



1
00:00:07,550 --> 00:00:04,579
on this episode of skeptic Oh in the

2
00:00:09,350 --> 00:00:07,560
article that you wrote you cited his

3
00:00:11,930 --> 00:00:09,360
work and you said that his research

4
00:00:14,270 --> 00:00:11,940
delivered a blow to the idea that the

5
00:00:15,860 --> 00:00:14,280
mind and the brain could be separate do

6
00:00:18,290 --> 00:00:15,870
you remember this whole thing yes of

7
00:00:20,210 --> 00:00:18,300
course and he wrote me and said I

8
00:00:24,169 --> 00:00:20,220
disagree that is not what my research

9
00:00:26,870 --> 00:00:24,179
means and so we agreed to disagree how

10
00:00:28,909 --> 00:00:26,880
can you agree to just I mean if you said

11
00:00:32,120 --> 00:00:28,919
his methods were wrong

12
00:00:35,240 --> 00:00:32,130
or that his conclusions are well faulty

13
00:00:40,190 --> 00:00:35,250

but it's not in the methods it's in the

14

00:00:41,630 --> 00:00:40,200

interpretation of what it means I am

15

00:00:44,000 --> 00:00:41,640

skeptical of some of the methods of how

16

00:00:47,780 --> 00:00:44,010

they interpret experiences that people

17

00:00:58,970 --> 00:00:47,790

report having stay with us for skeptic

18

00:01:03,210 --> 00:01:01,620

today we welcome science historian

19

00:01:05,970 --> 00:01:03,220

best-selling author in one of the

20

00:01:08,280 --> 00:01:05,980

world's best-known skeptics dr. Michael

21

00:01:09,780 --> 00:01:08,290

Shermer - skeptic Oh dr. Shermer is here

22

00:01:12,030 --> 00:01:09,790

to talk about his new book which is

23

00:01:14,340 --> 00:01:12,040

quickly climbing the bestseller list on

24

00:01:17,550 --> 00:01:14,350

Amazon and elsewhere the title of that

25

00:01:20,120 --> 00:01:17,560

book the moral arc how science and

26

00:01:22,230 --> 00:01:20,130

reason leads humanity towards truth

27

00:01:24,180 --> 00:01:22,240

justice and freedom

28

00:01:26,070 --> 00:01:24,190

dr. Shermer it's great to have you on

29

00:01:27,450 --> 00:01:26,080

thanks so much for joining me on skeptic

30

00:01:30,930 --> 00:01:27,460

code thanks for having me I appreciate

31

00:01:33,719 --> 00:01:30,940

that so this issue that being morality

32

00:01:36,690 --> 00:01:33,729

has been a hot topic and somewhat of a

33

00:01:38,570 --> 00:01:36,700

touchy topic among atheist skeptical

34

00:01:41,910 --> 00:01:38,580

communities that you are a big part of

35

00:01:44,190 --> 00:01:41,920

why is it that that has been such a hot

36

00:01:46,200 --> 00:01:44,200

topic and such a touchy topic and what

37

00:01:48,350 --> 00:01:46,210

really I guess the question is what led

38

00:01:51,600 --> 00:01:48,360

you to write this book about morality

39

00:01:53,040 --> 00:01:51,610

sure well it's it's touchy in our in

40

00:01:54,920 --> 00:01:53,050

American culture because we're such a

41

00:01:57,810 --> 00:01:54,930

religious nation that the idea that

42

00:01:59,670 --> 00:01:57,820

morals and moral values and moral

43

00:02:03,419 --> 00:01:59,680

progress can come from some source other

44

00:02:07,889 --> 00:02:03,429

than religion strikes most people as

45

00:02:11,309 --> 00:02:07,899

either crazy or or insulting you know

46

00:02:15,750 --> 00:02:11,319

not just wrong but like like really evil

47

00:02:18,120 --> 00:02:15,760

an evil idea and but in fact as I show

48

00:02:19,350 --> 00:02:18,130

in the book cancer the second part of

49

00:02:21,540 --> 00:02:19,360

the question the book is something of an

50

00:02:23,600 --> 00:02:21,550

extension of all my previous books you

51
00:02:25,770 --> 00:02:23,610
know which are pro reason pro science

52
00:02:27,690 --> 00:02:25,780
trying to show how science and reason

53
00:02:29,580 --> 00:02:27,700
for the best tools we have for

54
00:02:31,380 --> 00:02:29,590
understanding the world and and that

55
00:02:34,320 --> 00:02:31,390
includes the moral world you know the

56
00:02:37,290 --> 00:02:34,330
moral sciences as David Hume he used to

57
00:02:40,470 --> 00:02:37,300
call him the idea that ever since the

58
00:02:43,410 --> 00:02:40,480
enlightenment philosophers then all the

59
00:02:45,270 --> 00:02:43,420
way up to scientists today tried to

60
00:02:46,740 --> 00:02:45,280
pattern themselves after the the

61
00:02:49,410 --> 00:02:46,750
luminaries of the Scientific Revolution

62
00:02:51,360 --> 00:02:49,420
who discovered that the world is

63
00:02:53,850 --> 00:02:51,370

governed by natural laws that can be

64
00:02:55,710 --> 00:02:53,860
understood through reason and empiricism

65
00:03:00,089 --> 00:02:55,720
through this this new tool called

66
00:03:00,780 --> 00:03:00,099
science and and it turned out that it

67
00:03:03,000 --> 00:03:00,790
really works

68
00:03:04,770 --> 00:03:03,010
I mean Newton showed that you could you

69
00:03:07,560 --> 00:03:04,780
could describe both celestial and

70
00:03:09,450 --> 00:03:07,570
terrestrial mechanics using you know the

71
00:03:10,230 --> 00:03:09,460
same set of equations and that the

72
00:03:11,700 --> 00:03:10,240
entire universe

73
00:03:13,920 --> 00:03:11,710
is covered by natural law and it was

74
00:03:15,540 --> 00:03:13,930
shortly after that that all the great

75
00:03:17,600 --> 00:03:15,550
philosophers in the Enlightenment that

76

00:03:19,980 --> 00:03:17,610

who were familiar with they they

77

00:03:22,530 --> 00:03:19,990

subconsciously modeled themselves after

78

00:03:24,240 --> 00:03:22,540

the scientists saying the social world

79

00:03:26,640 --> 00:03:24,250

the moral world the political world the

80

00:03:28,440 --> 00:03:26,650

economic world these are also governed

81

00:03:30,240 --> 00:03:28,450

by natural laws and we can understand

82

00:03:32,220 --> 00:03:30,250

them and and try to make the world a

83

00:03:34,410 --> 00:03:32,230

better place by by understanding them

84

00:03:36,660 --> 00:03:34,420

you know I think you're right and I

85

00:03:40,110 --> 00:03:36,670

think you make a very strong case in the

86

00:03:42,390 --> 00:03:40,120

book for why that seemingly disconnect

87

00:03:45,300 --> 00:03:42,400

between morality and science and reason

88

00:03:47,310 --> 00:03:45,310

maybe shouldn't be such a disconnect or

89

00:03:51,420 --> 00:03:47,320

shouldn't catch us by surprise you know

90

00:03:53,790 --> 00:03:51,430

as a history of science buff research or

91

00:03:56,250 --> 00:03:53,800

scholar really you do a great job of

92

00:03:58,590 --> 00:03:56,260

connecting these shifts in moral

93

00:04:00,560 --> 00:03:58,600

behavior that many of us have

94

00:04:04,140 --> 00:04:00,570

experienced through our lifetime or

95

00:04:05,970 --> 00:04:04,150

reduction in sexism or the way we treat

96

00:04:08,250 --> 00:04:05,980

people who are gay or lesbian or have a

97

00:04:10,770 --> 00:04:08,260

different lifestyle and I think what you

98

00:04:13,830 --> 00:04:10,780

do and you do a real nice job of this in

99

00:04:16,200 --> 00:04:13,840

the book is show how these kinds of

100

00:04:17,970 --> 00:04:16,210

shifts can't really be traced back to

101

00:04:20,520 --> 00:04:17,980

religious breakthroughs it's not like

102

00:04:22,740 --> 00:04:20,530

somebody discovered some scroll in some

103

00:04:25,260 --> 00:04:22,750

cave and then said gee we should stop

104

00:04:27,150 --> 00:04:25,270

enslaving people but it really was

105

00:04:29,550 --> 00:04:27,160

through science and reason wasn't it

106

00:04:31,410 --> 00:04:29,560

yeah absolutely although I should point

107

00:04:33,960 --> 00:04:31,420

out that you know the Mormon Church had

108

00:04:36,270 --> 00:04:33,970

a new revelation from God that that

109

00:04:37,590 --> 00:04:36,280

polygamy was a bad idea after all right

110

00:04:38,850 --> 00:04:37,600

around the time that you Tom would

111

00:04:40,590 --> 00:04:38,860

become a state in the Union and the

112

00:04:42,180 --> 00:04:40,600

federal government said well I think it

113

00:04:43,500 --> 00:04:42,190

means the illegal and then they also had

114

00:04:45,810 --> 00:04:43,510

another revelation from God that

115

00:04:47,490 --> 00:04:45,820

african-americans are not as bad as they

116

00:04:49,800 --> 00:04:47,500

thought they were right when they're

117

00:04:51,960 --> 00:04:49,810

sort of racist doctrines collided with

118

00:04:55,860 --> 00:04:51,970

the civil rights movement in the 1960s

119

00:04:58,440 --> 00:04:55,870

and 70s in 1978 God passed down a new a

120

00:05:01,500 --> 00:04:58,450

new ordinance saying you know actually

121

00:05:03,780 --> 00:05:01,510

everything Americans are ok so you know

122

00:05:07,170 --> 00:05:03,790

but normally what religious people do is

123

00:05:09,300 --> 00:05:07,180

is they just inculcate the expanding

124

00:05:11,340 --> 00:05:09,310

moral sphere that everybody else the

125

00:05:14,400 --> 00:05:11,350

rising tide kind of brings along to

126

00:05:17,880 --> 00:05:14,410

everybody and then they cherry-pick

127

00:05:20,550 --> 00:05:17,890

passages in the Bible that sound more

128

00:05:22,590 --> 00:05:20,560

inclusive so they'll cite something like

129

00:05:24,090 --> 00:05:22,600

Moses saying that you know you should be

130

00:05:26,370 --> 00:05:24,100

nice to Egyptians because you were

131

00:05:28,110 --> 00:05:26,380

strangers in a strange land like they

132

00:05:30,780 --> 00:05:28,120

are here you know but of course that's

133

00:05:32,430 --> 00:05:30,790

tucked away amongst you know dozens of

134

00:05:34,770 --> 00:05:32,440

stories of rape and pillage and

135

00:05:38,250 --> 00:05:34,780

destruction and murder and mayhem that

136

00:05:41,430 --> 00:05:38,260

Moses himself ordered his own people -

137

00:05:42,960 --> 00:05:41,440

you know perpetrate upon others and or

138

00:05:45,900 --> 00:05:42,970

they'll talk about Jesus being more

139

00:05:47,730 --> 00:05:45,910

expansive and and more liberal and nicer

140

00:05:49,950 --> 00:05:47,740

and that's true he's better than the Old

141

00:05:51,480 --> 00:05:49,960

Testament gods but you know that those

142

00:05:54,510 --> 00:05:51,490

passages are themselves tucked away

143

00:05:56,900 --> 00:05:54,520

amongst passages that are anything but

144

00:06:00,290 --> 00:05:56,910

you know in the modern liberal tradition

145

00:06:02,880 --> 00:06:00,300

so it really does come from the

146

00:06:06,240 --> 00:06:02,890

invention of writes in the 17th and 18th

147

00:06:09,750 --> 00:06:06,250

centuries you can track it even in the

148

00:06:11,460 --> 00:06:09,760

modern you know moral Crusaders like dr.

149

00:06:13,620 --> 00:06:11,470

Martin Luther King you know he himself

150

00:06:15,720 --> 00:06:13,630

says his primary influence was Gandhi

151

00:06:19,610 --> 00:06:15,730

was anything but a Christian and the

152

00:06:22,680 --> 00:06:19,620

most liberal of theologians and so they

153

00:06:25,050 --> 00:06:22,690

you know they they and and the arguments

154

00:06:27,750 --> 00:06:25,060

they used for abolition of slavery were

155

00:06:29,280 --> 00:06:27,760

were rights language kind of arguments

156

00:06:30,600 --> 00:06:29,290

they weren't really quoting scripture

157

00:06:32,550 --> 00:06:30,610

because you know scripture makes it

158

00:06:33,540 --> 00:06:32,560

pretty clear slavery is kind of cool and

159

00:06:36,480 --> 00:06:33,550

he's good

160

00:06:37,740 --> 00:06:36,490

as long as you take care of them and you

161

00:06:39,120 --> 00:06:37,750

know I mean the passages in the Old

162

00:06:41,070 --> 00:06:39,130

Testament they were really quite

163

00:06:43,260 --> 00:06:41,080

gruesome you know like what if you did

164

00:06:46,880 --> 00:06:43,270

like one of them was I found kind of

165

00:06:49,700 --> 00:06:46,890

forgot about was that if you that if you

166

00:06:53,730 --> 00:06:49,710

you can you can free one of your slaves

167

00:06:55,770 --> 00:06:53,740

after seven years but if you marry them

168

00:06:58,800 --> 00:06:55,780

first and then they have kids and a

169

00:07:00,660 --> 00:06:58,810

spouse that the kids and spouse are not

170

00:07:02,460 --> 00:07:00,670

allowed to go free so setting you know

171

00:07:05,220 --> 00:07:02,470

setting one member of the family free is

172

00:07:07,350 --> 00:07:05,230

is you know is hardly you know a liberal

173

00:07:08,910 --> 00:07:07,360

thing to do you know a moral thing to do

174

00:07:12,290 --> 00:07:08,920

when they'd have to leave their family

175

00:07:14,760 --> 00:07:12,300

and who's gonna do that you know so

176

00:07:16,110 --> 00:07:14,770

really all the arguments for the

177

00:07:17,820 --> 00:07:16,120

abolition of slavery and all the other

178

00:07:19,560 --> 00:07:17,830

rights revolutions all the way up to the

179

00:07:21,480 --> 00:07:19,570

modern modern ones we're going through

180

00:07:23,840 --> 00:07:21,490

right now are really infused with

181

00:07:27,150 --> 00:07:23,850

Wright's language from the 18th century

182

00:07:29,370 --> 00:07:27,160

so well said and you do a nice job in

183

00:07:30,480 --> 00:07:29,380

the book of exploring several examples

184

00:07:32,610 --> 00:07:30,490

of where that's come up and I think

185

00:07:34,830 --> 00:07:32,620

slavery is one of the most dramatic ones

186

00:07:37,530 --> 00:07:34,840

I'm comfortable with where you're at

187

00:07:40,380 --> 00:07:37,540

there and saying that religion and

188

00:07:42,870 --> 00:07:40,390

scripture is off the table in terms of a

189

00:07:45,900 --> 00:07:42,880

source for morality I'm a little bit

190

00:07:48,210 --> 00:07:45,910

less sure and I got a wonder about I

191

00:07:50,280 --> 00:07:48,220

guess so many of the great scientists

192

00:07:52,350 --> 00:07:50,290

have told us some of the people you

193

00:07:54,660 --> 00:07:52,360

reference in the book Newton Tesla

194

00:07:56,340 --> 00:07:54,670

Edison others that your reference in the

195

00:07:58,740 --> 00:07:56,350

book you know claimed that they were

196

00:08:00,270 --> 00:07:58,750

connected to some kind of extended

197

00:08:02,880 --> 00:08:00,280

consciousness so maybe this wasn't

198

00:08:04,620 --> 00:08:02,890

exactly from the Bible but they felt

199

00:08:07,470 --> 00:08:04,630

like they were tapping into something

200

00:08:09,450 --> 00:08:07,480

more something beyond themselves sure

201
00:08:11,010 --> 00:08:09,460
that maybe but I don't really care about

202
00:08:13,260 --> 00:08:11,020
that or I don't even care up there they

203
00:08:16,110 --> 00:08:13,270
were themselves religious that the

204
00:08:17,630 --> 00:08:16,120
sources of their ideas were not religion

205
00:08:20,730 --> 00:08:17,640
even if they're religious doesn't matter

206
00:08:22,170 --> 00:08:20,740
you know that the idea that like an you

207
00:08:23,850 --> 00:08:22,180
know Newton was very religious he wrote

208
00:08:25,320 --> 00:08:23,860
more about you know scripture and the

209
00:08:27,870 --> 00:08:25,330
inter proper interpretation of the Book

210
00:08:29,310 --> 00:08:27,880
of Daniel and so forth and he did you

211
00:08:30,480 --> 00:08:29,320
know on physics well they wrote more

212
00:08:33,570 --> 00:08:30,490
about alchemy than he wrote about

213
00:08:36,240 --> 00:08:33,580

Christianity so yeah exactly so I mean

214

00:08:37,940 --> 00:08:36,250

there that matters what matters is the

215

00:08:40,589 --> 00:08:37,950

principles that turned out to be true

216

00:08:43,260 --> 00:08:40,599

verifiable by other people that and they

217

00:08:46,380 --> 00:08:43,270

really work and that includes the ideas

218

00:08:49,080 --> 00:08:46,390

of like John Locke and and Immanuel Kant

219

00:08:51,840 --> 00:08:49,090

and Thomas Jefferson Benjamin Franklin

220

00:08:53,700 --> 00:08:51,850

and Thomas Paine Thomas Hobbes you know

221

00:08:54,840 --> 00:08:53,710

all those great enlightenment

222

00:08:56,790 --> 00:08:54,850

philosophers we would call them

223

00:08:58,320 --> 00:08:56,800

scientists today they that word wasn't

224

00:09:00,510 --> 00:08:58,330

invented back then it was they were

225

00:09:01,560 --> 00:09:00,520

natural philosophers but the idea was it

226

00:09:03,210 --> 00:09:01,570

doesn't matter I don't care how

227

00:09:04,800 --> 00:09:03,220

religious they are I mean Thomas Hobbes

228

00:09:06,660 --> 00:09:04,810

made his big argument in favor of the

229

00:09:09,360 --> 00:09:06,670

monarchy but that none of us would

230

00:09:13,260 --> 00:09:09,370

embrace today but his idea that you know

231

00:09:15,450 --> 00:09:13,270

the universe is knowable and its natural

232

00:09:17,700 --> 00:09:15,460

laws govern societies that we should

233

00:09:20,820 --> 00:09:17,710

discover what those are that's what has

234

00:09:22,710 --> 00:09:20,830

changed the world right but when these

235

00:09:24,360 --> 00:09:22,720

same people so you take Martin Luther

236

00:09:26,940 --> 00:09:24,370

King who you referenced or in the book

237

00:09:29,220 --> 00:09:26,950

you reference that really we associate

238

00:09:30,840 --> 00:09:29,230

that term the moral arc with Martin

239

00:09:34,110 --> 00:09:30,850

Luther King but you trace it back even

240

00:09:37,050 --> 00:09:34,120

further to theologian and abolitionist

241

00:09:39,990 --> 00:09:37,060

Theodore Parker you know both those guys

242

00:09:42,930 --> 00:09:40,000

are saying hey there is something more

243

00:09:46,320 --> 00:09:42,940

than I'm tapping into it's not just

244

00:09:48,810 --> 00:09:46,330

reason it's not just logic there's

245

00:09:51,420 --> 00:09:48,820

something more do we have to take those

246

00:09:54,389 --> 00:09:51,430

claims into consideration

247

00:09:58,440 --> 00:09:54,399

um well historically they're interesting

248

00:10:00,810 --> 00:09:58,450

I guess in a lot of dr. King's language

249

00:10:02,970 --> 00:10:00,820

was very metaphorical you know he his

250

00:10:05,820 --> 00:10:02,980

speeches were so brilliant so good

251
00:10:10,040 --> 00:10:05,830
because he he'd wax very poetic using

252
00:10:13,050 --> 00:10:10,050
these biblical tropes and in religious

253
00:10:14,699 --> 00:10:13,060
phrases and sayings from songs and

254
00:10:17,610 --> 00:10:14,709
previous speeches and things like that

255
00:10:19,320 --> 00:10:17,620
he was so good at that but but again now

256
00:10:21,210 --> 00:10:19,330
that really matters what matters is

257
00:10:24,090 --> 00:10:21,220
what's the arguments that were made to

258
00:10:26,010 --> 00:10:24,100
persuade people to change their minds

259
00:10:27,810 --> 00:10:26,020
about african-americans and civil rights

260
00:10:30,600 --> 00:10:27,820
that's what we care about and that's

261
00:10:32,370 --> 00:10:30,610
what we're identify it's you know the

262
00:10:33,780 --> 00:10:32,380
actual rights language that people

263
00:10:35,340 --> 00:10:33,790

should be treated equally under the law

264

00:10:38,519 --> 00:10:35,350

where does that come from

265

00:10:39,480 --> 00:10:38,529

or that that no person should be a means

266

00:10:41,310 --> 00:10:39,490

to an end

267

00:10:44,070 --> 00:10:41,320

but it ends in of themselves that's

268

00:10:46,199 --> 00:10:44,080

Immanuel Kant okay but where does that

269

00:10:49,110 --> 00:10:46,209

come from I guess in the book you make

270

00:10:51,269 --> 00:10:49,120

the case and trace it back to evolution

271

00:10:53,250 --> 00:10:51,279

and the behavior of social primates I

272

00:10:55,470 --> 00:10:53,260

mean that's ultimately where you come

273

00:10:58,890 --> 00:10:55,480

down on to in terms of where it comes

274

00:11:00,630 --> 00:10:58,900

from right oh I do yes I say that my

275

00:11:02,150 --> 00:11:00,640

moral starting point is the survival and

276

00:11:05,040 --> 00:11:02,160

flourishing of sentient beings

277

00:11:07,260 --> 00:11:05,050

individual sentient beings my groups not

278

00:11:09,570 --> 00:11:07,270

racess and that genders not nations and

279

00:11:10,920 --> 00:11:09,580

states and collectives at any time at

280

00:11:13,380 --> 00:11:10,930

the individual the whole Bill of Rights

281

00:11:15,570 --> 00:11:13,390

is designed to protect individuals from

282

00:11:17,790 --> 00:11:15,580

being discriminated against as a member

283

00:11:19,590 --> 00:11:17,800

of a group that it doesn't matter what

284

00:11:21,660 --> 00:11:19,600

religion you are race creed color

285

00:11:24,030 --> 00:11:21,670

whatever you're an individual and by

286

00:11:27,210 --> 00:11:24,040

virtue of being human you have these

287

00:11:29,160 --> 00:11:27,220

natural rights so I I'm definitely a

288

00:11:31,380 --> 00:11:29,170

natural rights person not a utilitarian

289

00:11:33,480 --> 00:11:31,390

because like with the trolley problem

290

00:11:34,680 --> 00:11:33,490

you know the trolleys hurling down the

291

00:11:37,110 --> 00:11:34,690

tracks gonna kill the five workers

292

00:11:38,400 --> 00:11:37,120

unless you flip the switch and it sends

293

00:11:40,199 --> 00:11:38,410

it down the other track and kills the

294

00:11:41,819 --> 00:11:40,209

one worker would you kill the one to

295

00:11:43,920 --> 00:11:41,829

save the five almost everybody says they

296

00:11:47,040 --> 00:11:43,930

would it makes sense it's utilitarian

297

00:11:49,139 --> 00:11:47,050

calculus but in fact this is a problem

298

00:11:51,750 --> 00:11:49,149

because first of all how does the one

299

00:11:53,220 --> 00:11:51,760

person feel about it and second you know

300

00:11:55,350 --> 00:11:53,230

being sacrificed and second of all it's

301
00:11:57,120 --> 00:11:55,360
too easy to ratchet up their from you

302
00:11:59,850 --> 00:11:57,130
know kill one to save five to kill ten

303
00:12:01,110 --> 00:11:59,860
million to save 50 million and pretty

304
00:12:02,880 --> 00:12:01,120
soon you have yourself a genocide you

305
00:12:05,250 --> 00:12:02,890
know we really need to kill these 10

306
00:12:08,220 --> 00:12:05,260
million Jews in Europe to save the pure

307
00:12:10,710 --> 00:12:08,230
Varian's or whatever it's too easy we're

308
00:12:13,590 --> 00:12:10,720
we're too easily swayed by bad ideas by

309
00:12:15,450 --> 00:12:13,600
pseudoscience by nonsense there's this

310
00:12:17,460 --> 00:12:15,460
whole race and blood and eugenics and

311
00:12:18,780 --> 00:12:17,470
all this stuff is or which burning you

312
00:12:21,240 --> 00:12:18,790
know we have to burn these witches to

313
00:12:23,430 --> 00:12:21,250

save our community from plagues and bad

314

00:12:26,850 --> 00:12:23,440

weather you know that these are just bad

315

00:12:28,470 --> 00:12:26,860

ideas that that science debunks and so

316

00:12:31,380 --> 00:12:28,480

the progress that progress comes from

317

00:12:33,180 --> 00:12:31,390

reason in science primarily I'm with you

318

00:12:34,500 --> 00:12:33,190

on all about it we're disconnecting on

319

00:12:37,200 --> 00:12:34,510

one point you know I have an interview

320

00:12:39,600 --> 00:12:37,210

coming up with renowned theoretical

321

00:12:41,880 --> 00:12:39,610

physicist dr. Lawrence Krauss I know you

322

00:12:44,280 --> 00:12:41,890

know him and I was just watching the

323

00:12:45,960 --> 00:12:44,290

movie he did with Richard Dawkins and

324

00:12:50,070 --> 00:12:45,970

you make a brief appearance in that film

325

00:12:53,730 --> 00:12:50,080

the unbelievers and in so here is the

326

00:12:55,680 --> 00:12:53,740

state of science if you will with dr.

327

00:12:58,640 --> 00:12:55,690

Krauss saying in a very matter-of-fact

328

00:13:00,780 --> 00:12:58,650

way that the universe is meaningless

329

00:13:04,020 --> 00:13:00,790

therefore our lives are meaningless

330

00:13:06,600 --> 00:13:04,030

except for any illusionary meaning we

331

00:13:08,400 --> 00:13:06,610

might attach to them with this thing we

332

00:13:10,770 --> 00:13:08,410

called consciousness which is really

333

00:13:13,560 --> 00:13:10,780

just a product of our brain you know I

334

00:13:15,510 --> 00:13:13,570

just think you're kind of making a

335

00:13:17,570 --> 00:13:15,520

little bit of sleight of hand if you

336

00:13:20,910 --> 00:13:17,580

accept this meaningless universe

337

00:13:24,030 --> 00:13:20,920

meaningless lives thing but then try and

338

00:13:25,980 --> 00:13:24,040

roll it back into social behavior of

339

00:13:28,530 --> 00:13:25,990

primates I mean those primates are still

340

00:13:30,660 --> 00:13:28,540

in a meaningless world doing meaningless

341

00:13:33,330 --> 00:13:30,670

things if that's where you sit how do

342

00:13:37,160 --> 00:13:33,340

you get morality in there I don't quite

343

00:13:39,240 --> 00:13:37,170

get that fit uh-huh well certainly

344

00:13:41,190 --> 00:13:39,250

Lawrence is correct that the universe

345

00:13:44,610 --> 00:13:41,200

itself is meaningless there's nothing

346

00:13:47,730 --> 00:13:44,620

outside of it saying you dear universe

347

00:13:50,130 --> 00:13:47,740

have meaning you know this is it but

348

00:13:52,770 --> 00:13:50,140

within it you know start the meaning of

349

00:13:55,860 --> 00:13:52,780

a star it's its reason for being is to

350

00:13:58,080 --> 00:13:55,870

convert hydrogen into helium and so

351

00:13:59,790 --> 00:13:58,090

forth the other elements when it dies

352

00:14:01,500 --> 00:13:59,800

you know that's its purpose that's its

353

00:14:04,050 --> 00:14:01,510

meaning that's what nature designed it

354

00:14:05,460 --> 00:14:04,060

to do by by dint of the laws of nature

355

00:14:08,700 --> 00:14:05,470

that's what gravity does under high

356

00:14:11,010 --> 00:14:08,710

pressure by the same principle of

357

00:14:13,230 --> 00:14:11,020

natural laws evolution designed us to

358

00:14:15,990 --> 00:14:13,240

want to survive to give us a you know a

359

00:14:17,730 --> 00:14:16,000

a life instinct to you know to want to

360

00:14:19,200 --> 00:14:17,740

breathe - want to eat to want to

361

00:14:20,910 --> 00:14:19,210

procreate - one

362

00:14:22,440 --> 00:14:20,920

if you're a social species to want to

363

00:14:24,690 --> 00:14:22,450

socialize with other members of your

364

00:14:27,270 --> 00:14:24,700

species and all the things that we find

365

00:14:29,460 --> 00:14:27,280

meaningful as a social primate species

366

00:14:31,470 --> 00:14:29,470

that that's what evolution designed us

367

00:14:33,590 --> 00:14:31,480

to do let me I shouldn't use that word

368

00:14:37,290 --> 00:14:33,600

design that's what natural selection

369

00:14:38,640 --> 00:14:37,300

created in the process this and you know

370

00:14:40,740 --> 00:14:38,650

this is all this all goes back to

371

00:14:42,690 --> 00:14:40,750

Dawkins thought experiment at the

372

00:14:43,920 --> 00:14:42,700

beginning of the Selfish Gene imagine

373

00:14:47,040 --> 00:14:43,930

you're a molecule what would you do to

374

00:14:48,900 --> 00:14:47,050

survive and and so you have to create a

375

00:14:51,180 --> 00:14:48,910

survival machine an organism to carry

376
00:14:52,710 --> 00:14:51,190
your genes into the future generations

377
00:14:54,570 --> 00:14:52,720
well these organisms have to be

378
00:14:55,770 --> 00:14:54,580
motivated to do certain things like eat

379
00:14:58,080 --> 00:14:55,780
procreate

380
00:15:00,990 --> 00:14:58,090
you know flourish find food find mates

381
00:15:02,280 --> 00:15:01,000
you know and so forth so they have to be

382
00:15:03,990 --> 00:15:02,290
they have to have these emotions that

383
00:15:06,840 --> 00:15:04,000
drive them to do things well they also

384
00:15:08,850 --> 00:15:06,850
have to have moral emotions because the

385
00:15:10,350 --> 00:15:08,860
difference is Richard points out between

386
00:15:11,910 --> 00:15:10,360
kicking a rock and kicking another

387
00:15:14,070 --> 00:15:11,920
survival machine is that the other

388
00:15:16,920 --> 00:15:14,080

survival machine will kick you back it

389

00:15:19,110 --> 00:15:16,930

doesn't want to be exploited so we have

390

00:15:21,000 --> 00:15:19,120

these emotions of you know standing up

391

00:15:24,180 --> 00:15:21,010

for ourselves fighting back feeling

392

00:15:27,570 --> 00:15:24,190

anger and vengeful about about being

393

00:15:30,150 --> 00:15:27,580

cheated or being aggressed against and

394

00:15:32,820 --> 00:15:30,160

so on so all of that comes out of our

395

00:15:35,430 --> 00:15:32,830

biological nature just by dint of being

396

00:15:37,740 --> 00:15:35,440

human or even broader than that

397

00:15:40,530 --> 00:15:37,750

a sentient being of some kind you know

398

00:15:42,270 --> 00:15:40,540

social primate species a mammal whatever

399

00:15:45,450 --> 00:15:42,280

however far you want to expand that

400

00:15:48,240 --> 00:15:45,460

sphere gives you that drive it comes

401

00:15:50,460 --> 00:15:48,250

with the territory no less than a star

402

00:15:54,720 --> 00:15:50,470

burning hydrogen and helium by the laws

403

00:15:56,460 --> 00:15:54,730

of gravity well maybe I mean let's put a

404

00:15:58,800 --> 00:15:56,470

big maybe on all that I think there's

405

00:16:01,610 --> 00:15:58,810

for most people there's a huge leap

406

00:16:04,200 --> 00:16:01,620

between saying meaningless universe

407

00:16:06,360 --> 00:16:04,210

consciousness is an illusion we're all

408

00:16:09,480 --> 00:16:06,370

basically biological robots which is

409

00:16:11,370 --> 00:16:09,490

what Dawkins says - there's a moral arc

410

00:16:13,590 --> 00:16:11,380

that we're moving towards and we're

411

00:16:15,990 --> 00:16:13,600

making things good and better because of

412

00:16:18,120 --> 00:16:16,000

our drive to survive I mean I think

413

00:16:20,550 --> 00:16:18,130

there's a major disconnect there for

414

00:16:23,790 --> 00:16:20,560

most people especially when we when we

415

00:16:26,240 --> 00:16:23,800

connect them but with people like Martin

416

00:16:29,640 --> 00:16:26,250

Luther King and other folks who clearly

417

00:16:32,790 --> 00:16:29,650

believe that their impulse is driven by

418

00:16:35,370 --> 00:16:32,800

something outside of them something more

419

00:16:38,000 --> 00:16:35,380

I think connects a lot of people now as

420

00:16:40,259 --> 00:16:38,010

you point out it connects them probably

421

00:16:42,360 --> 00:16:40,269

incorrectly with some kind of religious

422

00:16:45,150 --> 00:16:42,370

traditions that we can point at and say

423

00:16:47,310 --> 00:16:45,160

have some problems but I'm sure you hear

424

00:16:50,069 --> 00:16:47,320

this a lot that people aren't quite in

425

00:16:52,790 --> 00:16:50,079

sync with how we can bridge those two

426

00:16:56,120 --> 00:16:52,800

worlds between the atheistic kind of

427

00:16:58,500 --> 00:16:56,130

reductionistic science world and this

428

00:16:59,579 --> 00:16:58,510

spiritual but not religious world

429

00:17:02,310 --> 00:16:59,589

mmm-hmm

430

00:17:03,780 --> 00:17:02,320

well first of all what I predict will

431

00:17:05,699 --> 00:17:03,790

happen with the gay rights revolution

432

00:17:06,809 --> 00:17:05,709

same-sex marriage revolution is what's

433

00:17:09,360 --> 00:17:06,819

happened with all of them

434

00:17:11,970 --> 00:17:09,370

that is to say religions will get on

435

00:17:13,799 --> 00:17:11,980

board they already are piss Kop aliens

436

00:17:15,240 --> 00:17:13,809

were already were and now you know

437

00:17:17,370 --> 00:17:15,250

slowly but surely the Baptists and

438

00:17:20,280 --> 00:17:17,380

Presbyterians and others are getting on

439

00:17:22,650 --> 00:17:20,290

the on the on the wagon the moral wagon

440

00:17:23,880 --> 00:17:22,660

here and five in five to ten years they

441

00:17:26,340 --> 00:17:23,890

will all say you know what

442

00:17:27,510 --> 00:17:26,350

God loves everybody including gays and

443

00:17:28,950 --> 00:17:27,520

what were those people thinking back

444

00:17:31,640 --> 00:17:28,960

then well you were one of those people

445

00:17:34,549 --> 00:17:31,650

thinking back that mm not you Alex the

446

00:17:37,200 --> 00:17:34,559

religious person making this claim and

447

00:17:39,480 --> 00:17:37,210

and so they somehow changed their mind

448

00:17:41,190 --> 00:17:39,490

and how does that happen well because of

449

00:17:44,280 --> 00:17:41,200

this Benny moral art by the fact that

450

00:17:46,169 --> 00:17:44,290

all of us collectively slowly change our

451
00:17:47,640 --> 00:17:46,179
mind slowly expand the moral horizon

452
00:17:49,350 --> 00:17:47,650
include more and more people more and

453
00:17:52,500 --> 00:17:49,360
more sentient beings who are not

454
00:17:54,600 --> 00:17:52,510
immediate members members of our mediate

455
00:17:55,919 --> 00:17:54,610
kin and kind and family and in-group the

456
00:17:58,830 --> 00:17:55,929
in-group just keeps getting bigger and

457
00:18:01,230 --> 00:17:58,840
bigger women minorities you know now

458
00:18:02,580 --> 00:18:01,240
gays now animals the animal rights you

459
00:18:05,640 --> 00:18:02,590
know a whole chapter on animal rights um

460
00:18:08,340 --> 00:18:05,650
but but and on one level I don't care

461
00:18:10,409 --> 00:18:08,350
how they got there as long as they get

462
00:18:12,240 --> 00:18:10,419
there yeah you know technically

463
00:18:13,560 --> 00:18:12,250

historically I like to point out you

464

00:18:15,540 --> 00:18:13,570

know it wasn't really religion that

465

00:18:17,070 --> 00:18:15,550

abolished slavery you know it was it was

466

00:18:19,169 --> 00:18:17,080

the rights revolution that did it from

467

00:18:20,669 --> 00:18:19,179

the Enlightenment but anyway if as long

468

00:18:23,430 --> 00:18:20,679

as they they're on board with it I'm

469

00:18:25,260 --> 00:18:23,440

happy about that that's good but let me

470

00:18:27,960 --> 00:18:25,270

just back up one to the previous point

471

00:18:30,960 --> 00:18:27,970

um you know so in the book I make an

472

00:18:32,310 --> 00:18:30,970

analogy with the with public health you

473

00:18:35,790 --> 00:18:32,320

know the whole for for two centuries

474

00:18:38,190 --> 00:18:35,800

we've been you know creating sewers and

475

00:18:40,290 --> 00:18:38,200

sanitation systems and flush toilets and

476

00:18:42,570 --> 00:18:40,300

we've been studying diseases and plagues

477

00:18:45,580 --> 00:18:42,580

and tracking how they move all with a

478

00:18:47,680 --> 00:18:45,590

goal an end to

479

00:18:49,630 --> 00:18:47,690

for more people to survive and flourish

480

00:18:52,419 --> 00:18:49,640

in our societies for fewer people that

481

00:18:54,039 --> 00:18:52,429

died of smallpox and measles and and so

482

00:18:56,230 --> 00:18:54,049

on and in the current anti-vaccination

483

00:18:58,210 --> 00:18:56,240

movement has everybody wringing their

484

00:18:59,680 --> 00:18:58,220

hands because this could be bad news you

485

00:19:02,769 --> 00:18:59,690

know people could die from these bad

486

00:19:05,289 --> 00:19:02,779

ideas okay if you agree that you know

487

00:19:07,380 --> 00:19:05,299

saving hundreds of millions of lives who

488

00:19:10,269 --> 00:19:07,390

used to die from smallpox and and

489

00:19:12,460 --> 00:19:10,279

measles and so on and no longer do if

490

00:19:15,340 --> 00:19:12,470

you agree that's a good thing why is it

491

00:19:17,049 --> 00:19:15,350

a good thing why why you Alex I'm asking

492

00:19:19,720 --> 00:19:17,059

you why why would you agree that that's

493

00:19:22,330 --> 00:19:19,730

a good thing I'm not sure why would I

494

00:19:24,100 --> 00:19:22,340

mean do I agree or why would I well okay

495

00:19:25,570 --> 00:19:24,110

first do you agree that that's a good

496

00:19:28,840 --> 00:19:25,580

thing to save hundreds of millions of

497

00:19:30,909 --> 00:19:28,850

lives sure yeah okay why but see I have

498

00:19:34,149 --> 00:19:30,919

a different sensibility in terms of why

499

00:19:37,090 --> 00:19:34,159

I think that's so so well I just be

500

00:19:40,149 --> 00:19:37,100

curious to hear it I think that there is

501
00:19:42,070 --> 00:19:40,159
a moral imperative that drives me

502
00:19:44,830 --> 00:19:42,080
whether I'm totally conscious of it or

503
00:19:46,570 --> 00:19:44,840
not and I think what you were referring

504
00:19:49,120 --> 00:19:46,580
to I would see as some kind of

505
00:19:51,399 --> 00:19:49,130
collective consciousness that does exist

506
00:19:54,370 --> 00:19:51,409
even if I can't totally describe it or

507
00:19:56,980 --> 00:19:54,380
pin it down in a lot of ways so oh you

508
00:19:58,500 --> 00:19:56,990
mean like in a like a deep hoc kind of

509
00:20:01,720 --> 00:19:58,510
way that there's a consciousness

510
00:20:04,690 --> 00:20:01,730
pervasive in the cosmos maybe in a Carl

511
00:20:06,909 --> 00:20:04,700
Jung or really okay that's it's

512
00:20:09,340 --> 00:20:06,919
Sheldrick Rupert Shel Drake Cambridge

513
00:20:11,409 --> 00:20:09,350

biologist oh wow okay residents right

514

00:20:13,360 --> 00:20:11,419

well yeah we'll have to agree to

515

00:20:15,490 --> 00:20:13,370

disagree on that one because I don't

516

00:20:18,549 --> 00:20:15,500

accept the existence of a cosmic

517

00:20:20,380 --> 00:20:18,559

consciousness but okay well I could be

518

00:20:22,600 --> 00:20:20,390

wrong tell you well let me tell you this

519

00:20:25,090 --> 00:20:22,610

because last week we scheduled this

520

00:20:26,680 --> 00:20:25,100

interview you're very generous to do it

521

00:20:28,779 --> 00:20:26,690

I know you've done a lot of interviews

522

00:20:30,940 --> 00:20:28,789

for this book I sent out the

523

00:20:33,610 --> 00:20:30,950

announcement to skeptical listeners the

524

00:20:35,950 --> 00:20:33,620

number one question I got back to ask

525

00:20:38,380 --> 00:20:35,960

you and I think it's relevant to this

526

00:20:42,519 --> 00:20:38,390

latest bit of conversation we were just

527

00:20:44,350 --> 00:20:42,529

having in it they said ask him about the

528

00:20:48,450 --> 00:20:44,360

piece he wrote in scientific America

529

00:20:51,669 --> 00:20:48,460

March 2003 in which you cited a paper

530

00:20:52,570 --> 00:20:51,679

from dr. PIM van Lommel a near-death

531

00:20:54,820 --> 00:20:52,580

experience

532

00:20:56,830 --> 00:20:54,830

researcher who published we should say

533

00:20:59,360 --> 00:20:56,840

and one of the top medical journals in

534

00:21:02,420 --> 00:20:59,370

the world in 2001 in the land

535

00:21:04,700 --> 00:21:02,430

said in the article that you wrote you

536

00:21:07,100 --> 00:21:04,710

cited his work and you said that his

537

00:21:08,870 --> 00:21:07,110

research delivered a blow to the idea

538

00:21:10,670 --> 00:21:08,880

that the mind and the brain could be

539

00:21:13,430 --> 00:21:10,680

separate do you remember this whole

540

00:21:15,620 --> 00:21:13,440

thing yes of course and he wrote me and

541

00:21:17,750 --> 00:21:15,630

said I disagree that is not what my

542

00:21:21,770 --> 00:21:17,760

research means and so we agreed to

543

00:21:24,230 --> 00:21:21,780

disagree how can you agree to just I

544

00:21:28,690 --> 00:21:24,240

mean if you said his methods were wrong

545

00:21:30,860 --> 00:21:28,700

or that his conclusions about faulty but

546

00:21:35,780 --> 00:21:30,870

it's not in the methods it's in the

547

00:21:37,220 --> 00:21:35,790

interpretation of what it means I am

548

00:21:39,470 --> 00:21:37,230

skeptical of some of the methods of how

549

00:21:41,810 --> 00:21:39,480

they interpret experiences that people

550

00:21:44,390 --> 00:21:41,820

report having because there is a little

551
00:21:46,640 --> 00:21:44,400
gray area there there is a little you

552
00:21:50,030 --> 00:21:46,650
know fuzziness or subjectivity and how

553
00:21:52,820 --> 00:21:50,040
those reports are interpreted that part

554
00:21:54,380 --> 00:21:52,830
it's not that he's wrong it's that so

555
00:21:56,419 --> 00:21:54,390
much is that you know there's different

556
00:21:59,630 --> 00:21:56,429
ways to interpret what those experiences

557
00:22:02,930 --> 00:21:59,640
actually mean right maybe inside of that

558
00:22:05,299 --> 00:22:02,940
but I think this gets at the issue that

559
00:22:08,299 --> 00:22:05,309
I think a lot of people have with the

560
00:22:11,120 --> 00:22:08,309
skeptical atheist community is that

561
00:22:14,169 --> 00:22:11,130
after a while it kind of feels like

562
00:22:17,090 --> 00:22:14,179
there's this pattern of I don't know

563
00:22:19,760 --> 00:22:17,100

disinformation misinformation because

564

00:22:22,040 --> 00:22:19,770

when a guy ports the research you can

565

00:22:24,440 --> 00:22:22,050

either say I disagree with the research

566

00:22:27,350 --> 00:22:24,450

or I disagree with the methods but you

567

00:22:29,900 --> 00:22:27,360

can't say oh what that research says is

568

00:22:30,740 --> 00:22:29,910

this yes yes you can of course you can

569

00:22:32,960 --> 00:22:30,750

the whole point of the discussion

570

00:22:35,299 --> 00:22:32,970

section at the end of a paper that's

571

00:22:38,480 --> 00:22:35,309

where the you know the sort of boldness

572

00:22:40,340 --> 00:22:38,490

of the researcher and and the you know

573

00:22:41,990 --> 00:22:40,350

the counter-arguments of the of the

574

00:22:43,940 --> 00:22:42,000

critics that's where all the action is

575

00:22:46,100 --> 00:22:43,950

that's where it comes is how do you

576

00:22:49,330 --> 00:22:46,110

interpret the data and what what kind of

577

00:22:52,490 --> 00:22:49,340

model are you using so for example

578

00:22:54,260 --> 00:22:52,500

Oliver Sacks wrote he's written several

579

00:22:56,240 --> 00:22:54,270

critical pieces of that that very

580

00:22:58,220 --> 00:22:56,250

research that another pieces of research

581

00:22:59,840 --> 00:22:58,230

saying no it does not mean what these

582

00:23:03,290 --> 00:22:59,850

guys think it means I think it means the

583

00:23:04,669 --> 00:23:03,300

following and he makes the case that if

584

00:23:06,290 --> 00:23:04,679

you read any of his books you know the

585

00:23:08,870 --> 00:23:06,300

experiences that these people have are

586

00:23:10,970 --> 00:23:08,880

clearly tied to neuro chemical

587

00:23:12,920 --> 00:23:10,980

imbalances and damages to the brain

588

00:23:15,020 --> 00:23:12,930

strokes and tumors

589

00:23:16,790 --> 00:23:15,030

stuff like that and in that if you knock

590

00:23:19,610 --> 00:23:16,800

out a part of the brain a temporal lobe

591

00:23:22,570 --> 00:23:19,620

the function part that was there is gone

592

00:23:26,000 --> 00:23:22,580

well where to go I mean like with a

593

00:23:28,220 --> 00:23:26,010

split brain patient there should be now

594

00:23:31,910 --> 00:23:28,230

two two sources of consciousness you

595

00:23:34,130 --> 00:23:31,920

know not not one you know does that mean

596

00:23:36,230 --> 00:23:34,140

there's two two conscious brain

597

00:23:38,600 --> 00:23:36,240

somewhere floating around in the in the

598

00:23:40,460 --> 00:23:38,610

ether somewhere I mean what so well I

599

00:23:43,250 --> 00:23:40,470

don't think we know what it means but I

600

00:23:44,990 --> 00:23:43,260

think what's happened since the van

601
00:23:47,270 --> 00:23:45,000
Lommel paper and I don't want to focus

602
00:23:49,730 --> 00:23:47,280
on that I appreciate your position on it

603
00:23:52,580 --> 00:23:49,740
but there's just been a continuation of

604
00:23:54,650 --> 00:23:52,590
research published near-death experience

605
00:23:56,150 --> 00:23:54,660
research one after another these guys

606
00:23:58,670 --> 00:23:56,160
aren't lined up they don't have some big

607
00:24:01,250 --> 00:23:58,680
agenda to kind of push something they're

608
00:24:04,880 --> 00:24:01,260
just producing research the latest was a

609
00:24:07,580 --> 00:24:04,890
ten year study by Sam par Nia formerly

610
00:24:10,400 --> 00:24:07,590
of Cornell and a group of researchers in

611
00:24:11,990 --> 00:24:10,410
the UK came to the exact same conclusion

612
00:24:13,820 --> 00:24:12,000
there isn't a single near-death

613
00:24:16,130 --> 00:24:13,830

experience researchers that's come to a

614

00:24:18,320 --> 00:24:16,140

different conclusion but it's not just

615

00:24:20,360 --> 00:24:18,330

near-death experience research you know

616

00:24:22,160 --> 00:24:20,370

I mean right there you're in Los Angeles

617

00:24:26,360 --> 00:24:22,170

you can drive right up the street to

618

00:24:29,000 --> 00:24:26,370

UCLA and you can go visit UCLA School of

619

00:24:32,690 --> 00:24:29,010

Medicine psychiatrist dr. Jeffery

620

00:24:35,240 --> 00:24:32,700

Schwartz same stuff you know coming out

621

00:24:37,970 --> 00:24:35,250

and saying that the this idea that the

622

00:24:41,570 --> 00:24:37,980

mind is a product of the brain doesn't

623

00:24:43,610 --> 00:24:41,580

fit we have to look for more it opens up

624

00:24:46,670 --> 00:24:43,620

the door to the kind of extended

625

00:24:50,330 --> 00:24:46,680

consciousness that I think so many

626
00:24:52,550 --> 00:24:50,340
people that do have this religious

627
00:24:53,900 --> 00:24:52,560
inclination or spiritual inclination

628
00:24:56,900 --> 00:24:53,910
because I don't want to say religious

629
00:24:59,990 --> 00:24:56,910
I'm not a backer of religion but I think

630
00:25:04,280 --> 00:25:00,000
people are much more open to the idea

631
00:25:07,820 --> 00:25:04,290
that there is a reality to that moral

632
00:25:10,250 --> 00:25:07,830
compass inside them that does come from

633
00:25:12,920 --> 00:25:10,260
something other than their mere biology

634
00:25:15,380 --> 00:25:12,930
and I just don't think that's where the

635
00:25:19,480 --> 00:25:15,390
book I guess rings true in terms of

636
00:25:21,920 --> 00:25:19,490
encompassing in that larger body of work

637
00:25:23,390 --> 00:25:21,930
okay so take something like gay rights

638
00:25:24,800 --> 00:25:23,400

and same-sex marriage now so we're in

639

00:25:25,700 --> 00:25:24,810

the middle of this revolution and we can

640

00:25:29,029 --> 00:25:25,710

track how

641

00:25:31,100 --> 00:25:29,039

that changes happen and we can see it in

642

00:25:33,380 --> 00:25:31,110

the polls the pupils Gallup polls how

643

00:25:35,240 --> 00:25:33,390

people slowly change their mind and we

644

00:25:36,889 --> 00:25:35,250

can track how it happens when like with

645

00:25:38,750 --> 00:25:36,899

the coming out campaign for example

646

00:25:42,049 --> 00:25:38,760

celebrities authors politicians

647

00:25:44,720 --> 00:25:42,059

scientists CEOs like Tim Cook coming out

648

00:25:47,659 --> 00:25:44,730

you know that this changes how people

649

00:25:50,210 --> 00:25:47,669

think about gays instead of thinking of

650

00:25:52,070 --> 00:25:50,220

gays as something other or something

651
00:25:53,750 --> 00:25:52,080
less than human are different so

652
00:25:56,029 --> 00:25:53,760
different they don't deserve the same

653
00:25:57,889 --> 00:25:56,039
rights or or that they have these you

654
00:26:00,380 --> 00:25:57,899
know this gay agenda that they want to

655
00:26:02,810 --> 00:26:00,390
impose on the rest of us and you know

656
00:26:05,049 --> 00:26:02,820
the more that people know somebody who's

657
00:26:08,149 --> 00:26:05,059
gay the less they think those bad ideas

658
00:26:10,130 --> 00:26:08,159
and and that happens from the bottom up

659
00:26:13,070 --> 00:26:10,140
through television pop culture books

660
00:26:15,590 --> 00:26:13,080
novels films you know newspaper articles

661
00:26:17,060 --> 00:26:15,600
just it just sort of cascades along you

662
00:26:18,500 --> 00:26:17,070
don't need a majority to get started you

663
00:26:21,320 --> 00:26:18,510

just need a handful of influential

664

00:26:22,250 --> 00:26:21,330

people to first stand up and say we're

665

00:26:24,710 --> 00:26:22,260

not going to take this kind of

666

00:26:26,450 --> 00:26:24,720

discrimination anymore and then you know

667

00:26:28,669 --> 00:26:26,460

we want the same rights as you and then

668

00:26:30,080 --> 00:26:28,679

you know look tons of people that you

669

00:26:31,279 --> 00:26:30,090

know are like this and they're normal

670

00:26:33,380 --> 00:26:31,289

people and before you know it the whole

671

00:26:35,180 --> 00:26:33,390

thing changes and I don't think there's

672

00:26:36,980 --> 00:26:35,190

anything whatever word you want to use

673

00:26:39,019 --> 00:26:36,990

mystical or having to do with

674

00:26:40,730 --> 00:26:39,029

consciousness other than you know all of

675

00:26:42,649 --> 00:26:40,740

us change our minds you know over the

676
00:26:44,570 --> 00:26:42,659
course of a few years to a few decades

677
00:26:46,279 --> 00:26:44,580
and before you know it the shift has

678
00:26:48,350 --> 00:26:46,289
been made and I think you can track all

679
00:26:50,899 --> 00:26:48,360
that through sociology psychology

680
00:26:52,460 --> 00:26:50,909
anthropology political science I don't

681
00:26:54,950 --> 00:26:52,470
think you need say consciousness

682
00:26:56,720 --> 00:26:54,960
research for that other than out brains

683
00:26:59,389 --> 00:26:56,730
change their mind well I don't I don't

684
00:27:01,580 --> 00:26:59,399
know if you do or not I guess I mean I

685
00:27:04,639 --> 00:27:01,590
think that you make us very strong point

686
00:27:07,279 --> 00:27:04,649
for the fact that we can't trace that to

687
00:27:09,529 --> 00:27:07,289
any particular set of beliefs that are

688
00:27:11,600 --> 00:27:09,539

enshrined in some kind of religious

689

00:27:14,389 --> 00:27:11,610

mystery or anything like that I'm with

690

00:27:17,659 --> 00:27:14,399

you there but I think at the end of the

691

00:27:19,070 --> 00:27:17,669

day we have to be open to all the

692

00:27:21,139 --> 00:27:19,080

possibilities of what that could mean

693

00:27:24,110 --> 00:27:21,149

and when you say why we wouldn't trace

694

00:27:26,269 --> 00:27:24,120

it to some mystical consciousness that

695

00:27:28,039 --> 00:27:26,279

begs the big question of what is

696

00:27:30,710 --> 00:27:28,049

consciousness and I think when we don't

697

00:27:33,230 --> 00:27:30,720

tackle that question we don't wrestle it

698

00:27:35,299 --> 00:27:33,240

to the ground we're left open with the

699

00:27:37,730 --> 00:27:35,309

same kind of disconnect of saying well

700

00:27:39,010 --> 00:27:37,740

it's somehow a feature of biological

701
00:27:40,840 --> 00:27:39,020

primates

702
00:27:43,150 --> 00:27:40,850

yet we're still saying they have some

703
00:27:44,920 --> 00:27:43,160

kind of conscious experience that we can

704
00:27:46,510 --> 00:27:44,930

explain we don't understand where it

705
00:27:48,640 --> 00:27:46,520

starts where it ends or any of the rest

706
00:27:52,000 --> 00:27:48,650

of that maybe you don't see that as a

707
00:27:55,200 --> 00:27:52,010

big problem to the moral question I take

708
00:27:56,800 --> 00:27:55,210

it I don't I don't think we need that as

709
00:27:59,470 --> 00:27:56,810

explanatory

710
00:28:03,010 --> 00:27:59,480

vector in our model of how things change

711
00:28:04,810 --> 00:28:03,020

morally yeah I mean I don't discount it

712
00:28:06,610 --> 00:28:04,820

I guess I just don't even really think

713
00:28:08,050 --> 00:28:06,620

about it I mean it's just not not in my

714

00:28:11,110 --> 00:28:08,060

worldview my worldview is you know I'm a

715

00:28:11,740 --> 00:28:11,120

monist I'm a naturalist but you know I

716

00:28:14,200 --> 00:28:11,750

don't think there's anything

717

00:28:15,910 --> 00:28:14,210

supernatural or or whatever you'd want

718

00:28:17,980 --> 00:28:15,920

to call it but but on it let me just

719

00:28:20,500 --> 00:28:17,990

make one final point in that let's say

720

00:28:21,940 --> 00:28:20,510

that turned out to be true the the

721

00:28:24,010 --> 00:28:21,950

near-death experiences really do

722

00:28:26,230 --> 00:28:24,020

represent you know a connection to some

723

00:28:28,360 --> 00:28:26,240

other world and we were able to figure

724

00:28:30,280 --> 00:28:28,370

out where that is and how the connection

725

00:28:33,610 --> 00:28:30,290

is made through quantum physics a and

726

00:28:34,660 --> 00:28:33,620

neural neuroscience and and maybe you

727

00:28:36,940 --> 00:28:34,670

know the idea that there's these

728

00:28:38,890 --> 00:28:36,950

microtubules inside neurons where the

729

00:28:40,720 --> 00:28:38,900

collapse of the wavefunction happens and

730

00:28:42,370 --> 00:28:40,730

there's a you know there's a quantum

731

00:28:44,260 --> 00:28:42,380

effect there and we can we can connect

732

00:28:46,570 --> 00:28:44,270

with each other that that would no

733

00:28:48,250 --> 00:28:46,580

longer be part of the supernatural or

734

00:28:50,050 --> 00:28:48,260

paranormal it would just be part of

735

00:28:51,970 --> 00:28:50,060

physics and in neuroscience it would

736

00:28:54,160 --> 00:28:51,980

just be incorporated into science if it

737

00:28:56,470 --> 00:28:54,170

turns out to be true so I really

738

00:28:58,210 --> 00:28:56,480

wouldn't change my worldview it would

739

00:29:00,100 --> 00:28:58,220

just be one more causal vector to

740

00:29:02,260 --> 00:29:00,110

include in our equation so to speak of

741

00:29:04,150 --> 00:29:02,270

you know how what why things happen in

742

00:29:06,310 --> 00:29:04,160

the world is they do and if it turned

743

00:29:09,010 --> 00:29:06,320

out that the universe really is bending

744

00:29:11,320 --> 00:29:09,020

you know in a moral arc you know for

745

00:29:14,470 --> 00:29:11,330

some reason other than what I document

746

00:29:16,360 --> 00:29:14,480

and in the moral arc you know that

747

00:29:17,770 --> 00:29:16,370

that's fine I don't care I mean it's

748

00:29:19,750 --> 00:29:17,780

it's all still part of the natural world

749

00:29:21,730 --> 00:29:19,760

as far as I'm concerned as long as

750

00:29:23,800 --> 00:29:21,740

science can measure it it's a

751

00:29:25,480 --> 00:29:23,810

quantifiable way we can you know test it

752

00:29:27,130 --> 00:29:25,490

there it is see it you can measure it

753

00:29:28,990 --> 00:29:27,140

like quantum quantum effects can be

754

00:29:31,030 --> 00:29:29,000

measured if that was indeed the case

755

00:29:31,720 --> 00:29:31,040

then that would just be part of the

756

00:29:34,200 --> 00:29:31,730

natural world

757

00:29:37,780 --> 00:29:34,210

would you agree well unless

758

00:29:40,360 --> 00:29:37,790

consciousness is in some way fundamental

759

00:29:43,390 --> 00:29:40,370

oh yeah okay yeah I see which is a

760

00:29:44,950 --> 00:29:43,400

viable alternative way to interpret even

761

00:29:47,200 --> 00:29:44,960

some of the quantum effects that we're

762

00:29:49,060 --> 00:29:47,210

talking about right so the little double

763

00:29:50,920 --> 00:29:49,070

slit experiment is a wave is it a

764

00:29:52,750 --> 00:29:50,930

particle it depends on the observer I'm

765

00:29:55,120 --> 00:29:52,760

not saying that there's a

766

00:29:57,940 --> 00:29:55,130

recked link there but that hints at some

767

00:29:59,800 --> 00:29:57,950

in some way and many researchers as well

768

00:30:02,170 --> 00:29:59,810

as philosophers have suggested that

769

00:30:03,970 --> 00:30:02,180

maybe in some way consciousness is

770

00:30:06,670 --> 00:30:03,980

fundamental a lot of folks in the

771

00:30:11,290 --> 00:30:06,680

Atheist community are into kind of a

772

00:30:13,780 --> 00:30:11,300

very secular version of Buddhism and

773

00:30:16,960 --> 00:30:13,790

meditation sam harris of course is I

774

00:30:20,260 --> 00:30:16,970

mean the basic thought philosophy behind

775

00:30:22,270 --> 00:30:20,270

that is purely that that consciousness

776

00:30:24,130 --> 00:30:22,280

is fundamental consciousness is the

777

00:30:27,100 --> 00:30:24,140

source and that the matter that we're

778

00:30:28,270 --> 00:30:27,110

measuring as scientists is kind of

779

00:30:30,660 --> 00:30:28,280

looking in the wrong end of the

780

00:30:33,550 --> 00:30:30,670

telescope because it originates with

781

00:30:35,710 --> 00:30:33,560

consciousness yeah so for your listeners

782

00:30:37,810 --> 00:30:35,720

I should point out that most

783

00:30:40,270 --> 00:30:37,820

neurosciences do not agree with that you

784

00:30:42,600 --> 00:30:40,280

can you can find some you cited UCLA and

785

00:30:45,100 --> 00:30:42,610

a few other places yes okay that's fine

786

00:30:47,350 --> 00:30:45,110

but you know Christoph Kok you know at

787

00:30:49,810 --> 00:30:47,360

the Allen is too firmly at Caltech it

788

00:30:51,580 --> 00:30:49,820

Sam Harris does not agree with with

789

00:30:53,890 --> 00:30:51,590

Deepak in that argument that

790

00:30:56,410 --> 00:30:53,900

consciousness is fundamental property of

791

00:30:58,090 --> 00:30:56,420

the universe he does not think that even

792

00:31:01,120 --> 00:30:58,100

though he you know what where he goes

793

00:31:03,880 --> 00:31:01,130

with his own theories on consciousness

794

00:31:06,850 --> 00:31:03,890

and meditation and spirituality are

795

00:31:08,530 --> 00:31:06,860

quite different than most atheists he's

796

00:31:11,380 --> 00:31:08,540

still not in that camp he's not in the

797

00:31:15,040 --> 00:31:11,390

say Deepak Chopra camp he definitely

798

00:31:17,410 --> 00:31:15,050

disagrees with that so you know and so

799

00:31:19,330 --> 00:31:17,420

that kind of brings us back to you know

800

00:31:20,980 --> 00:31:19,340

where you start with a worldview if you

801
00:31:22,270 --> 00:31:20,990
start that consciousness is fundamental

802
00:31:24,100 --> 00:31:22,280
the universe you're gonna end up

803
00:31:26,380 --> 00:31:24,110
somewhere different than if you start

804
00:31:29,080 --> 00:31:26,390
off with same consciousness as a product

805
00:31:30,460 --> 00:31:29,090
just of brains right or you can just

806
00:31:31,690 --> 00:31:30,470
start with the data and just try and

807
00:31:34,210 --> 00:31:31,700
sift through the data and see where it

808
00:31:35,920 --> 00:31:34,220
falls and I'm not sure I don't sure you

809
00:31:38,380 --> 00:31:35,930
can do that I'm not sure that the data

810
00:31:40,750 --> 00:31:38,390
indicate for sure one way or the other

811
00:31:43,690 --> 00:31:40,760
although I make the case in another

812
00:31:45,850 --> 00:31:43,700
column in Scientific American that I

813
00:31:47,860 --> 00:31:45,860

think I call it Aunt Millie's mind

814

00:31:49,900 --> 00:31:47,870

because I asked Deepak one time at one

815

00:31:52,150 --> 00:31:49,910

of his conferences where does aunt

816

00:31:54,490 --> 00:31:52,160

millie's mind go when her brain dies of

817

00:31:56,650 --> 00:31:54,500

Alzheimer's you know we know that you

818

00:31:58,600 --> 00:31:56,660

know the neurons die you know one by one

819

00:32:00,190 --> 00:31:58,610

and as they go her mind goes her memory

820

00:32:02,290 --> 00:32:00,200

goes her personality shrinks and

821

00:32:04,780 --> 00:32:02,300

disappears and pretty soon she's just

822

00:32:06,670 --> 00:32:04,790

gone well where did it go I mean if if

823

00:32:08,860 --> 00:32:06,680

it exists separate from brain

824

00:32:10,900 --> 00:32:08,870

why does it why is it tied to the brain

825

00:32:13,420 --> 00:32:10,910

neuron by neuron and where is it now

826

00:32:15,280 --> 00:32:13,430

deep box answer was well aunt millie's

827

00:32:16,870 --> 00:32:15,290

mind returned to where it began to the

828

00:32:18,730 --> 00:32:16,880

you know the cause the cosmic

829

00:32:20,470 --> 00:32:18,740

consciousness er I forget the phrasing

830

00:32:22,240 --> 00:32:20,480

he used but it was something like what

831

00:32:24,760 --> 00:32:22,250

you're talking about well how would you

832

00:32:26,230 --> 00:32:24,770

test that you know you can assert it you

833

00:32:30,340 --> 00:32:26,240

can make an assertion that's where it

834

00:32:32,050 --> 00:32:30,350

goes but but how do we know well I think

835

00:32:35,740 --> 00:32:32,060

first of all I think you you obviously

836

00:32:37,150 --> 00:32:35,750

have a very broad understanding this and

837

00:32:39,310 --> 00:32:37,160

you've fought a lot about it which i

838

00:32:40,990 --> 00:32:39,320

think is fantastic and I appreciate you

839

00:32:42,970 --> 00:32:41,000

entertaining these thoughts I don't want

840

00:32:44,440 --> 00:32:42,980

to carry this on too far because we want

841

00:32:46,780 --> 00:32:44,450

to talk about your book which is an

842

00:32:48,340 --> 00:32:46,790

excellent book the moral arc people just

843

00:32:52,450 --> 00:32:48,350

really check it out it does a great job

844

00:32:54,100 --> 00:32:52,460

of like we say kind of retracing this

845

00:32:57,670 --> 00:32:54,110

history and putting it in a different

846

00:33:00,160 --> 00:32:57,680

context that for me was new and very

847

00:33:03,100 --> 00:33:00,170

eye-opening but just to make a small

848

00:33:05,410 --> 00:33:03,110

point on that last thing of aunt Mellie

849

00:33:06,850 --> 00:33:05,420

or whatever her mind is I mean you might

850

00:33:10,360 --> 00:33:06,860

look at the research into terminal

851
00:33:14,140 --> 00:33:10,370
lucidity if you go into any extended

852
00:33:15,730 --> 00:33:14,150
life or end-of-life care facility and

853
00:33:18,460 --> 00:33:15,740
you talk to the nurses and the doctors

854
00:33:20,740 --> 00:33:18,470
there you'll find people that regularly

855
00:33:23,980 --> 00:33:20,750
report folks who have been in long-term

856
00:33:26,230 --> 00:33:23,990
coma have severe dementia and near the

857
00:33:29,650 --> 00:33:26,240
final moments of their life will sit up

858
00:33:32,650 --> 00:33:29,660
in bed and demonstrate unexplainable

859
00:33:35,140 --> 00:33:32,660
lucidity and they'll sit and talk to the

860
00:33:37,810 --> 00:33:35,150
people about important events about

861
00:33:40,540 --> 00:33:37,820
important things and then they'll die so

862
00:33:43,990 --> 00:33:40,550
yes sir there are stories like that but

863
00:33:46,750 --> 00:33:44,000

that most people who die slowly in in

864

00:33:48,160 --> 00:33:46,760

cases like this my mother was one they

865

00:33:51,580 --> 00:33:48,170

don't do that correct

866

00:33:53,410 --> 00:33:51,590

why why do some do and some don't

867

00:33:55,060 --> 00:33:53,420

well now we're talking science aren't we

868

00:33:57,970 --> 00:33:55,070

now we're talking we need a man on the

869

00:34:00,070 --> 00:33:57,980

moon effort to answer that question so

870

00:34:05,260 --> 00:34:00,080

maybe we'll get there someday okay

871

00:34:06,520 --> 00:34:05,270

sounds good but the moral arc you know

872

00:34:08,980 --> 00:34:06,530

I'll give you some more examples of this

873

00:34:11,980 --> 00:34:08,990

that you know like Robert Wright's book

874

00:34:13,810 --> 00:34:11,990

non-0 which is really quite a good book

875

00:34:16,330 --> 00:34:13,820

he hits just a little bit at the end

876

00:34:18,220 --> 00:34:16,340

that it's that perhaps this whole thing

877

00:34:20,020 --> 00:34:18,230

this you know playing more zero-sum

878

00:34:22,470 --> 00:34:20,030

nonzero-sum games there's

879

00:34:24,720 --> 00:34:22,480

some games that is this tendency toward

880

00:34:27,340 --> 00:34:24,730

cooperation slightly more than

881

00:34:30,220 --> 00:34:27,350

competitiveness you know maybe edges out

882

00:34:31,810 --> 00:34:30,230

over over the course of time maybe was

883

00:34:34,060 --> 00:34:31,820

built into the universe from the very

884

00:34:35,350 --> 00:34:34,070

beginning and so he kind of makes the

885

00:34:37,000 --> 00:34:35,360

argument that you know had it not been

886

00:34:38,649 --> 00:34:37,010

humans it might have been the an Turtles

887

00:34:40,930 --> 00:34:38,659

doing what we're doing now and if not

888

00:34:42,010 --> 00:34:40,940

Neanderthals maybe Homo erectus not Homo

889

00:34:43,570 --> 00:34:42,020

erectus he goes all the way back you

890

00:34:45,580 --> 00:34:43,580

know eventually chimps and gorillas

891

00:34:47,740 --> 00:34:45,590

would be doing what we're doing now so

892

00:34:50,590 --> 00:34:47,750

that that's pushing the in it that sort

893

00:34:52,060 --> 00:34:50,600

of inevitability to the arrow of moral

894

00:34:54,220 --> 00:34:52,070

progress more than I'm comfortable with

895

00:34:55,629 --> 00:34:54,230

I I'm willing to actually say the whole

896

00:34:57,850 --> 00:34:55,639

thing could go down the toilet

897

00:35:00,100 --> 00:34:57,860

you know if Putin got you know decides

898

00:35:01,630 --> 00:35:00,110

to unleashes you know nuclear arsenal

899

00:35:03,940 --> 00:35:01,640

you know we're back in the Stone Age I

900

00:35:05,320 --> 00:35:03,950

don't think that's gonna happen but you

901
00:35:07,840 --> 00:35:05,330
know that I don't think it's inevitable

902
00:35:09,730 --> 00:35:07,850
I'm open to the fact that that could

903
00:35:11,830 --> 00:35:09,740
happen you know the one other thing I

904
00:35:14,620 --> 00:35:11,840
throw and we're mentioning the the UCL a

905
00:35:17,020 --> 00:35:14,630
and Jeffery Swartz what Schwartz showed

906
00:35:20,250 --> 00:35:17,030
is he's a researcher and he was

907
00:35:22,390 --> 00:35:20,260
interested in helping people who had

908
00:35:24,460 --> 00:35:22,400
obsessive-compulsive disorder what he

909
00:35:26,460 --> 00:35:24,470
found and sure you've run across us in

910
00:35:30,190 --> 00:35:26,470
your science research is this idea of

911
00:35:31,660 --> 00:35:30,200
self-directed neuroplasticity so twenty

912
00:35:33,700 --> 00:35:31,670
years ago we didn't know that brains

913
00:35:36,430 --> 00:35:33,710

could rewire themselves that

914

00:35:38,740 --> 00:35:36,440

neuroplasticity was even possible well

915

00:35:41,200 --> 00:35:38,750

now what he's shown in the laboratory

916

00:35:44,530 --> 00:35:41,210

also replicated at Harvard and at Yale

917

00:35:48,310 --> 00:35:44,540

is that folks with their own attention

918

00:35:52,570 --> 00:35:48,320

with their own directed thoughts can

919

00:35:55,000 --> 00:35:52,580

rewire the brain yeah but yeah research

920

00:35:57,160 --> 00:35:55,010

why is that not just neurons firing

921

00:35:59,290 --> 00:35:57,170

influencing other neurons all within a

922

00:36:01,210 --> 00:35:59,300

brain it's just still brain do you have

923

00:36:03,880 --> 00:36:01,220

to look at dr. Schwartz's work because

924

00:36:06,310 --> 00:36:03,890

what he says quite convincingly I think

925

00:36:07,990 --> 00:36:06,320

if you go down your path Michael you

926
00:36:10,990 --> 00:36:08,000
have a chicken and the egg problem right

927
00:36:13,990 --> 00:36:11,000
I mean if thoughts make brains and

928
00:36:17,860 --> 00:36:14,000
brains make thoughts then you wind it

929
00:36:20,950 --> 00:36:17,870
back and how did it all start so this is

930
00:36:22,840 --> 00:36:20,960
like a primary cause problem in the

931
00:36:24,970 --> 00:36:22,850
evolutionary equation right because now

932
00:36:27,670 --> 00:36:24,980
we have the idea that thoughts can

933
00:36:30,010 --> 00:36:27,680
actually change them but what are

934
00:36:32,710 --> 00:36:30,020
thoughts they're just it's just neurons

935
00:36:33,700 --> 00:36:32,720
firing well that's it but that I think

936
00:36:36,370 --> 00:36:33,710
it begs that

937
00:36:39,750 --> 00:36:36,380
question of what our thoughts and our

938
00:36:42,579 --> 00:36:39,760

thoughts strictly viable in the route

939

00:36:44,349 --> 00:36:42,589

materialistic reductionistic model dr.

940

00:36:46,750 --> 00:36:44,359

Schwartz doesn't think they are but then

941

00:36:48,849 --> 00:36:46,760

that's just as you said that's just one

942

00:36:51,040 --> 00:36:48,859

guy out there that's right

943

00:36:54,280 --> 00:36:51,050

you know Sam outside Sam again because

944

00:36:56,140 --> 00:36:54,290

he's not too far removed from Jeffery

945

00:36:59,770 --> 00:36:56,150

Schwartz oh he's there he's there he

946

00:37:01,630 --> 00:36:59,780

just doesn't realize it well I'll let

947

00:37:03,490 --> 00:37:01,640

Sam speak for himself on that front but

948

00:37:05,800 --> 00:37:03,500

what my point is that I think Sam would

949

00:37:07,210 --> 00:37:05,810

agree meditation you know and and

950

00:37:10,000 --> 00:37:07,220

self-awareness and all these things are

951
00:37:12,430 --> 00:37:10,010
really good for health for you know

952
00:37:15,880 --> 00:37:12,440
wellbeing for rewiring your brain to do

953
00:37:18,640 --> 00:37:15,890
all sorts of things but but without any

954
00:37:20,470 --> 00:37:18,650
of the you know this this sort of I

955
00:37:22,180 --> 00:37:20,480
don't know which words to use I don't to

956
00:37:23,920 --> 00:37:22,190
say woo woo but just you know the sort

957
00:37:26,109 --> 00:37:23,930
of supernatural element it's still just

958
00:37:28,630 --> 00:37:26,119
neurons firing this is different neurons

959
00:37:30,460 --> 00:37:28,640
influencing other neurons and and round

960
00:37:33,400 --> 00:37:30,470
around and a loop they go and you can

961
00:37:34,690 --> 00:37:33,410
you can will that to happen by you know

962
00:37:37,180 --> 00:37:34,700
some other parts of your brain that

963
00:37:38,440 --> 00:37:37,190

where the will is located so I don't

964

00:37:40,390 --> 00:37:38,450

know that we need to invoke anything

965

00:37:43,690 --> 00:37:40,400

more than that doctor sure you have an

966

00:37:45,460 --> 00:37:43,700

excellent trailer for the book up on up

967

00:37:47,920 --> 00:37:45,470

on YouTube that people can check out

968

00:37:50,170 --> 00:37:47,930

what else are you doing out there or is

969

00:37:52,450 --> 00:37:50,180

there any movie projects or anything

970

00:37:54,220 --> 00:37:52,460

associated with this or you oh yes yeah

971

00:37:56,829 --> 00:37:54,230

now I'm working on having a film made of

972

00:37:58,810 --> 00:37:56,839

the moral arc thanks again to dr.

973

00:38:01,270 --> 00:37:58,820

Schreber for joining me today on skeptic

974

00:38:03,670 --> 00:38:01,280

oh I have one question to tee up from

975

00:38:07,150 --> 00:38:03,680

this interview I could actually have a

976

00:38:09,160 --> 00:38:07,160

long long list of questions including

977

00:38:12,010 --> 00:38:09,170

one about dr. schirmer's casual

978

00:38:14,079 --> 00:38:12,020

dismissal of all experiences that might

979

00:38:17,190 --> 00:38:14,089

ever be discovered that our paranormal

980

00:38:18,400 --> 00:38:17,200

as being incorporated into our natural

981

00:38:20,470 --> 00:38:18,410

worldview

982

00:38:22,510 --> 00:38:20,480

once we have a way of measuring and

983

00:38:25,150 --> 00:38:22,520

explaining them boy talk about the

984

00:38:28,150 --> 00:38:25,160

promissory note of materialism and the

985

00:38:30,099 --> 00:38:28,160

idea that we should have faith that dr.

986

00:38:32,800 --> 00:38:30,109

Shermer science as we know it will

987

00:38:35,200 --> 00:38:32,810

figure everything out if we just give

988

00:38:37,180 --> 00:38:35,210

him enough time but I'm not gonna focus

989

00:38:39,730 --> 00:38:37,190

on that question or any of my other ones

990

00:38:42,400 --> 00:38:39,740

because I want to focus on one question

991

00:38:44,109 --> 00:38:42,410

kind of a big complicated question to

992

00:38:46,720 --> 00:38:44,119

tee up from this interview and it

993

00:38:47,559 --> 00:38:46,730

centers around this very troubling

994

00:38:49,930 --> 00:38:47,569

situation

995

00:38:51,599 --> 00:38:49,940

with the article he wrote in scientific

996

00:38:54,160 --> 00:38:51,609

America the article was titled

997

00:38:56,739 --> 00:38:54,170

demon-haunted brain and it was published

998

00:38:58,420 --> 00:38:56,749

in the March 2003 issue of Scientific

999

00:39:01,900 --> 00:38:58,430

America and in it

1000

00:39:03,339 --> 00:39:01,910

dr. Shermer reported on this research by

1001
00:39:05,829 --> 00:39:03,349
renowned near-death experience

1002
00:39:07,779 --> 00:39:05,839
researcher dr. PIM van Lommel who is a

1003
00:39:10,989 --> 00:39:07,789
cardiologist in the Netherlands who

1004
00:39:13,089 --> 00:39:10,999
studied this phenomena extensively for

1005
00:39:15,189 --> 00:39:13,099
many many years with number of patients

1006
00:39:17,349 --> 00:39:15,199
across a number of hospitals and came to

1007
00:39:19,809 --> 00:39:17,359
a conclusion that that a conventional

1008
00:39:23,799 --> 00:39:19,819
explanation for near-death experiences

1009
00:39:27,160 --> 00:39:23,809
was not possible to this dr. Shurmur

1010
00:39:29,890 --> 00:39:27,170
wrote his article and said that van LOM

1011
00:39:32,049 --> 00:39:29,900
was research delivered a blow to the

1012
00:39:35,709 --> 00:39:32,059
idea that mind and brain could be

1013
00:39:39,549 --> 00:39:35,719

separate now the question is do you

1014

00:39:42,069 --> 00:39:39,559

think this crosses the line in terms of

1015

00:39:44,410 --> 00:39:42,079

science journalism or do you think as

1016

00:39:47,199 --> 00:39:44,420

dr. Shermer positioned it in this

1017

00:39:50,609 --> 00:39:47,209

interview that it's just the discussion

1018

00:39:52,989 --> 00:39:50,619

session it's just his analysis of it I

1019

00:39:54,969 --> 00:39:52,999

have to jump in here and offer up my

1020

00:39:57,339 --> 00:39:54,979

opinion because I think it goes way over

1021

00:40:00,339 --> 00:39:57,349

the line it would be like me saying that

1022

00:40:02,049 --> 00:40:00,349

dr. Shores book the moral arc delivers a

1023

00:40:04,989 --> 00:40:02,059

blow against the idea that religion

1024

00:40:07,329 --> 00:40:04,999

hasn't played a role in defining our

1025

00:40:09,939 --> 00:40:07,339

moral character as a country because he

1026

00:40:12,339 --> 00:40:09,949

cites religious leaders like dr. Martin

1027

00:40:15,099 --> 00:40:12,349

Luther King as being influential in

1028

00:40:17,289 --> 00:40:15,109

defining our morals well of course it's

1029

00:40:19,359 --> 00:40:17,299

true he does cite dr. Martin Luther King

1030

00:40:20,439 --> 00:40:19,369

but his conclusion is of course exactly

1031

00:40:23,979 --> 00:40:20,449

the opposite

1032

00:40:26,079 --> 00:40:23,989

it's that dr. King's religiosity isn't

1033

00:40:28,239 --> 00:40:26,089

what's important and instead it's his

1034

00:40:28,959 --> 00:40:28,249

ideas thinking reason logic that's

1035

00:40:31,269 --> 00:40:28,969

important

1036

00:40:34,630 --> 00:40:31,279

well the question is do I have an

1037

00:40:37,059 --> 00:40:34,640

obligation to point out that even though

1038

00:40:39,430 --> 00:40:37,069

I'm using evidence from his book the

1039

00:40:42,819 --> 00:40:39,440

opinion I'm drawing is exactly the

1040

00:40:45,910 --> 00:40:42,829

opposite well this is analogous to the

1041

00:40:49,959 --> 00:40:45,920

situation in 2003 with dr. van LOM Oh

1042

00:40:52,599 --> 00:40:49,969

dr. van Lamas conclusion after all of

1043

00:40:54,699 --> 00:40:52,609

his research after compiling all this

1044

00:40:57,339 --> 00:40:54,709

data and presenting this data in a

1045

00:41:00,759 --> 00:40:57,349

peer-reviewed journal was the opposite

1046

00:41:01,420 --> 00:41:00,769

of what dr. Schurman reported on so I

1047

00:41:03,819 --> 00:41:01,430

think there's

1048

00:41:06,160 --> 00:41:03,829

some room for maybe some disagreement on

1049

00:41:09,250 --> 00:41:06,170

this I mean a reporter does have a right

1050

00:41:11,950 --> 00:41:09,260

to analyze and offer opinions but I do

1051
00:41:15,460 --> 00:41:11,960
think there's a certain obligation to

1052
00:41:18,099 --> 00:41:15,470
make it clear when their opinions vary

1053
00:41:20,170 --> 00:41:18,109
that sharply from the findings of

1054
00:41:22,359 --> 00:41:20,180
scientific research particularly in this

1055
00:41:25,359 --> 00:41:22,369
case we have a peer-reviewed very

1056
00:41:26,950 --> 00:41:25,369
tightly presented bit of research so I

1057
00:41:29,079 --> 00:41:26,960
think it's noteworthy I think it's

1058
00:41:31,660 --> 00:41:29,089
noteworthy that he still can't back down

1059
00:41:33,520 --> 00:41:31,670
from that he can't see any problem with

1060
00:41:36,730 --> 00:41:33,530
that and in spite of the fact that

1061
00:41:39,250 --> 00:41:36,740
scores of research has been published

1062
00:41:42,730 --> 00:41:39,260
since then corroborating exactly what

1063
00:41:44,980 --> 00:41:42,740

dr. Vaughn lhamo concluded he's still

1064

00:41:47,559 --> 00:41:44,990

holding to this position but we might

1065

00:41:51,030 --> 00:41:47,569

even ask the larger question and I think

1066

00:41:54,730 --> 00:41:51,040

this is the gaping hole in the Atheist

1067

00:41:57,040 --> 00:41:54,740

skeptical view of the world is why the

1068

00:42:00,250 --> 00:41:57,050

heck does Shermer care so much about

1069

00:42:03,339 --> 00:42:00,260

near-death experience anyway his

1070

00:42:05,950 --> 00:42:03,349

strongest points are his points against

1071

00:42:09,339 --> 00:42:05,960

religious orthodoxy and fundamentalism

1072

00:42:12,339 --> 00:42:09,349

he's somehow as has atheism in general

1073

00:42:15,250 --> 00:42:12,349

and skeptics in general created this

1074

00:42:17,589 --> 00:42:15,260

strange brew of science and religion

1075

00:42:19,329 --> 00:42:17,599

that has evolved into their own crazy

1076

00:42:22,539 --> 00:42:19,339

creed that no one could really take

1077

00:42:24,760 --> 00:42:22,549

seriously after all who really believes

1078

00:42:26,410 --> 00:42:24,770

they're a biological robot leading a

1079

00:42:28,930 --> 00:42:26,420

meaningless life in a meaningless

1080

00:42:31,349 --> 00:42:28,940

universe Michael only the most desperate

1081

00:42:34,510 --> 00:42:31,359

church haters can swallow that stuff

1082

00:42:36,160 --> 00:42:34,520

oops there I go after my olive branch

1083

00:42:38,740 --> 00:42:36,170

offering at the beginning of this

1084

00:42:41,500 --> 00:42:38,750

episode towards the atheists and their

1085

00:42:43,809 --> 00:42:41,510

valid points about religious orthodoxy

1086

00:42:46,150 --> 00:42:43,819

I'm kind of pulling that olive branch

1087

00:42:48,309 --> 00:42:46,160

back and beating them over the head with

1088

00:42:51,280 --> 00:42:48,319

it a little bit but in this case I think

1089

00:42:53,710 --> 00:42:51,290

it's warranted what do you think tell me

1090

00:42:56,950 --> 00:42:53,720

of course the place to do it is through

1091

00:43:00,039 --> 00:42:56,960

the sceptical website at ske P tik Oh

1092

00:43:01,839 --> 00:43:00,049

calm you can leave a comment there jump

1093

00:43:04,809 --> 00:43:01,849

over to the forum where I like to hang

1094

00:43:07,480 --> 00:43:04,819

out and hear your great ideas or connect

1095

00:43:10,210 --> 00:43:07,490

with me on Facebook or Twitter or just

1096

00:43:12,120 --> 00:43:10,220

send me an old-fashioned email so I have

1097

00:43:15,250 --> 00:43:12,130

a number of interesting shows coming up

1098

00:43:18,010 --> 00:43:15,260

appearances coming up as well I'm going

1099

00:43:20,080 --> 00:43:18,020

to keep pounding away at this atheist

1100

00:43:22,600 --> 00:43:20,090

question some more I think there's many

1101

00:43:25,810 --> 00:43:22,610

many angles to it that I want to explore

1102

00:43:27,850 --> 00:43:25,820

and I think it is so central to many of

1103

00:43:30,520 --> 00:43:27,860

the issues that we really care about

1104

00:43:33,790 --> 00:43:30,530

here so I'm eager and excited to do it

1105

00:43:37,000 --> 00:43:33,800

and I hope you will enjoy it as much as

1106

00:43:39,190 --> 00:43:37,010

I enjoy bringing it to you well then

1107

00:43:42,070 --> 00:43:39,200

that's gonna do it for today I hope