

[Transcript] The Tim Ferriss Show / #677: HERESIES — Exploring Animal Communication, Cloning Humans, The Dangers of The American Dream, and More

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And you, my dear listeners, can get 20% off of all mattress orders plus two free pillows. So go to helixsleep.com/slash/tim to learn more. That's Helix Sleep, H-E-L-I-X, helixsleep.com/slash/tim. This is their best offer to date and it will not last long. So take a look with Helix Better Sleep starts now. This episode is brought to you by AG1, the daily foundational nutritional supplement that supports whole body health. I view AG1 as comprehensive nutritional insurance and that is nothing new. I actually recommended AG1 in my 2010 best seller more than a decade ago, the 4 hour body, and I did not get paid to do so. I simply loved the product and felt like it was the ultimate nutritionally dense supplement that you could use conveniently while on the run, which is for me a lot of the time. I have been using it a very, very long time indeed.

And I do get asked a lot what I would take if I could only take one supplement. And the true answer is invariably AG1. It simply covers a ton of bases. I usually drink it in the mornings and frequently take their travel packs with me on the road. So what is AG1? What is this stuff? AG1 is a science driven formulation of vitamins, probiotics, and whole food sourced nutrients. In a single scoop, AG1 gives you support for the brain, gut, and immune system. Since 2010, they have improved the formula 52 times in pursuit of making the best foundational nutrition supplement

possible using rigorous standards and high quality ingredients. How many ingredients? 75. And you would be hard pressed to find a more nutrient dense formula on the market. It has a multivitamin,

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multimineral superfood complex, probiotics and prebiotics for gut health, an antioxidant, immune support formula, digestive enzymes, and adaptogens to help manage stress. Now, I do my best always to eat nutrient dense meals. That is the basic basic basic basic requirement. That is why things are called supplements. Of course, that's what I focus on, but it is not always possible. It is not always easy. So part of my routine is using AG1 daily. If I'm on the road, on the run, it just makes it easy to get a lot of nutrients at once and to sleep easy, knowing that I am checking a lot of important boxes. So each morning, AG1, that's just like brushing my teeth part of the routine. It's also NSF certified for sports. So professional athletes trust it to be safe. And each pouch of AG1 contains exactly what is on the label, does not contain harmful levels of microbes or heavy metals, and is free of 280 bad substances. It's the ultimate nutritional supplement in one easy scoop. So take ownership of your health and try AG1 today. You will get a free one year supply of vitamin D and five free AG1 travel packs with your first subscription purchase. So learn more, check it out. Go to [drinkag1.com slash Tim](http://drinkag1.com/slash/Tim). That's drink AG1, the number one, [drinkag1.com slash Tim](http://drinkag1.com/slash/Tim). Last time, [drinkag1.com slash Tim](http://drinkag1.com/slash/Tim). Check it out.

Hello, boys and girls, ladies and germs. This is Tim Ferriss and welcome to another episode of The Tim Ferriss Show. I'm very excited to publish this episode. This is an experimental format and we are calling it heresies. And the objective of this format, which is a group format, is to encourage and celebrate independent thinking. And I was introduced to this by Kevin Kelly, who hosts many Jeffersonian style conversations where there's only one conversation per group. And there are many reasons why I wanted to do this podcast. Number one, it's just a lot of fun and people get fired up quite quickly. So it starts a little slow in this episode and then things get moving very, very quickly. But more important, it honors the worth of holding a belief that you did not inherit. So most remarkable people, most amazing people I have met inevitably have some very, very unusual beliefs. And I think that is worth fostering so that you can be the author of your own beliefs, even when they are, maybe especially when they are unpopular. Number two, just because people agree on many things does not mean they have to agree on all things. You can have close friends and disagree intensely on certain things. Learning to work with unconventional beliefs in others is, I think, one of the most important skills that individuals need. And even if you just want to in self interest, perform better, get more done. I think this is important. And furthermore, I think as a society, this is incredibly, incredibly critical and could not come at a more critical time. Number three, practicing independent thinking is a skill. It can be improved. It is not just inherited is not like height or something like that. And as you listen, and we will reiterate this in the conversation, recognize that there is an art not just to having and sharing a heresy but in hearing one. Okay, so there are two crafts, two arts, two skills that you can develop, hopefully in listening to these conversations. One is developing and sharing heresies, unpopular beliefs, but also in hearing one, stress testing one, having a civil disagreement about one, you can become a better listener of heresies by reserving your judgment as long as possible and amplifying your curiosity and effort to understand as one of the guests today will say, try to be curious, not furious, we'll see how that goes. Sometimes the gloves come off in this one. So with all of that said, let me get to the guests and it'll take a minute, but then we will hop right into the conversation. The first guest is Maggie Spivey Faulkner. She is an anthropological archaeologist and practitioner of indigenous

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archaeology currently working as an assistant professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Alberta. She also serves as an assistant chief of the Upper Georgia Tribal Town of the PD Indian Nation of Beaver Creek, a state recognized Native American group in South Carolina. Her work focuses on using anthropological data to upend harmful misconceptions of Native

American peoples embedded in public policy, science, and the public consciousness.

Maggie was raised in a tight knit extended family in rural Hefseba, Georgia. She is an international fellow of the Explorers Club, a former junior fellow of the Harvard Society of Fellows and a recipient of the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship. She received her PhD in anthropology from Washington University in St. Louis in 2018 and her AB from Harvard College in 2008. Joshua L. Steiner is a partner at SSW, a private investment firm and a senior advisor at Bloomberg LP, where he was previously head of industry verticals. Prior to joining Bloomberg, Steiner co-founded and was co-president of Quadrangle Group LLC, a private equity and asset management firm. And before co-found in Quadrangle, he was a managing director at

Lazard. From 1993 to 1995, he served as chief of staff for the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

He serves on the boards of Yale University, the International Rescue Committee, and the SNF Agora Institute at Johns Hopkins University. Kevin Kelly, you can find him on Twitter at Kevin, the number two Kelly, helped launch and edit Wired Magazine. He has written for The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal, among many other publications. You can find my

most recent interview with him at tim.blog.com. He's been on the podcast quite a bit and is arguably the most interesting man in the world, but I'll leave that for another time. He is the author of the new book, *Excellent Advice for Living Wisdom I Wish I'd Known Earlier*. It is a great book. I literally have it in my suitcase right next to me here in my hotel room. Kevin is currently co-chair of the Long Now Foundation, which is building a clock in a mountain that will tick for 10,000 years. That is not made up. That is a real thing. He also has a daily blog, a weekly podcast about cool tools, a weekly newsletter, *Recommendo*, which is a free one-page list of six very brief recommendations of cool stuff. Last but not least, Noah Feldman, who will be my ongoing co-host. At least that is the plan. You can find him on Twitter at [NoahRFeldman](https://twitter.com/NoahRFeldman), is a Harvard professor, ethical philosopher and advisor, public intellectual, rigorous scholar and historian. He's also a rigorous scholar and historian and author of 10 books, including his latest *The Broken Constitution, Lincoln's Slavery and the Refounding of America*. You can find my interview with him at tim.blog.com. His upcoming book is *Bad Jew, subtitled A Perplexed Guide to God, Israel and the Jewish People*, which is currently available for pre-order. With all of that said, I'll leave my bio for another time. Please enjoy this very wide-ranging, sometimes very hot conversation

in this new format, *Heresies*. We are locked and loaded and ready to go. This is intended to be fun. It's an experimental format. It will get in front of interesting people. Let's just have a good time with it. If we need to zig and zag as the format settles, we'll zig and zag.

With that, Kevin, do you want to take a deep breath and lead us in?

There's lots of definitions for heresy, but one that I like to use and ask people about is, what's something that you believe that the people that you most admire don't believe and might even

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find shocking? To be a true heresy in this sense, it has to be something that's not just necessarily an unpopular idea, but it's an unpopular idea among the people that you hang out with in your circle, the people that you most respect for. We're not right now going to try and uncover some heresies and they should be, in some senses, things that you think the rest of us hear. The other four of us probably don't believe and might also find hard to believe. Then we'll go through and see if we can maybe change some people's minds and see if there's a way in which we can understand it. The whole purpose, I think, of this exercise is, in some ways, is to cultivate independent thinking because if you have a heresy in this definition, that means you arrived at it on your own. It wasn't something that you inherited because you inherit the things around you. It would

be things that you absorbed, things that you didn't really think about. In order to arrive at something that the people around you also find weird, odd, or hard to believe, you've probably had to arrive at it on your own. We're trying to cultivate that skill and celebrate that skill of trying to have some sense of independent thinking and not necessarily just inheriting or absorbing the ideas. One of the things that will first do with it is, I found in doing this numbers of times that it's good to try to help collectively refine the actual statement of the heresy to put it in a form that makes it easy to see its orthogonal relationship with everything else that we believe. What I'd like to do is to go around and each one of us can present a heresy that they believe and then we'll examine it and see if we can understand it first and then see where it sits into our own beliefs. We're just an experiment, as Tim says, and we don't know where this is going to go. We've done this in small groups like dinners. This is a public version of it. We'll see what happens. We don't have an order in mind, but Josh, would you like to suggest a heresy that you think the rest of us would have trouble believing?

Happy to do it, although I have to say going first is no great gift. Thank you, Kevin.

I feel like part of the heresies should probably be disagreeing with part of the premise.

Which premise? The premise of the heresies?

The definition. You said that the people you most admire would disagree with you.

I'm going to talk about something where I would say the person I admire most and with whom I'm closest, my wife has persuaded me that it's something I now believe that I did not believe, but consistent with your point of view that many people probably don't think.

So do you think that the rest of us would also find this heretical?

Only one way to find out.

I don't know. Only one way to find out. I'm going to try it out on you.

But you suspect that.

Well, I suspect it's definitely heretical relative to the teaching and training that most of you got during your educations. Now, whether you've overcome that education in ways that might make you open to this idea, that I don't know because I don't know you.

I'm hopeful that it will be at least stimulating and interesting.

I'm eager to get invited back. So if it's a disaster, I will have failed.

Okay. That's a great setup. Okay. So what's the heresy?

Let me start with a little hypothetical. You have a friend who comes back from a date.

And how many times have you heard or say the date was a disaster?

The guy I was out with, he just listened too carefully.

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Or how many times have you heard about a couple that are breaking up?
And you know, say, why did those guys break up?
And your friend says, well, the couple broke up because they just listened to each other too carefully. My hypothesis is you've never heard either of those statements.
We've all had friends who come back from a date and said that guy just would not stop talking.
Or you've heard about couples and all they did for many, many years was argue with each other.
And why is that? Well, at least one reason I think is that we spend a disproportionate amount of time doing all of our educational lives being taught two things.
We get taught how to speak publicly and we get taught how to debate.
And yet if you think about what forms the core of most meaningful relationships, it's the ability to listen. And we somehow have this notion that listening is an inherited skill, that someone's intuitively a good listener or not. So my heretical idea is we need to deemphasize and stop spending so much time teaching people how to debate and spend a lot more time teaching people how to listen.
That's predicated on the idea that talking isn't listening.
Well, I would definitely say talking is not listening and listening is not waiting to talk.
So I think many people think that the premise of listening is just waiting your turn.
And I think part of the argument I'd like to make is that there are lots of teachable skills around listening, which make people better able to understand differences, demonstrate empathy, and have the capacity actually to learn in ways that just teaching debating does not. So let me hop in for a second. I want you to potentially push back.
I would say though it is on topic in the sense that in our back and forth about this episode, the point has come up strongly that speaking heresies is one thing, but developing the ability to listen to heresies is also important. So it is sort of compatible in a sense, which maybe means it doesn't fit into the heretical bucket. But how do you feel, Kevin?
I'm a total agreement. I think listening is a superpower. I just did this book of advice. And that was one of the main topics was that active listening, which is important. I would say caveat that it's an active listening rather than just a passive listening. That is the superpower.
So others, Noah, did you have any comments about this heresy?
Yeah. I mean, I think it's an interesting form of a heresy. And I think it is a heresy because it's a heresy that it's hard to disagree with without sounding like an asshole.
Can I say that word on your podcast? Yeah, you can. Absolutely. I'm from Long Island.
You can say whatever you want. There you go. So when someone says, yeah, we really need to learn to listen more. And I'm sure every person in my life would agree that what Josh said is exactly what I need to hear. But I do kind of have an instinct to want to say, yeah, no, you can't really teach somebody to listen well. You could teach them passive listening by making them spit back what they've heard. But we all agree that that's not that useful a skill. You can teach them tricks like I will mirror back to you what you've said so that you have the experience of feeling properly listened to. And we probably all, at least those of us of a certain age have gotten some training in that whether we liked it or not, maybe from a romantic partner. But even that's not really listening. I mean, really listening requires being genuinely open to the other person's experience. And when you just at a deep level, don't think their experience matches reality, or you think that their opinion is just so flat

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out wrong. Sure, you can teach yourself to listen to get inside their head to convince them that they're wrong. And sure, you can learn to listen because it's a really useful tool to get ahead in life. I think the heresy, if I hear it right, Josh, is not for those reasons, you know, not instrumental listening to get something, but there's inherent deep value in listening to other people. And I think that's probably true, but I'm not sure you can really train people to do that. It's like training people and being open minded.

I mean, maybe you can do it, but it seems very, very difficult to figure out how.

Just to jump in for a sec, Noah, I think you were making two different points. One is whether, in fact, it's possible to teach something like listening in a way that won't come across as superficial. That was the first point about mirroring. We'll come back to that. The second point I think you were making was that, in fact, just listening actually is an understanding.

An understanding is different from listening. Are those the two points that you were making?

Yeah, I think so. And the third, maybe, is that really listening might be something that you can't teach, that you just have to make your way through life and get experience, but that formally teaching it wouldn't do as much good. Now, ask yourself, Noah, your reaction to what I put back to you, where I was demonstrating that I actually had heard you and that I was paying attention to what you said, as opposed to what might have been my natural inclination to say, Noah, you're a law professor, you're used to lecturing people. The fact that you may have the incapacity to listen probably doesn't mean this is a bad idea. That would be an alternative response and probably somewhat less productive. No, I think it's way better. I actually think it's way better. If I was debating you, that might have been my response. And so I think what I'm getting at is, first of all, on your two points, I don't think I agree with the first one. The fact that something might seem superficial when you first try it doesn't mean that it can't permeate in a way that will fundamentally change your behavior. So, picking up on Kevin's point, one of the skills of active listening certainly is mirroring, but that is, you said, a relatively superficial tool when it's first practiced. Your second point about the difference between listening and understanding, I think, is more complicated and harder. But the process of doing that does teach one empathy. You know, the line I like, which I think is very helpful, is curious, not furious. If your first reaction to hearing someone, even to your point, someone with whom you disagree quite profoundly is to be furious, it's very unlikely you're ever going to get to a point of empathy or the ability to understand what she might think. If you're curious, on the other hand, if you go through a process of asking questions, I think that is a skill that ultimately will allow you to actually develop some empathy, to develop some understanding, even with people with whom you disagree quite profoundly.

I wanted to ask the third point, just to clarify, so I understood, when you said that you didn't think we'll call this maybe a sophisticated level of listening as something that isn't teachable, do you mean that a person could not improve their ability to do it? Or just that, when you say teaching, do you mean like in an educational formal context? Or are you saying that they can't actually improve it? Definitely, people can get better at listening. And they can also get better at understanding over time. You can also train yourself to greater empathy, I suspect. I think Josh is right about that too. What I'm thinking about is what most education looks like, where we say, okay, now we're going to start training people in listening, some kind of a formal process where you try to make people listen. I mean, look, as Josh pointed

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out, I teach constitutional law for a living. So basically, what I do all day every day is I go into a classroom, and I pointed kids, and I ask them, well, they're young adults, and ask them to speak. And then I ask everybody else to listen to them and respond to them. And if I'm doing my job right, I don't have to say anything. When it works well, it's them all listening and having a conversation with each other. So yeah, I do believe that it's possible to train them and to train ourselves in that kind of listening. What I'm kind of dreading is the industry that and Josh's Utopia we have, where we're all subjected to trainings on how to listen. And maybe that's just my allergy to trainings in general, which is maybe it's not a heresy. It's like the opposite of heresy. Most people don't love trainings is that it would just, I feel, very quickly devolve into one of the things we don't want, you know, the spitting back or the mirroring or the, I mean, those are all fine techniques, but they're not genuine listening. I wanted to just get some other people in this. So it's not, so Maggie or Tim, do you have anything to add to this? Yeah, I mean, I think that, let's hear, a lot of the times I speak anecdotally, right? I'm not from the same culture y'all are from. And the way that listening is modeled in the cultures that it appears y'all grew up in, it's not what listening looks like in other cultures, anywhere else on earth, right? So for example, how do I say this without getting myself in trouble? When I hang out with my mother in law, she listens, she's been trained to listen, it turns into a little bit of an interrogation. You keep asking more and more questions of the same person and you dig down, dig down, dig down.

But there's no sharing of yourself there. So how do you even know that that information is being consumed and understood and internalized? Or is this like an algorithmic performance? As opposed to in my culture, when you listen to someone, the way that you show that you understand and relate is that you respond back with an anecdote and story from your own life that illustrates the same point. And if you're not used to that structure, it sounds like you're full of yourself. It sounds like you're trying to dominate the conversation with your own bullshit. But in reality, what you're showing is you're relating, you deeply understand the topic at hand because you're like, I have had a similar experience. And a conversation predicated on that concept of listening sounds like two people who aren't even having the same conversation to someone from like middle class America. So I think that that's the tough thing here is that the way that we are acculturated to converse and listen isn't uniform, even in the United States, much less worldwide. So I don't know how applicable this type of like Noa says training or whatever intervention

would actually be. That's my take. And Tim, what's your response to this heresy? I'm just enjoying how quickly this all got fired up. I was eager to see where it would go. So I'm just enjoying the initial fireworks. I would say that I am inclined to ask Josh more questions because I heard Noa, who's, Noa's good at sparring too. He said, you know, in Josh's Utopia, and I was like, well, wait a second, is that Josh's Utopia? Maybe we should clarify what Josh means. And specifically, since this is my job as the prescriptive podcaster, I suppose, maybe it's Thomas Moore's Utopia. My inclination is also just to say, all right, well, let's take the broader statements and maybe refine it down to Josh's personal experience coming back to this sharing of anecdotes. It doesn't need to be some RCT. In your experience, Josh, since you have changed your mind on this, it seems, what have you found most helpful to help to inform the

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experience of genuine listening on the part of people you are having conversations with? So to your point, Tim, my experience is deeply formed by my wife's experience. And so I recognize that one's a little contrary to Kevin's original point. My wife started out as a non-profit litigator representing survivors of interpersonal violence. And she would go to court and have horrible case after a horrible case. And she did an amazing job representing these women who were facing just unbearable personal situations. And after years and years of that, she found it difficult. And there's a lot of vicarious trauma in that profession. And she ultimately migrated and got retrained as a mediator, where she now helps low income couples avoid court and work through mediation on orders of custody and separation. And through that process, she went from being a really hard edged, although she's a very deeply empathetic person, but a need to have a really tough near because she was a litigator to being retrained as a mediator. And she would come home after three days of training, and I would get really helpful instruction. And I would say that I started some place like NOAA or maybe even further from NOAA on this whole subject. And I think it may have reflected my own personal experience like NOAA with some corporate institutional type trainings, which made me skeptical about whether, in fact, these things could be done. And just listening to Antoinette week after week, year after year, and watching her and seeing how she demonstrated it was super compelling. And it totally changed the nature of our interaction. And it totally changed the way I try to work in my professional life as well. It was as profound as anything else I had been taught in my professional life, and I learned it at home in our kitchen. So I think I feel it so strongly, partly because I learned from the woman I admire, and it changed my life quite directly. Y'all are straw man and NOAA, okay? It's okay. That's my job. Josh, what's an example of a technique that you learned that was really helpful? I think a lot of it has to do, Kevin, actually, with what you were talking about in terms of active listening. And for me, the piece that is hardest, and I wish I were a lot better at it, and I'm quite confident over the course of this podcast, I'll demonstrate that I haven't learned it as effectively as I should have. And that's the difficulty, of course, with this topic. Because you guys are all looking at me like, doesn't look like he's learned that much on this. Maybe he should go back to school. But I think the piece that's most effective and has helped me the most, and as I said, it's really not just in the context of our relationship, but with our friendships and at work, is trying to come at these conversations from a place of empathy. And really asking myself, why? Why is this person reacting in the way that she is? Why is this guy so angry? What is upsetting her? What is upsetting him? What is the underlying root? And there's an expression in this area, which is going down the V, which is to say, you have to go down and understand the root of the issue, and try to come out of from a place of empathy. And if you can do those things, your capacity to hear, to listen, to adjust is likely to be increased. To Noah's point, often one won't agree, right? This isn't about saying we all need to get along. This isn't about necessarily always cooperating. There are things out there in the world about which I feel very strongly, and I'm totally antithetical to my belief system. This is about having the capacity, at least, to having some empathy. I just also want to pick up on Maddie's point quickly. I totally agree with you, Maddie. There is not a one-size-fits-all to this. And what you described in terms of sharing your anecdote sounds lovely. The version of that that operates in New York is horrible.

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You go out to lunch with a guy, and you say, my daughter's not feeling great for X, Y reasons, and he immediately responds by saying, my daughter's got the same problem. It's like, that's not really demonstrating empathy. That's just talking about yourself. So, I think it's got to be done in a way that is appropriate for the community in which it's being taught. Yeah, I don't know nothing about New York, to be fair.

Maggie, can I ask you a question? When you were talking about, you belong to multiple overlapping cultures. I guess we all do. When you talked about your culture, where the appropriate response is to say, I've had a similar experience, which of your cultures were you talking about?

That's more kind of a location-based. I'm indigenous, but it's not so much that. This is just how people speak where I'm from, around Hepsiba, Georgia. This is like deep, rural, built in place, southeastern stuff. And to the point that, after how many years I've been gone from home, and kind of trained in this other way of being polite, with the air quotes and everything, I remember going back home and having a conversation with my mom and my papa and his wife, my step-grandmother, and they just looked at me like I was an alien. We were trying to have a conversation, and I was like asking questions, and she was just looking at me like I'd grown a third head, and I was like, oh, all right, I've been led astray. This isn't about politeness, it's a cultural thing. And when you live in a liminal cultural space like I constantly do, where you've got all these weird overlapping cultures that are hard to disarticulate, sometimes you get slapped in the face with reality like that.

Sure. Is there anything else we want to add to Josh's heresy before we maybe move on to another one? I think it was a great starting place. Yeah, I'll let you court it back as you see fit.

Okay, so Noah, would you like to volunteer a heresy that you have and subject it to the group?

Sure. It's always hard to narrow down the things you think that the people around you think are terrible, because I got a lot of them. Well, terrible. It's just that we don't believe.

So I'm going to take one that comes from my professional sphere, but it's a professional sphere that a lot of people care about, which is constitutions, broadly speaking.

Okay. Intentional agreements between people to do something a certain way.

And my heresy is that written constitutions are seriously overrated.

And this is coming from somebody who's devoted most of my life to studying mostly written constitutions, and when anyone will let me, trying to help people write them.

So it's like a self-harming heresy. And just to articulate why I think it-

The best ones.

Yeah, it's the best kind, right? Is that we think that if we have an agreement written down, between us, and this is not only at the constitutional level, but it could be like an agreement with your partner or with your business partner.

Like a contract.

Like a contract. We think, well, we have a contract. It's written down.

And because it's written down, we're going to keep it, because there are some consequences if we don't keep it. And we also think that we'll both know what the agreement is because we can look at the piece of paper that it's written on. And all of those propositions turn out when you look at them more closely to be false. You're keeping the agreement because you each think it's worth keeping the agreement at a given moment. And you might change your minds about that. And you might break the agreement without telling the other person.

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Or you might jointly decide to change it without bothering to change the writing. If you think someone's breaking their promise to you and you say, hey, look at this piece of paper where you wrote down their promise, that'll basically never get them to do the thing you want them to do. And the whole approach forgets that it overemphasizes the idea that language is clear, which it isn't. And it overemphasizes the idea that if we've agreed to something at one moment, we're stuck with that thing forever. We're not. And in the case of a country, if we ran the country the way the Constitution of 1787 was written, we'd still have to be living like it was 1787. And that's not viable. And we actually don't amend our Constitution barely ever in the United States. We just change what it means by a whole complicated set of processes, some official and some unofficial. And so now if you look at the written Constitution, it doesn't really bear any relationship to what it was supposed to be originally. And that's fine. What that shows you is what if we hadn't written it down at all? You know, what if we had just agreed to live together as a community and work things out as we went? That would have been closer to what it's like to be married to somebody or to be in a long-term business relationship with somebody where you're constantly modifying and altering and shifting and changing. So the heresy is that we think this is so great. And we think it because we've been patting ourselves on the back and saying that in the U.S. for 200 plus years. And really, here's the kicker. When we wrote down our Constitution in the U.S., basically, no one else had ever had a written Constitution. And now almost every country in the world has a written Constitution, which means we've convinced people all over the world, basically with the exception of Great Britain and Saudi Arabia, that this is the greatest thing since sliced bread. And you have to have one. If you want to be a democracy, you got to have this. So we've convinced everybody of this idea that it's verging on bullshit. It doesn't map reality. And so I think that's, you know, it's not something that the people around me would agree with at all.

And, you know, they've got a million good arguments about why I'm wrong and I'd love to hear how you guys react to it. So the heresy is that written constitutions are overrated.

So what's the alternative to it that's underrated?

And actually, if I may jump in and maybe know if you'd be able to use a real-world example, like you mentioned the UK, perhaps that's a good counterpoint. Speaking as someone who's really not familiar with the inner workings and the way that you are, the question of what the alternative would be is interesting. And maybe leading into that, you could just say, when you developed this heresy for yourself, has this been something that you've believed for 15 years? Is this the last five years? What led to it? And then what would be an example of an alternative? Because speaking as an idiot who doesn't know anything about these things, I have all these board games laying around. You open the board game, what's the first thing you do? You figure out the rules. And that keeps everybody on the same page. So to my knuckle dragging Long Island self, I'm like, well, if you don't have a set of written down rules, wouldn't it just be complete chaos, especially in the US with a bunch of separate states and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah? Is it chaos when you play pool? Not if you agree on the rules in advance. That's a good question. Yeah, fair enough. As long as you agree in some form in advance, not necessarily, depends on the number of drinks I've had. But yeah, it's generally okay. Noah. It's something I came to very, very slowly, because like you, I always thought we need the rules,

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and I cared about it enough to go into this as my living. So I definitely was not in early life realization. I think I had way too much faith in the idea of stuff being written down.

And I think the way I came to it was by actually being in the middle of processes where people were writing down rules from scratch, where they were as they were making up the rules of the board

game in Iraq and in Tunisia, and realizing that actually nobody necessarily intends to follow the rules the way they're written down. They just see the rules as kind of a vague suggestion that will ultimately come to be distorted, changed, played around with. I used to think that was a bad thing, and I came to see that that was a good thing. And then if there was one idea that really made me realize that I was kind of wrong about the rules of the game, and I remember reading this really clearly, I read it in graduate school, but I didn't understand it for years afterwards. It's this idea that conversation, this actually might bring us back to Josh, that conversation language is also like a game, that when we're talking to each other, like a game. So we're up the five of us are having a conversation, and there actually are a bunch of rules of that conversation regarding who can speak and when and how and grammar. And there's also a ton that isn't written down in there. We don't have a paradigm exactly for interruption, and we'll all have different interruption styles to Maggie's point. If we're from different parts of the country, we'll have different interruption styles. If we have a different class upbringing or gender upbringing, we'll have different styles. If we speak different languages, we'll have different interruption styles just to take one example. And in fact, we're just making up the rules of that game as we go. Same when, you know, invent a new word, like who's the first person who thought that the word cool meant what it now has come to me. Whoever first said that, people probably looked at that person like, what are you talking about that this music is cool? Like cool, what? You introduce a new word, and then other people use it and you play around with it. So you're playing this game. And so that game doesn't have rules. And from there, I didn't understand it when I first learned this at all. I was like, this is interesting, but I don't get it. I came to realize that actually, you know, life is a lot more like a game of catch than like a board game, Tim. So if we're playing catch, you know, there's a whole bunch of unwritten stuff, like do we bounce the ball to each other? Sometimes we do. Do we throw it hard when kids do it? Like when you're trying to see how hard the other person can handle it, we do that sometimes too. Sometimes are we just lobbying it? There's like all this unwritten stuff in a game of catch. It's definitely a game. And there's some rule like throw it to each other and throw it back. But then everything else is kind of being played with along the way. And that's why it can change.

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How can that work on a nationwide basis if you could just paint an alternative since I don't know what that looks like? The most aggressive version would be the British Constitution, which depending on how you count, you could say is 1,000 years old. You could say it's 400 plus years old. You could put the inflection point at different moments. And by the way, there's been civil wars in the middle of it too. So it's not like it's perfect by any stretch of the imagination. But what you had there is that the people who were doing the governing, the people who were criticizing the way the governing was happening, and the people who were being governed collectively experimented with different ways of doing things, and they shifted their collective understanding over time in an evolutionary way. And all of them basically admitted that things were changing over time. None of them ever said, I can point to this piece of paper and tell you this is exactly who can run for office, or this is exactly what the king or the queen can do. And sure they had mess ups along the way, lots of them, but it turns out not really more mess ups than any other system. And they maintained a high degree of continuity. And again, they had a civil war, they had a revolution. So it's not like it was totally seamless. But they were able to negotiate moments of big change and transition, often more smoothly

than other countries. And they've got the best longevity of a governing system of any country. And if you measure it in those terms, that's pretty darn successful. And what's more, I would just close that by saying, countries like ours that have an old written constitution, we do all that same stuff too, we just lie about it. We just pretend they were not doing that. Maggie, may you hit something?

Yeah, I mean, the other long term example of this is the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. So this is what a lot of people call the Iroquois League, right? These are the six nations in upstate New York and crossing over into Canada in the modern day that have had a kind of living, spoken constitution, complete with federalism for hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years, prior to European invasion of North America. And the physical manifestation of that government, you still have that, right? You still have an item that is the thing to point to. It just doesn't have words per se on it. So you have these wampum belts that have figural depictions of agreements woven onto them. And even beyond what happens in the UK, that constitution has survived an apocalypse, it still exists and is in working order today. And they're the strongest nation, indigenous nation in the Eastern Americas because of the strength of that spoken constitution.

And I think to what Noah's saying is, you know, we talk about this a lot, it's kind of the difference between the word of the law and the spirit of the law. When you write something down, you can play a different kind of game than what Noah was talking about. You get all these people who are interested in trying to find the seams and the cracks in an agreement to change the meaning, rather than trying to adhere to the original point of what the agreement was. You start having people trying to rip it apart to suit new needs, rather than adhere to what the point was. This is why I didn't end up becoming a lawyer, actually. So no, I have a clarifier or something. So it seems to me that there's saying that the written constitution is overrated, that there's several

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things. One is you have something that's a language-based constitution and there's issues with as Maggie was saying, having it based around language. And then there's the additional one of the written language. So you're saying there's additional level of difficulty because it's written down. And that as far as I can see what you're saying is that it's because writing is sort of immutable. And then that becomes a problem as time progressed because you don't want immutable

things. You want things to be mutable. And so writing is the immutable version of the language. And so are you saying that you don't want to have a language-based agreement or that you just don't want to have a written immutable version of the language agreements?

What I'm trying to say is closer to the second thing you're saying. I'm not sure I can imagine what it would be like to reach agreement without language at all at scale. You can have symbols like Maggie was talking about that are super powerful and maybe can't be reduced solely to language. But on the other hand, if you ask people who have been the bearers of that constitution for 300 plus years, they could tell you what it is. And they could tell you in language what the particular image on that particular wampum belt is signifying. So it's not that I'm trying to imagine a world without language. I'm not saying it's impossible. I just can't do it. I'm not good enough at it. I am talking, though, about our fantasy that if we've written something down, now we know. And now that agreement is genuinely fixed. And you could also think of it just in terms of regular contracts. You made a contract with someone that you're going to shovel their snow and they're going to pay you X dollars every time there's a snowstorm. And you're like, okay, I'm great. I'm good. And then you get like a dusting of snow and you go run right out and you shovel up the dusting and you send them a bill. And they're like, what the hell? That was not a shoveling of snow. And now you immediately find yourself what matters is not what the words shovel mean or snow mean. What matters is how much they like you. Do you intend to shovel their snow next year? What kind of social ties do you have with them so that it'll be an issue if you stiff them or they stiff you? Those are the relational issues. The relationship issues are the really the most important ones that come in and they will determine what's going to happen. And now you imagine that between two people. And it's definitely the same. Like you can't really get up and invoke your wedding vows. You promised to love and honor me. Now you're not doing it. I mean, you could try that, but it doesn't always work. So maybe it works in Josh's house where everyone listens. But in the rest of the world, it doesn't always work that way. Okay, now I got to jump in. Oh, no, poking the bear poking the bear. Exactly. Thank you, Tim.

So first of all, I totally admire the fact that Noah chose a topic where we would be somewhere between idiotic and foolish to debate it with him. Does anyone really want to get on this show and say, you know what? I think I'm going to take on the Felix Frankfurter Professor of Constitutional Law at the Harvard Law School over a subject of whether constitutions are valid. No, thank you. No, thank you. I will respond though in two ways. One is I totally take his point about the UK and Maggie's point about the Six Nations. There's a big survivor bias element of that. Yeah, you can always point to the example which has survived and say, yeah, great. Unfortunately, there are a lot of examples of where it doesn't survive. And therefore, we don't point to those. So I'm not sure those examples are entirely valid, notwithstanding the strength of the cultures and the histories. I would say on the subject of contracts, and that's why Noah is a constitutional professor,

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not a contract law professor, because if he was a contract law professor, he wouldn't have made that case. I really disagree. Look, contracts serve important purposes. And here's what they are. One is they force a discussion upfront. They allow people to align expectations without that process. I don't know what you expect. Now, let's leave aside marriages because I think prenuptials are unlikely to work. And I agree with you, wedding vows are done at a highly romantic moment. But in business, in the real world, what you do is you say, you're buying something, I'm selling something. Let's figure out what that means and make sure that we've agreed on the fundamental terms. And that's an important process. And the other thing it does is it forces you to understand consequences if you don't live up to your side of the agreement. And that's a very useful technique as well. So it's possible that this discovery that Noah made at Burning Man last year, that his lifelong work in the Constitution is no longer valid. That's conceivable to me. It seems unlikely, but it's possible. I don't think it's necessarily applicable, however, if you extend it out into the rest of the world. And using wedding vows as the extreme example, generally speaking, I think is a little bit of a false analogy.

So just to be fair, I'll say Josh likes poking bears too.

Hi, Kevin. Going back to the kind of the immutable aspect of it, to me, that actually the true genius was not the first writing down of the Constitution or the US was the fact that it had a self amendment

clause. That is real genius. And I think actually it was the Six Nations that influenced the self amendment. So there's something buried in there. There is a facility to do that. So I think, I would say in a Constitution without a self amendment clause or facility would be really worrisome. But once you have that in, to me, that could overcome some of the immutability aspect of it. You just want to have it easier to mutate. So right now, we're kind of penalized because it's kind of more difficult to change the Constitution than it was to pass the Constitution. And so there you're penalizing the future generations. So wouldn't you just want to make it easier to change things if that was the real hurdle?

Actually, could I modify that question, Kevin? Are you okay with that?

I'm going to build off of that. So the question, Noah, is very closely related, what I would ask to Kevin's, which is, let's say we could wipe some of the polarization in the US, and we're kind of starting from scratch in a culture that at least informed by Western and European influence by and large does not have, for the majority of the country, a strong hand down oral tradition. What might you suggest as a better way to put things together? Now you guys made it one minute really hard. So let me go through them in order. So I'll start with Josh's point. I agree, Josh, that if you're strangers and you need to sell each other some commodity, you need a written contract with all the details. I'm not imagining that you could run the futures trading markets by purely conventional terms with nothing written down. Though I will note that there are markets like the diamond markets where people's transactions are overwhelmingly still to this day based on a handshake and a bunch of rules that are not written down in any one place. But that depends on being a close knit community of people who know each other. This already hints at the answer to Tim's point. So I guess what I would say imagine that you've got two poles of continuum. On the one side are pork bellies sold by people who have never seen a pork belly to each other and never will see one. And on the other hand is wedding vows, which are highly conventional, general principles at a high level designed maybe

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to inspire you to manage to live well together over the long run. I'm saying my heresy is that constitutions are on that continuum closer to wedding vows, where the goal is to be together for a long time and to adjust and evolve and change and be responsive than they are to pork bellies. And I think that's the heresy. So that raises the question of change. Kevin, you're right that amending a constitution is crucial, but unfortunately our wonderful founders did a terrible job in putting in an amendment provision if they wanted us to actually amend the constitution.

Which secretly they didn't. Madison was terrified about the possibility of too much amendment. He thought it would end up like the Florida constitution or the California constitution or one of these constitutions with hundreds and hundreds, in some cases, you know, nearly a thousand

amendments. So they made it too hard to amend. And that's why we have to do all of these mechanisms

that aren't amendment to change it. Tim, I think you're making an incredibly rich and powerful point, which is if we don't have common traditions necessarily, and we're also a country of both of immigrants and of people who change their views, even aside from the polarization, it makes us look more like traders trading pork bellies who don't have anything in common with each other. I mean, they actually do in real life, but let's imagine they didn't. For example, they all wear the same Patagonia vest, but it makes us seem more like that than it does like a married couple.

And I guess here's what I would say. That's a reason to have a written thing up front and then to try to use that to build up a culture in which we do share common values.

And if we don't have enough of the common values, we're not going to pull it off.

And that's why polarization is so scary. I mean, we've had polarizing moments in our history before.

This is not our most polarized moment. It's not even the second most polarized,

but it's still, it is very polarized. And the reason that in general is scary,

that at a certain point, if you don't have enough in common with somebody, you know,

if the situation is not working, you know, you might break up. And this is not a situation

where there's the option of some clean breakup. That's terrifying. And it's why you need to build up some sense of common values and beliefs. And a constitution is a good starting place that way,

recognizing that it's not going to run all the way down through history with all the

details specified. So talking over at first is great, like Josh says. But then as hundreds of

years pass, if we got together and had a new constitutional convention today and said,

oh, let's just talk it over, I don't think we'd reach an agreement. So we sometimes need something

that is general and loose enough, like marriage vows, that we can all say, oh, I know what that

means. I know what that means. And we think they mean almost opposite things. So unless someone

has something else to add to this heresy discussion, I'd like to move it on to the next one. Anyone

else have anything more to say on Noah's? Really great. Wonderful. Unexpected. So Maggie,

what's a heresy that you'd like to share with us?

Yeah, I think American middle class culture is ruining America.

America middle class culture is ruining Middle America and every and all.

It's ruining everything. It's ruining literally everything. Yeah. I mean, we export ourselves.

So maybe it's ruining the whole world. Let's just extend it. Let's get out there on a limb.

When I say that, though, really, what do I mean? I kind of mean American modernism,

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the type of America that's existed post World War II, where we instill in people a certain set of values. We've adjusted our culture. You tell your youth that to be a successful and respected member

of society, you leave home at 17 or 18, go somewhere where you don't know anybody, go to college. And then if you're successful, you can start up a little nuclear family out in a nameless suburb or a town that has the same amenities that every town has and live a successful kind of the barman life, a little Protestant ethic in the spirit of capitalism in there.

This is a very particular cultural brand. And as we're no longer in the heady glory days economically of what America was able to achieve after the world was destroyed, and we were the only people that had like working machines anymore, as some of those pockets of fat have dissolved in the United

States, we've been left in this situation where you get extreme social isolation.

You get kids that can't get into the Ivy League, even though they feel like they're entitled to it, and then they go spend all their time online, become in cells by AR-15 and shoot up a school.

And I think that it's because we've really moved away from the idea of community

in terms of being embedded in a place. There are other European countries with economic issues.

Look at Italy, look at Greece, but they don't have the same end result because those people are still embedded in a community of people who care about them, who interact with them,

and you don't have this extreme social isolation. It's just, it's all cultural process,

in my opinion. A similar thing with, I think that leads a lot of people to these extremely

escapist drug addictions. And, you know, to Josh's point, I'm not talking about burning man,

right? I'm talking about the kind of drug issues I see in Worcester, Massachusetts.

So, I think that this extreme adherence to that particular brand of the American dream

has ruined our ability to have a functional, I mean, things have just become quite dysfunctional

in the country because of it. So, I'm trying to, again, refine the heresy with the, it is,

so you said it was American dream, then you said it was maybe more modern.

Yeah, modernism. I'm thinking about the hundreds of millions of people,

hundreds of millions of people in China who have left their communities, moved into the cities.

And so, is this what you're talking about, or is it something different than this?

And the same thing is happening in India right now, where there are, where the same kind of

migration is happening of people leaving these little villages that are, where they have a certain

identity, they know who they are, they're moving into big cities, they're going to college and

beyond, they're mixing up, they're isolated. Is that what we're, we're talking about this as a

general phenomena, or you're saying that there's something else different than this?

Yeah, I think I do mean it a little bit more pointed than gradual urbanization

due to like change, economically, globally. I think there is a particular brand of the American

version of this. And honestly, the people who are most harmed by it, I think are young men,

young white men in America, they're feeling this sea change under their feet. There are more

women

going to college than men for a decade now. Why? In America, a lot of it is because men are just

not achieving dumb metrics that are kind of meaningless, like SAT scores and GPAs at the

same rate as women in the United States. I think that it's all American culture bounded, where

if you're failing to meet this high kind of, this Billy Crystal standard from movies in the 80s

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and 90s of being able to strike out on your own with just a baseball bat and an army duffel bag full of stuff, walking into New York City to like start your life, that you have failed. And I think people are being told that they're literal failures because they're not able to achieve this very time constrained version of American success. And that a lot of the people who are doing some of the worst things in the United States right now are people who have gone through that experience of failure. And it's not necessary. I don't know that there's any analog to that type of failure in modern China or India. And I'm pretty sure there isn't a version of that in Italy or Greece. You live with your parents, you go to college and then you move down the street when you get married. Can I ask Maggie, how much of this is the stuff part? The part that you might call consumer culture, you know, that we measure ourselves by how much stuff we have and how good that stuff is and the brands that go with it. And then if you want that, you need cash. And to get that cash, you move to the city because that's where the job is that pays more cash. And then you just meet more people who want the same stuff. How much of it is the stuff part of it? And how much of it is the dream of making it big? Like, you know, the fantasy of becoming the next Elon? And how much of it is the leaving where you grew up to go to a new place? Because all those seem to be part of what you're describing. Yeah, absolutely. I mean, I think the stuff is a major part of it. But I would extend stuff beyond consumer goods and keeping up with the Joneses type stuff to meaningless achievements. What's the real difference from getting a degree from the University of Georgia versus Emory in terms of your life trajectory? Not that huge. But if you don't get into Emory, and you have to go to Georgia Southern, suddenly that's like almost like a narcissistic injury, where you have this hit to your ego you can never recover from. And it's just constant knocking down of ego that injures people in this way emotionally. What I'm arguing is that those standards are fucking stupid to begin with. They're not based on anything other than the imagination of what we could achieve on the GI Bill in 1950. At a time where we had far fewer people in the country, we had a far different economic outlook. And I really don't think it's necessarily about leaving home, which I mean, for me it is. Personally, I'm coming from this, again, from an outsider point of view. I didn't grow up in this type of culture, but I'm surrounded by it all the time now. So it's all bound up with it. But I think it's more this absolute, like you said, about the constitution, the written constitution, this fiction we've created, this fantasy of what you need to just have a basic, respectable life in upper middle class America. It doesn't matter how much money you make even. If you're an underwater welder, are you getting the same respect as someone who went to Cornell in upper middle class Boston? I don't know that you are, even if you're making double the money. So quick question for you, Maggie. Yeah. And I'll just add a little backdrop. So Johann Hari is an author from Getting His Name Pronounced Correctly. He's written books about addiction and also depression, chasing the scream, lost connections. And he returns in a very compelling way over and over again to social isolation. And I suppose what I'm wondering is, as I look at cultures that I understand somewhat like Japan, for instance, the schooling there and cram schools and test scores are even more determinant in a way of your future than, say, the SATs are in the US. However, and there are social isolation issues in Japan, but you have multi-generational households. And you look at a place like Costa Rica, multi-generational households. And I'm wondering if that is a crux component of all of this, which it seems to be, is there anything to be done in the US? Are there changes that you think we could

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make culturally that would remedy some of the symptoms that you're describing?

Maybe celebrate people whose lives are happy, as that's the form of success that we should be like lionizing above meeting what is frankly, like you said, you just said, oh, there's multi-generational households in Japan, and there's this really toxic testing culture. If you think about it, you know, not to get too theoretical here, in an organismic way, where these different facets of culture work like different organs in a system as a whole, like a body that forms a culture, very like Durkheimian way of thinking about things. Maybe you can pick pieces in and out there, like you're explaining these other cultures that you have experience with. Somehow in America, we've picked a set of organs that lead to a particularly toxic end, toxic individualism.

Individualism at all costs, really. We don't have a maternity leave. It's just like we don't have universal health care. There's stuff that just makes economic, even neoliberal sense that we don't do because of like toxic individualism. And I do think that if we started focusing on, again, lionizing people who live happy lives, or have fulfilled lives, rather than ones who meet this American archetype, Don Draper, that could lead to a lot of good change.

Josh, I think you had your hand up.

So I react in a couple of different ways to this, Maggie. The first is, you know, if you live in New York City, you have a lot of politicians who come here to ask for your advice, and they quickly pivot to asking for money, but it gives you a chance at least to hear from them. And I try to ask them what's something true about your constituents that I wouldn't know. And one of them said to me once, you think all my constituents want to move to New York City? They don't. The problem is they don't have jobs where they want to live. So the first way I react to this, I totally agree. And I think we are failing to your point, Tim, as a society, when we fail to provide employment opportunities, meaningful work, a sense of purpose in the communities where people

actually want to live. And we should not assume that everyone wants to move to New York City and work for Metta and live in a loft in Soho. Although, even if you work for Metta, you probably couldn't afford a loft in Soho. So that part I really react to, Maggie, and I agree with you.

I probably disagree with you slightly on part of it. If you look at places like Italy and China, just picking two examples what you cited, probably their biggest problem going forward is a demographic

one, where they have some of the lowest birth rates in the world. So you pick two societies and held them up, particularly Italy, is a place where things are going well. I would say a society where people are sufficiently pessimistic about the world, that they're unwilling to have children, and where they have repeatedly voted into office, someone like Berlusconi, a little on the person they have now, probably aren't society as ours, hold up as exemplars of what our aspirations should be. So I'm not sure I agree with you on that point. And then the third thing I'd probably say is the maladies that you're describing, I think, are real. I think that's a confluence of things, though. I think one element absolutely is consumerism, one element certainly is social media, dislocation, they're all combined. But if I had to come back to one, I probably would go back to the point you made and where I started, which is we're failing to provide meaningful employment, a sense of purpose, the capacity to support yourself and you support your family and the community that you find meaningful. And we've assumed that's only one type of community, and that's a failing as a society. I started in this conversation with responding to Josh about

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how I normally converse in my culture. And I will now show an example of that. I have a very large tight-knit family that lives on a compound. Okay, we all live on the same piece of land, we've had the land for 300 years, we got up for service in the revolution. I'm related to most of the people where I'm from, the exact piece of land. We all went to high school together, we all went to middle school together. And some of us, including myself, are considered in our culture big weirdos, people who would be targets of bullying, people who don't fit into the norm of the area, but having the social network of cousins in this example to help guide you through social situations that you don't understand on the ground as a peer who loves you in your school and then threatening to kick someone's ass who tries to come at you, gives you a way to navigate through some of what are the most scarring times for a lot of these kids who are totally disassociated

from a community. You hear about all of these maladjustments, and I spend a lot of time online to my physical and emotional detriment. And you just see these communities of young men that are just spiraling. And I have cousins who could have gone down that path but instead live normal lives now because we were there to kick someone's ass who tried to come at them. Can I just say, the more I hear you say that Maggie, the more I think that the problem might just not be in modern America, it might be everyone in the U.S. who's a descendant of immigrants to a certain degree because so few people descendant of immigrants in the U.S. formed familial compounds where they stayed. Mostly people move a lot. And that's always been true since Europeans first came to the Americas, to North America. So some of this problem may go back even further. And the other thing is, to my mind, it's associated with this problem of social class that we don't like to talk about in the United States. Class is the seaward of our public conversations. On the one hand, there's something beautiful about that post-World War II moment where, as we're constantly being told by the economists, there was a lot of mobility possible in the United States. And in the U.S., because we never had an aristocracy, mobility was often measured by, did you go to college? And at first, there weren't very many colleges. So going to college was a way to bump up. Then after the GI bill, there were a lot more colleges, but it was still, we still treated it as a way to bump ourselves up. And now it's obviously a lot harder for reasons you were describing for anyone to bump up. And so we know about this kind of mobility problem. But what you're saying, and this is why I like it, and it's also so radical, and it's really making me think, is that it's actually even before that. It's that even just the idea that you can move up implies that you should want to move up. And that there's something not okay with you if you don't. And in a way, what you're describing is a kind of like downside of mobility. It's not just the lack of mobility. You're saying, even if we had the mobility, it still sends a wrong message to people who are like, I don't want to be mobile. I like who I am. I like where I live. I like what I do. And that is something which I think it's hard to find any period in US history where European-descended or other immigrant-descended Americans were consistently happy with saying, I'm just going to stay where I am and do my thing.

I mean, you'd be shocked at how bizarre people treat me. I went to college at Harvard. I'm a beast of a certain mold like Noah is. We had this Uncle Harvard there looming in the background for a lot of our lives. And you'd be shocked at how many people acted like I was out of my mind for not wanting to spend my time dragging the American South for being the place where a lot

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of the worst sins of America were paroxysmed out or tried to. We pretended the whipping boy of the entire United States that I didn't want to talk about how awful it was and get away from it and that I spend my time proselytizing to people from home about the fact that, yeah, I mean, Donald Trump really is the con man snake oil salesman from New York you told me to be scared of when I moved to New England. It's here. He's here. He showed up. Y'all maybe pay attention. I get treated like it's crazy that I don't want to live in New York City that I don't. I'm not interested in it. I have my people and I have my culture. So Josh, you had something. I think would maybe conflating a couple of things. One is mobility with a sense of economic security. I think Maggie's completely right that not everyone wants to move.

No, you're right that the history of the United States required movement. And why was that? It was because parts of the country had a stagnant economy and parts of the country almost always had a booming economy and people who were looking to better themselves from an economic perspective and prioritize that. That was a question of choice. One can argue about whether that's the right choice, but they found mobility is the most compelling way to improve their lot. Interestingly, over the last couple of years, mobility United States has declined dramatically. That was partly COVID related. It's partly also people are reprioritizing, right? They're recognizing, I think a little bit, Maggie, what you're saying, which is that new job, that 20% pay raise is less important to me in some respects than maintaining a sense of community and a sense of place. And I'm going to prioritize those. I think we just have to be willing to acknowledge that if that's going to work, though, we need to be creating jobs around the country, leaving aside one's views on work, right, to work. If you go to Greenville, South Carolina, why is that community vibrant is because we have a lot of auto plants. And we've moved auto plants out of one particular place, which was the Midwest, and we've moved them to places where other people want to live. You don't even have to live in the town of Greenville, the city of Greenville. You can live outside in quite rural South Carolina and have a job that will pay you a living wage. Boeing's in Charleston, South Carolina, that works for the people who work at Boeing and manufacture and assemble 787 Dreamliners. So I think our conception of where people want to live and work needs to change.

And I think we need to recognize that and provide those opportunities. So I completely agree. But it's a different question than upward mobility. And I don't think we should diminish the historical and relatively healthy American desire for our children to have a better lives and quotes than what we had. And part of that realistically is economically. It's not just having more meaningful relationships for people who have not had means. It's important that they have an opportunity to have more financial security. So I feel as if maybe we should move on unless Maggie, do you have anything final to say on your heresy or is that enough?

My last sentence would be if you can just move from one suburb a thousand miles to another suburb and you don't feel culturally uncomfortable, you are doing it wrong. Okay. All right. Really good. So, Mr. Tim, Tim, what's your heresy? I know you have a heresy deep inside you. So tell us what it is. I've been racking my brain on this for a little while because I didn't want to start with something so nearly impossible to defend that it would be unproductive. So I think what I'm going to go with is I have come to a point where I believe there are multiple vehicles through which we will be able to meaningfully communicate with animals within the next five years, I would say. And by meaningful, I've thought about what that actually means. Like, would it be at the

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level of a small human child? I don't think that the conceptual mapping will work quite that way, but there are a couple of things that have combined for me to believe this. One, on the easier to grasp side would be work that people like Aza Raskin are presenting and exploring, related to using AI and machine learning and so on to effectively decode and then produce communication with different species. And there's a fair amount of progress that's been made with, say, whales and others. Whales guy. I've met him. I care about his name.

Okay. Yeah. I haven't met the whale guy. I've seen the book, though. So I do think technology, and in this case, literally, sort of exponentially developing technology will put a huge dent in that in a very short period of time. And of course, Kevin, you've spent a lot of time in the sandbox of AI. So you know how absurdly quickly things are developing and surprising the developers themselves. Now, I'm going to throw a twist on that to make it a little stranger, which is a few other things that I think will help with animal communication are sensory augmentation so that there could be potentially real time interaction along the lines of, say, what neuroscientist David Eagleman has done where they put on, say, a suit for someone who is blind or deaf and it provides a tactile form of feedback where they begin to map their environment and inputs differently and adapt to this very, very quickly. And furthermore, this is the last I'll say and I'll stop. I think that certain psychedelic compounds will probably facilitate a number of these, mostly the sensory augmentation used in combination. And I would point to some research that these are mostly case studies, I should be clear and not randomized controlled studies or anything that journalist named Rachel Neuer has pointed me to related to MDMA for social

anxiety and social cues. There are quite a number of people in the communities, the autism communities

who have experimented with sort of durable effects on social anxiety and social cues. So I'll stop there since there's plenty to pick apart. But compelling, surprising animal communication within five years that will then be propagandized by all the political and special interests, it will become a very contentious area. So I'm not sure that it will have uniformly positive impacts, but that's my prediction. So one clarification, the psychedelics you were talking about being applied to the humans, not necessarily to the animals? No, I think that they could be applied to animals as well in terms of reading body language and opening the reducing valve on processing that type of information, particularly as it relates to neuroplasticity and adapting to sensory augmentation. I think that will be ultimately viewed as maybe a very primitive approach to what the AI can produce, but I think they could all work in tandem.

I think you have nesting heresies there because giving animals like a delix is a self.

Oh, no, not animals. Well, I guess animals, human animals, the human animals.

Although I would like to fund research looking at whether or not MDMA can help to reverse the equivalent of PTSD in dogs who have been abused. I think that's under-explored, but that's a whole separate thing. Is the time frame of this important for your heresy? I just wanted to kind of throw something out there that would give people something additional to object to.

I'm not going to object, but I am really curious, Tim, about this, and I should begin by saying I know less than nothing about this. So when you talk about communicating with animals, I mean, first of all, we already do a significant amount of communicating with animals.

The better you are, say, with a dog at both understanding where the dog is coming from

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and communicating to it and what a dog will understand, and I've seen you do this, Tim, with your own dog really beautifully, you having a much better communicative relationship than a lot of other people do with animals, certainly than I do, and maybe even then a lot of people- It turns out Noah likes listening to animals. It doesn't like listening to people. There you go. But what I wanted to ask about the communication, Tim, is like, what are you picturing? Because there's this super famous essay by the still going strong, well into his 80s philosopher, Tom Nagel, called, What Is It Like to Be a Bat? Basically, what he tries to say, and if you're right, this article will be obsolete, is that we can't really piece together what it would be like to be a bat from within our perspective. And I would think that maybe language is a little bit like that. So what would it mean to hear the animal communicating? I'm not talking about the whale song here where it is enough like language in that it has repetitive patterns and it's sound and we can sort of begin to picture the way it might be used. But what does it look like to you to say we're understanding what the animal is communicating to us? Is the AI producing like a translation? It's like wolf GPT or something, and it like, you know, it just gives us a running trend. I mean, just tell me what you're talking about, because I can't really picture it. Yeah, sure. So I think there are multiple possibilities. And I do not understand the technology. If we're talking about the AI side, just the idea of calling that keeping it simple is kind of hilarious in and of itself. But let's keep it simple and talk about AI and the sort of computer science side of things. I think that for a communication model to be functional, and I say this is someone who's studied a lot of human languages, first and foremost, with, say, different species, we're talking about, let's just define terms a little bit. When I say communication, it could be human to animal communication, but it could also and probably will first be animal to animal communication. So within a certain species, can you model the language in such a way that there is a predictive value? Does that make sense? So you are able to predict what will happen next based on pattern recognition within a given species or even, say, it could be a regional iteration of a single species. And we see a lot of variants across, say, chimpanzees, depending on location. But let me give an example that Asa Raskin has brought up just to give an example of one of the leads that I find interesting that I think will develop over time. So with dolphins, which also have this sort of sonic patterning. So in that sense, as a human, it's a little easier to compare these funny sounds coming out of my mouth that are being molded by all these muscles and so on to a dolphin. But with the dolphins, you can ask a dolphin, and I don't know the exact training that went into this. And we can come back to Nagel too, and the kind of behaviorism, skinner, black box type of stuff if you'd like. And I don't think you need to understand the internal functioning of an animal to make progress with communication in the same way that you don't really understand what's going on in any human's head. But you infer that based on what comes out. So I do think you could base it on observable data. But with the dolphin example that Asa has given, and I'm going to butcher this because I'm calling it from memory, but these marine mammal trainers, which is a very interesting branch of animal training for anyone who's interested in say dog training, it gets more interesting when you get in the water, you can't hit a misbehaving dolphin with a rolled up newspaper, not that I would recommend that with a dog. But they will ask a dolphin to do something novel. In other words, do something you have never done

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before. And they have confidence that this is being sort of semantically communicated well enough that the dolphin understands it. Is that true or not? Who knows, but they are able to produce novel behaviors. The more interesting aspect to me, although I think that's very interesting if you dig into it, is that they can then take two dolphins and say, together, do something that you have never done before. And they like do whatever they do. And they confer and then they simultaneously

perform a novel movement that they have never demonstrated before. So I think a lot of it will be starting with trying to model some type of predictive value on language inputs using technology. I think that's where it's going to start, where it leads, I honestly couldn't tell you, but I do think at some point, we will be able to produce, we already can on some very, very primitive level birdsong and so on that have say alarm call values. It's very rough, but I think the fidelity of that with the type of data that can be captured now with better technology, not just AI, but just simple kind of audio technology, I think we will get to a point, and this could be abused, and Aza would agree with this, where you could actually propagate messages say through water to dolphins to whales. I think it'll be easier to start with mammals versus say reptiles, although you can train chickens and other things, which I think is a good idea. If you're planning on having kids, you should have to train a chicken or a dog first, I think. But I'm not sure if that answers the question, but that's where I think things are at least starting at the moment. There's an example of a prototype version of that with dogs using these little buttons where you record a word onto it that was used often with kids who were having trouble with language, and the ultimate was the scowl who was teaching her dog to speak

by having, she had a plywood set up where they had 34, she got up to 34 different words that the dog could press the buttons for and say a sentence, and it was again remarkable, like Coco, it was kind of like a sign language, but it was an audible sign language, where the dog was constructing fairly complicated sentences about what it wanted to do or want to go outside and see its friend and all kinds of remarkable things, just using the recorded sound on one word per button, and up to 34, and they had kind of primitives so they could actually construct a fairly complicated sentence. And so that would, if you could imagine that transferring into some kind of audible language, that would make it another step. Josh.

Tim, let me ask you a question. Do you think if you're right, it's going to lead to a quite transformational view on animal rights and people's willingness to consume animal products? Yeah. So that, I do think that's one possibility, and that's related to my comment on political division and how that's going to fit into things. I do think for millions of people who are maybe towards the midline, let's just say you have a continuum, just to say, I want to sound like a smart guy, so I'm going to use this too. If you have a continuum from, let's just say pure vegetarian to, or like herbivore carnivore, and you have like 100% pure, 100% pure, never going to change, and as you move towards the middle, you get increasingly flexible. I think for people who are close to that midpoint or maybe even within 20 points, a lot of folks will switch to probably more plant-based food, which I do not for the record think is automatically healthier, but for moral reasons, I think more people will switch. At the same time, my experience,

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because I've been involved with all sorts of things that are kind of at odds, we could talk about it, but the conservation work that I have done, conservation is viewed in very particular way, I think in a very exaggerated way in the US specifically. You don't run into this as much, say, in South America, in Colombia, when they're producing like QDB, Get They Park, and so on, or protecting it, but in the US, there's a great piece in the New Yorker. I think it's something along the lines of the wolf lady or the powerful story of the wolf lady, and it talks about wolf conservation, which is basically considered the Middle East of conservation and how politicized it is. There are people who want to kill wolves just because they view it as a magnet for liberal overreach with conservation, city folks telling rural folks how to live. There's more to that, of course, and then you have the opposite on the liberal side, and it turns into this battlefield for ideology where something like a wolf or a fill-in-the-blank animal is a symbol, it becomes a symbol. So I do think that it will flip a lot of people towards different behavior, and simultaneously it will become hyperpolarized, and you'll have competing researchers or computer scientists who are taking completely opposite interpretive stances based on whatever their political or ideological goals will be. But I do think it will change behavior, absolutely. I'm not a vegetarian, I hunt and consume elk and deer and so on. So my personal choice has been to set parameters around it so that I feel ethically comfortable with consuming nutrient-dense meat, but I do think a lot of people will switch to a more plant-based or synthetic-based diet, which is not automatically healthy, but I do think that we'll see that change. Yeah, I was recently at a very strange kind of conference about the confluence of a lot of the things we're talking about today about multi-species constitutionalism, and this idea of trying to and being able to communicate with other animals was the majority of the focus of this meeting. I was there because my assertion was that we're not, you know, the dominant, again, I'm an anthropologist, right? I'm thinking about culture all the time, but the dominant kind of cultural worldview or as people in my field call it ontology, which is just like an obfuscating word for no reason, just like, let's make things harder. We'll say practice instead of practice. It's just like, all right, thanks for making this less reachable by normal humans, but we don't have it built into our worldview to deal with this eventuality, in my opinion, and there are plenty of cultures that do have it built in to their worldview to deal with this, and I would say that most of those are relational cultures, so I'm native, bringing it back around to that. You know, you have this idea of a relational world where there is a connection and reciprocal responsibility between every entity in the universe, including between an individual squirrel who eats your trash or whatever. I guess that's a raccoon and yourself. That raccoon has a responsibility to you and you have a responsibility to that raccoon, and it gives a baseline, having a conception of how to deal with animals in a way that respects them as what they are, rather than what we need them to be to fit into how the mechanics of our world currently work is going to be necessary to deal with this eventuality or else it's going to be a disaster. Like you said at the beginning of this, it's like, who's going to get the Lorax endorsement on their presidential campaign and stuff that's just, let's churn it through the meat grinder we currently have. I think it's the danger, you know, not to be too punny. Yeah, yeah, totally. The Lorax, great invocation. I want to say a few more things. So this is also, so far, we've only been talking about what we would consider

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animals. I actually think it's going to get stranger. Like fungus, fungi. Well, plants in general, I don't think that we will find that eating plants is quite as ethically black and white the opposite of eating animals. And there's a piece that Michael Pollan wrote called the Intelligent Plant in New Yorker in 2013. A lot has happened since then. And you have to be careful, I think, just to point out the obvious with anthropomorphizing all things. I think there are lots of risks there. But there are some very seemingly credible researchers who have observed some very, very strange phenomena, which make plants seem much more sentient, much more sensitive, much more, let's just call it alive, than I think many people who eat solely plants would like to believe. So I think that's also going to complicate matters. And I'll just point out also, and you can romanticize a lot of older cultures. And I think there's a risk that you see a lot of that in Austin, it kind of drives me nuts on some level, but where everything new is bad and everything old is great. And I'm like, I don't know if it's that simple. However, there are many, many cultures and I've had most of the exposure in South America and Central America, although I know it's certainly true in other places where the idea of communicating in some fashion with animals and plants is completely uncontroversial, which is not to say that therefore it is true. But I find it interesting that over the span of millennia, in some cultures, there is a durable uncontroversial belief. It's kind of like Tuesday comes after Monday. Yes, you can communicate with plants or with film the blank species. So don't call them old. Those are still living cultures that exist today. Yeah. Well, what's the right way to put it? Long non-modernist, traditional, non-modernist. There we go. There we go. So Noah, Noah, no, you have something to add here. Yeah, I wanted to ask a heretical question about the heresy. So let's say you're right, Tim. Let's say the heresy is true. Maybe it will go the other way. Maybe instead of thinking that ethically we can't eat something that we can talk to, we go the way that most traditional cultures have gone, which is they're not necessarily vegetarian just because they think they can communicate with animals. Nor, I mean, if you can communicate with plants too, you can eat the plants. Maybe it would have the opposite effect. Maybe we would no longer think that the capacity to be sentient and communicate is the basis for deserving our ethical consideration. And maybe at the margin that would even be bad. This is the heretical thought. Maybe that would even be bad for the way we treat each other. I mean, drawing the line at humans is problematic in a whole bunch of ways, obviously. But at least it's had one really big benefit over the last few hundred years, which is it's gradually allowed us to recognize that all humans deserve equal rights no matter what aspect of those folks, practices or culture or appearance we don't like. Because the line used to not be at human. Yeah. So the thing about drawing line at humans is in a lot of ways it's obviously naive, but it has done a lot of good drawing the line at humans in terms of our treating other humans not equally because we never, we never get there, but treating them as humans and respecting their inherent dignity. So the radical question would be, what if everything you said happened to him and made us worse? I think it's entirely possible is my short response. I have more thoughts, but Kevin. We get back into genocide in a big way, you know. There's an heresy that I would not bring up here, but I would just have to add, which is, yeah, cannibalism is okay. Long port. All right. You dropped the line. Yeah, we can eat humans. Sure, it's fine. If they're dead. So unless there's something else to add to Tim's, I want to move on to the last one,

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because we have only 15 minutes to talk about. So I picked a heresy that I thought would be, we could have a short discussion rather than a complicated one so we can finish in time. And mine is that I think that human clones are fine. We should have human clones, that there's nothing wrong with human clones. Right now, there's a kind of a taboo about making human clones, but they're perfectly fine because we already have human clones. They're called twins. They're simultaneous clones, but we get all freaked out with serial clones. And actually, in fact, if we did not have twins and we suddenly invented twins, people would call them the devil. They would just say, that's just insanely evil if we had twins and that we didn't have them naturally.

So I think that it's perfectly fine to have serial twins rather than just simultaneous twins. Okay. But according to you, Kevin, we can eat them, right? As long as we do.

Exactly. And we can eat them too.

Well, I mean... Twin farming.

Am I wrong? Am I wrong?

Eatyourself.com.

And saying that the reason people are like weirded out by serial twins is because of the insight it gives into the psychology of the person who wants to serialize themselves, more so than the actual cloning?

Well, you're assuming that you don't have to actually serialize yourself. You can make twins of anything. You don't have to make a twin of yourself. You don't have to clone yourself.

Okay.

You can clone anything. You could clone your neighbors if you wanted to.

Right, exactly. So it's not just cloning of yourself that you have to do.

So you clone your kids so you have an air and a spare and you just keep on in the house.

So Kevin, what would you like to see happen then? You're making an ethical statement that this is okay instead of not okay. What would some use cases be?

There's obviously many people who lose a child or something who would like to restore that to bring them back, so to speak. And so I don't think that we should prohibit that just based on the fact that there are clones.

At a deep level, I understand that people have that instinct. But what's the advantage of that relative to a non-cloned? Because the new clone, like identical twins, won't actually be the same person. Exactly.

They might look alike for some period, but there won't be the same person.

Let's say you lost a child and chose to have another child. I think if someone said, we lost our child, we decided to have another child, none of us would think what a terrible ethical reaction. We would think, oh, that's very understandable.

We wouldn't condemn it. But that's because they would be acknowledging that it wasn't going to be the same person all over again. And even if they named the child the same thing, we might raise our eyebrows quietly amongst ourselves saying, gosh,

don't they want this child to have its own identity? But we probably would let that go too.

After all, we don't get to have seven people named their kids after themselves.

We know that they don't really mean that that's going to be their kids going to be admitting me.

So I guess what I'm wondering is, what's the added value there? I understand people have

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the instinct. Why is it any better than just saying, just have another child if you feel that way?

I think you're right. I think there's going to be a lot, would be a lot of self-correction that in a sense that people would understand that clones are very rarely possible to have an identical thing. And so there would be less, maybe demand for it, but it'll be another choice, another option. And there might be times when it worked out. I just don't think it should be a prohibition. The reason why there's a prohibition is there's a fear that they're going to be taken over, that our lives would be full of clones and that there'd be nothing but clones. And so where does the prohibition come from?

What if it turns into one of these like weird Gattica elite things where you start cloning people you think are really smart or Usain Bolt or something and you create this like weird elite class? I think what they discovered, which is to know his point, is that cloning is, there's no guarantee that you're going to get necessarily what you think you're going to get because of, we know, twins themselves. They vary between each other and triplets, likewise. I think you see often how something which is super well-intentioned can run afoul of what actually is best for society. So you take the example of sperm donors who are trying to help families get pregnant or single mothers conceive, and then you end up having these cases where there are other doctors or individuals who ultimately have 500 children out in the world, which is a deep, deep disservice, obviously, to those children because now you need to get genetically tested when you start dating someone to make sure that you're not dating your half sibling. And that's like a pretty unappealing thought. So the idea that we would have a massive number of clones out there, all of them having to figure out whether, in fact, they're huge genetic, let alone psychological issues associated with it. Because as they get older, they're not going to be able to self-identify as clones. Why? What do you mean? Well, because even identical twins relatively rapidly don't always look alike. And so you're not immediately going to be able to know who's your sibling, who's not, whether you're intermarrying and doing all sorts of things. So from a genetic perspective, it doesn't seem like a particularly wise thing for the species. To have thousands and thousands of people who have their identical genetic code.

Right. So you're saying, as soon as you have clones, you have thousands of millions of them?

No, you don't necessarily. But just the way no one assumed when you had the opportunity to have sperm donors that you were going to have some idiot who decided that he wanted to have 500

children. So I would say you might want to regulate clones, but that's very different than prohibiting them. Are they prohibited right now? Yes. There's an agreement among, I don't know if it's a treaty, but there's an agreement among biologists that they're not going to do human cloning.

Okay. Yeah. I mean, I think one of the reasons for that worry is the kind of worry that, well, both of the worries, both Josh's worry and Maggie's worry, that we're worried about people trying to make tweaks to the clone and then tweak the clone so that they develop the germline in new ways. And that has both risks and ethical side. But I wanted to ask, just taking on your core case, I think the best thing you could say on the opposite side, you almost have to say this, is there's something about human reproduction

that should include recombination and the randomness that comes out of that recombination?

Because we're not saying it's completely random because we let people choose who they're going to have kids with or for able, we want to let people choose. And so we're letting people decide

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within some boundary who they're going to mix their genetic material with. But there is some unavoidable, inescapable, and I think most people think good randomness about what happens when you combine two genomes. And I guess that question would be, what do we lose if we give that up? And I think what we lose at some basic level is the beauty of human variation. And the thing about twins is that that's also a product of the randomness of human variation, especially identical twins. Well, not really. If there's a huge preponderance. But those aren't identical twins. Yeah, exactly. And I'm talking about identical twins. Almost always fraternal. Exactly. Identical twins are themselves. That's a rare, outlying random experience. So my argument would be that we shouldn't, as a society, want to encourage human reproduction that it doesn't have that element of randomness, because it encourages us to believe that we can plan out in advance what someone's going to look like. And from there, what their life is going to be like in some way. And it's already bad enough. I mean, I'm a parent of teenagers. Yeah, I already, sorry, I'll just close, I'll shut up. I already, I'm too invested already in what my kids turn out like. I need to be, every day I wake up and try to be less invested in that. And here it just feels like an invitation for people to be more invested. Well, no, and just to your point, the societies that have tried this most closely, which are the royal families of Europe, it's inevitably ended badly. The enormous jaws, huge health issues, because they were convinced. Yeah, they were convinced that the way to ensure exactly what Noah described was to informally. And the result was insanity and deep, deep, physical deformity. So any experiments that we've seen in real life have not ended well. To the extent that there are problems that wouldn't work, I think those are going to be self-correcting. You would say, okay, we don't want to do this, or trying to engineer this has always had trade-offs. And whatever's going to try to eliminate this disease, Parkinson's Alzheimer's, there is inevitably going to be some trade-off if you eliminate that kind of a gene from your clone. So eugenics, we're drifting into eugenics. And that's the concern is it just turns into a form of eugenics, but it doesn't have to. Again, I think we want to have the option of it. We don't want to close off the option. We want to be able to manage it and do it just like we don't prohibit twins. Would you allow people to sell their genetic material? So you see some person who's super successful and she decides, you know what, if you want to have someone like me, I've been super successful, you can, I'll sell you a clone of me. And so couples are deciding that they go off and want to have Maggie as their daughter. Would you allow her to do that? That's a decision. People do buy and sell eggs, right? I mean, for surrogate babies. And I don't know if sperm is actually sold or not. That's interesting. You can sell it. I'm not sure you have to buy it. I don't know. I want to say as like a kind of related sidebar, as someone who is currently gestating and pretty far along, I would like to say it all sucks and we shouldn't do any of it. If you could do it in the lab, you would, is what you're saying? Oh, man, like in the matrix where there's like some other like spider thing. Yeah, this sucks. So, Kevin, I just want to say, since I'm your friend and I care for you, that it, for your next, for your next cannibal buffet, you should also pay attention to genetic diversity. So you don't get Kudu, which is the laughing death. I really would, it would, it would, it would, it would hurt my soul to see you die. Don't eat the brains. The shape. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Don't eat the brains. Well, this has been, so this has really been great, everybody here. I hope, Tim, that you found it successful. And we do it in another version someday. And

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I appreciate everybody being willing to play along with the game of sharing your, the unwritten rules. Exactly. Yeah, so fun. And I'll just say to people listening, yeah, we will, we will put links to whatever we mentioned that can be linked to. We will include links and also to everyone who's been on the show in the show notes as always at tim.blog.com slash podcast. But this was a great experiment. It really was. It was a lot of fun. I really enjoyed it. Really great. So thank you guys. Thank you, Kevin, for coming in with the sage experience. Yeah. For our maiden voyage. And I think finally back to the night when I first experienced this in our small group doing, doing our walk about a lot of fun. And thanks for making the time, everybody. Thank you. Really, really appreciate it. Hey guys, this is Tim again, just one more thing before you take off. And that is five bullet Friday. Would you enjoy getting a short email from me every Friday that provides a little fun before the weekend between one and a half and two million people subscribed to my free newsletter, my super short newsletter called five bullet Friday. Easy to sign up. Easy to cancel. It is basically a half page that I send out every Friday to share the coolest things I've found or discovered or have started exploring over that week. It's kind of like my diary of cool things. It often includes articles I'm reading, books I'm reading, albums, perhaps gadgets, gizmos, all sorts of tech tricks and so on. They get sent to me by my friends, including a lot of podcast guests and these strange esoteric things end up in my field. And then I test them and then I share them with you. So if that sounds fun, again, it's very short, a little tiny bite of goodness before you head off for the weekend, something to think about. If you'd like to try it out, just go to [Tim dot blog slash Friday](http://Tim.blog.com), type that into your browser, [Tim dot blog slash Friday](http://Tim.blog.com), drop in your email and you'll get the very next one. Thanks for listening. This episode is brought to you by AG one, the daily foundational nutritional supplement that supports whole body health. I view AG one as comprehensive nutritional insurance and that is nothing new. I actually recommended AG one in my 2010 best seller more than a decade ago, the four hour body, and I did not get paid to do so. I simply love the product and felt like it was the ultimate nutritionally dense supplement that you could use conveniently while on the run, which is for me a lot of the time. I have been using it a very, very long time indeed. And I do get asked a lot, what I would take if I could only take one supplement. And the true answer is invariably AG one, it simply covers a ton of basis. I usually drink it in the mornings and frequently take their travel packs with me on the road. So what is AG one? What is this stuff? AG one is a science driven formulation of vitamins, probiotics, and whole food source nutrients in a single scoop. AG one gives you support for the brain, gut and immune system. Since 2010, they have improved the formula 52 times in pursuit of making the best foundational nutrition supplement possible using rigorous standards and high quality ingredients. How many ingredients? 75. And you would be hard pressed to find a more nutrient dense formula on the market. It has a multivitamin, multi mineral superfood complex, probiotics and prebiotics for gut health, an antioxidant immune support formula digestive enzymes and adaptogens to help manage stress. Now, I do my best always to eat nutrient dense meals. That is the basic, basic, basic, basic requirement, right? That's why things are called supplements. Of course, that's what I focus on. But it is not always possible. It is not always easy. So part of my routine is using AG one daily. If I'm on the road on the run, it just makes it easy to get a lot of nutrients at once and to sleep easy knowing that I am checking a lot of important boxes. So each morning, AG one, that's just like brushing my teeth part of the routine. It's also NSF certified for sport. So professional athletes trust it to be safe. And each pouch of

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AG one contains exactly what is on the label does not contain harmful levels of microbes or heavy metals and is free of 280 bad substances. It's the ultimate nutritional supplement in one easy scoop. So take ownership of your health and try AG one today, you will get a free one year supply vitamin D and five free AG one travel packs with your first subscription purchase. So learn more, check it out. Go to drinkagone.com/slash/Tim. That's drink AG one, the number one drink AG one dot com slash Tim last time drink AG one dot com slash Tim. Check it out. This episode is brought

to you by Helix sleep. Helix sleep is a premium mattress brand that provides tailored mattresses based on your sleep preferences. Their lineup includes 14 unique mattresses, including a collection of luxury models, a mattress for big and tall sleepers. That's not me. And even a mattress made specifically for kids. They have models with memory foam layers to provide optimal pressure relief if you sleep on your side as I often do and did last night on one of their beds. Models with more responsive foam to cradle your body for essential support in stomach and back sleeping positions and on and on they have you covered. So how will you know which Helix mattress works best for you and your body? Take the Helix sleep quiz at helixsleep.com/slash/Tim and find your perfect mattress in less than two minutes. Personally, for the last few years, I've been sleeping on a Helix Midnight Lux mattress. I also have one of those in the guest bedroom and feedback from friends has always been fantastic. They frequently say it's the best night of sleep they've had in ages. It's something they comment on without any prompting from me whatsoever. Helix mattresses are American made and come with a 10 or 15 year warranty, depending on the model. Your mattress was shipped straight to your door free of charge. And there's no better way to test out a new mattress than by sleeping on it in your own home. That's why they offer a 100 night risk free trial. If you decide it's not the best fit, you're welcome to return it for a full refund. Helix has been awarded number one mattress by both GQ and Wired magazines. And now Helix has harnessed years of extensive mattress expertise to bring you a truly elevated sleep experience. Their newest collection of mattresses called Helix Elite, includes six different mattress models, each tailored for specific sleep positions and firmness preferences. So you can get exactly what your body needs. Each Helix Elite mattress comes with an extra layer of foam for pressure relief and thousands of extra microcoils for best in class support and durability. Every Helix Elite mattress also comes with a 15 year manufacturers warranty and the same 100 night trial as the rest of Helix's mattresses. And you my dear listeners can get 20% off of all mattress orders plus two free pillows. So go to helixsleep.com/slash/Tim to learn more. That's helixsleep.com/slash/Tim. This is their best offer to date and it will not last long. So take a look with Helix Better Sleep starts now.