some of them are actually involved in a massive power grab and putting the rest of us at tremendous risk. That isn't theirs, to create. Yeah. And the problem is, I keep running into this, which is, in order to protect ourselves from these kinds of instincts, right? One has to convey something subtle, and increasingly, I think boring. And so it's very hard to get people to focus on why we have counterintuitive protections, why we don't go after the other party when they leave office, and we feel that what they've done in office is vile, right? Very hard to explain these things. And the idea that we need to get enough of us on board with remembering what those structures are for and how they work when they work and what has happened when they failed and why that's bad. I just can't imagine that conversation occurring broadly enough to to reverse the trajectory. And I did see in a hopeful sign there was enough traffic in the reverse where a OC was trying to incite people to start cataloging who had committed these crimes

**Heather** 29:25

well as I began with it's not just her there's an actual page and

**Bret** 29:29

I've seen it all ever hurts basically it's the

**Heather** 29:31

What was that? What was that spreadsheet that was started during early me to the Oh yes, the

**Bret** 29:37

bad

**Heather** 29:38

wasn't bad but it was something men in Hollywood the nasty men Yeah, whatever it was, where this this journalist or would be journalist I don't remember what basically said, just send me all of your, all of your names, sending me the name of anyone who has been naughty, and I'm I How could I fact check it so I'll just put that up there. And then publicize This this spreadsheet. And you know, of course, it took out a number of good people as well as you know, presumably revealing some truly heinous figures. But

**Bret** 30:08

the point is an informal system like that invites abuse? Of course it does. I would also point out long before Candace Owens was well known, she was involved in an effort to put together a, basically, I hope I have this right, it was like a doxxing site. So anyway, this theme keeps getting reinvented

**Heather** 30:30

the left presumably,

**Bret** 30:32

this was it's a little murky as to what it was, I don't want to say because I'm not certain about the details of it. But it's, it's it's a canonical, where people will keep reinventing the idea of panel up punishing those people on the other side, but I would point out, okay, it is very rare these days, that people on the left will invoke the comparison between Trump and Hitler. But there was a long period there where it was not the least bit rare to hear that assertion. And I think the point is the idea that in an environment where you're going to get stuff that wrong, right, that you are then going to go about punishing people on the other side for disagreeing with you. That's preposterous.

**Heather** 31:15

Well, I gather you haven't heard that Rogan is the new Hitler.

**Bret** 31:18

That seems unlikely. I mean, you've met him, he doesn't really seem all that.

**Heather** 31:23

Oh, really not. But that would be exactly what he would do, wouldn't it

**Bret** 31:27

luring us into a false sense of security by being so god damn decent? That Yeah. Yeah. All right. So

**Heather** 31:37

now I've actually seen people beginning to suggest that Rogan might be Hitler.

**Bret** 31:44

I can personally assure you that he is No.

**Heather** 31:48

Of course not. But But I mean, to to the point that people once once you've established the need for the devil, and you know, we talked about this with when we were talking about hofers book on mass movements, that you know, that this is akin to a religion, every good religion, every successful religion needs some kind of a double that if, if Hitler, if you know, the guy, he would manage to come in some number of people was Hitler is now out of here. And, like, Who are you going to put up on the mantle of Hitler knows? Well, you know, rokytnice apparently want to

**Bret** 32:20

lay on the arm. Yeah.

**Heather** 32:22

It's, it's incredible.

**Bret** 32:24

Yeah. Yeah, it's really shocking. But you need a devil you do. But the other thing to say is, in some way, the these formulations and the fact that they're being deployed on ironically, is really, in some sense, a measure of just how rare it is for people to step outside of their filter bubble. You know, for you and me. I'm sure that we are in a filter bubble, but it's so arbitrary on its borders, by virtue of the fact that we are neither fish nor fowl. And so I'm sure the algorithm just hasn't really figured us out. It knows that it we know it, but it doesn't know who to file us with in order to reinforce stuff because it's, you know, the belief system is eclectic. But you and I know, because we know so many people who voted for Trump spoke about their reasons for doing so weren't in the dark, right. And we know lots of people who did that on the Biden side, too. But the point is, there was a, you know, a self awareness in both cases. But if you and I know, I don't know, dozens of people who could absolutely articulate a case for voting for Trump a case that you and I presumably didn't agreed on, because we didn't vote for him. But a case that we can recognize, yeah. And the point is, who are any of these people to be looking at your the fact of support for Trump as as if it was tantamount to a crime, right? No, it isn't. You absolutely have to have your own side in order before you can even look at what's on the other side as a moral defect because the point is you're engaged in a moral defect to and, you know, as I sometimes say, we can't hold people responsible for making bad choices when there were no good choices available. Right. And that's, that's the situation now election after election. Yeah, not sure

**Heather** 34:21

as. Okay, let's talk. Let's talk a little bit about what I call a read only activism. Okay. Okay. So this is a phrase that I invented, I believe, in the wake of the panel that I was on that you introduced back in February 2018. On a day on, which we met for the first time, Helen pluck rose James d'amour, Peter Bogosian, also not on stage. Those are the people who were on stage was Peter, Helen, James and me. But some of the other people we met that same day We're Andy No, who was actually one of the student leaders of the event. And James Lindsay, who was there as well. And Mike Naina, who many of you will be familiar with, as the documentary filmmaker, who both both revealed the grievant studies affair, I think is what is what they call it, and also the three part documentary on evergreen. So Gosh, there were more people there that we met as well. But that was, that was the main people and about a half an hour into this event. And it's all it's all available on YouTube, the whole two hours ish of the event, activists stormed out and broke some sound equipment. And out there in the lobby, they started making the claim that even the women that would be me and Helen pluck rose, were captured by this ideology, and probably fascist I don't remember exactly the language they used. And the thing literally, the thing that they stormed out on was me saying that men and women are different heights on average. Okay, and so this caught the attention of a lot of people, because it seemed like they had just gone too far. Like, how can you disagree with us? This is actually a simple measuring pole parameter. What the hell? And my point which I wrote about, but it's, it's just an just a medium here. You can you can put this here, Zack Yep. So again, this is from first of March 2018. in which you know, back then I'm saying protest is American solidly at the heart of any democratic society. Many of our cherished institutions have a long history of protest. And then I described a little bit about the panel and the disruption. Just these three paragraphs, I think that we found points of agreement and disagreement, but the protesters who walked out, breaking the audio equipment as they left weren't around, listen, outside. Unbeknownst to those of us on the panel, the individuals who left said things like even the women in there have been brainwashed and quote, Nazis are not welcome in civil society. When banal observations like men and women are different heights prompts the accusation that I'm both brainwashed in a Nazi, it's clear that this was not a good faith protest. It is true that the authoritarian leftist nine biology but the deeper truth of the situation is perhaps even more concerning the incoherence of the protesters responses on the fact that the walkout was scheduled in advance, which we later which we learned was true, suggests something darker, the protesters are read only, like a computer file that cannot be altered. They will not engage ideas, they will not even hear ideas, because their minds are already made up. They have been led to believe that exposure to information is in and of itself dangerous. Scientists, philosophers and scholars of all sorts have effectively been accused of crimes before it is even known what we're going to say, the very concept of thoughtcrime, as Orwell himself well understood, is the death knell to discourse discovery and to democracy. So why why am I bringing this up? Now, given that we're, you know, in the wake of this election, and most people, it seems, at least on the left are quite sure that that now the protests will stop. And while it's only today that most of the media have declared a winner, I don't see any evidence that the riots anyway, I put aside the protests, because really, they they are related phenomena. But But very often, it's quite clear when you're talking about riots and not protests are not stopping at all. So let me just provide a few examples. Here, hold on, go back and forth a few times. We have the Pacific Northwest youth Liberation Front saying fuck Trump, fuck Biden, Death to America. We want something better than this trash and we're going to take it. So that was the evening, the late evening of the eluxury way.

**Bret** 39:07

scroll over on that one to the next image.

**Heather** 39:11

Whoever they vote for we are ungovernable

**Bret** 39:14

on govern. Yeah. Yep. Yeah, that sounds.

**Heather** 39:17

So next sec. Thank you. So just a better picture of that here. Whoever they vote for. We are ungovernable with the size of anarchie cosec. Let's see. This. We don't want Biden we want revenge for police murders, imperialist wars and fascist massacres. And maybe they've got a lot of remaining governable. Let's see the fight continues. post election protest, fight continues. We don't know what the fight is about, even at this point where Just being told the fight continues. And, of course, what we saw what we've been seeing in Portland, still, every night, since the election is more vandalism, there is a church in downtown Portland. Here we go is Multnomah County Sheriff reporting on this church that was doing tremendous work with homeless which of course, Portland has a huge problem with being vandalized sufficiently that they have now declared that the church itself can no longer be doing some of its work with the homeless, because the church is not intact enough to do so. And then let me just one more example of this. Here's Nancy Roman, our friend, who was in Portland for several days, this week, who was present to see for instance, the wild Fang basically a feminist women's fashion store had all of its windows blown out. And, and, and many and many other things like that. So I highly recommend this article and reason if you haven't read it by Nancy Rome. And so there they are. And who is that? It's, you know, it's a tiny fringe element among the people who were who were, in fact, protesting peacefully, of course, right? For for many, many months, but it's not a tiny fringe part of those people who started writing reliably every night after dark for many, many months here in Portland. And why is it that they haven't changed their tune now that the election has actually come to pass? Well, because it's not actually responsive to its environment. This is not activism that is responsive to its environment. Therefore, it should both not be taken seriously, I would say as a critique of particular policies or politicians, but it is being taken seriously, you know, Mayor Wheeler, who we triumphantly reelected, because by doing so we avoided the actual anti if a candidate, Mayor Wheeler, and Governor Brown, who this week has been making some moves, and I think the correct direction, but have been taking these people seriously with their batshit demands, as if they are actually responding to policy and people. And at the same time, as we should not be taking their critique, as if it is actually about policy or people given that they're telling us it's not, we should also be taking it far more seriously than it is as a force of destruction, and not just of Windows, and not even just of individual acts of violence, of which there's plenty of evidence, but an actual force of stock destruction. I could not find the couple of images that I'd seen earlier in the week from Denver, and I think from Philly, which have them arguing that liberalism itself is the enemy of Death to America.

**Bret** 42:45

Yeah, well, that's that's the thing is that this is a an attack on the very fabric of pluralistic secular society. And if you pay attention to what it says, and what it does, this is very clear. Now what it has gotten good at, is reversing cause and effect. So the fact that you have a large number of you know, Chardonnay, liberals with Trump derangement syndrome, those people are susceptible to partnering with anything that appears to be equally angry about the thing that has their focus. And so, you know, the whole thing that we watched go down in slow motion here in Portland was the relentless attack on policing and governance and authority that forced Trump at the federal level to bring in DHS officers, which then was portrayed as the precipitating event for the violence and the point is cause and effect have been reversed. What it is that is being sought by these protesters and rioters is quite clear in what they say they're not good at keeping it under wraps. But somebody paying casual attention or worse, somebody editing, what it is that others see can very easily portrayed in the wrong direction so that it appears to be a reaction to something that they themselves find. Find troubling. And I will say, at first, I was very heartened to hear governor browns, bringing in of the National Guard and the fact that finally we saw a proportionate response to the violence where there were

**Heather** 44:32

so just just just to provide some details she declared a state of emergency in the state of Oregon from 5pm, the day before election day through Wednesday, 5pm and basically allowed the possibility the National Guard would come in and that they think it was Multnomah County, which is the main county that Portland is in would have the authority to use tear gas such that the you know, the non lethal me instead of taken off the table by Mayor Wheeler would now be back on the table such that perhaps we could actually avoid, you know, state promoted violence, while also actually keeping the peace. And in the wake of the riots both election night and basically promises to continue at the next night, she is now she is now extended that I don't know if it's official, the state of emergency or just all of the stuff around the National Guard through at least tomorrow through early Sunday, and very

**Bret** 45:27

much to her credit. And so doing fee did not make the usual move that we've seen in so many democratic municipalities and other other provinces and the like. But she said, we won't tolerate violence from the left from the right or the center. That was her phrase. And anyway, it was well done. overdue, inexplicably, but nonetheless done and done before the election. So, you know, good on your Governor Brown very much. So. The other thing, though, is, we were of course, very concerned about the fact that Mayor Wheeler was facing this challenge from Sarah Eon around to his nominal left, and she was a not so cryptic supporter of an Tifa. So that was a very frightening prospect that she might win. Now she lost, which I initially took to be a good sign that reason had won out. And as much as Wheeler has been a spectacular disappointment is an understatement to say the very least, he stood a greater chance of ultimately coming to his senses and standing up to this nonsense that is threatening his city and its citizens. But what I found out later, was that in fact, there had been a substantial writing campaign now nobody because of the way the ballots are reported, we cannot say whose name was written in. But the only plausible candidate to have taken a to have gotten as many write in votes, was actually somebody understood it to be, even to the nominal left of IANA Roan, a founder of the group, don't shoot Portland. So it is not clear at all why Ted Wheeler won. And whether that was an outbreak of reason or the result of a divided vote on the I hesitate to, I'm going to not use an epithet, I'm going to say the extreme illiberal left. But But in any case, the right outcome did happen. That right outcome is still very little security in light of what we learn is allowed

**Heather** 47:39

well, and here we have Wheeler, today, I am grateful to be mayor of a city that overwhelmingly voted for Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, we can now move forward instead of fighting against administration that tried to move us backward, we now will have a partner in the federal government instead of an opponent. Here he is reversing cause and effect, willfully confusedly. Who knows? I don't, I don't think he's a dumb man. So it's possible that he is legitimately confused, or he really, you know, or he saw exactly the threat that you saw what like, wow, actually, half the people who voted in Portland, more than half the people who voted in Portland, I think, voted for either someone who actively supports an Tifa or someone even farther left than her. I don't like this description of the left. Yeah. Even more liberal than her Yeah. And is imagining that those of us who voted for him will put up with anything and all he has to do is keep on moving more and more liberal. And one thing that I think you know, most, the vast majority of people who watch us listen to us aren't in Portland. But I cannot imagine that the next time the mayor of Portland is up for re election, that the vast majority of us who still live here, however many of us that might be at that point, will be paying such insignificant attention that we allow this kind of diabolical choice to show up on the ballot again. Well,

**Bret** 49:11

so the problem, of course, is that I think people are voting and signaling as if this is all an abstraction. And it is very obvious that it will not take long if you allow a force to break the windows of whatever businesses it wants to terrorize citizens the way the writers have been doing night after night, if you allow people to do this, it is obviously going to destroy the economic base of the city. You know, it's not a place that somebody is going to want to start a business. If there are no businesses, then where is the tax base, right? So you know, people are voting in a way that completely out Up ends the capacity of the city to be governed well now, you know to the extent that there's a defense for you know, a liberally minded city it's you want one that is capable of accomplishing things that others can't you want, you know better transportation you want a, you know, safer cleaner streets, you you know you want the city to function well. And in fact, that's the slogan Portland is the city that works right?

**Heather** 50:26

Is that right? Oh, I didn't know that. Yeah, that's

**Bret** 50:30

right. But the thing is, it's very easy to up end that and then apparently, everybody's worse off. And so whatever your liberal values have you pursuing you've undone them by virtue of the fact that there's nothing to do those things with?

**Heather** 50:45

Yeah. Well, so just a couple more minutes on Portland on politics, they're local to us here there is something something good that happened? That is an actual positive, as opposed to a very much a lesser of two evils, which is the situation with the mayoral race in Portland. But I'm gonna start with something that's definitely not so good. Why won't it open? Okay, well, I can't open that site for some reason. Okay. So city Commissioner, Dan Ryan, I'm trying to open this link from Willamette week. And Zach's going to try to open it for me, but now I can't read my notes. So Dan Ryan, who was an extent, city commissioner and who was not being being who's not on the ballot, this this year, voted against an $18 million cut to the police budget. And a mob came to his house middle of the night and vandalized it and put a players in front. And this is in part what prompted Governor Brown to say actually, we're extending the, the either the emergency order, or at least parts of it, then allow the National Guard and the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office to oversee and give more power to the Portland Police Bureau. So actually don't need that anymore. Zach, I'm done talking about it. So I need my screen back though, please, so that I can go to the next one. So that's all terrible. But what isn't terrible, is this we had this Commissioner elect Mingus maps who is a former political science professor who is black who is here They call him conservative, but what that means in Portland, I actually have no idea. He won against incumbent Chloe usually who was very much in line with sort of meander around and Hardesty and some of the other like, actually get rid of the police. People has stood up already like he's he's just a commissioner unlocked and yet somehow, he was allowed to also vote against the $18 million defunding of the police that happened this week. And he says this campaign of intimidation and vandalism against Commissioner Ryan must stop map map said, mobs have descended on his house in the middle of the night in order to intimidate him into voting the way they want. It happened again last night. That's true. What happened two nights running. A mob descended on his house, broke windows and sprayed paint on his home. Maps was joined on a press call by about a dozen black community leaders. His remarks were significant in part because they signaled a new dynamic in City Hall. A black man will be among the most conservative members of the council. And he is wielding the language of civil rights and equity to condemn the excesses of a protest movement that also says it is seeking racial justice. Well, how fuckin lujah that's that's amazing. That is amazing that I this is one of the few things that actually really gives me hope right now from this election.

**Bret** 53:49

Yeah, I agree. That's a, a, a rare but unambiguous sign of reason. Yeah. So all right.

**Heather** 53:59

That's That's all from Portland's good

**Bret** 54:00

on your Mr. Maps? Yeah. Okay, so let's see, where are we? Are there more topics?

**Heather** 54:09

I have a few things to end with. At your suggestion is just to end with it or unrelated to politics.

**Bret** 54:15

All right. Well, before we close out the politics, let me ask you, do you have a sense of what should happen now in light of the the gardening store, press conference and landscaping supplies man la landscapes the supply landscape? Sorry, landscaping supplies press conference. The

**Heather** 54:39

allegations, the Four Seasons landscaping company foresee

**Bret** 54:44

I have to say there is something delightful about the president having tweeted that they were going to have a press conference of the force.

**Heather** 54:50

Absolutely. I'd like journalists to I first heard about it from the called the four seasons in Philadelphia. It's like you sure it's not they're like Yes, sir. It's at the landscaping.

**Bret** 55:00

All right, can we just all agree whatever side you're on, there's something charming about that store.

**Heather** 55:05

Charming, or, you know, they're calling around and they're like, Oh, no, no, you cannot have your press conference here. No, you could not have that

**Bret** 55:12

like kind of like, right? The you know, look, this President is paying a huge price for what I would call failures of taste. Right, right. The Four Seasons was not going to help that a landscape supply shop in some way, is a nice counterpoint, I think to a press conference held at the Four Seasons Hotel. Yeah. Okay, so we've got these allegations and legal maneuvers. On the one side, we've got the Blue World of media and I will say the red world of media, you've got Fox in the Wall Street Journal also declaring the election. Well, I

**Heather** 55:56

mean, we didn't even talk about the fact that fox declared Arizona for Trump before anyone else did and like stuck with it for days. And it's still not frankly clear that Arizona won't actually flip out to red, right? I don't actually know what the state of that is for the last couple of hours. But yeah, I meant for Biden, sorry. They declared it for Biden, and it's not clear to me that it won't flip. But you know, they were the first and you know, it enraged partisan hacks on the right. Yeah, like I, you know, we thought you were a partisan hackery network. It's like, actually, Fox is trying to report the news. Right. And apparently, actually, I don't have the details of this. So I may get some of this wrong. But apparently, after the last election, when the polls were so wrong, I believe it was the AP and Fox basically formed some kind of an alliance with a different different predictive polling outfit, because it was so clear that what everyone was relying on, which is basically everyone at that point, had gotten it really wrong. So they were looking at different, you know, hopefully the votes of the votes, right. But the predictions about what they're going to be and how fast they're going to be counted, and how many they're ultimately going to be before they're all counted. And all of this is, is the work of pollsters and statisticians, and those predictions will vary by what models you're, you're using. So Fox was apparently using different models this time than all the rest of the media except for I think, the Associated Press, and, and they had a different, they, you know, they went against type, and

**Bret** 57:35

which could mean a lot of things I have to say, Sure, sure. It's a little hard to know what it means. And, you know, let's not forget that Trump was not the establishment candidate on the right, he more or less beat the GOP in the primary with help from Hillary Clinton and the DNC of all people, and of all organizations, and effectively decapitated the the GOP and took over now. I don't know is this the establishment part of the GOP? reestablishing itself? Right? In other words, did they go after weaken Trump? Because

**Heather** 58:15

Caitlyn, calling Arizona before anyone else doesn't doesn't necessarily mean going after Trump?

**Bret** 58:21

Well, I, let's put it this way. I detect a very straight presentation from Fox. Yeah. Right. When

**Heather** 58:32

we were mostly watching NBC, I guess it was. But But yeah, NBC is mbcs coverage. When we looked at it seemed pretty, pretty straight.

**Bret** 58:41

But let's just say I saw the same story almost across Fox, Wall Street Journal, PBS, CBS, NBC, you know, New York Times. And so that could mean any one of a number of things. But I just want to be agnostic about what's actually going on here, because the landscape is so rich, so confused and misleading. And the players. You know, they it's not very long ago that Trump was a challenge to the very core of the GOP. And then he became synonymous with the GOP. And so what happens in a case where, you know, you've got a squeaker of an election? I don't know. I will say, you know, you say, let's hope that the votes have the votes. Let's hope that the votes are the votes.

**Heather** 59:30

There's and we will never know.

**Bret** 59:33

We will very likely never know.

**Heather** 59:36

I would hope that we would know with greater certainty than we do now. But we will never know everything.

**Bret** 59:43

We will never know everything. And I have to say there's one place legally speaking. There are very strict regulations I have now learned about, about the voting, the dead voting, right and it even extends to people People who vote by mail and then die, their votes don't count. So these things are very tightly regulated,

**Heather** 1:00:07

really. So if on election day you're dead, even if you voted early legally, your vote is not supposed to count,

**Bret** 1:00:14

which makes sense in a weird way. Because

**Heather** 1:00:17

I was actually I was wondering exactly this. Yeah. I mean, this is kind of lighter. So very, very few.

**Bret** 1:00:23

It's not a lot. It's not a large constituency now. But yes. But nonetheless, that, you know, it makes sense, because the fact is, imagine that there were no male in voting. And the point is, if you're there voting, you're alive. And so we should not be skewed. Right. But the other thing is, you know, legalities aside in the case of people voting from beyond the grave. I mean, in this case, I think it's fair for people who died of COVID. what's fair to be able to vote from beyond the grave? I just think in this case, the mishandling of the COVID epidemic actually gives them a certain number of rights that I wouldn't extend more broadly,

**Heather** 1:01:05

you're arguing for special rights for the COVID dead? I say, Okay, I

**Bret** 1:01:09

just morally that feels right to me. You're looking at death, look in your eyes that you get some time. Well, alright. Shall we move on move on to the final, political or non political?

**Heather** 1:01:26

Well, actually, just two more quick notes about the state of the world. The Smithsonian magazine, yep, has reported that there is a global shortage of anti venom for venomous snake bites. And the Guardian has reported a surge in white shark sightings off the coast of California. So in case you felt like things outside of politics, were doing fine. Nope, nope, they're not No.

**Bret** 1:01:48

Sorry. I wanted to say one more thing before we close this out, given that we are at this singular moment in history, was it the anti venom or the sharks? No, it was neither It was me remembering that I had something. So I don't know what you think should happen now. Right? Oh, yeah.

**Heather** 1:02:03

I never answered that.

**Bret** 1:02:04

Do you have a should happen now?

**Heather** 1:02:09

It depends on what level we're talking about. Maybe, maybe let's save. why don't why don't you go on? Okay. I have a few at different levels. So here's,

**Bret** 1:02:15

here's my, my sense. And mind you I'm, at least am consistent in this way over my lifetime, we've had parallels to the situation and my advice would have been similar even to two people across the aisle. But my sense is that what has already unfolded with Trump and the Trump administration in the context of this election, means that ultimately, he will not be seated as President, even if there is some fraud in the election. And I haven't seen compelling evidence of that yet. But it's of course possible that the sequence of events that would result in him staying would look like a an intense battle over balloting. Yep. In which, you know, we are very unlikely to get to the truth. But you know, as in 2000, we could get to a win that would award votes, right, it could end up in the Supreme Court, which of course, is a fraught venue at this moment anyway, because of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, death. And so the, the fact is, even in Trump fantasy world, yeah. him remaining in office is at such spectacular cost to the nation in terms of our already distrusting and at each other's throats. Nature, that my argument would be, look, Trump did not do a good job in the run up to the election. In fact, he did an appalling job ceding the idea that the election was going to be stolen that compromises him dramatically with respect to claims that it has been stolen

**Heather** 1:04:14

I feel like you mean that he actually did a really good job of seeding that idea which was a dishonorable thing to be doing was

**Bret** 1:04:20

a dishonorable thing to be doing and he did it effectively which means that now is claiming that the election has been stolen is in the context that he set in motion

**Heather** 1:04:30

Yeah, he's boy he's and boy who cried wolf territory. On the other hand, if there's actually a wolf then you're the only one who's seeing it right like you know so there's you can write do a both sides of this analysis story. You

**Bret** 1:04:43

can but he, I guess my point would be this look, I am. I believe that presidents should be patriotic and this should be so much a prerequisite for the job that we should never have had one that wasn't I don't think that's where we are. I think The game that gets you there is actually not very consistent with patriotism because in effect, patriotism requires self sacrifice is built into it right that it is the core of patriotism is self sacrifice and ruthless, political self promotion is the opposite. But in this case, the point is, look, the well being of the nation does depend on a peaceful transition. And as our friend Ryan pointed out in a discussion this morning, the concession speech is actually a vital piece of this process that the fact of the winner and the loser agreeing on what has happened, and then events unfolding downstream of that, even though that's not technically what happens, technically, the ballots get counted, official, you know, calls are made, those official calls result in the electoral college doing what it does formally,

**Heather** 1:06:04

which doesn't happen for weeks anyway, right.

**Bret** 1:06:06

But the point is, the most important part of the process may be the winner and the loser converge on an interpretation of what has happened. And that kicks the narrative into the next mode. And we go forward. And so the point is grace in

**Heather** 1:06:19

concession allows both demonstrates your patriotism, and allows for the country to come back together. I actually saw I saw george bush's of all people his concession speech in 1992. And you know, this, no fan of that guy at all, you know, he was, that was he was voted in in 88. And the first election that we were ever able to vote in, and, and yet he gives a concession speech at the point that Clinton beats him. That is, that is terrific. It's short. You know, it could be that it doesn't mean it. But he appears to mean it. And it is gracious. And he says, we're going to work with the new administration during transition to make sure that we have, that we basically empower them with everything that they can be empowered with, so that they help make this country as strong and productive and office as possible.

**Bret** 1:07:16

And that's the key thing is it's I don't know, if there's a there must be a term for it. But it's like the political equivalent of good sportsmanship. Yeah. And it is so vital to the functioning of the nation, that I believe this, this ought to be the focus right now. And so I guess my point to Trump, which I assume he doesn't listen to the podcast, but if he does, what I would like him to think about is, let's say that you won an improbable series of victories in courts that then resulted in the Supreme Court delivering a verdict that caused you to be inaugurated, in January, you would be inaugurated in a country that was so bitterly divided over what had happened, that it would be diminished in its power spectacularly. And you would be governing in that environment, which is just simply not good for the country. So my argument is the patriotic thing to do is to realize this was a very close election, that that effectively makes it something like a coin flip. So in some weird sense, the winds didn't blow his direction, and that graciously accepting that result. And stepping aside, in an honorable way is actually both in the interest of the nation, and also in the interest of his legacy and the judgment that history will will render on him. And so, you know, that's what leadership looks like, and and I hope he will show it in this case.

**Heather** 1:09:00

I'm not sure I agree. And I don't I think maybe we should talk about this next time. That's that sounds completely right. Unless it really was stolen.

**Bret** 1:09:14

Well, so you know, remember, my point is at some level stolen is not the right description for what big tech did in the context of this election. But I think we already know that this was not a free and fair election in the way that the founders viewed this was a this was an election on a slanted playing field.

**Heather** 1:09:34

Fair enough. Okay. So put it put aside any question about tampering and all of this slanted playing field and a toss up? Of course, the coin came down the way the people who had slighted the playing field One, two, yeah. It is both. You're not in keeping with apparently who he is as a person, but it's not clear that that it would honor Honor the half of the people who voted almost, for him, for him to, for him to step out of the fight. And I'm not I'm not saying that the country can afford an extended fight. And, you know, it certainly wouldn't be good for him to be literally dragged out on January 21, or whatever Inauguration Day is, which would of course happen, you know, just like, if, you know, just like in Portland, if the police and others have been allowed to do their jobs, they're going to shut the shit down. Yep. Trump is not going to like, you know, inhabit the White House beyond, you know, Inauguration Day of if Biden is the winner, it's just not going to happen. But, you know, for For how long? Is it appropriate? Is it patriotic? And he i don't i don't i don't think of him as a patriot. I don't think he is a patriot. But presumably, many of the 70 million ish people who voted for him are and, you know, what, what? What about their voices? If there really were shenanigans here, that we deserve to know about?

**Bret** 1:11:12

Well, look, I don't disagree. I'm a big believer in the democratic control mechanism of our republic. And, you know, the fact that it's so corrupted is part of what animates me as you know, yeah. My sense is that this cannot be settled here will not be settled here. And if it were settled here, let's put it this way. It's either settled here in a direction that goes against him. And that doesn't change anything about the representation of the people that you're referring to. or it gets settled in his direction in, in which case, the, the damage that is done in this process is so spectacular in a context where we can least afford it, right? We're in a fragile condition rather than an anti fragile one. So anyway,

**Heather** 1:12:01

the obvious analogy being to the 2000 election. And, you know, many of us were grievously disappointed by the Supreme Court's decision that tossed that bush to rather than to Gore, it's impossible to know what kind of an effective or ineffective president he would have been absent. 911 happening so soon upon his inauguration. But it's also true that as much as he was easy to dismiss for most of us on the left, as an effective statesman, he was not divisive in anything like the way that Trump is divisive.

**Bret** 1:12:39

We thought he was divisive at the time, but now we better example.

**Heather** 1:12:43

But yeah, it would be you know, the dismissals were about things like, Wow, he would prefer to be clearing brush on his ranch. Yeah, as opposed to actually leading free world.

**Bret** 1:12:53

Alright, so then I guess, my position is this. And I have not refreshed my memory on what happened at the end of the 2000 election. But my recollection is, there was absolutely an honorable way to continue counting. And this was artificially stopped, which seeded bush and would have seated gore had the counting continued. And so my point that's right, my point would be that the sausage making involved in presidential balloting and elections has already stolen an election for one side. It's not like that's a new phenomenon. And my point, I think some of some people will have seen my tweet where I pointed out that unity had behind the scenes been trying to create a prize that would have incentivized The, the rapid creation of a, a secure, and what's the word? I can't remember the word when I ballot an auditable balloting mechanism in the form of an app. So the point is, look, this was a perfectly predictable catastrophe. Right? We saw this coming. And let me tell you what happened when unity tried to get this thing jumpstarted. The idea was, you can never adopt a new technology for standardizing the way that we vote because so many municipalities and states are involved in this process independently. And there's no way to hurt all those cats in the same direction. And so our thought was, if we incentivize the construction of the app that accomplishes the goal, then at the point that the catastrophe predictably unfolds, the point will be you know, there is a solution and it looks like this. And the problem is there wasn't enough enthusiasm because it wouldn't have gotten it wouldn't have been ready in time to save us from this one. which then means that we will be in this same situation down the road. And so Okay, we've got a couple of elections in which something has happened that should have been avoided by a mob And coordinated way of dealing with the ballots. And it's now time for us to do that.

**Heather** 1:15:06

Shorter the way it is it's not. It doesn't grab the imagination because it's not sexy, right, you know, a tech fix to deal with nefarious political maneuvers. The only thing sexy in that sentence is nefarious? Well,

**Bret** 1:15:20

I disagree with you, I actually think it is kind of sexy, right? There is like an example, I think, is in Estonia that has done this. And that there is an example of someplace you don't expect, who has actually gone fully modern in this regard and solve the problem.

**Heather** 1:15:34

Okay. And but if it is Estonia, I don't know, does Estonia have a population that's like that of? Oh, I don't know, Georgia.

**Bret** 1:15:42

Right. Right, since it's tiny state, but the point is it you know, it's doable. Now, there's argument about that there are lots of sophisticated people who say you can't do this. And the reason is because you will create a nightmare, there's no system you could build that would make the problem better, because if somebody hacked into the system, this that and the other. Now, our belief in unity looking at this is that there are solutions to this problem, but you have to be very, you have to be very broad minded to see what the real problems are and figure out how you fix them in such a way that were there that a hack is very unlikely be that if it happened, that you would detect it and be able to reverse engineer what it actually happened. That is possible. But in any case, we should certainly be having that discussion broadly because boy did we see this exact moment coming and let me tell you it's coming again. All right. neuf politics.

**Heather** 1:16:40

Yep. Okay, I already mentioned snakes yes and sharks. So at some level my biologist self job here is done. Let's talk about perfume briefly.

**Bret** 1:16:50

Of course. Okay, next logical thing the next

**Heather** 1:16:53

logical thing this will be the last thing we talked about before going taking a break and moving on to the for your super chat question

**Bret** 1:17:00

a mostly peaceful transition to the q&a that is what I'm expecting

**Heather** 1:17:04

now 100% peaceful transition to the q&a fair enough we can set that as a goal I mean, unless we put cream up there and only let one of the cats edit or something right that

**Bret** 1:17:12

would that's where the mostly would come in. Yeah, yeah.

**Heather** 1:17:15

Okay, so you have heard us talk before I believe about Luca Turin, who was highlighted in Chandler burrs terrific book, The Emperor of scent, which I failed to bring here. So look at her and yeah, it might be on the shelves right here. Okay. So Luca Turin is an extraordinary heterodox scientist who has a hypothesis that has a tremendous amount of scientific support behind it not no has a tremendous amount of actual data support behind it. That it has more explanatory power than the status quo explanation for how smell works, and it has been roundly ignored by the scientific establishment. In fact, after he had already been sort of making the rounds talking about and providing his evidence across you know, biology, chemistry, physics evidence for for his model for how small works after it was already out there in the world. The Nobel was actually given to the competing not as fully explanatory hypothesis, the shape lists over and over and smell space. So you might add something I

**Bret** 1:18:21

want to correct what you said he has been loudly and aggressively ignored. I would say

**Heather** 1:18:26

that I say quietly, I just said roundly

**Bret** 1:18:28

Yes. roundly Yes. It sounds like people just like, like he wasn't there. But no, this was a very vociferous kind of ignoring that they did to him.

**Heather** 1:18:38

Yes, they practically made fun of what he was wearing. Right if everything else

**Bret** 1:18:42

it's a little tell that Yeah, when things are afoot in science space indicates Yes. So when you have a mess, I

**Heather** 1:18:50

highly recommend the emperor of scent, which is again, Chandler burrs, basically a count of look returns, move through the scientific establishment and finally having no choice but to say like, Well, you know, I still pretty sure I'm right. I still like to still think that I have the correct mechanism for how smell works. It's a better fit for the data. It's a better fit for me, no, but, but I can't get anywhere so To hell with that. But Tarun is not just a brilliant scientist across all these domains, you know, biology, chemistry, physics. He's also got an extraordinary nose, which is not something before I read the emperor of science but I really thought about much. So in this book, perfumes the guide, which is something that I just bought, and I wouldn't have even thought to really buy by Luca Turin and his partner in in perfumery and also I believe his wife Tanya Sanchez, he in his in in Sanchez review hundreds of perfumes. And for those of us like us who don't traffic and perfumes, we just don't. I know the names of maybe a couple many more from having become familiar with Turin's work here. Most of us will never heard of many or maybe even any of these but the reviews themselves are just glorious okay so I want to read a few of these reviews and without any expectation that you know what any of these perfumes are they've given for each of them a scale of one to five stars were five is a masterpiece fours recommended three is good two is not good one is avoid and for each review they also give a two word phrase that describes it describes the smell so there are several four and five star reviews I'm going to read one four star review and then and then a number of the one star reviews because they're particularly fun so just the four star review so you can get a sense of and most of these are actually most of the rest of the stuff in the book is written by Sanchez and most of the reviews themselves are written by tr and I need to find the actual pages. Usually they come in order right Okay, so here we have

**Heather** 1:21:03

we don't what it's not on the right page. Somehow I wrote the wrong page number down. Here we have on a totally different page than what I wrote down, kept narrowly focused four stars. The two word description they gave his capsicum indole not to Oh to Cologne at all despite the beautifully bright resinoid citrus start when it settles down to what it settles down to is an intensely indolic orange blossom, which reminds me of jasmine incense in the various household ancestor shrines of my mother's friends. Not a fresh white blossom but a dark quiet smell that really should belong to sticky black syrups and medicinal bottles behind it a peculiar peppery angle adds to the feeling of mystery as so often with the fragrances of Patricia de Nikolai it is slightly more than and different from what you'd expect to extend the excellent top note wear on fabric so that's the sort of classic description and you know other of one that he enjoys

**Bret** 1:22:00

by the way if this sounds like nonsense to you if it sounds like astrology where a bunch of vague stuff is being thrown at thing it is not at all if you read the emperor of scent you will find yourself going into perfume stores and smelling these things and you can actually I mean it's amazing how much dimensionality there is there's a temporal dimension and these things that you would have no ability to describe which he just does a marvelous job of render he

**Heather** 1:22:27

yeah he he pulls up but then you know it's mostly by analogy to other things because English like I think an emperor of sound they say every language that they've that they've looked at, although I'm not sure it's everyone but at least almost on every every language is really depauperate with regard to words that describe smell. You know, English is particularly vision oriented and you would expect languages to be because primates are particularly vision oriented, having sort of taken over the smell part of our brain for optical processing. But there are some other languages that are more hearing oriented in terms of the richness of the metaphors that they have, but there aren't any that are you know, that are smell focus do we just don't have the language for it and yet here we have Tarun and Sanchez really, really nailing it so I have 551 star reviews so these are not the best perfumes in the these are in fact not the best perfumes. Lay concentrate. To Wear description condensed fail. If you take an unopened tin of sweet condensed milk and boil it in a saucepan of water for several hours, you get courtesy of the Maillard reaction, a brown semisolid Marvel, which Argentinians who suffer no shortage of cows called Dolce diletto lair concentrate this perfume is a failed attempt to replicate the rich and complex glory of the real thing. One has to ask though, even word accurate Why would anyone want to smell like condensed milk?

**Bret** 1:23:58

I wouldn't know.

**Heather** 1:23:59

So from the same house from the same perfume house we have laid to biscuit I don't know I actually hate Browns biscuit and French visqueen for which they're two word description again, a one star review is defective biscuit. The thing he writes about the smell of baked goods as any flavorist will tell you is that the recursive chemistry that happens at high temperatures yields an intricate mixture of aroma chemicals that satisfies precisely because complex, replicating the main impact materials and a poverty stricken composition. And claiming this well quote, awake childhood memories, grievously underestimates human memory, intelligence and sense of smell awful. just pulls no punches. The third of five one star reviews of perfume that Luca Turin shares in this fabulous guide that he's co written with Tanya Sanchez is trust a very one star. The two word description is milk caramel. Trust a ver It's so preposterously awful that a conserved calibrate one's perfumery scale on zero. If my date wore this on arrival, I would cancel reservations dragger through a carwash then say goodbye forever. The accord described as Artemisia pallida Wormwood and the PR smells like a monster Delta de leche, a flavor base with a little skank added. Everything that is wrong and unholy about caramel flavored coffee is here repackaged to harm innocent bystanders. penultimate one star review from called born ecml Bonnie ccmr. Now Bonnie's mo two word description is hazelnuts, coca, no hazelnuts, cocoa one sentence review, utterly revolting flavored coffee and atella thing. And finally, and there's so many more 50 milliliters demba Tae is the name of the perfume the two word description for this one star review is sweaty Uranus Luca Turin advises where this grow a messy beard, sit on a park bench, talk loudly to yourself, answer back and soon enough they'll take you away hose you down for free and give you warm soup. So you might not expect to find humor in a perfume guide of all places. But this guy that both of them can write and they pull no punches and it's hilarious and even if you don't own any perfume at all, or thinking of buying any if you want something to laugh about right now, I recommend this book it's like as like Christopher Hitchens for olfaction Yeah, so there we go.

**Bret** 1:26:50

All right, well, we have arrived at this second book end to the 53rd Dark Horse live stream We will be back in a few minutes to do q&a 15 minutes is that right? 15

**Heather** 1:27:03

minutes to answer your questions that you wrote in this hour and that you write in next hour on Super Chat. Yeah, join us at our Patreon

**Bret** 1:27:11

join us at our Patreon and you know we would just be so grateful if you would absolutely obliterate that like button, subscribe to the channel. Hit notify leave a comment tell us what you want clipped and broadcast into the universe. All those things are good.

**Heather** 1:27:30

Yeah, so we have a separate clips channel Dark Horse podcast clips, which is also moving along quite a clip itself

**Bret** 1:27:37

moving along at quite a clip. I like it. Okay, we will see you in 15 be well.