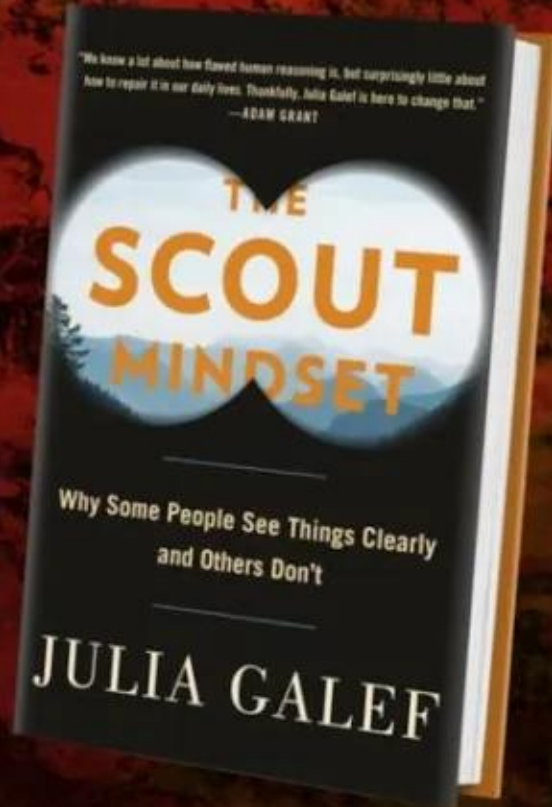


Episode **660**

THE
**SKEPTIC
ZONE**
PODCAST

www.skepticzone.tv

3 June 2021



1
00:00:08,390 --> 00:00:06,550

[Music]

2
00:00:11,190 --> 00:00:08,400
welcome to the skeptic zone

3
00:00:16,900 --> 00:00:11,200
the podcast from australia for science

4
00:00:23,670 --> 00:00:16,910
and reason

5
00:00:27,189 --> 00:00:25,269
welcome to this special episode of the

6
00:00:31,109 --> 00:00:27,199
skeptic zone for the

7
00:00:34,229 --> 00:00:31,119
3rd of june 2021 episode number 600

8
00:00:36,950 --> 00:00:34,239
and 60. in today's extra episode

9
00:00:39,190 --> 00:00:36,960
we present iran segev with his interview

10
00:00:41,350 --> 00:00:39,200
of julia galif who has written the book

11
00:00:43,350 --> 00:00:41,360
the scout mindset you'll find details of

12
00:00:45,670 --> 00:00:43,360
the book and other links

13
00:00:48,150 --> 00:00:45,680

in this week's show notes and also this

14

00:00:50,709 --> 00:00:48,160

interview includes many chapter markers

15

00:00:51,270 --> 00:00:50,719

so you can get to the section you want

16

00:00:53,910 --> 00:00:51,280

or

17

00:00:56,229 --> 00:00:53,920

re-listen again at your leisure so sit

18

00:01:17,190 --> 00:00:56,239

back and relax and enjoy this interview

19

00:01:27,749 --> 00:01:19,990

let's all take this with a grain of salt

20

00:01:29,830 --> 00:01:27,759

here's iran's again

21

00:01:32,390 --> 00:01:29,840

is a public intellectual whose ted talk

22

00:01:34,230 --> 00:01:32,400

has now attracted about 5 million views

23

00:01:36,310 --> 00:01:34,240

she is also the host of a popular

24

00:01:38,310 --> 00:01:36,320

podcast active in the skeptical

25

00:01:39,109 --> 00:01:38,320

community and in the effective altruism

26

00:01:40,789 --> 00:01:39,119

movement

27

00:01:42,950 --> 00:01:40,799

and now also the author of a wonderful

28

00:01:44,950 --> 00:01:42,960

new book the scout mindset

29

00:01:46,950 --> 00:01:44,960

i have recently spoken to julia in what

30

00:01:48,469 --> 00:01:46,960

was meant to be a half hour discussion

31

00:01:50,630 --> 00:01:48,479

but it was impossible to keep to the

32

00:01:52,230 --> 00:01:50,640

time given her fascinating insights and

33

00:01:53,749 --> 00:01:52,240

thoughtful analysis

34

00:01:55,270 --> 00:01:53,759

i hope you enjoyed this interview as

35

00:01:57,749 --> 00:01:55,280

much as i did

36

00:01:59,109 --> 00:01:57,759

welcome to the skeptic zone julia thank

37

00:02:02,069 --> 00:01:59,119

you great to be here

38

00:02:03,270 --> 00:02:02,079

i have a pile of questions but uh about

39

00:02:06,069 --> 00:02:03,280

all kinds of things

40

00:02:07,590 --> 00:02:06,079

uh yeah i have a pile of answers yeah uh

41

00:02:09,749 --> 00:02:07,600

you have a lot on

42

00:02:11,270 --> 00:02:09,759

in your uh history and in your

43

00:02:11,589 --> 00:02:11,280

experience that i would like to discuss

44

00:02:12,949 --> 00:02:11,599

but

45

00:02:15,910 --> 00:02:12,959

let's start with your book the scout

46

00:02:17,510 --> 00:02:15,920

mindset first of all congratulations

47

00:02:19,110 --> 00:02:17,520

it's your first book and it appears to

48

00:02:21,270 --> 00:02:19,120

be doing very well because

49

00:02:23,270 --> 00:02:21,280

when i was looking for it it was sold

50

00:02:24,949 --> 00:02:23,280

out on a couple of online stores oh

51
00:02:26,550 --> 00:02:24,959
oh wow well that's good news and bad

52
00:02:29,110 --> 00:02:26,560
news i guess

53
00:02:30,390 --> 00:02:29,120
but i ended up buying it both on amazon

54
00:02:32,550 --> 00:02:30,400
and on

55
00:02:34,229 --> 00:02:32,560
audible i read it and listened to it and

56
00:02:35,190 --> 00:02:34,239
it's great um it was good to have you in

57
00:02:37,350 --> 00:02:35,200
my ear for

58
00:02:39,589 --> 00:02:37,360
all these hours in the book you refer to

59
00:02:41,830 --> 00:02:39,599
the scout mindset of course but

60
00:02:43,589 --> 00:02:41,840
you contrast it with a soldier mindset

61
00:02:45,910 --> 00:02:43,599
what is the difference between the two

62
00:02:47,110 --> 00:02:45,920
both the scout and soldier mindset are

63
00:02:49,750 --> 00:02:47,120

metaphors for

64

00:02:50,550 --> 00:02:49,760

ways of thinking ways of deciding what

65

00:02:52,229 --> 00:02:50,560

to believe

66

00:02:54,229 --> 00:02:52,239

and this i'll start with a soldier

67

00:02:55,589 --> 00:02:54,239

mindset being in soldier mindset means

68

00:02:58,229 --> 00:02:55,599

being motivated to

69

00:02:59,350 --> 00:02:58,239

defend some pre-existing belief or to

70

00:03:01,750 --> 00:02:59,360

defend some belief you

71

00:03:02,470 --> 00:03:01,760

you want to hold against any evidence

72

00:03:05,030 --> 00:03:02,480

that might

73

00:03:06,710 --> 00:03:05,040

threaten it the reason i chose soldier

74

00:03:08,309 --> 00:03:06,720

as the metaphor is because

75

00:03:10,390 --> 00:03:08,319

this way of reasoning is really very

76

00:03:12,710 --> 00:03:10,400

militaristic we talk about

77

00:03:13,750 --> 00:03:12,720

supporting our beliefs or or buttressing

78

00:03:16,869 --> 00:03:13,760

our positions

79

00:03:18,710 --> 00:03:16,879

we talk about digging in our heels or

80

00:03:20,470 --> 00:03:18,720

bolstering our case these are all the

81

00:03:21,350 --> 00:03:20,480

metaphors as if we are defending a

82

00:03:23,509 --> 00:03:21,360

fortress in a

83

00:03:24,470 --> 00:03:23,519

war and we also of course talk about

84

00:03:26,309 --> 00:03:24,480

going on the offense

85

00:03:28,550 --> 00:03:26,319

about shooting down opposing arguments

86

00:03:30,229 --> 00:03:28,560

or poking holes in someone's logic

87

00:03:32,390 --> 00:03:30,239

so i call this soldier mindset the

88

00:03:33,990 --> 00:03:32,400

official term in the

89

00:03:35,990 --> 00:03:34,000

field of cognitive science is

90

00:03:36,630 --> 00:03:36,000

directionally motivated reasoning which

91

00:03:38,309 --> 00:03:36,640

was

92

00:03:40,309 --> 00:03:38,319

a little less catchy and colorful i

93

00:03:42,789 --> 00:03:40,319

thought so i call it soldier mindset

94

00:03:44,070 --> 00:03:42,799

but my favorite definition for

95

00:03:44,949 --> 00:03:44,080

directionally motivated reasoning or

96

00:03:46,630 --> 00:03:44,959

soldier mindset

97

00:03:48,550 --> 00:03:46,640

comes from a cognitive psychologist

98

00:03:50,869 --> 00:03:48,560

named tom gilovich and the way

99

00:03:52,390 --> 00:03:50,879

he put it is when we're evaluating

100

00:03:55,589 --> 00:03:52,400

something we want to believe

101
00:03:57,670 --> 00:03:55,599
we ask ourselves can we believe this or

102
00:03:59,350 --> 00:03:57,680
can i believe this and we search for any

103
00:04:00,949 --> 00:03:59,360
justification to accept it

104
00:04:02,390 --> 00:04:00,959
whereas if we're evaluating something we

105
00:04:04,229 --> 00:04:02,400
don't want to believe we

106
00:04:05,509 --> 00:04:04,239
instead look at it through the lens of

107
00:04:07,670 --> 00:04:05,519
must i believe this

108
00:04:09,589 --> 00:04:07,680
and look for any excuse to reject it and

109
00:04:11,270 --> 00:04:09,599
so to sum up this is how soldier mindset

110
00:04:13,270 --> 00:04:11,280
works we apply different standards

111
00:04:14,630 --> 00:04:13,280
different standards of evidence or rigor

112
00:04:17,189 --> 00:04:14,640
or which sources we will

113
00:04:18,390 --> 00:04:17,199

accept uh testimony from depending on

114

00:04:20,629 --> 00:04:18,400

whether we want to believe

115

00:04:23,030 --> 00:04:20,639

the conclusion so that's soldier mindset

116

00:04:24,550 --> 00:04:23,040

and then scout mindset was my term for

117

00:04:25,990 --> 00:04:24,560

an alternative to soldier mindset a

118

00:04:26,950 --> 00:04:26,000

different way of thinking about evidence

119

00:04:29,749 --> 00:04:26,960

and what's true

120

00:04:31,189 --> 00:04:29,759

and the scout unlike the soldier is not

121

00:04:32,629 --> 00:04:31,199

trying to attack or defend things

122

00:04:34,230 --> 00:04:32,639

he's trying to go out and just see

123

00:04:36,390 --> 00:04:34,240

what's really there see what's really

124

00:04:38,790 --> 00:04:36,400

true to the best of his abilities and

125

00:04:41,350 --> 00:04:38,800

form as accurate a map as possible

126
00:04:42,230 --> 00:04:41,360
of a situation or an issue so being in

127
00:04:44,390 --> 00:04:42,240
scout mindset

128
00:04:45,830 --> 00:04:44,400
means being or trying to be

129
00:04:48,629 --> 00:04:45,840
intellectually honest

130
00:04:50,150 --> 00:04:48,639
and fair-minded and just curious about

131
00:04:51,670 --> 00:04:50,160
what's actually true

132
00:04:53,270 --> 00:04:51,680
obviously you can never know for sure

133
00:04:54,390 --> 00:04:53,280
what's actually true and and this is

134
00:04:56,870 --> 00:04:54,400
sort of part of the metaphor

135
00:04:58,390 --> 00:04:56,880
that you have this map of reality and

136
00:05:00,150 --> 00:04:58,400
you accept that like all maps it's going

137
00:05:01,430 --> 00:05:00,160
to be incomplete and imperfect and

138
00:05:03,590 --> 00:05:01,440

you're going to have to revise it over

139

00:05:06,550 --> 00:05:03,600

time as you learn new information

140

00:05:08,469 --> 00:05:06,560

that's scott mindset and soldier mindset

141

00:05:10,710 --> 00:05:08,479

does that mean that the scout mindset

142

00:05:12,390 --> 00:05:10,720

does not have motivated reasoning the

143

00:05:13,350 --> 00:05:12,400

technical term for scout mindset in

144

00:05:15,270 --> 00:05:13,360

cognitive science

145

00:05:16,790 --> 00:05:15,280

the non-metaphorical term is accuracy

146

00:05:19,029 --> 00:05:16,800

motivated reasoning so it's

147

00:05:19,990 --> 00:05:19,039

reasoning directed at trying to figure

148

00:05:21,990 --> 00:05:20,000

out what's true

149

00:05:23,430 --> 00:05:22,000

as opposed to soldier mindset which is

150

00:05:24,950 --> 00:05:23,440

reasoning directed at supporting a

151

00:05:26,950 --> 00:05:24,960

predetermined conclusion

152

00:05:28,550 --> 00:05:26,960

they're both motivated in the sense but

153

00:05:29,110 --> 00:05:28,560

um one's motivated towards the truth the

154

00:05:32,150 --> 00:05:29,120

other one

155

00:05:33,990 --> 00:05:32,160

isn't what we colloquially call

156

00:05:35,830 --> 00:05:34,000

motivated reasoning is really what in

157

00:05:37,430 --> 00:05:35,840

the book you refer to as directionally

158

00:05:40,390 --> 00:05:37,440

motivated reasons yeah

159

00:05:42,390 --> 00:05:40,400

it's a bit of a confusing jargon but

160

00:05:44,710 --> 00:05:42,400

yeah what we call motivated reasoning

161

00:05:46,790 --> 00:05:44,720

colloquially is uh is actually shorthand

162

00:05:49,670 --> 00:05:46,800

for directionally motivated reasoning

163

00:05:50,070 --> 00:05:49,680

okay how is the scout mindset different

164

00:05:51,590 --> 00:05:50,080

from

165

00:05:53,189 --> 00:05:51,600

critical thinking and scientific

166

00:05:55,510 --> 00:05:53,199

skepticism we're both

167

00:05:56,710 --> 00:05:55,520

skeptics and and i think that's

168

00:05:58,710 --> 00:05:56,720

definitely to me

169

00:06:00,629 --> 00:05:58,720

uh it sounds when i read the description

170

00:06:02,390 --> 00:06:00,639

of what scout mindset was in the book i

171

00:06:04,309 --> 00:06:02,400

thought that's very much what i try to

172

00:06:04,950 --> 00:06:04,319

apply as part of skepticism how is it

173

00:06:07,110 --> 00:06:04,960

different

174

00:06:08,150 --> 00:06:07,120

there is a lot of overlap i'd point to a

175

00:06:10,710 --> 00:06:08,160

couple important

176

00:06:12,070 --> 00:06:10,720

areas of non-overlap one is that

177

00:06:14,150 --> 00:06:12,080

critical thinking

178

00:06:15,909 --> 00:06:14,160

at least in practice the way it's done

179

00:06:17,909 --> 00:06:15,919

in practice if not in theory

180

00:06:19,110 --> 00:06:17,919

is often like you can apply your

181

00:06:21,270 --> 00:06:19,120

critical thinking

182

00:06:22,950 --> 00:06:21,280

to anything so you could apply your

183

00:06:23,670 --> 00:06:22,960

critical thinking to trying to find

184

00:06:26,870 --> 00:06:23,680

flaws

185

00:06:28,150 --> 00:06:26,880

in claims that you encounter so if you

186

00:06:30,230 --> 00:06:28,160

spend your time

187

00:06:32,309 --> 00:06:30,240

reading claims from people who say they

188

00:06:34,390 --> 00:06:32,319

saw ufos or ghosts or

189

00:06:35,590 --> 00:06:34,400

that astrology works or whatever you

190

00:06:36,309 --> 00:06:35,600

could be really good at critical

191

00:06:37,990 --> 00:06:36,319

thinking

192

00:06:40,070 --> 00:06:38,000

and what that means is you're really

193

00:06:42,110 --> 00:06:40,080

good at pointing out flaws in the logic

194

00:06:43,990 --> 00:06:42,120

or you know potential alternate

195

00:06:44,870 --> 00:06:44,000

explanations for the phenomena that

196

00:06:47,029 --> 00:06:44,880

people are claiming

197

00:06:47,990 --> 00:06:47,039

exist that's not necessarily scout

198

00:06:49,350 --> 00:06:48,000

mindset if you're not

199

00:06:51,110 --> 00:06:49,360

also applying that critical thinking

200

00:06:52,390 --> 00:06:51,120

towards things that you believe so

201
00:06:54,230 --> 00:06:52,400
maybe a shorter way to say that is that

202
00:06:57,510 --> 00:06:54,240
critical thinking is um

203
00:06:59,430 --> 00:06:57,520
is like a method but you still choose

204
00:07:00,710 --> 00:06:59,440
what to use that method on and if you

205
00:07:02,230 --> 00:07:00,720
choose to use that method

206
00:07:03,909 --> 00:07:02,240
on claims that you don't want to believe

207
00:07:06,309 --> 00:07:03,919
then you still end up

208
00:07:08,070 --> 00:07:06,319
in soldier mindset so a method versus

209
00:07:09,189 --> 00:07:08,080
the direction in which you point that

210
00:07:11,029 --> 00:07:09,199
method or something

211
00:07:12,629 --> 00:07:11,039
you might want to reply that you know

212
00:07:14,550 --> 00:07:12,639
critical thinking is supposed to be

213
00:07:15,670 --> 00:07:14,560

applied to everything including things

214

00:07:16,309 --> 00:07:15,680

that you know beliefs that you hold

215

00:07:17,909 --> 00:07:16,319

dearly

216

00:07:19,749 --> 00:07:17,919

and so that's why i kind of said well

217

00:07:21,350 --> 00:07:19,759

you know in theory that might be true

218

00:07:22,950 --> 00:07:21,360

but in practice the way i see a lot of

219

00:07:24,550 --> 00:07:22,960

people applying critical thinking is is

220

00:07:25,430 --> 00:07:24,560

in this kind of one-sided way towards

221

00:07:27,510 --> 00:07:25,440

claims that

222

00:07:29,110 --> 00:07:27,520

they were hoping to debunk anyway it

223

00:07:29,749 --> 00:07:29,120

sounds to me like basically what you're

224

00:07:32,550 --> 00:07:29,759

talking about

225

00:07:34,550 --> 00:07:32,560

or the way you see it is that skepticism

226

00:07:36,870 --> 00:07:34,560

or critical thinking is more about

227

00:07:38,710 --> 00:07:36,880

debunking claims rather than assessing

228

00:07:41,670 --> 00:07:38,720

evidence more holistically

229

00:07:42,390 --> 00:07:41,680

is that a fair uh i think that's not

230

00:07:44,629 --> 00:07:42,400

wrong

231

00:07:46,469 --> 00:07:44,639

well it's it's more about what claims

232

00:07:47,110 --> 00:07:46,479

you're focusing your critical thinking

233

00:07:50,390 --> 00:07:47,120

on

234

00:07:53,350 --> 00:07:50,400

of time debunking

235

00:07:54,469 --> 00:07:53,360

pseudoscientific claims and suppose he's

236

00:07:56,869 --> 00:07:54,479

actually

237

00:07:58,469 --> 00:07:56,879

pretty good about saying well this claim

238

00:07:59,270 --> 00:07:58,479

i can thoroughly debunk this other claim

239

00:08:01,110 --> 00:07:59,280

i'm not so sure

240

00:08:02,869 --> 00:08:01,120

maybe it's false i'm i'm not positive

241

00:08:04,390 --> 00:08:02,879

he's not just blindly rejecting every

242

00:08:06,710 --> 00:08:04,400

single claim and that's good

243

00:08:07,749 --> 00:08:06,720

but he never actually turns that

244

00:08:10,469 --> 00:08:07,759

critical lens on

245

00:08:11,990 --> 00:08:10,479

say his political beliefs or his belief

246

00:08:14,070 --> 00:08:12,000

that he's right in arguments about his

247

00:08:15,670 --> 00:08:14,080

relationship or something like that

248

00:08:17,749 --> 00:08:15,680

because he just doesn't want to he'd

249

00:08:19,270 --> 00:08:17,759

much rather just stay secure in his

250

00:08:20,390 --> 00:08:19,280

conviction that he's always right about

251

00:08:21,909 --> 00:08:20,400

politics or

252

00:08:23,430 --> 00:08:21,919

relationships or whatever i would call

253

00:08:23,909 --> 00:08:23,440

that a failure of scout mindset even

254

00:08:25,990 --> 00:08:23,919

though he

255

00:08:27,029 --> 00:08:26,000

clearly has the ability to be a really

256

00:08:28,710 --> 00:08:27,039

good critical thinker

257

00:08:30,629 --> 00:08:28,720

when he wants to be is it more about

258

00:08:34,230 --> 00:08:30,639

than the way the movement has

259

00:08:35,750 --> 00:08:34,240

evolved suppose i suppose

260

00:08:37,269 --> 00:08:35,760

it sounds to me like the way i think

261

00:08:39,029 --> 00:08:37,279

about skepticism i'm not saying i

262

00:08:41,190 --> 00:08:39,039

necessarily apply it but the way i think

263

00:08:43,909 --> 00:08:41,200

about skepticism it read very much like

264

00:08:45,590 --> 00:08:43,919

what scout mind said um is how you

265

00:08:48,630 --> 00:08:45,600

define my scout mindset so

266

00:08:49,750 --> 00:08:48,640

to me it felt at least significant

267

00:08:51,509 --> 00:08:49,760

overlap if not

268

00:08:53,190 --> 00:08:51,519

complete definitely significantly

269

00:08:55,269 --> 00:08:53,200

identical so i'm just wondering

270

00:08:56,550 --> 00:08:55,279

whether the difference is more to do

271

00:08:58,710 --> 00:08:56,560

with just the way

272

00:08:59,829 --> 00:08:58,720

skepticism has evolved as a movement and

273

00:09:02,630 --> 00:08:59,839

as a as a

274

00:09:04,310 --> 00:09:02,640

community i guess i don't know for sure

275

00:09:07,030 --> 00:09:04,320

because i haven't really been

276

00:09:09,030 --> 00:09:07,040

fully immersed since the beginning but i

277

00:09:10,790 --> 00:09:09,040

guess would be that

278

00:09:12,630 --> 00:09:10,800

there have always been lots of people

279

00:09:15,269 --> 00:09:12,640

who are more

280

00:09:17,350 --> 00:09:15,279

enticed to the skeptic movement by the

281

00:09:18,470 --> 00:09:17,360

enjoyment of debunking

282

00:09:20,710 --> 00:09:18,480

of kind of pointing out the ways in

283

00:09:22,150 --> 00:09:20,720

which other people are wrong and less so

284

00:09:22,949 --> 00:09:22,160

on turning that on themselves and asking

285

00:09:25,509 --> 00:09:22,959

themselves the hard

286

00:09:26,790 --> 00:09:25,519

questions uh i mean i've definitely met

287

00:09:27,990 --> 00:09:26,800

people like that i guess i don't have a

288

00:09:29,430 --> 00:09:28,000

strong intuition about whether they've

289

00:09:30,070 --> 00:09:29,440

gotten more or less numerous over the

290

00:09:31,670 --> 00:09:30,080

years

291

00:09:32,870 --> 00:09:31,680

and i want to emphasize that i've met a

292

00:09:33,750 --> 00:09:32,880

bunch of people in the skeptic movement

293

00:09:37,110 --> 00:09:33,760

who i think are

294

00:09:37,509 --> 00:09:37,120

wonderful scouts uh as well but yeah i

295

00:09:39,509 --> 00:09:37,519

think

296

00:09:41,829 --> 00:09:39,519

just inevitably there's something really

297

00:09:43,350 --> 00:09:41,839

fun about debunking other people's wrong

298

00:09:44,949 --> 00:09:43,360

arguments and so of course that's going

299

00:09:46,790 --> 00:09:44,959

to attract a lot of people who

300

00:09:48,870 --> 00:09:46,800

find that appealing one other thing i

301
00:09:50,550 --> 00:09:48,880
wanted to point out area of non-overlap

302
00:09:52,630 --> 00:09:50,560
between scout mindset and

303
00:09:54,070 --> 00:09:52,640
critical thinking is that a lot of the

304
00:09:55,030 --> 00:09:54,080
examples of scout mindset that i talk

305
00:09:58,630 --> 00:09:55,040
about in the book

306
00:10:00,550 --> 00:09:58,640
have to do with kind of being willing to

307
00:10:02,310 --> 00:10:00,560
acknowledge unpleasant or inconvenient

308
00:10:04,550 --> 00:10:02,320
truths to yourself or being willing to

309
00:10:06,389 --> 00:10:04,560
consider unpleasant possibilities like

310
00:10:07,509 --> 00:10:06,399
you know well you know maybe i did

311
00:10:09,590 --> 00:10:07,519
actually screw up maybe i was

312
00:10:12,630 --> 00:10:09,600
responsible at least in part for that

313
00:10:13,509 --> 00:10:12,640

failure at work or maybe i actually did

314

00:10:15,509 --> 00:10:13,519

make a mistake

315

00:10:17,190 --> 00:10:15,519

in quitting my job or getting into this

316

00:10:18,710 --> 00:10:17,200

relationship or whatnot

317

00:10:20,949 --> 00:10:18,720

i guess you could call that critical

318

00:10:22,550 --> 00:10:20,959

thinking but it's more about

319

00:10:24,470 --> 00:10:22,560

sort of emotional strength and

320

00:10:25,590 --> 00:10:24,480

self-awareness or something like that

321

00:10:27,430 --> 00:10:25,600

it's not the kind of thing that usually

322

00:10:27,990 --> 00:10:27,440

comes up in critical thinking classes

323

00:10:29,190 --> 00:10:28,000

but it is

324

00:10:30,949 --> 00:10:29,200

it falls under scott mindset because

325

00:10:32,230 --> 00:10:30,959

it's about actually wanting to know

326

00:10:34,630 --> 00:10:32,240

what's true about

327

00:10:35,990 --> 00:10:34,640

your choices and your life as opposed to

328

00:10:37,030 --> 00:10:36,000

just believing things that are

329

00:10:39,110 --> 00:10:37,040

comforting

330

00:10:41,590 --> 00:10:39,120

i think that i could probably uh

331

00:10:43,350 --> 00:10:41,600

strengthen your position a little bit by

332

00:10:44,550 --> 00:10:43,360

thinking about my own attitude so one of

333

00:10:45,910 --> 00:10:44,560

the things that i always

334

00:10:47,590 --> 00:10:45,920

you know when i talk to people who are

335

00:10:49,269 --> 00:10:47,600

not within the skeptical movement and

336

00:10:50,790 --> 00:10:49,279

you know i tell them about skepticism

337

00:10:52,790 --> 00:10:50,800

and all that because i've been

338

00:10:54,550 --> 00:10:52,800

in it it's part of my part of my

339

00:10:56,069 --> 00:10:54,560

identity in a sense and we'll talk about

340

00:10:57,829 --> 00:10:56,079

identities later on

341

00:10:59,269 --> 00:10:57,839

one of the things i always say is that

342

00:11:01,509 --> 00:10:59,279

it's made me a better person

343

00:11:03,590 --> 00:11:01,519

and one of the ways in which it's made

344

00:11:06,230 --> 00:11:03,600

me a better person is by

345

00:11:06,710 --> 00:11:06,240

making saying i don't know very very

346

00:11:08,949 --> 00:11:06,720

easy

347

00:11:09,829 --> 00:11:08,959

but it's very rare for me to say

348

00:11:11,509 --> 00:11:09,839

something that is

349

00:11:13,190 --> 00:11:11,519

equally true but i just don't say it as

350

00:11:16,710 --> 00:11:13,200

much is that it made

351

00:11:19,990 --> 00:11:16,720

saying i was wrong easier

352

00:11:23,590 --> 00:11:20,000

so the the fact that i emphasize the

353

00:11:26,230 --> 00:11:23,600

being not knowing over being wrong

354

00:11:26,630 --> 00:11:26,240

i suppose it kind of says something

355

00:11:29,350 --> 00:11:26,640

about

356

00:11:31,269 --> 00:11:29,360

my attitude to skepticism it's an

357

00:11:32,230 --> 00:11:31,279

interesting point and uh and i admire

358

00:11:33,990 --> 00:11:32,240

you for making it

359

00:11:35,990 --> 00:11:34,000

but i can think of other explanations

360

00:11:37,829 --> 00:11:36,000

like maybe if you rarely take

361

00:11:39,269 --> 00:11:37,839

confident positions one way or the other

362

00:11:40,870 --> 00:11:39,279

because you recognize that everything is

363

00:11:43,350 --> 00:11:40,880

complicated and it's hard to

364

00:11:44,790 --> 00:11:43,360

know anything with certainty then the

365

00:11:46,150 --> 00:11:44,800

frequency with which you find yourself

366

00:11:47,430 --> 00:11:46,160

saying i was wrong is going to be much

367

00:11:48,630 --> 00:11:47,440

lower than the frequency with which you

368

00:11:51,030 --> 00:11:48,640

say i don't know

369

00:11:52,550 --> 00:11:51,040

does that make sense like yeah yeah yeah

370

00:11:54,949 --> 00:11:52,560

so that could be another reason why you

371

00:11:57,750 --> 00:11:54,959

find yourself focusing on the

372

00:11:59,750 --> 00:11:57,760

don't latter yeah okay and uh another

373

00:12:00,550 --> 00:11:59,760

thing is that the subtitle of the book

374

00:12:02,389 --> 00:12:00,560

is why people

375

00:12:03,990 --> 00:12:02,399

why some people see things clearly and

376

00:12:05,350 --> 00:12:04,000

others don't yeah

377

00:12:07,430 --> 00:12:05,360

that would put the book firmly in the

378

00:12:09,430 --> 00:12:07,440

reference section but i found it to be

379

00:12:11,670 --> 00:12:09,440

very much a self-help book

380

00:12:12,470 --> 00:12:11,680

albeit a much more nuanced and careful

381

00:12:14,870 --> 00:12:12,480

one

382

00:12:15,590 --> 00:12:14,880

than what's common in that field how do

383

00:12:16,710 --> 00:12:15,600

you see it

384

00:12:18,790 --> 00:12:16,720

well you could look at it either way

385

00:12:19,910 --> 00:12:18,800

really because throughout the book i'm

386

00:12:22,230 --> 00:12:19,920

pointing out

387

00:12:23,590 --> 00:12:22,240

the things that make it make it easier

388

00:12:24,069 --> 00:12:23,600

to be in scout mindset versus soldier

389

00:12:25,750 --> 00:12:24,079

mindset

390

00:12:27,190 --> 00:12:25,760

or the things about your environment

391

00:12:29,509 --> 00:12:27,200

that push you more towards scout mindset

392

00:12:31,350 --> 00:12:29,519

are more towards soldier mindset so

393

00:12:33,509 --> 00:12:31,360

you know i talk about identity which you

394

00:12:36,069 --> 00:12:33,519

brought up earlier um and how

395

00:12:38,150 --> 00:12:36,079

more strongly you hold your identity as

396

00:12:39,910 --> 00:12:38,160

a you know democrat or as a effective

397

00:12:40,710 --> 00:12:39,920

altruist or a skeptic the harder it is

398

00:12:42,389 --> 00:12:40,720

for you to think

399

00:12:44,389 --> 00:12:42,399

clearly and objectively about beliefs

400

00:12:46,389 --> 00:12:44,399

that are related to that identity

401
00:12:48,550 --> 00:12:46,399
that's one criteria that kind of

402
00:12:50,069 --> 00:12:48,560
determines how much of a scout versus a

403
00:12:51,430 --> 00:12:50,079
soldier someone's going to be

404
00:12:53,269 --> 00:12:51,440
at least on a particular topic or a

405
00:12:54,710 --> 00:12:53,279
particular domain is you know how much

406
00:12:57,750 --> 00:12:54,720
is that part of their identity

407
00:12:59,350 --> 00:12:57,760
and then i also talk about things like i

408
00:13:00,710 --> 00:12:59,360
have a whole chapter about

409
00:13:03,269 --> 00:13:00,720
coping with reality without

410
00:13:06,150 --> 00:13:03,279
self-deceiving and i point out that

411
00:13:07,829 --> 00:13:06,160
one important thing that people do that

412
00:13:08,629 --> 00:13:07,839
makes it easier for them to be scouts

413
00:13:10,710 --> 00:13:08,639

about

414

00:13:12,150 --> 00:13:10,720

kind of unpleasant personal truths like

415

00:13:13,829 --> 00:13:12,160

i might have screwed up my

416

00:13:15,110 --> 00:13:13,839

marriage one thing that makes that

417

00:13:16,230 --> 00:13:15,120

easier for some people is that they have

418

00:13:18,150 --> 00:13:16,240

ways of coping

419

00:13:19,910 --> 00:13:18,160

that don't require self-deception so

420

00:13:21,430 --> 00:13:19,920

they have kind of strategies for

421

00:13:23,190 --> 00:13:21,440

comforting themselves like looking at

422

00:13:24,550 --> 00:13:23,200

silver linings or

423

00:13:26,230 --> 00:13:24,560

reminding themselves that things could

424

00:13:27,670 --> 00:13:26,240

be worse than they are those are

425

00:13:29,110 --> 00:13:27,680

strategies for coping with difficult

426

00:13:31,269 --> 00:13:29,120

truths that don't require

427

00:13:32,949 --> 00:13:31,279

you to self-deceive and i point out some

428

00:13:34,629 --> 00:13:32,959

examples of people who

429

00:13:36,150 --> 00:13:34,639

have those strategies and are able to

430

00:13:38,230 --> 00:13:36,160

face unpleasant truths

431

00:13:39,269 --> 00:13:38,240

uh and some examples of people who don't

432

00:13:40,790 --> 00:13:39,279

have those strategies and have to

433

00:13:41,430 --> 00:13:40,800

deceive themselves in order to feel

434

00:13:43,189 --> 00:13:41,440

better

435

00:13:44,389 --> 00:13:43,199

i'm answering the why question in a lot

436

00:13:46,629 --> 00:13:44,399

of different ways throughout the book

437

00:13:48,069 --> 00:13:46,639

but it's also a self-help book in that

438

00:13:50,230 --> 00:13:48,079

i'm pointing out kind of actionable

439

00:13:51,829 --> 00:13:50,240

differences like you can try to reduce

440

00:13:52,949 --> 00:13:51,839

the strength of your identity in these

441

00:13:53,829 --> 00:13:52,959

different ways and that'll help you be

442

00:13:56,949 --> 00:13:53,839

more of a scout

443

00:13:58,550 --> 00:13:56,959

or you can try to develop this toolkit

444

00:13:59,829 --> 00:13:58,560

of coping strategies that don't require

445

00:14:00,870 --> 00:13:59,839

self-deception

446

00:14:02,389 --> 00:14:00,880

and that'll help you become more of a

447

00:14:03,990 --> 00:14:02,399

scout to me it seems like two sides of

448

00:14:07,269 --> 00:14:04,000

the same coin does that not

449

00:14:10,550 --> 00:14:07,279

seem true to you yeah it does

450

00:14:11,030 --> 00:14:10,560

okay yeah i was just wondering uh what

451
00:14:14,949 --> 00:14:11,040
your

452
00:14:18,629 --> 00:14:14,959
i found the book

453
00:14:21,910 --> 00:14:18,639
extremely usable to the point of

454
00:14:24,949 --> 00:14:21,920
being transformative and i think i think

455
00:14:26,550 --> 00:14:24,959
what i will find is that i will

456
00:14:27,269 --> 00:14:26,560
absolutely be recommending it to people

457
00:14:29,430 --> 00:14:27,279
and i

458
00:14:31,269 --> 00:14:29,440
already i'm doing it through this

459
00:14:32,230 --> 00:14:31,279
recording there's no question in my mind

460
00:14:35,430 --> 00:14:32,240
that if you really

461
00:14:37,189 --> 00:14:35,440
commit yourself to some of the

462
00:14:38,790 --> 00:14:37,199
attitudes and behaviors that you

463
00:14:42,230 --> 00:14:38,800

recommend in the book

464

00:14:44,150 --> 00:14:42,240

you will change your behavior

465

00:14:46,389 --> 00:14:44,160

for the better you will be better for it

466

00:14:46,790 --> 00:14:46,399

so so i absolutely see it as both and

467

00:14:48,629 --> 00:14:46,800

but

468

00:14:50,629 --> 00:14:48,639

on the other hand obviously it clearly

469

00:14:53,509 --> 00:14:50,639

explains the reasons

470

00:14:55,030 --> 00:14:53,519

and the the background for all of these

471

00:14:57,189 --> 00:14:55,040

attitudes behaviors and

472

00:14:58,790 --> 00:14:57,199

modes of thinking which of course for

473

00:15:01,110 --> 00:14:58,800

anybody who's interested

474

00:15:02,790 --> 00:15:01,120

is first of all much much more

475

00:15:04,150 --> 00:15:02,800

persuasive but also simply

476

00:15:06,230 --> 00:15:04,160

much more interesting and makes the book

477

00:15:07,590 --> 00:15:06,240

more readable as an example of how

478

00:15:09,829 --> 00:15:07,600

usable this book is

479

00:15:10,790 --> 00:15:09,839

um in improving one's thinking my

480

00:15:13,990 --> 00:15:10,800

thinking

481

00:15:14,629 --> 00:15:14,000

i'd like to discuss chapter 5 noticing

482

00:15:16,550 --> 00:15:14,639

bias

483

00:15:18,069 --> 00:15:16,560

this is obviously something that also is

484

00:15:18,710 --> 00:15:18,079

you know skeptics focus on a lot of

485

00:15:20,629 --> 00:15:18,720

biases

486

00:15:22,470 --> 00:15:20,639

at the end of the of the chapter you

487

00:15:23,509 --> 00:15:22,480

have a table summarizing the thought

488

00:15:25,990 --> 00:15:23,519

experiments

489

00:15:27,750 --> 00:15:26,000

described in the chapter and which are

490

00:15:28,310 --> 00:15:27,760

designed to help us avoid several common

491

00:15:31,030 --> 00:15:28,320

biases

492

00:15:33,110 --> 00:15:31,040

i actually photocopied that table what

493

00:15:34,949 --> 00:15:33,120

can you tell us about biases

494

00:15:36,949 --> 00:15:34,959

generally and how they affect our

495

00:15:38,870 --> 00:15:36,959

decision making so the word bias can

496

00:15:40,389 --> 00:15:38,880

refer to a lot of different things

497

00:15:42,389 --> 00:15:40,399

like in this chapter i was specifically

498

00:15:45,430 --> 00:15:42,399

talking about bias in the sense of

499

00:15:47,110 --> 00:15:45,440

using a different standard for

500

00:15:48,550 --> 00:15:47,120

claims that you want to reject versus

501
00:15:49,509 --> 00:15:48,560
claims that you want to accept sort of

502
00:15:50,949 --> 00:15:49,519
what i was talking about

503
00:15:52,150 --> 00:15:50,959
earlier with the direction of soldier

504
00:15:53,030 --> 00:15:52,160
minds that are directly motivated

505
00:15:54,790 --> 00:15:53,040
reasoning where

506
00:15:56,550 --> 00:15:54,800
you ask yourself can i accept this for

507
00:15:57,269 --> 00:15:56,560
some claims and must i accept this for

508
00:15:59,670 --> 00:15:57,279
other claims

509
00:16:00,310 --> 00:15:59,680
the point of the noticing bias chapter

510
00:16:02,069 --> 00:16:00,320
was

511
00:16:04,310 --> 00:16:02,079
to practice some thought experiments

512
00:16:06,550 --> 00:16:04,320
that help you kind of compare

513
00:16:07,590 --> 00:16:06,560

these two different worlds try to detect

514

00:16:09,110 --> 00:16:07,600

whether your

515

00:16:10,550 --> 00:16:09,120

standard of evidence or your reaction is

516

00:16:11,430 --> 00:16:10,560

different in those two different worlds

517

00:16:12,629 --> 00:16:11,440

depending on

518

00:16:14,870 --> 00:16:12,639

your motivation in those two different

519

00:16:16,949 --> 00:16:14,880

worlds so just to take an example

520

00:16:19,350 --> 00:16:16,959

one thought experiment i talked about is

521

00:16:22,389 --> 00:16:19,360

the i call it the selective skeptic

522

00:16:23,189 --> 00:16:22,399

test it i'll just start with with an

523

00:16:25,749 --> 00:16:23,199

example of me

524

00:16:26,310 --> 00:16:25,759

using it so when i was writing the book

525

00:16:28,389 --> 00:16:26,320

i would

526

00:16:29,990 --> 00:16:28,399

bookmark a bunch of studies that kind of

527

00:16:30,550 --> 00:16:30,000

supported my point that i wanted to put

528

00:16:31,910 --> 00:16:30,560

in the book

529

00:16:33,509 --> 00:16:31,920

and then i came across a study that

530

00:16:35,030 --> 00:16:33,519

didn't support my point the study

531

00:16:36,629 --> 00:16:35,040

claimed to have found that

532

00:16:38,069 --> 00:16:36,639

soldier mindset makes you successful and

533

00:16:40,230 --> 00:16:38,079

happy in life and

534

00:16:41,749 --> 00:16:40,240

so i read that abstract and my eyes

535

00:16:43,910 --> 00:16:41,759

narrowed and i was like well let's see

536

00:16:45,829 --> 00:16:43,920

how well this methodology section holds

537

00:16:47,670 --> 00:16:45,839

up and i read through it and

538

00:16:48,870 --> 00:16:47,680

and it was in fact a very poorly done

539

00:16:50,389 --> 00:16:48,880

study i found some glaring

540

00:16:52,230 --> 00:16:50,399

methodological flaws

541

00:16:53,670 --> 00:16:52,240

and so i was like great i can dismiss

542

00:16:55,430 --> 00:16:53,680

this and then

543

00:16:56,389 --> 00:16:55,440

i asked myself well suppose it was the

544

00:16:58,069 --> 00:16:56,399

exact same study with the same

545

00:16:59,829 --> 00:16:58,079

methodology but the conclusion was the

546

00:17:01,509 --> 00:16:59,839

opposite and it had found that instead

547

00:17:03,110 --> 00:17:01,519

scout mindset makes you successful and

548

00:17:03,670 --> 00:17:03,120

happy in life what would my reaction

549

00:17:06,069 --> 00:17:03,680

have been

550

00:17:07,110 --> 00:17:06,079

i imagined that world and i realized oh

551
00:17:08,630 --> 00:17:07,120
in that world

552
00:17:10,150 --> 00:17:08,640
i would have said great let's put this

553
00:17:11,829 --> 00:17:10,160
on the list of studies to talk about

554
00:17:13,429 --> 00:17:11,839
in my book and i would not have gone to

555
00:17:14,870 --> 00:17:13,439
the methodology section and scrutinized

556
00:17:16,390 --> 00:17:14,880
it carefully looking for flaws

557
00:17:17,590 --> 00:17:16,400
and so that thought experiment where i

558
00:17:17,990 --> 00:17:17,600
was comparing those two different

559
00:17:19,829 --> 00:17:18,000
possible

560
00:17:21,270 --> 00:17:19,839
worlds one in which the study supports

561
00:17:22,150 --> 00:17:21,280
my view and one which study doesn't

562
00:17:24,230 --> 00:17:22,160
support my view

563
00:17:25,350 --> 00:17:24,240

and noticing oh i'm my reaction would be

564

00:17:27,189 --> 00:17:25,360

very different in those two different

565

00:17:27,669 --> 00:17:27,199

worlds that was kind of an eye-opening

566

00:17:30,150 --> 00:17:27,679

moment

567

00:17:31,990 --> 00:17:30,160

for me to see that i was using this

568

00:17:33,830 --> 00:17:32,000

asymmetric standard of rigor

569

00:17:35,110 --> 00:17:33,840

uh depending on my motivations and so

570

00:17:37,190 --> 00:17:35,120

that caused me to go back and

571

00:17:38,870 --> 00:17:37,200

kind of force myself to go through all

572

00:17:39,669 --> 00:17:38,880

the studies i had bookmarked to include

573

00:17:41,430 --> 00:17:39,679

in the book and

574

00:17:42,870 --> 00:17:41,440

really comb their methodology section

575

00:17:44,390 --> 00:17:42,880

and ask myself you know can i really

576

00:17:45,830 --> 00:17:44,400

justify including this

577

00:17:47,270 --> 00:17:45,840

and for most of those studies

578

00:17:47,990 --> 00:17:47,280

unfortunately the answer was no i didn't

579

00:17:50,150 --> 00:17:48,000

feel like i could

580

00:17:51,430 --> 00:17:50,160

be confident in their conclusions that

581

00:17:53,350 --> 00:17:51,440

is an example of a

582

00:17:54,950 --> 00:17:53,360

type of thought experiment that i think

583

00:17:57,990 --> 00:17:54,960

can help highlight

584

00:18:00,230 --> 00:17:58,000

these really very invisible biases

585

00:18:01,750 --> 00:18:00,240

in or asymmetries in the way that we

586

00:18:02,870 --> 00:18:01,760

react to claims depending on whether we

587

00:18:03,750 --> 00:18:02,880

want to believe them or not

588

00:18:05,990 --> 00:18:03,760

and there are a bunch of other thought

589

00:18:08,470 --> 00:18:06,000

experiments that you can apply to

590

00:18:09,990 --> 00:18:08,480

claims in your personal life uh or claim

591

00:18:11,029 --> 00:18:10,000

political claims but they all have the

592

00:18:13,350 --> 00:18:11,039

same structure where you're

593

00:18:14,710 --> 00:18:13,360

changing one feature of the situation

594

00:18:16,789 --> 00:18:14,720

and noticing

595

00:18:18,630 --> 00:18:16,799

whether your reaction changes it sounds

596

00:18:21,669 --> 00:18:18,640

easy in principle

597

00:18:24,230 --> 00:18:21,679

but i think that that one in particular

598

00:18:25,029 --> 00:18:24,240

sounds to me like it felt to me while

599

00:18:29,110 --> 00:18:25,039

looking through it

600

00:18:31,669 --> 00:18:29,120

it felt particularly hard in the

601
00:18:33,750 --> 00:18:31,679
in the sense of putting yourself in that

602
00:18:36,549 --> 00:18:33,760
position

603
00:18:36,870 --> 00:18:36,559
it's very easy to deceive yourself as

604
00:18:40,710 --> 00:18:36,880
you

605
00:18:42,390 --> 00:18:40,720
through this thought experiment

606
00:18:44,950 --> 00:18:42,400
it's very easy to say oh yeah yeah i'd

607
00:18:46,710 --> 00:18:44,960
still believe it it's probably a

608
00:18:48,549 --> 00:18:46,720
i would say kind of thing that you need

609
00:18:50,230 --> 00:18:48,559
to train yourself into

610
00:18:52,789 --> 00:18:50,240
really putting yourself in in that

611
00:18:55,270 --> 00:18:52,799
mindset where you really believe

612
00:18:56,070 --> 00:18:55,280
that the conclusions are the opposite

613
00:18:58,070 --> 00:18:56,080

for example

614

00:19:00,390 --> 00:18:58,080

in you know when we talk about the two

615

00:19:02,950 --> 00:19:00,400

positions you really believe it

616

00:19:05,110 --> 00:19:02,960

emotionally so that you can probably

617

00:19:06,470 --> 00:19:05,120

judge how your reaction would be

618

00:19:08,789 --> 00:19:06,480

because it's very difficult to judge

619

00:19:10,549 --> 00:19:08,799

what your emotional reaction would be

620

00:19:11,990 --> 00:19:10,559

right yeah i mean and it doesn't have to

621

00:19:12,630 --> 00:19:12,000

be your emotional reaction it can just

622

00:19:16,789 --> 00:19:12,640

be

623

00:19:19,110 --> 00:19:16,799

yeah like would i accept or reject this

624

00:19:21,270 --> 00:19:19,120

and i think you bring up a great point

625

00:19:23,909 --> 00:19:21,280

and i i'm glad you appreciate that it's

626

00:19:24,549 --> 00:19:23,919

it's not so trivial to just introspect

627

00:19:26,230 --> 00:19:24,559

and notice

628

00:19:27,990 --> 00:19:26,240

what your reaction would be and just

629

00:19:31,029 --> 00:19:28,000

assume that that's correct because

630

00:19:32,310 --> 00:19:31,039

introspection is flawed and we can tell

631

00:19:33,750 --> 00:19:32,320

ourselves

632

00:19:35,190 --> 00:19:33,760

something about what our reaction would

633

00:19:36,470 --> 00:19:35,200

be and that's not necessarily the truth

634

00:19:38,950 --> 00:19:36,480

that's all true and excellent

635

00:19:40,230 --> 00:19:38,960

point and something to watch out for one

636

00:19:41,909 --> 00:19:40,240

piece of advice i would give

637

00:19:43,270 --> 00:19:41,919

that i kind of briefly touched on in the

638

00:19:45,590 --> 00:19:43,280

book is that it can help

639

00:19:46,310 --> 00:19:45,600

to make the thought experiment really

640

00:19:48,150 --> 00:19:46,320

concrete

641

00:19:50,150 --> 00:19:48,160

for example instead of instead of asking

642

00:19:51,029 --> 00:19:50,160

yourself would i accept this anecdotal

643

00:19:52,630 --> 00:19:51,039

evidence

644

00:19:54,310 --> 00:19:52,640

if it opposed my side instead of

645

00:19:56,070 --> 00:19:54,320

supporting my side and if it's really

646

00:19:57,510 --> 00:19:56,080

abstract like that it's easy to just lie

647

00:19:59,669 --> 00:19:57,520

to yourself and say well of course i

648

00:20:01,110 --> 00:19:59,679

i wouldn't accept it if it supported i

649

00:20:02,390 --> 00:20:01,120

forget how i constructed that sentence a

650

00:20:03,669 --> 00:20:02,400

second ago but um

651
00:20:05,430 --> 00:20:03,679
but you know of course i would do the

652
00:20:06,950 --> 00:20:05,440
epistemically responsible thing

653
00:20:08,549 --> 00:20:06,960
it's easy to say that in the abstract

654
00:20:09,590 --> 00:20:08,559
but if you pick a concrete example like

655
00:20:12,870 --> 00:20:09,600
okay suppose

656
00:20:15,350 --> 00:20:12,880
i read this anecdotal evidence about

657
00:20:16,630 --> 00:20:15,360
how i don't know feminism was bad

658
00:20:17,510 --> 00:20:16,640
because whatever here's one or two

659
00:20:19,750 --> 00:20:17,520
anecdotes

660
00:20:20,789 --> 00:20:19,760
how would i feel in that like if i read

661
00:20:23,350 --> 00:20:20,799
that claim

662
00:20:24,710 --> 00:20:23,360
would i say like yes i that makes sense

663
00:20:26,950 --> 00:20:24,720

to me or would i say well that's just

664

00:20:28,710 --> 00:20:26,960

two anecdotes you can't trust anecdotes

665

00:20:29,830 --> 00:20:28,720

i think picking a concrete example is

666

00:20:31,190 --> 00:20:29,840

really important in these thought

667

00:20:33,350 --> 00:20:31,200

experiments rather than just

668

00:20:35,669 --> 00:20:33,360

um asking yourself an abstract question

669

00:20:37,990 --> 00:20:35,679

yeah i think it's important to

670

00:20:39,029 --> 00:20:38,000

not assume that it's going to be easy

671

00:20:40,950 --> 00:20:39,039

definitely

672

00:20:42,549 --> 00:20:40,960

yeah i found going through this and

673

00:20:43,590 --> 00:20:42,559

trying to think about situations that

674

00:20:45,110 --> 00:20:43,600

i've encountered

675

00:20:47,029 --> 00:20:45,120

i found that it's definitely it could be

676

00:20:48,070 --> 00:20:47,039

challenging i want to talk about the

677

00:20:50,870 --> 00:20:48,080

specific bias

678

00:20:51,510 --> 00:20:50,880

that you mentioned it's the status quo

679

00:20:53,430 --> 00:20:51,520

bias

680

00:20:54,710 --> 00:20:53,440

where we prefer things as they are

681

00:20:57,190 --> 00:20:54,720

basically

682

00:20:58,310 --> 00:20:57,200

you explain how we should say okay if

683

00:21:01,990 --> 00:20:58,320

the alternative

684

00:21:05,270 --> 00:21:02,000

position were the status

685

00:21:06,230 --> 00:21:05,280

quo would we then want to change to the

686

00:21:09,110 --> 00:21:06,240

current position

687

00:21:09,750 --> 00:21:09,120

do i present that correctly basically

688

00:21:11,590 --> 00:21:09,760

yeah

689

00:21:12,870 --> 00:21:11,600

i would just say it's not necessarily

690

00:21:15,270 --> 00:21:12,880

wrong to prefer things

691

00:21:17,430 --> 00:21:15,280

uh the way they are but but if that's

692

00:21:18,710 --> 00:21:17,440

the only reason why you prefer things

693

00:21:20,549 --> 00:21:18,720

that's that's very good because that

694

00:21:23,909 --> 00:21:20,559

that leads to my question which is

695

00:21:25,430 --> 00:21:23,919

change itself bears a cost i mean for

696

00:21:27,270 --> 00:21:25,440

example you know when we talk about for

697

00:21:27,590 --> 00:21:27,280

example organizations i'm a manager i

698

00:21:29,029 --> 00:21:27,600

work

699

00:21:31,590 --> 00:21:29,039

you know large organizations a lot of

700

00:21:34,470 --> 00:21:31,600

people i spend a lot of

701
00:21:35,750 --> 00:21:34,480
effort and money and people on managing

702
00:21:38,070 --> 00:21:35,760
change by itself

703
00:21:38,870 --> 00:21:38,080
the reason is that people don't like

704
00:21:40,390 --> 00:21:38,880
change and

705
00:21:42,310 --> 00:21:40,400
it takes time for people to get used to

706
00:21:45,510 --> 00:21:42,320
something new and i'm wondering whether

707
00:21:47,510 --> 00:21:45,520
that actually provides a certain bias in

708
00:21:49,510 --> 00:21:47,520
favor of status quo not in the

709
00:21:51,270 --> 00:21:49,520
from the emotional or rational sense but

710
00:21:52,310 --> 00:21:51,280
right from a practical perspective right

711
00:21:55,510 --> 00:21:52,320
that is a great point

712
00:21:58,789 --> 00:21:55,520
the status quo bias thought experiment

713
00:22:01,909 --> 00:21:58,799

is designed to highlight for you that

714

00:22:02,549 --> 00:22:01,919

the only reason you prefer the status

715

00:22:04,070 --> 00:22:02,559

quo

716

00:22:05,830 --> 00:22:04,080

is either that you just kind of

717

00:22:07,510 --> 00:22:05,840

irrationally prefer the status quo

718

00:22:08,950 --> 00:22:07,520

because it's the status quo or because

719

00:22:10,950 --> 00:22:08,960

you don't want the

720

00:22:12,549 --> 00:22:10,960

transaction costs if it's the latter

721

00:22:13,270 --> 00:22:12,559

that could be rational depending on how

722

00:22:15,510 --> 00:22:13,280

significant the

723

00:22:17,029 --> 00:22:15,520

transaction costs are yeah okay so one

724

00:22:17,750 --> 00:22:17,039

example i talk about in the book is

725

00:22:20,710 --> 00:22:17,760

someone

726

00:22:22,149 --> 00:22:20,720

who i actually know a friend of mine who

727

00:22:25,110 --> 00:22:22,159

did this thought experiment

728

00:22:26,549 --> 00:22:25,120

when he was hesitant about moving to the

729

00:22:28,390 --> 00:22:26,559

bay area to

730

00:22:30,630 --> 00:22:28,400

start a well-paying and exciting job

731

00:22:31,830 --> 00:22:30,640

there and he was hesitant because

732

00:22:33,430 --> 00:22:31,840

it would mean moving away from his

733

00:22:34,870 --> 00:22:33,440

friends who had grown up with and so he

734

00:22:36,549 --> 00:22:34,880

did this thought experiment where he

735

00:22:37,750 --> 00:22:36,559

flipped the status quo around and said

736

00:22:39,510 --> 00:22:37,760

well suppose i was already in san

737

00:22:41,270 --> 00:22:39,520

francisco working at this exciting job

738

00:22:43,830 --> 00:22:41,280

but i had an opportunity to move back

739

00:22:46,390 --> 00:22:43,840

home to be closer to my friends

740

00:22:47,190 --> 00:22:46,400

would that seem like a tempting deal and

741

00:22:48,549 --> 00:22:47,200

he realized

742

00:22:49,990 --> 00:22:48,559

no that really wouldn't be tempting at

743

00:22:50,870 --> 00:22:50,000

all i would want to stay in san

744

00:22:52,549 --> 00:22:50,880

francisco

745

00:22:54,310 --> 00:22:52,559

either that could mean that he had been

746

00:22:55,110 --> 00:22:54,320

influenced irrationally by a status quo

747

00:22:57,510 --> 00:22:55,120

bias

748

00:22:59,430 --> 00:22:57,520

or it could mean that he just is a verse

749

00:23:01,909 --> 00:22:59,440

to change for whatever reason could be

750

00:23:02,470 --> 00:23:01,919

fear of risk or it could be just the

751
00:23:03,990 --> 00:23:02,480
effort

752
00:23:05,750 --> 00:23:04,000
of of making a change which is sort of

753
00:23:07,270 --> 00:23:05,760
what you were alluding to earlier

754
00:23:08,630 --> 00:23:07,280
the fact that he got that result in the

755
00:23:09,750 --> 00:23:08,640
thought experiment doesn't prove that

756
00:23:11,430 --> 00:23:09,760
he's being irrational

757
00:23:13,270 --> 00:23:11,440
but it at least highlights to him it

758
00:23:14,230 --> 00:23:13,280
makes it very kind of clear and salient

759
00:23:16,710 --> 00:23:14,240
and explicit

760
00:23:17,270 --> 00:23:16,720
like okay is this transaction cost is

761
00:23:19,430 --> 00:23:17,280
the

762
00:23:20,789 --> 00:23:19,440
cost of change of moving to a new city

763
00:23:22,710 --> 00:23:20,799

is that actually

764

00:23:24,230 --> 00:23:22,720

a good enough reason in my opinion to

765

00:23:24,950 --> 00:23:24,240

not do this thing that seems better to

766

00:23:28,070 --> 00:23:24,960

me

767

00:23:28,950 --> 00:23:28,080

you can ask yourself that question

768

00:23:30,310 --> 00:23:28,960

explicitly

769

00:23:31,909 --> 00:23:30,320

instead of having that be working on

770

00:23:34,149 --> 00:23:31,919

your judgments in the background and not

771

00:23:36,870 --> 00:23:34,159

be able to be consciously aware of it

772

00:23:38,149 --> 00:23:36,880

in the part five you talk at length

773

00:23:40,390 --> 00:23:38,159

about identities in fact you've

774

00:23:42,230 --> 00:23:40,400

dedicated uh three chapters

775

00:23:44,310 --> 00:23:42,240

why are identities an important factor

776

00:23:46,310 --> 00:23:44,320

in adopting this card mindset

777

00:23:47,830 --> 00:23:46,320

i'll just explain what i mean by

778

00:23:50,390 --> 00:23:47,840

identities affecting your

779

00:23:52,149 --> 00:23:50,400

uh your ability to reason people are

780

00:23:54,390 --> 00:23:52,159

already very used to the idea that

781

00:23:56,230 --> 00:23:54,400

you know politics can be part of our

782

00:23:57,669 --> 00:23:56,240

identity you know our political beliefs

783

00:23:59,269 --> 00:23:57,679

our religious beliefs are part of our

784

00:24:00,789 --> 00:23:59,279

identity you're supposed to not talk

785

00:24:01,269 --> 00:24:00,799

about things like politics and religion

786

00:24:02,950 --> 00:24:01,279

on

787

00:24:05,110 --> 00:24:02,960

first dates or at you know social

788

00:24:06,390 --> 00:24:05,120

gatherings and the reason is because

789

00:24:08,390 --> 00:24:06,400

when something's part of our your

790

00:24:09,190 --> 00:24:08,400

identity someone disagreeing with it

791

00:24:12,149 --> 00:24:09,200

feels

792

00:24:13,909 --> 00:24:12,159

like they're you know stomping on your

793

00:24:15,510 --> 00:24:13,919

country's flag or something it's

794

00:24:17,350 --> 00:24:15,520

you get indignant you feel outraged and

795

00:24:18,470 --> 00:24:17,360

offended even just learning that someone

796

00:24:20,310 --> 00:24:18,480

else has a different opinion even if

797

00:24:21,909 --> 00:24:20,320

they're not actively challenging you

798

00:24:24,149 --> 00:24:21,919

it feels like they're on another team

799

00:24:25,909 --> 00:24:24,159

basically and politics and religion are

800

00:24:27,510 --> 00:24:25,919

a couple very common examples but

801
00:24:29,669 --> 00:24:27,520
anything can become part of your

802
00:24:31,269 --> 00:24:29,679
identity so the reason that i spend so

803
00:24:33,590 --> 00:24:31,279
much time in the book on identity

804
00:24:34,710 --> 00:24:33,600
is because so many things can become

805
00:24:36,149 --> 00:24:34,720
part of our identities

806
00:24:37,190 --> 00:24:36,159
and make it hard to reason about what's

807
00:24:38,630 --> 00:24:37,200
happening in the background when

808
00:24:39,350 --> 00:24:38,640
something is part of your identity is

809
00:24:42,149 --> 00:24:39,360
that

810
00:24:43,750 --> 00:24:42,159
a you get defensive when someone

811
00:24:45,510 --> 00:24:43,760
criticizes it so it's hard to think

812
00:24:46,950 --> 00:24:45,520
honestly about criticisms of those

813
00:24:48,710 --> 00:24:46,960

beliefs and be

814

00:24:50,630 --> 00:24:48,720

just in the background when you're

815

00:24:52,230 --> 00:24:50,640

reading or hearing

816

00:24:54,630 --> 00:24:52,240

any information that's relevant to those

817

00:24:56,549 --> 00:24:54,640

beliefs you're kind of unconsciously

818

00:24:58,149 --> 00:24:56,559

searching for things you can use to

819

00:24:59,510 --> 00:24:58,159

support your belief in

820

00:25:01,669 --> 00:24:59,520

argument with other people and the

821

00:25:04,070 --> 00:25:01,679

search process that you're using for

822

00:25:05,669 --> 00:25:04,080

deciding which evidence to pick up is is

823

00:25:07,110 --> 00:25:05,679

really biased and so this doesn't mean

824

00:25:08,789 --> 00:25:07,120

that you shouldn't have anything

825

00:25:10,390 --> 00:25:08,799

in your identity at all that you should

826

00:25:12,789 --> 00:25:10,400

be a completely identity-less

827

00:25:14,149 --> 00:25:12,799

robot but that you should just hold your

828

00:25:14,470 --> 00:25:14,159

identity a little more lightly and try

829

00:25:15,750 --> 00:25:14,480

to

830

00:25:17,590 --> 00:25:15,760

maintain a little more emotional

831

00:25:20,549 --> 00:25:17,600

distance so that you

832

00:25:22,070 --> 00:25:20,559

just keep in mind yes i believe this

833

00:25:23,110 --> 00:25:22,080

strongly or passionately or i think this

834

00:25:26,149 --> 00:25:23,120

is important

835

00:25:28,230 --> 00:25:26,159

but that's contingent that could change

836

00:25:29,269 --> 00:25:28,240

you know if i learned something that

837

00:25:30,789 --> 00:25:29,279

changed my mind

838

00:25:33,029 --> 00:25:30,799

the goal is basically to avoid

839

00:25:34,230 --> 00:25:33,039

supporting the identity just because

840

00:25:36,230 --> 00:25:34,240

it's the identity

841

00:25:37,990 --> 00:25:36,240

um you should only be supporting it

842

00:25:39,269 --> 00:25:38,000

because your current view is that it's

843

00:25:41,510 --> 00:25:39,279

true and important

844

00:25:43,029 --> 00:25:41,520

that's my summary of why identity is

845

00:25:44,390 --> 00:25:43,039

important to pay attention to if you

846

00:25:46,549 --> 00:25:44,400

want to be a scout it sounds like

847

00:25:48,230 --> 00:25:46,559

identity could be a problem for the

848

00:25:49,510 --> 00:25:48,240

scout mindset are there any

849

00:25:52,630 --> 00:25:49,520

are there any ways in which it can

850

00:25:55,110 --> 00:25:52,640

contribute to the scout mindset

851
00:25:56,149 --> 00:25:55,120
yeah so at the end i kind of flip things

852
00:25:57,830 --> 00:25:56,159
around and say

853
00:25:59,430 --> 00:25:57,840
well if they're going to be things that

854
00:26:00,310 --> 00:25:59,440
are part of our identity that we pride

855
00:26:02,390 --> 00:26:00,320
ourselves on

856
00:26:04,149 --> 00:26:02,400
and you know strive to live up to and so

857
00:26:05,750 --> 00:26:04,159
on then why not make

858
00:26:07,830 --> 00:26:05,760
things related to scout mindset part of

859
00:26:09,510 --> 00:26:07,840
your identity so you're priding yourself

860
00:26:11,909 --> 00:26:09,520
on doing the things that make you

861
00:26:13,909 --> 00:26:11,919
more accurate and more truth-seeking you

862
00:26:15,430 --> 00:26:13,919
know congratulating yourself when you

863
00:26:17,590 --> 00:26:15,440

notice you were wrong about something

864

00:26:19,430 --> 00:26:17,600

or feeling good about yourself when you

865

00:26:21,510 --> 00:26:19,440

can accurately

866

00:26:22,870 --> 00:26:21,520

summarize your critic's argument

867

00:26:24,149 --> 00:26:22,880

accurately enough that they

868

00:26:25,590 --> 00:26:24,159

hear your summary and they go oh yes

869

00:26:27,190 --> 00:26:25,600

that is exactly what i'm trying to say

870

00:26:28,630 --> 00:26:27,200

you don't want to

871

00:26:31,110 --> 00:26:28,640

just pat yourself on the back for being

872

00:26:32,710 --> 00:26:31,120

a scout and not do anything to earn it

873

00:26:34,230 --> 00:26:32,720

because that's not actually making you

874

00:26:35,269 --> 00:26:34,240

more accurate it's probably making you

875

00:26:37,110 --> 00:26:35,279

less accurate but

876

00:26:39,029 --> 00:26:37,120

if you pride yourself on doing the

877

00:26:40,789 --> 00:26:39,039

things taking the actions that actually

878

00:26:41,750 --> 00:26:40,799

move you in the direction of truth and

879

00:26:43,990 --> 00:26:41,760

accuracy

880

00:26:45,830 --> 00:26:44,000

then i think that's a really good use of

881

00:26:48,549 --> 00:26:45,840

the identity function of our brains

882

00:26:50,070 --> 00:26:48,559

instead of the all the other uses so

883

00:26:52,789 --> 00:26:50,080

yeah i encourage people

884

00:26:54,149 --> 00:26:52,799

to make true seeking or intellectual

885

00:26:55,909 --> 00:26:54,159

honesty or scout mindset

886

00:26:57,190 --> 00:26:55,919

part of their identity is to try to you

887

00:26:59,830 --> 00:26:57,200

know counteract some of

888

00:27:00,630 --> 00:26:59,840

the other identity effects and do you

889

00:27:03,269 --> 00:27:00,640

think

890

00:27:04,870 --> 00:27:03,279

that scout mindset can be applied to

891

00:27:05,669 --> 00:27:04,880

moral and political questions which

892

00:27:08,789 --> 00:27:05,679

you've kind of

893

00:27:10,549 --> 00:27:08,799

kind of mentioned uh absolutely

894

00:27:11,909 --> 00:27:10,559

yeah i mean i think a lot of my favorite

895

00:27:13,269 --> 00:27:11,919

examples of scout minds that are about

896

00:27:16,310 --> 00:27:13,279

moral and political questions

897

00:27:17,909 --> 00:27:16,320

so i often talk about truth and you know

898

00:27:19,029 --> 00:27:17,919

scout mindset is about trying to see

899

00:27:21,269 --> 00:27:19,039

what's true

900

00:27:22,389 --> 00:27:21,279

and that becomes a bit hairy when you're

901
00:27:24,470 --> 00:27:22,399
talking about

902
00:27:25,430 --> 00:27:24,480
you know your views on moral questions

903
00:27:27,430 --> 00:27:25,440
because

904
00:27:29,430 --> 00:27:27,440
well it's unclear whether there is like

905
00:27:32,310 --> 00:27:29,440
a right answer to moral questions

906
00:27:32,789 --> 00:27:32,320
so in that context the way i would

907
00:27:35,190 --> 00:27:32,799
define

908
00:27:36,310 --> 00:27:35,200
scout mindset is about really just

909
00:27:38,389 --> 00:27:36,320
avoiding the bias

910
00:27:39,669 --> 00:27:38,399
that i was describing earlier in our

911
00:27:40,870 --> 00:27:39,679
conversation so

912
00:27:42,870 --> 00:27:40,880
being in scout mindset about moral

913
00:27:44,310 --> 00:27:42,880

questions would just entail

914

00:27:46,950 --> 00:27:44,320

trying to reason about them in a way

915

00:27:48,870 --> 00:27:46,960

that's not influenced by things like

916

00:27:50,470 --> 00:27:48,880

which answer is most convenient for me

917

00:27:52,950 --> 00:27:50,480

personally that doesn't

918

00:27:54,950 --> 00:27:52,960

get us to one particular correct answer

919

00:27:56,310 --> 00:27:54,960

but at least it eliminates some of the

920

00:27:59,110 --> 00:27:56,320

the ways of reasoning that i think are

921

00:28:00,950 --> 00:27:59,120

kind of more obviously egregiously

922

00:28:02,389 --> 00:28:00,960

biased i don't know when i'm reasoning

923

00:28:03,590 --> 00:28:02,399

about moral questions

924

00:28:05,430 --> 00:28:03,600

i'm not sure it makes sense to say there

925

00:28:06,549 --> 00:28:05,440

is a right answer about moral questions

926
00:28:09,669 --> 00:28:06,559
but at least

927
00:28:12,149 --> 00:28:09,679
i try to do thought experiments

928
00:28:12,870 --> 00:28:12,159
that kind of challenge my current moral

929
00:28:15,669 --> 00:28:12,880
position

930
00:28:16,549 --> 00:28:15,679
and i try to find the best the best

931
00:28:18,549 --> 00:28:16,559
representatives

932
00:28:20,630 --> 00:28:18,559
of moral views that disagree with mine

933
00:28:23,190 --> 00:28:20,640
and i try to

934
00:28:25,190 --> 00:28:23,200
notice whether my like the emotional

935
00:28:27,750 --> 00:28:25,200
texture of my thinking on moral issues

936
00:28:29,350 --> 00:28:27,760
like does it feel like i'm hurriedly

937
00:28:30,950 --> 00:28:29,360
reaching for an answer

938
00:28:32,389 --> 00:28:30,960

that will you know get me to the

939

00:28:34,870 --> 00:28:32,399

conclusion i want or does it feel like

940

00:28:36,549 --> 00:28:34,880

i'm genuinely curious and taking my time

941

00:28:38,630 --> 00:28:36,559

and so these are all criteria that i

942

00:28:39,909 --> 00:28:38,640

think even if you don't think there's a

943

00:28:42,789 --> 00:28:39,919

single right answer

944

00:28:44,230 --> 00:28:42,799

about morality i think it is fair to say

945

00:28:45,110 --> 00:28:44,240

that there's like some conclusions that

946

00:28:47,350 --> 00:28:45,120

are a little more

947

00:28:48,230 --> 00:28:47,360

justified and reasoned than others and

948

00:28:50,470 --> 00:28:48,240

i'm trying to

949

00:28:51,510 --> 00:28:50,480

aim at the former i suppose the

950

00:28:53,510 --> 00:28:51,520

corollary of

951
00:28:55,750 --> 00:28:53,520
that question is uh do you think there's

952
00:28:58,549 --> 00:28:55,760
a correlation or link between

953
00:28:59,430 --> 00:28:58,559
scound versus soldier mindset and

954
00:29:01,990 --> 00:28:59,440
conservatism

955
00:29:03,110 --> 00:29:02,000
versus progressivism uh certainly not a

956
00:29:05,110 --> 00:29:03,120
simple link

957
00:29:07,269 --> 00:29:05,120
in that i can definitely find lots of

958
00:29:09,350 --> 00:29:07,279
examples on both sides of people

959
00:29:12,230 --> 00:29:09,360
being in soldier mindset or in scout

960
00:29:14,950 --> 00:29:12,240
mindset there are definitely theories

961
00:29:16,870 --> 00:29:14,960
most of which come from progressive

962
00:29:18,149 --> 00:29:16,880
social scientists so take this with us

963
00:29:19,750 --> 00:29:18,159

a salt shaker worth of salt but there

964

00:29:22,070 --> 00:29:19,760

are definitely theories that there's

965

00:29:25,110 --> 00:29:22,080

something about conservative ideology

966

00:29:27,830 --> 00:29:25,120

that attracts personality types

967

00:29:28,310 --> 00:29:27,840

who are less inclined to be open-minded

968

00:29:29,909 --> 00:29:28,320

and

969

00:29:31,909 --> 00:29:29,919

question their beliefs or their their

970

00:29:33,830 --> 00:29:31,919

lifestyle or background etc

971

00:29:35,909 --> 00:29:33,840

that seems maybe plausible to me

972

00:29:37,350 --> 00:29:35,919

although the research that claims to

973

00:29:38,870 --> 00:29:37,360

support that

974

00:29:40,230 --> 00:29:38,880

theory is pretty terrible which i

975

00:29:41,430 --> 00:29:40,240

actually talk about in the book but just

976
00:29:43,110 --> 00:29:41,440
because but just because the research

977
00:29:44,789 --> 00:29:43,120
supporting that theory is bad doesn't

978
00:29:46,870 --> 00:29:44,799
mean the claim is necessarily false so

979
00:29:48,149 --> 00:29:46,880
that could be true i don't have strong

980
00:29:49,510 --> 00:29:48,159
intuitions one way or the other and i

981
00:29:50,070 --> 00:29:49,520
don't think we have great evidence about

982
00:29:52,470 --> 00:29:50,080
it

983
00:29:54,389 --> 00:29:52,480
so in the book you mentioned the studies

984
00:29:56,950 --> 00:29:54,399
about the rigidity of the right

985
00:29:57,990 --> 00:29:56,960
and the the problems that right that's

986
00:30:00,870 --> 00:29:58,000
what i was referring to

987
00:30:01,909 --> 00:30:00,880
do you wanna sure the theory is that

988
00:30:04,549 --> 00:30:01,919

conservatives

989

00:30:05,590 --> 00:30:04,559

or people on the right in in the us tend

990

00:30:07,430 --> 00:30:05,600

to have

991

00:30:08,870 --> 00:30:07,440

personalities that are more rigid and

992

00:30:11,990 --> 00:30:08,880

less open-minded

993

00:30:13,029 --> 00:30:12,000

and some of the sort of core research

994

00:30:15,669 --> 00:30:13,039

that claimed to

995

00:30:16,470 --> 00:30:15,679

support this theory the way they

996

00:30:19,430 --> 00:30:16,480

measured

997

00:30:20,389 --> 00:30:19,440

how rigid someone is was by asking

998

00:30:22,549 --> 00:30:20,399

questions like

999

00:30:23,990 --> 00:30:22,559

do you think that women should have the

1000

00:30:25,029 --> 00:30:24,000

right to get an abortion whenever they

1001

00:30:27,350 --> 00:30:25,039

want or

1002

00:30:28,549 --> 00:30:27,360

do you think it's a great thing when

1003

00:30:31,669 --> 00:30:28,559

women

1004

00:30:33,430 --> 00:30:31,679

and gay people challenge the traditional

1005

00:30:35,269 --> 00:30:33,440

values of their societies

1006

00:30:37,110 --> 00:30:35,279

and and forge their own paths et cetera

1007

00:30:38,789 --> 00:30:37,120

or um do you support the death penalty

1008

00:30:40,470 --> 00:30:38,799

and your answers to these questions

1009

00:30:41,669 --> 00:30:40,480

determine how rigid the researchers

1010

00:30:43,269 --> 00:30:41,679

consider you to be

1011

00:30:45,110 --> 00:30:43,279

and of course the problem is that these

1012

00:30:46,630 --> 00:30:45,120

these are very political questions

1013

00:30:48,630 --> 00:30:46,640

they're essentially asking you like are

1014

00:30:49,110 --> 00:30:48,640

you on the right or the left and if you

1015

00:30:50,549 --> 00:30:49,120

answer

1016

00:30:52,389 --> 00:30:50,559

questions that indicate you're on the

1017

00:30:53,990 --> 00:30:52,399

right then you get classified as rigid

1018

00:30:55,669 --> 00:30:54,000

and then the researchers conclude like

1019

00:30:57,430 --> 00:30:55,679

oh wow what a surprise

1020

00:30:59,509 --> 00:30:57,440

rigid people are more likely to be on

1021

00:31:02,310 --> 00:30:59,519

the right it's completely circular and

1022

00:31:04,630 --> 00:31:02,320

and logical and so i i brought that up

1023

00:31:06,549 --> 00:31:04,640

in the book as kind of an example of how

1024

00:31:08,310 --> 00:31:06,559

just because you're you know smart and

1025

00:31:09,909 --> 00:31:08,320

well-educated and very knowledgeable

1026
00:31:11,750 --> 00:31:09,919
about your subject area

1027
00:31:13,269 --> 00:31:11,760
does not mean you're immune from soldier

1028
00:31:14,070 --> 00:31:13,279
mindset because i think these

1029
00:31:15,669 --> 00:31:14,080
researchers

1030
00:31:17,190 --> 00:31:15,679
are kind of a good example of people who

1031
00:31:18,230 --> 00:31:17,200
are smart and well-educated and

1032
00:31:20,630 --> 00:31:18,240
knowledgeable about

1033
00:31:21,509 --> 00:31:20,640
cognitive science but i think the fact

1034
00:31:25,110 --> 00:31:21,519
that they

1035
00:31:26,389 --> 00:31:25,120
went unchallenged in their little

1036
00:31:28,230 --> 00:31:26,399
subfield for

1037
00:31:30,070 --> 00:31:28,240
so many years is kind of a bad sign

1038
00:31:32,870 --> 00:31:30,080

about their ability to think

1039

00:31:33,830 --> 00:31:32,880

objectively uh about these questions i

1040

00:31:35,830 --> 00:31:33,840

hope you will give me

1041

00:31:37,190 --> 00:31:35,840

a bit more of your time because i have

1042

00:31:37,750 --> 00:31:37,200

so many more questions that i want to

1043

00:31:40,389 --> 00:31:37,760

ask you

1044

00:31:41,990 --> 00:31:40,399

so first of all you've given a ted talk

1045

00:31:44,310 --> 00:31:42,000

in 2016

1046

00:31:45,990 --> 00:31:44,320

uh which is now on almost five million

1047

00:31:47,830 --> 00:31:46,000

views i

1048

00:31:49,830 --> 00:31:47,840

checked last night at like 4.9 million

1049

00:31:51,990 --> 00:31:49,840

or something in which you discuss

1050

00:31:53,430 --> 00:31:52,000

the scout mindset i'm just wondering is

1051
00:31:56,710 --> 00:31:53,440
that where the book started

1052
00:31:58,549 --> 00:31:56,720
no i've been using this metaphor for

1053
00:32:00,389 --> 00:31:58,559
a little while before that so the

1054
00:32:00,789 --> 00:32:00,399
genesis of the metaphor actually which i

1055
00:32:02,149 --> 00:32:00,799
don't

1056
00:32:03,909 --> 00:32:02,159
know if i really made clear in the book

1057
00:32:05,830 --> 00:32:03,919
but it's kind of a

1058
00:32:07,909 --> 00:32:05,840
what's the word chimera of several

1059
00:32:09,990 --> 00:32:07,919
different metaphors all lumped together

1060
00:32:11,750 --> 00:32:10,000
one of those metaphors is the idea of

1061
00:32:13,990 --> 00:32:11,760
our beliefs as fortresses

1062
00:32:15,990 --> 00:32:14,000
like we fortify and support and defend

1063
00:32:18,230 --> 00:32:16,000

them and also the metaphor of

1064

00:32:19,669 --> 00:32:18,240

arguments as battle that we try to you

1065

00:32:20,310 --> 00:32:19,679

know knock down or shoot down opposing

1066

00:32:22,070 --> 00:32:20,320

arguments

1067

00:32:23,590 --> 00:32:22,080

and those metaphors i first encountered

1068

00:32:25,430 --> 00:32:23,600

in george lakoff's book

1069

00:32:26,710 --> 00:32:25,440

metaphors we live by i think it's called

1070

00:32:28,710 --> 00:32:26,720

so that's where the idea for soldier

1071

00:32:31,669 --> 00:32:28,720

mindset came from and then

1072

00:32:33,430 --> 00:32:31,679

scout mindset came from the metaphor of

1073

00:32:35,269 --> 00:32:33,440

the map and the territory

1074

00:32:36,950 --> 00:32:35,279

which i originally encountered on les

1075

00:32:37,990 --> 00:32:36,960

wrong but it actually comes from some

1076

00:32:41,669 --> 00:32:38,000

philosophers

1077

00:32:43,190 --> 00:32:41,679

idea of the map and the territory

1078

00:32:44,870 --> 00:32:43,200

is it's just what i was referring to

1079

00:32:45,590 --> 00:32:44,880

earlier that you need to keep in mind

1080

00:32:47,350 --> 00:32:45,600

that your

1081

00:32:48,950 --> 00:32:47,360

the judgments you form about the world

1082

00:32:51,509 --> 00:32:48,960

your map essentially

1083

00:32:51,990 --> 00:32:51,519

is is different from the world itself

1084

00:32:53,590 --> 00:32:52,000

basically

1085

00:32:55,029 --> 00:32:53,600

it's a warning against what

1086

00:32:55,990 --> 00:32:55,039

psychologists sometimes call naive

1087

00:32:57,190 --> 00:32:56,000

realism where you just

1088

00:32:58,870 --> 00:32:57,200

assume that the way you perceive the

1089

00:33:00,389 --> 00:32:58,880

world is the objective truth and you

1090

00:33:01,750 --> 00:33:00,399

forget or just don't acknowledge that

1091

00:33:03,190 --> 00:33:01,760

there's this filter that everything's

1092

00:33:04,789 --> 00:33:03,200

passing through and that filter can be

1093

00:33:05,669 --> 00:33:04,799

flawed yeah so the idea of the map and

1094

00:33:08,389 --> 00:33:05,679

the territory

1095

00:33:09,990 --> 00:33:08,399

kind of combined with this soldier

1096

00:33:11,350 --> 00:33:10,000

metaphor in my head to produce the

1097

00:33:13,269 --> 00:33:11,360

soldier in the scout

1098

00:33:15,029 --> 00:33:13,279

so that's where that came from yeah okay

1099

00:33:17,269 --> 00:33:15,039

well i definitely recommend people go

1100

00:33:19,990 --> 00:33:17,279

and watch that talk it was excellent

1101
00:33:21,830 --> 00:33:20,000
now you define yourself as a rationalist

1102
00:33:23,029 --> 00:33:21,840
i suppose you have the podcast

1103
00:33:24,870 --> 00:33:23,039
rationally speaking

1104
00:33:26,470 --> 00:33:24,880
i think i've heard you referred to

1105
00:33:29,509 --> 00:33:26,480
yourself in an interview

1106
00:33:31,110 --> 00:33:29,519
as a rationalist you know i never

1107
00:33:33,269 --> 00:33:31,120
actively self-identify

1108
00:33:35,509 --> 00:33:33,279
that way i just feel compelled to jump

1109
00:33:36,230 --> 00:33:35,519
into arguments online about rationalists

1110
00:33:38,789 --> 00:33:36,240
when people are

1111
00:33:39,830 --> 00:33:38,799
using them of various things and so then

1112
00:33:41,430 --> 00:33:39,840
i have to jump in and defend the

1113
00:33:42,950 --> 00:33:41,440

rationalists and i think yes like i

1114

00:33:46,310 --> 00:33:42,960

count as a rationalist

1115

00:33:49,190 --> 00:33:46,320

but i i do try to avoid wearing my

1116

00:33:51,990 --> 00:33:49,200

self-identifying labels proudly yeah you

1117

00:33:53,830 --> 00:33:52,000

know or waving them as a flag and so

1118

00:33:55,350 --> 00:33:53,840

yes i by all like reasonable definitions

1119

00:33:56,710 --> 00:33:55,360

i count as a rationalist but

1120

00:33:58,789 --> 00:33:56,720

i'm not trying to like go out there and

1121

00:34:01,269 --> 00:33:58,799

proclaim that

1122

00:34:02,549 --> 00:34:01,279

you're not uh i i recognize that the

1123

00:34:04,070 --> 00:34:02,559

name of my podcast might seem to

1124

00:34:05,669 --> 00:34:04,080

undermine my claim that i'm not trying

1125

00:34:06,549 --> 00:34:05,679

to go out there and proclaim myself to

1126

00:34:07,909 --> 00:34:06,559

be a rationalist

1127

00:34:09,589 --> 00:34:07,919

but it's actually a bit of a just

1128

00:34:11,109 --> 00:34:09,599

coincidence because the name of the

1129

00:34:13,510 --> 00:34:11,119

podcast came from

1130

00:34:14,869 --> 00:34:13,520

the name of massimo piluchi's blog

1131

00:34:16,790 --> 00:34:14,879

rationaly speaking

1132

00:34:18,470 --> 00:34:16,800

which existed years ago before i ever

1133

00:34:19,669 --> 00:34:18,480

met him or encountered the skeptics and

1134

00:34:22,869 --> 00:34:19,679

i met him in

1135

00:34:24,629 --> 00:34:22,879

i guess 2010 or late 20 2009

1136

00:34:26,550 --> 00:34:24,639

and he he proposed that we start this

1137

00:34:27,430 --> 00:34:26,560

podcast together and we just decided to

1138

00:34:29,589 --> 00:34:27,440

give it the same name

1139

00:34:30,550 --> 00:34:29,599

as his blog and so now i'm i'm solo

1140

00:34:32,230 --> 00:34:30,560

hosting it but i

1141

00:34:34,629 --> 00:34:32,240

i didn't actually choose the name myself

1142

00:34:35,349 --> 00:34:34,639

so it's uh it's a bit of a coincidence

1143

00:34:36,629 --> 00:34:35,359

that i

1144

00:34:39,030 --> 00:34:36,639

am a rationalist and also have this

1145

00:34:40,629 --> 00:34:39,040

podcast rationally speaking okay

1146

00:34:43,669 --> 00:34:40,639

uh just a little anecdote about the

1147

00:34:45,990 --> 00:34:43,679

podcast by the way is that uh when

1148

00:34:46,869 --> 00:34:46,000

my partner maya and i met one of the

1149

00:34:48,790 --> 00:34:46,879

things

1150

00:34:50,470 --> 00:34:48,800

i think it was on the first date we

1151

00:34:52,950 --> 00:34:50,480

compared podcast lists

1152

00:34:54,310 --> 00:34:52,960

yours popped up in both of ours and that

1153

00:34:55,109 --> 00:34:54,320

was kind of one of the things this is a

1154

00:34:57,430 --> 00:34:55,119

good sign

1155

00:34:58,710 --> 00:34:57,440

oh that's so lovely and now we live

1156

00:35:01,109 --> 00:34:58,720

together and you know

1157

00:35:01,990 --> 00:35:01,119

oh wow i'm talking that up in my you

1158

00:35:05,190 --> 00:35:02,000

know as a win in my

1159

00:35:05,990 --> 00:35:05,200

column yeah but being rational poses uh

1160

00:35:08,630 --> 00:35:06,000

some risks

1161

00:35:11,270 --> 00:35:08,640

uh but uh in your book it's best

1162

00:35:13,670 --> 00:35:11,280

exemplified by mr spock's blunders

1163

00:35:15,670 --> 00:35:13,680

uh due to not understanding human nature

1164

00:35:16,069 --> 00:35:15,680

uh now in a world dominated by social

1165

00:35:18,310 --> 00:35:16,079

media

1166

00:35:19,670 --> 00:35:18,320

where you get instant feedback on a lot

1167

00:35:21,270 --> 00:35:19,680

of things straight away

1168

00:35:22,870 --> 00:35:21,280

there are some risks involved in trying

1169

00:35:25,190 --> 00:35:22,880

to find the truth that i would like

1170

00:35:26,870 --> 00:35:25,200

to discuss with you and get your view on

1171

00:35:29,109 --> 00:35:26,880

the first one is how do you best deal

1172

00:35:32,790 --> 00:35:29,119

with sensitive topics i could mention

1173

00:35:34,230 --> 00:35:32,800

gender as an example how do we ensure

1174

00:35:36,069 --> 00:35:34,240

that we find the truth but

1175

00:35:37,270 --> 00:35:36,079

don't unnecessarily offend people in the

1176

00:35:39,910 --> 00:35:37,280

process

1177

00:35:40,950 --> 00:35:39,920

and other questions that we should that

1178

00:35:43,750 --> 00:35:40,960

we shouldn't ask

1179

00:35:44,069 --> 00:35:43,760

i don't think that there are questions

1180

00:35:45,910 --> 00:35:44,079

that

1181

00:35:47,750 --> 00:35:45,920

no one should ask sorry for the double

1182

00:35:49,990 --> 00:35:47,760

negative there but i think it's it would

1183

00:35:51,829 --> 00:35:50,000

be a really strong claim to say that

1184

00:35:53,589 --> 00:35:51,839

no one anywhere in any academic

1185

00:35:55,910 --> 00:35:53,599

department or in any blog or social

1186

00:35:57,670 --> 00:35:55,920

circle should ever be allowed to ask

1187

00:35:59,430 --> 00:35:57,680

such and such question that's a very

1188

00:36:01,190 --> 00:35:59,440

strong and very restrictive

1189

00:36:02,790 --> 00:36:01,200

claim that i i would definitely not

1190

00:36:05,109 --> 00:36:02,800

stand behind i would say

1191

00:36:06,470 --> 00:36:05,119

the loss to freedom of speech and

1192

00:36:07,990 --> 00:36:06,480

freedom of thought and our just

1193

00:36:09,109 --> 00:36:08,000

collective ability as a society to

1194

00:36:10,950 --> 00:36:09,119

figure stuff out together

1195

00:36:12,390 --> 00:36:10,960

of such a policy would be huge compared

1196

00:36:14,630 --> 00:36:12,400

to the benefit so

1197

00:36:15,910 --> 00:36:14,640

no i wouldn't support that policy but i

1198

00:36:17,430 --> 00:36:15,920

do think it's totally fine and

1199

00:36:19,910 --> 00:36:17,440

reasonable to say that

1200

00:36:20,630 --> 00:36:19,920

in some spaces or in some contexts you

1201
00:36:22,310 --> 00:36:20,640
should avoid

1202
00:36:23,589 --> 00:36:22,320
such and such questions because they're

1203
00:36:24,150 --> 00:36:23,599
going to be inflammatory or they're

1204
00:36:25,750 --> 00:36:24,160
going to

1205
00:36:28,230 --> 00:36:25,760
antagonize people or whatever on a

1206
00:36:29,670 --> 00:36:28,240
case-by-case basis i think it's fine to

1207
00:36:31,829 --> 00:36:29,680
have some questions or topics be

1208
00:36:33,349 --> 00:36:31,839
off-limits um and then we just you know

1209
00:36:35,510 --> 00:36:33,359
get into the weeds about like well when

1210
00:36:36,710 --> 00:36:35,520
exactly or like in what context or and

1211
00:36:38,150 --> 00:36:36,720
who gets to decide and those are all

1212
00:36:40,230 --> 00:36:38,160
very complicated questions but

1213
00:36:42,069 --> 00:36:40,240

i just wanted to distinguish between not

1214

00:36:43,430 --> 00:36:42,079

allowing discussion of a topic anywhere

1215

00:36:44,630 --> 00:36:43,440

versus not allowing it in certain

1216

00:36:45,670 --> 00:36:44,640

specific cases

1217

00:36:47,589 --> 00:36:45,680

i feel like those two things get

1218

00:36:49,030 --> 00:36:47,599

conflated sometimes yeah i think there's

1219

00:36:51,430 --> 00:36:49,040

there's also the you know the

1220

00:36:53,109 --> 00:36:51,440

the thin line between asking questions

1221

00:36:55,349 --> 00:36:53,119

and just asking questions

1222

00:36:56,390 --> 00:36:55,359

if you you know what i mean yeah i do

1223

00:36:58,310 --> 00:36:56,400

yeah so

1224

00:36:59,670 --> 00:36:58,320

just asking questions right right right

1225

00:37:00,470 --> 00:36:59,680

i heard those quote marks so i'm just

1226

00:37:03,430 --> 00:37:00,480

wondering

1227

00:37:05,670 --> 00:37:03,440

whether that could be perhaps an issue

1228

00:37:07,910 --> 00:37:05,680

of how we navigate that and

1229

00:37:09,510 --> 00:37:07,920

perhaps how would we make it clear that

1230

00:37:10,069 --> 00:37:09,520

the questions we're asking are genuine

1231

00:37:11,750 --> 00:37:10,079

because

1232

00:37:13,349 --> 00:37:11,760

very often the difference between asking

1233

00:37:14,150 --> 00:37:13,359

questions and just asking questions see

1234

00:37:15,670 --> 00:37:14,160

the perception

1235

00:37:17,430 --> 00:37:15,680

of the other side the person being

1236

00:37:19,510 --> 00:37:17,440

questions or those observing i'm just

1237

00:37:22,150 --> 00:37:19,520

wondering whether some of it is

1238

00:37:23,910 --> 00:37:22,160

simply about making it clear that the

1239

00:37:25,190 --> 00:37:23,920

questions are genuine and you do see

1240

00:37:27,190 --> 00:37:25,200

online people saying

1241

00:37:29,990 --> 00:37:27,200

honest question or genuine question

1242

00:37:32,870 --> 00:37:30,000

right before they ask something

1243

00:37:34,470 --> 00:37:32,880

whether that's possibly sometimes when

1244

00:37:37,109 --> 00:37:34,480

someone says genuine question

1245

00:37:39,030 --> 00:37:37,119

colin what follows doesn't does indeed

1246

00:37:40,150 --> 00:37:39,040

seem to me to be a genuine question

1247

00:37:41,750 --> 00:37:40,160

they're just curious or they don't

1248

00:37:43,430 --> 00:37:41,760

understand and then other times it's

1249

00:37:44,390 --> 00:37:43,440

really not a genuine question it's just

1250

00:37:46,630 --> 00:37:44,400

them

1251
00:37:48,710 --> 00:37:46,640
trying to get a dig in at the other side

1252
00:37:51,270 --> 00:37:48,720
you know like genuine question colin

1253
00:37:52,870 --> 00:37:51,280
do the democrats really not understand

1254
00:37:54,950 --> 00:37:52,880
you know such a such obvious fact

1255
00:37:56,150 --> 00:37:54,960
or what's going on there like so this is

1256
00:37:59,349 --> 00:37:56,160
part of the problem that

1257
00:38:01,190 --> 00:37:59,359
because people so often pretend to be

1258
00:38:02,710 --> 00:38:01,200
just asking questions when really

1259
00:38:04,310 --> 00:38:02,720
they're trying to ask

1260
00:38:06,230 --> 00:38:04,320
leading questions to make the other side

1261
00:38:07,510 --> 00:38:06,240
look bad or they're not actually

1262
00:38:08,790 --> 00:38:07,520
interested in what you have to say in

1263
00:38:10,150 --> 00:38:08,800

response to their questions

1264

00:38:11,990 --> 00:38:10,160

they're just trying to troll you or

1265

00:38:15,030 --> 00:38:12,000

whatever because that's so common

1266

00:38:17,109 --> 00:38:15,040

it becomes really hard to have those

1267

00:38:18,790 --> 00:38:17,119

those ideal conversations in which you

1268

00:38:19,349 --> 00:38:18,800

you are genuinely asking and answering

1269

00:38:21,349 --> 00:38:19,359

questions

1270

00:38:22,630 --> 00:38:21,359

it becomes hard to honestly signal that

1271

00:38:24,150 --> 00:38:22,640

there's no way to just say like by the

1272

00:38:25,430 --> 00:38:24,160

way guys i'm i'm honestly asking

1273

00:38:27,190 --> 00:38:25,440

questions here and have everyone just

1274

00:38:28,390 --> 00:38:27,200

accept like well of course yes

1275

00:38:29,990 --> 00:38:28,400

you must be telling the truth because

1276

00:38:31,190 --> 00:38:30,000

lots of people are lying or not lying

1277

00:38:33,109 --> 00:38:31,200

but just kind of

1278

00:38:34,470 --> 00:38:33,119

self-deceiving but thinking that they're

1279

00:38:34,950 --> 00:38:34,480

just asking questions when they really

1280

00:38:37,270 --> 00:38:34,960

aren't

1281

00:38:38,310 --> 00:38:37,280

i think this is honestly one of the one

1282

00:38:40,069 --> 00:38:38,320

of the big causes

1283

00:38:41,349 --> 00:38:40,079

of like one of the big problems with our

1284

00:38:43,349 --> 00:38:41,359

discourse today is

1285

00:38:45,109 --> 00:38:43,359

the fact that so many people pretend

1286

00:38:45,990 --> 00:38:45,119

they're asking questions or arguing in

1287

00:38:48,069 --> 00:38:46,000

good faith when they really

1288

00:38:49,829 --> 00:38:48,079

aren't and that just poisons the well i

1289

00:38:52,230 --> 00:38:49,839

don't think that there's a

1290

00:38:53,030 --> 00:38:52,240

an easy straightforward solution to that

1291

00:38:55,990 --> 00:38:53,040

but

1292

00:38:57,190 --> 00:38:56,000

one thing that can help is to read your

1293

00:38:59,109 --> 00:38:57,200

question

1294

00:39:00,710 --> 00:38:59,119

to yourself before you post it or tweet

1295

00:39:01,990 --> 00:39:00,720

it or say it or whatever and just ask

1296

00:39:03,510 --> 00:39:02,000

yourself does this actually sound like

1297

00:39:05,990 --> 00:39:03,520

what someone would say

1298

00:39:07,030 --> 00:39:06,000

if they were genuinely interested in

1299

00:39:08,710 --> 00:39:07,040

asking in good faith

1300

00:39:10,150 --> 00:39:08,720

and i sometimes notice that that's not

1301

00:39:11,829 --> 00:39:10,160

the case for me when i

1302

00:39:13,510 --> 00:39:11,839

ask a question like i don't know there

1303

00:39:15,349 --> 00:39:13,520

was an example recently where i said

1304

00:39:16,550 --> 00:39:15,359

i was responding to someone and i said

1305

00:39:17,349 --> 00:39:16,560

something or i was about to say

1306

00:39:20,150 --> 00:39:17,359

something like

1307

00:39:21,109 --> 00:39:20,160

so in your mind you know such and such

1308

00:39:23,349 --> 00:39:21,119

is true

1309

00:39:24,230 --> 00:39:23,359

and when i wrote that when i typed that

1310

00:39:27,109 --> 00:39:24,240

out

1311

00:39:28,150 --> 00:39:27,119

i didn't feel like i was being snarky or

1312

00:39:30,310 --> 00:39:28,160

antagonistic

1313

00:39:31,990 --> 00:39:30,320

or anything i felt like i was just

1314

00:39:33,990 --> 00:39:32,000

trying to clarify what they meant

1315

00:39:35,510 --> 00:39:34,000

but when i read it out loud to myself

1316

00:39:38,470 --> 00:39:35,520

before hitting send

1317

00:39:39,030 --> 00:39:38,480

i realized oh that phrase so in your

1318

00:39:41,109 --> 00:39:39,040

mind

1319

00:39:42,950 --> 00:39:41,119

that's really it's kind of a sneer but

1320

00:39:44,950 --> 00:39:42,960

it hadn't felt that way to me

1321

00:39:46,550 --> 00:39:44,960

consciously when i first typed it i was

1322

00:39:48,069 --> 00:39:46,560

feeling annoyed at them i was feeling

1323

00:39:49,990 --> 00:39:48,079

some disdain for their

1324

00:39:51,589 --> 00:39:50,000

position or their arguments or whatever

1325

00:39:53,190 --> 00:39:51,599

and that came through in the words that

1326

00:39:55,190 --> 00:39:53,200

i chose but i wasn't consciously aware

1327

00:39:56,950 --> 00:39:55,200

of it when i chose those words

1328

00:39:58,470 --> 00:39:56,960

and it was only when i read it aloud to

1329

00:39:59,829 --> 00:39:58,480

myself and imagined

1330

00:40:00,950 --> 00:39:59,839

seeing someone else write those words

1331

00:40:01,829 --> 00:40:00,960

and i was like oh yeah that's kind of an

1332

00:40:04,230 --> 00:40:01,839

obnoxious

1333

00:40:05,750 --> 00:40:04,240

phrasing so yeah the part of the

1334

00:40:06,790 --> 00:40:05,760

solution i think is just becoming more

1335

00:40:09,190 --> 00:40:06,800

self-aware about

1336

00:40:10,069 --> 00:40:09,200

when your irritation with the other side

1337

00:40:12,069 --> 00:40:10,079

is showing through

1338

00:40:13,109 --> 00:40:12,079

it's really hard to just declare in a

1339

00:40:14,790 --> 00:40:13,119

one-off instance

1340

00:40:16,150 --> 00:40:14,800

i'm just asking questions in good faith

1341

00:40:17,510 --> 00:40:16,160

and expect everyone to believe you

1342

00:40:19,750 --> 00:40:17,520

you kind of have to develop a track

1343

00:40:21,589 --> 00:40:19,760

record over time as someone who

1344

00:40:23,510 --> 00:40:21,599

is operating in good faith and that

1345

00:40:25,109 --> 00:40:23,520

means you know kind of

1346

00:40:26,870 --> 00:40:25,119

demonstrating scout mindset on a lot of

1347

00:40:28,390 --> 00:40:26,880

really controversial topics and being

1348

00:40:30,069 --> 00:40:28,400

willing to say you know

1349

00:40:31,349 --> 00:40:30,079

yep that is a good point or like yes

1350

00:40:33,030 --> 00:40:31,359

that is something that people on my side

1351
00:40:34,550 --> 00:40:33,040
do that's wrong or you know when you

1352
00:40:35,750 --> 00:40:34,560
summarize the other side's position

1353
00:40:37,589 --> 00:40:35,760
doing it in

1354
00:40:39,430 --> 00:40:37,599
an accurate and fair way and not in a

1355
00:40:41,589 --> 00:40:39,440
straw many way you kind of have to

1356
00:40:43,109 --> 00:40:41,599
do that over time so that when you say

1357
00:40:44,550 --> 00:40:43,119
hey guys here's this controversial issue

1358
00:40:46,870 --> 00:40:44,560
that i have a question about

1359
00:40:48,390 --> 00:40:46,880
they can actually trust that yes she

1360
00:40:49,990 --> 00:40:48,400
genuinely has a question she's

1361
00:40:51,910 --> 00:40:50,000
not just trying to be a dick so yeah you

1362
00:40:53,910 --> 00:40:51,920
need that that reputation built up and

1363
00:40:55,829 --> 00:40:53,920

that's that does take a little while

1364

00:40:57,270 --> 00:40:55,839

yeah probably does controversial

1365

00:40:58,710 --> 00:40:57,280

question so i'd like to know what you

1366

00:41:00,790 --> 00:40:58,720

think of cancelled culture and i'm

1367

00:41:02,790 --> 00:41:00,800

referring both to the term

1368

00:41:04,950 --> 00:41:02,800

and to the phenomenon that it supposedly

1369

00:41:06,230 --> 00:41:04,960

describes i'd like to know whether you

1370

00:41:09,589 --> 00:41:06,240

think it's real

1371

00:41:12,230 --> 00:41:09,599

and i'd also if assuming that it is real

1372

00:41:14,309 --> 00:41:12,240

whether it's new or different from past

1373

00:41:16,950 --> 00:41:14,319

attempts at silencing dissent

1374

00:41:18,069 --> 00:41:16,960

i do think it's real and i do think it's

1375

00:41:20,630 --> 00:41:18,079

somewhat different from

1376
00:41:21,510 --> 00:41:20,640
what existed 15 years ago it seems to me

1377
00:41:23,510 --> 00:41:21,520
that the main

1378
00:41:25,829 --> 00:41:23,520
crux of disagreement between the people

1379
00:41:27,829 --> 00:41:25,839
who talk about cancel culture

1380
00:41:29,109 --> 00:41:27,839
you know with worry and the people who

1381
00:41:31,349 --> 00:41:29,119
scoff at

1382
00:41:32,630 --> 00:41:31,359
them i think one of the main cruxes of

1383
00:41:34,550 --> 00:41:32,640
disagreement is over

1384
00:41:35,750 --> 00:41:34,560
well one is over how serious the

1385
00:41:37,030 --> 00:41:35,760
consequences actually are

1386
00:41:38,870 --> 00:41:37,040
because the people who say like oh

1387
00:41:40,630 --> 00:41:38,880
cancel culture isn't a real thing stop

1388
00:41:42,630 --> 00:41:40,640

complaining about it we'll often say

1389

00:41:43,990 --> 00:41:42,640

like oh well those people you say were

1390

00:41:45,510 --> 00:41:44,000

canceled quote unquote

1391

00:41:47,030 --> 00:41:45,520

they still have jobs or you know they

1392

00:41:48,470 --> 00:41:47,040

can get another job

1393

00:41:50,790 --> 00:41:48,480

or they still have audiences they're not

1394

00:41:51,349 --> 00:41:50,800

really canceled and that's true in a

1395

00:41:54,230 --> 00:41:51,359

sense

1396

00:41:56,069 --> 00:41:54,240

but there are still real and often

1397

00:41:56,870 --> 00:41:56,079

significant consequences to saying

1398

00:41:59,349 --> 00:41:56,880

something that

1399

00:42:00,309 --> 00:41:59,359

the internet or or your your social

1400

00:42:03,270 --> 00:42:00,319

circles decide

1401
00:42:03,990 --> 00:42:03,280
is is over the line just the fact that

1402
00:42:05,589 --> 00:42:04,000
you

1403
00:42:07,829 --> 00:42:05,599
develop a reputation as someone who's a

1404
00:42:09,990 --> 00:42:07,839
bigot or a racist if that's not

1405
00:42:11,109 --> 00:42:10,000
actually warranted that that alone seems

1406
00:42:12,069 --> 00:42:11,119
to me like a pretty significant

1407
00:42:13,430 --> 00:42:12,079
consequence like

1408
00:42:14,710 --> 00:42:13,440
if someone googles you and finds

1409
00:42:16,069 --> 00:42:14,720
articles about how you're a bigot and a

1410
00:42:18,470 --> 00:42:16,079
racist that seems like

1411
00:42:19,829 --> 00:42:18,480
an unfortunate outcome to me it does

1412
00:42:21,030 --> 00:42:19,839
seem like a sad thing

1413
00:42:22,309 --> 00:42:21,040

if that's happening to a lot of people

1414

00:42:22,950 --> 00:42:22,319

who don't actually deserve it and that's

1415

00:42:24,390 --> 00:42:22,960

like a cons

1416

00:42:25,670 --> 00:42:24,400

that's a thing we should be concerned

1417

00:42:26,950 --> 00:42:25,680

about and should be trying to minimize

1418

00:42:28,069 --> 00:42:26,960

the number of people who get

1419

00:42:29,990 --> 00:42:28,079

charred with that brush who don't

1420

00:42:32,470 --> 00:42:30,000

deserve it that i think is a legitimate

1421

00:42:34,069 --> 00:42:32,480

thing to be concerned about and then the

1422

00:42:34,870 --> 00:42:34,079

other crux of disagreement i think is

1423

00:42:37,030 --> 00:42:34,880

over

1424

00:42:39,190 --> 00:42:37,040

it's less about like should we cancel

1425

00:42:41,589 --> 00:42:39,200

people for saying the wrong thing

1426

00:42:42,630 --> 00:42:41,599

and it's more about the boundaries of

1427

00:42:45,430 --> 00:42:42,640

what what kind of

1428

00:42:46,069 --> 00:42:45,440

mainstream online society considers to

1429

00:42:47,510 --> 00:42:46,079

be

1430

00:42:49,349 --> 00:42:47,520

a reasonable view that someone could

1431

00:42:52,230 --> 00:42:49,359

hold what it seems like to me is

1432

00:42:53,589 --> 00:42:52,240

is happening is that in like 15 years

1433

00:42:55,190 --> 00:42:53,599

ago or 20 years ago

1434

00:42:56,790 --> 00:42:55,200

there were a lot of things that people

1435

00:42:57,270 --> 00:42:56,800

might disagree about but they were like

1436

00:42:59,589 --> 00:42:57,280

well

1437

00:43:01,030 --> 00:42:59,599

you know yeah i disagree but the fact

1438

00:43:02,390 --> 00:43:01,040

that you hold that view doesn't make you

1439

00:43:04,710 --> 00:43:02,400

the worst person in the world

1440

00:43:05,910 --> 00:43:04,720

and now it seems like the set of things

1441

00:43:08,470 --> 00:43:05,920

that you can disagree about

1442

00:43:09,270 --> 00:43:08,480

and not be a villain is um is much

1443

00:43:11,670 --> 00:43:09,280

smaller

1444

00:43:13,510 --> 00:43:11,680

it's not necessarily that people are

1445

00:43:15,589 --> 00:43:13,520

reacting more strongly

1446

00:43:17,270 --> 00:43:15,599

to taboo views than they used to it's

1447

00:43:18,470 --> 00:43:17,280

that there are more views that are taboo

1448

00:43:21,030 --> 00:43:18,480

than there used to be

1449

00:43:22,470 --> 00:43:21,040

does that make sense yeah i must say i'm

1450

00:43:24,309 --> 00:43:22,480

not as

1451
00:43:26,309 --> 00:43:24,319
confident as you are about this i think

1452
00:43:27,190 --> 00:43:26,319
there is i mean two minds about it on

1453
00:43:29,829 --> 00:43:27,200
the one hand

1454
00:43:30,309 --> 00:43:29,839
i agree that uh there's definitely a lot

1455
00:43:32,870 --> 00:43:30,319
of

1456
00:43:34,630 --> 00:43:32,880
taboos and there's potentially be severe

1457
00:43:36,630 --> 00:43:34,640
outcomes to saying

1458
00:43:37,750 --> 00:43:36,640
what's considered to be the wrong thing

1459
00:43:39,670 --> 00:43:37,760
online but

1460
00:43:41,030 --> 00:43:39,680
but i'm not entirely sure that it's not

1461
00:43:43,750 --> 00:43:41,040
simply a factor

1462
00:43:45,349 --> 00:43:43,760
of the technology the the fact that we

1463
00:43:47,990 --> 00:43:45,359

live online now

1464

00:43:49,829 --> 00:43:48,000

so there's a chance the chance that we

1465

00:43:52,790 --> 00:43:49,839

would encounter

1466

00:43:55,030 --> 00:43:52,800

somebody who disagree disagrees with us

1467

00:43:56,870 --> 00:43:55,040

is significantly larger

1468

00:43:58,150 --> 00:43:56,880

and somebody would comment on it whereas

1469

00:43:59,829 --> 00:43:58,160

in the fact you know if you think about

1470

00:44:01,829 --> 00:43:59,839

a village in the family

1471

00:44:03,430 --> 00:44:01,839

you know you were not exposed you could

1472

00:44:05,430 --> 00:44:03,440

have dissenting views

1473

00:44:07,349 --> 00:44:05,440

it was mostly within a community that

1474

00:44:08,230 --> 00:44:07,359

already knew you there was less of a

1475

00:44:10,390 --> 00:44:08,240

chance that they would

1476

00:44:12,230 --> 00:44:10,400

you know immediately shun you because

1477

00:44:14,630 --> 00:44:12,240

there was the personal relationship

1478

00:44:16,150 --> 00:44:14,640

people's views were not exposed in the

1479

00:44:17,270 --> 00:44:16,160

same way that they are today so i'm just

1480

00:44:19,910 --> 00:44:17,280

wondering whether that

1481

00:44:21,670 --> 00:44:19,920

is whether that's the difference or

1482

00:44:23,190 --> 00:44:21,680

simply that there's

1483

00:44:24,870 --> 00:44:23,200

more and more we live in a more

1484

00:44:27,109 --> 00:44:24,880

sensorious society

1485

00:44:28,710 --> 00:44:27,119

i'm just not sure well i don't know

1486

00:44:30,790 --> 00:44:28,720

let's take an example

1487

00:44:32,630 --> 00:44:30,800

so you do you know the story of david

1488

00:44:35,670 --> 00:44:32,640

shore yes i do

1489

00:44:37,589 --> 00:44:35,680

it seems to me that tweeting a study in

1490

00:44:38,309 --> 00:44:37,599

the wake of like black lives matter

1491

00:44:40,470 --> 00:44:38,319

protests

1492

00:44:41,349 --> 00:44:40,480

tweeting a study by a respectable

1493

00:44:43,589 --> 00:44:41,359

academic

1494

00:44:44,710 --> 00:44:43,599

showing that violent protests are often

1495

00:44:46,390 --> 00:44:44,720

counterproductive

1496

00:44:48,390 --> 00:44:46,400

david shore did that and was fired from

1497

00:44:48,870 --> 00:44:48,400

his job as a result because people felt

1498

00:44:51,510 --> 00:44:48,880

that

1499

00:44:52,230 --> 00:44:51,520

supportive of black lives matter

1500

00:44:54,630 --> 00:44:52,240

protests

1501
00:44:55,430 --> 00:44:54,640
it seems to me that that like holding

1502
00:44:58,390 --> 00:44:55,440
the view that

1503
00:44:58,870 --> 00:44:58,400
hey it's good to take into account

1504
00:44:59,910 --> 00:44:58,880
whether

1505
00:45:01,750 --> 00:44:59,920
different kinds of activism are

1506
00:45:03,109 --> 00:45:01,760
productive or not and like here's some

1507
00:45:04,790 --> 00:45:03,119
evidence

1508
00:45:06,150 --> 00:45:04,800
that seems to me like a view that would

1509
00:45:08,950 --> 00:45:06,160
not have been considered

1510
00:45:09,510 --> 00:45:08,960
over the line or like beyond the pale 20

1511
00:45:13,109 --> 00:45:09,520
years ago

1512
00:45:15,430 --> 00:45:13,119
but now is often it's very messy because

1513
00:45:16,950 --> 00:45:15,440

there's not a ton of rhyme or reason

1514

00:45:17,750 --> 00:45:16,960

about like who gets canceled and for

1515

00:45:19,829 --> 00:45:17,760

what and like

1516

00:45:21,190 --> 00:45:19,839

how bad the canceling is i'm sure like

1517

00:45:22,550 --> 00:45:21,200

lots of people have said

1518

00:45:24,230 --> 00:45:22,560

the same thing that david shore has said

1519

00:45:25,990 --> 00:45:24,240

in in different contexts and

1520

00:45:27,750 --> 00:45:26,000

and it's been fine it seems like there's

1521

00:45:29,589 --> 00:45:27,760

a bit of randomness and you know

1522

00:45:31,750 --> 00:45:29,599

like which events are going to trigger

1523

00:45:33,190 --> 00:45:31,760

the the mob getting angry at you and you

1524

00:45:34,710 --> 00:45:33,200

losing your job or

1525

00:45:37,190 --> 00:45:34,720

getting called a bigot by lots of

1526

00:45:38,630 --> 00:45:37,200

magazines i don't think that it's easy

1527

00:45:39,829 --> 00:45:38,640

to predict exactly what's going to

1528

00:45:41,670 --> 00:45:39,839

trigger that but i don't know

1529

00:45:42,630 --> 00:45:41,680

do you think that that event is

1530

00:45:43,510 --> 00:45:42,640

something that could have happened 20

1531

00:45:45,750 --> 00:45:43,520

years ago

1532

00:45:47,190 --> 00:45:45,760

it couldn't but but i think a lot of it

1533

00:45:48,069 --> 00:45:47,200

is to do with the technology just like

1534

00:45:50,630 --> 00:45:48,079

you said uh

1535

00:45:52,230 --> 00:45:50,640

david shaw's situation and i encourage

1536

00:45:53,270 --> 00:45:52,240

people who don't know the case just to

1537

00:45:55,349 --> 00:45:53,280

look it up and

1538

00:45:56,710 --> 00:45:55,359

say it's a very interesting story my

1539

00:45:58,230 --> 00:45:56,720

recollection is that it's not that he

1540

00:45:59,750 --> 00:45:58,240

was fired he didn't even start he was

1541

00:46:01,190 --> 00:45:59,760

about to start the job and

1542

00:46:02,390 --> 00:46:01,200

and they told him you couldn't start but

1543

00:46:03,990 --> 00:46:02,400

i could be wrong about that oh no i

1544

00:46:05,670 --> 00:46:04,000

think he was fired

1545

00:46:07,910 --> 00:46:05,680

but whatever the case whatever the case

1546

00:46:08,710 --> 00:46:07,920

may be it doesn't make it any better or

1547

00:46:11,270 --> 00:46:08,720

worse it's

1548

00:46:12,390 --> 00:46:11,280

it's it's bad as it's bad as it is but

1549

00:46:15,030 --> 00:46:12,400

as you pointed out

1550

00:46:16,550 --> 00:46:15,040

others may have voiced the same opinion

1551

00:46:18,230 --> 00:46:16,560

perhaps more strongly

1552

00:46:20,309 --> 00:46:18,240

but we're not punished in the same way

1553

00:46:22,950 --> 00:46:20,319

so there's a level of randomness to it

1554

00:46:23,589 --> 00:46:22,960

and i'm just wondering whether that is

1555

00:46:25,589 --> 00:46:23,599

simply

1556

00:46:26,790 --> 00:46:25,599

the result of social media somebody must

1557

00:46:28,550 --> 00:46:26,800

have picked it up

1558

00:46:30,069 --> 00:46:28,560

and made a big hura about it and you

1559

00:46:31,910 --> 00:46:30,079

know that person will have had lots of

1560

00:46:32,790 --> 00:46:31,920

followers so it made more noise than

1561

00:46:35,510 --> 00:46:32,800

others

1562

00:46:36,309 --> 00:46:35,520

yeah i i tend to think that it the issue

1563

00:46:38,630 --> 00:46:36,319

here is

1564

00:46:40,950 --> 00:46:38,640

social media rather than the

1565

00:46:41,349 --> 00:46:40,960

sensoriousness and also i must say also

1566

00:46:43,589 --> 00:46:41,359

as

1567

00:46:44,630 --> 00:46:43,599

somebody who doesn't live in the u.s

1568

00:46:45,829 --> 00:46:44,640

employment at will

1569

00:46:47,670 --> 00:46:45,839

is not something that's common

1570

00:46:49,349 --> 00:46:47,680

throughout the western world so people

1571

00:46:50,950 --> 00:46:49,359

don't get fired as easily

1572

00:46:53,109 --> 00:46:50,960

uh whereas in the us you could more

1573

00:46:53,990 --> 00:46:53,119

easily lose your job and of course that

1574

00:46:56,870 --> 00:46:54,000

plays a part

1575

00:46:58,790 --> 00:46:56,880

the whole whole other issue just i want

1576
00:47:01,990 --> 00:46:58,800
to ask you one more question

1577
00:47:04,630 --> 00:47:02,000
as a scout you want to find the truth

1578
00:47:05,510 --> 00:47:04,640
but how do we do that in very complex

1579
00:47:07,430 --> 00:47:05,520
fields

1580
00:47:09,510 --> 00:47:07,440
how do we assess evidence that's beyond

1581
00:47:11,349 --> 00:47:09,520
our capacity to judge directly

1582
00:47:12,550 --> 00:47:11,359
so you know in science for example we

1583
00:47:14,710 --> 00:47:12,560
know that we can go

1584
00:47:17,030 --> 00:47:14,720
to sci hub for example to read the

1585
00:47:19,270 --> 00:47:17,040
original articles very often

1586
00:47:20,870 --> 00:47:19,280
how do we know what we don't know yeah

1587
00:47:21,670 --> 00:47:20,880
so this is i'm so glad you asked this

1588
00:47:25,030 --> 00:47:21,680

question

1589

00:47:26,309 --> 00:47:25,040

because one thing i wish i'd emphasized

1590

00:47:28,950 --> 00:47:26,319

more strongly in the book

1591

00:47:30,950 --> 00:47:28,960

is that having an accurate map or a map

1592

00:47:34,230 --> 00:47:30,960

that's as accurate as possible

1593

00:47:35,430 --> 00:47:34,240

my definition of accurate there is not

1594

00:47:36,790 --> 00:47:35,440

necessarily the same as

1595

00:47:38,549 --> 00:47:36,800

you might be thinking as your listeners

1596

00:47:39,910 --> 00:47:38,559

might be thinking um it doesn't

1597

00:47:42,069 --> 00:47:39,920

necessarily mean

1598

00:47:43,589 --> 00:47:42,079

knowing the precise truth about every

1599

00:47:45,270 --> 00:47:43,599

question it just means

1600

00:47:46,950 --> 00:47:45,280

being well calibrated or some

1601

00:47:49,190 --> 00:47:46,960

combination of you know

1602

00:47:51,030 --> 00:47:49,200

having the right answers and having uh

1603

00:47:53,589 --> 00:47:51,040

having the right amount of uncertainty

1604

00:47:55,589 --> 00:47:53,599

about your answers the appropriate

1605

00:47:56,309 --> 00:47:55,599

strategy for the vast majority of things

1606

00:47:58,150 --> 00:47:56,319

in the world

1607

00:47:59,349 --> 00:47:58,160

because you just don't have time to

1608

00:48:00,230 --> 00:47:59,359

investigate everything even if you

1609

00:48:01,750 --> 00:48:00,240

wanted to

1610

00:48:04,950 --> 00:48:01,760

the appropriate strategy for the vast

1611

00:48:07,270 --> 00:48:04,960

majority of things is just to recognize

1612

00:48:08,309 --> 00:48:07,280

how uncertain you are or or to say you

1613

00:48:10,309 --> 00:48:08,319

know well

1614

00:48:11,670 --> 00:48:10,319

my guess about this complex medical

1615

00:48:14,150 --> 00:48:11,680

question is that

1616

00:48:14,870 --> 00:48:14,160

probably stents help prevent this

1617

00:48:17,349 --> 00:48:14,880

disease

1618

00:48:18,950 --> 00:48:17,359

but i have you know i could end up being

1619

00:48:20,630 --> 00:48:18,960

wrong about that i'm just basing that

1620

00:48:21,990 --> 00:48:20,640

off of whatever you know my impression

1621

00:48:23,349 --> 00:48:22,000

of the medical consensus

1622

00:48:25,109 --> 00:48:23,359

you have these error bars around your

1623

00:48:27,030 --> 00:48:25,119

estimates and you are

1624

00:48:28,630 --> 00:48:27,040

self-aware about what your judgments are

1625

00:48:29,510 --> 00:48:28,640

based on and what could cause them to

1626
00:48:31,670 --> 00:48:29,520
change

1627
00:48:32,870 --> 00:48:31,680
um and so that process for the vast

1628
00:48:34,309 --> 00:48:32,880
majority of things doesn't actually take

1629
00:48:36,069 --> 00:48:34,319
that much time and effort it just it

1630
00:48:38,710 --> 00:48:36,079
just requires self-awareness basically

1631
00:48:40,710 --> 00:48:38,720
uh and calibration you still want to

1632
00:48:42,390 --> 00:48:40,720
sometimes you have to make

1633
00:48:43,910 --> 00:48:42,400
decisions and they don't necessarily

1634
00:48:45,030 --> 00:48:43,920
need to be practical decisions in your

1635
00:48:45,829 --> 00:48:45,040
day-to-day life you could but it could

1636
00:48:48,069 --> 00:48:45,839
be something about

1637
00:48:50,309 --> 00:48:48,079
who you vote for or what what charity

1638
00:48:52,549 --> 00:48:50,319

you decide to support

1639

00:48:54,710 --> 00:48:52,559

you know do i spend this money on

1640

00:48:56,870 --> 00:48:54,720

supporting a climate change activist

1641

00:48:57,990 --> 00:48:56,880

group for example i want to know whether

1642

00:48:59,910 --> 00:48:58,000

the risks that they're

1643

00:49:01,589 --> 00:48:59,920

highlighting are real or not and of

1644

00:49:03,990 --> 00:49:01,599

course for that

1645

00:49:04,950 --> 00:49:04,000

i need to know what the science says uh

1646

00:49:06,309 --> 00:49:04,960

and again i'm

1647

00:49:08,150 --> 00:49:06,319

you know if you're not in atmospheric

1648

00:49:09,829 --> 00:49:08,160

science or somebody who like

1649

00:49:11,030 --> 00:49:09,839

i know that in the case of climate

1650

00:49:11,910 --> 00:49:11,040

change we're talking about multiple

1651

00:49:13,990 --> 00:49:11,920

fields that show

1652

00:49:15,990 --> 00:49:14,000

all show the same conclusions but but if

1653

00:49:17,670 --> 00:49:16,000

you're not a scientist or you're not

1654

00:49:19,030 --> 00:49:17,680

equipped to judge then that makes it

1655

00:49:19,910 --> 00:49:19,040

difficult for you but i would say

1656

00:49:21,109 --> 00:49:19,920

there's there's a

1657

00:49:23,109 --> 00:49:21,119

there are cases where it's even more

1658

00:49:24,390 --> 00:49:23,119

complex than that i if i may i would

1659

00:49:27,190 --> 00:49:24,400

like to give an example from

1660

00:49:28,549 --> 00:49:27,200

a podcast one of your podcasts so sure

1661

00:49:30,549 --> 00:49:28,559

there are situations where

1662

00:49:32,230 --> 00:49:30,559

knowledge is required similarly to

1663

00:49:33,910 --> 00:49:32,240

science but the field is

1664

00:49:35,589 --> 00:49:33,920

uh tinted with interpretation and

1665

00:49:37,510 --> 00:49:35,599

opinion for example

1666

00:49:38,950 --> 00:49:37,520

the law and i think you know where i'm

1667

00:49:41,349 --> 00:49:38,960

heading with this

1668

00:49:42,710 --> 00:49:41,359

with you recently interviewed professor

1669

00:49:44,630 --> 00:49:42,720

william board

1670

00:49:46,309 --> 00:49:44,640

and he talked about he defended uh

1671

00:49:49,349 --> 00:49:46,319

originalism and uh

1672

00:49:52,069 --> 00:49:49,359

i i posted about this to a uh

1673

00:49:52,870 --> 00:49:52,079

a lawyer who has a podcast uh opening

1674

00:49:55,190 --> 00:49:52,880

arguments and

1675

00:49:56,630 --> 00:49:55,200

andre torres i oh yeah posted to him and

1676

00:49:59,190 --> 00:49:56,640

asked him what he thought about because

1677

00:50:00,549 --> 00:49:59,200

he's a he rejects uh originalism very

1678

00:50:01,349 --> 00:50:00,559

very strongly and i was wondering what

1679

00:50:03,750 --> 00:50:01,359

he thought

1680

00:50:04,950 --> 00:50:03,760

and he made two shows about it and i he

1681

00:50:07,910 --> 00:50:04,960

said he contacted you

1682

00:50:08,390 --> 00:50:07,920

dude and and william board to discuss

1683

00:50:09,750 --> 00:50:08,400

this

1684

00:50:12,870 --> 00:50:09,760

anyway i don't have an opinion about

1685

00:50:14,549 --> 00:50:12,880

this because i'm not

1686

00:50:16,790 --> 00:50:14,559

i'm not a legal mind i don't have legal

1687

00:50:18,069 --> 00:50:16,800

training i find this discussion very

1688

00:50:20,150 --> 00:50:18,079

interesting but

1689

00:50:21,190 --> 00:50:20,160

i find the arguments on both sides

1690

00:50:24,309 --> 00:50:21,200

compelling to

1691

00:50:25,589 --> 00:50:24,319

one degree or another but let's assume

1692

00:50:27,030 --> 00:50:25,599

for a moment that i needed to make

1693

00:50:28,790 --> 00:50:27,040

decisions based on this

1694

00:50:30,069 --> 00:50:28,800

how do i know in a situation like this

1695

00:50:31,589 --> 00:50:30,079

you know again this is a field where

1696

00:50:33,109 --> 00:50:31,599

knowledge is required but here we have

1697

00:50:34,790 --> 00:50:33,119

two eminent people

1698

00:50:36,390 --> 00:50:34,800

that both sound trustworthy and

1699

00:50:36,870 --> 00:50:36,400

knowledgeable disagreeing with each

1700

00:50:38,870 --> 00:50:36,880

other

1701

00:50:39,990 --> 00:50:38,880

what do i do about something like that

1702

00:50:43,030 --> 00:50:40,000

the short answer is there's

1703

00:50:44,230 --> 00:50:43,040

no you know easy rule of course the

1704

00:50:45,670 --> 00:50:44,240

longer answer is that

1705

00:50:47,670 --> 00:50:45,680

you end up just using this bundle of

1706

00:50:49,270 --> 00:50:47,680

heuristics different heuristics you

1707

00:50:49,829 --> 00:50:49,280

might lean on more in some domains than

1708

00:50:52,230 --> 00:50:49,839

others

1709

00:50:53,510 --> 00:50:52,240

one heuristic i use is like i may not

1710

00:50:55,670 --> 00:50:53,520

really understand the field

1711

00:50:57,190 --> 00:50:55,680

but i can look at the people supporting

1712

00:50:59,109 --> 00:50:57,200

one side and the other side

1713

00:51:01,910 --> 00:50:59,119

and i can kind of get a sense of do the

1714

00:51:03,670 --> 00:51:01,920

people supporting side a

1715

00:51:04,950 --> 00:51:03,680

seem more reasonable than the people

1716

00:51:07,109 --> 00:51:04,960

supporting side b

1717

00:51:07,990 --> 00:51:07,119

um that's a heuristic i often use i

1718

00:51:11,190 --> 00:51:08,000

often will

1719

00:51:11,829 --> 00:51:11,200

also just use just priors like if a

1720

00:51:15,270 --> 00:51:11,839

theory

1721

00:51:16,150 --> 00:51:15,280

is is really new and unusual i might say

1722

00:51:17,589 --> 00:51:16,160

like well

1723

00:51:19,589 --> 00:51:17,599

how often are really new and unusual

1724

00:51:22,230 --> 00:51:19,599

theories correct and

1725

00:51:23,990 --> 00:51:22,240

and if it's really rare then i might put

1726
00:51:25,430 --> 00:51:24,000
lower probability on that being true

1727
00:51:27,270 --> 00:51:25,440
even if again even if i don't really

1728
00:51:27,589 --> 00:51:27,280
understand the subject matter because

1729
00:51:29,270 --> 00:51:27,599
it's

1730
00:51:30,790 --> 00:51:29,280
outside of my area of expertise none of

1731
00:51:32,549 --> 00:51:30,800
these heuristics are guaranteed and i'm

1732
00:51:35,910 --> 00:51:32,559
applying them in kind of this

1733
00:51:36,549 --> 00:51:35,920
messy subjective way i'm kind of making

1734
00:51:38,309 --> 00:51:36,559
a lot of

1735
00:51:39,829 --> 00:51:38,319
educated guesses and i can't prove that

1736
00:51:42,390 --> 00:51:39,839
i'm right and that's okay

1737
00:51:43,349 --> 00:51:42,400
and that's inevitable but over time you

1738
00:51:44,950 --> 00:51:43,359

want to sort of

1739

00:51:46,630 --> 00:51:44,960

pay attention to which of your

1740

00:51:48,549 --> 00:51:46,640

heuristics seem to be

1741

00:51:50,549 --> 00:51:48,559

working out well like when you can

1742

00:51:52,230 --> 00:51:50,559

actually find the answer to something

1743

00:51:53,910 --> 00:51:52,240

uh you want to look at like well how

1744

00:51:55,430 --> 00:51:53,920

accurate were my heuristics in this case

1745

00:51:55,990 --> 00:51:55,440

like did they lead me astray or did they

1746

00:51:57,910 --> 00:51:56,000

help me

1747

00:51:59,670 --> 00:51:57,920

get the right answer um and over time

1748

00:52:01,430 --> 00:51:59,680

you kind of update your sticks and learn

1749

00:52:02,150 --> 00:52:01,440

which ones to rely more on or to rely

1750

00:52:03,670 --> 00:52:02,160

less on

1751
00:52:05,270 --> 00:52:03,680
the way i'm describing it it sounds

1752
00:52:06,069 --> 00:52:05,280
really pretty messy and qualitative and

1753
00:52:09,349 --> 00:52:06,079
it is

1754
00:52:12,150 --> 00:52:09,359
but a less messy and and somewhat more

1755
00:52:12,870 --> 00:52:12,160
more like analytical version of this

1756
00:52:15,030 --> 00:52:12,880
approach

1757
00:52:16,309 --> 00:52:15,040
is i think in the example of the super

1758
00:52:17,430 --> 00:52:16,319
forecasters that i wrote about in the

1759
00:52:20,150 --> 00:52:17,440
book these are the people

1760
00:52:21,349 --> 00:52:20,160
in the longitudinal multi-year

1761
00:52:23,510 --> 00:52:21,359
forecasting tournament

1762
00:52:25,190 --> 00:52:23,520
that was run by the government the

1763
00:52:28,549 --> 00:52:25,200

department of the us government called

1764

00:52:30,390 --> 00:52:28,559

darpa or irpa in which they

1765

00:52:32,870 --> 00:52:30,400

pitted teams of forecasters against each

1766

00:52:34,710 --> 00:52:32,880

other to see you know who was better at

1767

00:52:36,549 --> 00:52:34,720

predicting the outcomes of various world

1768

00:52:37,829 --> 00:52:36,559

events like you know which world leader

1769

00:52:39,510 --> 00:52:37,839

will be re-elected or

1770

00:52:41,510 --> 00:52:39,520

when the such-and-such civil war will

1771

00:52:42,230 --> 00:52:41,520

end etc and the super forecasters were

1772

00:52:44,870 --> 00:52:42,240

this team

1773

00:52:45,430 --> 00:52:44,880

that was recruited and led by among

1774

00:52:46,710 --> 00:52:45,440

other people

1775

00:52:48,549 --> 00:52:46,720

a political scientist named philip

1776

00:52:49,829 --> 00:52:48,559

tetlock and he called them the super

1777

00:52:51,190 --> 00:52:49,839

forecasters because they

1778

00:52:52,950 --> 00:52:51,200

just blew the competition out of the

1779

00:52:54,230 --> 00:52:52,960

water um and were

1780

00:52:56,069 --> 00:52:54,240

were more accurate at predicting

1781

00:52:57,270 --> 00:52:56,079

political and economic events than like

1782

00:52:59,829 --> 00:52:57,280

the cia's

1783

00:53:01,030 --> 00:52:59,839

analysts uh not to mention you know

1784

00:53:02,630 --> 00:53:01,040

professors who were

1785

00:53:04,069 --> 00:53:02,640

allegedly experts in politics and

1786

00:53:06,390 --> 00:53:04,079

economics over the years

1787

00:53:07,990 --> 00:53:06,400

um they were i think like 30 more

1788

00:53:09,270 --> 00:53:08,000

accurate than the cia despite not even

1789

00:53:10,630 --> 00:53:09,280

having access to the classified

1790

00:53:12,069 --> 00:53:10,640

information that the cia had

1791

00:53:13,990 --> 00:53:12,079

these are the kinds of things that super

1792

00:53:15,349 --> 00:53:14,000

forecasters talk about doing

1793

00:53:16,390 --> 00:53:15,359

uh when they make their forecast they

1794

00:53:17,510 --> 00:53:16,400

have certain heuristics they have

1795

00:53:19,190 --> 00:53:17,520

certain priors

1796

00:53:21,589 --> 00:53:19,200

they use to try to you know make their

1797

00:53:23,430 --> 00:53:21,599

guesses always with a corresponding

1798

00:53:25,270 --> 00:53:23,440

confidence level like they might say i'm

1799

00:53:27,270 --> 00:53:25,280

90 confident that such and such leader

1800

00:53:28,870 --> 00:53:27,280

will get reelected or i'm only 60

1801

00:53:30,950 --> 00:53:28,880

confident that civil war will end this

1802

00:53:31,910 --> 00:53:30,960

year et cetera over time they revise

1803

00:53:33,990 --> 00:53:31,920

those heuristics

1804

00:53:35,589 --> 00:53:34,000

and they learn when to rely more on

1805

00:53:37,910 --> 00:53:35,599

certain kinds of evidence or when to

1806

00:53:39,510 --> 00:53:37,920

rely less on it and that's just i think

1807

00:53:41,670 --> 00:53:39,520

the best you can do

1808

00:53:43,589 --> 00:53:41,680

but isn't the key i think i loved that

1809

00:53:45,670 --> 00:53:43,599

part of the the book where but

1810

00:53:47,670 --> 00:53:45,680

i thought to me the key in all of that

1811

00:53:48,710 --> 00:53:47,680

was that they constantly you you discuss

1812

00:53:51,270 --> 00:53:48,720

this how they

1813

00:53:52,069 --> 00:53:51,280

constantly update they they it's not

1814

00:53:55,190 --> 00:53:52,079

like they

1815

00:53:56,790 --> 00:53:55,200

say i'm 60 confident and that's it

1816

00:53:58,549 --> 00:53:56,800

they will constantly update their

1817

00:54:00,470 --> 00:53:58,559

prediction and they will constantly

1818

00:54:01,829 --> 00:54:00,480

update the margins of error

1819

00:54:03,829 --> 00:54:01,839

the the error bars around that

1820

00:54:04,390 --> 00:54:03,839

prediction as well perhaps that is the

1821

00:54:06,950 --> 00:54:04,400

answer

1822

00:54:07,990 --> 00:54:06,960

just be constantly update updating your

1823

00:54:10,470 --> 00:54:08,000

view and

1824

00:54:11,829 --> 00:54:10,480

be open to recalibrating yeah and i

1825

00:54:13,349 --> 00:54:11,839

guess an important distinction i should

1826
00:54:14,150 --> 00:54:13,359
make the super forecasters were trying

1827
00:54:16,549 --> 00:54:14,160
to be

1828
00:54:18,069 --> 00:54:16,559
as accurate as possible but you can

1829
00:54:20,309 --> 00:54:18,079
actually be well calibrated

1830
00:54:22,549 --> 00:54:20,319
without putting in nearly as much time

1831
00:54:23,829 --> 00:54:22,559
and effort as the super forecasters did

1832
00:54:25,670 --> 00:54:23,839
sorry i should just define being well

1833
00:54:26,630 --> 00:54:25,680
calibrated to be well calibrated means

1834
00:54:28,069 --> 00:54:26,640
to have the appropriate level of

1835
00:54:29,589 --> 00:54:28,079
confidence in your beliefs out of all

1836
00:54:30,230 --> 00:54:29,599
the times you say you're 60 sure of

1837
00:54:32,390 --> 00:54:30,240
something

1838
00:54:33,910 --> 00:54:32,400

you're actually right 60 of the time out

1839

00:54:35,589 --> 00:54:33,920

of all the times you say you're 90

1840

00:54:37,510 --> 00:54:35,599

sure you're actually right about 90 of

1841

00:54:38,950 --> 00:54:37,520

the time that's good calibration

1842

00:54:40,630 --> 00:54:38,960

you can practice your calibration

1843

00:54:42,150 --> 00:54:40,640

without having to become an expert in

1844

00:54:44,549 --> 00:54:42,160

something so you can take

1845

00:54:45,670 --> 00:54:44,559

a quiz of 40 trivia questions try to

1846

00:54:47,670 --> 00:54:45,680

guess the answer to

1847

00:54:49,190 --> 00:54:47,680

which country is bigger or which

1848

00:54:50,470 --> 00:54:49,200

invention came first or whatever and

1849

00:54:52,069 --> 00:54:50,480

even if you know very little

1850

00:54:54,150 --> 00:54:52,079

kind of try to make guesses and put a

1851
00:54:55,910 --> 00:54:54,160
confidence level down next to your guess

1852
00:54:57,510 --> 00:54:55,920
and most people when they first take a

1853
00:54:58,549 --> 00:54:57,520
calibration test are

1854
00:55:00,549 --> 00:54:58,559
pretty bad they're pretty poorly

1855
00:55:01,990 --> 00:55:00,559
calibrated usually they're overconfident

1856
00:55:02,950 --> 00:55:02,000
so they're they're not right nearly as

1857
00:55:04,470 --> 00:55:02,960
much as they think they're going to be

1858
00:55:06,549 --> 00:55:04,480
right but if you do a few of them

1859
00:55:08,549 --> 00:55:06,559
you quickly become very well calibrated

1860
00:55:09,829 --> 00:55:08,559
because you just kind of get a sense for

1861
00:55:11,670 --> 00:55:09,839
when is it appropriate for me to be

1862
00:55:12,470 --> 00:55:11,680
confident and when is it not how much do

1863
00:55:14,470 --> 00:55:12,480

i really know

1864

00:55:15,990 --> 00:55:14,480

that's kind of a domain general skill

1865

00:55:17,670 --> 00:55:16,000

being good at noticing like can i

1866

00:55:18,789 --> 00:55:17,680

justify being confident about this or do

1867

00:55:20,150 --> 00:55:18,799

i not really know very much

1868

00:55:21,910 --> 00:55:20,160

there aren't like hard and fast rules

1869

00:55:23,190 --> 00:55:21,920

for how to be well calibrated but you

1870

00:55:25,030 --> 00:55:23,200

it's a skill you pick up just through

1871

00:55:26,470 --> 00:55:25,040

practice you can choose to like put in

1872

00:55:28,470 --> 00:55:26,480

the time and effort on some fields to

1873

00:55:29,910 --> 00:55:28,480

try to become really accurate but

1874

00:55:32,069 --> 00:55:29,920

failing that you can at least be well

1875

00:55:34,390 --> 00:55:32,079

calibrated okay well i think

1876

00:55:35,349 --> 00:55:34,400

that's a good point to uh end this

1877

00:55:37,270 --> 00:55:35,359

interview on

1878

00:55:39,349 --> 00:55:37,280

before we wrap up i want to say how much

1879

00:55:42,549 --> 00:55:39,359

i enjoy your podcast on a regular basis

1880

00:55:43,430 --> 00:55:42,559

yeah and i the book uh i can't recommend

1881

00:55:44,470 --> 00:55:43,440

it highly enough

1882

00:55:46,309 --> 00:55:44,480

i want to make sure that people

1883

00:55:48,069 --> 00:55:46,319

understand that despite the fact that

1884

00:55:50,549 --> 00:55:48,079

it's very thought-provoking

1885

00:55:52,150 --> 00:55:50,559

and as i mentioned earlier i think it

1886

00:55:54,150 --> 00:55:52,160

has the potential to be transformative

1887

00:55:56,390 --> 00:55:54,160

if you dedicate yourself to

1888

00:55:58,309 --> 00:55:56,400

using the advice in it i think it's it's

1889

00:56:00,470 --> 00:55:58,319

v it's extremely readable it's it's

1890

00:56:02,309 --> 00:56:00,480

really enjoyable to just read through

1891

00:56:03,750 --> 00:56:02,319

i've read i'm a very slow reader i read

1892

00:56:05,510 --> 00:56:03,760

this through this very quickly and

1893

00:56:08,150 --> 00:56:05,520

listened to the to the audiobook

1894

00:56:08,950 --> 00:56:08,160

as well and now as i mentioned i also

1895

00:56:12,950 --> 00:56:08,960

photocopied

1896

00:56:13,829 --> 00:56:12,960

future reference because i think they

1897

00:56:15,750 --> 00:56:13,839

could

1898

00:56:17,510 --> 00:56:15,760

make a change in the way i think about

1899

00:56:19,270 --> 00:56:17,520

things and i speak as somebody who's

1900

00:56:21,430 --> 00:56:19,280

really dedicated the last 20 years of

1901

00:56:24,390 --> 00:56:21,440

their lives to critical thinking into

1902

00:56:25,349 --> 00:56:24,400

trying to be better in thinking finding

1903

00:56:27,190 --> 00:56:25,359

the truth and

1904

00:56:28,390 --> 00:56:27,200

living life according to what's true not

1905

00:56:30,150 --> 00:56:28,400

according to what's

1906

00:56:31,750 --> 00:56:30,160

uh what i would like to be true i can't

1907

00:56:32,549 --> 00:56:31,760

recommend the book and the podcast

1908

00:56:34,630 --> 00:56:32,559

highly enough

1909

00:56:35,589 --> 00:56:34,640

okay where can people find you if they

1910

00:56:38,230 --> 00:56:35,599

want to

1911

00:56:38,870 --> 00:56:38,240

listen and read your work well i'm julia

1912

00:56:41,430 --> 00:56:38,880

gailiff

1913

00:56:42,470 --> 00:56:41,440

on twitter and my website is julia

1914

00:56:44,870 --> 00:56:42,480

gayliff.com

1915

00:56:46,870 --> 00:56:44,880

my podcast is rationally speaking it's

1916

00:56:48,390 --> 00:56:46,880

uh rationallyspeakingpodcast.org

1917

00:56:50,630 --> 00:56:48,400

and my book is the scout mindset and you

1918

00:56:51,990 --> 00:56:50,640

can find it on amazon or

1919

00:56:53,349 --> 00:56:52,000

hopefully lots of other booksellers

1920

00:56:53,990 --> 00:56:53,359

although now i'm worried that it's sold

1921

00:56:56,150 --> 00:56:54,000

out

1922

00:56:57,829 --> 00:56:56,160

no no it was just it wasn't so it was

1923

00:56:59,430 --> 00:56:57,839

sold out for the moment they actually

1924

00:57:00,549 --> 00:56:59,440

said you will take another two weeks or

1925

00:57:03,589 --> 00:57:00,559

something like that and

1926

00:57:05,589 --> 00:57:03,599

i didn't want to wait so okay okay good

1927

00:57:06,950 --> 00:57:05,599

and uh it's been a pleasure so uh so

1928

00:57:08,470 --> 00:57:06,960

great to be on your show so much

1929

00:57:24,870 --> 00:57:08,480

and all the best and thank you very much

1930

00:57:28,390 --> 00:57:26,549

thank you to a ransom gift for that

1931

00:57:29,430 --> 00:57:28,400

fascinating interview with the author

1932

00:57:31,349 --> 00:57:29,440

julia galif

1933

00:57:33,589 --> 00:57:31,359

and don't forget the regular episode of

1934

00:57:35,990 --> 00:57:33,599

the skeptic zone will be out on time

1935

00:57:37,750 --> 00:57:36,000

this weekend but for now this is richard

1936

00:57:43,349 --> 00:57:37,760

saunders the producer signing off

1937

00:57:46,549 --> 00:57:45,109

you've been listening to the skeptic

1938

00:57:49,789 --> 00:57:46,559

zone podcast

1939

00:57:51,190 --> 00:57:49,799

please visit our website at

1940

00:57:54,230 --> 00:57:51,200

www.skepticzone.tv

1941

00:57:56,230 --> 00:57:54,240

for show notes contacts and to access

1942

00:57:59,750 --> 00:57:56,240

the back catalog of episodes

1943

00:58:01,829 --> 00:57:59,760

going back to 2008 you can follow the

1944

00:58:05,270 --> 00:58:01,839

skeptic zone podcast on twitter

1945

00:58:08,789 --> 00:58:05,280

at skepticzone visit our facebook page

1946

00:58:10,230 --> 00:58:08,799

or leave a review on itunes you can also

1947

00:58:13,430 --> 00:58:10,240

support the skeptic zone

1948

00:58:14,789 --> 00:58:13,440

via patreon or paypal the skeptic zone

1949

00:58:17,190 --> 00:58:14,799

podcast is an

1950

00:58:19,270 --> 00:58:17,200

independent production the views and

1951

00:58:21,270 --> 00:58:19,280

opinions expressed on the skeptic zone

1952

00:58:22,549 --> 00:58:21,280

are not necessarily those of australian