

**Living in a Material World**  
w/ **Daniel of WHAT IS POLITICS**

Peter Michael Bauer

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# Contents

Introduction . . . . . 3  
Conversation Begins . . . . . 4  
Notes . . . . . 43

Anthropology is at the core of rewilding. Understanding the various ways in which humans act and why, helps us draw a picture of what is possible for humanity. Rewilding pulls its inspiration from the millions of years that humans lived in relative harmony with our environments—without causing the sixth mass extinction and without creating large-scale inequality, and how these crises came about. To make cultural transformations, we have to understand where material determinism and intentional idealism come together.

On this episode of the Rewilding Podcast, I've invited Daniel, the host of the @WHATISPOLITICS69 channel, to explain how this all works. What is Politics is a compelling series that delves into the natural histories and anthropology of politics, in the form of didactic storytelling. I came across Daniel's long form videos on YouTube last year when I was complaining about how off the mark David Graeber's book the Dawn of Everything is, (how much it omits, how much it ignores, how much it simply pretends doesn't already exist on this subject) and someone sent me a link to the What is Politics critiques. People had been asking me to write a review, and I couldn't get past the first 100 pages of what I considered a misdirection. The amount of time it would taken to review the book felt daunting, and I kept putting it off. I was super relieved to find and watch the What is Politics reviews, to see that someone had gone through the whole book with a fine-tooth comb and so much deeper than I ever could have. Now when people ask me what my thoughts are on the Dawn of Everything, I just send them to the What is Politics YouTube channel. It's a huge relief to be honest. For these reasons and more, I'm excited to have Daniel as a guest on the Rewilding Podcast, to talk about the material realities that give rise to, and/or provide the fuel for, certain human political and social organizations.

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[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MrU4ci\\_eRis](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MrU4ci_eRis)

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## Introduction

**Peter:** For thousands of years, civilization has been a destructive force, both ecologically and socially.

In the midst of the 6<sup>th</sup> extinction, the future of humanity and our other-than-human kin hangs by a thread.

At this pivotal moment in time, we must reach back into the depths of the human story and uncover our mistakes.

There's still time to reconnect to what we have lost, to restore our broken relationship to the land where we dwell, and to remember the human place in the wild.

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Now when people ask me what my thoughts on the dawn of everything are, I just send them to the What is Politics YouTube channel.

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## Conversation Begins

**Peter:** Daniel, thanks for coming on the Rewilding podcast.

**Daniel:** Yay, thanks for having me on.

It's nice to meet you and you are very lucky that you didn't do that review because I did three chapters of the book so far.

It took me nine months almost straight of work to do and yeah.

**Peter:** Thank you.

**Daniel:** Consider yourself bullet dogs.

**Peter:** Thank you. Yeah.

**Daniel:** Before you ask me anything, can I ask you, when you say it's considered a misdirection, you're upset about it, what was it that bothered you about the book?

**Peter:** I mean, first of all, there was just this sort of like pretentious tone that came across and it felt like they were being like, all this other stuff that's been written about this for the last like 100 years or whatever, doesn't really make sense and doesn't matter.

So we're just going to pretend like it doesn't exist and then tell you what, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah and then like, you know, page after page, it was just like, Christopher Bohm said this thing, but he doesn't know what he's talking about.

Or, you know, all of this research into primates, doesn't really matter because we're not chimpanzees or whatever.

Just stuff like that was like, what are you talking about? Like there's so much foundation that you could build off of and it felt really weird because I do feel like there, I do feel, and we can talk about this a lot more later because I've got questions around it.

But I do feel like there was an important point in the book and I feel like that point was could have come together with the material determinism that we know of and been even more powerful.

But instead, it just like, it just like, bashed material determinism to this point of like, none of that actually matters.

It reminded me of the book, I don't know if you remember this, like 20 years ago, there was all this hype in the same kind of way about a book about spirituality called The Secret.

Do you remember this? And the secret was just visualize what you want in the world as you come to you and this is to me, like the dawn of everything is like the secret, but for anthropology or something.

So it is, yeah, for politics.

**Daniel:** That's exactly right.

I never thought of that.

I mean, I always make fun of the secret and laugh about it and I still make jokes about it, but holy crap.

Yeah, that's right.

That's what that book is.

I compare it to smoking crack.

Like it gives you the confidence and all the hope, Totally.

So you smoke a crack pipe and you're like, whoa, I can do it.

We can have equality, we can have revolution.

But you don't have any, you didn't learn anything about how that could actually happen.

So then you're just going to go do something insane and fail trying.

So that's yeah.

**Peter:** Exactly.

**Daniel:** So it served a good purpose.

It had a good goal and it also, I think, lights up people, because it did something, this is what I have a lot of these problems with a lot of David Graver's work, right? Because he's very exciting, wasn't a very exciting anthropologist, had a lot of great ideas.

But so he asks the questions that need to be asked and in a way, and writes in a popular stuff, because so many academics do not know how to write.

They're writing in gibberish, like, you know, we can talk about it later, but I feel like academia after the 60s and 70s, which I think posed a threat to authority, they found a way to turn academia into just a \*\*\*\*\* gibberish bubble where nobody's talking to the outside.

They're only talking to themselves and they're these neutralized.

You take the best brains in the country, neutralize them, make them unintelligible, and make them, full of gibberish.

So he gets out of that bubble because he can speak in English.

He writes an exciting, good book, but it's a complete failure.

Like it doesn't, yeah, it's just this mishmash of important ideas.

He asks the questions that need to be asked.

Why are we stuck in hierarchy? And, you know, what can we do about it? And then completely fails to answer the questions because his whole paradigm He guarantees that he fails to ask that question.

He's so afraid to look at the material causes of hierarchy and inequality in the past thinks, and he went to, let's not forget about him.

They think that if you look at material conditions, then like he thinks that there's agency or materialism.

No, you know, it's one exclusion of the other.

Material civilization.

So let's just write a book where we just ignore, deny, and pretend materialism doesn't exist and then we can just show how much freedom We have to do whatever we want.

So we are people who live in a civilization.

We don't have to participate in government and in space of us.

So it's great to read a book and feel good about it.

But if you actually want to do something that's going to motivate people to actually act and do something, this takes away the skills that you need to act and do something.

So because if you want to, for example, build an airplane, it's very exciting to tell people, you know, you can fly.

All you have to do is just, if you really you want to fly, you can fly and that's sort of true, but you still need to build an airplane or else you can't fly and that's depressing because it might be difficult to build an airplane and it's hard.

Where do I get the, you know, metals? Where do, how do I get the knowledge? Well, it might take you 200 years because you don't have the materials and that's just a fact, but work on it.

Or if you at least know the principles of aerodynamics, maybe you could build some kind of kite, you know, maybe you could do something else.

But you have to know the principles of how things work and that book not only doesn't talk about those things, but actively hides them and ignores them, right? They talk about, some egalitarian societies that existed, and then they'll report parts of the book and they just ignore every part of the book that explains why that society was that way, and then insult the author and say, he's so stupid.

**Peter:** I know.

I was ranting about it on Facebook and stuff, and people were like, we don't understand like why you're so angry about this.

what, why, I like the book.

I don't understand why you're upset and I'm just like, you can't tell that this is insulting to like me and every, all these other people, these authors that I have a lot of respect for.

But yeah, in terms of how you're talking about the, this academic language, right? Kind of like confusing things.

Is this why you created the What is Politics YouTube channel to, you know, like what was it the inspiration behind creating the What is Politics channel?

**Daniel:** So actually, it's the other way around.

I was trying, I was dealing with non-academic people and I was dealing with family members who were like, damn, in Canada, I'm in Canada, the healthcare system is really messed up and the reason it's messed up, like not that people know, is that, we have a really, we used to have, it was always judged as one of the top three healthcare systems in the world.

Like when I was a kid, you'd see that advertised on TV.

The government would make these ads like, we have the top, the number three healthcare system in the world.

Finland and Japan, it would always be jockeying in those top three positions and in 1994, the government just slashed everything and gutted it and never put the money back in, put some money back in, but not enough and it's just been, they've been bleeding it to death on purpose basically ever since and I see all these people who are just like, oh, I wish we had a better health, public healthcare.

We need to put more money in the system.

That's why I'm voting for the Conservative Party, you know, which is like the party that wants to slash the healthcare even faster than the Liberal Party.

It's like voting for the Republic.

It's like voting for Donald Trump if you want universal healthcare, right? It's exactly like that and I'm just like, oh my God and I live in a province in Quebec where the dividing lines, the way people vote is just based on are you nationalist or are like Quebec nationalism? We have like people who want Quebec separation or are you a federalist? Like I want to remain part of Canada.

So people vote just based on that and they're not like left and right barely doesn't exist.

You have 4 right-wing parties in Quebec and one left-wing party and people here have single mothers on welfare voting for the party that will cut subsidies to daycares because we have to be subsidized daycares.

Anyways, so I was just like fed up with all this nonsense and I'm like, let's just describe, let's just explain to people what left and right means and why it's important, you know, when you're going to fill votes.

That was my first, you know, what I was first thing I was trying to do and as I sat down, to define left and right.

I was like, hey, you know what? I don't really think I know what left and right mean.

Let's look it up in a dictionary.

Let's look it up in an encyclopedia.

Let's look it up in a book and I kept getting more and more books and academic books and articles and popular books and I was like, nobody knows what these things mean.

So I ended up having to do a giant research project to kind of like tease out what it historically meant.

Oh, and I see that the meaning changed over time and it turned into gibberish basically around the Cold War and afterwards and now it means almost nothing.

It means it's become a PR tool and anyways, we can talk about that too.

There's certain psychological traits that people have and today, I think that concert left wing just is a PR tool to reach the certain kind of people who are open to experience, who have that trait and then the right wing is people who are close to experience.

But 100 years ago, someone who was a communist would be somebody today who votes for the Republicans.

You know, there wasn't.

**Peter:** Sure.

**Daniel:** It was more based on actual interests, perceived.

I mean, people always vote based on perceived self-interest, but the PR industry has sort of like figured out who we are and then just pumped, like breaking us down into demographics.

Like, oh, this is the kind of person who's going to buy this kind of music, so let's just pump them with this.

So they found that there's this dividing line among people, and I could talk about the evolutionary reasons that might have that, about 50% of the population goes this

way and 50% of the population has these characteristics and they've just certainly, and that's why you see every election is like a 50 first, especially in the States, you really see it where you just have two parties.

The elections are just like, what do you, why, how could it be that people are just so evenly divided between these parties, which I mean, they have a lot in common, but a lot not in common.

I think it's just this marketing genius that unintentionally did this.

Yeah, I'm really curious.

**Peter:** If you could talk a little bit about that, because it makes me think about, fascism being on the rise.

I'm like, are 50% of the, is 50% of the population really like into fascism? But I don't think that's true, right? Because I feel like later on, we're going to talk a little bit more about like, you know, the potential innateness of egalitarian societies.

You know what I mean? So there's this conflict in my mind, right? So yeah, it would be awesome if you could talk a little bit about that.

**Daniel:** And it's cool.

This is the exclusive, like I haven't even done this on my show yet.

So you're getting the exclusive first and I, which also means I haven't sat down and done the deep reading on this, but I'm putting it together from a bunch, so it'll be a bit half-baked.

**Peter:** Awesome.

**Daniel:** But if you want me to start on that right now.

**Peter:** Yeah, just a little, you know, what, yeah, you know, if you could condense it.

**Daniel:** In the Paleolithic.

right? Which is human beings emerged probably about 300,000 years ago.

We don't have a lot of evidence, but we start to get more and more evidence around 200,000 years ago and it seems like we probably emerged as an egalitarian species, more or less.

Certainly much more egalitarian than most of what we see now.

But in the Paleolithic, the temperatures were fluctuating very rapidly.

So climatic change was very exaggerated compared to how it's been for the last 12,000 years.

Okay? So every generation or two, you'd have actually serious changes of climate where, oh, this area used to be a great, beautiful pasture.

Now it's a barren area, or this is too cold now to, you know, to hunt the animals that we hunt.

So probably people were going through these cycles of being squeezed for resources and then relaxed and open and there's more expansion for resources.

So We have these two modes of social organization, and I think that comes with it a bunch of character traits, what do you call it, cultural traits, where in times of more scarcity, and competition for resources, people become a bit more what we call tribal,

hierarchical, violence, xenophobic, things like that and then in times of, and probably more male dominated as well, and then in times of more resource availability and expansion, time people become much more peaceful, much more egalitarian, gender equality becomes very important and stuff like that and also have much wider social networks.

The social networks close down and get smaller in those squeeze periods.

I think that explains why we're so good at equality.

People don't realize that we are so good at equality because they haven't seen anything, but we'll talk about immediate return hunter-gatherers and see that we actually are veered at equality, which nobody knows.

That's why I was so \*\*\*\*\* \*\*\* about this David Graver book.

**Peter:** They don't even mention the word immediate return hunter-gatherers in their whole book, you know.

**Daniel:** David Graeber, it turns out, hated that whole idea.

It's like, so, what's his name? Chris Knight, who is a really cool anthropologist and who really focuses on that stuff, and it's very explicitly political.

He was talking and he was giving an interview and he talked about how one of his mutual friends, because he knew David Graver as well, told him that, oh yeah, Graver hates that stuff.

He doesn't believe in any of it.

He thinks it's all fake news.

Like all those, there's about like 60 years now of literature on these hyper-egalitarian societies who live like the anarcho-communist dream and have gender equality.

There's no leaders, there's no shamans controlling anybody.

They have all the, everything that we would want in a society, I mean, except for, you know, advanced medicine and like flying cars, they have this, more or less and he just didn't believe any of it.

He thought that all that stuff was crap and I kind of was getting that sense anyways, just reading his stuff and wondering why he just never, like when I was a kid, you know, and discovering David Graver, I was like, wow, anarchist, anarchist anthropologist.

I can't wait to see what he has to say about all these egalitarian societies and I'm like reading all this books and like, it's not in there anywhere and I'm just like, does he just not know about this stuff? That's weird and that could be because in academia, people are siloed and often go outside their tiny little specialty and then I would whenever he talked about egalitarianism, he would always, it would be like a fake, he would talk about some male-dominated society.

I'm like, that's not an egalitarian society.

It would have been considered egalitarian in the 50s before we discovered that there were gender equal societies.

I mean, although we kind of knew that in the 1850s as well with the Haudenosaunee and people like that.

But anyways, I see I got lost to my whole chain of thought.

So, so we are very good at egalitarianism, and there's lots of reasons to believe that we began as an egalitarian species and there might be reasons, we might have been more mostly egalitarian throughout all the Paleolithic as well.

It's hard to tell.

Certainly by the end of the Paleolithic, we see more and more evidence of some potential hierarchy emerging.

But so, you know, my 2 theories about why we are so good at hierarchy and equality are this like squeeze expansion theory of the Paleolithic and that's true.

That's how the climate was.

That's why There was no agriculture, by the way, until 12,000 years ago, because the climate was changing too fast for agriculture to ever be viable.

So they found a few experiments with agriculture, like 30,000 years ago, 23,000 years ago, but people give it up after 20 years because then the climate just changes and you can't, you know, there was too much room.

It was too easy to hunt and gather and too hard to do agriculture.

So there's just no point in really doing it over long term.

**Peter:** So do you think that Graham Hancock is right then, that there's an ancient, I'm just kidding.

**Daniel:** I don't know who that is.

**Peter:** OK, good.

**Daniel:** No, I don't know if I should be Rabbit Hole.

Yeah, no, let's just the two theories are the squeeze expansion theory of the Paleolithic, or before we were egalitarian hunter-gatherers, we were probably hierarchical apes, and we're sort of like halfway in transition before the Holocene happened, and then our, you know, hierarchical part of our nature just never completely evolved out.

So now we have this, we can float around.

Although most great apes, you can see that when they're in different circumstances, actually organized a little bit differently as well.

There's some baboon studies that are, it was a Sapolsky pointed out that there was a troop of baboons, you know, and most people think of animals and great apes as just entirely genetically programmed and that their social structure is entirely genetic. probably a bit more than ours.

But at the same time, so baboons are very male dominated and that has a lot to do with men being twice as big as women.

So it's very easy to dominate and they're very hierarchical as well and then they, so what that means, the hierarchy in Great Apes means that you get access to food 1<sup>st</sup> and sex also.

So there was a botulism, I think, infected garbage with a bunch of botulism meat or bananas, I forget what and the Alphas ate all this stuff first, and then they all died off.

So you only had these betas and gammas, or not even like even like gammas, deltas, like the lower ranking baboons, but the only ones left and they just had a much

more egalitarian society and even when potential alphas came in from outside, they inculturated them into their, it wasn't completely egalitarian, but it was much more egalitarian than other baboons and then that was in 1986, and 30 years, or how many years later now we are, 40 years later, it's still that way now.

So animal, you know.

**Peter:** This is like a good, so this is what I want to like have you kind of explain the, difference between material determinism and, idealism or the ability to change something based on like culture.

**Daniel:** So, like, I'm not the first person to say this, but there's no...

They're not really distinguishable.

They're one and the same thing and for me, materialism is just, so like in their pure faith dichotomous form, materialism is the environment, nature, causes everything.

Every idea that we have comes from the outside.

Like, you know, the classic 1 I always use is Marx said that capitalism generates the Protestant work ethic, but Weber would say, no, the Protestant work ethic is what made capitalism possible.

right? And so that's the ideal.

The idealistic view is Weber.

people had these ideas and the ideas, like people in Saudi Arabia are so male dominated because they're just bad meanie weenies and they're just sexist.

You know, that's the, that's in a very idealistic way of thinking, oh, in America, we love freedom.

That's why we, had the, you know, the constitution, which whatever.

**Peter:** Sure.

**Daniel:** In theory is supposed to have all this freedom, right? So, and then the materialist reason is no, in Saudi Arabia, they're male dominated because their form of social organization when they were Bedouin pastoralist is such that men had all these advantages because of the various conditions that they were living in, which we can talk about later and then that spilled over into modern times.

It's like, you know, the practical conditions were shaped.

Now, both of those things are true.

You're we have agency, we're not just robot, but we live in a serialism, is just looking at things in their context and I don't talk so much about material conditions, because it has a weird Marxist connotation, but it also makes people think about just the environment.

But no, it's the practical conditions and part of the practical conditions are pre-existing culture.

So if you're living in a situation where everybody has these really male-dominated ideas, well, you know, that's a material reality, you know, and that people are going to go out and beat up a woman who wears a mini skirt, like that's a reality that you have to live with.

cultural, but it's also a physical reality.

They're not that different because our cultures and our minds are physical objects as well.

So, but in the long term, I think that it's much more useful to look at material context and in the short term, it's also useful, but there's more room for ideas to play out and what I mean is, let's say you have 10 people and there's no material reason why anyone should have any advantage over anyone else.

We all are, you know, we have equal wealth.

We all...

I don't know.

It's not like I have an army or I have guns and I can control everybody.

I have no advantage over anybody else, but I'm really charismatic and I manage for some reason to make everyone follow me around and just make me their leader and their king.

I terrorize them, I make up a bunch of stories.

That can work for a few years, maybe for a generation, but generations, someone's going to eventually figure out, one of my kids might be stupid and not be able to continue this thing and someone's going to figure out, wait, why are we following this guy? We don't have to do this and it's not going to be stable.

It's not going to last that long.

So when you see something lasting 10,000 years, there's usually a material context.

There's a reason for it.

It's not just, oh, these people were all sexist and that's why these people were all male dominated for the last 5,000 years.

No, something happened that made that happen.

Or these people are not male dominated.

Why is that? Not that they're such great feminist males and women were so much smarter there, and our women are so much weaker and that's the problem with the David Graber type of thesis, is it sort of implies like, oh, the Saudi Arabians are just such bad mean-winnings.

Oh, the hards of foragers are just such great people, and their women are so much more stronger and powerful, and the women in Saudi Arabia are such wimps.

But you know, that's where that idea leads, where it's just ideas that shape society and not context, essentially just makes everything everybody is.

**Peter:** Yeah, it's the secret, right?

**Daniel:** So the secret is a great, manifest your, exactly.

You didn't manifest it hard enough.

Yeah, So it's your fault at the end of the day.

I mean, the author of the secret didn't mean to say everything's your fault and the people that give it don't mean to say all thinking takes it, right? Whereas the materialist thinking is there but for the grace of God go I.

Oh, if I was raised in Saudi Arabia and I was in those conditions and I'm a woman, I would be stuck and forced, you know, I would have much different options than a woman in Denver.

Mark does, and I might rebel in my own oppression like that a woman might rebel in there too, or I might not want to choose to rebel because my, I'm going to get killed, you know, et cetera.

**Peter:** Yeah, cool.

Yeah, your internet's still kind of was fluctuating a little bit there, but I think we got everything.

**Daniel:** I'm sorry, okay, yeah.

**Peter:** If you see me just turn my video off, it's just, I'm trying to.

**Daniel:** If I get more Patreon subscribers, you can get a faster internet.

**Peter:** Yeah.

Nice.

Yeah.

So, yeah, I mean, I guess we're kind of, we're circling all of the questions that I have for you and one of them is, you know, what do you think the Dawn of Everything was trying to accomplish? And is there a better way to get there?

**Daniel:** Yes, okay.

So there's definitely a better way to get there.

So I applaud the authors for asking the right questions, for bringing to our attention all this anthropology, which is where the answers to this question lie.

But I fought the authors for blowing it big time in just refusing to look at the answers and then for faking stuff almost and insulting everyone, insulting the answers.

What they were trying to accomplish was they wanted to give us hope that an egalitarian future is possible.

They were looking at authors who say or imply that real egalitarianism is not possible because civilization just demands a high level of hierarchy and they're trying to push back against that and those arguments will say, the practical realities of civilization, there's just so many people.

Society is very commonly specialized labor that you can't possibly have a sort of decentralized society in those conditions.

Maybe I should turn up my video.

So yeah, so they're trying to argue against that material determinist argument and like I mentioned earlier, I think David Graeber really had it in his head that if you accept that cultures like hierarchy or inequality is in large extent a function of material conditions, then you have no hope.

Then we are in fact trapped in these very unequal, unfair arrangements because of the nature of civilization itself.

So what they did is they went through all of this anthropology of all these different types of societies changing back and forth, for example, or living in different arrangements, like in civilizations or in hunter-gatherer societies and all kinds of other societies

and they make it sound like these people just chose their different social arrangements and that in fact, their thesis was like, oh, one of the questions they ask is, in the past, we used to just switch back and forth between hierarchy of quality for fun and kicks.

I forget how they phrase it, but they basically say for fun and ritual and play, like it was just some kind of big joke, you know, which sounds like it makes sense if you know absolutely nothing about societies.

If you're watching out in cartoons and you see all these cave, you know, that's how it they're often shown in a lot of TV shows, people are like, ooga, booga, and they're doing these weird freaky rituals and they're lighting fires and praying to gods and it just seems like a bunch of fun, like it's Burning Man or just some nonsense.

But hierarchy isn't just a cool game.

Hierarchy is your husband, if you're a woman, tells you what to do and you can't say no and if you say no, he's allowed to hit you.

Like that, you know, like that's hierarchy.

If nobody wants, you know, people might want direction.

They might like having somebody tell them what to do every day in general. general, but they want the right to say no.

I don't actually agree with that and say not obey when they don't want to obey.

So that book doesn't allow for, doesn't even allow that idea to exist, right? Like, you know, and it's an insult to all the people that are, you know, in those, you know, they talk about the Inuit.

It's If the idea that Inuit go back and forth, they talk about Inuit had patriarchy in the summer, but then not in the winter.

So, oh, it's all a big game.

Well, no.

Why would women accept to be beat by their husbands in the summer, but not in the winter? That doesn't make any sense.

Obviously, they didn't want to get beat any time of the year, but there was something that actually allowed them not to be beat in the winter, which wasn't there, or that's something that gave men an advantage that they didn't have in the summer and that whole concept of advantage and bargaining power is absent in the book and in a way, it's not their fault because these ideas that just aren't, if you go to political science in academia, you study anthropology, there's very little discussion of bargaining power and that stuff.

It's really not there.

Like I think about it a lot because I'm a lawyer, actually, and I do a lot of negotiations.

So I mean, I was thinking about those things anyways, but especially doing this, I really see that everything is just about, you know, bargaining power.

If you look at a society, why does Denmark have greater labor laws? in the United States? because the labor movement had more bargaining power and they fought hard, they were able to fight harder and win more rights.

The constitutions of different states and the laws of different states reflect the relative bargaining power of the different parties in those societies.

Why did women have the right to vote? Why did they all get the right to vote in most countries around World War I? It's because women had more bargaining power because all of a sudden they were the workforce and society depended on them completely for not just home work, but work outside the homes.

So they got all this leverage.

After wars, common people tend to get a lot more rights and you'll see that throughout European history.

After every war, suddenly men, you know, men didn't have the right, then there's wars, and suddenly men have the right to vote.

So everything is, if you want to say politics, including political anthropology, you need to understand relative bargaining power and so that book just erases that whole idea, doesn't bring it up and also, they bring up a lot of Let me just, maybe I should skip to the answer of, can they do it better? But I want to say, you talked about Christopher Bohm.

Okay, so they, you know, he writes this book called Hierarchy in the Forest and in that book, he explains why he thinks that human beings were all mostly egalitarians and until about 5,000 years ago, most human beings were living in a relatively egalitarian society and he, explains at length, the whole book is about why that is, but the authors of the book just say, well, Bohm is a great smart thinker because he says that it takes a lot of effort and willpower to maintain an egalitarian society.

So he understood that these people were politically smart and that they maintained egalitarianism on purpose.

So they give him kudos for that because that seems like it's echoing their thesis.

But why does he default to this stupid idea that people just chose the same so form of social organization for 90% of human existence.

That's nonsense.

Like he was just falling for that old canard, that old trope, you know, and they don't mention that his entire book is explains why he thinks what he thinks.

It's not like they, it's not like they gave his reasons and they symbol his reasons.

Exactly.

They're like, gee, why does he think this stupid thing? He must be a big dumb dumb and I'm like, yeah, you've read the book.

So when you read that, you were like flipping out and getting angry.

But most 99% of the people have not read this book.

So they're just like, oh, that makes sense.

What's wrong with that guy? What an idiot.

You know, and all the, because David Graber equates the idea, and in that book, he says it explicitly, the idea of an egalitarian society where there's no oppression is infantile.

It's not realistic.

That's not human nature and to believe that a society would be that way is to think of them as like Smurfs, basically.

He doesn't say that in those words, but you're basically just painting a fairy tale of Papa Smurf and the Smurfs all living in harmony and it's not real.

That's not who humans are.

So he I'm sure that when he was in college, he probably had, because at the time that this literature was coming out, it started in the late 50s and early 60s, and especially in the late 60s, he probably had a lot of very annoying hippie professors who were, you know, ranting and raving about these immediate return societies and portraying them in very childish ways, because that's what college people, and this, you know, I have a very chip on my shoulder against academia and upper middle class educated people, especially now I'm reading about the Russian Revolution.

So people these are up, these are elite type people, upper middle class people, and they kind of make everything stupid.

So they're probably, making this very hippified, silly, utopian version of these immediate return hunter-gatherer societies and then David Graver probably was offended by this and then he spent the rest of his life just thinking that all that stuff was crap and he probably just never engaged with the literature at all until 2000, like before, in between 2018, when he wrote an article where he was doing the same thing as always, just ignoring it and then in 2020, when the book came out, I think he critics must have really yelled at him for it and then he read a little bit about it and then he talks about some of these societies in the book.

So he does engage with some of those societies for the first time, because his entire career, he never barely even mentions a single immediate return society and there he actually talks about the Hadza at some length at least.

So I think he engaged, but he just, instead of learning anything from it, he just sort of squished it into his existing thesis and it's very clumsy and I think that that's, anyway, that's my theory for what you're saying.

So he He ignores all the, if anyone who studies those hyper egalitarian societies has asked, like, why, like, why are they also, why are they so egalitarian? And what's interesting about them is that they are not, they're living in completely different conditions all across the world.

You had some in the Kalahari Desert.

You have some in the Tanzanian Savannah.

You have some in the Central African rainforests.

You have some in North America in the 1600s, which the Jesuits wrote about.

You have some in the mountains of India.

So these very different environments across spanning continents, spanning hundreds of years and they all just have very similar cultures in many ways.

I mean, they have a lot of superficial differences, but they all have male-female egalitarianism or near-egalitarianism.

There's no fixed authority leaders.

There's no people.

Yeah, there's no one's commanding anyone else.

They have very loose religious beliefs, which is really interesting.

They don't have this deep, you know, religion, no religious hierarchy.

They have, anyways, I don't know.

There's all kinds of stuff, a lot of freedom, a lot of equality, and our co-communist ideal, basically.

Okay and so the people who have written about this stuff have thought about and talked about why that was and actually Christopher Bohm talks about that in his book, which the Graber and Wangrow completely ignore and they cite material reasons for why these societies were equal, because of the way populations were distributed and the types of hunting that they did that was nomadic.

Basically, anyone had access to the means of production.

Anyone could get food without having to depend on anybody.

So because to get hierarchy, you need one person or group of people to be able to dominate resources that other people depend on to live well.

So you can leverage your control of those resources for obedience, right? That's why you, if you have a job, you obey your boss all day.

Even though there's 1000 employees and one boss, the employees all obey the boss, not the other way around, because the boss is the one who controls access to the salary that everybody depends on, right? Henry Kissinger said, If you control the food, you control the people, right? If you control, you know, if you're living in a company town where the company owns the land and owns the house and owns all the stores and all the things, you can, you know, work the people, you know, to the ground.

So, In those societies, there's just any, there's no practical way for anyone to dominate anyone else in any long-term fashion and because everybody has equal access to lethal weapons, which means if somebody's really bullying you, can kill them with a poison arrow.

If you're a man or woman, a woman can poison somebody, you know, it's everything.

Everyone has equal access to projectile weapons.

So the biggest alpha male who might have gotten somewhere in an ape society would get killed off in a human society, right? And anyone can get food anywhere, so you don't really depend on anyone.

It's always better to live in a group.

You'll get better food and more food, but for most of the year, you can probably go off on your own if you have to and there's always somewhere for people to go.

If you don't like your group of people, you can just immigrate to another group of people because everyone's always on the move and you have friends and relatives spread out across all these bands.

So the practical conditions that these people live, and women are equal because they form organizations to defend their rights, but they also have male relatives around who will stop, if your husband is bullying you, well, your brother is probably going to be

around who can beat your husband up, or you might have cousins around, or somebody you have.

Or you can poison him.

Or you can poison him and kill him, yes.

So all that stuff together, right? So the means of domination just don't really exist, right? And that changes when you go into agriculture, when you go into different kinds of hunting and gathering, because that's an immediate return of the specific kind of hunting and gathering.

Conditions change, and then the ability to dominate people does arise.

So when you ask, is there a better way that they could have done this book? Well, what they could have done is instead of thinking materialism means prison and we're just completely determined by our environment, they could realize, well, one of the things that makes human beings special, in the book they say, well, what makes human beings special is we can choose our political system.

No, it's not that easy.

You can't just choose a political system.

You have to build the political system and the political system has to have the right incentives built within it that people will make the right decisions that you want.

Because as like in the Russian Revolution, they had the, you know, anyways, it's debatable, but the Bolsheviks seem to actually believe in a in a form of direct democracy and egalitarianism to a large extent, but they didn't put any of the checks and balances in place to make that happen and all the incentives and the, having all to do with war and deprivation and things like that, but the incentives were massively towards corruption and having the party hog all power and establish a new hierarchy.

So What Graeber should have done is to say, well, no, what makes us special is not that we can just magically invent our political systems, because you can make a political system, but no one's going to follow it.

Right.

Like enforcement is 9 tenths of the law is real, right? Like there's all these, like I work, I defend tenants from landlords.

So, and it's the same thing with labor law and tenant law.

A lot of labor law and tenant law is just fancy toilet paper, because in reality, I once had a judge say this to me, the judge said, that your landlord could, because somebody was suing his landlord for something and they're like, your landlord can just make your life hell, if you keep this, if you keep suing them with this, which is true.

But I'm like, hey, judge, do your job.

Like, that's why we come to you, because you're like, you're supposed to make the landlord's life hell if they try this stuff.

Like, Jesus Christ.

Anyways, but the point is that If the material conditions aren't there to make your political system enforceable, then it's nothing.

It doesn't count.

So what Graeber could have said is instead of we have the freedom to choose our political system, he should have said, what makes humans unique is that we have the ability to reshape our environments.

That's what makes, I mean, it's not unique because there are other animals too, but we can do this a bit more consciously and in a more planned out manner than others.

So when you're inventing your political system of the future, what you want to do is study how material conditions affect things like hierarchy and equality so that you can build that into your system and make sure that the incentives are there that will maintain equality.

Even if everybody's a bunch of psychopaths and a bunch of \*\*\*\*\* that they're still all going to be equal because to not be equal would damage their self-interest, right? And that's what you see in these hunter-gatherer societies.

It's not that everybody's just an amazing, wonderful egalitarian.

I mean, they do have egalitarianism in their ethos, but they also are selfish.

Like when somebody, you know, there's a, what is it? One of the stories was the anthropologist saw that, pulled that, whipped out a tomato and offered a piece of the tomato to one of her friends, like from the hunter-gatherer society and her friend looked around and saw nine people and so she cut up her tomato into 9 equal portions and gave one to everybody there because she was in public.

Because if she didn't do that, people would say that you're a stingy person and I'm not going to share with you and you're violating the rules of society.

But a lot of some interesting studies have shown that people from those same societies, which are the most egalitarian societies on earth, when they're in private, they'll actually hoard stuff a little bit more than other people and they'll share less than other people because they're kind of tired of sharing because they have to share all day long.

So they're just as selfish as we are and because of the rules of so much sharing, they might be a little more selfish than some of us are.

But because of the fact that anyone can demand anything from you at any time and to not do something will mean that everyone will look at you askance and won't share with you when you need it.

Just The incentives are such that people share all the time, no matter how selfish or not selfish they are and if they don't, there are consequences for it.

So what Graeber should have done was looked at all the way that material incentives work and then try to find some principles there that would help us build an egalitarian society in a civilizational context.

**Peter:** Totally.

Yes.

Yeah.

So what are those? that's the big problem, right? Like, what got us stuck here? It's like, well, we understand why we're stuck here, right? But like, but then I don't know, because so the way that I kind of look at it and the way I explain it to people in terms of like civilization is, you know, there's this, there's a graph, not a graph, it's like an infographic or whatever of like the three elements that make a a fire, right? It's like a triangle with a flame in the middle, and then each side of the triangle is a different thing, right? The bottom is fuel, one of the sides is oxygen, and the third one is heat and without those three things, you don't have a fire, right? Yes.

So then, you know, one of, so I've been trying to, like, this is a metaphor, right? It's not like you can't move it over.

Exactly.

But when I explain civilization to people as a specific kind of society, there's like, you know, surplus of food, is like the fuel, right? Like a hoarding of food, essentially.

But you can get that, like you've explained in a lot of your videos, like you can get that without being an agricultural society, right? Like the Northwest Coast had, you know, a very similar subsistence to agricultural because of the salmon storage and all of that, right? So you can have a, you can have what is a civilization, you know, by dictionary definition, it's like a system of writing is part of the definition of a civilization, as well as a complex political organization, which is basically just hierarchy.

It's like a smoke screen for a hierarchy, right?

**Daniel:** It's built into the, it's built into the definition.

**Peter:** Which is the problem, right? Exactly.

So a civilization is like a hierarchical society, you know, that is sedentary, with a food surplus that has a form of writing.

So, and those can happen geographically with different forms of subsistence, like here in the Northwest Coast.

But the ones that what we would call like colonial civilizations, the one that expand and kill their neighbors and take over, those are like agricultural, right, in nature and the word colonial comes from the Roman word *coler*, which meant to till the soil.

So it's literally like forcing other people into your grain taxation regime.

That's literally like what colonization means, right? And it's something that we've seen in multiple civilizations all over the world.

It's definitely not unique to any particular civilization.

It's like there are some that arise geographically, and then there are some that are like colonial civilizations that are the agricultural ones.

But what gets us stuck in that framework? if we, and I like to equate it as like a forest fire, like thinking of civilization as a forest fire.

Like there's a level of fuel that's built up, right? And it's on fire now.

How do we put out that fire in order to, you know, do something different, right? And it's, yeah.

In terms of diminishing returns, right? Like if you look at the book, Collapse of Complex Societies by Joseph Tainter, he talks about like the civilizational curve of energy returns and so transformation only really becomes super possible when that society starts to transition from the point of growth to a point of descent.

Is that so? Yeah, I'll stop.

**Daniel:** No, Go.

I mean, this isn't going to ask you about rewilding, because I mean, I have my answer about that, but I want to know maybe what you think a little bit, because, you know, I haven't done the deep dive episode on let's plot out the future society.

Hey, I don't necessarily think we can have too much of A we're so far from it that we want to have a general idea and have the general principles that we want and we want to have a couple of steps planned out.

But beyond that, I don't know that it's that useful.

Though there are interesting, you know, like Michael Albert has something that's interesting as Parikhian.

Yanis Varoufakis is working on something.

Then you have something like Matt Brunig, which is working out a type of socialism that almost looks exactly like the society we have today with a few modifications that's modest, but looks like it's more achievable as like a step, or maybe that's where the final step, who knows.

But so, okay, so when you're talking about rewilding, because I have a lot of people who are anarcho-primitivists who like to argue with me or contact me and that it's just not possible to have an egalitarian society or even a society or even a future at all because of climate catastrophe with a civilization context.

We have to go back to hunting and gathering.

What rewilding sounds a bit like that, but not exactly.

So tell me about it.

I'm sure your audience knows all about it.

I don't.

I read a little bit about it when you first contacted me.

So tell me about it and I'll.

**Peter:** So it definitely emerges from anarcho-primitivism, for sure and I think that there are, on some level, I consider myself an anarcho-primitivist, but like you're saying, there's these people who message you and say, it's not possible, you know, hunting and gathering.

For me, there's a whole deeper explanation of what wildness is in terms of like a conversation with an ecosystem or a conversation with the people together collectively and how our will is shared, as an individual, as a collective, and then in an environment.

**Daniel:** So just an idea of sustainability, more or less, if you want to.

**Peter:** Yeah, but there's this question of like, you know, what level of a society is sustainable.

For me, I look at it not, I don't like that word.

So I look at it as the relationship between disturbance and regeneration.

So like when people say, you know, living in harmony, what does that even mean? it means that there's a relationship where your disturbances that you create through existence, consuming things, is somehow matched with regeneration, the regeneration of the environment that you're in.

**Daniel:** Right.

Which you see in the hunt to gather societies who are very careful too and it's funny, the mechanisms are really weird.

Like sometimes they're very conscious mechanisms.

They're like, oh, we got to stop killing this kind of animal because there's too many of them.

But sometimes they're these weird religious things where they're like, oh, it's bad karma.

It's not karma, but it's like they have.

**Peter:** Sure.

**Daniel:** It's called aquila, like among the Hadza.

They have, oh, it's bad aquila to hunt this blue, I forget what it's called, the antelope, you know, so we have to stop now and it's just this weird, these things that catch on which seem to be conservation methods, but they're not conscious.

Although some of them are, sometimes it is conscious, sometimes it isn't conscious.

It's very interesting that the play, and one of the things about the Dawn of Everything that \*\*\*\*\* me off is that it made everything about consciousness when so much of culture is just about unconsciousness, about doing things, because if we were conscious, we wouldn't do the right thing.

**Peter:** Totally.

**Daniel:** We would probably be doing a selfish thing, but if we're unconscious, if we're afraid of some, you know, mystical punishment or bad luck, then we'll actually behave in a way that's in our own interest, but in our long-term interest.

But anyhow, So, but does rewilding require return to hunter-gatherer society, or it's just the idea that we have to pay attention to that issue of being able to replenish what we use?

**Peter:** Yeah, so I think, you know, when we look at immediate return societies, there's a couple of things that come up, right? Like one of those things is that that's to me, that's like the litmus test, you know, that's like the example of how we evolved, you know, like if we're looking, you know, to use the the terms from the Paleolithic nutrition studies, like the environment of evolutionary adaptation.

**Daniel:** Adaptation, yeah.

**Peter:** Right.

So if immediate return is our environment of evolutionary adaptation, that's something we should know about and understand in terms of like what makes us tick, what makes us, you know, what can inspire us to build something else, right?

**Daniel:** A million percent, yeah.

**Peter:** But then, there is this problem, right, where the environment of evolutionary adaptation had way less people and way more megafauna.

**Daniel:** Yes.

Right.

Yes.

**Peter:** Immediate return hunting and gathering worked great when there was megafauna to hunt.

There isn't any more.

**Daniel:** So, well, it's still immediate return hunting and gathering still works without megafauna, but it's being Those cultures are being wiped out basically by the day as we speak.

But 100 years ago, there was still no megafauna, but there were very, I don't know, prosperous, but well, stable and happy immediate return functioning societies that weren't on there, weren't being pushed to extinction the way they are today.

But at the same time, I don't know how accurate this number is, but the number that's normally given is to live in a nomadic immediate return hunting and gathering society, you need about one person, 0.1 people per square kilometer or something like that.

So you'd have to kill off, but that's the argument against all the anicore primitism is, well, you've got to kill off 99% of the population to live this way.

I mean, clearly we are built to be immediate return or to be hunter gatherers at least.

We're certainly built that way.

Although in the last, 6, 7,000 years of evolution, maybe we're not as built.

there's all kinds of people who are evolved not exactly to do hunting and gathering.

That's another, like if you have flat feet, you're not going to make a great hunter gather.

If you, know, there's that kind of stuff.

So, and we're probably not as strong as it, but anyways.

Totally.

But in general, so much of our bodies and our psychologies is based on a hunting and gathering lifestyle and I think it's very important actually to focus It's a bit dangerous, but it's also very important to focus a bit on biology and evolution.

Like it's many people on the left or who think they're on the left are absolutely allergic to evolution and biology.

I know Draver and Wengro certainly did not want to ever talk about anything like that.

because it's associated with racism and all that stuff.

So, and it very quickly goes there.

Like if you look at all the people who are into evolutionary psychology, like 90%, 80% are like sexist kind of are into it in order to justify kind of weird, sexist and racist stuff.

But at the same time, it doesn't have to be.

There are all kinds of radical left wing evolutionary anthropology types and we really need to like, you know, And we all, and even the most, anti-evolution person who's afraid of talking about evolution in terms of personality, those people will not be afraid for 5 seconds to admit that, yeah, the reason we can eat unlimited amounts of sugar and fat and chips, and, you know, I drank, I ate a whole bunch of Reese's Pieces peanut chocolate chips today that I regretted.

The reason, you know, we have those impulses, even though they're not good for us, is because that made sense in an environment where those resources were limited.

So in a Tanzanian that has a community, when they find some honeycomb, they eat 10,000 calories of honey and wax and bees in a day and then they sleep for the whole day in a diabetes coma or whatever and that's okay, because it happens like once every three months and it's not a big deal.

But for us, you're doing that every day and you're just on the road to killing yourself. Now, the same things apply to so many other things about it.

So for example, one of my theories about hierarchy is just like we crave unlimited amounts of sugar because no one was ever going to have We also might crave always a little bit more power and a little bit more wealth than we have.

But because no one was ever going to get that much power or wealth, like even in those, when I was talking about the Paleolithic squeeze and pull times, even in those squeeze times when you'd have maybe one person who had a bit more authority than others, there's only a bit more authority.

They only got a bit more food than everybody else.

They only got, like in their wildest dreams, you weren't going to have anything like a rich person has to today, like that disparity of zillions and obscene amounts of wealth that you wouldn't even know what to do with.

Like if I took away 99% of Elon Musk's wealth, he wouldn't even notice besides the number on his computer.

Like life wouldn't change in any way for his children, for generations.

So that did not exist and so we have maybe that insatiable.

So what you need to do is create an environment.

Now, you know, we're built for that hunter-gatherer environment, maybe.

But I mean, In part, certainly, but to what extent we don't know, because we might have evolved a bit since then.

But we want to emulate the best parts of it, and it's in so far as much as we can without having to kill anybody.

We don't want to kill up 99% of the population.

So, you know, what's the degree? It's like, I don't know.

It's like, you know, maybe we do need a certain amount of hierarchy, but we have to orient ourselves to eliminating it insofar as possible and that should be the orientation of society.

The orientation of society should always, like, there's, why is there no, you know, I'm going to make a video on how socialism will solve all of Jordan Peterson's problems.

Yes, please do.

If you look at Jordan Peterson, right, he's constantly, and the reason he's so famous, right, is he's, well, one of the reasons he's so famous, is he's constantly complaining about real problems, you know? You go on dating apps and well, the richest, good-lookingest men and women will get 99% of the views and note that the algorithm locks out everybody else, so nobody else even gets a chance and all this stuff and all this stuff and you have so many choices and everyone's going to try to catch the richest, you know, most good-looking person or whatever, or the youngest, most beautiful woman or whatever it is.

Well, guess what? The solution to that is get rid of the profit motive from Tinder. Like, it's that simple.

You know, oh, Facebook is causing genocide.

Facebook is causing 12-year-old girls to come in suicide.

Guess what? Easy solution.

Get rid of the profit motive and make it a democratic cooperative and watch that completely disappear in 5 seconds.

So, you know, there's of course the argument that, oh, well, if you try to get rid of the profit motive, you have communism, you have the Soviet Union.

That's wrong and I can, you know, I'm going to do an episode of...

Even maybe that's true to a certain extent, but let's find out what that extent is.

Why is there no commission on getting rid of the profit motive insofar as much as possible? Well, the reason is because the people who live by profit control everything.

But the idea is that the orient, so, you know, when you're talking about what's my political ideology, I hate using all those 19<sup>th</sup> century terms of socialist, anarchist, whatever.

But, you know, for me is the orientation of trying to remove as much hierarchy as possible while still having a functional society.

So, we don't know what that is because we haven't even tried.

Like we've seen interesting experiments in anarchist Spain where the workers ran their own factories, the peasants ran their own agriculture, and they cooperated with each other and coordinated each other.

It looks good to me.

You know, who knows how would that, if it didn't get crushed by the communists and the fascists, maybe that would have worked that well, or maybe it would have collapsed.

We don't know.

But why, this is what we need to be going for and finding out the limits and how little hierarchy we can get away with.

in some situations, like if you're directing a movie, you need hierarchy.

I don't think you can have, and hierarchy, of course, when talking about politics, is about decision-making.

We don't, we're not talking so much about money, although money is decision-making power, but politics is about decision-making in groups.

So when we're talking about political hierarchy, we're talking about decision-making power.

So in a cinema context, well, if the director can't tell, you know, if the lighting, if the director tells the lighting person what to do and the lighting person is like, No, I don't want to do that.

looks stupid.

I think we should have this kind of lighting.

That's, you can't function, right? Every, if the craft table is saying no and the extras are saying no, I want to do it like this, the movie's going to be a disaster.

That doesn't work.

So you need some kind of hierarchy.

The director has to be able to command and people have to obey.

But there's no reason why the producer or the investors get all the money and everybody else just gets a wage.

**Peter:** Exactly.

No, for real.

**Daniel:** It could be a cooperative.

**Peter:** I used to work in the film industry, so.

This is a thought I had every day on set.

**Daniel:** There you go.

So you know exactly what I'm talking about, right? There's all kinds of unjust hierarchies.

There's a hierarchy, which I would say is just and necessary inherent to the occupation of making a film.

But then there's a dozen hierarchies in there which have no purpose just to give the people who have money and power more money and power.

Right.

So you can have a democracy where people democratically choose to be obedient to the director for the purpose or creative purposes, and then have no obedience to the director once the film is over or when it comes to dividing up the profits of the movie.

So we should be doing this with everything, right?

**Peter:** I mean, it's essentially like a hunting party, right? Like when a hunting party goes out, like you're going to listen to the person who's really \*\*\*\*\* good at hunting.

You know what I mean? Like there's definitely like little scale of leadership and I don't, so that's the thing, like the word hierarchy to me is maybe misleading in the way that we use it or we project it onto certain things.

Like, I wish that there was more diversity of language around explaining organizations other than, hierarchy and not hierarchy or whatever.

Like, because there's some that are, where somebody's getting all of the resources and then there's others that are just like decision-making that are voluntarily done because you understand like nobody's better than anybody else in terms of...

**Daniel:** That's exactly no and what you brought up, the hunting party example is perfect.

So if people don't know, even in those hyper egalitarian societies where you have no chief, you have no leader, even parents, sometimes children have more authority than parents, because when it comes to something, we're making a decision for the future, the parents understand that the children are the one that are going to have to live in the future, not us.

So the kids get more authority in those types of decisions, right? That's such an egalitarian society.

But when it's time to go hunting, people choose often a hunting leader and the hunt and people, he tells people what to do.

do and they do it and these are egalitarian societies.

They're so egalitarian that when there's a conflict between two people, they can't choose a mediator among their own ethnic group because that would, who's this big shot? Who does he think he is or she think he is? She's making the choices.

They have to get someone from the neighboring pastoralist tribe to come in and mediate for them because it will disrupt their whole internal cohesion.

So that's how egalitarian they are.

But when they go hunting, they choose a hunting party leader and they obey that hunting party leader and as soon as the hunt is over, even during the hunt, they might say, no, I'm not doing this.

Like, what are you talking? But when the hunt is over, the guy has no authority whatsoever unless people like him, right? So that's, so I would call that a voluntary hierarchy or a democratic hierarchy versus a dominance hierarchy, right? Because hierarchy is, but those blend into each other and I think we have to be watchful about that.

But dominance hierarchy is about you are getting benefits A dominance hierarchy is where the benefit is for the people at the top of the hierarchy.

A democratic hierarchy is where the benefit of the hierarchy, the hierarchy exists for the benefit of the people at the bottom of the hierarchy or for all the people of the hierarchy.

We have you as our leader, so you can see that in the What do they call that Graber talks about? Their chief is basically there because it's useful for the people and it helps them in various ways.

So you get to be chief because we need you as the chief.

The second that we don't need you anymore, that you're like overstepping your bounds, see you later, we're going for this other chief.

So the institution of a chief is there because it's necessary, but nobody has to and those can easily, one can slip into the other very quickly.

I think hierarchy is a bit like nuclear power or something.

It's dangerous.

Like anyway.

I don't know enough about anything.

There's debate about whether nuclear power is necessary or not, but let's pretend it is sort of necessary in some situations.

It might be necessary sometimes, but you have to be very, very careful with it because it could destroy everything and the hierarchy is like that.

Even, you know, even Jordan Peterson, he's so funny.

Like anyways, I'm really, I find him fascinating because he's so, it's a bit like David Graeber.

His finger is in all the right places, but he just can never get to the right answer because his head is so full of garbage.

He's, you know, Graeber was so full of weird.

I don't know what I do.

deal is garbage, and Peterson is full of, he's got a conservative temperament, so he's always very afraid of changing.

He's also probably traumatized by being yelled at by kids, you know, so he can't, you know, the whole idea of the left is scarce and he equates it to Stalinism, but you know, in university context, I can see what he's so afraid of.

**Peter:** But, so you mentioned leveraging power, and I want to, and I want to kind of like look at that in terms of, so you know, how do we get unstuck or whatever, right? Especially in a, especially in a globally linked society where you have multiple hierarchies in competition with one another, with leveraging power over one another.

Like, how do you, how do you get out of that cycle, right? Like, what's the...

**Daniel:** So you mean like different, are you mean to say like, let's say the United States decides to become an anarcho-communist society and we just be invaded by Russia or China or something like that?

**Peter:** Yeah, it's like a prisoner's dilemma or whatever, right?

**Daniel:** I don't know.

Obviously, the solution to that.

There's different ways of dealing with that, where you could still have a military, for example, a militia, a universal service militia, dealing with the outside world, but have democracy and workers' rights at home.

Obviously, and the socialists always understood this, or most of them, is that the idea, you know, the Russians, before they did the Russian Revolution, understood that you, well, actually think they might have been wrong in a sense, but They didn't think that you could have socialism in one country.

They thought that, well, we're going to do the revolution in Russia and all of Europe is going to have a revolution shortly thereafter because it really seemed like they were about to and that's going to make socialism possible here.

The idea of socialism in one country was just no one thought that was possible until Stalin, you know, for very selfish or practical reasons, decided to make that the official policy because they were basically stuck.

So like, who knows, maybe a country like the United States is wealthy enough that they can pull off that socialism in one country thing.

But then again, why are they so prosperous in a way because they're exploiting all these other countries? Like if Look, I don't know, okay, but it could be, and I do believe this, that the conditions of today, and this is one of the things I want to talk about when I consume my Graeber series, is that I think that the material conditions of today actually create opportunities for us to be egalitarian in ways that weren't possible 100 years ago, 200 years ago, 1000 years ago, at least not on the scale that we're talking about, like for civilizations, I think and we can see that in a, like if we, and Graeber sort of mentioned this a bit in the book, which I thought was one of the brilliant parts of the book.

Somebody today, if you go study like the Haudenosaunee people or you go study one of the egalitarian hunter-gatherer societies, you'll relate to those people.

Like if you read one of those ethnographies, like there's some things that have been going on there that you're going to find weird and you don't relate to, but most of it you're going to relate to way more than you're going to relate to 15<sup>th</sup> century Europeans with all the weird things that they believe and that they're the witchcraft and the punishment and how they love torture and murder and like all this crazy stuff and their religious beliefs.

because the material conditions have given us a lot of things that resemble hunter-gatherer, immediate return societies in the sense of like a welfare state, for example, creates conditions where people can move around more easily and where people aren't stuck on, like, you know, there's that book, *Why Sex is Better Under Socialism*.

So the idea is that in, or like, that is a funnier example, that you know this guy, Rush V, he's this horrible pickup artist.  
guy.

He writes these books like *Bang, Bang Sweden, Bang France*.

Like he wrote, he'd write all these books on how to go have sex with girls, how to manipulate basically girls into having sex with you in every country as a tourist, you know? Now he's some kind of weird traditional Catholic for Muslim, I forget what religion he is, but of course, because now that he's in his 40s and his testosterone's calming down, he's becoming this bitter old man and he's all bitter about like, oh, women, you know, I can't find a real girlfriend.

All these women are so superficial.

Gee, maybe it's because They're just chasing all these people with manipulation tricks.

Anyway, sorry.

I'm A rambo.

The point is that he wrote a book called Don't Bang Denmark and he's, because when he went to Denmark, none of his tricks worked because women there don't need a rich guy.

They don't need a guy who's flashing his wealth.

They don't need a dominant guy because they have a great social welfare system.

So they can live independently on their own and if they get pregnant, they don't become these dependent people who need to better stick with this man than on my own, which is a compromise that many people make and have made over the years.

They don't have to make any of those compromises because they have such a generous welfare state.

So they look for a good partner, a good, someone who's going to raise their kids well, someone's going to treat them well, and someone who knows how to sexually please them well, which is what that book is, sex is better under socialism.

They compared East Germany, you know, whatever, all the problems of East Germany, there was still that welfare state.

So women in East Germany found were much more interested in a partner that knew how to do sex properly than in West Germany where women were, even though West Germany was wealthier, women, there wasn't that same substance.

So women were much more interested in a man that was wealthy and like, you know, the amount of orgasms they had was much less in West Germany than in East Germany.

It was this great experiment.

right? There's the same society at the beginning and then 50 years later, the only difference is the, like that welfare, that welfare state and it changes completely the sexual.

That's another example of materials, by the way.

It changes how good men are at sex because they don't have to be in West Germany if they have money, whereas they have to be in East Germany to be a woman.

So I forget why I'm even talking about this.

Well, in a civilization, sorry, can you repeat the question if you remember it?

**Peter:** Yeah, we're just we're we're just riffing on, you know, This notion of how to, how every, if one culture, one nation, state or whatever has more power and they could just take over another one if it's trying to transition to something that is more social.

**Daniel:** So because of the global economy, and this is a problem we sort of, it's funny because the left used to talk about this a lot in the 90s and then they just stopped talking about it and I don't know if it's because something changed in the global economy that I don't know about or because it's the left is afraid to talk about it because it's depressing, is that If we want to do something in one country, we have to do it other places, because if not, the companies can say, Well, we're just going to

Vietnam, we're just going to, and then Vietnam gets more labor rights, and they're like, Oh, we're going to Burma, or we're going to this, you know.

So, to a certain extent, you need several, and this is what they're sort of trying to do a bit in Europe, like with the Varafakis' DiEM25 movement, is you need not just one country, but you need a whole alliance of wealthy countries that can form a block enough to trade with each other.

And, if they're blockaded by the outside, that they could still be sustainable on some reason, on some level, and you need, I think, solidarity between poor countries and rich countries and you need it to be a more broad movement than just in one country.

So that's, I think, a material constraint that is real and a bit daunting.

But at the same time, I think today we hate the internet because we're just at the beginnings of it, right? I think, the biggest, the technology that changed the world the most versus anything was, I think it was some kind of 100 technology list, and it was the printing press.

It changed everything.

Like the Enlightenment happened, Protestantism happened.

Like, you had a sort of stable system for 1000 years and this printing press happens and everything changes very rapidly because people are able to communicate.

It pushed us towards democracy, it pushed us towards all this stuff.

So the internet is like the new printing press.

It's like creating this other level of communication and democracy, even though right now it just seems like insanity and you know, because all these algorithms are just pushing teenage girls to commit suicide and making genocide in Burma and all this and making your grandparents, you know, leave insane QAnon conspiracies and stuff like that.

But I think we're just at the beginnings of it.

I think there's so much potential.

If you look at why did Haiti have a successful, you know, whatever, it turned into something bad, but why did they have a successful revolution against colonial France? And why did slave rebellions in the US almost always fail and never go anywhere? the difference is that, there's a bunch of differences, but in Haiti, the slaves were as abused as they were during the day.

They were kind of free to do their own thing at night, and they would go on these, they'd have these dancing events and religious events, but it was a network that spanned across the entire island.

So they're able to communicate, people on one side of the island were able to communicate with people on the other side of the island, and people were able to report back on what the colonials were doing and stuff like that.

So they were able to organize and orchestrate and successfully carry out revolution because they had communication.

Whereas in the United States, you basically didn't have any social network if you're a slave outside of your master's home, right? So you might, if you had a big home, you might have 20, 30 other people, but it just, so those rebellions were just like, they kill the master, they kill a couple of people, and then they get shot and killed by the authorities.

there's nothing, it just couldn't, they just weren't capable, another materialist explanation, right? Yeah.

So we had this internet, as terrible and idiotic as it is right now, I think once we learn how to use it more intelligently, and I think, you know, If young people just don't end up just dying in complete isolation with no friends, I think people more and more, like I've noticed the way people consume my age, consume media at first is like using way too much internet, being way too addicted to their screens, and then sort of just being like, oh, you know what? I don't need to go on Facebook.

I don't need to do Instagram.

I'm going to use it once in a while just to see how my friends are doing or to see if I'm invited to a wedding or something and I think younger people who are growing up with this stuff are going to make, you know, figure out, even though it's all poisoned by profit motive and stuff, they'll still sort of might figure out how to use it better and then we can actually use it for good purposes and to organize things and I think people don't realize how much potential there is to, like, Arnold Schroeder, who's a guy who was quite like an animal podcast and I had him on my show, he was talking about how in Standing Rock, that there was all these, protests and the protests got so big that they had to call police departments from like 12 adjoining counties like and state troopers.

So you to come into all this one area and it was just, I don't know how many people were protesting at Standing Rock, but it's not that big relative to the population of the country.

But you had to have 12 areas that had no police or protection, you know, state enforcement services almost whatsoever, because they're all, dealing with this small, relatively small protest.

So imagine if you actually had a movement that involved a million people to like that Occupy.

That's one that's one reason also that I was like sitting on Graver so much is that Occupy had an enormous amount of potential.

Totally.

You know, you don't have to be violent to have all this potential.

You just have to like the state can't get away.

I mean, it can sometimes, but you can't just shoot people anymore the way you could, even 50 years ago.

It's much harder to use violence because we have all this media exposure.

People get very upset very quickly.

Look at the George Floyd protests, right? Whether you all for them or you think it was a bunch of chaos, it doesn't matter.

The fact is that you had these cities up in arms doing a lot of work.

All over the world, right? And no one, I mean, if that happened, first of all, if they were happening in cities, if that happened 50 years ago, you'd have been shooting down a lot of these people, right? If it happened in, if somebody else was president at the time, or if somebody was mayor, I mean, because cities tend to be Democratic, but you can imagine a Republican mayor not tolerating that and shooting down a bunch of people.

But the idea is that nowadays, It's much harder to just mow down a bunch of people because you have social media, you have access to information, you have all this alternative media that you didn't have before.

So people would know about it and people would be up in arms.

So if you had...

**Peter:** So I mean, there's a couple of like other premises I feel that kind of are resting in this too, which is that on some level there's a time limit to this, right? Like the climate collapse is imminent.

**Daniel:** I think, yes.

**Peter:** I mean, the oceans are acidifying faster than the climate is collapsing.

So there won't be seafood by the year 2047, according to NASA.

So, you know, there's this time limit of like, and I think there's a thing where you, where people tend to lose hope when they get overwhelmed by the broadness or the, you know, all of the things that we're talking about, right? But I feel like there's a level of When the society loses its, or starts to hit the point of diminishing returns, and it no longer has that amount of energy coming in to maintain a level of violence that it was using, then you start to see a transition happening and I feel like the internet will become super powerful and I mean, I tend to be one of those people that's like, I don't think anything's going to happen until we hit that point of diminishing returns.

But I'm also trying to constantly grapple with that.

Like what can we do now? Even if that could be beneficial either way, right? Like that's kind of one of the things I think about.

But I also just wanted to mention Mastodon really quick because it's funny to think about how Twitter is collapsing right now and Mastodon is this decentralized version.

It's not like exactly like Twitter, but it's essentially a similar type service that's considered like a federation.

It's not corporately controlled.

It's very different and people are migrating over to that and I was having this conversation with a friend of mine the other day where I was like, the one now that like people like are moving over to Mastodon because of Elon Musk, what's really going to push Mastodon to be the forefront of a lot more change is another type of event like the George Floyd uprising, where people are going to need to use that form of communication much more on a global, I mean, people are already using it, right?

**Daniel:** Because the corporate one, the corporate one won't let you talk about, like right now they're censoring mostly stupid stuff, although they also censor good stuff.

But they're going to, that censorship stuff is horrible because they're just going to censor political good stuff very quickly at the blink of an eye.

They're already doing it.

They're already doing it.

But they'll like really.

**Peter:** Elon Musk has been like banning all of the Antifa and anti-fascist accounts. In fact, he even just banned Crime Think like 2 days ago.

**Daniel:** That doesn't surprise me at one point or another.

I mean, because the whole idea that it's owned by a centralized corporate organization, whether it are government organization or central, as soon as it brushes up against their interest, they're like, okay, we're going to shut all this down.

Like, but so is this Mastodon? Because people, because I'm always asking people, like, is there some alternative to YouTube, for example? And everyone keeps sending me this stuff, but it's always another for-profit company and I'm like, first of all, it doesn't have the reach of YouTube, but it's not even, it's a for-profit company.

So like in five, 10 years, if it ever gets anywhere, it's just going to turn to garbage because that's the, all these companies, you know, YouTube was great 10 years ago now, it's garbage.

Google was great 10 years ago now, it's garbage because of the, you know, this publicly joint corporations, it's how they, that's what happens to them.

So is Mastodon a non-profit?

**Peter:** I mean, I would look into it more.

I would look into it more.

I'm not fully, I don't use the internet on that scale.

Mostly I used Twitter to follow live news here in Portland when the uprisings were going on so I could know where to go or whatever.

You know, like there were certain benefits to having it.

I never used it.

I barely ever post on it.

But Mastodon is kind of a similar thing, except the thing about Mastodon is it's like, Anybody can create their own server of, it's sort of like a decentralized, I don't know if the company itself is privately owned.

**Daniel:** Company, exactly.

See, company, see, yeah, right, exactly.

It's a bit like Bitcoin and stuff, like where there's this decentralized aspect, but there's also this centralized control aspect where I'm just, But, actually, it's good that you brought this up.

Like, I don't know, anything about mastodon one either, right? And I just learned about it this second.

I think someone mentioned it yesterday on Twitter and I was like, oh, what's that? I don't care.

But what you're saying is very important because one of the things that we can, so what can we do now, right? And look, the Earth, I don't, it's funny, I just heard the Lex Fridman podcast and he just had a couple of like climate people on and they're both like middle of the road climate people saying, oh, we don't, you know, things are definitely getting worse, but we don't have to worry, we're not all going to die in the next 30 years.

I don't know.

You know what I mean? Maybe those guys are right.

Maybe that's garbage.

Maybe we, I have no idea.

I have not, because it's a scary topic.

I haven't investigated.

You know, like Arnold Schroeder, you know, he tells me like, well, unless we invent some new technology, yeah, civilization is basically going to be destroyed in the next, I don't know what he said, 100 years, 50 years.

But then there's other, these other people are saying, no, civilization is not going to be destroyed, but we're going to have some problems that we have to deal with.

I don't know which of those extremes are true.

I don't know.

I have no idea.

But What I do know is that what I think is a very important, like everybody's got to apply themselves.

One of the things that you need to do is just do something, okay? Because we don't do anything and it's also, you know, people, I read a statistic that 1/4, I don't know if it's a quarter of people or 1/4 of people under a certain age have no, literally no friends, which is brutal.

People are very isolated nowadays and we don't know how to connect to other people.

This is worse with younger people.

So one of the things One of the ways you can connect with people is by joining an organization and love like-minded people and doing something.

There's a ton of problems.

It's much more fun to join an organization with your friends or start an organization because you might not like the culture of the organizations and their clickers and all these problems.

But anyways, get involved in something, even volunteering in something, whatever you're doing.

But one of the things that I think, you know, I can do and that is important is spreading certain kinds of ideas because it's all about common sense.

What's in the common sense? What's in the air? So if there was, so I think that you're right in that there's some kind of catalyzing event that will precipitate the desire for change and I think the material conditions are such that change can actually happen quite quickly.

I think Occupy, I think it's people don't realize just how easily things can change. It could be a wonderful change or it could be a terrible change.

I think Occupy Wall Street had an enormous potential to change things.

I don't think the government with all other nukes and things can just kill everyone.

I don't think that's going to happen for a whole number of reasons.

I think you could have a very quick change.

But the problem is, if nobody has any idea, if the ideas in the air are stupid ideas, the change is going to be bad or the change is going to be like occupy.

They had this idiotic idea of don't make any, maybe you believe in this idea, I don't know, but don't make any demands idea.

You know, that whole idea was to me the suicidal insanity where I think they had a potential to maybe get one, you know, let's, so I talked about it on my show, and there's an article, an academic article about it, about how in Occupy New York, there were people who wanted to make one demand.

Let's push one demand in unison and either we have such influence, and because it was overwhelmingly popular, it was so popular that the state wouldn't clear out these people from all the parts, just like the George Floyd protests.

You had all these people doing illegal stuff, and the state with all their guns and tanks is just sitting there picking their noses, because everyone is on their side.

You know, they changed the whole vocabulary of the nation.

So these people are like, Let's push one demand and they had like, let's end corporate personhood or let's, I forget what, oh, there was one that was like so obvious.

**Peter:** Tax the rich or something.

**Daniel:** I don't know.

Get money out of politics.

That's the one.

I think that would have been the winner.

That's something that like, and this, you know, when you have people supposedly on the left or the right, that's one of the reasons I started my podcast because people agree on 80% of things.

You could have the most racist person and then the most, you know, super egalitarian PC person, but when it comes to socialized medicine, a lot of those people are on the same page and they can and should cooperate on that.

But they're divided by, you know, I'm going to vote for Donald Trump because I want free health care.

That, you know, that's in the air.

So there are these people who want to push that one demand and getting money out of politics has 96% support.

Do you know that more Republicans want monopolies to be broken up than Democrats? Like that's something that's You can do something with that.

There's such power in that.

If you just get those people together instead of that idiotic dividing line between this stupid corporate party and that stupid corporate party.

Anyway, so this, a big section of Occupy wanted to push one demand and the best demand, I think, was get money out of politics and the lead, and there was a, I don't know, they had rules that you had to have a 75% vote in order to pass resolutions.

So they had beyond 75% to pass these resolutions.

But then the people in charge of making the rules changed it to 90% because they were dedicated and Graber was one of those people on not having any demands.

We're just going to sit here \*\*\*\*\* because somehow that's, you know, they had their idea.

The point is you push this demand and then everyone, the entire country, 96% Republicans and Democrats are on your side and either you might actually get something done, you might actually get concessions out of the government and if you get some, probably some \*\*\*\*\* sessions.

But if you do, you taste blood and you realize, oh, we can get more if we just do this again and it would create a precedent of any time we're really upset and there's a giant consensus on something, 96%, let's have an Occupy movement and then get stuff done.

Or the police comes in and they close it down.

They're probably not going to shoot I mean, they might shoot some people, but they'll probably close it down violently and then people realize like, wow, this is something that everybody agrees on, but the government put in the guns and the tank and the dogs instead of doing it.

So that's also a catalyzing moment.

So it's like a win-win situation either way, but instead they're like, no, let us jerk each other off in this circle and just do nothing.

I mean, something didn't do anything, but like, let's just collapse until the public gets bored of us, because the public's like, oh, I guess they're not doing anything and then they get bored.

NH put in the dogs and they closed the thing down and the reason, I mean, Occupy did reverberate in a lot of ways, but it was a whimper compared to what it could have been because of the stupid organization.

So that's because our society is full of garbage ideas and the other garbage ideas that we have is this weird, half-baked right-wing libertarian stuff.

Like the popular ideas are this weird mix of social democracy, right-wing libertarianism, weird right-wing cultural issues, and this dumb, on the left, we have all this dumb, like don't do anything.

decentralism.

I mean, I'm for decentralism, but it has to be effective, right? So everything is idiotic.

So for me, tell me what you really think.

Yeah, I could go on.

I'm holding back, actually.

But I could, you know, I'm trying to clean up the debt.

Let's understand what left and right means.

Let's understand what socialism means.

Let's understand what this means, what that means, whether you agree with it, whether you like it or not, whether you like my definitions or not.

Let's just think about how words are used, how they're used to manipulate us, how we actually agree with a lot of people that we're on different sides of some dividing line and how we can unite with those people to achieve things and get good ideas in the air.

Let's show that, oh, get rid of the profit motive.

That's a terrible, you know, Twitter sucks because of profit.

Facebook sucks because of profit.

Tinder sucks because of profit.

Healthcare sucks because of profit.

Like, let's put those ideas, make those ideas common sense so that when there is, and also make the idea of don't sit around \*\*\*\*\* that's not anarchism, that's just \*\*\*\*\*.

That's academic, upper middle class, rich kid stuff.

So that when the next crisis happens, whether it's a police shooting or whether it's a climate event or whether it's who knows what.

We don't have, we have no idea.

No one expected Occupy to happen.

Some \*\*\*\*\* some meshugas, you know, who knows what it's going to be.

That it's not a bunch of people like, oh, let's vote for Adolf Hitler because maybe he'll do something different, which is like what Donald Trump to me is, right? People are just like, and I know a lot of, you know, Hispanic people, a lot of people are just like, well, he looks like he's going to do something different.

You know, he sets, he sets the alarm bells off in me and you for various reasons, but there's other people.

who doesn't, my dad, it doesn't send off alarm bells to my dad.

My dad knows he's kind of stupid, he's a bit of a thug, but he's like, well, you know, sometimes we need a guy like that to shake things up.

Right.

So, You want those people who think like that to be able to see through the Donald Trump's and to be able to see through the \*\*\*\*\* and see through the Democrats and see through the Republicans and have common sense.

Like the idea that profit is ruining everything could be a common sense idea easily, I think.

The idea that people could run their own workplace should be a common sense idea easily, I think.

The idea that the environment is being destroyed and corporations are destroying the environment is already a common sense idea.

It's just that nobody knows what to do about it.

But like, That's for me, what I think I can do, and that's what I'm doing right now and I think, that's something, I don't think everyone should be doing that, because everyone needs to, there's other things that need to be done too, besides that.

So, and one thing that can be easily done, if you have computer skills, start your cooperative Facebook, start your cooperative Twitter, like, because those are great ideas.

Like, you know, give the kudos to the whoever, you know, I don't think it was Elon, like, whoever started Twitter.

Usually the guys who run the corporation stole it from some other guy, the most horrible \*\*\*\*\* \*\* \*\*\*\*\* rises to the top.

But whoever thought of that, you know, whether Jeff Bezos thought of Amazon, these are in some ways great services.

Oh, Uber, Airbnb.

Like I spend my life fighting Airbnb because they're destroying housing and causing rents to explode and but you can put anyways, we successfully lobbied to limit Airbnb's in my city.

So I feel proud of some work that we did there.

But all these things you could easily like we could get rid of rent evictions and you can get rid of a huge rent eviction.

problem by just getting rid of Airbnb and making a new law that says in order to rent out something on a platform like Airbnb, you have to live in the actual apartment.

That would, you know, just giant change with a little flick of a switch.

Or just get rid of Airbnb and make Airbnb a cooperative organization.

Make Uber a workers cooperative so that the taxi drivers benefit from Uber and the customers benefit from Uber and get rid of that stupid medallion system that's been enslaving taxi drivers, but also get rid of the stupid Uber system that's enslaving Uber drivers, like these simple, simple things.

So if you're a software developer and instead of just making a zillion dollar company that's going to become another mega slave owning company, think of how to make a decentralized worker control, you know, like Wikipedia, whatever, it has a lot of problems, but it's actually a very good source of information and it's a decentralized, you know, not completely decentralized, it has like a central thing, but it's, if you want to get involved, you can get involved.

You do have a say.

It's A democratic organization.

That's a good model.

It's not going to solve all of society's problems, but all these terrible \*\*\*\*\* apps that are just making everybody commit suicide can be turned around completely.

You know, it's just terrible.

Like the young, young, I forget, is it young women, young girls like age 12 to 16 or something, their suicide rate doubled since 2010 and it has everything to do with cell phone access and social media access.

So, and Facebook actually had a, they realized this and they had a project to change it and then they're like, well, this is going to cause 1% dropping our profits.

I guess we can't do that.

Too bad.

like that's easy to, and it's not hard.

like if you're talking about the word anarchism, that's going to scare away a lot of people.

You talk about the word communism, that's going to scare away a lot of people.

But just getting rid of that stupid crap is really easy that everyone can agree on.

You know, we don't need to, you know, there's a lot of things that, workers should have a say in their workplaces.

Why isn't democracy apply to the workplace? Of course, that'll have some resistance, but a lot, a lot of people would find that very interesting, but they've never heard it before.

So there's a lot of simple, simple things that we can messages that we can get out there and I think that the material conditions, I don't know, like maybe civil, have people telling me of civilization is impossible to maintain because of this just inherently so destructive.

I have no idea, okay? So obviously you need to deal with that materiality, but the material realities of communication, of the amount of production that you can have, which I'm sure you have to reduce on some level to not make it destroy everything, and internet and all that stuff, you can, social safety nets, you can recreate an effective, the conditions that made hunter-gatherer people, that make hunter-gatherer people so free and equal, you can approximate those in a civilizational context.

It's already been happening since the welfare state.

You can see that our attitudes on marriage, we don't, why don't we have tribes anymore? I mean, part of that is the church and European history, but a lot of part of that is, you know, a lot of that has to do with the welfare state, with the fact that you don't have these Tribes exist as a means of controlling property.

We don't have that same need to control that property.

The capitalism has broken up that whole thing.

So in some ways, it's like Marx talked about capitalism, creative destruction.

So in some ways, it destroyed old things and makes possible new things and we can see that the welfare state is like this embryonic Not that the state should be necessarily the means for it, but anyways, I feel like I'm talking into too much abstraction.

That's cool.

**Peter:** We're, yeah, we're.

**Daniel:** The geoconditions are there, I think.

**Peter:** Yeah, I think you're right.

I think there's definitely a lot that we can all do.

We talked to.

**Daniel:** People in Vietnam and third world countries, and now people have, you know, people in Vietnam have internet.

I've seen cool Vietnamese internet channels.

You can communicate with those people.

You can create alliances and have an international movement in ways that weren't possible before.

**Peter:** So if people were going to jump into your channel, do you feel like you've done it in a sequential way where they should start at the beginning?

**Daniel:** I mean, if you're really into anthropology and the rewilding stuff that you're talking, you know, that you guys who listen to this are into, then you'll probably want to start on my political anthropology episodes where I talk directly about that, you know? So start with like, the one size 6 or 7 hierarchy inequality, why where male dominance comes from, why you can't eliminate sexism just by eliminating sexism.

Those are good ones or the David Graeber stuff, you know, if you're interested in that book and then once you like go to that, then you can go to the what's the right and left, you know, and how do we know what right and left means or why is it important? Why should we care? What does politics mean? What does, you know, all these words, what do they mean? And How dangerous is it that we don't know what they, like if you think about any political term, the word politics, the word the market, the word government, the word left and right, nobody knows what any of these words mean, really.

We sort of feel what they mean.

You know, I was studying politics for 20 years, and then when I sat down to write left and right, I realized I did not know what these ABC words meant and then when I read a bunch of literature, I realized that people with PhDs in poli sci don't know what these words mean.

So what does that do to us? It makes us very easy to manipulate, you know?

**Peter:** Totally.

**Daniel:** Yeah.

**Peter:** Awesome.

I mean, not awesome, but awesome that you're creating.

Awesome that you're creating a language around it for people to better understand.

I feel like I want to keep talking to you about, loads more things, but we're out of time.

Is there like one last thing that you want to say before we go or?

**Daniel:** I can't think of anything right now.

I'm sure there's a bazillion things, but.

**Peter:** Yeah.

**Daniel:** We can talk another time, whatever you want.

Awesome.

**Peter:** How many more videos do you have lined up for the dawn of everything? Like how many more are you going to do for that?

**Daniel:** So I did chapters one to three, which took five or something episodes and nine months to produce.

I'm going to do up till chapter 5.

I'm going to do chapter 4 and five and then I'm going to talk about a little, probably another episode about the rest.

It might be one or two episodes to deal with the rest because I have.

some, I have enough expertise or whatever you call it to talk in depth about chapters one to five and after that, I don't have enough knowledge and there's Walter Scheidel wrote a wonderful review where he really covers chapter 6 to the end brilliantly.

So I don't need to, someone else did it.

I don't need to do it, you know and but I'm going to go over the end a bit, talk about prospects for the future, some of the stuff we talked about here.

So I'd say, I don't know, three, 5 to 5 more episodes.

I'm taking a break now.

I'm doing all this stuff about communism in Russia and Jordan, light changed my brain a little bit, but I'm getting back to it for sure.

**Peter:** Cool.

Awesome.

Well, thank you so much for coming on.

Looking forward to the rest of your videos.

Thanks for listening to this episode of the Rewilding Podcast.

Check out the show notes to connect with my guest and for a list of resources that we mentioned in our conversation.

If this episode inspired you, made you think more deeply or gave you some new tools to use, Make sure to subscribe, share on social media, and become a patron at [patreon.com/petermichaelbauer](https://patreon.com/petermichaelbauer).

Thanks.

## Notes

Daniel's WHAT IS POLITICS Channel

<[www.youtube.com/@WHATISPOLITICS69](https://www.youtube.com/@WHATISPOLITICS69)>

Hierarchy in the Forest by Christopher Boehm

<[bookshop.org](https://bookshop.org)>

## Chris Knight Works

- Dawn Review: <mronline.org>
- Early Human Kinship Was Matrilineal: <libcom.org>
- The Science of Solidarity: <www.chrisknight.co.uk>
- Did Communism Make Us Human: <brooklynrail.org>
- The Human Symbolic Revolution: <web.archive.org>

## The Pseudoscience of ‘The Secret’

<www.livescience.com>

## No Time for Bullies: Baboons Retool Their Culture

<www.nytimes.com>

## The Collapse of Complex Societies by Joseph Tainter

<bookshop.org>

## Parecon: Life After Capitalism by Michael Albert

<theanarchistlibrary.org>

## Yanis Varoufakis

<www.yanisvaroufakis.eu>

## Matt Bruenig

<mattbruenig.com>

## Anarcho-primitivism

<en.wikipedia.org>

## Mastodon

<www.joinmastodon.org>

## Ocean Acidification

<ocean.si.edu>

## Elon Musk Bans CrimethInc.

## from Twitter at the Urging of Far-Right Troll

<crimethinc.com>

## Suicides among teenage girls and young women have almost doubled in seven years, figures show

<www.independent.co.uk>

The Ted K Archive

Peter Michael Bauer  
Living in a Material World w/ Daniel of WHAT IS POLITICS  
12 Dec 2022

The Rewilding Podcast. <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=MrU4ci\\_eRis](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MrU4ci_eRis)>

**[www.thetedkarchive.com](http://www.thetedkarchive.com)**