

A Collaboratively Edited Discussion on the Life & Ideas of Eisel Mazard

Various Authors

First published: February 2025. Last updated: February 2025.

Contents

Contributors	4
1. The Life of the Mind	5
2. ‘What we have here, is a failure to communicate’	12
3. What podcast episode ideas would you like to give Eisel?	15
4. What videos do you wish Eisel would reupload most?	17
5. How did Eisel influence you and your character?	18
6. Debate on individuals taking responsibility for domestic animals	23
Melissa’s case against pet ownership	23
7. The definition of veganism	44
8. Common faulty reasoning Eisel uses	46
Arguing against straw-men	46
Faulty comparisons	47
Jumping to conclusions	48
9. Source Material	50
The wonder that was à-bas-le-ciel: Eisel Mazard and his critics.	50
Reddit vs Reality: the ongoing conspiracy to put Melissa in a straitjacket for speaking her mind.	52
Episode Preview Clip Compilation	52
Podcast Episode Begins	53

Note: This is a collaboratively edited conversation that anyone in the world can join in on, by simply pressing the writers pen symbol at the top of this page.

You simply have to add a name or nickname to the contributors list and put your name in bold at the beginning of any paragraph where you want to enter the conversation.

Try to make your contribution at the end of text dialogues, so as not to break up back and forth responses. But there's no hard rules, for example, if one person writes an extremely long text block of questions, you can suggest an edit that would break their text block of questions up into parts and answer them one at a time.

Contributors

- **Admirable Win** —
- **Avg Web Intellectual** —
- **bunned gump** —
- **Cryptic Cracking Fan** —
- **Eisel Mazard / The Notorious AR IO** — The man himself.
- **Familiar Lab** —
- **hot dog water** —
- **inquy** —
- **Kurtz** —
- **Sapientia** —
- **Simbabones** —
- **Solsolico** —
- **Son of Lung** —
- **Strum Glory** —
- **Tempeh Muncher** —
- **Theo Slade / Wild Virtue** — A dude who's addicted to archiving some of the bizarre personalities of this world.

1. The Life of the Mind

Solsolico: I'm going to go on a pretty long-winded rant here, so bear with me. TLDR; it's me questioning the validity of the so called "life of the mind" and what I will also refer to as "intellectual tourism".

For the longest time, I agreed that so-called active research is a worthwhile endeavor. It's worthwhile to spend time reading books by proper investigative journalists, for example.

But yesterday and today, while I'm going through some real shit in my life, I saw two people debating a moral and political issue about burkas in the USA. Someone remarked that wearing burkas in Minnesota is disrespectful. It was a discussion on Reddit.

Usually, I would read this type of discussion and be engaged with it mentally, thinking it's interesting to see different perspectives. But I couldn't force myself to read it today. It struck me how damn pointless the discussion was for me. It was just play, and there's nothing wrong with playing, but that's all it is. None of these people in the discussion are going to impact the situation. They are probably very far removed from it. And me, the spectator? I'm super isolated from that situation. I don't see people wearing burkas where I live, and even if I did, I'm not part of any community that wears them. I don't have friends or family who wear burkas.

Sure, it's fun to play with ethics and intellectual ideas. But that's all it is... it's play. When I read a book about the history of gangs in El Salvador, I'm just playing. In the same way, if I listen to a podcast about Aristotle that Eisel recorded, I'm just playing. It's just play.

So what? Some people like skiing, going to the beach, meeting locals from different cultures, or mountaineering. But is intellectual tourism any more meaningful than ecotourism or physical exercise tourism? Is reading about the history of some place far removed from me really meaningful? Are we just fooling ourselves into thinking that being intellectual tourists is a life worth living and time well spent? Because when I read that discussion, as an intellectual tourist, I thought, "This is so unimportant to me and my life".

Don't get it twisted—I've read books and learned important things from them. The reason I mention the El Salvador book is that I learned a lot from it.

Okay, but great. I'm not trying to be a politician. So what is this information for? To seem smarter in front of others? To understand one part of the world better? For what? You know, I've been doing plyometric training on and off for a few years, but why? I don't play competitive sports anymore. Plyometrics isn't good for long-term health or joints. Why am I doing it? Because I have some idea about being a great athlete as I enter my 30s (yes, that's the reason... I've been a good athlete my whole life and have a fear of losing it)? Resistance training, cardio, flexibility, balance—these are great for long-term health. Plyometrics? Not so much. I quit break dancing for long-term health reasons a year or two back.

So, now I feel like reading books for the sake of reading or living the so-called life of the mind is like doing plyometrics in my 30s when I don't play any sports. Listen, if I were in a book club, then reading any book would be meaningful, because of the social moments shared later-on. Reading a non-fiction book a month on my own? Also worthwhile. Reading 3 a week? Lunacy.

If you enjoy reading intellectual books, great. But to posture it as something better than being social and physically active? I used to believe it, but now I think, "No, that's not true." I'd rather go hiking with a friend than read any book in the world. One is inherently meaningful to me, and the other isn't.

He likes to call people "on permanent vacation". Hence, I use the term intellectual tourism. What has he done with his intellect? He's not a politician or changing policy. He's not working for any organization with a political agenda. He's not a journalist or a historian. What's the point of living the so-called life

of the mind? Is there intrinsic value to information? I don't think so, not anymore. The idea that the average person should be living this way, I now see that as absurd.

If he's happy reading books instead of socializing or playing in other ways, all the power to him. But for years, he's thought this made him a better person, something I agreed with. Now, I see through it and think, "Nope, that's nonsense." He can frame it how he wants, like he's some badass we should all aspire to be like. But if he enjoys it, great. Yet, he frames it as some type of moral duty almost. And if he doesn't enjoy it, why is he doing it? It's not work. I get that a plumber might not enjoy changing a faucet cartridge, but it pays the bills and keeps society's infrastructure running. It's necessary. Reading books just to read books? It's play. Sure, some reading is important for cognitive health (and it's useful to be informed politically, but you don't need to incessantly reading 5 books simultaneously for that). Mental math, learning new words, and learning new physical skills are also important for cognitive health. But cognitive health isn't the lifestyle he's talking about or idealizing. He is like an "intellectual bodybuilder". Muscle mass and fitness are important, but you don't need to be a bodybuilder to achieve what's important.

Eisel: One reply to two quotations in succession: (1) *"If you enjoy reading intellectual books, great. But to posture it as something better than being social and physically active? I used to believe it, but now I think, "No, that's not true."* (2) *"He can frame it how he wants, like he's some badass we should all aspire to be like. But if he enjoys it, great. Yet, he frames it as some type of moral duty almost. And if he doesn't enjoy it, why is he doing it? [...] He is like an "intellectual bodybuilder". Muscle mass and fitness are important, but you don't need to be a bodybuilder to achieve what's important."*

I don't regard myself as having been "an intellectual bodybuilder" at any stage of my life: I am neither flattered nor insulted by this statement, I think you're in the position of being intellectually exhausted —and you presume that what I'm doing is far more intellectually exhausting still, when you peer across the chasm between us.

If you're doing humanitarian work in Laos, do you want to throw yourself into learning the Lao language? Not everyone does: there were people doing those jobs who had zero engagement with the language, history or politics. They earned their paycheck, got a pat on the back for trying to make the world a better place, and they got on an airplane when they'd had enough of the experience.

Without false humility, I'd say that the level of effort I made in learning Laotian should be regarded as the bare minimum requirement for someone who chooses to put themselves in that situation. When I slept under a mosquito net, I read the collected works of John Dryden with a flashlight (i.e., there was no electricity). I was also studying Pali and several different periods of history. That's what I did for fun, in my spare time, when other people were drinking alcohol and... worse.

I did have friends in Vientiane, but we spoke amongst ourselves in English —sometimes French, sometimes German. John Dryden, also, I read in English —not Lao. And when I was in the room, we would talk about history and politics. Most of those friends I met spontaneously, at coffee shops.

I owned a bicycle. I did long distance cycling (circa 115 km per run). I had other hobbies and interests. I had a gym membership for most of the time that I was in Vientiane, too.

Yes, there were people there who looked at how I was spending my time and wondered, intellectually, how I could possibly do any more; but from my perspective, I would ask how I could possibly do less.

So, I return to the quotation: *"But to posture it as something better than being social and physically active?"*

You reach a point of diminishing returns with "being socially and physically active" fairly quickly: how many hours per week do you want to be scheduled for exercise? How many hours per week do you want to spend socializing? The number is not zero in either case; however, if you really challenge yourself to put a specific number to it... it is going to be finite.

The repetition of these activities (social and physical) benefits you very little, and with more hours, past a point of diminishing returns, it benefits you less and less.

What I learned in researching and writing *No More Manifestos* really does accumulate: there's a sort of "intellectual benefit" (from that active research leading to an informed opinion) that will endure

for the rest of my life —whereas spending twice as much time doing pushups (during those same months in which I wrote the book) would not have benefitted me in any way at all —or, at least, not in a way that would accumulate and still endure years later / right now.

Re: *"[He talks about himself as if] he's some badass we should all aspire to be like."*

I do not think "you all" should aspire to be like me, but I have known many (MANY) people who directly asked me for advice as to how they could be more like me. Really. Even long before I had a youtube channel. Young and old. Some people want to be more intellectual than they already are. Some people want to be sober. Some people want to be vegan. Some people want to be able to record a three hour livestream on Aristotle (or a bunch of other random topics from the history of political science) with zero notes, zero preparation, etc., in the way that I could (and I did).

You may think they're eccentric, and you may think I'm eccentric, but, in my experience, including many face-to-face conversations, there are always *some* people around who want advice as to how they can live the life of the mind as I define it. This can include very specific questions about reading and research —about how Melissa and I would read books together, for example. It can include specific questions about political protests, creative projects, etc.; so if you think I'm eccentric, you will have to imagine how eccentric these other people are who are asking for advice as to how they can imitate me in eccentricity.

So, the comparison to bodybuilding here is apt in one limited sense: not everyone wants to be a bodybuilder. However, those who do want to may well seek out advice from someone else they see bodybuilding, etc.

However, I don't see it that way: instead, a great deal of conflict arises from my perception of the issue in terms of "bare minimum requirements" and moral obligations. It would create less tension with colleagues around me if I had this kind of ("narcissistic") delusion that I was some extraordinary specimen pushing at the limits of what's humanly possible —if I considered myself to be an intellectual bodybuilder who could show off for the crowd. If I regarded myself as extraordinary, it would make others feel more comfortable about being ordinary.

Instead, I regard my contemporaries as falling short bare of minimum requirements —and at some point that becomes a moral problem, not just an intellectual one. When you're looking at a university professor who has not done the bare minimum reading required to teach a subject, that's not just a matter of individual laziness: it entails a moral problem and a predictable conflict with someone like myself.

I learned a lot in a short time, in those years in Laos. And I was surrounded by people who'd been there for many more years than I who never did any of the "bare minimum requirement" work that I did. But yes, I also had a very active life socially and physically: there were enough hours in the day for all that and more.

Solsolico: I didn't expect this to get a reply from you, but I appreciate that you've come here to discuss. I don't know how many of my comments you've read... I hope you don't see me as a basic hater because I've actually watched your channel for many years. A lot of things you've said have had important, profound effects on how I see the world. I do think I mentioned that several times throughout the comments I've left. PM me if you want the most profound example (not something I want to share publicly).

I originally left the comment you have quoted in the context of when you posted this Instagram story which juxtaposes you spending your time reading books compared to other people spending their time at the beach or doing some other recreational activity. My comment was my reflections on hearing this type of perspective from you over almost a decade and just losing conviction of the perspective. I think it's fair to say that over the years, you have on many occasions disparaged people doing things for recreation and in some way verbalized that reading books is superior; other people are living meaningless lives.

Due to your influence, I did hold this belief as well, for years. But as is often the case with new ideas, innovations, or thoughts, it's about the right place and right time. I was going through something

challenging in my life, and that post of yours came up. If I had seen that post a week before or a week after, it wouldn't have been the right place and right time, and I probably wouldn't have had this reflection about your influence on me.

With that being said, of course, I agree that if you're in Laos and you're working there, you should learn the language. I was always on board with your critiques against Durian Rider and the Fruit Fest. You know how it would probably be better if they learned some of the local language and learned about some of the history of the country and some of the political, social, and economic issues that the country faces, seeing that he had hosted this festival every single year.

But that isn't what I'm referring to. Knowledge to do your work or craft better obviously has instrumental value. This doesn't have anything to do with doing the bare minimum in your job. This is about the pastime of reading books.

Sure, you say that the law of diminishing returns comes quickly with social and physical stuff. I mean, I feel like that's the case with reading books as well. I questioned whether this is something the average person should be doing for the sake of doing, if there's an intrinsic value to it. Like, sure, if you're a politician or an academic, then you should be reading a lot of books. It's your job to learn from the past.

But when you're just an average person who maybe works as a language teacher, landscaper, investment advisor, or bike mechanic, I also think that there is a point of diminishing returns when it comes to reading books, and it comes pretty quick. But you said it yourself: when you were living in Laos, you preferred to read about history rather than socialize with alcohol. But couldn't that just be as deep as it gets? It was more enjoyable to you than the other options.

I also do not agree that the point of diminishing returns in a social life is reached quickly, but this is probably just due to personal differences. I'm probably a much more social person than you are.

If you sincerely find meaning and joy in reading 100's of books per year, fantastic. But when I look at myself and think of the books I've read and the time I've spent reading books and academic papers and stuff like that, I really do think that, yeah, that time wasn't well spent. Like the amount of papers I've read about phonology... way too many for someone who is not an academic and does not want to be an academic. Sure, at some point, I enjoyed reading them. Sometimes I was fascinated. But eventually, it got to a point where it was just a chore. But I had this mindset or worldview that, no, this is important to do. So I stuck with it. And for what? I feel like I would've gained more "value" if I stuck through an electrician course; if I stuck through a pottery class; if I stuck through an auto-mechanics course.

The bare-bones version of this criticism I laid towards this worldview you espouse is that reading books has no intrinsic value. If you enjoy it (which you said you do), then great. It's not a harmful hobby like video games. But basketball isn't a harmful hobby either; neither is surfing, neither is hiking. There is a bare minimum of books one should read in a year, sure. But "bookmaxxing" is not going to be a life well-lived if the person sees it as a chore. And the way you talk about reading books and compare it to other pastimes, whether you say it overtly or not, there is the implicit premise we all pick up on, which is "my hobby is worthwhile, yours is a waste of life".

The only reason I care so much is because it's a worldview I did hold for many years. The average person who disagrees with the worldview would just move right past it.

Avg Web Intellectual: One needs to read and educate themselves on the topics they're interested in, not random shit to posture like Eisel. I had made a post here about how an NPD can't be an intellectual. And I would say your argument applies to NPDs. Because they're not genuine. Their purpose is to posture and pretend. That's why they know it all and talk about everything.

Now regarding the burka stuff, on its own it might seem small and insignificant. Maybe because you're regarding the topic as something isolated. You need frameworks to apply when approaching these topics so they stand on something. So each topic you learn then becomes a node in your web of knowledge.

For example, for me, for a very long time I've never read anything historical or political. Then as I started learning about modern colonialism / imperialism, racism, etc. I have developed interest in

modern history and politics. Because whatever I read I can apply to this framework. It is not intellectual tourism, because this is effecting who I am voting, who I am donating to, who I am friending, which political activism I'm engaging in, etc. This is actually future changing stuff. It might be insignificant in individual level for most people, but it would have collective impact.

Solsolico: I will try to expand and rephrase my new perspective here, since I don't think we disagree on much. I can't say I disagree with your comment.

I had this realization that most (basically all) of the discussions I engage with online are just a game to me. It's just play. Of course, a discussion like this is a little more meaningful because it's about how we live our lives. We're kind of troubleshooting how we should spend our time and live our lives.

Obviously, the burqa example is a little more political than another example I could give, but it's just that the burqa conversation was what I actually read. For example, if I go through my Reddit history, most of the things I talk about are what I'd be calling play. And that's cool. But I just have to recognize it for what it is. It's not some type of profound intellectual betterment. If it's just play, then if I don't want to play that, or I want to play something else more, then I should just play what I want to play more. Me discussing burqas is not profound. I'm not saying that it's not a profound topic. What I'm saying is that me discussing it is not profound.

But there's nothing wrong with play either. It's just not any better than any other form of play.

The word "meaningless" is obviously a strong word, so if I ever used the word "meaningless" in prior comments, I will rescind that. Probably change it to "unprofound."

Something utterly indisputably as just play would be a debate around something subjective, like whether smoothies are better with bananas or no bananas.

For example, I think there are some things that we need to learn about as a moral duty. If you live in the Americas, it's a moral duty to read about the history of the country with regards to colonization and racism and all of that.

If in Minnesota there were a referendum for, say, a burqa ban, I think then it would be a moral duty for Minnesotans to read about the politics and history of burqas. I'm not sure what else the readings would entail because I'm not an expert on this topic.

Hearing your perspective, however, is interesting because I can contrast it with mine. I've properly read about colonialism for more than 15 years now, at least in the Americas. And, of course, I have an opinion on whether wearing a burqa is disrespectful to Americans or not, but for me to leave a comment and engage in a debate with other users about this topic, the only reason I would ever do that is because I would find it to be fun... a fun debate because for whatever reason, I enjoy intellectual conflict and disagreements and for whatever reason I like writing long comments.

And I'm not saying I was conscious of this "fun" factor before, but properly analysing myself, it's always been about that. Like when I discussed about the morality of billboards, or the morality of alcohol ads. A few years ago, yeah I viewed those discussions like I was spending my time in a productive way. But now I re-analyse it, and just realize like... those discussions were fun and ultimately we were just playing.

And it's not that fun can't be healthy. Playing basketball is healthy. Having an intellectual discussion is, of course, going to be cognitively healthy. But at the end of the day, I'm not writing policies or academic papers. So is it any more meaningful than playing a sport, for fun (which also ends up being healthy?)

I guess that's kind of where I'm at. Hope I explained that well. Basically: learning as a chore vs. learning as hobby... and then, say sports as a hobby, music as a hobby, art as a hobby vs. learning as a hobby.

bunned gump: He's not happy though, is he?

Happy people don't behave like he does.

He has no friends.

He can't laugh, can't joke and be silly.

He puts on a facade. It must be so exhausting by the end of the day. I can't imagine the drain on anyone that has to interact with him.

And his life of the mind is a construct. It's only real to him. Most of us have been witness to the construct and see straight away it's a house of glass. Bananas on a window sill for company. Just generally being a miserable human to everyone.

We should be celebrating just how different we all are, not disparaging each other because we don't read Greek history or learn languages or play video games.

Luckily he is only one person and we are legion.

Solsolico:

He's not happy though...And his life of the mind is a construct.

I'm now wondering how much of this so-called life of the mind is just a sunk cost fallacy.

For the past year, I had been working on this project. At some point, I realized that the output of the project was not worth the input. The project would have taken me over 10,000 working hours to complete, and I knew this. But I had already put in several hundred hours and figured out most of the experimenting, innovating, and troubleshooting. So, I kept working on it, even knowing that it was ultimately a waste of my time. I put in several hundred more hours after realizing it was a waste before finally stopping.

It's a hard pill to swallow—to admit to yourself that you wasted 1,000 hours of your life. It was so hard to admit that it almost propelled me to waste an additional 9,000 hours.

If he ever felt that his life of the mind and reading books was a waste of time, well, he's probably already invested thousands of hours. A huge amount of his time spent would be rendered meaningless if he concluded that this life of the mind was meaningless.

He never really made a logical argument with premises to back up the claim that the life of the mind is worth living. He talked about it in a way that it was implicitly true. He never made the case for why reading ancient Greek philosophy was more meaningful than attending the fruit fest in Thailand that Durian Rider hosted. I get his critiques about having a festival in a country with economic and social problems and the moral duty to be informed about those issues. But that's completely different from the so-called life of the mind—being an intellectual tourist.

But I'm just making a hypothesis here. I don't know what goes on in his head. All I know is that I don't see the life of the mind or being an intellectual tourist as intrinsically meaningful anymore. I don't think it's necessarily even respectable, in the same way, I don't think bodybuilding is respectable. I'm not going to disrespect someone for bodybuilding, but it's not something I find deserving of respect. Being an intellectual tourist is not the same as being a doctor without borders or a firefighter. To me, it's on the same level as being a bodybuilder. It's something personal for someone, but there's nothing more to it than that. It's a hobby, and many people might see it as a waste of time. But the same can be said about any hobby. On the other hand, I don't think anyone would say doing three hours of exercise a week is a waste of time. We all know that is fundamental for our long-term health. Living the life of the mind is a hobby; it is not a virtue and it's not foundational. That's how I see it now, anyway.

Eisel: I suppose it would be a devastating refutation for me to point out ***THAT I AM HAPPY.*** ;-)

This is an interesting aspect of internet culture in the 21st century: the idea that one side “wins” and the other side “loses” simply by insisting, “I know you're not happy!”

The point here being, “You teach us that we should all force our girlfriends to read Aristotle and Plato's *First Alcibiades* with us, but just look at yourself: ***you're not happy!***” Genuinely, you have no idea how happy it might make the two of you —conversely, you have no idea how miserable. The two of you might well break up by the time you get to the end of the *Gorgias*.

Happiness is not what people think it is: if I meet a true believing Communist who is happy this will not motivate me to re-evaluate the morality of Communism —nor will it make me re-evaluate the psychological significance of belief itself. It does not matter how intensely happy the Communist

may be, nor how miserable I may be by contrast. The happiest drunkard cannot convince me that I'm miserable because I'm sober —nor can he convince me that he'd be any less happy if he were sober himself. However, as I've already disclaimed: I am extremely happy with my life, at this very moment. (Feb. of 2025)

Happiness comes about in unexpected ways: I criticize the notion that you can know what will make you happy with any greater certainty than you'd ever know what will make you miserable. The reasons for one's own happiness are always discovered too late.

A large part of my public work has been self-criticism, reflecting on bad decisions I've made in my life, and examining the false assumptions “behind” (or “beneath”) those decisions. You will notice that the participants in this Reddit group resolutely ignore this evidence that I'm not a narcissist (although it's a huge part of my corpus, even appearing within my books and articles, not just in my podcasts and videos). If I were diagnosed with NPD I wouldn't be ashamed of it any more than a diagnosis with autism: each resembles the other closely enough that (e.g.) the symptoms of autism seen in Elon Musk could instead be interpreted as narcissism. If you've known people with NPD you wouldn't ridicule them for this: they are quite incapable of doing what I've done (certainly more than a hundred times on the internet) publicly or privately. They are also incapable of doing what Durianrider did, on numerous occasions, in having a laugh at his own expense (i.e., I have never believed that Durianrider had NPD). They are quite incapable of making comedy mocking themselves, and/or engaging in the kind of serious self-criticism I've been so bold as to bore my audience with.

Studying Chinese at UVic made me miserable: I can explain to you the reasonable expectations that led up to the decision to study that subject at that place —and I can explain to you the false assumptions that the experience debunked. That's how life is for all of us: the things that make us happy arise adventitiously —they are very hard to foresee.

This is one of many reasons why I urge people **NOT** to live their lives **FOR** happiness: they are making the mistake of regarding something unknowable as known.

2. ‘What we have here, is a failure to communicate’

Simbabones: I’ve been reading through the criticisms of you on Reddit, and they force me to take a critical stance on your approach to communication. Much of the banter is discussing whether or not you have NPD (or more convincingly, “High-Conflict Personality Disorder,” which is not an actually medically recognized disorder but might be a meaningful concept), which is much less relevant than the actual discussion of your concrete “symptoms.”

The bare fact of the matter: it is rather suspicious that you could not develop a single lasting political alliance throughout your entire career, even granting that A. most people are shallow and self-indulgent, and B. the leaders of veganism have been particularly shallow and self-indulgent. Of course, suspicion is merely a piece of empirical evidence, not a conclusion in itself.

It would be uncontroversial to deem you “confrontational,” but confrontationality is in a significant way the result of the combination of conscientiousness and integrity. Confrontation is fundamental to bringing about change, whether that be large-scale or individual. In the vegan movement, you had no choice but to be confrontational; the other vegan activists were promoting explicitly counterproductive variants of veganism (or pseudo-veganism) that could not (and did not) scale.

NEVERTHELESS: Several commenters have pointed out that you cannot “read the room.” Let’s look at a case study. I just recently watched your podcast *Unnatural Vegan: Why Everyone Hates Eisel Mazard*. You stated that *Unnatural Vegan*’s arguments “weren’t worthy of response,” and this initial comment led in a significant way to your popular downfall. You assumed that both *Unnatural Vegan* and her audience would understand where you are coming from when saying that her arguments “weren’t worthy of response,” and that they would accept such a point of view with a detached demeanor, essentially admitting to your intellectual superiority. It was obvious to me (with or without hindsight) that such a response would never happen, and that the only reasonably expected response would be one of offense and even condemnation. You couldn’t “read the room.”

“Normal” people expect a direct refutation when they make a series of arguments. When they ignore your previous videos on the subject and suggest you never made any attempt to justify your positions, someone who can “read the room” would immediately come to the conclusion that this person expects a direct refutation of their own arguments. To believe that that would be a waste of time since you already gave such reasons in previous videos would be false: a direct refutation is, indeed, the only way to respond, not because it is an efficient ideal, but because that is what the majority of people expect by default. You hadn’t been able to read the room, and it villainized you in the eyes of who knows how many vegans (or otherwise).

How many other similar circumstances had you found yourself in, either in person or online, because you had assumed that everyone else was on the same wavelength as you (the ultimate meaning of “you can’t read the room!”)? How many possible political alliances were shattered because you couldn’t accommodate your communication style to fit that of “normal” people? One of your most crushing self-criticisms is that it took you so long to realize that almost no other people think like you do (a.k.a. in a detached, unemotional way).

Whether you are “narcissistic” or similar is not nearly as interesting as the fact that you have apparently been unable to adjust your communicative approach when such was crucial for your political networking. This, combined with your confrontationality and high confidence, could easily come off as

“narcissistic,” your capacity to engage in self-criticism notwithstanding. And when people gain the sense that you have NPD, any alliance is impossible, and all trust is lost.

The fact that your circle on the Internet BELIEVE you have NPD is indicative of a personal failure, in any case, due to your inability to “read the room” (or perhaps, your unwillingness to change your communicative approach for the sake of some ideal?). Their points of view don’t come from nowhere. I can trace them to their roots.

I MAY BE WRONG.

I will be documenting my own experience, either as I go along or as some kind of after-the-fact autobiography, of meeting normal people and trying to get them to enter the world of politics: and not just politics, but MY politics, which has a lot of overlap with yours. We have a lot in common in terms of interest, personality, and philosophy, but I am much less prickly (the word I like to use). In a sense, my temperament functions as a scientific experiment: key variables are constant EXCEPT for communication style. I am somewhat convinced that your communication style is a core reason for your repeated failures in life. I may be wrong. The Redditors take me to be right, and your track record adds a little empirical support. My life will be the litmus test! And from this, decades down the line, I may be able to answer what, if anything, is left of the 21st century intellectual.

Eisel: Re: “...it is rather suspicious that you could not develop a single lasting political alliance throughout your entire career...”

Tell me: who is Unnatural Vegan in an alliance with?

Tell me: who is Erin Janus in an alliance with?

Tell me: who is Vegan Gains in an alliance with?

Now tell me, honestly: can you imagine that I would want to drink a cup of coffee sitting at the same table as any one of these three people? We could extend the list to many more, from Isaac (“Ask Yourself”) Brown to Paul Bashir.

You are beginning with an utterly false “optic” (or “framing”) of the problem as if I had attempted and failed to sustain a political alliance with any (or all) of these people —and you’re then taking the further step of attributing this failure to my “communication style” that can supposedly be reasonably interpreted as “NPD”.

NPD is a very recognizable pattern of behavior, and a purely behavioral diagnosis: I have none of the checkmarks on the checklist for it —and for largely the same reasons that I have none of the checkmarks for autism.

This whole approach, Simba, evades the extent to which my differences with these people are real rather than merely a matter of communication style misinterpreted as a diagnosis of a psychological disorder.

Unnatural Vegan would absolutely never accept what I said about dogs and cats (pet ownership). She would absolutely never accept what I said about Peter Singer. This is not an exhaustive list of the things she would never accept about me: these are real differences entailing real enmity —they entail hatred from her directed against me, even if I do not reciprocate this hatred.

Now tell me, who has had a worse communication style, and who could not be diagnosed with a serious psychological order, in this same list of personalities? • Paul Bashir. • Isaac (“Ask Yourself”) Brown. • Vegan Gains. • Erin Janus. • Unnatural Vegan.

To say that these are people with “a problem of communication style” would be a drastic understatement. To say that each and every one of them could be diagnosed with NPD would, also, be an understatement.

It is absolutely absurd to say that Paul Bashir has none of the symptoms of NPD, and it would be absurd to say that these cannot be demonstrated from his communication style. You can now replace Paul’s name with every other name on that list, and speculate at what other diagnoses (with what other disabilities) might be more or less apt than NPD.

Quote, “Whether you are “narcissistic” or similar is not nearly as interesting as the fact that you have apparently been unable to adjust your communicative approach when such was crucial for your political networking.”

This model, Simba, presumes (1) that there are people for me to network with, and (2) that I have tried to adjust my communicative approach to network with them, but I have been unable to do so.

These two terrifyingly simple points are not true.

Erin Janus is not someone I can network with. It is extremely unlikely that anyone reading this would need even one word of further explanation as to why. Vegan Gains is not someone I can network with—and, likewise, no long explanation is needed. I could repeat this statement for each of the name on the bullet point list, above, and I could add many more names to it.

The incompatibility between myself and these other “content creators” is not the result of anyone’s inability to adjust their communicative approach, as you put it. The invidious rift between myself and each of them exists for relatively profound reasons (outlined efficiently enough in *Future of an Illusion*).

It is just not the case that I can adjust my communication style on the issue of pet ownership to then find myself friends and allies with people who want to kill cows to feed them to cats (and who believe the highest accomplishment a human being can dream of is adopting stray cats to help them get into kitty cat heaven).

To use an old catchphrase: stupidity is real.

Erin Janus is never going to be someone who could sit and have a conversation with me while drinking a cup of coffee. The inequality in intelligence is just too drastic for that.

The inequality isn’t as hard for me to endure as it is for them: try to imagine how humiliating and emotionally painful it is for (i) Vegan Gains, (ii) Unnatural Vegan, (iii) Brian Turner, (iv) Cami Petyn and (v) Modvegan to talk to me about their history with antidepressants—and my history of criticizing their public statement about antidepressants. It is much harder for them than it is for me.

The difference between Communists and Anti-Communists cannot be overcome by a change in communication style, nor the difference between Muslims and Atheists—and it does not help to “misinterpret” this difference in communication style as narcissism on one side or the other.

A diagnosis of NPD would really be possible for Erin Janus, Vegan Gains, etc., but it wouldn’t help any of them, and it certainly wouldn’t help them to overcome the obstacles that separate them from me.

None of these people ever could have been my colleagues: none of them ever could have contributed to Doomed Republic. There never was anyone who could be networked with.

Re: “I am somewhat convinced that your communication style is a core reason for your repeated failures in life.”

What failures?

The failure to seduce Unnatural Vegan? You might as well talk about a shark trying to seduce a manatee.

3. What podcast episode ideas would you like to give Eisel?

Theo: I suggest Eisel review the documentary *Tawai* made by Bruce Parry, for his Brand New Ancient Buddhism podcast, it has an interesting environmentalist message, advocating a way of re-thinking how we should organize society, taking lessons from how nomadic hunter-gatherers & Hindu ascetics relate to each other and nature.

It does have a heavy helping of woo because it's basically advocacy for panpsychism. However, it also discusses some interesting facts about our evolution and anthropological observations which if people desired to subjectively value in a similar way to how Bruce Parry does, then we might get to enjoy a better future.

I'm in talks with these Radical Anthropology Group people who were featured in the film about setting up an online archive of radical anthropology texts. I'm not 100% sure what I think about their politics yet, but I like that many of the members have desired to spend years of their lives living with hunter-gatherers writing ethnographies for their PhDs.

Saying all that, Eisel might purposefully not come even close to covering any ideas we suggest out of spite, so maybe suggest the opposite of what you'd like to see and see if he'll do the opposite lol. Or, you might need to include some personal angle you think he might enjoy narcissistically shitting on.

Here's a list of all Eisel's podcasts to give people ideas for what to suggest anyways:

Doomed Republic

A podcast about ancient ideals, modern utopias, dystopias and attempts at democracy, including Greece, Rome China, India, Europe and America.

à-bas-le-ciel

This is the podcast that resulted after eight years of discussions on Youtube, where Eisel Mazard was the voice of à-bas-le-ciel, criticizing veganism from within, eventually reaching millions of views with his jarring portrayal of the vegan movement as a deeply corrupt and dishonest failure.

Nihilism Now

Politics After Atheism

Brand New Ancient Buddhism

Is it a philosophy pretending to be a religion, or a religion pretending to peddle a philosophy? This is a podcast made by a man who became a Pali scholar (learning to read the language in harsh conditions in Laos and Cambodia) but eventually outgrew the religion, on the basis of a thorough understanding of both its ancient origins and the reality of the role it now plays in the modern world.

The History of Comedy Podcast

Yep, from the Ancient Greeks to New York City stand up geeks, it's THE REAL history of comedy with Rome and Shakespeare in-between (did you realize the extent to which Plautus and Terence influenced... well... EVERYTHING that came afterward?).

Everyone Hates Eisel Mazard

The podcast for truths too terrible to tell: things you'll never hear on "The History of Comedy Podcast", "Doomed Republic", or à-bas-le-ciel!

Tempah Muncher: Still waiting on the polyamory podcast... We were promised.

I can't take him seriously anymore on anything really. Only value is lulzcow content for me now unfortunately (or fortunately) .

Pretty much irredeemable

I listened to the Nihilism Now one that just came out... he is just sounding more and more insane levels of NPD.

Claiming all the women and comics in Newfoundland want to know him so impressed blah blah.

All he does it bitch on the gram about being banned. It's really getting to him the irrelevancy.

Eisel you gatta do some crazy hostage series type shit again if you want attention. No one cares about your opinion on Pliny the Younger or w.e you blabbling about on Spotify. I'll go listen to Mary Bead or something for that.

Polyamory or bust.

Admirable Win: Eisel: Behind the Scenes

What's his day-to-day life like? Daily schedule? Productive times? Routines? Favorite hang outs? Places to meet up with friends?

4. What videos do you wish Eisel would reupload most?

Theo: For me it'd be the video called "The Ex-Vegan Euphoria: It's Kinky." "An R-rated reply to the question, 'Why do so many ex-vegans experience some kind of euphoria (increased sex drive, or other psychological changes, presented as seeming health-benefits) when they decide to discard their ethical commitment to the vegan diet and revert to eating meat.'"

I think he made an interesting point about how 'the excuses are harder to give up than the food itself' and how many people are plagued by 'aesthetic fantasies' all throughout their lives e.g. if your grandad took you out fishing once, that memory can have an emotional hold on someone making it difficult for them to give up meat eating as a custom/tradition.

I've been trying to write an essay on tech anxieties and how they manifest in various people like Luigi Mangione and Ted Kaczynski. For Ted, after having a difficult time approaching women and making himself unhappy over the stress of it all, he may have found an escape in sexual fantasies of being a caveman where he didn't have to try so hard to seduce women. Quoting Ted:

... I might imagine myself living a stone-age life all alone in some far wilderness; then I find a beautiful girl off in the woods, injured or in some other danger or difficulty; I rescue her, nurse her back to health, and make her my mate.

Obvs there was a lot going wrong in Ted's life, so this may have been completely inconsequential, or it may be 10th down the list of puzzle pieces to the bigger picture, however, it's interesting trying to work out.

Son of Lung: The videos of the possible alleged domestic violence situation. Me and the boys at the precinct are very keen to continue with our criminal investigation.

I just remembered I have a serious answer: The I Killed Anthony Bourdain video was genuinely really funny.

Solsolico: He played that one in a recent podcast.

Admirable Win: Easy. His comedy. Because it was so bad. His raps sucked too.

Strum Glory: He had a couple videos about pet ownership that I appreciated, and are probably why I started paying more attention to him. They helped to affirm feelings I was having regarding pet ownership at the time but of course had no one to talk to, being surrounded by so-called dog-lovers.

inquiry: There was a video titled something like "You're not introverted, you're just a loser". I've been meaning to watch it at some point to hear his humor take, so I kept it in my Watch Later playlist, but then it all got deleted...

Cryptic Cracking Fan: I think I recall the one. One of the takeaways is that if you're the type of person to attend a college lecture and not ask questions, you're an introvert loser moron. Which is just patently false. The smartest person by far on my degree was mute.

hot dog water: Naturally, Eisel can't imagine attending a lecture and not attempting to engage the professor in a public dick-measuring contest...

Tempeh Muncher: A good video actually that IMO was good: Where he went after mikayla peterson meat only diet and how she basically almost killed her mother lol. I can laugh because her mom lived.

5. How did Eisel influence you and your character?

Familiar Lab: For anyone who had followed Eisel for multiple years, how did he influence you and your character / behavior?

I recently had a moment of self-reflection and realized I'm not as curious as I thought I was. This is a throwaway account because I'm embarrassed by my post history after this realization.

I've been lurking on this subreddit for the past few months, really soaking in who Eisel is. I noticed he's super narcissistic, always thinking he's the best at everything, and super rude to people in his interactions in emails. I used to think that sure he's kind of pompous and arrogant, but if you look past that, he has some really interesting ideas to share.

But now I see how he's made me less inquisitive. Instead of genuinely asking questions or seeking other people's opinions, I had become hypercritical, just like him. His constant critiques in his videos rubbed off on me, turning me into a non-inquisitive, non-collaborative person.

Looking back at my Reddit posts, even though I never felt or meant to be arrogant, I come off as very critical and arrogant. Reflecting on my conversations with friends, I can see how I appear hypercritical, always finding something to disagree with.

I need to find a balance. While I appreciate the critical thinking skills I gained, it got out of hand. I need to learn how to be more agreeable, inquisitive, and collaborative in an intellectual sense.

I know I can't be the only one influenced by Eisel and his way of thinking and interacting. Do any of you have some reflections?

Tempeh Muncher: I don't think he did negatively in all honesty. Actually all positive really.

Aside from trolling on here a lot lately I'm pretty productive IRL.

I literally have enormous guilt if I spin up video games now...

Maybe 50% because of le seal but a lot of others as well. I realized they were way to addicting before le seal but he had a way of saying it.

That and a few other issues he made good points on. But I don't think that was the premise of your question....

That and oh one thing he used to say I will not forget and it pops in my head time to time...

Something like... "morality is what you do when no one is looking" I remember that a lot. I really want X candy (oh it has gelatin)... hmm. That kinda stuff pops in my head. Credit to Le Seal.

I really like him honestly... Wish he could get his raging narcissism under control.

Familiar Lab: That point you bring up about morality is when no one is looking reminds me of something he said that has always stuck with me too: being a hero is meaningless because it's random, while your day-to-day morality is what actually matters.

bunned gump:

So when you say you like him, what is it you like?

Tempeh Muncher: Hmm okay I'm taking you don't want I agree with he said X on subject or made good points on X. Most of what he preached he never did himself anyway.

Then not much, BUT, I think though... there is a sense from his videos/raging/emotional outbursts... Hard to describe... I guess that he is uncompromising. He is not willing to adjust what he believes to just fit into society. Like I imagine if he goes to a restaurant and orders the vegan option... and there is a single shred of microscopic dairy he will ask to speak with the manager and make a great fuss about

it. Or he goes to a comedy club and someone offers him a drink... he'll go on a rant about how it causes brain damage or something.

Like I have to go for my career out to dinner and crap from time to time non veg places and yeah its a pita sometimes. hmmm only option is salad yay... and butt of the jokes for an hour... fun. He wouldn't be willing to sit and make the compromise to be the butt of the jokes for an hour... and I guess I will. (I also don't have rich parents to fund me for my income for life).

TLDR; He believes what he believes and is willing to suffer the consequences for it.

It's like that for most vegan but I think the seal takes it to another level?

Not sure if got my point across but best I could

bunned gump: I get you, but I think what you're describing is compromise. This is how actual adults behave. You make compromises. The fact that he doesn't isn't something to be envious of, in my opinion.

He takes a stand because he thinks it's correct. You, me and everyone could point out he's completely wrong, demonstrate why, provide clear evidence but he's so stupid and a narcissist, lets not forget. He would never so low as to change his mind. This is why he's an intellectual midget.

Smart people aren't wedded to their thoughts like this for all perpetuity.

Familiar Lab: I think you're onto something. I can appreciate his ability to be non-compromising. I surely don't have it. But he doesn't know how to use it productively. As you say, compromising is how adults behave, it's how you form and maintain relationships and friendships. What has his non-compromising gotten him? No progress in any of the fields he wanted to do something in, like veganism or endangered languages. And it got him no partnerships or friendships with people either, which he constantly talked about desiring on his YouTube channel. He made videos for his daughter and to make friends.

bunned gump: The video's were never for his daughter. That was a manipulation on his part.

When the Dorian/Freerider drama was playing out was when this reason was trotted out. Trying to gain sympathy.

He very quickly returned to his insult videos once the Chiang Mai dust had settled, in fact it continued throughout as I recall.

Admirable Win: I'm here because I met him once in China and we have some mutual acquaintances. I was a lot younger then, and remember being impressed with his exuberant knowledge, but also put off by his unabashed arrogance.

My mid 20s were not a time of great emotional maturity, but maybe I was thinking it's ok to be an asshole if you're smart and funny about it. Well, at least he cackles a lot like to make things seem like they're funny. He was able to go on extended diatribes about obscure topics which added to his mystery, but now I can see that also allowed some bullshit to creep in. The rumor at the time was that he was kicked out of Laos for naming his cat after the vice president. After the shitstorm of speech died down, things didn't really add up.

Anyway, I forgot about him soon after, but 15 years or so later, a mutual acquaintance mentioned in his blog that Eisel had pivoted to comedy on his YouTube channel, and I looked him up. I thought he would be a university professor by this point, but instead it was just his channel. His "comedy" was what intrigued me, because it wasn't funny at all, and it seemed that his intended audience was only one—Eisel Mazard. There was no way it was funny for anyone else.

The way he played into the whole YouTuber discourse: the drama, the cringe thumbnail faces, the retro video game reviews, seemed a bit pathetic.

Mostly I was there for the lulz. His sister is a philosophy professor in the UK, but Eisel, with only a bachelor's degree, eats PhD holders for breakfast. The rant with Melissa's dad on speaker phone was the icing on the cake. "There are two things you need to know about me. I'm rich, and I'm FUCKING brilliant!" So much to unpack in that video.

This unbridled narcissism was a guilty pleasure. Things never really added up, but he'd just move on to the next bullshit rant before you had time to work out his last one.

There was a video where he said he had lived in southern Japan where he could study Japanese and no one spoke English, but another video where he said he had never been to Japan. After I saw that, I tried finding the contradicting video, but it was looking for a needle in a haystack. He does not speak any Japanese, although sometimes he seemed like he was implying that he knew the language.

But to answer your question, I don't think I was really influenced by his behavior. Sometimes I guess I enjoyed watching a guy who could shut others down with his knowledge and draw from obscure ancient Greek and Pali treatises, all the while being irresistible to women, but it turns out he is utterly incapable of living in the real world.

The time I met him, he expressed a disdain for fiction, which is rich.

Avg Web Intellectual: I became sober, quit smoking, quit video games, embraced atheism, cut off my driver's license in half. Now I'm sitting alone in my living room / bed room (it's a studio apartment) thinking carefully what can I do with the next 2 years of my life and where would that bring me if I stick to it.

No, in all seriousness, probably made me more anxious, especially in regards to having fun time. Even when I perform decently in something I think "what if I had given 100% of me to it". So even my achievements turn sour as I think I could've done better if I had no fun time and had given my 100% to it.

Also helped me quit smoking for a while but that didn't last long.

bunned gump: That's a very honest and insightful of you.

This is one of the reasons I bang on and on about the guy being full of BS. It's why I get annoyed to read someone saying "He sometimes offers an interesting perspective on subject X".

When you dig and reflect you realise he's actually just a pompous, arrogant, nasty, negative shallow and argumentative person.

He first came on to my radar during the Dorian/Fruitloop riding conflict. The first video I saw of his, I forget what, something vegan, had me thinking he was pretty articulate and had some interesting thoughts. By the second or third I concluded the guy was not right in the head.

Don't know if anyone has seen the Wes Huff/Billy Carson conversation go viral. Esther is Billy Carson. Sure he can talk and talk at length on all sorts of things, the more obscure the better, less experts to challenge him.

He fits the classical definition of narcissist personality disorder and or a high conflict personality disorder.

This is what was jumping out of the screen for me in all subsequent videos of his.

I would implore anyone that watches or listens to him to have these takeaways. Don't believe him or use him as a model. Laugh at him. Maybe feel sympathy for him. Certainly feel sympathy to anyone that get's caught in his orbit, to a point, until they become him, Mulan. You don't need role models like this.

This link below sums him up. Or watch the interview with his ex-father in law.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xn8TWW50qw>

Familiar Lab: Yes, when someone listed the traits of high conflict personality disorder in a different thread, it clicked. It described his behavior so perfectly.

bunned gump: Yes. A good friend of mine's ex wife was HCP, a nightmare to be near.

Tempeh Muncher: I must annoy the hell out of you haha.

hmmm Okay annoy you more. I'm not putting le seal on this level... Isn't there lists and lists of good famous people who in there personal life were complete utter pieces of garbage?

I put le seal in whatever category that is... must be a name for it.

Edit... like the D- list of that category.

bunned gump: HAHAAAAHA. Funny you say this. I was actually thinking about this yesterday. Hitler built great infrastructure in Germany, rebuilt he economy and industry. Yet, was probably once of the most evil men to have ever lived.

Now, not putting Esther into the same bracket as Hitler, not at all. What I realised is that I could say nicer things about Hitler than I could Esther.

Esther is a parrot pretending to be a hawk.

If you dissect his monologues they are full of strawmen, anecdotes and bias. They don't stand up to critique. This is why his comments were never on, this is why he can't play with others. Then you lump in his clear psychiatric illness.

The fact that he might say something I agree with doesn't change anything. Dorain and Freerider said things I agreed with. Doesn't mean I hold them to be intellectual beings, which is what daddy really, really wants.

Son of Lung: He's the only person in the vegan movement I'm aware of who's against pet ownership which is something I agree with, there are various things like that and just generally criticising the fact that the people considered leaders within veganism are airheads who post videos of themselves half naked on the beach. There are a few things like that as well as other things that I don't necessarily agree or disagree with but that it's always good to hear a perspective you might not hear elsewhere. It's maybe 30% that stuff and 70% because he's a living meme and I can't look away.

Just realised I didn't actually answer your question. I'd say not at all.

hot dog water: I think if you're willing to think critically about your own behavior, you're already waaaayyy more evolved than Eisel. So give yourself a little credit. We're all works in progress.

I've always found him a useful reminder that:

- Extreme black-and-white thinking is really unhelpful. If you're interested in being a productive person, you gotta nip that shit in the bud. Same for encouraging yourself to toward a little good humor and optimism. It's not about being "nice" or forcing cheerfulness, it's about being pragmatic and maintaining a mindset that allows you to be constructive instead of a moany groany malcontent endlessly circling the drain.
- Being hypercritical of others' intelligence and quick to label anything/everything "stupid" does not make you seem confident in your own intellect. It does not make you seem self-assured. It makes you seem twitchy and like you've got a lot to prove.

Sapientia:

I've already talked about how his choleric demeanor had an impact on my impressionable young adult self in previous threads, so I won't elaborate on it here.

But just like you, his hypercritical skepticism did rub off on me to a certain extent. In some ways this had a positive impact on me, and in some ways it didn't. I think it's a good thing to take a step back and really scrutinize the position and intent of a person that is saying something, and taking seriously the fact that they may or may not be adequately educated on the subject. However, it is then very easy to get on a high horse and cement a dismissive attitude towards everyone, which is what Eisel ultimately did.

I really do believe he is a subconscious misanthrope (probably a side-effect of his narcissism). After years of watching his stuff it became extremely evident he does not have an empathetic bone in his entire body. For someone whose life revolves around politics and Being Positively Motivated to Make The World A Better Place™*,* it is LAUGHABLE that in TEN YEARS he was never able to even make ONE ally. Politics is literally about PEOPLE. And yet he fashioned himself into the most unlikable person imaginable by being an elitist smart-ass whose every aspect of his personality is a hard-line political stance that makes an enemy out of literally everyone, while at the same time reminding you that he's the most brilliant person to have ever been born.

I've been watching Eisel since the Durianrider drama (so like 8 years?) and he has NEVER (LITERALLY NEVER) mentioned or talked positively about ONE person that he looks up to or admires. It's pathological ranting all the way down.

However, to his credit. He did make me take seriously intellectual development and excellence in whatever field, and the work and sacrifice that is required. His stance on pet ownership also had a sizable impact on me.

Familiar Lab:

and he has NEVER (LITERALLY NEVER) mentioned or talked positively about ONE person that he looks up to or admires

That's a good observation. I noticed that too. When he does say something nice about something, he always has to counter-balance it with something not so nice about that person.

bunned gump: Sapientia You bring up a really good point, never occurred to me. Politics. It's all about winning allies, making connections, diplomacy, COMPROMISE.

He says he's serious about politics and activism yet he can't do it, can't work with anyone.

hot dog water: Exactly. Most of what I found compelling, when I first watched some of Eisel's videos, were sentiments about collaboration/projects/community-building that he's proven totally incapable of embodying. Stuff like:

- To be successful as a "movement," vegans have to be willing to form coalitions with people they might disagree with on certain issues (working with vegetarians and that sort of thing)
- Vegans should build "brick and mortar" community resources
- Vegans need to establish lobbying organizations that campaign for change in a strategic way (I remember he bemoaned that vegans "didn't have single lobbying group," and someone in his audience pointed out that the Plant Based Foods Association had recently been established... he never responded or addressed it at all)(ignoring his own oversights or mistakes when they were pointed out to him was something of a trend)

Obviously, no one person can do all do this. But the foundation for any of it — building positive relationships and collaborating with others — is something Eisel doesn't and can't do. He's strictly interested in "top-down" situations where he lectures and people listen; only glowing feedback accepted.

bunned gump:

That's right. He's only interested in top-down. Him being the top. Is he aware of what this means in gay circles, probably, he knows everything.

I know he's made a big deal about his sexuality but I'm beginning to wonder if that could be part of his inner conflict. He's infatuated with penis size, loves talking about his physique, the constant mention of the attention of every single woman, ever. He usually only criticizes women for their bodies and looks. He's overcompensating and it's as if he trying to distract the audience and himself from what is really going on inside.

I wonder if there is something else to this and he is in fact struggling with his own sexuality.

Sapientia: He really describes himself like an erotic masculine caricature, to the point where he even said that the reason he uses those scarves is because he wanted to seem more feminine and approachable. He also is very fixated on looks: to this day (literally yesterday I think) he still uploads posts on Instagram about how *insert famous person/e-celeb* and him are the same age OMG! I fucking wish the video where he describes himself as a rapacious sex god that needs dozens of orgasms a day was still up, but his dialogue with Melissa about their sex life was also telling of his skewed view on sexuality (—How many orgasms have you had today, Melissa? —A-at l-least f-fifty...).

bunned gump: Imagine having time for 50 orgasms per day. Imagine the books you could have read or languages you could learn. Multiply 50 orgasms per day by the number of years they were together. That's a how lot of minutes that could have been spent writing job applications. And, was his gf telling the truth, maybe she was afraid to bruise his fragile ego and answered "yup" to avoid conflict.

6. Debate on individuals taking responsibility for domestic animals

Melissa's case against pet ownership

Theo: So the context to all this is that Melissa watches a video advocating 'adopt don't shop' by a popular entertainment outlet, then comments under the video and share-posts it on twitter and Instagram with her critical comments.

So, she's criticizing the people who made the video and anyone who resonates with the message.

Next, a past friend from college who has been following her on social media writes a response to her. Then, Melissa writes out this long blog post explaining her position in depth.

The Case Against Pet Ownership by Melissa

In this blog post, I share my reply to a former housemate from university who sent me Twitter comments and Instagram messages, namely:

"Melissa what the hell? This is the most extremist take I've ever heard and incredibly messed up. You were too smart to let some youtube psychobabble turn you into someone who makes these kind of comments..."

"Hmm so pigs can convey misery, suffering, and fear to humans but dogs "don't care about the human ideas of family and love"? Your arguments make no sense"

Megan, I understand this may be this is the first time you've really thought through these concepts. You have said hurtful things in your Twitter and Instagram comments to me. I have every reason to simply delete your comments and ignore you, but I'm going to take the high road and offer an explanation.

What's shown in nature documentaries is how I want animals to live. I think it is our responsibility as human beings to allocate as much of the planet's surface as is possible to be like what is shown in documentaries so that animals can live their lives in a way that is meaningful for them.

Humans are animals, but we are endowed with cognitive abilities that are superior to any other animal on earth. We have complex language, we have culture, and we have built (and destroyed) civilizations. We have the ability to reason and use that reason for good rather than evil.

Unfortunately, much of what we do to animals is evil and has become so normalized that people don't question it.

There are obviously basic similarities between the life cycles of humans and other animals: birth, childhood, adulthood, reproduction, death. Animals absolutely feel pain, fear, joy, and sorrow. However, animals have their own social lives and family structures (without interference from human interaction).

Wolves, for example, are predatory pack animals who love to hunt and fight with other wolves. Wolves compete to find mates and reproduce. Wolves raise their children, and the cycle begins again. Wolves are happy to live this way in the wild.

Think about what humans have done to wolves. The life of a dog is nothing like the life of a wolf in the wild. Humans have selectively bred wolves over generations to be tame enough, small enough, and cute enough to be playthings. We've even bred them so that their bodies are so far removed from nature that they experience serious health problems like breathing issues (Pugs), hip dysplasia and intervertebral disc disease (Beagle, Corgi, Shih Tzu, etc.), and sometimes they can't even reproduce with one another (the French Bulldog, for example, is shaped in a way that it can't even mount another Bulldog).

If a dog is able to reproduce, their mate is often chosen by another human being so that the babies are more valuable and can get sold off to humans. The dog doesn't get to raise a family of pups—the pups get separated pretty soon after birth. Most of the time, not too long after they are puppies, humans remove their reproductive organs to make them more docile and to avoid them ever being able to reproduce. (Cats, too, as I'm sure you know. I think most people in America these days don't even know what a cat in heat sounds like because they have their reproductive organs removed before they can even be "in heat.")

Wolves in the wild roll around in the grass and dirt. They smell. They often have parasites and fleas. This just doesn't fit with animals living in the homes of human beings where furniture has to be kept clean and free of fleas and dirt. We groom dogs and give them medicine to keep away parasites. They scratch at the floors and blankets on beds because that's part of the behavior of wolves: they scratch and dig... but in a human home, they aren't supposed to scratch, and they have nowhere to dig.

Wolves, like all wild animals, urinate and defecate wherever they please. This also is an issue for animals living in a human home, and they have to be trained NOT to pee or poo wherever and whenever they want to like they would in the wild. It's a struggle and anyone who has owned animals know that it oftentimes doesn't work and you end up cleaning pee and poo out of carpets. Anyone who has owned dogs or done any dog sitting knows the disgusting feeling of using a plastic baggy to pick up warm poo from the grass so that our parks and sidewalks don't get covered in dog poo.

I've owned cats and I'm personally really disgusted that I had to spend so much time cleaning up cat poo from litter boxes, cleaning up kitty litter from crevices around the house, cleaning fur out of carpets, furniture, and clothes, etc. When my cats got older, especially, I had to clean up a lot of waste around the house. It's just plain gross to have to clean up after animals, and we force them into this unnatural, uncomfortable lifestyle when all they really want to do is be outside, hunt, mate, and fight with one another.

Dogs are the obviously the most happy when they get to go to a dog park and sniff the butts of other dogs and mount other dogs. They're pack animals and want to be around other animals of their own species, but most of the time they are sitting at home, alone, waiting for their owner to come home from work so that they can go outside and pee and maybe, if they're lucky, see another dog.

This is not even mentioning the messed up reality that they don't get to hunt for their food even though they're naturally predatory animals. They're fed mushed up remains from slaughterhouses (the body parts of pigs, cows, and chickens that humans don't want to eat) on a schedule dictated by humans, their owners.

It's all horrible, and I think people will all be better off when they can just GET REAL and admit that we naturally have an aversion to living amongst animals who, naturally, in the

wild, are filthy and smelly. We should let animals live out their lives with other animals in their natural habitats: in the forests, in the deserts, and in the oceans.

And that's just talking about household pets. Animal agriculture is a whole other level of human derangement, and you can watch a variety of documentaries about veganism: Cowspiracy, Earthlings, Vegucated, etc.

Theo: First obvious question, on just a pragmatic level is it not irresponsible to just be brashly turning potential converts to veganism away in this manner? I.e. even if I agreed with her philosophy on not rescuing dogs from shelters to live in our personal homes, would the importance of raising this issue in order to disambiguate animal rights from pet ownership be worth it at this stage?

For example, Eisel's talked about not helping shoppers when asked to reach for animal products from a high shelf, and just carrying on walking without even caring to explain why he won't help. For me, that's just the exact wrong image I want to impart of what veganism means, for me veganism is about building a better community social contract where no one you meet has ever taken the life of an animal arbitrarily or supported that action because it can help towards better human relationships.

So, whenever I'm critiquing someone, I always want to also be inviting a person over to my way of thinking. The circumstance in which I'd want to reserve the possibility of coming across as an asshole are wholly important conflict scenarios, like negotiating human rights with one another and where we're on the brink of collectively game-changing achievements for animal rights and the battle lines are plain, like out fox sabbing against cruel sports.

Second question, is Melissa right on the issue of pet ownership? Criticizing people self-congratulating being able to rescue a dog from a shelter to live in a house that is still a cage in comparison to what a dog's interests are in reality; to be able to roam all day, hunt, pick their own mate, like a wolf in the wild.

I think my answer to this is also no, I wouldn't go as far as to use all the failings of man keeping dogs alive without being able to satisfy all their needs as a reason to deride anyone rescuing a dog from a shelter.

The part I liked about the original video being critiqued is, in the video, they basically say; 'though it'll be sad when your rescue animal dies, that you'll have gotten to experience its whole life, and you'll likely be open to wanting to experience that again'. So whether you rescue from a kill or no-kill shelter, you on average become this carrier capacity for rescues, which in the future could mean a dramatically reduced number of dogs left on the street or in shelters. Along with a change in the culture through people meeting the dog and you, those conversations happening that wouldn't otherwise, where you're able to advocate for 'adopt don't shop', then we can potentially start to see a decline in the number of people breeding these animals.

Dogs also get people out in the countryside more, creating a demand for nature parks and in the future. A big paradigm shift might even be spurred on by an optimistic future vision of packs of sterilized feral dogs that we help be able to survive and roam on their own in managed wildlife habitats, with big fences so they can't attack farmers sheep, regular feeding time, veterinary care, and shelter they can access from the rain, etc.

Finally, I think the article should have grappled with frequently asked questions with this issue, even if Melissa's answer is simply that 'we shouldn't own dogs', like what would her ideal solution be? Why is it better to discourage this practice of individuals rescuing dogs when it will just lead to more dogs getting killed?

An interesting comparison to bring up is video games as a way of getting across how shallow the relationship between man and dog often is. However, I still think it's useful to paint a clear picture of the kind of life a dog could find meaning with a person in rare circumstances like living somewhere isolated and rural where farm dogs often take themselves on walks at night, or where the person works a job outdoors and is able to take the dog with them. Also, I know people who have simply got their dogs'

fallopian tubes tied so they can be at gatherings with other dogs, off the lead, getting into harmless scraps and fucking, without risking bringing more dogs into the world.

I do grant it's a grey area for me. I struggle with basically 'owning a slave' in that my family has rescued a dog, and then I've become its main carer. But to whatever extent the dog is a slave, I'm still glad I've saved the 'slave' from possibly having been killed by a vet, or living a shittier life in the city with only a small park to go for walks in.

It crosses my mind all the time in the small experiences I have with my dog, about how I'm in control of this dog's life and don't wish to be. Like how the dog would ideally just spend virtually all it's time outside running around a forest if I was capable of giving it that life. Or, just little things like, when I'm on a walk and trying to warn sheep of my approach so they don't scatter at the last minute and lambs get separated from their mum, I make warning noises like 'yeoooo yeooo', which the dog then greatly enjoys joining in with, in barking a ton. Although obviously in her mind, she's saying 'let me at 'em boss, let me at 'em' lol. I also sometimes longboard around the village with her at night and sometimes do this 'yeoo' call to encourage her to run faster on a section of road that we can go fast on, which I know makes her enjoy the run more for the excitement of running faster and evoking that idea of being in a chase. However, it crosses my mind every time 'is the more authentic her just jogging along at her own pace?' So, am I being a bad slave master? Anyways, just random thoughts.

Finally, I want to complete an off-road cycle tour of the UK with my rescue dog who doesn't like people, which will likely be a bit challenging lol, but I'm going to plan out stops where I can take breaks and pay people to buy lentils for me and stuff. Hopefully, I enjoy the solitude, views, beaches, and forests, and the dog will become slightly better adjusted.

hot dog water: You make lots of good points! It's always seemed slippery to me that Eisel presents his arguments — and I'm referring to "Melissa's" arguments here as Eisel's, because they are: his hand was (and still is) clearly so far up her butt that she's being used like a sock puppet — speaking "against pet ownership" so aggressively, but without even a hint of suggestion for a process by which pet ownership could be eliminated (or even discouraged). Do we just... kill all domesticated animals now? Is that more vegan? (I'm not even being hyperbolic and refusing to consider the possibility that it is more vegan, although the suggestion makes me personally uncomfortable and unhappy to consider. What I'm saying is that I'm open to the discussion, whether or not I would concur with all ideas.)

Arguing against pet ownership without bothering to address the reality of the millions of domesticated animals that exist today, whether we like it or not, just feels like more posturing and intellectual masturbation. Theoretical debate has its place, but condemning other people for disagreeing on a position with no meaningful function feels like instigating.

I'll add a few points of my own in a follow-up comment. Pet ownership seems like a subject worth discussion here because a) it was always one of Eisel's pet issues (rim shot, pun intended) within the "vegan demimonde" and b) he's claimed that no one has ever bothered to try and refute his points and/or that no one has ever effectively countered his arguments (obviously those aren't the same thing at all, but he vacillates depending on which claim is more useful or self-flattering in the moment).

Over the years, I've actually seen multiple people address his arguments against pet ownership... but if he even acknowledged them his reply was usually along the lines of "this is so stupid/evil it isn't worth my time."

So of course, the lack of engagement with his "serious" work is mostly Eisel's fault. Why even bother? Given how Eisel has historically responded, why would you take the time, all for the privilege of Eisel flouncing and kicking dirt in your face?

Honestly though: not to get too sentimental with my fellow drooling retards over here, but I've seen more good-faith discussion of Eisel's ideas in this sub in the past few months than Eisel has ever tolerated on his own accounts. More respectful disagreement, too!☒ So here we go, dummies! Let's talk about puppies and kitties and stuff.

One big omission Eisel makes in his arguments against pet ownership regards dogs.

Eisel frequently compares domesticated dogs to wild wolves, pointing out similar proclivities and behaviors, as evidence for the inappropriateness of owning dogs as pets. No one disagrees that *Canis lupus* and *Canis familiaris* are related species, but there are crucial differences Eisel glosses over. His comparisons require him to hand-wave or ignore the 30+ thousand years of reciprocal evolutionary history shared by humans and domesticated dogs. This has led to our two species being uniquely capable of cross-species “connection”, and hugely undermines Eisel’s supposition that dogs cannot form “real” emotional bonds with human beings... but Eisel clunkily reduces this empathic capacity to the result of “training” and selective breeding post-domestication that forces dogs to “fake” happiness around humans. (He goes on about this for a while in the first chapter of *Veganism*.)

The whole bit strikes me as a pretty woolly assertion, and Eisel makes no attempt to demonstrate how he can reliably discern “faked” dog happiness from genuine dog happiness. Much of his anti-pet argument, in fact, seems to rely on his belief that it’s impossible and “unnatural” for an animal to be happy living in a human home; an assertion he doesn’t bother to “prove” in any convincing way.

It also ignores the many, many generations of parallel habitation in which packs of only semi-domesticated dogs were choosing to live in and around human nomadic groups for mutual benefit, and the development of their ability to read human facial cues that happened during that time.

The history of domesticated cats + humans is shorter, but seems to share similarities: wild cats were drawn, of their own volition, to live in and around human settlements because of the presence of food refuse and rodents. Another weird omission from Eisel’s arguments is the fact that, in practice, many contemporary cat owners do not keep their cats “in captivity.” Many cat owners allow their cats free access to the out-of-doors (to the massive detriment of local songbird populations), and the cats go and return as they please. Depending on the culture, this may be true for dogs as well: in some parts of the world, domesticated dogs “owned” and cared for by one family are allowed to roam freely.

Both Eisel and Melissa make a lot of statements about the way domesticated animals act that are so broad as to be both false and useless:

Dogs are the obviously the most happy when they get to go to a dog park and sniff the butts of other dogs and mount other dogs.

You only have to have observed like... 10+ dogs in your lifetime to know this is not universally true or accurate. Plenty of dogs don’t want to be around other dogs at all. You might argue that the reasons for an individual dog being antisocial are the damaging results of domestication, and you might even be correct, but individual dog behavior is still varied enough that arguments like this come off as unsound and unfamiliar.

That brings me to my last point, which is the most presumptive but still something I’ve noticed over the years that Eisel has been banging on about this: I have never gotten the sense that Eisel’s position on pet ownership is the result of much personal experience or knowledge of domesticated animals. It doesn’t feel, to me, like Eisel has ever had any genuine affection for an animal. His position on pet-ownership does not feel like it exists in spite of a real appreciation for animals that he might otherwise enjoy being close to, were it not ethically inexcusable.

Eisel (himself and by way of Melissa’s parroting) basically seems to regard animals as gross and smelly. He’s said that dogs are inherently aggressive and love to fight with other dogs (downplaying their cooperative nature and dominance behaviors that actually seek to avoid fighting). He thinks they are flea-ridden and filthy, and that living with them should be something humans avoid. He has almost nothing fond to say about animals, and when he does attempt to claim an appreciation for their wild nature, it feels paper-thin: in his *Veganism* book he calls an octopus “beautiful,” but he never wastes space telling us what about the wild octopus he finds interesting or compelling. This may be part of Eisel’s larger struggle to say a single complementary thing about anything or anyone, ever... but in this case it feels like a weak attempt to frame his feelings about wild animals as “positive” in comparison to his disgust for domestication.

Either way, none of these observations of animal ickiness or beauty are objective (though Eisel presents them as such). They strike me as the opinions of someone who doesn't really like animals, and finds them repellent, but has repackaged this distaste as a position of moral superiority. ("I'm such a good person that I don't want any stupid fucking animals in my house!")

Kurtz:

Do we just... kill all domesticated animals now? Is that more vegan?

Yes and yes. I elaborated more in my other comment.

Even if we are talking about cows or chickens or pigs, the reality is that if we have enough impact on demand that there truly is a surplus, then the CAFOs cull their herds to cut their losses. A recent example is the ventilation shutdown (VSD) during COVID in hog farms that had surplus.

Sure, if more people become vegan, then the animal agriculture experts will revise their forecasts and breed fewer animals the following season. But we are not saving the domesticated animals that are already in existence today, i.e. whether or not I eat beef, all the cows alive today will be butchered. What we are trying to do is prevent more domesticated animals being bred in the future.

The tragedy is that every animal that is/was bred by humans is destined to be killed by humans.

Solsolico: Another thing that I would critique is just the unproven premise that wolves are happy to live how wolves live. And this would be the case for any wild animal. Based on what criteria is she making this claim? How does she know that wolves enjoy their lives more than your average house dog in the United States?

I feel like the vast majority of her argument is based around the premise that a dog wants to live like a wolf, or that wild animals are happy, or that there's something meaningful about living a life like a wild animal. And it's like, you're allowed to have those views, but you kind of just asserted them without making a case for why this is true.

Other than that, it's just like subjective experience. Like, imagine trying to convince someone that pet ownership is immoral because you personally find it disgusting to put your hand in a plastic bag and pick up dried poop in your backyard.

I don't even understand the point of adding this to her argument. It just makes her look like a baby, when morality is kind of about the opposite. In some sense, morality is voluntarily suffering. Like, if you convince someone who likes having pets that having pets is immoral, that person would have to suffer to follow through because they would be deprived of something they enjoy. So why include how much you hate having a pet in that argument?

Yeah, and I'm very ambivalent and undecided on the morality of having pets. But nothing in her perspective comes off as thought-provoking or interesting because it's just unproven premises and how much she hates having pets.

hot dog water: I found the inclusion of the poop argument especially peculiar because Melissa and Eisel are both outspokenly not antinatalists. But if you find that to be a convincing argument, what about human poop? Couldn't someone theoretically make the exact same argument about babies and children? "No one should have kids because changing diapers is disgusting."

Like... okay? Changing diapers isn't a pastime. Not enjoy the experience of cleaning shit is a sentiment most people share. But it has nothing to do with the ethics of human reproduction or pet ownership.

Kurtz: Actually, morality is, historically and culturally, tied to notions of cleanliness. Devout Jews and Muslims regard pork as unclean insofar as it is immoral for them to consume it. Likewise, a Hindu Brahmin regards beef and leather as unclean, and indeed, the purpose of the caste system was to delegate the unclean duties to the lower castes.

Thus, by cleanliness we are not discussing the scientific concept of whether or not something is sterile, which would be relevant for e.g. a surgeon about to perform an operation. Instead, cleanliness is used to distinguish what is befitting for a civilised human versus a beast.

The agriculture department will say the slaughterhouse is clean, as long as all the harmful pathogens are controlled with antiseptics. Despite this, we may recognise the pools of blood, faeces and entrails as unclean, and indeed this is the visceral reaction many (if not most) people experience when witnessing a slaughterhouse. Basically, cleanliness is being used in two different contexts hence the confusion.

So yes, the disgust people feel when they step on a cat or dog turd on the pavement is relevant because it indicates that these beasts do not have a place in advanced human civilisation. Moreover, the reproductive behaviours of these beasts (scent marking, “mounting” furniture or even their owners!) is even more uncomfortable, and, in a word, bestial.

edit: wanted to include this link. They called him Eisel-lite

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G54mEAIffHnE>

Solsolico: And I’m glad you explained your view of morality. That being said, I’m not convinced of it.

To me, morality—at least the morality that I care about and concern myself with—has to do with the suffering of sentient beings. Dumping chemical waste in a river is immoral because it destroys the clean water in the ecosystem, which has a bunch of negative effects regarding the suffering of sentient beings, including humans but also beyond humans. Really, any animal in that ecosystem that the river feeds is going to suffer because of dumping chemical waste into it.

So, while I can appreciate the perspective that cleanliness is used to distinguish what is fit for civilized human beings, I don’t necessarily think that it’s self-evident what is and isn’t. Most humans in civilized society will feel disgust if they walk through wet mud barefoot. So whether someone feels or doesn’t feel disgust about something is also about socialization, cultural norms, familiarity with an activity and sensory issues, not just biological instincts. People in the West might feel disgust to eat raw spinach or other raw vegetables. I feel disgust when I see wet paper, let alone touch it.

We live in 2025, and so I don’t think feelings of disgust are really what we should be basing our sense of moral cleanliness off of. And that’s because we often feel disgust about things that don’t warrant disgust from a health standpoint.

Likewise, I’m not convinced that having a hyper-hygienic society is something to necessarily strive for. Sure, there has to be some standard of hygiene, but do we need HEPA air filters in every single room? Do we need to scrub our shoes clean every night? Should camping be a thing of the past? There are a lot of extreme places we can go when we talk about how hygienic a society should be, and to me, it’s not self-evident that cohabiting with dogs is beyond the hygiene line. That’s something you’re going to have to make a case for on an individual basis.

There is also that disgust can come from just being soft or unadapted. For example, imagine you’re camping and the ground is a bit damp because it’s been humid outside. So when you try to sleep in your tent, the ground is a bit mushy. To feel disgust there—is that about hygiene, or is that just being soft / unadapted? That’s kind of how I feel about people who can’t pick up dog poop with a plastic bag. That plastic bag you have is protecting you from any pathogens that might be in the dog poop.

And it’s not like human beings are inherently clean either. Most sicknesses that we get are transmitted from other human beings (like the total occurrences; the cold, the flu, covid, etc.). We wash our hands. We (now) wear masks. We vaccinate. We have systems in place to deal with the fact that we are disease-transmitting to one another. And we also have systems in place for dogs.

I should also add, where I live, the shit that most people step on is Canadian Goose shit, but that doesn’t mean there is a moral imperative to eradicate them. And I think you’d also have a hard time convincing the world that walking outside barefoot is immoral as well.

I can see an argument against cats because of the toxoplasmic Gondii parasite that lives in them. However, someone could make the argument that the solution here is not to abandon cats, but just to put a system in place. But I don’t know biomedical research, so I don’t know the feasibility of that at all, and it’s beyond the scope of our discussion here... morality and cleanliness

Kurtz: The reason that I do not think exclusively in terms of suffering, especially when it comes to wild animals, is because, as you point out in your first comment, what a wolf or lion experiences is

beyond the realm of my human knowledge. To quote Wittgenstein, “If a lion could speak, we could not understand him”.

To use your own example, suppose dumping predator-specific contraceptive in a river was deemed to reduce “suffering” (however that is quantified) within an ecosystem. Would that be moral? I am not kidding (I wish I was) but influential leaders in veganism (e.g. Vegan Gains) subscribe to this logic.

Rather, as intelligent humans, we can be honest about the scope of our knowledge and technology. Sure, we can build skyscrapers but can we build a jungle or a coral reef? We can build robots, but can we build an elephant? Natural habitat and wildlife take aeons to evolve, and all we have to do is leave it alone. Of course, there is endless suffering that occurs in the jungle, but that is, in my opinion, completely irrelevant to the question of how much jungle should we conserve.

Regarding disgust, I totally agree that it depends on social conditioning. But as a society, either implicitly or explicitly, we are conditioning each other. The example you bring up about clothing, be it shoes or a hijab, is thought provoking. Ultimately, civilisation needs to decide on some dress code, and those who do not agree (e.g. nudists) have to either change the prevailing culture or set up their own colonies.

Of course, there is nothing scientifically unclean about the human body. But a nude body has cultural connotations that could range from a libertine exhibitionist to a Jain sky clad monk! Thus, the purpose of my earlier comment is to point out what we regard clean/unclean or pure/impure are culturally derived, not explicit scientific health-related facts.

It is very rare that humans use logic to change their emotions — it is usually the reverse. E.g. people feel an emotion (be that desire or disgust) at the sight of a steak, and then use logic to rationalise their emotion. This is why “debates” between vegans and meat-eaters are so futile.

What is involved in perpetuating domestication (of any species) is horrific. Watch the standard procedure for castration and neutering. Watch the standard procedure for artificial insemination. I am claiming that in a civilised society, human beings should not touch the genitals of other species. I really do not think this is that controversial (e.g. imo a debate about nudism is more nuanced) but the reality is that people are so attached to the taste of meat or the cuddles from their dog, that they make excuses for the bestial conception of these animals.

Why is bestiality universally condemned? It is completely irrelevant if the beast involved hypothetically enjoys the act. The reason bestiality is forbidden is because we do not want to live in a society where people fuck beasts. Pure and simple: because it is disgusting.

Solsolico: I can appreciate your comment here. I haven’t checked Reddit for a few days, so I wasn’t ignoring you or anything like that. I don’t want you to feel like your effort went unread or unappreciated.

I’m basically in agreeance with the vast majority of what you’re saying here. I think the genitalia argument is probably the strongest argument there is against pet ownership. It’s similar to my argument against something like eggs, where there’s this inherent step in the process that seems impossible to get morally right.

Like sure, someone can make the case that backyard chickens are moral if you treat them well, but there’s still the unavoidable reality that those male baby chickens are getting culled en masse because they can’t coexist. They fight each other. They kill each other. There’s no economically feasible way to continue backyard chickens through generations and generations without culling males.

The only solution would be to genetically modify the sex birth ratio for chickens or to genetically modify, through artificial selection, to make the male chickens more docile. But in both cases, you’re just looking at exploiting this animal. It just exists for your benefit, even if you’re going to treat it really nicely. You’re going through all this trouble to genetically modify it so that it fits into your existence better. It would be one thing if these genetic modifications already existed, like say with dogs, but the prospect of doing it again... I think we can see the moral problems right there because the motivation is basically just going to be some type of exploitation.

But, as you and I both stated, we don't know what it is like to be a dog. Like sure, I know for human beings, for a lot of them, not being able to have kids is super depressing for that person. We all know stories like that. Is it like that for a dog? If a dog is chemically castrated, because physical castration is fucked up, period, does this mentally affect the dog based on not being able to bear children? Are we depriving the dog of that desire it has? Because if we knew that a dog had this desire, how moral is it to deprive the dog of this?

I don't necessarily think depriving someone or something of their desire is inherently bad. A serial killer may have a desire to be free and kill again; obviously, we're not going to honor that. Of course, that's an extreme example, but a more tepid example could just be something like, you have a desire to be rich, but no one owes you that. You're a kid, and you have a desire to skip school; that doesn't mean your parents are just going to honor that.

Alright, but maybe this is more than a desire; maybe it's a psychological need. It's fucked up for a parent to deny their kid a social life. But stories like that definitely exist. Study all day type shit. So it's just like, well, yeah, I don't know what the psychological state of a dog is to have cubs. I don't know how fucked up it is. I know it would be messed up to deny a human being to have a kid, like if you were secretly chemically castrating them by putting whatever chemicals you need in their daily smoothie or weekly smoothie or however often you need to administer these hormones, that would be very fucked up.

Going back to the chicken example, I can say without a doubt that if we were at ground zero with dogs, like dogs were still wild animals, and we were debating about whether it's okay to selectively breed them to make them more docile for our needs, then I'd be like, yeah, that's really fucked up and we should not do that. If a wild dog wants to hang around and you want to feed the wild dog, I'm like, that's totally cool. But to breed them for our own benefit? To exploit them in ways that are convenient for us? Yeah, that's really messed up.

But what makes the situation we're in a little bit more messy is the fact that they're already like that. All of these different dog breeds exist already. And so it's like, who am I to say, who is anyone to say, that a "toy dog" like a poodle doesn't want to exist anymore? Because on the flip side, there's also a moral argument to be made that intentionally making a species or subspecies of an animal extinct is also fucked up. And I know Eisel's solution to this was like having a zoo for dogs. But it's like a zoo is also fucked up. Maybe you could make a zoo that's an ideal environment for dogs because, I mean, they don't really have pure freedom in most cases anyway. Especially urban dogs. Some rural dogs do have a lot of freedom.

Anyway, like where my head has been at in this debate of dogs and cats and stuff like that, pet ownership in general, it's just that no matter what we do, it seems like we're doing something immoral. **Kurtz:** Thanks for the reply. I also appreciate your comment. That's one of the things I like about Eisel, say what you want, he managed to attract an intelligent audience (even if we are too stupid to help him).

I share your sentiment about backyard hens. Another thing that is disgusting is how inbred domesticated animals are. Ultimately, "animal husbandry" is a euphemism for bestiality and incest — and we should hope to live in a society where humans are disgusted by such activities. It is one thing if an animal engages in incest on its own volition (this is quite rare in the wild) — but for humans to force animals to mate with their parents/children, siblings, etc. is vile.

"Purebred" is a manmade concept, that has aristocratic/caste origins. Without ongoing human intervention, dogs readily mate with different breeds. So why should we, as humans, be committed to preserving the categories of "poodle" or "beagle" which are meaningless to dogs themselves? These are human desires, and originate from an aristocratic morality where mongrels are considered dirty.

I completely agree with you that desires need not be fulfilled. Indeed, I am questioning (and hoping to destroy) the human desire for pets. The biggest obstacle is the emotional blackmail used by the pet industry: "adopt" this puppy/kitten or we will kill it!

In another comment, I explained how the language “adoption” is very misleading and inappropriate. Adopting an orphan means being a good parent. Thus, truly adopting a dog would mean acting as the dog’s own parents would have: teaching it how to hunt, how to defend itself and, when the time comes, having the detachment to let the dog leave and forge its own life. That is absolutely not the relationship humans have with pets: it is more analogous to how eunuchs were kept for company!

It is also very insidious how the moral and financial burden of caring for abandoned pets is transferred to vegans. The solution, IMO, is to heavily tax pet breeders and owners, and use these funds to buy swathes of rural land for abandoned pets and let them turn feral. It only takes a few generations, and thereafter, our relationship with cats and dogs would be essentially the same as it is with squirrels and crows.

Solsolico: Yes, I agree with that. He did attract an audience that is intelligent, which is why it’s such a shame that for most of his YouTube presence, he closed comments on the videos just because some people would misunderstand him or make stupid comments. For whatever reason, he couldn’t let that fly because he didn’t have the time, desire, or energy to moderate all the comments. But anyway, that’s an aside.

Of course, you make a salient point about the adoption dynamic. When people rescue orangutans, the goal isn’t to keep the orangutans as household pets, but to rehabilitate them so they can go live in the wild. This process takes years and years. There’s actually a documentary series called Orangutan Jungle School which shows this whole process, how long it takes, how challenging it is, and things of that nature.

That being said, I don’t know if it’s fair or applicable to apply this logic to pets because, well, these pets did not evolve in the wild. The wild didn’t select their genes, human beings did. So, it’s like, what are the solutions here? We could selectively breed them again so that they could survive in the wild, but then it’s like, why would we do this when they weren’t even a part of the wild in the first place? The other solution would be something similar to what you suggested, which would be to train them to survive in the wild, and just let them loose and see which ones end up surviving. But I also think there’s kind of a moral problem with that because many would end up dying, and not dying pleasant deaths, and I don’t think that’s moral to do. I think it’s probably more moral to euthanize than to send an animal to starve, freeze, or get eaten alive by a bear. But then, what’s the morality of mass euthanizing pets (at least the ones we know wouldn’t survive)? I don’t think that’s a great thing to do. And certainly society doesn’t either. At best, you would have a phase-out type of system where live animals stay living as pets, but breeding is now a thing of the past.

I guess we could do the sanctuary/zoo idea that Eisel proposed, but of course then there needs to be a debate about whether that land should be wildlife or a dog and cat sanctuary.

But then that gets back to the unknowable question that I have, and it’s something like, why do I get to decide if a poodle wants to stay existing? Obviously, the question of life, to live, that’s not a decision that anyone makes. But at the very least we could say living as a human being is a life worth living, so, at least it can be, although there are many human beings who fall through the cracks and I guess a large percentage of us at least go through moments in our life when we’re in those cracks. Obviously, there could be a whole secondary discussion about antinatalism here and their argument about consent to life and stuff like that. But I don’t really find that to be a convincing argument, but we’re not going to get into that now of course. So then it’s like, I can’t make the assertion that poodles feel like their life is worth living or not. And so, to make them extinct, I also can’t comment on that. And that’s my main area of doubt in pet ownership. Like that stuff you said about pure breed and caste and animal husbandry being incest and all that stuff, I 100% agree with. The process to get to where we are is terrible. But the process to discover nuclear energy was also terrible. The process of building the railroads in Canada and the United States was terrible and basically slave labor. But that doesn’t mean we abandon nuclear energy; that doesn’t mean we abandon the railroads. They exist now, and just because the process was immoral doesn’t mean there’s a moral imperative to destroy the product of something that has a very immoral past. I hope that is clear.

So I think we definitely both agree on a lot. I think we agree that the history of how pets came to be is morally problematic. I think we agree that castration is morally problematic. Although we didn't discuss it, I'm sure we both agree that buying dog food or cat food that contains meat is morally problematic. And so, in that sense, if pet ownership is morally alright, it would definitely need to be on a plant-based diet. I think we both agree that there's something morally problematic about dogs basically being treated like children their whole lives. Of course, you know, your 10-year-old son or your 13-year-old daughter, they don't have the freedom that they will have when they are adults. They can't leave the house whenever they want; they don't necessarily choose what they eat all the time. There are rules they have to follow. But eventually, they do have that freedom, at least to the extent that whatever society they live in grants them those freedoms. The same can't be said about the life of a dog. Although it can be said about the life of a cat to some extent, there are moral problems with letting cats roam because they wreak havoc on ecosystems, specifically birds. I will have more to say about this freedom aspect for dogs in a following paragraph. We also agree that it is unknowable what a dog wants fundamentally, like what's going on in their psychology.

But the next step is I think where most of our disagreement is. You're willing to proceed and say that the way we treat dogs is sufficiently immoral and there isn't really a way for us to treat them sufficiently moral in the context of being a pet, so we should start working towards a way to eliminate pet ownership. What it seems to me is your ideal post-pet-ownership is something like: getting dogs to live in a way where they are able to be self-sufficient in both food gathering and breeding, and things along those lines.

My two issues with this are that (1) we don't actually know if a dog would prefer to live that type of hunter-gatherer lifestyle as opposed to being domestic, so is it moral to force it on them? And (2) is that most breeds of dogs will become extinct like this. And then the only way to avoid that without keeping them as pets is that sanctuary or zoo idea, but that goes back to my first issue, which is that: we don't know if a poodle or a chihuahua would prefer to live in that zoo environment or an urban human environment. Like we don't know how much dogs actually value and appreciate the love from a human being, like being pet, playing tug of war and playing fetch. I can't possibly know if a dog values that more than being able to freely hunt. It is not obvious.

I do think we could explore the dynamic and desires and behavior of stray dogs a bit more. I think that would be an interesting case study to learn more about the freedom dynamic and what dogs value. But I have not read enough about the behavior and dynamic of stray dogs. I do know that if someone feeds a dog that is stray, that dog tends to want to hang around that person. But of course they are variables that would have to be controlled to further understand the desires of a dog. Like we know that a stray dog is going to pick food over absolute freedom, but what if these homeless dogs were fed? What if there were dog food dispensaries around a city and all stray dogs were fed? And let's say it was like low quality food but good enough to keep them healthy. Would a dog choose to live with someone, another human being, if that person gave them things like toys, played with them at the park, pet them, and gave them more tasty food? Or would the dog pick the absolute freedom?

Anyway, I will say this, this is probably the best discussion I've ever had about pet ownership. I think that you make the right points that really make me think about my position in ways that I haven't thought before.

Kurtz:

I didn't know reddit had a word limit! We certainly agree on a lot. Regarding our original point of contention, I concede that Melissa's example of cleaning up dog faeces is not the most convincing example of the uncleanliness of the pet paradigm. The examples we discussed, namely the ongoing bestiality and incest required to sustain the pet industry, are more damning and disturbing.

However, it is a bit heavy to have this type of conversation with a friend, let alone a stranger. While most people (vegan and non-vegan) will be offended, a certain kind of person will be interested because we are not merely discussing pets, but rather the meaning of civilisation, the distinction between man and beast, the limits of human knowledge, the motivations of having children, etc.

My perspective is that dog “breeds” are essentially castes — they are ultimately all the same species “*Canis familiaris*”. Dogs from different breeds can mate with each other and produce fertile offspring. In fact, from my understanding, mongrels tend to be healthier than purebreds. The only thing stopping dogs from reproducing how they please is a manmade caste system! Would it really be so terrible if, sometime in the future, all the dogs were mongrels?

Poodles would only go “extinct” in the sense Brahmins may go “extinct”. It is not real “extinction”, because the descendants of today’s poodles (Brahmins) will live on and mate with other breeds (castes). However, humans can be sentimental, and if preserving poodles (Brahmins) as they exist today is deemed important then the only way is to maintain a strict breeding program (arranged marriages) and deny poodles (Brahmins) reproductive freedom.

I am not denying or neglecting your point that some domesticated animals do not value/conceptualise freedom and are more than content living in refined captivity. Unfortunately (from my perspective), there are humans that fall into that category as well! My response is to think about the children — even though I may have a benevolent master, there is no guarantee his children will be benevolent. So when a human (or dog or cow) accepts to live in captivity, he is condemning his descendants to live at the mercy of an unknown almighty master.

There is something cowardly and despicable about that, in my opinion. And also, from a human perspective, I think there is something shameful about being a master, holding a leash. Freedom is being neither master nor slave. Freedom is people living by their merit with the hope that their children will surpass them. Captivity is for the weak — whether they are holding or wearing the chain.

edit: Thank you for bringing up the orangutan orphanages. I agree this is what real “adoption” would look like. I am sympathetic to efforts to prevent the extinction of species which we as humans caused by greed and stupidity. Orangutans are one example, elephants (ivory trade) are another. I am also aware this somewhat contradicts my philosophy of maintaining detachment to beasts — but it is a temporary, charitable measure. The hard work is to set aside enough jungle to release these animals, so they can live without disturbing us and vice versa.

Solsolico:

Your perspective on why poodles would only go extinct in one sense is definitely something to think about.

I understand your analogy with castes; that being said, I’m not sure if it’s an apt analogy. But to be fair, I don’t know enough about the Indian caste system so I deleted a lot that I wrote about it, deeming it as both irrelevant and uniformed. I will write as if the analogy given was that of different human cultures and human phenotypes blending and extinguishing the originals.

I guess my perspective here is backed by this value that I have. I think that genetics and phenotypes are worth something (dog breeds have this). I also think culture and language are worth something (dog’s don’t have this).

For example, even though there are so many people who identify as “Aboriginal Tasmanian”, the reality is there are no phenotypical Tasmanians left. It’s an extinct phenotype; it’s an extinct population from that perspective. The same can be said about a lot of indigenous ethnicities from the eastern coasts of the Americas, such as the Pataxó, who are Afro-Indigenous, or the Kalinago from the Southern Caribbean islands, who also are Afro-Indigenous. In these cases, the indigenous language is completely extinct, but some cultural elements exist, like attire, song, dance (I can’t really speak to the extent that traditional worldviews still exist and unique cultural perspectives still exist).

The Coahuiltecan are culturally and linguistically extinct, but their genetics and phenotypes still exist. The same can be said about a lot of different Meso-American Indigenous groups.

The Charrúa are culturally and linguistically extinct, and they are also phenotypically and genetically diluted. Like the modern indigenous Tasmanians, they are mostly European.

So although both situations are tragic, I think the Charrúa situation is even more tragic; more was lost.

So I guess my perspective here is that it's not meaningless that the genetics and phenotypes of a population are diluted, or simply gone.

In the same sense that language has value, I also think genetics have value. It's not that, for example, the genetics of a modern Pataxó person are less valuable than one from pre-colonial times. It's just that you're replacing something valuable with another thing that's valuable, but that doesn't cancel it out. You still got rid of something that was valuable. The Pataxó now speak a revitalized version of their language, and that's cool; that has value. But it doesn't replace the value that was lost when the original language was lost.

It's like if you have a vase that your grandma gave you, and your wife broke it, but then your wife made you a new one. Your wife's new vase has value, but it doesn't replace the value that was lost exactly. It's a different value. It would be more valuable if you had both vases.

We can test to see if you or anyone also holds this value of phenotypical diversity with this extreme example.

Let's say that there was some way to genetically modify the phenotype of someone's fetus. Let's say we are in South Africa, and let's say that every single pregnancy was to be genetically modified such that the babies turned out to look Western European. So these Western European-looking babies would still be raised by non-white South Africans. They would have the same culture that the many non-white South African groups have. Their Western European-looking babies would speak the same language as their non-white parents, and they would have the same cultures as their non-white parents. But within a few generations, the entire culture is now phenotypically Western European. No language was lost, no culture was lost, but phenotypes were lost. That's the only thing that was lost here. And I think that that loss is a real loss; something valuable was lost. The phenotypical variation of human beings is valuable.

I have to say this because it might be misinterpreted: this is not some crazy ideology that is trying to preserve this distinction of "races". The human population is already on a continuum. There are no discrete racial groups. Go from Sri Lanka, up India, across the Middle East into the Balkans, and you get a gradual change. Go from the Arabian Peninsula into Egypt down into the Horn of Africa, and you get a gradual change. Neo-populations, like mestizos populations in the Americas, are valuable, and they increase the human phenotype diversity, which is valuable.

So if we go back to dog breeds, it's like if all dogs unified into a so-called mongrel breed, that new mongrel breed is just as valuable as a poodle or doberman. But the reality still remains that replacing something valuable with another valuable thing doesn't mean that value wasn't lost.

So I appreciate you bringing up the caste example because I really think it made me think about why I valued the existence of poodles.

Of course, when you talk about the importance of reproductive freedom for dogs... in all cases of human extinction, reproductive freedom was never on the table for that group. There was some type of external force marginalizing them, or going to war with them, or some type of disease, or some type of external hardship. I don't think there's ever been a case where a culture has bred itself out of existence, because endogamy seems to naturally be more prevalent, or at least prevalent enough that even when hybrid-cultures are forming, the original cultures still remain.. For example, you have the hybrid culture of the Red River Metis, but the Manitoba Cree and French Canadian still exist as well. It's like, what is the best outcome: Only the Red River Metis existing and the French and Cree going extinct? All three existing? Or the Red River Metis never existing? I think the answer is: "all three existing".

So I have to ask the question: would it be tragic if a culture, under their own volition and not subjugated or under the power of another culture, procreated themselves out of existence and ended up in an entirely new hybrid culture? I think, to some extent, of course it would be sad, but at the end of the day, it would be immoral to force them not to. And so if dogs did end up procreating in this way you imagine they would, I do think that it would be sad and I think things of value would be lost, but at the end of the day, it would be completely immoral to force them not to, and that would override the value that I ascribe.

So I think that I am probably morally okay with the idea of dogs hybridizing, but it is not without its loss of value.

The second part of your comment I'll have to think about and ruminate on more, because how I understand it, it's fundamentally making the claim that it is immoral for a dog to let itself be domesticated by humans. I have never heard that perspective before and I haven't ever really considered it, so I'm not really sure what to say at this moment because it's an interesting perspective, no doubt, but I'd have to just think about it.

Kurtz:

Thanks for articulating your points so well. I think it is fair to say that our conversation has moved beyond pet ownership and into the realms of genocide. At the fore, I apologise for the delay in replying as I had other works, and also apologise that my reply is a bit haphazard (I had written more, but edited out things that were tangential to the main point). If I haven't addressed any of the points you made, it is because I agree with them. Due to the length of my comment, I had to split it into two parts.

Firstly, to consider the problem somewhat scientifically. Every child I have will inherit 1/2 of my DNA. So if I have exactly one child then 1/2 of my DNA is lost forever. In general, if I were to have n children, each of my chromosomes has probability $(1/2)^n$ of not being passed to the next generation. Thus, even if I have 2 children (i.e. replacement rate), still on average 1/4 of my DNA is lost.

Of course, if my mate were the same ethnicity as me, then we would share some DNA, because we have some common ancestors. Thus, even if I fail to pass some of my genes to my child(ren), there is a probability they would inherit those genes from my mate. So to reduce the probability of my genes becoming extinct, I either need to: 1) have many children; or 2) choose a mate that is genetically related to me.

So on this issue, I think it is good to be moderate. I am not going to procreate like Genghis Khan or commit incest, so I have to make peace that some of my DNA is going to be lost. On the other extreme, as you point out, if enough people do not pass their genes to the next generation, it can result in extinction/genocide. The most prolific example I can think of is the "Stolen Generation policy" in Australia. The so-called "Protectors of the Aborigines" showed that successively breeding Aborigines with Europeans resulted in effectively white descendants. Such a policy enforced for sufficient time would result in Aboriginal genes becoming scarcer and eventually extinct. So this policy is clearly genocidal, even though it does not involve killing all the Aborigines outright.

The safeguard against such extinction is human mating behaviour which has evolved a certain way. On average, people tend to marry people who speak the same languages, eat similar foods, have similar beliefs, etc. This is why the Stolen Generation policy was predicated on destroying Aboriginal languages, culture and pride. But let's say, in an alternate reality, the Aborigines and settlers were so mutually attracted to one another that they intermarried without any reservation. Even in such a romantic hypothetical, it would still eventually result in the scientific genocide of Aborigines, because their genes would become scarcer due to the genetic drift I described earlier. However, these are both extremes: extreme xenophobia and extreme xenophilia both lead to genocide (i.e. loss of genes). It is difficult to precisely specify what moderate amount of discrimination is necessary to avert genocide, but my thinking is that our innate sexual preferences (which have evolved over millions of years) should be a reasonable guide. At any rate, I am more comfortable with people choosing their own sexual partners based on their own subjective preferences, rather than an academic eugenics program, even if the latter can theoretically be optimised to yield a more diverse human gene pool, eliminate hereditary diseases, etc. etc.

Bringing the discussion back to other animals, much like humans, beasts have complex mating behaviours and preferences. Take, for example, water buffalo. The bulls rut and cows choose the victors. However, wild water buffalo are now endangered, primarily because feral domesticated water buffalo are interbreeding with the wild populations. Who am I to deny a feral bull who won his rut an opportunity to mate? There are multiple tragedies at play. Yes, the extinction of "pure" wild water buffalo is a loss to biodiversity. But it would also be a tragedy to keep domesticated buffalo in perpetual captivity. Even

more tragic would be exterminating the domesticated buffalo, when their ancestors ploughed the paddy fields that kept our ancestors fed. So I say, the best option is to let the beasts sort it out themselves — and may the best buffalo prevail! To be crude, for beasts, I really am advocating for “survival of the fittest”; for “Nature red in tooth and claw” to take its course in the wilderness, since this is an experiment beyond the scope of civilisation, which makes the wilderness genuinely valuable, unique and interesting.

This may be a key point of disagreement between us: when there is a competition between feral and native species, I do not think humans have any responsibility to intervene on behalf of the natives. I understand the analogy that the white man was a feral species in Australia and North America, that outbred and decimated the native populations to the point of extinction. So looking back with hindsight, it sure would have been nice if someone helped the indigenous peoples when it would have mattered — not centuries later once the dust has settled on genocide. It is a persuasive argument in favour of intervention to protect diversity.

While I support “survival of the fittest” for beasts, when it comes to humans within the confines of human civilisation, I support a meritocracy. In some sense, this is also a “survival of the fittest” but of intellectual and moral qualities rather than the brutish ones rewarded in the wild. And on this point, I think the settler colonialists behaved with such savagery that they absolutely undermined Western civilisation, the very thing they thought they were furthering! I’ll be honest, I don’t know much about pre-colonial indigenous cultures, but I am sure they had some unique wisdom to contribute to the future of civilisation. Of course, there are aspects (e.g. meat eating, genital mutilation, etc.) that would put me in conflict with indigenous cultures, just as it puts me in conflict with much of Western culture.

However, these conflicts need not be resolved by violence, wars or reproductive coercion. Fortunately, as humans, we can affect each others behaviour through dialogue and creative pursuits. Whereas, when it comes to our relationship with other animals, the only way we can change the behaviour of beasts is with violence (e.g. the bullet or the whip) and reproductive coercion (e.g. castration or selective breeding).

Basically, intervening in a human genocide does not require us to morally compromise ourselves to the point of exterminating or enslaving the feral/invasive party. Whereas, intervening in conflicts among beasts can only make us bestial. The best thing we can do for the beasts (be they feral or wild), is provide them as much habitat as possible, and let them have at it.

Solsolico: Thanks for the reply. I can appreciate your distinction between a xenophobic genocide and a xenophiliac genocide. If all dogs went out and bred with each other, of course they would have a xenophiliac genocide. And, of course, it’s hard to make the case that that is immoral. On the other hand, a xenophobic genocide is obviously immoral.

Feral animals and ecosystems

I was unaware of the water buffalo situation that you mentioned. That is quite interesting. I also agree with you that it’s best to just let the water buffalo figure themselves out. As you said, and I agree with, there are multiple tragedies at play there. But if you have to weigh the options, which is the least immoral? That one is probably letting the water buffalo do what they do on their own without human intervention, knowing that there’s going to be a loss of biodiversity as a result.

But I find it a little more challenging, or it’s more uncertain, when it’s a species that was brought from a completely different part of the world and now outcompetes the native species. Like, am I correct to assume that the domesticated water buffalo are descendants of the local wild water buffalo?

For example, wild hogs. Wild hogs can outcompete most species, but humans also brought them to a place. So, with the water buffalo example, it’s like they were already here, but humans kind of messed with their genetics a bit. But it’s like the wild hog example: I believe that pigs in Canada, both the wild ones and the domestic ones, are from Europe. And humans brought them over. And so if this animal that humans brought to a specific place outcompetes other species in that place to extinction, or potentially to extinction, isn’t it, in some sense, our responsibility as humans to prevent it? Because in some sense, it’s like, well, we are the ones who brought this problem to these animals. And in that sense, it is a human problem now. If we caused the problem, then we are responsible for the outcomes.

Of course, that question might be getting a little out in the weeds here, because it might not really be relevant to the discussion about pet ownership but rather something like the morality of maintaining the ecosystems the way they were and to be as unaffected by humans as possible. And then, of course, to grapple with this issue, one also needs to talk about whether reducing wild animals' suffering is a moral imperative or not.

For what it's worth, I am now solidly okay with the loss of diversity if it happens through xenophilia because I agree that freedom is more important than diversity. If maintaining diversity comes at the cost of limiting freedoms, then it's not worth the price.

All right, so where does that leave us? So, I am fine with dogs converging genetically if it's on their own accord, and it would be because, as we both know, humans are the ones that really enforce that phenotypic diversity among dogs, but I'm still stuck on just not knowing if that's how dogs would want to live or not. Like, castration is super immoral, but it's also immoral, in my perspective, to force a species to try and adapt to an environment that it did not evolve to adapt in, knowing that most of them, if not all of them, will die. And then we have to get into the issue of whether that's even ecologically responsible to do, because, much like the wild boar examples in Canada, introducing a new species into an ecosystem is human intervention, and in my opinion, that does make it a human issue forever. Even though your perspective is that already existing feral animals aren't a human concern, that is still different than introducing a new feral (non-local) animal.

What goes on between seals and whales and polar bears has nothing to do with human beings at all. But wild pigs in Canada? It totally does. And a new convergent species of dogs that are now wild in the entire world? It also totally does.

Sorting things out and a hypothetical question for you

- I agree that it is more moral to release dogs into the wild than to make them extinct if we had the a priori knowledge that they wouldn't outcompete other species into extinction or hunt them into extinction
- I also think that it is more moral to maintain dogs as pets than to make them extinct.

But that leads me to an interesting question that I'd like to hear your perspective on. If the only option were between extinction and maintaining them as pets, what's the more moral option? And hypothetically, it might be the only option because dogs wouldn't survive on their own (I know this is unrealistic because wild dogs do exist already, though maybe we're talking about the Sonoran desert and they wouldn't be able to survive on their own out there) or because there is a consensus that it is immoral to introduce them as a species into the wild because they would cause the extinction of another species. I think it would be an interesting way to understand your perspective a little bit better.

What still holds me back: can't know if dogs prefer a domesticated life or wild life

I think we will find agreement on most aspects of pet ownership, but the fact that I can't know if a dog would prefer to live a wild life or a domesticated life makes it hard for me to get on the "pet ownership is 100% immoral" boat. It seems to me that it is possible for domesticated dogs to be happy and live happy lives. Of course, it comes at a cost (freedom, genital mutation) but also comes with benefits (healthcare, stability, resources).

Still, what you said a few weeks ago was still very interesting to ponder, "the fact that your master might be kind but the master of your offspring might not be". And I have pondered it. My brain came up with this:

"That is true, however, nature isn't always kind either. Sometimes a baby's mom gets eaten by a wolf or a lion. Sometimes you're born into a period of boom (yay!), and other times into a period of bust (no!) (boom-bust population dynamics: when a species' population grows too much for the environment to support, it crashes, then grows again when resources recover, rinse and repeat). Sometimes you're born with a disability and get infanticided. Sometimes you're born in a drought, or in extreme cold.

Sometimes you're born and a flood or fire destroys your ecosystem. Sometimes you're born and you contract a parasite very early on. Life is a gamble for the parents either way, it seems."

Kurtz: My interpretation of Eisel's philosophy is that it is "speciesist" to treat a cat/dog differently to a rat. The attachment people have towards cats and dogs versus rats is not based on any immutable characteristic of the species in question (rats, if castrated, groomed, etc. can make equally satisfying pets as cats or dogs). Nevertheless, we (vegan or not) recognise that if our city is infested with rats, then the solution is extermination. Nobody seriously proposes catching all the feral rats, castrating/neutering them, grooming and vaccinating them, and then "adopting" them. Practically, what would this mean? Even with "population control" (deadly) measures, there are estimated over 3 million feral rats in New York. If people think a vegan diet is a sacrifice (it is not) then imagine what kind of sacrifice it would entail adopting millions of feral animals that society is too insensitive to kill.

The entire discourse reminds me of a topic that Vegan Gains et al. bring up called "wild animal suffering". To me it is so surreal, yet the proponents are steadfast. I think this stems from a "utilitarian" ethic, i.e. that pleasure is axiomatically meaningful and the ideal life is free of suffering. But this does not address the question of what happens when someone (e.g. lion) derives pleasure (or eases their own suffering) by causing suffering to another (e.g. zebra). Equally, the lack of suffering of the zebra results in material suffering (hunger) for the lion. So ultimately, we are left at the Buddhist truth that life is suffering, and to deny this is to live in a delusion, like young Siddhartha roaming his palace.

A sewer rat does not live in a delusion. From an early age, its elders have taught it to be weary of Man, who slayed their brothers and sisters. The rat learns how to evade the traps laid out before it, and it uses its undeniable intelligence to procure continued freedom for its descendants, not to perform cheap tricks or keep company with a fiend who forcibly took away its ability to ever have children. You see, in this way, a sewer rat actually has more dignity in life and death than a house cat or dog can ever hope for.

Theo: I agree that it's easier to perceive a simple dignity in wild and feral animals in contrast to the shit we put domesticated animals through. Does this justify trying to throw scorn at people advocating adopt don't shop though? On both the pragmatic and principled level, this just seems counter-productive.

Also, with you arguing we should just kill domesticated animals now, does this mean I should just go tell my vet I want my dog put down by telling them she's too violent for human society, plus in my head doing it to save the environment the few resources I take from it in the form of vegan dog food? Considering dogs have interests to run round mountains which I can provide this dog, is not cutting short those interests more cruel and a step away from the kind of world vegan social contract we'd like to develop?

Kurtz:

Does this justify trying to throw scorn at people advocating adopt don't shop though?

Is the word "adopt" being honest — or is it a euphemism? If I legally obtained an orphan, castrated him, and kept him as my lifelong companion, is that what we really mean by adoption? Adoption means being a good parent to an orphan. It is easy to imagine what this looks like with humans.

When it comes to e.g. dogs, being a good dog parent, means treating the dog as it own mother and father would have. Teaching it how to hunt, teaching it how to fight and defend itself, and when the time comes, letting go and allowing it to reproduce. The fundamental problem is that humans do not have the capacity or time to truly be a dog parent, and even if they did it would mean denigrating themselves to behaving like dogs.

People keep pets for their own egotistical (in the Stirnerian sense) reasons. Invoking adoption is phony altruism.

Incidentally, I think that adopting animals can be meaningful. On YouTube, you can watch orangutan orphanages, where human caregivers teach orphaned orangutans (whose mothers were killed by deforestation) what fruits to eat, how to open coconuts, how to run away from snakes. This is meaningful

in the sense that the purpose is not for the orangutans to become attached to the caretaker or keep humans company. Rather, the point is that these orangutans may hopefully live a free life.

Also, with you arguing we should just kill domesticated animals now, does this mean I should just go tell my vet I want my dog put down by telling them she's too violent for human society, plus in my head doing it to save the environment the few resources I take from it in the form of vegan dog food?

My point is that the excuses (yes, "adopt don't shop" is an excuse) pet owners make ultimately perpetuates the pet owning paradigm, and prevents the social status of cats/dogs being elevated (from my perspective, demoted from yours) to the status of sewer rats.

From your writing, I understand you are deeply attached to your dog. Thus, I would not recommend you to now abandon your dog, not because I think your dog is currently living a meaningful life, but rather because such an act of betrayal would psychologically devastate you. Nevertheless, for both of your sakes, I hope you outlive your dog. And then, with some more detachment, perhaps you can appreciate my criticism of the pet industry.

Theo: Ok, but just for clarity, hypothetically if you knew it wouldn't affect my life in the least, and we lived in a society where you could just ask for your dog to be put down without any questions asked, you would advocate that I kill my dog? This would be robbing her of the chance to live a long life for a dog, fulfilling some of the interests she has to express her capabilities towards achieving some amount of happy flourishing.

I share many of your critiques of domestication, I just don't see the utility in advocating that no one personally take responsibility for domestic animals. Plus, advocating that everyone who's currently responsible for a domestic animal kill them sooner rather than later.

For people like me who have helped give dogs who were languishing in shelters a better life, we're ambassadors against people breeding dogs. I meet friends of friends, and they say things like 'I'd like to get a brood of puppies out of my dog at some point', then I argue 'there are already so many dogs languishing in shelters which people should take responsibility for if they want a dog in their life', then I'm taken more seriously because I'm already taking responsibility for a dog, and not just arguing from a position of not-invested snobbish moral superiority who hasn't put any effort into helping animals myself.

Kurtz: I'll be honest: I find the betrayal involved for a dog owner to kill his dog disturbing, just like I find it disturbing that livestock farmers betray their animals by using their trust to lead them to the slaughterhouse. Having clarified this, I also find it disturbing for pets owners to abandon their pets at shelters.

There is a fundamental difference between shooting/poisoning a feral pest species versus catching animals, removing their reproductive organs, and keeping them in cages to tug on the heartstrings of compassionate people who take pity on their plight.

That is why I am criticising the shelter/"adoption" industry. It is an emotional blackmail. And by the time someone "adopts" a cat/dog it is already too late. He has taken responsibility for that animal, and developed a psychological attachment, which is a weakness not a strength.

And what exactly is achieved by this compromise? From a strictly pragmatic view, I think this subsidises (both economically and morally) pet breeding, which we are both against. Why? Where do you think the money spent on pet insurance, vet bills, pet food, pet grooming, etc. is being invested? The companies in those industries have a vested interest in sustaining the pet industry. Sure, they decry puppy mills, but in the same breath laud "responsible/sustainable breeding practices". The used car market does not threaten the manufacture of new cars — they are part of the same economy.

Even worse, as I alluded to, the fact that there are vegans who advocate "adopt don't shop" is a relief for those who buy pets, and even eases their guilt if they abandon their pet at a shelter. "Hopefully, a kind vegan will take care of this dog I no longer want."

My message is mainly directed at people being lured in by the “adopt don’t shop” propaganda. Don’t fall for it! Don’t let your strength (respect for animals) be turned into a weakness. The only hope for cats and dogs is when we, as humans, can regard them with the same detachment as we regard rats and cockroaches.

P.S. I forgot to reply to this:

I argue ‘there are already so many dogs languishing in shelters which people should take responsibility for if they want a dog in their life’, then I’m taken more seriously because I’m already taking responsibility for a dog, and not just arguing from a position of not-invested snobbish moral superiority who hasn’t put any effort into helping animals myself.

I agree, if someone **wants** a dog, then getting from a shelter is better than a breeder. Likewise, if someone **wants** a steak, getting it from a roadkill is better than a butcher.

But I am questioning the desire itself. I am saying we should foster a society where people neither desire pet dogs nor beefsteaks.

Theo: I appreciate the long responses. I created a table of authors for a kind of wiki page I wrote recently unrelated to veganism, on where various authors stand on the nature/nurture divide, whether humans have a more rigid human nature, or a more flexible human nature. Another interesting spectrum is whether people think our nature is more rigidly noble, rigidly ambiguous, more rigidly savage, or more equally flexible between all three.

I wonder how all your talk of strength, weakness and dignity could be mapped out against other pro-domestic-animal-extinctionists (of which I am one), but where extinctionists like me still desire to ideally look out for some highly sentient animals until they die of old age.

I think you do damage to the campaign to boycott animal products because you tie people’s perception of vegans and veganism to reasoning that isn’t cogent.

If a person wants a dog in their life that was stuck in a shelter because they empathize with the dog, I think that compassion should be celebrated. If an unintended side effect of a single person taking a dog from a shelter were India launching nukes at Pakistan, then for sure, we should discourage the action of taking dogs from shelters, however I haven’t seen any reason to believe there’s a huge downside to vegans taking responsibility for dogs from shelters. I do have anecdotal evidence to believe it can be good advocacy against dog breeding.

Similarly, if a dad wants to skin a roadkill deer to show his kid a bushcrafting skill of learning how to turn animal skin into moccasins he can go wild for all I care. There exists actions people can take which at first glance may feel morally dubious, but if examined closer for their hyper-specific circumstances are ethically fine in my book. For example, some of those actions that have no bearing on the goal of wanting to build a global social contract in which no one purposefully kills animals for food when they could have just acquired free or cheap vegan food. Some actions like bloodsports that don’t happen to have anything to do with boycotting animal products, still boo. Sometimes using roadkill and taking care of dogs can have positive outcomes however:

Is Freeganism a Positive Form of Advocacy for Legal Animal Rights? | Ishkah Vs. Trashcarcass

Kurtz: Thanks for your replies too. Just to clarify, I don’t walk up to pet owners and troll them to kill their pets. Likewise, I don’t go and tell dairy farmers to kill all their cows. I am just telling people who are thinking of getting a pet to seriously consider the moral compromise involved, which will last for decades depending on the species. The anti-pet arguments that Eisel made are novel and interesting (even if they may be offensive to pet owners) — we live in a culture where having pets is seen as a virtue.

Like I said, it is worth analysing what are the psychological motivations for wanting a cat or a dog. With respect, I think it is your attachment to your dog that leads you to perceive my argument as not cogent. Otherwise, you would not value dogs differently than sewer rats, which we do not subject to castration and lifelong captivity.

The strongest rebuttal I have encountered is from one of my pet-keeping non-vegan friends, that humans have a greater duty of care towards cats/dogs versus rats/cockroaches because humans bred the former and not the latter. Firstly, this is an insidious argument that seeks to “socialise” the guilt/wrongdoing of pet breeders and shoppers onto the wider population.

What I am advocating for is best described as “detachment”, although I can see how this can be misconstrued as “betrayal”. We cannot betray sewer rats, because we are not attached to them, nor they to us. Thus, the only way to stop the betrayal of cats/dogs is to encourage and advocate for detachment. Detachment is not betrayal — it is the opposite.

The concept of detachment can also be applied to culture. In your example, the father showing his son how to make leather shoes, I think the father also has a responsibility to explain to his son why rubber and fabrics are superior to leather, even if it is to simply point out billions of humans need shoes and there is not that much roadkill. Without this level of detachment, the moccasins become more than a shoe — they become a symbol, and the son may feel he is “betraying” his ancestors/culture by wearing non-leather shoes.

Theo: I agree that being freegan and/or being responsible for domestic animals comes with the responsibility to not leave people with the impression that breeding animals for leather or pets is good. Again my personal experience is that the novel use of roadkill or novel story of having taken responsibility for an animal from a shelter helps with advocating an animal liberation philosophy through it being a launching off point for a topic of conversation.

The negative topic of conversation that people like Eisel or Melissa create by not being cogent on freeganism or domestic animals however means that I am forced to mock them mercilessly.

Kurtz: One of the reasons why Eisel’s arguments resonate with me is because I am from a Buddhist culture, where detachment is viewed as a virtue. In this sense, vegetarianism (and by extension veganism) is associated with asceticism, which is very different to the West, where veganism is associated with sentimentality about animals.

Non-vegans assume they can have a peaceful and cordial conversation with their vegan friend about their affection for cats and dogs. I understand that it is an olive branch, so yes, I agree with you that, in such a context, there is no need to be rude or dismissive.

Theo: ‘Meat-eating pet lovers’ are particularly annoying. I keep remembering this story, so I’ll just tell it to you here.

I used to do a lot of hitchhiking and I enjoyed giving my family dogs a good life on these squatted land projects, where people grew their own food and the dogs could wander around the forest as happy as Larry.

One day when I was hitchhiking off somewhere with one of the dogs, I got picked up by two people who told me almost as soon as I got in the car that they only picked me up because they thought my dog might be cold. The dog was a mix of water-spaniel and cocker-spaniel, so it had tons of fur on it and wasn’t cold at all. So, I explained this to them, then said ‘do you guys care a lot about animal rights issues then? Do you try to eat vegan?’ And there was just a long cold silence lol. They basically just talked among themselves after that.

So, I’ve definitely been accidentally rude in the past, but yeah, maybe if I could go back and have that convo over I’d just talk about where I’d just come from, the nice life the dog had been living with me, plus hope veganism comes up later in like talking about food not bombs stuff I’d done or something.

Kurtz: Thanks for sharing that story. I agree it is easy to accidentally offend people.

It could also be the case that those two people were not offended by your question — perhaps they (for whatever reason) had such a low opinion of vegans that they thought it would be less offensive to you for them to abort the conversation rather than giving their honest appraisal of veganism.

I think it goes back to the example in your original post about how Eisel said that he would silently walk past someone struggling to reach an animal product in the supermarket. I think his calculation is that in such a situation, the other person simply wants the animal product, not a discussion about

veganism. Thus, engaging with him would be counterproductive for both parties and the least offensive option is to just be silent.

7. The definition of veganism

Theo: So, as far as I know, Eisel has never tried to come up with precise wording for what his preferred definition of veganism would be, so at a guess from watching his videos, I can imagine it would be something along the lines of:

‘A personal duty to respect the dignity of animals & a desire to build a social movement to, among other things, lobby government for a higher percentage territory of managed wildlife habitat.’

And we can guess his argument for this philosophy being contained in the word vegan is that... its the best descriptive adjective for a human-centred movement. And, that the goal is to win over enough passionate people who are dedicated enough to take on the personal principle of avoiding animal products, as a basis for finding each other and organizing to making changes to our communities and institutions.

He’s critiqued people in the past for desiring to abandon the word vegan in favour of advocating the ideology of anti-speciesism, as an element of total liberation. So more like a social justice movement where anti-speciesism is one axis of oppression among other struggles like anti-racism & anti-sexism. Therefore an animal-centred movement alongside other oppressed-centred movements.

So, positives to Eisel’s critique are, by solely advocating for animals through a social justice approach, you just are going to get meat eaters being turned away from caring about animals because vegans look like deluded people who view animals as citizens.

As well as vegans feeling more justified in taking violent action for animals, who they start to view as members of our society. When in reality, like I said in my earlier video, animals can’t conceptualize a tactical war to achieve rights, so they can’t desire it.

We aren’t even able to alleviate their suffering like we could human prisoners with the optimistic notion that direct actions done in other places now, may one day lead to an end to their suffering.

Negatives are, he never acknowledges any better arguments for putting more focus on words like animal liberation.

I think we need to be fighting for incremental legal animal rights laws which make it less profitable to breed animals for food. And one philosophical and legal approach which is gaining more prominence is Martha Nussbaum’s capabilities approach, which we can say is about liberating animals to be able to express their capabilities in the wild.¹

As well, I think he’s wrong to claim Animal Liberation is primarily tied to Singer’s views on utilitarianism. The most common association people will draw it to is the Animal Liberation Front, which people already understand that if you have activists willing to liberate animals from cages, they obviously won’t also be buying animal foods.

I have nothing against veganism as a marketable word for a boycott identity, but in terms of explaining where the principle comes from, I think legal animal rights movement, says it really clearly in the name itself about how it’s a political movement, rather than veganism with it’s history and etymology in vegetarianism, which was simply a lifestyle society.

¹ Beyond Compassion and Humanity; Justice for Non-human Animals by Martha Nussbaum – <https://activistjourneys.wordpress.com/2020/07/25/beyond-compassion-and-humanity-justice-for-non-human-animals-martha-c-nussbaum/>
& The Capability Approach – <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/capability-approach/>

So in conclusion, I think as well as and even better than a vegan identity, we need to start thinking of ourselves as legal animal rights advocates also, which can encompass arguments for animal rights, liberation and/or welfare.

Firstly, because when simply explained as a behaviour, it's less easily misunderstood as a belief-ism one needs to buy into which could negatively change everything about how one currently views the world. And rather can be related to as a tool for achieving goals one has through one's own philosophy and culture already. Like the Mi'kmaq legend of how a demi-god used magic to obtain unlimited amounts of beaver meat from a single bone, reflecting a wish for abundance disconnected from the need to hunt.

Secondly, The strong commitment is clear through it being a boycott protest, which we can really easily conceptually tie to other boycotts, where someone boycotting South African products during apartheid wouldn't feel comfortable flying over their and joining the police force themselves. More so than in other definitions where you're just saying you're abstaining from using the end animal products.

And finally, I am actually fine with my definition being softer on for example subsistence hunters. I've got a video on my channel of Penan tribes people in Indonesia explaining how it would be repulsive to them to keep animals in captivity to farm, and I think this is great animal rights advocacy, so again a positive distinction.²

² Penan Relationship To Animals — <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ODG42xzqxUU>

8. Common faulty reasoning Eisel uses

Theo: So, I watched Eisel’s videos for a long time because he talked about a lot of topics I care about like a rewilding habitat approach to advocating for veganism, nihilism and encouraging a pragmatic, social science approach to many questions.

But, even though I was grateful to be introduced to lots of little conflicts between different world-views that I wasn’t previously aware of, I felt his views on issues were somewhat simplistic.

Firstly, let’s talk about his habit of arguing against the worst arguments for a world-view in order to appear superior.

Arguing against straw-men

Theo: So, Eisel likes to make the argument that you can draw an association between the top academics making arguments for a particular issue and the ineloquent layman who got their talking points from twitter, then dismiss both their reasoning as equally baseless.

Many of the problems we have within the intellectual ghetto of 21st century vegan politics are basically the same as the problems you have with the rest of planet earth or western academia or what have you.¹

And doubtless this is true in many cases, but often he never proves conclusively the association and in my view simply enjoys teeing off against bad arguments which make him look good.

So to demonstrate, imagine two rooms of people, where in both rooms one person is advocating veganism and the other is raising concerns about how it may create problems for preserving and increasing the number of people who can speak indigenous languages and play an active role in the culture.

In the first room of laymen twitter users, we’re asked to imagine that the person raising concerns about veganism’s impact on indigenous culture would view the threat as being so detrimental, that they would rather stick rigidly to one conception of what indigenous culture entails and not accept any idea of the culture evolving over time.

So, the meat eater asks the vegan; “do you see nothing positive in these indigenous cultures? Do you see nothing worth saving in native tradition?” And so, having laid the premise of someone putting forth a bad argument that we the listener would also be frustrated to have to answer, Eisel can jump in to save the day and answer with an apparent sense of superiority:

My answer to that is two-fold, one, when you think of culture, do you of it as a weakness or a strength? I’m dead serious, really think about it, is your culture holding you back? Is it dead weight? Is it a burden you’re going to place on the shoulders of the next generation?²

Cool, so for Eisel that’s video over, that’s the advice to remember to take away with you. But how would this actually go over, if you were in a room with a well read, articulate person offering reasonable concerns about the impact of veganism on indigenous people. Well we can imagine the meat eater asking “What about indigenous people on the bones of their asses, hunting as a cheap way of acquiring food and having a culture of sharing with elders in their community who can’t do it themselves, do you see nothing about that worth preserving? And now Eisel’s answer;

¹ Veganism vs. Anti-Capitalism (vs. The Vegan Anarchist) – https://web.archive.org/https://youtube.com/watch?v=cFqvoTLd5_k

² Against Anarchism (In Principle and in Practice, esp. “Left Anarchism” – <https://web.archive.org/https://youtube.com/watch?v=FaTvML9>

When you think of culture, do you of it as a weakness or a strength?³

Clearly this is inadequate, and everything about taking those actions in that circumstance and that culture is commendable. Did it sound like that argument could be put into practice just as easily on a more nuanced critique of veganism and it be just as easily refuted, as Eisel would have you believe?:

Every so often, London School of Economics has people with PhDs, who are on the far-left, making these same sorts of arguments, and they're just as easily refuted.⁴

So, the correct answer for me there is to say, of course I wouldn't condemn them for killing animals in that hyper specific circumstance, and I would campaign for free & better education, community gardening projects, etc. To improve their lot in life. But, if you're living in the city and your only access to hunting grounds is driving an hour out your way, then a healthier and more ethical use of your money would simply be picking up tofu from the supermarket instead of meat.

Faulty comparisons

Theo: So, a faulty comparison is when you compare one thing to another that is really not related, in order to make one thing look more or less desirable than it really is.

For example, the comparison; broccoli has significantly less fat than the leading candy bar!

While both broccoli and candy bars can be considered snacks, comparing the two in terms of fat content and ignoring the significant difference in taste, leads to the faulty comparison.

Now in Eisel's case, here's an example from his video called Against Anarchism:

So someone could challenge me, I'm steal-manning Theo's position here to say well look even if you don't subscribe to this long term more utopian idea of where this is going to, and even if you don't agree with this in principle, in this sense, can't you see some short-term benefit in anarchism here and now, in the same way that I can see a benefit in charity...

And if I argued back pointing out the relative historical triviality of libertarianism, look this isn't really a major influential political philosophy, but if on a scale of one to ten, if we rate libertarianism like a three out of ten, then left-wing anarchism is a zero, it has no significance at all.⁵

Now, the obvious mistake he made here is the pragmatic goals of right or left-wing anarchists would simply be to win people over to transitionary policy steps through left or right-wing libertarianism. So the logical comparison to make would be comparing support between right wing anarchism and left wing anarchism, or right wing libertarianism against left wing libertarianism. Not comparing the more public friendly image of right wing libertarians against the more radical side from the left wing anarchists.

Next, an example from his video on China's policies in Xinjiang towards the Uiyghur Muslims:

Is it fair to say that this is cultural genocide? My answer to that question is yes, this is cultural genocide, but we should say in the same breath without any hypocrisy that what the government of the United States of America attempted to do in Afghanistan also was cultural genocide.

So even if we examine the cultural project that the United States embarked on and compare it to the cultural project that the government of China is embarked on, we have to say the body count for what China is doing and how it is doing it is much much lower, the negative impacts are much more limited.⁶

³ Against Anarchism (In Principle and in Practice, esp. "Left Anarchism" – <https://web.archive.org/https://youtube.com/watch?v=FaTvML9>

⁴ China is Right About Xinjiang – <https://web.archive.org/https://youtube.com/watch?v=hqgPw5Z-Guw>

⁵ Against Anarchism (In Principle and in Practice, esp. "Left Anarchism" – <https://web.archive.org/https://youtube.com/watch?v=FaTvML9>

⁶ China is Right About Xinjiang – <https://web.archive.org/https://youtube.com/watch?v=hqgPw5Z-Guw>

Now, in reality the cultural heritage that was attempted to be destroyed in Afghanistan, if we can even call it genocide really was only aimed at disarming the movement of rural Pashtun's who chose to take up arms only 10 years earlier, naive though that aim was. Rules of engagement listed mosques as protected buildings and a conservative Islamic government was put in place.

China on the other hand is locking up millions, bulldozing it's towns and mosques, subsidizing settlers to move in on mass and take coordinator positions. All in an effort to brainwash the people into thinking of themselves as more like Han Chinese who should praise the state for their glorious history. So the level of cultural destruction is played up in the Afghan case to appear more equal and suffering as a result is played down in the Chinese case to appear better.

And finally a video he did on civil disobedience:

Do you think Israel should be ruled by the sober judgment of a hundred percent of the population participating in a democracy where they have to stand up and make rational arguments where they believe in and consider the law of the Constitution and people get to vote and all this stuff [In short...] do you think it should be a procedural rational democracy involving everyone OR do you think that a small minority of religious fanatics should just be able to go and engage in civil disobedience?

... Civil disobedience is; rule of your society by the most militant minority.⁷

So, this is both a bad comparison and a faulty dilemma, there are obvious degrees of punishment a government can bring down on people breaking the law, any direction the society goes in for either not controlling or bowing to protesters demands is still the moral culpability of the government and those who participated in the party political process. There is an obvious legal and moral difference between victimless civil disobedience aimed at all people being treated equally in society like collecting salt from the sea or staying seated on the bus, to that of stealing another country's resources against international law.

Jumping to conclusions

Theo: So, in the video I'm responding to he claims Singer has said he himself eats meat:

Peter Singer very casually talks about eating meat in his own life when he's in a particular situation at a restaurant other people order meat and he'll eat meat too for no reason⁸

But try as I might googling, I can't find any quote anywhere to back up his claim, so more than likely this is just part of a long running pattern of Eisel jumping to conclusions that fit his narrative.

The reality is not much better, but the fact is Singer acts vegan when at home and vegetarian when travelling and there are no vegan options in the restaurant he wants to visit.

When I'm shopping for myself, it will be vegan. But when I'm travelling and it's hard to get vegan food in some places or whatever, I'll be vegetarian. I won't eat eggs if they're not free-range, but if they're free-range, I will. I won't order a dish that is full of cheese, but I won't worry about, say, whether an Indian vegetable curry was cooked with ghee.

Singer's book 'Animal Liberation' promoted a preference consequentialist view which makes veganism an obligation, it was only later he started to slide towards hedonistic utilitarianism.

I also found a particularly hilarious example of Eisel not watching the video he's responding to the end and making a response video critiquing the guy for burning a poster of Mao Zedong, which

⁷ Civil Disobedience is the Opposite of Democracy. – <https://web.archive.org/https://youtube.com/watch?v=gs9H04BjwrY>

⁸ Sanity vs. Insanity: Veganism vs. Animal Liberation – <https://web.archive.org/https://youtube.com/watch?v=iXghrCRoz5s>

he in fact doesn't do and Serpentza gives the same reasons for not doing it that Eisel is supposedly critiquing him for doing.

So, Serpentza makes a video saying how he couldn't understand at first why Chinese people don't reject putting up posters of Mao Zedong in the same way German people reject putting up posters of Hitler today, but he learnt to sympathise with the fact it's part of the culture to see him simply as a symbol who kept the country strong and independent.

Eisel's response; 'why would you burn a poster of Mao Zedong, you don't have any sympathy for the Chinese people or their culture, you ignorant, unresearched, lazy fuck.' Hahaha

[The communist party are] very good at engineering what people think from a very young age through education and through various different social programs. People still believe that if it wasn't for him, China wouldn't be the way it is, people still believe that he's a great man who maybe made a few small mistakes and if you want to call a few small mistakes murdering millions of people, so be it...

So at the end of the day, am I going to burn this portrait of Mao Zedong? No I'm not going to burn it and you all know why because I respect my Chinese friends, I respect my Chinese family and I respect Chinese people and their opinions, at least to a certain degree. And while I do not agree with everything that this man stands for – and why honestly if I could have met him in real life, just like most people say about you know taking out Hitler, if they met him in real life that's something I would have done – at the end of the day though because I do respect my Chinese friends, family and Chinese people, I will not burn this because it's distasteful, because it shows a massive lack of respect towards the Chinese people.⁹

So he had a video recently in which he featured himself burning a portrait of Mao Zedong. I guess I'll give the link below this video and currently that video has over 200,000 views, so I certainly can't hope to challenge that by reaching an audience of equal size and you know he's reaching that audience because he's telling people something they already want to hear...

I am not in a position to say to people who put his poster on the wall this is all that Mao Zedong represents this is the only thing it represents and this is what it must mean to you...¹⁰

I think it comes down to a trend of Eisel's to jump to conclusions about a person's position so that he can believe he has superior positions to the person and mock them. It's part of a conspiracy mindset. Like believing with confidence the assassination of both Kennedy brothers was done by the CIA and that people like Abby Martin are government agents for Russia.

I'll link to another funny example where he did this to me in the description box down below.¹¹

But yeah, that's the end of the video, all the best, peace.

⁹ Chairman Mao – Why do people worship this MURDERER? By Serpentza – https://youtube.com/watch?v=R_ZCf1dZv6g

¹⁰ Against Serpentza, re: Chairman Mao's Portrait on the Wall – https://web.archive.org/https://youtube.com/watch?v=W_AFVx0S0Zk

¹¹ Eisel's use of faulty comparisons to oversimplify problems. – <https://philosophicalvegan.com/viewtopic.php?p=48462>

9. Source Material

The wonder that was à-bas-le-ciel: Eisel Mazard and his critics.

Eisel and I still get along: here we are talking about Ancient Greece for an hour in a recent podcast, AFTER he got banned from YouTube. <https://open.spotify.com/episode/3vFvyKawA4I3Z51uBLfAUI?si=qbUhSwpLQ>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W_ecxRah7ss

Melissa: Hello. Hi. I'm going to do it. I'm going to reply to the horrible, horrible things that people are saying about me on Reddit. When you're talking about conspiracy theories, you have to keep in mind how unequal people are. Some people insist that the world is flat. Some people insist that the theory of evolution can't possibly be true. We're not all equal. Maybe you want to believe that with enough hard work and research, we could all be equal. The reality is that here and now, we aren't.

Unknown autistic person: Hello. And in this video. I would like to talk about. ABBA Lacey al, I know that you deliberately lie about. About these elements to. To get profit from. From right wing politicians and neoliberal capitalists organizations. I don't have the evidence on me, however.

Melissa: I lived with Eisel for seven years and I saw directly that the people making up conspiracy theories about him are really, genuinely at an intellectual disadvantage. It's a disadvantage, just as stark is when you're looking at conspiracy theories about the earth being flat. It's worse in a sense, because this is a guy with a podcast about Ancient Rome videos and essays about Buddhist philosophy, and the main criticism that he's received has consisted entirely of other people's fantasies. His sex life. And it always has. For 10 years, in which he uploaded more than 2600 videos.

Unknown critic: Yeah, this is just a quick video. Just saying à-bas-le-ciel here is a total scumbag. And he probably does harass people on the Internet. Probably harasses people, little girls and just sour, sour taste. Just, seriously sad person.

Melissa: These are people who can't appreciate 2000 videos about politics, history and philosophy. These are not people who are sophisticated enough to have a contrasting view on any of the controversies that Eisel made videos about. Either as a serious statement or as comedy. These are people who just want to feel morally superior to someone, anyone they want to ridicule someone for having a worse sex life than they have themselves and in. Case it's. Really not true. He's been honest and open about his sex life all these years, and he did nothing wrong. What he did was produce videos that made other people feel intellectually inferior. Because they are. And it made them feel morally inferior because they are and they want revenge. I've seen the emails. I've heard the voices of Isil's critics over the years. They are really mentally disabled. They often mention directly. Their diagnosis and disability in the

course of talking eyes. And of course, it's obvious when they. Their faces. People made-up the lie that Eisel couldn't speak Chinese and that he'd never lived in. They claimed that a video that he'd recorded of himself in China was actually recorded at a Walmart in California. And that the signs had been digitally edited to be in Chinese. There were videos of Eisel speaking Chinese. Wouldn't. They love the made-up story that he was a fraud so much that they disregarded all the evidence and built up this myth around him. The same thing happened in the durian. Court case. Eisel showed exactly how the money had been spent. But people just love the opportunity to claim that he was a bad person. Love the feeling of being morally superior and isolated. Even his book review videos make them feel morally inferior. Aaron Janis is also a useful example.

Erin Janus: Who locked me up? Who locked me up? I'll tell you people who were doing the best they could. That's who love me, OK? I was first medicated because somebody believed that was best for me. I forgive them, but I don't want to do it again.

Melissa: Aaron Janis is crazy. She's been committed to an asylum. Eisel knew how crazy she was. He tried to warn people and he's hated for it. Aaron Janice herself hates him for it. Isles YouTube videos about Aaron were played in hearings to decide whether or not she was sane enough to be released from an asylum. They included evidence of just how serious the extent of her insanity is. I've been in the room when Eisel had a private Skype conversation with Aaron. She tried to bully Eisel by making up lies about his sex life. And she also suggested that she and Eisel had some kind of romantic history together when that wasn't true at all. This is common. People who feel powerless. People who feel stupid, people who feel immoral, they try to go after Eisel for his sexuality. I've seen Aaron Janis do it. I've seen members of my own family do it. They can't debate or dispute anything, philosophically or politically, so they just make up lies about. Sex life. They make up stories that he's secretly some kind of terrible person, and none of it is true. And I know I was in the room with him every day for all these years. I'm the one person who knows what's. And no matter how many times I say what is true and what is false. Nobody believes me. Because they'd rather believe these stupid made-up stories. Can you imagine how frustrating it is for me as a 32 year old woman to have everyone dismiss what I have to say, as if I'm the victim of brainwashing? As if I'm the victim of mind control. They completely ignore what I say. They completely ignore all the evidence and they just sit there with their made-up stories. Won't listen to ISIL, and they also won't listen to me. And there is nobody else you can trust. Only two people know the truth and I am one of them. But nobody cares. If I. Very spontaneously and passionately. They say it's fake. If I break down weeping on camera, they say it's fake. If I make a carefully scripted video, they'll say it's fake too. I've seen this go on for years, even when izel shows screenshots. Even when Eisel shows evidence of what really happened and why. Even when the truth makes sense. Even when Izal and I both tell the truth consistently. People would rather believe. A made-up lie that makes no sense at all. It's crazy. It's incoherent. It's self contradictory. But that is what they want to believe. It really is like Flat Earth theory. The evidence doesn't change anything. My honesty can't help a lot of mentally disabled people are on psychiatric medications and a lot of those people hate Eisel because he's made videos discussing the scientific evidence that those psychiatric medications don't work. This kind of hatred can be really petty, but really intense. As well, makes people feel bad about their excuses for eating meat, taking antidepressants and smoking marijuana. They can't make eyes all feel bad about himself by criticizing his work on the politics of Buddhism or the American constitution, or Ancient Greece or ancient Rome. So they just make something up and it's usually about sex because. They don't have very much. Look at what happened with a natural vegan. She couldn't deal with any of arguments about the philosophy of Peter Singer about pet ownership, about antidepressants. So she just made things up. Plant based news did the same thing. Durian Ryder did the same thing. And those three sources alone reached hundreds of thousands of viewers. I've been standing next to him seeing this pattern again and again, even with things as simple as whether or not he was in China learning Chinese. One side is based on telling the truth. One side is based on telling a lie. Eisel is telling the. I am telling the truth. These people just make up a lie that I'm the victim of abuse. When I'm here telling them I'm not the victim of abuse. These people deny the reality of what I spent so many hours saying.

They are fantasists. They can't accept reality. This inequality will never end. It never gets better. This is how the Internet has changed. My own father would never make a political statement on the Internet because he's afraid people are afraid to say anything on the Internet now. People just live in fear of this mess of mentally disabled people on Reddit and YouTube. A minority of mentally disabled people have made it impossible for intelligent, well-intentioned people to have discussions about politics history. Anything of intellectual substance. I've been on the Internet for. Years. I've seen how it's changed and I've seen how it's changed people. What happened to Eisel could happen to you? What durian rather did to ISIL? Could happen to you. People are afraid to lose 10 years of hard work. It could all be taken away from you just because somebody made-up stupid rumors about you on the Internet being a public intellectual in the face of this kind of hatred is impossible today. The people who have a lot of time to spend on Reddit, YouTube, Twitter or Twitch. They are disproportionately disabled. There used to be a time when people who had families, people who had jobs, people who had active lives. They were online and posting videos to YouTube. That time is over. Now the people who post on YouTube, Tiktok, Reddit, Twitter. They're not in school. They're not employed. A lot of these people are getting disability benefits and a lot of these people are taking psychiatric medications. I've seen these people. I've been with. And read the emails as they've come in. I've listened to the voice messages as. Come in. I've heard him talking with them on Skype. I've seen for myself just how mentally. These people are. You cannot read these statements on Reddit or YouTube with the assumption that these are normal, well-intentioned people. Do you think is the source of these people's information? Only two people were in the room. You heard Isil's perspective. Now you're hearing mine. Anyone who was not in the room is making up a story, and it's not going to stop. Doesn't matter how many videos I. Saying what? The truth is, it doesn't matter. Even with things as simple as Eisel was studying Chinese, it doesn't matter. There will always be mentally disabled, mentally ill people on the Internet making up rumors about your sex life, and that's why nobody wants to be on the Internet in 2025. We've lost the optimism of 2015. Nobody wants to be a public figure anymore. Because they know. Price that they'll have to pay. They know what comes with it.

Reddit vs Reality: the ongoing conspiracy to put Melissa in a straitjacket for speaking her mind.

Including the true story of how (not why) my youtube channel was censored and deleted! In contrast to the conspiracy theorists amongst the Redditors, here is the strange fate of à-bas-le-ciel, as never told before!

Feb 21, 2025

Listen here.

Episode Preview Clip Compilation

Melissa: And you know, they pay attention to every single post you make, every single Instagram story, every single thing that you share. They are like chomping at the bit to just, like, tear you down.

Eisel: Do you think it's working?

Sound Clip: You think because you believe something that entitles you to some kind of special ***** treat. From God. It ain't gonna happen. You reading. The **** they believe some ****, but I don't live off believe I live off of experience. Understand what I'm saying. That's what I'm having here on Earth is real ***** experience. That's what the **** I got to deal with.

Melissa: Nobody ever gives. Nobody ever gives back the very little that. They could, you know, like you, you give and give and give and all these people, they just like, oh wow, this is great. Like thanks, you know, but then they, like, don't do anything for you and you know, so OK. Yeah, you take on the different approach. I am going to find somebody that will collaborate with me on a project and I'll do this at a place where they're performing like they they're performing on stage. They're showing their chops, you know, like what they have to offer. Yeah, okay. Doesn't mean. You're pretending or impersonating a talent agent. Is that you're there to try to? People where also the ****. The **** are you? To. How are we supposed to meet people? We don't drink alcohol, we don't do drugs. We don't go to **** church and apparently we can't meet anybody because they'll just dox us. So be a photo somebody posted on Instagram somewhere of you at a comedy club. Well, So what is the response that you just don't go to the comedy club then? Somebody took a picture of me at a comedy club. Now I'll just never show up there because these losers online are like. Stalking me.

Sound Clip: You know. Used to say he talked about church. Know what he told? They have the magic show over there 9:00 Sunday morning. You can go over if you want. I ain't get what he was mean. A magic show. Know magic. Is you say abracadabra, and the **** door. That's **** magic. Religion is a damn practice. It ain't a **** belief. It's a. It's how you live the ****.

Eisel: The amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere still going up. Here. Every day, you know, so the Cree language is closer to extinction. Every day I mean all the things I cared about politically. I never found one other person who cared about.

Melissa: I remember I made. I made a video like I was by myself. Was recording a video of myself talking about. You know, I remember the title was. You know. Doing **** would have been better than it.

Sound Clip: Yeah.

Melissa: And in that video I was talking about how the shape of my labia is like the most desirable inform. I'm aware of that and. The response from Reddit was basically I need to be put in a straitjacket for saying that.

Sound Clip: So what happened to all of the talents and skills and potential that you got? What the **** did you do with that? You ain't a baby. I see a whole lot of people walking around. Did it just ain't **** happen yet. But they're still depending on something or somebody to do for them what they need to learn how to do for the **** self. That's some real ****. You think? Because you believe something that entitles you to some kind of special **** treat. From God. It ain't gonna happen. You reading it? The **** wrong. He's suffering from a **** mental illness. It's called magical **** thinking. Wait a minute. I believe some ****. So that's gonna protect me.

Podcast Episode Begins

Eisel: You do not choose if you are going to be hated or loved. In this life, ladies and gentlemen, you choose whether to be known or unknown. Let me just add. You don't owe anyone the truth. You get to choose whether or not you tell the truth. You get to choose whether or not you wear a mask. You get to choose whether or not you are going to live a lie. There has always been a consortium of anonymous strangers on the Internet, fascinated by my peculiar brand of disruptive honesty on the Internet. I'm honest about my own life. I'm honest about my own shortcomings. I'm honest about my own failures. Yes. Right. And when I criticize other people, whether I'm criticizing political leaders or obscure personalities in the vegan denim and, you know, criticizing Youtubers or what have you. I am equally brutal in my honesty, so naturally, this consortium of anonymous strangers make great efforts to try to prove that I'm not being honest. At all. So the first example I'm going to address in this era sat. Test. Is, umm, the claim that I've been lying about? My YouTube channel was deleted. Someone who speaks Spanish as a first language posted to Reddit. A series of screenshots. They claim that these are screenshots from an e-mail that YouTube sent to them. Explain. It why? Why should it was deleted?

This is utterly false. I have so much experience over so many years dealing with every aspect and angle of how YouTube censorship works. Trust me, you never get an e-mail from YouTube explaining anything. If you were the one sending in a complaint. I mean, I've been through so many strange scenarios. I've been through situations where I'm complaining about someone else's video and the problem is resolved in my favor and I don't get one. Worried about it? Like for someone else's video is deleted. For violating my privacy or violating some other principle of YouTube, and I've been through situations where someone else has a complaint against me and I win the case. I prove that this is legitimate criticism and I'm not violating anyone's privacy or breaking the other rules. The idea that an anonymous stranger, someone other than the owner of the YouTube channel that's being arraigned, that's being crushed, the idea that you get any e-mail from YouTube explaining anything. Already laughable if you're an insider, if you know the system works. And secondly what the screenshot shows. Is just his or her own interface. It's simply the list of videos that he or she reported he or she complained about. So that's all that is. It looks like a checklist, but it is just a list of receipts. YouTube's interface conforming to him or her in Spanish. We received your complaint about this video. We can see received your complaint about this video. It does not indicate in any way that those specific videos were deleted. For that reason, nor that they were flagged, nor did they want to say, arraigned. They were examined. Was any process. Well, I will.

Again briefly, the truth of what happened and why, with the deletion of my YouTube channel. But philosophically and pragmatically, let's just pause to reflect on why it is I tell the truth at all. I do not believe in your judeo-christian God. I do not believe there is a judge in the sky in heaven. I don't believe in any of the little stories Socrates made-up about going to heaven and hell after you die, which also more or less involve judgment by the gods, the God of the underworld and. On in so many different. This fantasy, you know, has been construed and talked to children again and again. Including Buddhism, in case you didn't know in Buddhism. Heaven and hell, there are these kinds of supernatural reasons to tell the truth. Well, OK. Here I am a nihilist, an atheist, a skeptic, living in a world where I'm surrounded by true believers and nobody can understand. Why it is that I'm so committed to tell the truth, even when it doesn't work in my favor, and that's because they don't live their own lives by those rules. If you sit down to play the game of chess. You are accepting a set of rules. If your opponent gets up to go to the bathroom, gets up to get a cup of coffee, turns their attention away from the chess board. And you move one of the pawns sideways. You break the rules of chess, you take a secret, extra move, you cheat. OK, you're not playing chess anymore. You're playing a different game. What you want to do? Is improve. Your ability to play chess. You play by those rules for that reason. You play by those rules in an ancient sense for the sake of virtuosity in my idiom, in my parlance, you tell the truth. You play by the rules because of the person you want to be the person you want to become five years from now. I've been surrounded by people who lie all my life.

I remember I was especially astonished by this when I was at Cambridge University, England. By the way, I was not a student there. I was just there. I was married to a student, but I wasn't a student myself, but I was meeting and talking to PhD students, professors, academics at different stages of their career, and they're all lying. Constantly and this includes lies about what they've read and what they know and where they've been and what they've accomplished. And got to tell you something. This really is. Like something like you never learn how to play chess or you never improve and how you play chess because you're always cheating because you're always breaking the rules. There's a lot you can learn by telling the truth. And there's actually nothing you can learn at all by being a liar. Except you dig yourself in deeper and deeper to living a life so very beautiful. To this specific complaint that I'm supposedly lying about. Why my YouTube channel got deleted? None of these people on Reddit owe me anything. They don't have a moral commitment to. They don't have a moral commitment to this God that doesn't exist. They are free to lie. And a large percentage of the data that's transferred over the Internet consists of people lying. Sometimes for self-serving reasons, sometimes for self aggrandizing reasons, sometimes for self-destructive reasons, sometimes just to pass the time. Is an aspect of human nature that's so well documented. Nobody's going to dispute this. With me, they don't owe me anything

and I'm not hurt. And I'm not upset by seeing this. Really not. You know, naturally, and I've been very public about this. Been very, very public with this. What has hurt me? What has upset me is seeing people who know me come on the Internet to lie this way. Where it's like, bro, you and I have talked about this. Even if it's just for one hour. You and I have had a one hour phone call about this and you know you can phone me up and talk to me for an hour again. If you're not sure what the truth is, or you want to check like, you can talk anytime. You can send me like you know. You know. You know, again, not even necessarily, that we're friends. But you know, you talk to your when I have that kind of connection with a person, and then you see them. Indulging in this same strange cycle of making up love, being a fantasist. Of course, that's upsetting. And most of the people listening to this podcast now, they will never experience this 'cause their lives are not worth talking about. Nobody's gossiping about them. In case in case you haven't heard this catch phrase before, a lot of people want to disrespect me and my crew, but the fact is, you know my name and I don't know you. It's. It's possible you've heard that rap lyrics somewhere before somewhere. It's possible. All these people on Reddit who claim they hate me, they have heard the sound of my voice for more hours than they've heard the sound of their own brother's voice, their own cousin's voice. They have friends and colleagues and coworkers. They haven't listened to it for that many hours. It's a lot of hours like these people, my voice. And if, if that's all they get out of it is the opportunity to make up all these kinds of fantasies about me. Know it's pathetic, but does it? It upset me. No, not at all. Returning to the subject to this particular example. These screenshots are displayed on Reddit as if they prove that this is the reason why my YouTube channel was deleted. Now, if that were true. Why would I? About it. I'd be delighted to talk about that if it were the truth, or if I had any evidence that it was the truth. Very briefly, the messages I got from YouTube, both the timing of the messages. And the particular videos that were flagged. In the timestamps in those videos. So when they send you these complaints, they tell you the video that's offensive and they give you a moment in time. In the video, all of that indicates to me. That this was a Muslim person, quite possibly in northern India or Pakistan, is this is where, you know, YouTube employs many, many thousands of people and at very low wages to do these jobs. And I just have to say it does seem to me this is someone who. Not understand the English language very well. If I'm wrong, I'm wrong. They were. They were making very strange leaps of influence about what these videos were saying and why, and that they were making these videos. As hate speech against Muslims. But that's the claim is that these are racist against Muslim people. And this happened a significant number of months after Melissa uploaded her videos weeping after there were the videos with Abashex name in the title, so on and so forth. Now. I cannot say to you I never received a single e-mail from YouTube about any of those videos complaining I received one e-mail from YouTube about one video. 1. There was one video that included a very, very small image of Abhishek's wife. And abstracts away is a public figure and these were images and videos you posted publicly. They were on. She's also a YouTube. If you are a YouTuber, uploading YouTube videos. Obviously I should be able to show a screenshot of your YouTube channel. On my YouTube channel. Well, understandably, YouTube didn't see it that. Someone at YouTube looked at that and said look. This woman doesn't deserve to suffer. Or you want to put it Abhishek's wife doesn't deserve to have her image in this video. So that video was uploaded twice and all these people who are supposedly obsessed with me and criticizing me and paying attention to these tiny details in order. To criticize none of you noticed that.

So this is significant several ways. Yeah, YouTube was receiving complaints about all the videos at that time. Who knows how many 100 complaints or how many thousands? Don't know, nobody knows. And YouTube dismissed every single one of those complaints except one, right? Like see, this is the exception that proves the rule. Someone. Hey, Abhishek's wife should never face in this video. These are all decisions made by human beings, regardless of the written. Someone sat there and said, yeah, you know what? You're right. Abhishek wife doesn't deserve to have her picture in this. Yeah. Hey. I say fair. So I reuploaded the video with her photograph. So you see what I'm saying here? Yes, it is quite. 100 people sent in a complaint that the video of Melissa crying. Is somehow harassment against Melissa that she somehow harassing herself by crying on camera. It's totally possible. I don't know. But if 100

people sent in that report, YouTube dismissed all of those. Whereas YouTube sent me a complaint that a comedy video I made criticizing the Muslim YouTuber Hamza Hamza, who is primarily famous for giving advice on sex and dating, he also gives advice about fitness and. Quitting video. A few other things. How to be a real man? OK, that was flagged as hate speech and the time stamp within the video. Was of me crumpling up a piece of paper on which the words were written. Everything you believe in, I crumple up the words. Everything you believe in and throw it in the toilet while saying you might as well crumble up everything you believe in and throw it away. That was the moment marked. So any theory that YouTube decided to delete my channel for reasons unrelated to this show open minded about? I don't care. Somebody has a better idea or better explanation? You would have to explain why the deletion of my channel happened at that time for that stated reason. Where the allegation is racist hate speech. So if you believe it was because of the videos about Melissa procedurally, right, so am I racist against Melissa? Is it hate speech against Melissa? That your claim? And do you have any evidence for that? I say this with detachment. I am telling the truth. 'Cause this is the game of chess I am playing. And I don't violate the rules 'cause. If I do, I would. Violating myself. For me to lie about this would hurt nobody but myself. I don't owe you the truth. And you don't owe the truth to me, stranger. I'm telling the truth here for my own reasons, and everyone involved can learn from this. But looking at it with detachment. Is it possible that some employees at YouTube what they were really angry about was the videos Melissa made where Melissa is crying and then they made-up a plan they hatched a scheme. They plotted and said Okay. How can we delete this guys YouTube channel? And then. Contrived insincerely to claim that my channel was racist against Muslims. You know. Yes, that's possible. But Occam's razor. The principle is that we don't just speculative make speculatively invent things that we have no evidence for. Have no evidence for that. Is it impossible? No, it's not impossible at all. You know, if someone who was an employee of YouTube stepped forward in India and gave an interview and said, yeah, he was the guy on duty that day and he said, you know what? We've been sitting around the office trying to make up an excuse to delete a. CL 'cause we really didn't like this guy's videos with his girlfriend. Stranger things have happened. And then we decided this was the excuse. Yes, that's possible, but I have absolutely no evidence for it. Again, why would I lie about this? Why would I pretend to know something? I don't know. All of us can only learn. Of us can only benefit and make progress. By telling the truth, I'll just end with one example. Do you know what it's like to talk to a university professor who is pretending? To teach you about a book. He or she hasn't read. I know what that's like. I know what it's like to be in the classroom. Someone is trying to teach me. But they don't know the text. Teaching and I do. I've been in a situation many times, so I made my choice in life. I don't want to wear a mask and for a lot of people listen to this if you do. Really stop and think. About what kind of game you're playing. Because it's not chess anymore. Right. It's not chess. If when your opponent isn't looking, you move the pawns sideways.

Melissa: When I was talking to you about some of the comments on Reddit. I I still do sometimes feel upset and. You know, part of what you've said in that introduction is that you feel these people don't owe you the truth. And I understand they don't owe me the truth either. You see people participating in this who have actually spoken with you. The phone. In some cases, they've even met you in person. And that I do sympathize with, and I agree with you when I have. Seeing certain people that we've met in person. Talking about us behind our backs online, yeah, it's upsetting. You know, these are people with bad motivations and they are lying to themselves and they're lying to others. And I think a really good aspect of what you just said is that you know, really ultimately they are hurting themselves. Not even really hurting me. But you know. This always gets back to. You know who do you want to be 5 five years from now? Well, do you want to be a person who lies? Do you want to be a liar and it's just? Yeah, the fact that I did speak honestly and I was telling the truth and then I was met with. You know a mob of people online who called the police on me. It's just not what I was expecting and a lot of the people who do this. They do it under the guise of helping me.

Eisel: Let's just be clear. Doxed you. They disrespected you. They called the police on you. And I would just say to add one more word that starts the letter D they dehumanized you. They really treated

you as if you were a puppet. Being used by me when absolutely nothing could be further from the truth and the whole the whole ugly episode shows the extent to which what you say and what you do is not controlled by me and never has been. It shows just how much scope you have to do all kinds of things I wouldn't approve of.

Melissa: Yeah, exactly. So. Yeah. And talking about one of these comments, you know somebody who was saying that they they wish that they could help me. They were saying, you know, Melissa, I'd talk to you about veganism and I'd talk to you about politics, and I wouldn't try to **** you. You know. I don't know. Do you think any of these people actually want to help me?

Eisel: Look, this comes close to home for me. Because for the last 10 years I have been making YouTube videos and I have been communicating with people on the Internet through e-mail, through Skype, through telephone, you know. In order to help them. So you've seen what that looks like up close for many years.

Melissa: Yeah.

Eisel: You have seen me really genuinely trying to help people young and old, male and female, where I have no other interest and no other agenda and nothing to gain. Many of the examples are just obvious. Someone writes in to me, asking me to counsel them out of committing suicide. You know, and just recently just a couple months ago, one of my viewers begged me to re upload that video. So he wasn't the guy who asked for the help, but he said that periodically, like every few months, he went back and watched that video again for inspiration. So I you know it's. Up to my imagination. Why that video means so much to him, but he said for many years this video about why you should not commit suicide was tremendously meaningful. OK, this is me trying to help you. You know, one of the first videos you and I did together. I was being. I was being very harshly criticized and defamed by another YouTube. And his university education was in film. He was to some extent like a college teacher in film. I know he was a professor, but he taught a film studies, that kind of thing. And so I asked him very simply so. A film critic. Are they trying to hurt people or are they trying to help people? Like are you trying to destroy the film industry? If you're a film critic pointing out what's wrong with it. And that that was the end of his argument. So my point my point here is. Even the criticism. 99% of it is motivated by me trying to help people, and the 1% that isn't I. Admit openly, I say to the view openly. I'm not doing this stuff. This person's 'cause it. It is the exception, the rule rule. By the way, what do I? I mean, I mean, cosmic skeptic mean cosmic skeptic is he may be the only example, but there are. I mean there might be one or two other people in the last 10 years where my criticism was not well-intentioned. I said that to the audience like, look, you know. Here's my agenda, but the vast majority of my trash, these people I was really trying to help them. And man, I can remember a phone call with a vegan activist. She was telling me. She ran up to a complete stranger on the street and punched him in the head as hard as she could. And you know that one incident she could have been in prison, you know, not for the rest of her life. But she could have been prison. A couple of months or a couple years. That's that's. That's aggravated assault, and I remember. So I knew the stuff she was doing as a protester. Knew her character the way she was overwhelmed. This kind of rage. So, you know, don't don't do this to yourself. You know. So anyway, anyways. Can imagine, but yeah, you know for me. For a period of less than fully 10 years, I mean, I don't call it eight years or something, but for quite a long time I was mostly interacting with people on the Internet to help them. And then you know, the turning point comes where I have to admit to myself. Nobody's going to help me and most of the help I wanted, you know, this was something wanted. You know, I didn't want money from the audience. I really didn't. I didn't want sex from the audience. I really didn't. But it's like, look, you know, I upload a book review video like this. I upload these videos talking about history and politics, and here's what I'm getting back from the audience. So that for me was not. And when I say dear listener, here is what I'm getting back from the audience replies.

What we are talking about now on Reddit, you know. Qed. And look, you can't hate stupid people for being stupid. You can't. This is all they're capable of. So you know this babe. I've read very, very few of the comments on Reddit. I have friends who've read all of them. But I think there's only been

two days in which I opened up that Reddit page. I I laughed a lot. I laughed a. Today I was really laughing when you see someone who's taken the time to listen to a video or podcast that's over an hour long. Just to pick out some minute details that they feel they can insult you for, you know. You just have to say, well, this is all they could appreciate about this. You know, this person listened to several hours of me talking about Buddhism just so they could come here on Reddit and and make a comment about the airplane noises in the background of the video. Something. Well. Yeah. Very alien to me. I don't relate to. I don't sympathize with it, but no, I don't hate people for that. Don't get angry about it. You know, these people are demonstrating who they are intellectually, who they are emotionally. And you know, again just what can I tell you? When I was at Cambridge, England, Cambridge University, again, I wasn't a student, just married to a student. There are people there who spend all their time and energy gossiping about the sex lives of the other students and professors. And if you say to them. Yeah, yeah, yeah, I know. I know that guy is having sex with his secretary. Know but tell me. Did you read his PhD? Tell me something. Did you actually read? That article he wrote about Myanmar. Yeah, yeah. But do you know his perspective on Sri Lanka and the hydraulic society? And they know. It's like, well, you spent 10s of thousands of dollars in tuition. And way more than that on rent and sacrificing years of your life to be here. And it sounds to me like you're learning nothing but how to be a gossip, you know. About who do you want to be 5 years from now? You came here to get whatever degree, master's degree, PhD, whatever they're there for, even. You came here and in these five years, your life, instead of making yourself into a real intellectual. You've made yourself into a real scumbag and a real backstabber and a real dirty gossip, you know? And and by the way, in that case, I'm not even saying that. Rumors about the sex lives of the professors and other pH. D students. Not saying they aren't. I knew a lot of horrifying stories about those people, so so that I knew to be true, you know, like I was close enough to the the evidence and the primary source. Knew this stuff was. You know, this includes professors and ta having sex with their students and cheating on their wives and wives, cheating on their husbands. This this kind of thing. It also includes communism, where I was there were no problems with with fascists or Nazis, but lots of communists, lots of left. OK. But you know, do you want to deal with, you know, do you want to wear a mask or do you want to show your real face here? You want to deal with something. Do you want to deal with something imaginary? We what are we doing, guys? And so I just said I was prepared for this. I was prepared for my life on the Internet. By the reality of what my life was like off of the Internet. But the hope is you read a book and upload a book review. The hope is there were a couple other people out there who on the same level you are intellectually and who are going to respond to it intellectually.

Melissa: Right and the disappointing experience is to find that you upload something and there aren't even 5 people who are on that level. And yet the Reddit group is full of people complaining about how. You. Are constantly complaining and whinging about other people being stupid and. You know other people not not being on your level, right?

Eisel: Well, OK. They are. They are demonstrating problem right there. Go on. Yeah.

Melissa: Yeah, I mean, like, why complain about? It's the hope that something will change. I mean, like, why? Why say anything? About that, unless you are kind of hoping. The the You know if you really just want isolation to suffer in silence, like knowing that nobody appreciates his work, you know all that they can do is. Listen to his podcast for hours and hours and hours like you said. You know more than they've even listened to their brother more than they listen to their coworker. Than they've listened to their. More than they've listened to a news broadcaster, you know. Yeah, that's what they're capable of doing. They're capable of picking out small things, and you know, they pay attention to every single post you make, every single Instagram story, every single thing that you share. They're like chomping at the bit to just, like, tear you down.

Eisel: Do do you think it's working? I mean all. You're doing is creating a speaker ramp.

Melissa: I know this is probably being a figure on the Internet. You know, I appreciate your answer. Really. Do. You know, I I just say yeah, you were. Asking for help from the audience and you used to have this take where? Hey, you know, you too can make YouTube videos. You too can. Talk about. You

too can live the life of the mind. And. After years where nobody was helping you, nobody was, you know. Building anything with you or even you know. Making a video about a book that you wrote, you know. Doesn't have to be just unquestioning praise or something. Know it's like. The one person. Yeah, the one person. Yeah. The one person who made videos talking about normal manifestos was Oscar Jenkins. OK, Sam, Sam as well, who? We tried to be friends with well, like I. Yeah. It's just it's it. It's been really tough.

Eisel: I. I gotta tell you a short story here. I want to tell you a short story here. It is. It's going to sound like it's the start of a long story, and it's not. But look, I do not feel underappreciated. I don't. And I'm going to tell you why I don't feel. Underappreciated. I used to be married to a woman with a pH. D. And we would fly around the world and meet other people who had PhDs. Most often in anthropology, sometimes in a in a different field, for example, could be Asian studies or Chinese studies, or something like that. You have no idea how thankless and unrewarding task it is. To go and meet different white people who live in Taiwan and who have pH DS, you know, 1 by 1 face to face. You know, after getting in touch with the Internet and saying, oh, hey, look, I see you study this and this. We have this in this in common. Sorry, I'm saying that this is just my. Many people for more years for many more years I was meeting other scholars of Buddhism, most of whom had pH. DS. Once in a while, you're talking about a Buddhist monk who doesn't have a PhD. But most of these were people with pH D's. Of them were eccentric. With other kinds of credentials, like Madame Secret, she did not have a PhD. She had, I think, a degree in library studies or something. Mostly people with pH D's so during that period of my life. Let me tell you, I felt underappreciated. All the people I meeting feel underappreciated. Like wow, that the level of effort and creative output and years of research that are being put. To get nothing in return or next days horrifying, right? I was familiar with that from that time in my life. I had already decided I didn't want to go down that path. You know, years before. But I saw that. Again and again and again. And boy. Just did the two guys. Thinking of. I met in Taiwan, so these were White, Western English speaking guys. Wow. Like just, you know, you you put in the effort to meet someone that face to face. And the meeting is so negative. You wonder if it's gonna end with a fist fight. Like it's that bad. That. That's how crazy. And stupid and malicious. This guy turns out to be right. None of the Buddhist monks. Tried to start a fist fight with me but like I had a life before before I got on YouTube. Where I just use the Internet to meet people, right? Don't. Go. Hey, with this in common, let's face. And it was terrible. So no, in this phase of my life, I don't feel underappreciated. And innumerable people have written on the Internet or written to me, or made YouTube videos, or made their own media. Innumerable people have talked about how positively my work has influenced their lives, whether that's the books or the videos or the pocket. So you know this. You've seen this people. Writing in and saying how it changed their life and writing publicly. I'm talking about how important these books are. These YouTube videos are how Dan just literally how this changed their life. I don't feel underappreciated at all. The tragedy is. You use the word help. Nobody can help you. I remember an especially beautiful married woman who got in touch with me. This woman was stunningly beautiful and I didn't say anything flirtatious to her, but she did not reveal to me that she was a married woman. Until after I said look. The hell are you really doing here? Like where is. Where is this conversation going? Like what is this? And I remember when she when she revealed that she was married, she said that her husband. Knows about her correspondence with me and he's OK with it and. On the point is this. That woman has nothing to contribute to the Doomed Republic podcast. That woman is not a candidate to be a Co host on a news and politics YouTube show podcast. Or have you? That is a woman who wrote to me from the beginning and she was she was writing to me about her experiences in life being. An incredibly gorgeous woman, and she was the kind of woman who was offered modeling jobs and stuff. And she did. It was really her. It was not a catfish. Is a real person. That's Chris Beard's life. Was writing to me. With absolutely nothing to offer other than sex. And she knew it. And women still write to me that way to this day. And some of them are married and some of them are single. Some of them I don't. So again, this is a great. Of why be honest? It's incredibly depressing to look back at 10 years. And see. OK, so this is what the rest of humanity, you know, had to offer you. And again,

I'm not saying the bar too high here. Not even an intelligent response to. A book review or discussion of vegan politics. All the many other genres of video. So in terms of what people can appreciate and what they have to offer and how they can help. Nope. This is getting into. This is. Into an area of kind of profound disappointment with human nature. There are plenty of people listening to this right now saying that doesn't sound so bad. What are you completely pro people? Your. And tell you that the books are brilliant and change their life. People listen to your YouTube videos and say it's inspiring and it talked about a suicide. Get all this positive feedback. And.

Sound Clip: Emmanuelle.

Eisel: These women, some of them married some of the single truck drivers like that, doesn't sound that doesn't sound all bad. Well. You know. This is my character for me. For me it is bad for me. Is disappoint. But when you say help, nobody in the audience will help you. Know you know, you know what kind of help I wanted. So.

Melissa: Yeah, I mean. The help that people are trying to. Provide me is. I mean, this is one of the. So, you know, I don't have it open at the moment, but you know, I was just reading it earlier. Just the. Was that somebody when we were living in Vic? That somebody would just come up to me at a park and say you can leave like that, that would somehow. So they're trying to help me by breaking us up. OK? And like, there are so many people who have tried to end my relationship with you over the years. You know, that's the form of help that they're offering. And so I I understand like I I totally get you know your experience on the Internet.

Eisel: Let me let me offer. Let me offer contrasting interpretation. Of that statement I read it. I don't think that is someone offering to help you, and I don't think that someone stupid enough to believe that they would or could help you. I think that is a fantasy from someone who watches our lives the same way they watch ATV show. It's their fantasy about what could happen next. In the soap opera, just imagine someone walks up to her in the park and says this one sentence to her, and then it changes the whole direction in life. A fantasy.

Melissa: Yeah, sure. Right. No, no, I think you're right. And like it's just a OK. So what is motivating the the question? I want to ask you is like, you know what is motivating them. Totally am willing to concede that I'm asking the wrong question, but like. No, I think what I'm trying to get here is. I think that they have a fantasy that they will be a better partner for me. Like, I think that a lot of people that have been trying to break me up with you over the years, whether it's you know, man or woman, they think, you know, I'd be better off with them than I am with you izel, you know like. And.

Eisel: I I can think right now I can think of two beautiful young women in Europe. I'll leave it anonymous, but two different women in two different countries in Europe, who both in the fullness of time, revealed that their scheme was to force us to break up. So that this beautiful young woman could seduce me, could take over your position. So I'm just. There may have been other examples I'm not remembering, but I can remember two different beautiful women in Europe. And they were both. Ten years younger than. Or something like that, I don't know.

They were significantly younger than you. I I I. But like you know, they were, they were really a generation removed and that was their fantasy. Fantasy was that they could. You know, offer me a better option and get rid of you. So like is some of that going on for some of the male viewers in the eyes, I guess but you know. I I wouldn't overlook malice as a motive. A lot of people watch TV shows and watch soap operas of malice. Obviously, people want to hate me. Want to punish? People want to hurt me for all the reasons that are stated on my podcast. Everyone hates ozma's hard.

Melissa: All right. So so you're you're saying these these people don't they don't have any interest in me sexually? Know these are people that don't really think that they'll be a better partner for me. It's just that they want me to suffer. Want me to be alone? They want me to be a miserable lonely.

Eisel: Person, some percentage, some percentage are like that, but yes, some percentage have sexual fantasies about you. Some of those Reddit comments, I think you can see transparently, they're they seem to be written by men. Want to sleep with you? But. I mean, you know, what percentage of them are motivated by pure malice rather than a mix of? Envy and ***** fantasy.

Melissa: I don't. I mean like, yes, I do remember, there have been women who have tried to. Take my. I guess they want to be the woman who is beside you in YouTube. They want to be the person who's with and instead of us having an open relationship with them, they don't want that. Want a monogamous relationship with you, which is impossible? You are you are somebody who is always going to have an open relationship. Yeah, it's it's just, yes, that was their fantasy and. Yeah.

Eisel: All of those women approached me with lies and manipulation, so we've now mentioned kind of three women. Not that, but everyone but the married woman I mentioned and those two younger women in Europe. I would never be in a relationship with someone who who began the relationship on the basis of lies and manipulation, but I know a lot about you because you're lying to me right now. Like, you know, like you're not the kind of person. I'd be in an open relationship with or monogamous relationship with with. If this is how you treat men and this how you treat me, if this is your sexual morality. You're not someone I want to have sex with, so the very dishonesty and deception that was built into those relationships from day one. Meant that those were women. Never. I'd never get seriously involved with. But yeah, they. They were acting on a fantasy. But look, you know there's there's no limit to human malice. Not like people run out of malice. At some point. There are people who will hate me forever because of something I said in a video eight years ago about cat food. It's crazy, but that's that's very real. Very deep seated hatred. I remember a whole group of women who hated me because of videos I made talking about the fact that wearing a mask. And holding ATV set showing images of slaughterhouse violence. You know that this doesn't work and this a waste of people's time. And it was a critique of this form of St. activism. Here we are. Whatever 10 years later. Does anyone really doubt that my criticisms were apartment and well-intentioned? I've just had. I've had intense agitation because of book. I did people who will hate me for the rest of my life because of a A well-intentioned. Sincere. You know, analytical book review, and I read the book. Are people who give me a negative review? Never read my. I think they need the same people, you know, but it was very obvious in those book reviews. Was actually quoting the tax. It only get really demonstrated that I read it in detail and taken notes and this is a responsible critique of the book. And there are people who will hate me so intensely. For that the rest of my life. So you know, I mean obviously these are not the worst examples. We've seen people who hate me for unbelievably petty. Reasons that can only be attributed to insanity or mental disability, or a combination of the two. But just as one example, let's address the claim on Reddit. I forget if someone sent me. Someone asked me about it, but somebody posted this claim on Reddit. That I was misrepresenting myself as a talent agent. Now, if you've listened to any of our podcasts, long format videos and discussions about comedy, you will know that this very indirectly relates to something I have said, and it's currently still visible. On on Instagram, it's not that far from the top of my stack of. On Instagram, there's a short video in which I'm discussing in a philosophical and hypothetical way, what is the point. Of going to a vegan protest and what is the point of going to a stand up comedy Club? And I say you go to meet talent, you go to meet people, you go to the comedy club or you go to this vegan event, hoping to meet other people you can work with. Now I'll just be. I wouldn't say that today I'm not even that optimistic anymore. Really not. But that was the positive message I was giving was. Look, if you go to a vegan protest, the protest itself will not save the lives of animals. Will not change the world, not accomplish anything but. It is a kind of social event where you could meet other people whom you could work with in doing something actually productive. And I'm saying the same thing about going to same comedy. Somebody takes that and turns it into an insult. And I think so. They say it first on YouTube. And then it it's recycled from YouTube to Reddit. That I'm going around misrepresenting myself as a as a talent agent. So that's how it works. OK, that's that's just motivated by malice. That's OK. Jealousy and envy. That's it's just someone who wants to hurt me. Now I ain't hurt. And again, older demonstrating is their own stupidity. You know, and they're demonstrating who they are intellectually, who they are emotionally and who they are ethically. We you know every day of your life, that's what you do.

Melissa: Right. So your experience? Is such that over 10 years on YouTube. You didn't meet. A collaborator. You know umm. You didn't meet somebody that you could run a political show with. And

you talked about that for many years. You had a lot of different interests over the years and you did ask the audience to participate, to respond, to write in, to say something. And. You were so disappointed by those replies that. Ultimately it lead you to. Basically concluding that. 99% of the audience is malign and stupid.

Eisel: So look, let's just use two or three examples with a human face on them. I've got more than two or three. Mod vegan. MODVEGAN mod vegan. Obviously, when I was first talking to her, I hoped she could be someone I wouldn't collaborate.

Sound Clip: Yeah.

Eisel: Whatever you want to say, make YouTube videos, make a podcast, news politics, show something. Sky's the limit. I certainly specifically proposed that she and I host a conference at which people would present academic papers, and then we collect the papers together and publish it as a book. So that's collaboration for you, right? Well, you know, she turned out to be. An utterly despicable. Person. Intellectually, emotionally and morally, she showed us. That she is bad. In the fullness of time was over many years. She's an utterly despicable, utterly dishonest person. I didn't know that I found out the hard way. OK. Much shorter time scale. There's this other YouTuber named Sky. A public figure I can. I can use his name too. And he used to have a YouTube channel called Vegan, of course. When I first met him and started. To him. Great. Sky's the limit. Have some kind of collaboration, some kind of cooperation with you? Something positive. You know, I talked to him about moving to a new town so that the four of us could all live in the same city together. So I was literally talking about renting a house and moving all my. So I could live in the same city as this guy, or the same small town as this guy, and we could do YouTube and politics videos together. Don't know how many offers he's gotten like that. But I was those are serious talks. So, you know, coronavirus is ending. We want to move. Do you want to? Think about the different projects we do together. Filmmaking, what you know, I was interested in real, real cinematography, not just YouTube at that time, but whatever. We do podcasts or live streams or other format is OK. This I work with. Well boy, we learn soon enough. You know who is he intellectually? Is he ethically? Who is he? We learned that he is a really bad person. Right. It didn't take long. For him to demonstrate to us what a terrible person was. Yeah, there are other examples, but those two are extraordinary because they were not women trying to have sex with me. And a lot of the other examples. Know my audience gets tired of hearing about it, but that kind of was. That kind of was the source of tension. Like discussions and negotiations are. You know, vitiated by the fact that they they wanna sleep with me. And you know, obviously everything changed. There was a period of life where I was single and I was publicly single. Then my. Was in a committed relationship with you. And some of the same women who'd been circling around before. You saw, you saw things changed. So yeah, and as has already been discussed, that doesn't mean they gave up. You know, it doesn't mean they gave up trying to have me or trying to get rid of you or what have you. Know so. But that's, you know, these are examples I. You know, there was the spirit of season 1, very open to anyone participating. Very open to anyone getting on the phone with. Anyone meeting up with me at any time, and I did that was that was a spirit. Pardon me. That was a spirit of open, active participation, fundamentally similar to what I was doing when I was with my. Wife just going and meeting scholars of Buddhism, meeting people, species and anthropology. Just send a few emails back and forth. This. Okay great, let's meet in person. So instead, you know just being very open to meeting strangers on the Internet after pretty perfunctory introduction. So that was the spirit of season 1. The spirit of season 2 instead was this more, you know, serious and narrowly focused attempt to transition to cinematography in a different format of show demonstrated by my negotiations with Sky. And now one of the spirit of season 3. Know the reality is doomed. Republic is not a club that anyone can join, whereas abalone seal was a balloon is a project had its doors wide open. And complete nut cases like Andreas got to meet his face face to face. And we made time to have long phone conversations with completely worthless people like Sam Sam, formerly known as Little Bubby. He's used different screen names. But we really made the time to talk to those people over the phone and in person. And you know, the door. The door was really open for all those years.

Melissa: Those conversations that I heard and was participating in. You were. You had good intentions. You were open minded. And the conversations that I saw with, you know, people that you met in person to. You you paid for the food all the. Like I'm sorry if that's a stupid thing to say, but it's just like you know. You actually made the effort to meet people where they lived. You, you know, hosted them in effect, you know, you talked about things positively with them. What they could do? You know, I'm thinking of. And thinking multiple people right now, but I remember all of the conversations that you had with them. You were talking about, you know, who do you want to be 5 years from now and it wasn't. You know, I just. It's just, it's so unfair.

Eisel: Trying to make money.

Melissa: Yeah, it's just so unfair that, like you have been putting out this. Yeah.

Eisel: Real attempts to collaborate with hang on.

Melissa: Yeah, and none of the ones I'm not thinking of. You trying to *** **** with any of these people. Know you were trying to collaborate with. You were trying to talk with them about what they do with their their lives in the future. This is the. This is what you get from all of that work. You know, you just get these.

Sound Clip: Thank you.

Melissa: People who have. Oh, God no.

Eisel: I will remind you we met Mohammed in person. Twice. Mohammed appeared on my YouTube channel, even if briefly, but he's one of the few people who have appeared in a YouTube video on Bella Shell other than myself. I remember he was unhappy with his situation at the university and I said, look, you speak several dialects of Arabic. I can get on Kickstarter right now and start taking donations and raise the money. Let's fly to North Africa and make a documentary. Let's make a documentary movie about what's going on in Libya like today. Let's commit to this project. You know he'll be the translator in effect. You know. We'll both take turns on the was it straight up, so look man. I want to make a documentary film about this war in Libya. You you want to get the hell out of your dead end university program. Whatever. You're you're upset. Your life. Let's do it. So I mean, the whole 10 years I was proposing positive things I could do with other people. And to come back to Andreas as an example. Yeah, you know, Andreas suggested to me that I could move into a hippie commune, referred to as a farm, but they don't actually farm anything. And there were some YouTube videos up showing the people that commune. I remember saying to him, look, man, just looking at this YouTube video, I can see right away these people are all drug addicts. I know what you're going to tell me, but like, this is not a farm. This is not a vegan political movement. This is a bunch of drug addicts on vacation. In Hawaii. And you know at that time I was saying, look, I need a career, I need a future. I need a way to support my daughter and have my daughter visit me. Know my daughter was growing up in France, et cetera. Those are my. Like you know what do. Why would you say to me that it's a solution? For my problems to move into this hippie gang and where all these people. Me and it's very likely to be mutual. Like my hostility to drug addiction is about 110%. You've been, by the way, Melissa has seen me socializing with people who use drugs. And you've seen me. Was one live stream we did at an airport that actually showed me being very kind to a guy who was basically a drug addict, you know, and nobody. Was expecting that they thought it was going to freak out her lecture. I'm not. I'm not cruel to these people. But no I. I don't want to live surrounded by by drug addicts. This is the sort of incoherence. Of the political movement that surrounded us for all those years, on the one hand, there are people whose whole lives revolve around taking care of pets, taking care of rats.

Melissa: Yeah.

Eisel: Literally rescuing rats from rat traps and raising them as their pets. That's their whole. Well, you know, we're not going to cooperate with those. You know, there are the various sort of scam artists that I criticized over the. I'm not going to be able to cooperate with James Asbe, you know, I regard someone like Wayne. Young as a totally immoral and ethical patriot, this is known, but like you know. My position in the vegan movement, you know, was one of a nihilistic critic surrounded by people who were true believers. And what did they believe in? Sometimes the answer is ayahuasca. Sometimes the

answer is, you know, antidepressants. Marijuana soon, as the answer is communism. But all these people believed in things I could never believe it. So cooperation between us was impossible. You know that's that's the story of Season 1 and season 2. And now I have nothing to do with the vegan movement. They have nothing to do with. I have nothing to do with the atheist movement. They have nothing to do with me and so. I have to move forward as an intellectual on my own terms. You know, I have to now work in a way that's that's more independent than what I was doing before right now.

Melissa: So this leads me to circle back to what I was trying to say earlier, you know. This. Issue that people have created that now there are results online that you know you are somebody who's. Impersonating a talent agent. Right. OK. And I will also say again. So after all this time, you haven't met somebody to collaborate on a project to make a political show, to make a show, talking about nihilism, atheism, you know, somebody who is. For they fit into. That position, you know, I am not saying that nobody on the Internet who has communicated with you had the same interests. You know, some people have had the same interest in veganism. Some people have have had the same interest in politics, in democracy, in, you know. Ancient Greece, ancient. Okay some people have had the same interest, but they are not.

Sound Clip: That's most absurd example of.

Melissa: All that. Yes, but for various reasons, those people were not able to collaborate with you. And after all this time. You decide you want to attend stand up comedy events with the hope that you might meet somebody who is talented. Who would want to collaborate in some way with you? And this is just like. He kept, he would go to a stand up comedy show to meet somebody that he. Collaborate with. Like you know, it's just. These people are going to be outraged with anything you ***** do. Want you to be miserable and lonely. Want you to be completely by yourself, apparently, and I just don't understand why 'cause you're a wonderful person, like the people that I have seen you interact with. You you host them and you take them like, you know, show them around every single place that we've like lived in. Shown people around and like. Take them out to restaurants and like done way more than any other like person would expect. You know it's, it's just and they've just. Been. Yeah. Nobody ever gives. Nobody ever gives back the very little they they could, you know, like you, you give and give and give and all these people they just like oh wow, this is great. Like thanks, you know, but then they, like, don't do anything for you. And you know, so, OK, yeah. You take on the different approach. I am going to find somebody that will collaborate with me on a project and I'll do this at a place where they're performing like they they're performing on stage. They're showing their chops, you know, like what they have to offer. Yeah. OK. Doesn't mean that you're pretending or impersonating a talent agent. Is that you're there to try to meet? Where else are the? Where the **** are you supposed to go? Am I supposed to meet people? We don't drink alcohol, we don't do drugs. We don't go to ***** church. You know, atheists, we don't go to church to meet people. Where are we going to meet somebody? And apparently we can't meet anybody 'cause. Just dox. There'll be a photo of somebody posted on Instagram somewhere of you at a comedy club. Well, So what is the response that you just don't go to the comedy club then? Somebody took a picture of me at a comedy club. Now I'll just never show up there because these losers online are like stalking me, basically.

Eisel: Look, I sympathize. But you know my emotional reaction to this is. It's totally different. So look I. I agree with the crucial central point you're making, which is that if you are going to meet people as a sober intellectual, you've got to get out and take risks. So you you were there when this example happened? I'm at a comedy club. There's a comedian who also does Kung Fu, and I want to say to him, look. You know, you and I together can make a Kung Fu movie. A comedic satirical Kung Fu movie like that, this can work. This stand up ***** is going nowhere, you know. And since then, it's a couple years ago now, that guy really has gone to work. Mention him and he woo. He got worse and worse. Not. It's actually. It's actually quite a saddening example for me to reflect on. But sure, if you're going to take a risk that way, if you're going to walk up to someone and say, look, I think you're talented, I think you have potential. We could work together and and and do something new and different and original and great. You know, sure. People on the Internet can criticize you or make fun of. Or, you

know, whatever they can write to that guy and say, oh, no, you know, don't don't work with Zell. Don't you realize what he said about cat food? Or or. A lot of people, they're not even vegan, but they hate me because of what I said about Aaron Janis. Like anyone who would say this about Aaron Janis is a monster. Who would say this about cat food is a. You know. So you live with that kind of cloud? Of. You know rumor and intrigue and. You know surrounding that that, that comedian I talked to what? What are you gonna say? Nobody's talking about. Nobody's talking about his sex. Nobody's wondering what he's going to do next this career. So, you know, things. Things could be worse. Yeah, you know, it's a risk. If I meet someone at the gym. You know, this is what's so demoralizing. Just as I described before with these different women, you know, getting in touch with me over the years, you know, if I meet someone at the gym, what are the odds that they are going to be a part of my life? Intellectually, politically, emotionally, ethically, that's just physical attraction. You know, there's just no other basis for that, whereas you know, something like stand up comedy. You learn a lot about a person. Just by listening to them perform comedy, you can very often learn and you know, get. They have this potential and this OK, well, you know, maybe maybe some files in government. But look. So maybe I'm missing the point. I mean, maybe your point is. Just to draw attention to the malice of the of the Redditors. But they're just, they're just playing a game. This is all they have to offer.

Sound Clip: Yeah.

Melissa: You know, it's just so many times how uncharitable people are. Me. Just how they jump to the absolute worst possible motivation that you might have for going to a stand up comedy event. You know that, you know, the assumption is.

Eisel: But for them, that's that's the sport. That's all they can do to amuse themselves is to make up a kind of parallel universe of their own fantasies in which, on this villain, that's that's what they do. Yeah. Yeah. The amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Melissa: Yep.

Eisel: Still going up every day. You know the the Cree language is closer to extinction every day. I mean, all the things I cared about politically, I never found one other person who cared about. There were lots of Chinese women who wanted to have sex with me. All right. Maybe half a billion. OK, I. Not everyone believes it, for whatever. Women find me attractive. Maybe they don't know why themselves, OK. But like again, you remember we had Evan visit us and he was he was really shocked by how much interest women were showing. Randomly, just on the street and in restaurants and stuff that women who were complete strangers were were into me and trying to spark up with me. And I was not alone. I. Not even appear to be single. Whatever it is, what it is, but you know, guess what? Not what I learned Chinese for. Wow. So you put in so many years you work so hard on the language, history and politics, and then you look around and say, wow, is this all there is? You know, so I'm not gonna meet anyone else. When I first started doing YouTube videos. About history and politics of China, I thought I'd have dozens of people, dozens of ambitious intellectuals wanting to talk about politics. China, whether that's, you know, in the current century or. Previous centuries, you know, it's such an enormous issue and it's so pressing. Matters, you know, week by week in matters right now. You know? And no, I mean, as I say, there are women who want to have sex with me. Was absolutely no possibility of any collaboration or cooperation of any other kind. With. Not in Canada. Not in Taiwan, not in Communist China. Not in Europe. It's just so the the intellectual poverty. Of the human race in this generation, the extent to which people live without even the idea. Of being an intellectual, you know, this is something I've had to face up to and and deal with. You know, Chinese politics is a high stakes game. Global warming carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere. It's the highest stakes game of all. You know, like the central, the central moral concern, the central moral concern of veganism itself seems trivial compared to carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere. Like you know, we all, we all have to stand together. Or we're all gonna hang together like this. Is that and again, you know, you've been with me for eight years. Not one person. Ever. No sincere interest. From anyone ever on that topic, whereas I can't count. How many beautiful women want to sleep with me?

Melissa: OK so.

Eisel: No, guys.

Melissa: Right. And and when you talk about that, I think a lot of people are really annoyed by that. Why do you think that is?

Eisel: Because they're stupid and ugly. Look, my experience is other people who are handsome and brilliant. Are not annoyed by. They have their own experience and they talk about it with me and they they relate right away and other women, especially if they're over 30, who are both beautiful and. Highly intelligent or more intelligent than average, they relate to it. Away too. And you know, I had one female. We never had sex. Never. Basically the first day we were talking, she was just smarter than the average woman. She. Look, her whole life, it's been the same way. And she said, you know, she she described me, even the way heterosexual women relate to her, not just men. And, you know, lesbian women and so on. But the way in which. Her looks and her kind of sharpness or being a kind of. Witty, intelligent person and being beautiful. How it shaped everything she did and the motivations of all the people around her, whether they loved her or hated her, and often enough inspired jealousy and cruelty from both women and men. Yep. So no, I mean, the people who are beautiful and brilliant. They relate to it, no? And they have experience of their own to talk about, people who had a period of their life being beautiful and brilliant. They just had 10 years like that or something, you know? Comes and goes being tried. They I think it is people who are both stupid and ugly.

Those are the people who can't cope with such a simple, direct statement. Now look, I I just reiterate. I didn't expect this and I didn't want this. I assume you make YouTube videos talking about global warming and people reply talking you about global warming. Whatever intellectual level they're at, you know. I didn't think you make videos talking about global warming. And people write in and say. They want your penis inside their mouth. Like that. Is the planet we're living on.

Melissa: No, and I I remember I made AI made a video like. I I was. I. By myself, I was recording a video of myself talking about, you know, I remember the title was like, you know, doing ***** **** would have been better than this. OK. And and in that video I was talking about how the shape of my labia is like the most desirable in ****.

Eisel: Yeah.

Melissa: I'm aware of that. And the response from Reddit was basically I need to be put in a straight jacket for saying that that I should be put under a conservatorship, that I should not have access to the Internet at all, just to say that.

Eisel: I'd like to point out the incongruous contrast. There are several legendary YouTube videos of women complaining that they have an ugly vagina. Legendary huge numbers of views. These two very different women sitting there and complaining about their whole how their whole lives have been miserable because they have an ugly vagina. Right. And moral complaining that she's bad at sex. Numbers. Yeah, it's huge support, and apparently this is positive. OK, so only the people who have ugly vaginas get to talk about what it's like going through life with an ugly vagina. Nobody gets to talk about what it's like having a beautiful vagina, or at least a superficially desirable vagina. Whatever beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but that's what we're talking about. No, that that's just. Nobody. Nobody talk with that and like again, any number of men who upload videos talking about feeling sexually inadequate, feeling not desired, feeling ugly or feeling like they're. Bad and better than okay that you know. Misery loves company. That can be good, but if you're if you're saying, look guys, here's my situation. I'm a handsome genius. I don't really have problems with attracting women. I don't have any problem about being great in bed. I my problem is I sleep with women and they tell me that it's the greatest sex they ever had in their life and they. Don't want to live without me and they want to have my baby and this is more my kind of experience, you know? OK, but guess what? You know, my problem is I have political ambitions. I have intellectual ambitions and I have kind of emotional requirements. That this world. Is just incompatible. So that's what I want to talk. And no, you see, you see what these people are capable of hearing and what it is they have to offer in return. All they they can't cope with the fact. I mean, look. To me, God, this is such a memorable story in so many

ways. I remember going into a sex shop in Hong Kong. Is the old days in Hong Kong. With my blonde girlfriend of the time.

Sound Clip: And.

Eisel: We were there trying to buy condoms that would fit me. And I remember my blonde girlfriend was laughing and. They were selling these sex toys for men where the man would have to fit their penis inside it. And she was pointing out that, like, I couldn't like if I tried, but like, I wouldn't be able to put my baby finger inside it. And then like the whole sex toy was like, smaller than the circumference of my penis. And then again, we went over to the desk and you know. There's a language barrier and you're trying to communicate to these Hong Kong Chinese people. Yeah, we need extra large condoms and. Like Oh yeah. Oh, we have all. We have all these great extra large condoms from Japan. And it's like guess. The Japanese definition of extra large is smaller than like the American medium. It's like this is what you're dealing, OK? Am I crazy? Like so. Can men only be honest about sexual inadequacy? Not sexual adequacy. And what I mean again, this whole conversation like I'm totally cool with joking around about it. Totally cool with doing stand up comedy about. It's fine, but sure, over a period of 10 years, of course it grinds you down. That it's like look. I'm trying to do something. Of a much higher intellectual caliber. And there's only so many hours per week I'm willing to talk about my sex life. Guys, this is just this is just not what I got on the Internet. For me a certain number of hours a week. I'm cool with it. I sort of thing I talk about over coffee with friends. But I mean any anyone listening to this who has had coffee with me? No, I mean it's a coffee with. Mazda is a very intellectually intense experience, and it's likely to be several hours of. Profound, passionate discussion about philosophy, politics and history. And yeah, sure, some funny anecdotes about my sex life get get thrown in there. I mean, come on just. I mean, what can I tell you being the babysitter? To sexually inadequate, mentally disabled people on Reddit. That's not why I got on YouTube and that's not why I started doing these podcasts. Not a role. That's not a role I would take on. Even if I were paid a very generous salary and I'm I'm not getting paid at all.

Melissa: Yeah, no, it's just, you know, I was honest in talking about things that I had really, really struggled to be honest about for my entire life. And I was repaid with this, you know, and. It it's mostly people saying that I should be in a straitjacket. Should be. You know what kind of help is the police? Are the police going to? They're going to show up and bring me to a mental facility. That's what you want. That's what these people want. You know, they think that my talking about my sexuality is something so terrible that I shouldn't be allowed to use the Internet at all. And you know it's it's a different response. You know, with how you've talked about. Your sex life because we've had much different experiences sexually in in our lives. OK. But you know what? I do. You've never had a problem with.

Eisel: But Melissa, I think you made a very a very profound point there, a little bit too briefly, right you said. These are. You struggled to be honest about for years. And then you were honest about it on the Internet. And what do you get in response? You know, you get this cruelty, defamation, whatever. What do you get from telling the truth? You know. You get to be a better person. And you know in your case I didn't notice for, say, by telling the truth, you get to know the truth. Because before you were living a lie, you were really living several different. Very strange lives, none of which served any purpose. That's why it was so unexpected. But yeah, you decided to be honest about these contradictions in your sex life. It that way. And yeah, look what you get in return. Like there literally is a better. You get to be 5 years from now. I think you already are a better person now than you were five months ago, you know, or five years ago because you were honest and you deal with it and you learn from it. And before again, I don't need to go into detail on this podcast, but before you were lying to yourself to such an extent that you were really losing track of the truth, like you were like. You and telling your own autobiography would be struggling to separate. Truth from fiction, you know, during those years. Sure, it's. I think it's a huge change. I think you do get something. I think you do benefit, but what do you expect back from the audience? You know, what do you expect back from the people on on Reddit? I did get e-mail. Of appreciation for the videos you made. Know this e-mail and other messages. I mean,

I only got four people writing into me with hostility. I know nobody will believe. But the total number of people who complained everyone negative way. Maybe 4 maybe. Like it's very, very few people were saying this was a terrible thing listed and actually a larger number of people. Were writing in with appreciation, saying that this made them reflect on tragedies that had happened in their own life. Know a different story in each case? But sure, there were a lot of people from different backgrounds. Mostly older women, in some cases, older men saying, hey, you know, thank you for keeping it real, like and you were talking about things that almost nobody has talked about openly on the Internet. Certainly I've never seen anyone. Being honest, no. But those things there so. There's a better person you get. As a result, but the audience is not in a position to reward you any more than they are in a position to reward me for doing a great book review. It's hard to live with, but that's the truth.

Melissa: Yeah. No, I, I, I wish that I would have had more appreciation from the audience for videos that I made about politics. Know I made a video about black Hammer that I heard very little about from anybody. You know, I I do understand.

Eisel: So let's talk about that. One second though, right? So if you make a video, that's brilliant. There were people in the audience who watch it and feel stupid. If you make a video about morality, there are people in the audience who sit there and feel immoral. This this is the. That's why a woman makes a video weeping that she has an ugly vagina. A woman makes a video weeping that she's bad in bed and has a lousy sex life. So on for men. That the audience can reward out of their stupidity out of their inadequacy and out of their. Frankly, you know, but if you make a video saying you have a beautiful vagina, it's the best looking part of your body or whatever. If you just practically reflecting on this and how it's fitted to your sex life. You know anything positive, right? Think about all the people in the audience who are sitting there. Feeling ugly. Like this. This is the pair of. This is what YouTube demonstrated to us again and again for 10 years, and it doesn't have to be that way. It doesn't have to. But for this generation in this culture, that's what you're getting 99% of the time. Anyone who isn't? Self pitying in their mediocrity is torn down and denounced for being a narcissist. You know you must be a narcissist if you go to university and you're smarter than your professor and you know it. That must be a narcissistic delusion, right?

Melissa: Yeah, that's a that's a serious psychological. It's not actually the case that a lot of people who end up becoming university professors are morons.

Eisel: But you say with you and your sexuality, it's the same thing, but it's just more acute. Like the fantasy that you've seen on Reddit again and again is that these people want you to be a victim. What they want? It doesn't matter how much evidence you provide that you're not a passive victim in any of this. Their fantasy is that that you're a victim. Their your their fantasy is that you are stupid and ugly and hopeless and helpless and weak and passive. That's what they are. And they want to tear anyone down who distinguishes themselves, even with ambition, even with an intellectual video about Aristotle. Did you receive? Oh, my God. Did you receive one message from anyone after the most recent video we did about Aristotle, I believe you received a 0. I. Like we made videos but many years ago. The most recent video that ends with the fire alarm going off. That video about Aristotle. I it's not as if there were any women. On the Internet, who wrote to you through? You know, it doesn't matter e-mail or whatever kind of messaging and said, hey, I want to let you know it meant a lot to me to hear you putting in the effort. You know, you putting in all this effort to read and analyze Aristotle and then come on YouTube and discuss it with your boyfriend. Not one. And look at all. Morons on Reddit who want to tear you down. That. That's what you owe them. You're just a threat to their their sense, not even their sense of self esteem. Their sense that the whole world should just wallow in this mix of self pity. And self righteousness while accomplishing nothing. That's just be really that is ultimately the greatest enemy of the vegan movement, right? Like nobody can deal with veganism 'cause, they're so preoccupied. With this toxic mixture of self pity and self righteousness. All right, let's put a pin in it there.

Melissa: Yeah, if you have anything else to say. I'm. I'm open. I'm all ears.

Eisel: I didn't see the reality of human nature. Because I only read books written by brilliant people for brilliant people. And you know, within a cinema, you're seeking out those rare, exceptional movies that are pie brilliant people. 4 brilliant people. And I was trying to live my life in that same way. Only in the company of really extraordinarily brilliant and well-intentioned people. So it's very late in my life that I had to face up to the reality of what human nature is. And depending on where you're living, what 99% of people are like maybe 95% of people? Varies a little bit from. Place to place my YouTube channel. Was deleted. Because what I had to say about Islam was offensive to Muslim people. You know what I have to say about Christianity is offensive to Christian people. What I have to say about Buddhism is offensive to Buddhist people. Guess. What I have to say about veganism is offensive to the vast majority of vegans. You know, for 10 years I was on the Internet saying, hey, who else is with me? But you're with me. You are one of the few extraordinary people who looked at the moral and political arguments I was presenting, and you really, deeply agreed with it. You've lived life of the mind for eight years. You've gone from being. A silly girl from you know, the suburbs of Michigan to being someone with some real intellectual acumen and ambition in your 30s. So, naturally, the whole world hates you. This is what it is to be a dissident intellectual. You do not choose to be hated or loved. You choose to be known or unknown. Alright, that's a wrap. That's a wrap.

The Library of Unconventional Lives

Various Authors

A Collaboratively Edited Discussion on the Life & Ideas of Eisel Mazard

First published: February 2025. Last updated: February 2025.

This is a live wiki page that anyone can edit directly by clicking the little writers pen symbol below to join in the discussion. Or, you can join one of these discord or reddit spaces to have discussions and potentially have some of them be added by someone else.

thelul.org