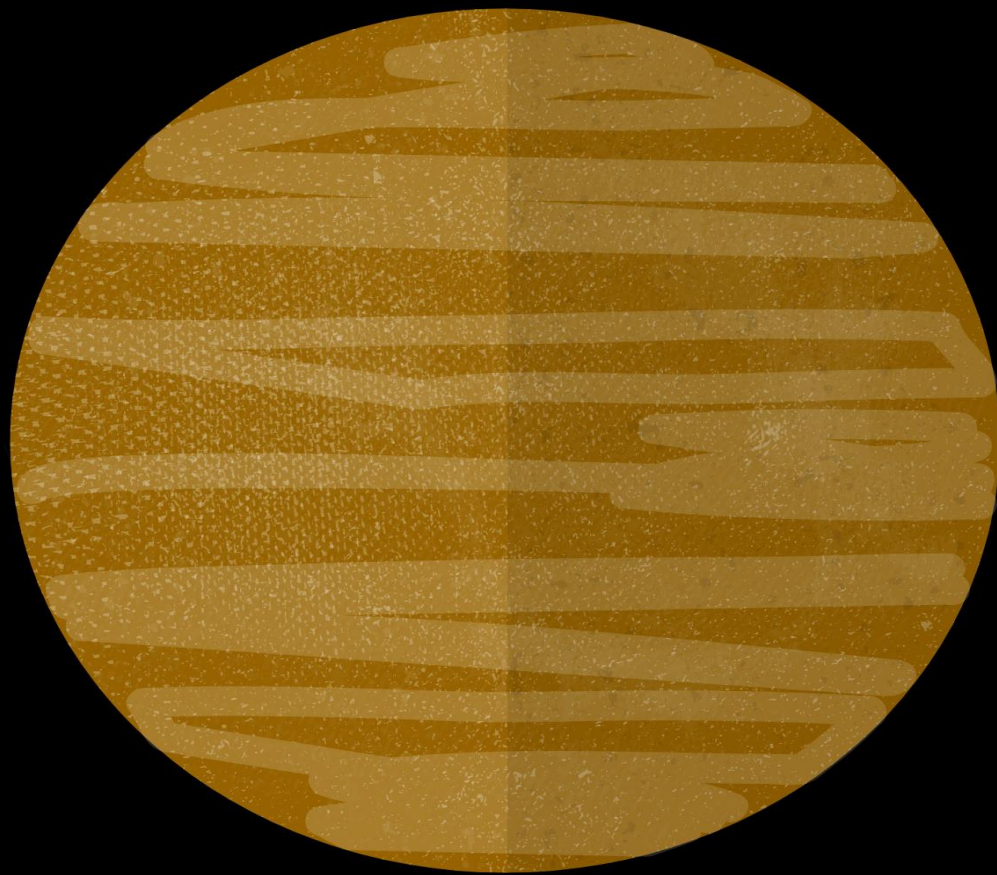# Ask A Genius

Set VII

**SCOTT DOUGLAS JACOBSEN
&
RICK ROSNER**

In-Sight Publishing

ASK A GENIUS: SET VII

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To three generations of women who support and tolerate me - my mom, Ruth, my wife, Carole,

my daughter, Isabella.

Rick

To the love in my life, forever lost and kept.

Scott

ASK A GENIUS

Introductory Note

Also, as a general note, the title of the series references Rick, not me, based on mainstream standardized test scores for standard psychometrician and psychology definitions of genius based on rarity of cognitive abilities out of the general population in addition to the scores on alternative high range tests and the scores there, even with the caution and care in consideration of the greater margin of error with alternative tests and the higher implied sigmas from the aforementioned high range tests. Whether mainstream or not, the title maintains some justification. Nonetheless, more or less, this amounts to two friends having fun and playing around once in a while. Thanks for tuning into us.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen

Ask A Genius 341 - A Time to Stand, A Time to Bounce

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

December 8, 2017

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: So, what was your trajectory as a writer? What were the most difficult parts and how can you use that analysis to help others in their own writing?

Rick Rosner: In general, you could argue that I've been blocked as a writer for most of my life. Talking about Writer's block is an excuse. It's a complicated thing. It's like some disease that may or may not exist and possibly because of laziness or perfectionism.

I haven't written that much long form stuff, but I've found ways to do it. If you google around you can find about a million words that I have written or helped to write available to read on the internet.

A million words is ten or twelve pretty thick books with most of that output coming in the last three years via work with you and also twenty-six thousand tweets. Before that, I wrote about a hundred and ten thousand jokes and related bits of ephemera for T.V.

Thousands of those jokes made it to broadcast, but what's happening with all of it. The commonality of most of this writing is that it's twenty words at a time and I'm comfortable that I could pump out twenty words that I'm okay with.

Longer forms tend to take me much longer. I can't dash stuff; I don't often dash stuff off. The stuff you and I create is often you ask me a question or set up a hypothetical or we come up with a topic, then I talk and you transcribe.

Then it goes up and much of this material I don't look at because that if I looked at it I will see its flaws. It would make me all crazy. So, I let it go. There's a fight against imperfection that has certainly knocked down the levels of longer form stuff that I have written.

Working with you, I have sat down and written hundreds of thousands of words of longer form prose on a variety of topics, but I'm most comfortable with twenty words at a time. The spoken material that gets turned into written material or that gets turned into text; I can tip-toe away from without freaking out.

I still have a book that I'm pursuing and have managed to write one sixty-page proposal. That's working with a co-author. I'm quite comfortable with collaboration. There are alpha males who are strong leaders. There are beta males who are followers. I'm kinda like an alpha minus male.

I can lead if I have to or if the situation is amenable to my leading. Like, I was a head bouncer at a huge bar in the 80s. This was a five-acre, two hundred thousand square foot beer garden in Boulder, Colorado.

I became the lead with a door staff of up to twenty bouncers at any one time. Twenty bouncers for when we had ten thousand customers on football Saturdays because it was down the hill from C.U., the University Colorado football stadium.

After the game, ten thousand people would spill into the gardens and that took staff of twenty or more bouncers to attempt to keep order. I could be the leader of the bouncers, even though I'm not a huge guy and even though my fighting skills are close too non-existent because I love catching fake IDs in the context of keeping underaged people out.

That was something that nobody else cared about. So, I was able to run around and make sure that we had a tight perimeter, which we did because it's hard to control that much space. That many entrances.

Six or eight entrances plus a bunch of ways too. There was a creek you could cross through and hike up a hill. It was a mess, but I would also be able to cruise through the crowd and pick out underaged people who made it in one way or another.

One way to find the underaged people was to look for lame-o clumps of lame guys. Guys who I saw at the place week after week never picking up a woman, always there for that purpose. Like, there was the guy with the Robin Hood shirt, a shirt that had laces across the top.

That guy never scored, but if he was part of a cluster of similarly lame guys, I knew that if I looked at the center of that cluster I'd often find an underaged girl who hadn't yet learned how to fend off lame guys.

So, I'd pluck her out of the cluster. I'd ask her to see ID. She wouldn't have an ID. I'd kick her out. So, I had a love for this detective work: catching a fake ID. It's the twenty-second mystery.

You've got ten or fifteen seconds at the most before you start pissing people off to determine whether an ID is real or fake. It's like being Colombo fifteen seconds of the time and my love for that allowed me to be a good supervisor of the staff.

But it was only because I had a super eccentric interest in the fake IDs. The guys who were much more qualified. Bouncers are generally not interested in leadership. I worked with a bunch of guys.

Larry, who had gotten two Bronze Stars from Vietnam and who still had shrapnel coming out of his legs twelve Years after the war. Larry was there to hang out, maybe meet girls. There was no brawl that he could solve by walking into the middle of it.

Pushing people out of the way, Larry wasn't interested in being head of that group. None of these tough guys were interested in being the head bouncer. The only reason that I became head bouncer is that catching a fake ID required some level of organization and administration.

So, it wasn't that I have this leadership that would inevitably surface in any given situation. Writing for late night, I worked. The crew of late night writers are all men and women: tough. It takes a level of toughness to crank out hundreds of jokes a day under the gun.

With most of these jokes going unused because you only use the best jokes of all the jokes that are generated and also in an environment where, in a funny way, everybody makes fun of everybody else. Everybody's freaking funny. A lot of funny people are best with other people.

It's 'give and take.' It a little like junior high, but it is awesome. However, my skills don't go into it because I'm not an alpha male and a lot of these people at my job are alpha males and alpha females.

I found myself towards the bottom of the pecking order and my skill does not extend to giving other people a bunch of jocular shit. But what I liked about the job and what I liked about a lot of the writing, in general, is the opportunity for collaboration; which is a true non-alpha male characteristic.

You and I have been working together for more than three years now. I'm happy with more than one point of view. More than one person generating ideas. I've learned to love collaboration. Let's see what else. I imagine a bunch of stories that I will never write that could be good.

Now, I have to come up with some of them. Oh, like a screenplay, this could be an awesome screenplay of. I have a zillion ideas; none of them will come to fruition because I won't write them, but say the story of somebody's life told only in the crashes they've been in.

You don't know much about the person but like, when I was four years old, I was in the back seat with my mom. 1964, my aunt who was a terrible driver caused a six-car chain reaction. Rear-ended somebody, super hard, my mom and I bounced off the front dash and back into the back seat.

So, you show that crash maybe minutes leading up to it the minutes afterward. I had double vision. I yelled out, "I can't see. I can't see you." They rushed me to the hospital. If I'd been more articulate at four years old, they wouldn't have had to fucking x-ray of my head.

So, I'm sad that I couldn't express myself better and thus got my head x-rayed. The crashes I've had. I had a crash in high school at a ski resort where I was trying to be a cool guy. I borrowed the babysitter's car to go skiing with my cool friends. Didn't know how to drive on ice, went off the road, crashed into a tree.

Anyway, you can tell somebody a story, not all of it, but a lot of details about the person's life in twenty crashes. Each of which is three to eight minutes long. It starts in 1964, which was the first crash.

Then it moves through now. Th n it moves into the future with some in 2032 with the guy now old, but not because in 2032 he is seventy-two, because seventy-two is the new forty-eight. The guy is in a crash of a self-driving car or in the crash of a dirigible.

Anyways, it would be a fun story. It's nothing but crashes. The guy is saying on the phone leading up to the crash and what he says in talking to the people that participate, the other drivers after the crash. You get little snippets of the guy's life over time. Everything goes around.

Anyway, I have a gazillion things like that. But because I lack writing discipline, most of those things won't get written. Somebody comes to me. They know that I'm a decent writer.

Somebody who urged me to wrote a screenplay call *Wing Dog*. This thing that was written probably ten or eleven years ago. A casual guy who uses his dog as his wing man to help him meet women. The dog is a genius.

It turns out that the stray dog escaped from a secret government program. So, the dog is a genius. Anyway, it was a nice screenplay, but it would have been written if I hadn't been recruited to collaborate.

The same guy recruited me to write a treatment, a pilot episode and a Bible, for a project called *Growing Up X*, which is about this kid. It's like *Boogie Nights* told from the point of view of a kid in high school whose parents are in the porn industry.

Jacobsen: [Laughing] I got one minute.

Rosner: Okay. So, again, it was a good project. We came up with it. Most things don't get made, but this thing got made except not with my participation. The guy sold it. It was made into a reality web series.

He found a porn family and he spent months with them showing their lives. So, that thing got made anyway. But anyway, my writing style is collaborative. The end.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 342 - Samaria's and Judah's God, Big Bang, Steady State, and IC (1)

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

December 15, 2017

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: So, how has your philosophical view evolved? Because we've talked about, in previous sessions, growing up as Jewish and not questioning things, thinking of some of the stuff as not necessarily true.

Rick Rosner: The Jewish have much to do with my philosophy about the nature of the universe. I had various earlier philosophical views, but they weren't sophisticated. They were little kid views.

Like on everything, I was nerdy and bad on the play-ground and bad at sports. I understood that this was fitting, but I didn't like it because the Declaration of Independence says that all men are created equal.

I understood that to mean - I was seven-years-old - but I took that to mean that I was good in school, but there had to be a countervailing bad thing. So, everybody much equaled out. So, like, my being good in the classroom was countervailed by being terrible socially.

Jacobsen: And you were the top kid at your school?

Rosner: When you are seven years old, nobody knows whether you were the top kid, nor should anybody know if you are the top kid, every kid is different, but this was the IQ era. Eventually, I found out I had the top IQ scores at my junior high, but that's a ridiculous criterion.

But I took to art when other stuff went wrong; in gym class or whatever, though, that was probably a crutch. I should have kicked out from under myself earlier realized that regardless, I needed to make some social compromises or at least develop a more sophisticated understanding of how to get what I wanted socially.

Perhaps, I should have done that at an earlier age rather than defiantly being nerdy. I wasn't trying to be nerdy, but I wasn't trying to change myself drastically until high school, the last years of junior high.

But then it was ninth grade and by then it was much too late, or at least given how clueless I was, it was too late, because not only was my social taste naïve, I wanted all the things that dumb guys wanted, which was to have a cute girlfriend from amongst the group of university acknowledged, popularly cute girls.

Because I didn't know better. That's when you are young and socially dumb; that's who you get crushes on. Anyway, at a young age, say six or eight, I remember asking myself the standard physiological question of "Why am I not seeing as somebody else?"

There is an answer to that, but I couldn't answer it. I forget how completely I answered. I can probably think of that, but the answer to why you are you and not anybody else is because all the information in your brain pertains to you, all your sensory information, all your thoughts.

You are you because you live within your consciousness. Every person lives within his or her own consciousness and for you to be somebody else, then we would have to be that person. There is no escaping.

Everything you are comes from your perception of your own thinking and to get glimmers of somebody else, then you'll have to be some supernatural movie phenomenon, where you start getting information piped in first from somebody else.

That doesn't happen. From starting a few years before age ten, I was thinking about the structure of the universe, in the mid to late sixties, which is much of what we think of the structure of the universe now, which is the Big Bang Theory.

Until the early sixties, the Big Bang Theory competed with other theories for the predominant theory about how the universe works, probably with Big Bang Theory winning; it has the best physics and most observational evidence in favour of it, but the victory wasn't definitive until nineteen sixty-four or sixty-five.

When background radiation was discovered, I started reading about how the universe was structured a few years after that. At age ten, I started writing little notes to myself on scraps of paper about my naïve and dumb thoughts about how the universe could have come to be in a Big Bang sense.

Or in a sense of coming to be at all, I didn't have a problem with the Big Bang at age ten. Then was nerdy; I wanted to be more popular; I wanted to come up with a great big theory that would make me famous.

Then I figured that if I were famous, then I could be more popular and I could have a girlfriend that looks whatever a ten years old version of a girlfriend is, except I didn't have a standard ten years old version of what a girlfriend is.

Being nerdy I run into adult material and naked ladies playing cards and other gentle porn and some porn that was less gentle. So, I was already horny, which is a sad thing to be at age ten because there is nothing you can do with it.

But in any case, that led to me wanting to get famous or thinking about the universe. So, I had all sorts of not good theories. That was one way to get famous, by solving the four colour theorem. That is, you will only need four colors to colour any two-dimensional map.

My theorizing was on the level of that its ninety degrees divide of the circle into the four parts, somehow that had something to do with the four colour theorem. That's not even garbage; that's little baby do-dos.

When about the origin of the universe, that, maybe, the entire universe did pop out from a single point as the naïve Big Bang Theory would have it, but, that, maybe, the entire universe may have popped into existence via being extruded, more or less, in another invisible dimension.

That the universe somehow went from non-existence to existence by the separation of the eliminations, though this was not the terminology used in my dumb 10-year-old head, but it popped out from nothing via going from a zero - with the zero thickness to some dimension that we don't perceive to a non-zero thickness.

Somehow, that brings the universe into existence. Again, this is dumb, baby, pre-thinking. For a while, my friends and I tried to trisect the angle, which is a famous insoluble geometry problem.

I don't think it was a standard tool of an ancient Greek geometry of a compass and a straight edge.

I don't think there is any way to try and perfectly trisect an angle. That has been long proven, but my friends and I tried to come up with a technique to do that for a couple days. My friends that were as nerdy as I was.

So, my philosophy on form, but at age ten and through the years after that, it was the Big Bang. As far as I can remember, my thinking would have been somehow contaminated with Steady State Theory.

But I was doing no super helpful thinking about that. I was probably doing some thinking that was prefatory to doing productive thinking about that stuff. I was taking physics in high school. Then eventually, college in a fairly half-ass way, so in a lazy way.

I was preparing to think about all this stuff. Then at age twenty and eleven months, I was sitting in the cafeteria in my dorm and eating red Jell-O. I was always trying to get bigger in those days. This was nineteen eighty-one. The late seventies, early eighty's.

People were aspiring to be muscular as did I. Nobody was walking around trying to look like a superhero, but I wanted to look muscly and thinking that it would help me, get girlfriends. A girl or something.

So, I go to my first semester in college. I ate eight meals a day, the cafeteria was all you can eat, all you can eat; you show up and you present your ID. They allow you to go through the line as many times as you want.

So, I eat two breakfasts, three lunches, three dinners, trying to bulk up. So, I was in the cafeteria a lot. So, I was in college now. This is my third semester. I started the semester late because I had gone back to high school.

Anyway, I'm in the cafeteria, eating a bowl of red Jell-O cubes. I must have read an article or was looking at an article. I was thinking about an article that I had read previously in the library about the difference between short-term memory and long-term memory.

Thinking that there was a certain amount of bullshit in looking for structural theory, structural stuff in the brain architecture, to exploit short-term versus long-term memory, or you might be able to use geometrical arguments to explain why not everything that enters short-term memory can be retrieved via long-term memory.

The geometrical argument being that remembered memories are more central to thoughts and can be accessed via a variety of combinations of stimuli of related ideas and memories that the things in long-term memory are accessible from more angles with the angles being determined by the relationship amongst the things.

That the short terms memories aren't always recallable later because there are fewer angles to them. It takes more of a specific context to get to making that short-term memory more retrievable on a long-term basis.

When the initial condition of the formation of that memory is no longer present, if you remember a thing a lot, there is a lot of different contexts; that memory becomes accessible in a lot of different contexts.

Something like, on an average day, the greatest accessibilities of some memories through third grade. I remembered when the books at the other end of the classroom, the words on their titles become blurry to me.

I remember that. I was becoming near-sighted. I can remember the teacher being blonde and hot. I remember drawing a naked lady then freaking out that I had a picture of a naked lady in my possession.

Then sticking it through the window of a car to get rid of it. But I can't specifically recall a day in April in third grade; the context. I don't have any context for retrieving memories from a specific, the memories from third grade…other than the ones that has some meaning to me biographically or remembered repeatedly that has more angle on.

I could tell you quite a bit about the night I lost my virginity because I reviewed that memory a lot of times. So, that memory or at least the memories of the memory because it's probably overwritten to a certain extent, remembered it a gazillion times.

That memory is easily accessible because I accessed it a lot in different contexts. So, I can get at it. So, twenty years and eleven months, I'm thinking the information in your head should have geometry with the more easily retrievable stuff.

The more relevant information being at the centre of some structure. The less relevant, less retrievable information being on the outskirt, on the periphery. Then, eating my Jell-O, I had the thought that maybe the geometry of the universe is the geometry of information within awareness.

That was the beginning of my hardcore, philosophizing and thinking about physics without being necessarily fantastically diligent. There has been a lot of laziness; there has been a lot of doodling around; there has been a lot of wasted time, but the idea of the universe being made of information, of being a map of information within an awareness, the idea that the information can be mapped within its own space, all those related ideas are what I've come to believe.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 343 - Samaria's and Judah's God, Big Bang, Steady State, and IC (2)

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

December 22, 2017

[Beginning of recorded material]

Rick Rosner: I have half-assedly worked on it, through 36 years with that stuff turning into what we have been calling IC or Information Cosmology, where the universe only looks big bangy, but it's a structure that is older than it appears to be.

Go back to Steady State Theory in the fifties with Fred Hoyle and a couple of other people who suggested that, in places in the universe where there is not a lot of matter, the matter would spontaneously be created.

So, that when you had enough matter accumulating in previously under-mattered or underpopulated parts of the universe, that matter would eventually coalesce into galaxies. The universe was imagined in time.

It looked big bangy because it was always forming new galaxies that were pushing out. So, you always had new galaxies popping up and going through their life cycles. So, the principle of regularity, of non-specialness is a big principle in physics, that you are not in a special place in the universe.

Space that works under big bang; that if the universe is expanding uniformly from an initial singularity, like the surface of a balloon, which is the standard analogy, there is no favored place on the surface of a balloon.

It disregards the neck of a balloon. It's an expanding ball. Everybody feels like they are in the centre of this expanding universe, but every point on the ball feels like the centre. There is no special place.

So, the Big Bang has no favored position in the universe in space. On the other hand, every moment in the Big Bang universe is a unique moment in time. No moment in time is like any other moment in time because you are on the surface of this expanding ball which acts like a clock.

You can tell how late it is in the universe, because of the size of the ball, gives you the age of the ball. In Steady State Theory, you always have new universes popping through, more galaxies popping into it, gradually popping into space in existence.

So, the universe may be expanding and may be expanding, but it's expanding because new matter, and new space is always being created. So, as the universe expands, new stuff arises to fill the space between old stuff.

So, you got a universe in time and you can't tell what time it is in the universe because every moment looks the same. But that's not how the universe operates. There is no observational evidence to say that, "No, you don't have new galaxies popping up in the spaces between old galaxies."

However, I have the same idea because the universe is on a vast time scale. Imagine that the apparent age of the universe is proportional to the amount of information in the universe, you do have processes which cycle, not cycle within a solution to General Relativity.

There are solutions to a General Relativity universe that works from a similarity; it doesn't have enough energy to keep expanding. It collapses back to a singularity and then expanse back outwards again.

So, it's breathing, basically, going from zero space out to a bunch of space, then collapsing back to zero space. I'm not talking about that solution. I'm talking about a universe that has active information in the centre.

If that universe becomes irrelevant to information processing being done, that information can slide out of the centre to the outskirts where it's in a stasis for several reasons. Then when it's relevant again, it can be brought back into the active centre of the universe.

But in the active centre of the universe, it looks like it's 13.8 billion years old, or much older than 13.8 billion years, but 13.8 billion Years apparent age of the universe is how much is a measure, how much information is currently active in the central arena of information processing of the universe. Alright, that's enough of that.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 344 - Exceptional Giftedness

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

January 1, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: How do exceptionally gifted (IQ170+) children get support or other gifted children for that matter?

Rick Rosner: There's an industry devoted to serving or several related industries devoted to serving kids identified as exceptional, but the private schools are designed to appeal to parents who want concierge education for their exceptional kids.

Growing up in the '70s and for most of the 20th century, people thought that regular public education served almost everybody and this idea almost begins with the beginning of the country whereas the US expanded westward.

One square mile out of every 36 square mile plot of land or whatever you want to call it, a section of land profits from the sale of that 1/36th; one mile out of 36 square miles of land was supposed to go to building schools.

So, schooling for everyone was a big deal. Then there was further development in the US. Throughout the 19th century established state schools, most states in the US have one or two big public colleges that are supposed to be cheaper than private colleges.

So, there's been a long-term emphasis on having an educated population and with that education being supported by the government. The government is democratic. There are been democratic ideas that have infused ideas of education.

That it should be firm; that there should be a place in the educational system for everyone. And a hundred years ago, the idea of the comprehensive high school, which spread across the United States, supported the idea that the teenage education for grades 9 or 10 through 12 should take place in public high schools.

That was for everyone regardless of interest or ability levels, but there would be within these schools communities that could support schools of this size. These schools would run from 1,200 to 3,000 students.

There would be educational paths for everyone and that everyone would go to school together and learn to function in a little-abridged version of society together, which was unlike schools in other countries like Britain where people in their early teen years are divided between schools on vocational tracks and on academic and professional tracks.

But in America, everybody was supposed to go to the same stereotypical high school with cheerleaders and football players and nerds and student council leaders and everybody mixed with everybody else.

The way that everybody was supposed to mix with everybody else in a democratic society. People were then with perhaps the unstated idea that they're going to learn academically as much as you're going to learn socially.

You're going to learn how to get along in this abridged version of society, which didn't work. So, for decades and decades, maybe even now, there are plenty of movies that over the past 50 years or more present high school as a jungle.

But middle school or junior high school are the jungle, where the people are at their worst; where the hormones start kicking in, people start caring about their place in the social pecking order and haven't learned any restraint yet.

So, it's the sixth through eighth or seventh through ninth where kids are at their most asshole-ish. Then high school kids have started to learn to acquire some sophistication and restraint and are starting to learn how to behave in a version of society.

And I spent many years in high school; many more years than most people because high school was interesting and I kept going back. And I disagree with the idea of high school presented in the movies as a vicious, murderous sometimes, place, where the high school can be a place where people haven't had their ethics eroded yet because they haven't had to confront corrosive, competitive aspects of adult life.

Most high school kids, though by no means all, are taken care of to some extent; they have food, clothing, and shelter provided by their families. I say at least 80% of high school kids have basic necessities provided by family members.

And kids in the traditional stereotypical high schools. They're the kids who maybe don't have those things provided or are not under the scope of consideration. They are in the stereotypical comprehensive high school of the 20th century.

Impoverished kids who don't have a family structure are virtually invisible and if they do show up they're a special problem that the community can address. So, under that system, people can afford to be nice; they're being taken care of.

There is competition in some areas: sports, academics, getting boyfriends and girlfriends, but stuff isn't life or death and people can afford to and often do behave as and think of themselves as good people.

They try to behave ethically and have the resources to do so. And I find that it's later in adult life when push comes to shove in life situations that people become more vicious.

So, anyways, the thought beyond that this comprehensive system was supposed to be for about everyone, whether the kid is going to be a mechanic taking short classes in high school or whether the kid is going to be a professor taking calculus in high school; both those kids could see each other in the cafeteria and play on the same teams, go to the same dances.

It was a one-size-fits-all system that didn't necessarily serve everybody, especially in periods of relative decadence including the period I grew up in the '60s and '70s when I was a teenager from 1973 to 1980.

During the last period, we ended/lost a war that had gone on for a dozen years and more. We lost Vietnam. We lost a president to corruption to Watergate. People who were disillusioned with institutions. At the same time, the pill entered the market; the birth control pill in 1960 or so.

So, you had such a growing sexual revolution and women's liberation and sexual liberation coupled with disillusionment and hedonistic singles culture. Everything combined to create certain laziness in education in the 70s.

There's this movie coming out called *My Friend Dahmer*, which I read when it was a graphic novel. One of the themes of the graphic novel was that Dahmer is clearly disturbed; this is a kid who several years after graduating would become a serial killer and a cannibal.

During his high school years, he was turning into the severely disturbed person that would later become the Dahmer we know and that all the kids knew about it, but none of the educators could be bothered to pay any attention to this drunk, bust-up kid walking the halls every day.

Based on my IQ scores and doing ell n school when I tried, I was considered a gifted kid. There wasn't much in the way of gifted services for me. Sometimes, the teacher would spot me as somebody who deserved or needed special attention and would give me advanced work to do advanced projects.

But mostly it was assumed that I would get along with everybody else, but my grades might be better than most people's because I had the ability to do it. But people didn't worry too much about singling me out, getting me special stuff, I desperately wanted to be normal.

My family, my mom wanted me to be normal. I wanted to have a cool kid's high school life being popular, having girlfriends. I didn't give much of a shit about the academic excellence that I would sometimes achieve, but only because maybe it would set me apart from other kids and some girl would like me for that.

I was desperately looking for me to get to something that would make girls not think I was gross. Within a couple decades after I left high school, a set of related industries popped up, which are designed to identify and service gifted students.

Partly, this is because the people my age, the software and hardware geniuses, maybe didn't care as much about being normal, but cared more about learning how to program and make computers. Those guys grew up to completely change society to a computer and technology-based society and being a nerd went from social death to barely acceptable.

The whole world has become more technical. I can mention the Flynn Effect that in the 50 Years after World War II the average IQ of the entire planet went up by 15 points because our technology and pop culture saturated the entire planet.

So, it's the entire planet smartened up and in the US that smartening became an exploitable market. Where if you parents want to identify their kids as gifted and once identified, parents will spend 30-40 thousand dollars a year to send an identified gifted kid to a private school.

Parents will spend eight or ten or twelve thousand dollars on tutoring for the SAT or the ACT, obviously, parents who have this money. When I was in school, the average kid who took an AP class took an average of one and a third AP classes, whereas the average AP kid of my daughter's generation took takes an average of seven AP classes.

The competition to get into elite schools is much more heated with either the Ivies having admission rates of about 5% compared to 20% when I was in high school. There's more of what leads to an idea of a zero-sum situation, where there are a limited number of viciously competed for spots for elites.

That means that the 21st-century system of gifted with students who are identified early and nurtured and pushed and self-propelled along demanding academic paths with applying, on the average as a super competitive kid, to twelve or fourteen colleges now.

Probably, many of my daughter's friends took a dozen or more AP classes. A lot of private school education. There is a lot of hustling to get into limited gifted education schools within financially strapped public school systems like the LA Public Schools.

So, education for the gifted now is viciously competitive, has a little bit of zero-sum about it, feels more Republican where the 20th century felt more democratic: that we'll all learn together; we'll all do everything together.

Things will turn out all right as we're plugged into our communities. The stereotypical comprehensive high school of the mid-twentieth century can be pictured as being part of a nice little town.

There's a movie, *Pleasantville*, that takes place in a pleasant little town in the mid-50s, *Father Knows Best*, *Leave It to Beaver*; all these shows that had high school and smaller kids as important characters were set either in small towns or in suburbs and presented their families as being plugged into the community.

They function like the successors to it; it is a wonderful life. Everything works better when everybody watches out for everybody else, which leads to Hillary Clinton's unsuccessful slogan 'It takes a village'.

But in the 21st century, we shifted to something that feels more like Social Darwinism, where there are a limited number of up spots and elite colleges for gifted people in public schools and you have to compete for them, often brutally.

So, you need to identify your kid early; you need to see what you can do to make sure your kid is gifted early; you need to work with the kid to develop his or her talents. My kid didn't know any better about working her ass off.

From kindergarten on, she took it for granted that she should be spending two or three or four or more hours a day on homework, which would have been unheard of in the 70s; where maybe a half an hour a day of homework, then most people had jobs, but they didn't lead any place.

Jobs in an ice cream parlor or hostessing in a restaurant. Regular teen jobs that you worked at to get spending money. You interned at some lab or something too because it was part of your career path and because it added another notch to your college admissions packet.

So, anyway that's enough of that, that was plenty.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 345 - Snakes: Religious Politics, Political Religion

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

January 8, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: IC leads to infinities: different types - and relations amongst and between the types.

Rick Rosner: So, that gets scary. Because anytime that you say there is an infinity or that there is anything that is unlimited, then that implies some kind of infinity and all of our experience of the world tend to fully add the possibility that our world is huge but not infinite.

Jacobsen: But I like the phrase "functional infinity" or "functional infinite," which means a very large finite but an unknown number for that finite number.

Rosner: But the whole idea or the whole question of infinite versus finite is: either way, there's a huge but finite number of things of all possible things. That is problematic and then also it is problematic with this or that infinity, or maybe not.

Jacobsen: I remember hearing as a far-left philosopher who is dead, who stated that in a similar way with "to be" or "not to be." Although, he didn't use it in that phrase. He was talking about the arguments of "being" and "nonbeing."

If you talked about the "tuned in" and the "not tuned in," so something is tuned in or not, but the degree to which is tuned in is the degree of fidelity. That not necessarily being tuned in to someone does not necessarily mean nonexistence.

It means not tuned in, so it may exist or may not to some degree or other, but it's not tuned in and other things that are within our experience within our consciousness are tuned in to varying degrees of fidelity.

And he used that to kind of shut it down to 2,500 years of arguments around being and nonbeing. I get that from what you're saying in a similar way with infinity and infinity.

Rosner: The best that you can say now in that infinity versus non-infinity would be something that we or our descendants will be arguing about for quite a while.

Jacobsen: It will be a question that will be asked to make either of those answers meaningless.

Rosner: Yes, true, that and it may be infinity versus non-infinity; maybe, that will be one of those things that turns out deriving the solution to the problem.

Jacobsen: And that's what I like for it with "functional."

Rosner: The question for free will is that you're maybe not framing things properly when you're asking is there free will. The idea, I see the universe is a self-consistent information system; that any large system is a system built from information, which is a step back from a purely cold Godless Big Bang science framework that we're currently under.

That it doesn't impose God the Creator, but that it does suggest a proliferation of consciousness in entities across the universe and that the universe has something like ten to the twenty-second stars with something like half of those stars potentially having planets.

So, you have at least a billion billion environments for life to evolve; that if you look at the evolution of life on Earth, there is a good chance that cognition evolves. So, you get both the probabilistic argument that it's unlikely that we are the only conscious beings in the universe.

You have the idea of consciousness being a technical aspect of information sharing as not miraculously originating things, but is a natural consequence of large self-consistence. That means that you've got a universe that is naturally full on conscious entities - not meaning the kumbaya like mystical, crystal on the wall of my bedroom to get my power, but in the sense that there are more conscious entities than us and than those on thin surface of the Earth.

The thinking beings who probably rise in a bunch of places and those thinking beings would often have consciousness and the universe itself may have consciousness, so some of these thinking beings may survive for millions of years.

In the case of the universe, perhaps, many hundreds or thousands or billions of billions of years, which presents the idea that there are conscious entities with God-like complexity versus which it's like - I don't know it's - a baby step away from the fully cold universe.

Jacobsen: What about the pre-fully cold universe that arose within primitive – by which I mean antediluvian - or original major religions? I guess, that also makes it like Orthodox Judaism, Confucianism - within their views of the world.

Rosner: When you talked about there is a certain philosophy, religious philosophy, that lives in the cracks and then you search to fill in the blanks. I forget the name. But there will always be blanks to fill in and people will always, and what comes after people will always, yearn for science or a purely mechanistic explanation for things. Not only that.

People evolved to search for significance; we evolved as omnivore survivors. We look for explainable regularities in the world to survive, so people will always look for patterns within patterns, patterns beyond what's known and the inevitable, the possible wondrous things that exist.

But beyond our understanding too; so, religion will never go away, never go away. Otherwise, they will continue to be squeezed - one would think in a way that religions have been squeezed for hundreds of years.

What they thought they understood, they were squeezed out. What is understood is wonderful, and also there is the possibility that comes with what becomes understood involves things that would be considered wonderful by religious people of past eras; the idea that the unification, the unified nature, of the universe, how the universe knows about every point in the universe, has a rough idea of what's going on in every other point of the universe.

That every point of the universe speaks for a cohesiveness that perhaps is having a satisfying cohesiveness that does offer a satisfaction in the wondrous ways that this happens.

Jacobsen: This segues into a topic we were talking about off tape.

Rosner: Okay.

Jacobsen: Which is conceptions of the world apart from factual knowledge, we take the scientific knowledge. We take failures from the past. They are applied to describe the real world in some way either to derive meaning, functionality, or both.

Another way that this is shifted is then into a political tool. We were talking about some ways how spiritual conceptions of the world then become used as political tools for some people in general.

Rosner: We were talking about the exploitation of the, to be specific, Evangelicals in U.S politics.

Jacobsen: I would not merely state some Evangelicals, but I would state that as a big category. But I would state religion at large in much of the Middle East North Africa region.

Rosner: Then that being a big example. Another example might be Saudi Arabia is whipping up anti-Americanism to serve their own purposes in a religious way. Various regimes have anti-Western purposes, say with Saudi Arabia with politicians using religions for further cynical purposes.

Jacobsen: I would extend that by the way to Catholics and Eastern Orthodox as well, which are big hunks of the population.

Rosner: You're from Canada. You see things happening, similar things happening.

Jacobsen: Take, for instance, Alberta. It is a province where, or you can use Saskatchewan, too, where, there is controversy around the implementation of a single school system for all citizens.

Where non-Catholic citizens are paying for their kids to go to Catholic school and Catholic parents pay for their kids to go to Catholic school - apart from the contentions around labelling kids Catholic for the kids with Catholic parents, the Catholic parents are paying for kids to go to Catholic school, but the non-Catholic parents are paying for their kids to go to Catholic school.

That seems disproportionate to me if not outright unfair. Many parents have to move, for instance, so there is a proposal for a single educational system without any particular religious or other brands, so some of the single secular schools.

Rosner: I'm sure that this is a bunch of Catholics.

Jacobsen: Sure, it's forty percent of the population, roughly, who are Catholic. So, it becomes a matter of contention, but it might also become a matter of contention for other denominations because they might watch this and think, "Okay, what about us now? I am homeschooling nine kids, for instance."

Rosner: Let's talk about the whole deal where the use of Evangelicals in politics.

Jacobsen: The political use of religion; the co-opting of religions for political use.

Rosner: When you get things with the energizing of it, still not the right word.

Jacobsen: The zeal.

Rosner: No, where you roll out and implement what you want anyway, it feels like traditional values of Evangelical voters. This is something that has been going on for more than one

hundred years, but it is the exploitation of Evangelicals and the political right that is only thirty, forty years old.

It is a consequence of conservative think tanks researching: how do we get leverage over the American populace? How do we get voters out to vote for people? Before that, at least in America, you have more now hen nine versions of Evangelism and of Christianity.

You can call it Christianity close to home, where the fifties, the forties at least, in the idealized version of America; you have a bunch of towns backed with a bunch of churches. Most people went to a church or places of worship like synagogues.

Everybody worshipped in their own way roughly the same set of Christian values. They all looked out for each other. In some more sinister cases, they kind of looked like busy bodies and looked down on other people - perhaps whose behavior fell short of their ideals.

But all an all, it felt like a fairly benign version of pervasive religious values. Not particularly coercive but with some aspects of coercion, but not strident, not feeling threatened, not trying to impose religious values by any means necessary.

Not seriously infringing on politics. The current brand of politics, the conservative side, is propped up possibly by a forged number of Evangelical voters and how every politician, regardless - any major politician, has to claim, whether liberal or conservative, to be religious.

It's a very brave and exceptional politician who doesn't claim to be religious. It's a rare group of voters who vote that person in, but all the religious test in politics for a politician's base.

They can make a public statement that contains certain things appealing to non-religious voters, but the religious voters understand the politician to say, "I'm with you. I'm going to defend your values."

Anyways, that's all fairly new. Cynically though, instances of it, there is always a potential for it as long as there has been religion and politics.

Jacobsen: It went back as far as when Emperor Constantine made Christianity the state religion, basically.

Rosner: We don't throw people to the lions. We don't urge people to say all that stuff is done at the intersection of religion and politics. So, it's always a possibility and by embracing science you don't necessarily avoid it.

But you open yourself up to all different sets of tragedy, the atomic bomb can go off now and then everything is obliterated.

Jacobsen: What does this continued encroachment of more accurate views of the world mean for religious faith or faith in general, because the trend over centuries has been a decline in outright belief in and the liberalization of those that do believe in traditional religion?

Rosner: Generally, there's a low cost to have large philosophical beliefs about the way the world is, believing in God or a bunch of Gods or no God, whatever you believe. Unless you're working in the field; unless you somehow run afoul of some grinding mechanism where religion meets politics, it doesn't affect your day to day life because you navigate your day to day life using a bunch of specific knowledge of situations.

These allow you to cross the street on a red light. You don't drink a draino. You cook chicken before you eat it. None of those things have large religious import; that's all a different set of knowledge.

People will continue to believe; people will continue to tell the hopes about what the world is; people's beliefs are to some extent religious, and over time on average more informed by actual information about the world.

It's a rare person who continues to believe the Earth is flat because nobody believes the Earth is flat anymore, except lunatics. It doesn't mean that within the flat Earth there is a naïve belief from thousands of years ago; that that naïve belief has gone away either.

It doesn't mean that religion will go away. It is a specific area of knowledge, which will squeeze out perhaps religious belief in certain scenarios. But there are certain areas, but there will always be room for religious or mystical or philosophical feelings and beliefs about the world, even if a fully scientifically explained world.

Science itself will change, but even that fully explained world will still have room for religious overlays. There will always be stuff to discover; there will always be places to conserve mystical beliefs.

There is a thing in quantum mechanics. Einstein had a problem with quantum mechanics, where he thought you can't have a world this randomly. He thought that maybe there was a structure behind the structure to explain the lack of structure of quantum mechanic's apparently random action.

But there was another layer of information that wasn't accessible to us that makes the random not random, and the things like those since quantum mechanics have been particularly proven to work.

You can't have secret mechanics going on behind hidden mechanics determining outcomes. However, I see that you do have out of the things that happen apparently randomly in quantum mechanics; those things bring information into the world and I see that information reflects the state of something.

The state of say information being brought into being; the universe is accumulating information and newly acquired information has to be about by something, so it does imply a kind of framework behind the random action that will not express itself in the way that Einstein believed, but in a similar way there is always room to say, "I got this system. There is still room," and to say that this also exists.

You got a scientific world, but there is also room for beauty; there is also room for good and bad; there is also room for truth; and that will always be the evidence and theory based great work, which will continue to shape not scientifically but non-scientifically.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 346 - Faith Given Up and Taken Away

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

January 15, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: What are the problems of faith? We have been talking about these for some time.

Rick Rosner: When we were talking, you talked about what we're talking about, which are issues like abortion being in an intractable problem of today and into the future. We're never going to get the two sides to agree.

It would be nice to come up with a list of our intractable problems of the future. Problems and big controversies that are likely to come along. That will divide people along the lines, political lines of faith.

So, the legalization of new forms of relationships: is that when people eventually want three or four way marriages to be binding under the law or take place as part of a church? Some people may get annoyed about that.

I'm suspecting not because there won't be as many because it's tougher to set up a relationship like that. The more people involved then the less stable that's going to be. Also, in a multi-person relationship, people who would be inclined to get upset can imagine that only heterosexual sex is happening in that relationship, as in like you're a Mormon, marriage with your sister's wives.

Nobody's getting upset about that. The women are having sex with each other; maybe that stuff happens, people to people, but that's not why the marriage is that way. That's not supposed to be the deal of that type of marriage.

Jacobsen: What about that the big culprits currently and in the future? Will they be the same ones? The Shiites, the Catholics, the Eastern Orthodox, the Buddhists, then there's the big populations of religious individuals who were or are against gay marriage, homosexual marriage.

Do you think the mores will have shifted enough such that their disgust or disapproval of it will be much less in the future?

Rosner: I used to have hope that religious impediments to what might be considered progress would tend to lessen over time, and as people see the fruits of progress, but the conservative buddy, Lance, convinced me that Islam has enough adherents.

The rate at which Muslims reproduce is such that it's not going away. Islam is going to be a major force in the world over the next couple centuries and longer. And you could argue the same for everything to a slightly lesser extent about Catholicism, and other forms of Christianity.

There are so many people who believe along those lines that the dwindling will take a long, long time.

Jacobsen: This is coming out of some obscure interpretation of the text that comes out of a straightforward interpretation of a couple of lines of the texts, by enforcement from religious leaders in the culture they happen to live in.

Rosner: I'd like to say you can find anything in the Bible and the same applies to the Quran and also to support your particular point of view.

Jacobsen: They have statements about homosexuality being an abomination, for instance.

Rosner: But you could probably find as many countervailing statements that say leave people alone.

Jacobsen: What ones are often referenced?

Rosner: The verses, I don't know that stuff. There is an anti-masturbation little passage in the Bible about that; you're spilling your seed on the ground and the sin of Onan. It probably is, but like I don't see a bunch of big biblical campaigns against masturbation.

It's like a chicken and egg deal. People turn to their religious text to find support the point of view that supports them being offended. I'm not sure it's the other way around, but the big story in the in the liberal news is there's some pastor who says that he's saying that God wants Trump to nuke North's Kim Jong Un.

So, you can think there's always this. There were a lot of pastors out in the world and believe that you could've found anyone willing to support some horrible point of view.

Alt-Right's other stuff, it's an ongoing a tragedy about religion that for the longest time now and ever since the Reagan era the biggest jerks espousing religious points of view get the most exposure.

The people quietly try to live their lives according to religious principles of tolerance and charity towards people.

Jacobsen: What about religion as a political force? If you look at the history of Islam, you compare the history of Christianity.

Rosner: In America, it's a policy to talk about America of the past 40 years, where the conservative think tanks research how to motivate people and discovered that to keep a conservative and motivate a conservative base you want to mobilize the evangelicals, which they did.

But they propagandize the evangelical sections of the church, which made them stronger and made them politically active. Even to the point where now the evangelicals haven't turned out to be so manipulatable, that they regret that, many of them, aggressively supported our godless president who lies about being religious over Hillary Clinton who seems to have an indication of having a lifetime of faith.

But Trump barely has ever gone to church. Clinton, Hillary Clinton has gone to church her whole life. Now, it's come out that she is considering becoming a pastor. I don't if she said it or if her pastor said that they'd talked to her.

He said that she's considering doing that. And this doesn't lead to anybody from the evangelical side saying, "Maybe, we heard her wrong and maybe we should give her the benefit of the doubt regarding faith."

No! they're all like, "she'll have good luck practicing religion in jail, when people are about to be prosecuted." That's what they say and not many of the most politically active evangelicals

disdain the woman with a record of talking about her faith over the guy who has spent his life talking about grabbing pussies and banging women.

When people think about Trump, the first thing they think about him is not that he's not religious. That would be like number eight on the list to number 11. But the religion is in a fairly sad state in America because ostensibly religious people are embracing jerks at this point.

Let's get back to the list of stuff that will freak people out.

Jacobsen: Taking this point as segue, the heavier use of religion as a political tool; a political tool for the rich and powerful.

Rosner: People forget that it wasn't always like this. That it was until the Reagan Era that the evangelicals were a political force. I'm sure that if you went back to Harry Truman's time you could find groups like Catholics or Truman.

People distrusted when Kennedy was running for president. He had them come out and say that he is an American, first, and his loyalties is always the whole little pithy quote. That his number one allegiance is to America.

His Catholicism comes in a far second. People are distrustful of religion and politics. Anyhow, onto the list of people who will freak out about rights for non-human intelligence.

Jacobsen: Including animals, not official.

Rosner: That's a thing that already exists. So, it is not a new controversy about animals and it's not a huge controversy. You have people getting all pissed off about different levels of how horribly animals were treated.

That is of a more general argument about that you shouldn't house billions of animals in inhumane conditions in general; the argument usually doesn't get down to the small details of how smart animals are or not.

Or where there will be a bunch of forms of thinking and information processing, but that is independent of a human. So, when an old rich guy starts replacing his brain and wants to argue that he is still the same guy and has all the same legal rights, people will argue about it when that applies.

If your brain is 80 percent mechanical, the 20 percent that's organic according to an MRI is dead. It's like, "I still have the same rights." If that guy moves out of his body into some other robotic body, does the guy have the same rights?

Does the guy who moves into cyberspace? Does he have to have the same rights? So, there's that problem. There is the problem of wanting to legalize or become legally married to an artificial being.

That's something that doesn't show even in a legit way. But it'll show up in a dumb sense in the next 20 years, somebody will want to marry a sex robot. Most reasonable people will say that's dumb because that robot is not sentient.

It is as if it is a sophisticated callboy. You can't marry a toy. Then over the next 18 or so years, you'll have a true sentience among them: commercially available companions. At that point, it becomes a real issue that has been further clouded by idiots of the past trying to marry toys.

People trying to do arts. There will be a circus like aspect to it like the first time 40 years ago that a gay marriage license was issued, which happened in my hometown Boulder Colorado.

A city clerk decided to say, "Alright, I'm going to marry some gay people. Why not?" It was in the 70s. The licenses she issued didn't stand up because there was no widespread legal course for what she did, so she did it on her own.

Then within a few days of her issuing licenses, a cowboy shows up at the city clerk's office with his horse to marry his horse. So, you will always have jokers making fun of this stuff. But anyway, that's a thing that people freak out about.

Jacobsen: There's a distinction between values. One associated with conservative viewpoints, conservative reasons; the idea of transcendental laws coming out of religious faiths or faith. They're split.

They're the other side to the left or the social-oriented who often, more often, point to universal human rights. That's the rub for a lot of these controversies.

Rosner: That split will show up in the mid to far future with regard to what to do with sentient artificial beings with rollover. There's liberals who will argue that you can't dump thinking beings in landfills, even when it becomes possible to buy an ascendant being for six bucks.

Those beings will be subject to abuse. And liberals will argue that there needs to be a bill that those things need to have rights that are the right not to be treated like crap. And conservatives will argue that only things organic, especially humans, that've been touched by the hand of God that have rights and deserve consideration.

So, moving further on the list, you got people playing God with medicine at some point and people will start getting upset about different levels of life extension. When people start growing organs in pigs, which is going to be a thing.

Pigs are genetically close enough to us; they make a good place to grow replacement organs. You'll have a hell from all animal rights people, who will be upset. Other people will we should not be playing God.

The same thing with playing God around genetic manipulation, gene tweaks. I can take a small example of people saying, when people start looking old, people going to the Bible or the Quran.

People could go to those genealogies saying people are only meant to live x years because God deemed it. So, in creation therefore, people trying to live longer is against God's will and we should, therefore, make it illegal.

I can argue that at the same time. The Bible has a lot of people living for 800 years. Methuselah lived for at least 800. That was pre-flood. See, I could see these debates happening.

And these are dumb and silly arguments happening now over many things, especially in America. Though, the utility will tend to blunt a lot of these arguments. When certain technologies show themselves to be helpful and not leading to cats and dogs together, they fit in.

That certain new technologies fit into society. They're helpful to people, so religious arguments tend to be blunted. I've always been surprised at how the issue of cross-racial relationships evaporate without a big fight.

People now take whomever they like without regard to race. In fact, when a company wants to show that they are a hip company, a modern company, they'll often put up a cross-racial couple in their ads. Cheerios does it.

I can probably come up with another dozen examples. Nobody disapproved of it all, except for a few assholes; everybody except for a few assholes is with it. This may be because it doesn't hurt society.

It's fine. The obvious utility of people getting to be with whom they want has somehow overcome people's prejudice against us. You'll have issues around gene tweaking, especially when people use it to change their appearance or their gender.

You will have issues around new forms of relations, of marriage-type relationships, but even more so you may have people getting upset about people being intimately plugged into each other.

In the mid to far future, where the boundaries between entities are blurred, where two people in cyberspace, two entities, who may or may not be human, merge into one temporarily, permanently even, or there will be a lot of freaking out.

Especially more than 100 years into the future, people will be subsumed into larger information processing structures. There will be concern from the liberal side. This is the people's rights to exist; they are being violated because it won't be entirely clear in every case, where individual will stops and group will begins, and who's making the decisions and whether the individual wills are being participative in these group wills entirely with their consent or not.

On the conservative side, and in these big blobs or agglomerations of thinking entities, they will now completely violate the spirit of the world. The books can be completely against God.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 347 - Snapshot - Growing Up Manly

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

January 22, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Rick Rosner: In 1962, my mom married my stepdad. I was 2-years-old; we moved to Boulder, Colorado, which at the time was a small, not weird, college town, surrounded by farms and ranches.

Maybe, a population of 15 or 20 thousand; Boulder didn't get weird for another around ten to fifteen years. It grew steadily weirder beginning in the late sixties. I didn't relate to my stepdad.

He was an intimidating guy. He was 6'1 or 6'2, probably a 190lbs. Then going up to two hundred or more in later life. His arms and legs were spindly, but he was barrel-shaped and was physically imposing, especially compared to me.

It took me decades to realize he had a nice smile and a nice face, but I tell you he wasn't as handsome as my dad or as fun as my dad. My dad who had good hair and a good face, drove sports cars and had visitation with me for a month.

For years, he'd drive me from Boulder down to Albuquerque in his Firebird or he had a GTO (he had something like that). My stepdad worked all the time and had a big stark nose from when having fallen on a pop bottle that had sliced open his nose.

He was grown up in Boulder, was a friendly local merchant owned ready-to-wear dress store on Pearl Street. It's friendly at work. Then we would come home and be either quiet or pissed off about the assholes we've met during the day.

Though, I'm sure he called some people assholes and not too patient with the family. He'd go in my parent's bedroom and fall asleep with the TV on. Over the next couple of years, it became apparent that I was both awkward and smart.

I taught myself to read before the age of 4. This was before there was an era of this being a thing with parents pushing their kids to do stuff like that if the kid could do it.

Kids were kids in his era. You lived in a household with your parents, but parenting was something that was an active concern. It was like they are adults acting like adults, kids acting like kids.

He went to school and everybody went to the same school in the neighborhood and everything was expected to turn out okay. And for the most part, things did turn out okay. There were plenty of outlier examples where things turned out terribly, but for most people everything was adequate.

There's a movie coming out based on a crime novel called *My Friend Dahmer* written by a guy who grew up with the high school Jeffrey Dahmer. Dahmer was born on the exact same day I was born.

He was an increasingly odd kid as he was transforming into the homicidal monster he would later be; all the other kids knew he was way off. None of the parents or none of the adults in his world could much be bothered to notice anything about this hobby of going and seeing kids.

So, I'm looking forward to that movie because they will be indicative of the *laissez-faire* attitude of that time. So, I taught myself to read. If I'd been the same kid thirty or forty years later, I wouldn't have to teach myself to read at the age three and a half or three quarters.

I would have been spotted as gifted and treated like gold, then stuck in all these accelerated programs. They would have had me reading maybe a few months earlier and everybody would be looking at acceleration and enrichment private schools and testing.

Instead, when my mom noticed my signs of precociousness, she freaked out; she didn't know what to do with the genius; I was her first kid. She didn't know what to do with an apparently smart little kid. The other moms gave her shit because she wasn't even a teacher.

She wasn't being a teacher then, but the neighborhood, the people in the neighborhood, saw that I was reading and doing other smart kid stuff. I asked a lot of questions. I used bigger words than most 3 or 4 years old.

They gave my mom certain amount of shit because they thought she was keeping me inside and drilling me, teaching me all these smart kid things when she didn't do anything like that.

I stayed inside because I was not good with the other kids. They intimidated me. I preferred to stay inside reading or hanging with my mom. Then I went on to a public school. I was not good on the playground. There was one kid, whose dad had died and he used to lightly beat me up after school every day.

This was to contextualize that he felt sad because his dad has died. And nobody that I remember was particularly concerned that this kid was messing with me every day. And this is early elementary school, say first, second grade.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 348 - Genius Gone Mad and Bad

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

February 1, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Why are there stranger male geniuses than female geniuses?

Rick Rosner: We, off-tape, were saying that there seems to be more wild-ass or weird male super geniuses than female super geniuses. And one reason may be that woman may have better judgment, and that part of being a smart woman might be looking at life, in general, and deciding that leading a normal life makes sense.

Because, I have certainly had crap periods in my life based on following my own weird plans; plans that if you look at them in the aggregate, you would argue that I deserved to lose a bunch of points of my IQ for pursuing these plans.

I tend to think I'm not a psychopath or a sociopath or maybe only 5 or 10% on the way to being one, but I tend to think that a good sociopath would not do anything sociopathic because, in a cold, unemotional sociopathic way, the sociopath would look at the way to live a smooth life, a life without hassle, and decide that I would pretend to be a normal person.

I won't do a bunch of horrible antisocial stuff because the cost of doing the antisocial stuff is too high. The same way the idea of a super villain in comic books or movies who looks at his records of going up against superheroes and he clocks it, "I get beat every time. I'm going to retire and offer my services to the good guys."

I come up with great shit and it turns out to not be so great enough. I could certainly help out the *Justice League*. I know that villains got something in them that even when they try to be good for an issue or two in a comic book, something snaps, and they go back to pure badness, but really, it would be so much easier to not be evil.

Jacobsen: The entire premise is hysterical.

Rosner: I want to see a whole movie. It will piss off people *so* bad; I want to see a Marvel movie where the superheroes take care of the problem in the first ten minutes of the movie, twenty minutes, and their next ninety minutes of the movie is them hanging out and solving little problems and designing a dream house.

Them doing regular people stuff and seeing if they can get a buzz, seeing how many shots of Bailey Irish Cream will it take to get Superman buzzed. Probably don't want to use Bailey's, he would end up super throwing up before he got drunk.

Maybe, you wouldn't do it with superheroes. Maybe, you will do it with a group of teens that go to a spooky place. Like, you buy the rights to this shitty series of movies or a series of movies that ran its course. The Jason movies or the Freddy movies and they take care of the bad guy very thoroughly in the first ten minutes. They spend the rest of the movie hanging out and wondering if he's going to come back in some weird way. However, mostly hanging out. Alright, that was very repetitive, between the teens and the superhero. Sorry.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 349 - Lines of Love Drawn in Trauma and the Colour of Trust

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

February 8, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: I want to reflect more on the bad educational experiences for gifted kids, of the social experiences, which can leave such an impact on the psyche. Kids are in some ways almost crippled for social life, if not for a significant period.

Rick Rosner: All the bullying that I've read into was for the most part run of the mill. It was run by the white guys of the 60s and 70s. That served to eventually make me tougher and more determined to succeed socially.

What you read about are a kid goes out for a sports team, and a brave kid, it's not anything to do with the sport, or maybe it is; once you read the case reports, everyone starts hazing the kid. It's so brutal that it can include sexual assault.

I assume that would be hard with the violation of trust, which would be so severe. It would be *Love Line*. People would call into Carola and Dr. Drew. It was a show for people to call in and ask questions about romance, sex, maybe relationships.

Often, they would get calls of women with baby voices.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Was that a real thing?

Rick Rosner: Yeah! Carola tried to guess when someone had an unwanted sexual boundary violation, assault, based on the apparent age of the caller's voice. So, Carola tried to guess at which age of the caller was molested because it was his theory that your personality would freeze at that age.

However, Carola is not a theorist; he's the guy who makes jokes on the radio. But often his guess was good. Often, the caller would identify with him that something happens to the caller's life at a young age, but it's hard to draw conclusions from that.

Maybe, most people – unfortunately, given the culture - live in suffering based on some unwanted stuff. Early on, I don't think it was everybody; something so severe in its violation of trust or boundaries could freeze you up for a while.

Which if you're looking for tips on how to avoid that, one thing is to know what are the boundaries that exist and what they are. If I was lucky, I was knowledgeable about directing experience I read widely, so I knew a lot of things kids should not know, or figured out a lot of stuff.

So, a lot of people in my era were super naïve. I was naïve about some stuff, but not about other things. And when I was nine or ten, a friend of mined asked if I wanted to touch wieners. I would say, "No, that's not something I wanted to do."

Because I was innocent, the guy was curious. So, I knew stuff, but I didn't have that curiosity. And I saved myself from an innocence, though I wanted potential early instances of that type of

play. Others, I didn't want to get engaged in. And we have the Internet now; and we also have an awareness of the better and worse behaviour.

That there are people out there being left essentially to unwanted sexual potential from adults. Kids should be made aware. Most kids have this respect. And if you're listening to this, and the adults are not making sure that this stuff is available, go on the internet and teach them to yourself for a couple hours.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 350 - Observation and Wisdom - Tabula Rasa Self-Experimentation

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

February 15, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: So, we are thinking about how to observe better, so we go to physics and then we move onto the general.

Rick Rosner: That's the first step to coming up with things about what you are observing. However, being observant and coming up with new original observations is a starting point, it is a helpful ability to have for comedy, for science. What other fields should we talk about?

Jacobsen: Those are the two main ones. For comedy, for science and physics, it's not helpful, as you know, to be more observant by being more reflective.

Rosner: Perhaps, you need to develop tools to knock yourself out of the standard way of experiencing things less consciously. Often, we let things wash over us. We are used to things. Sometimes, I play games to help me practice observing a world that I am used to.

Game one is to imagine that, woken up in the world I'm in with no information about it and what can I figure out about that world from looking at it, and also I'm not allowed to gather more information.

I'm not allowed to be caught. I have to go about my business as if nothing is different and I have to gather information via the information I'm getting while going about my business. Even though, I'm not allowed to look all around because in the game that would get me caught as somebody who is new to the world.

Instead, I have to maintain my non-suspicious demeanor. I still have to figure out where I am, when I am. Sometimes, I play the game in a persona of some specific person from the different era, like Ben Franklin or Marie Curie or F. Scott Fitzgerald.

I have to draw a conclusion as if I am this person. And, generally, you can only do this at a few minutes at a time before you forget that this is what you are doing. You must guess what year it is; you must guess that you concluded that it's the future.

Is it a future version of your year or is it an alternate future? You have to try to suss out some of the technology that exists. If you are pretending to be Jesus, as I have observed a world, 2,000 years in the future or some other.

So, it is imagining someone from the past coming to the future and figuring out the world from that time. If you're trying to observe a world 25 years into the future, you are in a car. You have to figure out how the car might work, how the radio might work, how the radio isn't a bunch of little people in a prison, somewhere in the car.

Our comedies, playing the comedians, are going to be wrong about how the car works, about how the radio works because there are those millennia of intervening, of technology that you have no idea about.

However, you still must try to guess at what is going on. If you're playing the video for Scott Fitzgerald, you must guess at why the car or the cars of today look like pieces of melted candy, as if you took the old angular cars or cars of the past and sucked on them for a while until they lost a lot of their corners.

So, it's a game to increase, for very brief periods, your observation.

Jacobsen: How important is having memorized things before, so you have a database of experience and other previous observations?

Rosner: You are not allowed to use that; I am not allowed to go routing through what I know. If I am pretending to be somebody else who is suddenly awakening in my body. So, it is receiving on my sensory input.

I don't have the power to go routing around in my memory for answers, except in a very approximate big way. I am a passenger. I'm not in charge.

Jacobsen: I get some images about how to see the world the way other people see it, or me, but if there is time travel, what about seeing the world, from someone in the same era, a different part of the world? In some ways, it's functionally the same, in some ways it's not.

Rosner: Yeah, that's doable, but if you are seeing the world as someone else from a different part of the world then you've quickly concluded that it is the time that it is; it is that you are pretty much in the same era as you were when you were that person in a different part of the world.

So, if you are observing the world in America, while pretending to be somebody who had popped into your body from India, you have fairly quickly realized that you are in America, but you are driving around maybe and see a license plate of another place.

Or maybe, you see a TV. The TVs at my gym play videos. You may be able to reach conclusions by who is performing in the videos or could see a TV in a restaurant making a snippet of the news. But if you are pretending to be somebody from a different era, you may be able to make some guesses about how people are in this era.

Scott Fitzgerald could for our comedies because you are going to notice; people have devices in their hands that they interact with, either typing on or talking into. Fitzgerald would quickly surmise that those are some form of communication device.

Our comedies will too, but he would not have the idea of a telephone to work from. So, he may be drawing conclusions. At first, he may think that they are religious devices for people to worship something, or they are some talisman or fetish that they are praying to.

They must see one of those things up close, or see other screens in the world, in order to interact with information on the screens. So, that's a game you can play to become more observant for a few minutes at a time.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 351 - Schadenfreude: How Do You Feel About Jung? Mixed.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

February 22, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: You had some short ideas on Freud and Jung.

Rick Rosner: *Schadenfreude* is a helpful shorthand for a certain mixed emotion, and once you hear it, then it's sticky for a lot of people who have experienced that *Schadenfreude* type thing. So, *Schadenfreude* is a meme once you're aware of it, it sticks in your brain.

So, that's what memes were meant to be, but then the term "memes" got taken over by people who do fun graphic jokes on Twitter and Instagram, and once they go viral they're memes, but that's a whole second meaning that isn't exactly a sense of the first meaning.

That is a catchy mind bug that spreads through culture because the idea being expressed is handy or amusing. Then you said there was another thing you want to link to it.

Jacobsen: What do you think about Sir Carl Jung and the idea of the archetype? Those seem like memes evolved over time, which are almost statistical tendencies of forms that we have in our minds. They're all Platonic-ish.

Rosner: I understand the handiness of archetypes and stereotypes; without admitting, *I don't think I believe in Jung's form of archetypes*. He thinks that we have evolved structures in the brain that we are more receptive to.

We have some cultural history already embedded in our brain via evolution and that can include archetypes. The myth of the heroes and certain types of men in some way and some types of women in other ways if they line up with certain archetypal roles.

I have never strongly believed in that. I believe in it even less strong now that there is more evidence in neuroscience that shows that the brain is constructivist instead of essentialist according to recent research results, which that the brain, each brain, builds its own concepts based on experience via culture and repeated personal experiences.

Those concepts aren't inbuilt. People had arguments about this regarding language, whether we have inbuilt evolved language abilities or we have language centers evolved to make humans better at learning a language.

But a constructivist would say, "No, the brain is very flexible and it quickly builds structures in infancy when it's super fluid, when it's super flexible, in what it can do. It's able to quickly build the capacity for language without having an inbuilt evolved capacity for language."

So, based on the stuff I've read and heard about recently, I would disagree with a lot of inbuilt arguments as opposed to the spontaneously built over the life of your brain arguments.

Jacobsen: Okay.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 352 - It's a Big Blob Out There

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

March 1, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: What about the blob?

Rick Rosner: At some point, once information processes, conscious information processes are decoupled from the human body, it can be easily moved around and merged with other minds or other forms of information processing.

There will probably be an extended period of controversy and struggle, eventual alliances, maybe a settling down after a century or two. The issue will be around how much you will allow your consciousness to be subsumed in some other structure.

There will be a matter of alliances of merging consciousness boundaries. So, your rights once you are merged with a large information processing entity. What are your rights if you have to remove yourself from it in the future?

People will be able or the entity would be able to duplicate their consciousnesses, and will be able to extend a series of them out or venture out with your mind. You can send out a bunch of them and then re-join with them later.

There will be a bunch of issues about entities' rights to join up with other entities in intimate information processing partnerships or alliances, or the rights to end those alliances. It will be, obviously, complicated.

Eventually, who knows, this is talking out of my butt, but at some point, as things settle down; there will be one or more Earth-spanning massive information processing entities, or as big as is practical - which will be pretty damn big.

Jacobsen: We called this a "blob" before, right? You took on that term.

Rick Rosner: The "super blob," it could be something that extends for hundreds and thousands of miles across the earth's surface or into the earth itself or circles the earth via orbiting stuff. One of the priorities will be special compactness; a solid sphere of computation is more efficient than a sheet of computation.

That sheet covering the earth surface because the ball of computation has a lower average distance upon its various component code, and so it can compute faster. We will have vast structures. These structures would be the most powerful computing.

They will be gigantic. They will be the most powerful conscious computing information processing entities that we know of and sub-intelligences, smaller intelligences. There will still be smaller beings in this huge thing.

People can exist as people or whatever forms they want to take and they can go out and do their own computing, which will be super powerful compared to our mental computing now, based on the situation of all your computing as an independent entity is relevant to your situation in the world as an independent entity.

So, there will still be independent entities out in the world making decisions based on their local and specific situations. Independent entities will have a choice as to how much consultation they want to do on a moment to moment basis with the giant, super powerful processor.

Maybe, it's expensive to have the power of the central processor, working with you as you go about your affairs or maybe it's not expensive because the central processor finds it helpful to constantly gather information from independent entities that are linked to it.

However, all this stuff will evolve across hundreds of years until you have long periods of world computation. That could be minutes or days or something since every thing's moving so fast, but we will have a stable, somewhat stable, arrangement about where negotiated computation happens.

Or, you will have stable arrangements that evolved between lesser awarenesses and these big central information processors. At that point, we will be well beyond anything that's human relationships today, except for people who choose to engage in a throw-back cuddling for the reasons of being technologically Amish or to honor their ancestors.

Maybe, it's an issue from time to time of safety. If information processing structures are being attacked, then maybe people will lock themselves down and exist without being highly linked to other conscious beings.

But normal human coupling at this point will be a rare thing in the sea of other forms of infinite means of intimately shared information processing. Before that, this is the world of consciousness budding off and merging up into massive central processors.

That's about three hundred years, four hundred years in the future. So, until then, we have to predict where relationships would go. The first major thing would be any kind of widespread gender judgment or regulations.

Gender will fall as a thing that prescribes the maturity of the relationship you can have. That will fall within most places in the world within a century and then as consciousness becomes more mergeable, couple-hood will fall within a hundred and fifty years or two centuries.

Because there will be all sorts of new ways of merging one's perception of the world with somebody else or other people. People in Western countries will have things with coupling as being romantic as sex, and then only secondarily for making a family or as for economic stability, to pull in resources.

However, as we gain control of our bodies and minds, relationships will form for reasons beyond sexual romance and sex. We will still have business linkages, defensive linkages, but people will couple up.

People will couple up to share their history with each other. Maybe, somebody has had an unusual experience such as surviving living for years in space or years under water and spending a year of developing some theory.

People would make you want to experience what it's to be that person who they may be able to sell linkages: either your active consciousness or to form another record of your experiences as you live them.

So, that's pretty much as far as I can go right now.

There will be coupling for the standard reasons replaced by coupling and tripling and quadrupling and all other forms of coming together for a vast variety of reasons. And then after it, eventually, there's periods of strife as massive operations of information processing happen and as people try to sort out what role they want to have with the world computing apparatus; and then eventually, that settles down and you have this multi-minded and centrally-minded world-spanning consciousness.

I don't know, that's as far as I can go.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 353 - Independent But Logically Consistent

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

March 8, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: What about the blob?

Rick Rosner: At some point, once information processes, conscious information processes are decoupled from the human body. It can be easily moved around and merged with other minds or other forms of information processing.

There will probably be an extended period of controversy and struggle, eventual alliances, maybe a settling down after a century or two. The issue will be around how much you will allow your consciousness to be subsumed in some other structure.

There will be a matter of alliance of merging consciousness boundaries. So, your rights once you are merged with a large information processing entity. What are your rights if you to remove yourself from it in the future?

People will be able or the entity would be able to duplicate their consciousnesses, and will be able to extend a series of them out or venture out with your mind. You can send out a bunch of them and then re-join with them later.

There will be a bunch of issues about entities' rights to join up with other entities in intimate information processing partnerships or alliances, or the rights to end those alliances. It will be, obviously, complicated.

Eventually, who knows, this is talking out of my butt, but at some point, as things settle down; there will be one or more Earth-spanning massive information processing entities, or as big as is practical - which will be pretty damn big..

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Rick Rosner: The super blob, it could be something that extends for hundreds and thousands of miles across the earth's surface or into the earth itself or circles the earth via orbiting stuff. One of the priorities will be special compactness; a solid sphere of computation is more efficient than a sheet of computation.

That sheet covering the earth surface because the ball of computation has a lower average distance upon its various component code, so it can compute faster. We will have vast structures; these structures would be the most powerful computing.

They will be gigantic. They will be the most powerful conscious computing information processing entities that we know of and sub-intelligences, smaller intelligences. There will still be smaller beings in this huge thing.

People can exist as people or whatever forms they want to take and they can go out and they can do their own computing, which will be super powerful compared to our mental computing now, based on the situation of all your computing as an independent entity is relevant to your situation in the world as an independent entity.

So, there will still be independent entities out in the world making decisions based on their local and specific situations. Independent entities will have a choice as to how much consultation they want to do on a moment to moment basis with the giant, super powerful processor.

Maybe, it's expensive to have the power of the central processor, working with you as you go about your affairs or maybe it's not expensive because the central processor finds it helpful to constantly gather information from independent entities that are linked to it.

However, all this stuff will evolve across hundreds of years until you have long periods of world computation. That could be minutes or days or something since every thing's moving so fast, but we will have a stable, somewhat stable, arrangements about where negotiated computation happens.

Or, you will have stable arrangements that evolved between lesser awarenesses and these big central information processors. At that point, we will be well beyond anything that's human relationships today, except for people who choose to engage in a throw-back cuddling for the reasons of being technologically Amish or to honor their ancestors.

Maybe, it's an issue from time to time of safety. If information processing structures are being attacked, then maybe people will lock themselves down and exist without being highly linked to other conscious beings.

But normal human coupling at this point will be a rare thing in the sea of other forms of infinite means of intimate shared information process. Before that, this is this world of consciousness butting off and merging up into massive central processors.

That's about three hundred years, four hundred years in the future. So, until then, we have to kind predict where relationships would go and the first thing. The first major thing would be any kind of widespread gender judgment or regulations.

Gender will fall as a thing that prescribes the maturity of the relationship you can have. That will fall within most places in the world within a century and then as consciousness becomes more mergeable, couple-hood will fall within a hundred and fifty years or two centuries.

Because there will be all sorts of new ways of merging one's perception of the world with somebody else or other people. People in Western countries will have things with coupling as being romantic as sex, and then only secondarily for making a family or as for economic stability, to pull in resources.

However, as we gain control of our bodies and minds, relationships will form for reasons beyond sexual romance and sex. We will still have business linkages, defensive linkages, but people will couple up.

People will couple up to share their history with each other. Maybe, somebody has had an unusual experience such as surviving living for years in space or years under water and spending a year of developing some theory.

People would make you want to experience what it's to be that person who they may be able to sell linkages: either your active consciousness or to form another record of your experiences as you live them.

So, that's pretty much as far as I can go right now.

There will be coupling for the standard reasons replaced by coupling and tripling and quadrupling and all other forms of coming together for a vast variety of reasons. And then after it, eventually, there's periods of strife as massive operations of information processing happen and as people try to sort out what role they want to have with the world computing apparatus; and then eventually, that settles down and you have this multi-minded and centrally-minded world-spanning consciousness. I don't know, that's as far as I can go.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 354 - The Informational Translation Problem

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

March 15, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: We were talking off tape about hardware and software and information and if you have a potentially infinite set of hardware and a hardware implies certain infinities in information.

Rick Rosner: I read this book that says that not only are your thoughts not localized, but even when they're distributed across the brain they are what the author, Lisa Barrett, says is different every time. Every time you're sad; your sadness lights up a slightly different set of neurons, but they average out to be an average sad.

But anyway, what she and neuroscience are finding out is that thoughts are hard to pin down, to pin it up to areas of the little neighborhoods of the brain, we would like to think of a better model of where the information in thoughts is.

If what we're saying about information space is right, it's obviously in the information space, but pinning it down may be tougher. We've talked about the 'how' of an information space, how it might work; we've never talked about it in terms of specifics such as a 'why' for the universe. Why should the universe be made from information?

Maybe, we've talked about that a little bit, but that should be further developed. I started to try to do that. And one reason is, let's go from ourselves, where if we have a little information space based on the information that's in our brain, which is with our brain being the hardware, then you got to ask: Why is the information existing in a space of its own separate from the hardware?

And why can't the hardware be a part of that space? Why is there a division between the values held in the hardware and the hardware itself? Because the hardware exists as hardware plus it exists as a bunch of values that also exist within the hardware, the zeros and ones; the states of the various circuits in the chips.

As a first step there, the information that I'd hypothesize that we have in our awareness is information that will behave in certain ways independent but consistent, logically consistent, with what would have to transpire in the hardware.

But some future values of the hardware are not yet determined. But the information in an information space has to be sufficiently consistent and determinative that by following the rules of information in its own space it will follow the rules of that information as contained in the hardware which isn't the best or clearest thought, but it's the first thought.

So, that'll have to be further messed with. But the deal is that if there are information spaces that information is internally defined to a certain extent to the point where it behaves according to its rules and the information existing as values in the hardware is similarly constrained.

And then the less constrained stuff, the open parts, the outcomes of various quantum interactions can be determined as the system moves into the future. So, you've got the determinant part that

works according to the rules of information space or in the hardware and even then, you've got the open stuff which can be determined by the values that are input into the hardware which seems like a reasonable first step to the idea that the information when it's sufficiently self-consistent has an existence according to the rules of information that allows it to have its own existence in its own space. Is that reasonable?

Jacobsen: In some serious ways, yes, and in some other trivial ways, no.

Rosner: Okay.

Jacobsen: There's still the translation problem, which we identified some time ago. The translation problem is the one of precision because that's off - a long way off, but ways to think about certain structures translating into those different sets of experiences, where a set of experiences can be labeled set sad, set happy, and so on, and within each variable there are micro changes and those micro changes are sufficiently similar to one another that you can categorize them as something as a dynamic set in themselves or labeled under emotions.

Rosner: That's what Lisa Feldman Barrett indicates that there are states that the brain recognizes or that the mind recognizes as sadness but those states are variable; it's not always the same sadness and so in an informational sense it's always a little different and in a coding sense, a hardware sense it's always a little different, but not vastly different.

That when you take real-time fast PET scans of the brain and you try to evoke certain states like emotions, the same parts light up but they don't light up exactly the same from time to time to time.

Jacobsen: To me, it seems like the difference between microstructure and gross anatomy.

Rosner: Yes, that makes sense.

Jacobsen: You can see what is what, generally, with gross anatomy, you can't with microstructure, but you can know more precisely what a particular thing is in decent levels of microstructure analysis.

Too much and it becomes useless, but at a certain level it becomes useful but at the macro level; the gross anatomy level, you can label structures such as the hippocampus for memory, cerebellum is for motor coordination…

Rosner: Yes, except every structure might contain a couple million or more neurons. The little subdivisions that might contain tens of millions of neurons. And then there's the problem with if we're arguing that the universe is an information space, that we're seeing the information that the universe is made of in action, the universe follows precise rules of physics such as the distribution of matter.

It seems all the while orderly but also not pinned down. Everything orbits everything else that doesn't seem to have crystallized precision. There needs to be a way to understand both: the order of the universe and the lack of precision, or what looks like looseness in the universe.

There needs to be a framework that accounts for both and also provides for some understanding of how hardware cannot intrude into a world of pure information. For instance, each of our minds have evolved over our entire lives; we've learned stuff about the world, forgotten stuff and we have structures - that our minds are highly ordered.

We know what we know for the most part, we can recall a lot of things, for instance, have you ever punched a duck?

Jacobsen: [Laughing.]

Rosner: You immediately know the answer somehow. You've examined whatever records exist in your memory about ducks and punching and you instantly can answer. Most people can instantly answer, "No," which seems good informationally.

Have you ever kissed somebody for longer than five minutes? It is a little tougher but still answered almost immediately. It's highly ordered and that order seems to come from lived experience with the brain being exposed to lived experience and having some way to, as that experience happens, file it away associationally, so it maintains a certain amount of integrity.

You don't remember stuff that didn't happen for the most part though that's questionable, but with some degree of integrity and is highly retrievable. But there's all this stuff that is highly retrievable; but that you don't know at any given instant, so you could simulate a moment of awareness with a high degree of precision with the little bit of information that is in your awareness at a given time and somehow provide the illusion of the rest of this order - or artificially provide the order that exists from moment to moment because you're able to work with this system of information that includes a bunch of stored information.

So, the natural system based on decades of life experience has all this information that adds a certain precision to your thoughts but you could fake that with much less information for a moment or two of thought as long as you give the brain the information that it needs to think those couple of moments of thoughts.

So, the hardware could provide a framework as long as that hardware isn't perceived because of a lack of information like if you were simulating a couple moments of thoughts and then you quit and you let the system move on without supplying the missing information then the person thinking would either have his mind fall entirely apart because there was not enough supporting information or, and maybe both, for a few moments the person would realize that he or she knew nothing, had almost complete amnesia.

So, coming up with the rules of the existence of information space is based at least in part on the boundary between hardware and open propositions and determinative information within information space.

I'm hoping that's a good way to set up a boundary; another way of saying it would be that quantum mechanics is famously indeterminate which freaked out Einstein and a lot of people that the universe should not be a clockwork completely determined to universe.

We might be able to say that where the universe is determined that's due to the logical structure set up by the information and information space, where it's open to take new values those values will be provided by information coming in from the hardware world.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 355 - Listen Up! Perfectionism, Fucking Up, and College Admissions

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

March 22, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: So, perfectionism is a standard or classic trait of gifted and talented youth. You experienced that. What were your pivotal moments of perfectionism?

Rosner: I may have been more perfectionistic, but what I experience more than that were times I felt short of perfection and I fucked up. Beginning with at least first grade, where the teacher called in my parents, who have been told by my kindergarten teacher year before, that I was a genius based on an IQ test.

Because I could already read, which was unusual for that era. The first-grade teacher showed my parents an incomplete assignment that said, "If I were on Columbus's ship, I would," and that's where I stopped because I realized I didn't know crap about how it would be if I were a sailor with Columbus.

I was six years old. Maybe, I was perfectionistic, but I all of a sudden quit; I quit writing because I realized that nothing I wrote would be at all accurate because I have zero knowledge of what it was like to travel with Columbus.

But apparently at six years old, I was already underperforming and because my parents had left me with a scary old babysitter and had gone on a trip to New York for a week. My dad owned a dress store.

He goes to New York about five times a year to pick out clothing for the store because there was no internet yet. You had to do it in person and take a look at the clothing and once or twice a year my mom would go with him and when they came back from their trip I was turning in circles and chanting to God.

And that plus my screwing up in school earned me, I don't know, nine months or a year with my personal psychiatrist. And, there was a pattern throughout my elementary career, which was a year of performing in school, and a year messing up.

In fourth grade, we found a dirty book on the playground or the teacher found a dirty book on the playground. It was missing its cover, but she didn't realize it was dirty - so she brought it in and put it on her desk and we found it.

Then we spent much of that year or some of that year reading the dirty book and discovering how we get boners. It was also the year that we worked on being good at making fake farts. It was the year after a guy whose dad was a doctor told us how babies were made, so we were distracted by all that.

I don't know that I screwed up that much, but apparently, it was enough that when I got a teacher who understood me, Ms. Jones, in fifth grade. Everybody was happy and I performed for her. She gave me - this was an era where special attention was not that big of a thing or even virtually non-existent – extra attention.

Everybody did the same work at the same pace. Ms. Jones was the rare teacher who got real work out of me because she gave me challenging work to do. I looked out because she moved from fifth to sixth grade the same year I did, so I get to have her for two years in a row.

I moved on to junior high school. I tried hard. All three years at junior high school I tried hard and did okay except for in PE class and French class where Ms. Davis, the French teacher, didn't like you if you were popular.

Even if you're only trying to be popular, I was far short of popular, but I wanted to be popular, and I wasn't entirely serious in class, so she would give B's and those were not good because I want straight A's so I can more easily get into Harvard.

So, I would have gotten into Harvard. A student body president; my SAT scores were the highest in school; my grades were excellent; I was from Colorado, which made me geographically diverse. They didn't call it that back then, but the deal was if you are from a state that didn't send that many applicants, then your odds were good.

Back then, Harvard let in 20% of applicants compared to about 5% now, so given everything I had going for me I would have gotten in. I freaked out because I was still a virgin. I never had anything like a girlfriend. I wanted a girlfriend.

If I couldn't get a girlfriend at my little school, then I was totally unable to get a girlfriend in Harvard where everyone was rich or a Kennedy or came from a prep school. I would be one more smart kid from a high school among everybody who has been the smartest kid in his or her high school.

I thought I would be lonely and miserable, so I decided to break into my school. This is still my senior year in high school when everything fell apart. I went from virtually all As to a bunch of Fs. I broke into my high school, stole my transcript and went back to high school.

That was the second senior year and I wanted to get a girlfriend. Because I had two families, parents got divorced when I was zero years old; each started a new family. I was going to switch families. I switched families. I went back to high school in a new town, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

I didn't get a girlfriend. I was no better at getting a girlfriend. My new non-nerd persona, which I modeled on (Vinnie Barbarino) the John Travolta character on *Welcome Back Kotte*; that lasted about 12 weeks.

Then I dropped out of high school and instead of going to Harvard, I went to the University of Colorado. My hometown school where I screwed up big time. I didn't take CU seriously at all. I treated it as the cheapest place for me to live.

It was tuition plus room on board back in 1979 was 15 or 16 hundred dollars for the semester. That was all you could eat. At that time, I was eating seven or eight meals a day because I was trying to bulk-up, because that if I was big and muscley, I could get a girlfriend.

Alright, so, I had things in reverse, when the time I should have been big and muscley was in high school when I should have gone after football, but in college, everyone was trying to be smart at the time when I was trying to be Barbarino.

The perfectionism that drives and haunts a lot of gifted talented kids; it isn't the end of the world if you fall short of perfection and there're worst things in life than fucking up, especially at a fairly young age where it can lead to a new perspective.

Charles Darwin was a fuck up. He was wandering aimlessly through life. He didn't want to be a pastor. He wasn't great at school. Not sure whether his parents wanted him to be a doctor at one point, but anyway, nothing was for him, so they hooked him up with this ridiculous "do nothing" assignment for a position as a paid companion to a ship's captain.

He got depressed on long sea voyages. Now, this was Fitzroy, the Captain of Beagle and Darwin was…his family paid for him to go on this five-year voyage and hang out with the captain, talking with him to be the ship's naturalist, which he did a good job at.

Five-year journey around the world. He came up with a theory of evolution, so is one of the great thinkers of all of history. It's a nice consequence in part because he had to give himself a different experiential background that most people of the time didn't have or couldn't experience.

Five years of seeing the entire world, seeing all these geological formations that convinced him the world was fantastically old. He saw all the speciation on this plot of this island and all because he was a fuck up who couldn't figure out what he wanted to do.

Einstein has been presented as a fuck up. It's part of his myth. When you look at his actual academic history, he was a good student. Leaving school, he had troubles with certain professors because he didn't probably work that hard or paid that much attention, so he didn't strike people as sufficiently smart.

I don't know. Whatever they thought a young scientist should be like, he wasn't. Mostly, it was the Jews that may have pissed off some people, but he did a little bit of fucking up, not as much as the myth would have it. He knocked up his girlfriend, later his wife out of wedlock.

They had a kid that they may have been so messed up that they may have left it in the orphanage or gave it up for adoption. Anyway, they had a disappearing kid. So, Einstein was a screw up in some way.

Newton wasn't as much a screw up as the recipient of his mom screwing up and the horrible situation of the time. Newton's dad died early. He was less than ten years old. Because when Newton was ten or so, his mom marries a new guy.

They didn't have time for Newton in the house, so they gave him away to the local pastor or something. So, Newton got booted out of his house when he was ten and spent a few years living with an entirely different family until his family could take him back.

So, this probably didn't do wonders for his disposition. He was notoriously a prick for his whole life. So, I don't know; the point I'm trying to get at is that it feels good to perform in school and if you can do that it will get you all sorts of opportunities.

Or to perform in other areas, if you have landed a solid apprenticeship, say you are still in high school but you're helping out in a lab someplace, all that stuff is awesome. But, falling short of perfection isn't the worst thing in the world, you can see it even in what colleges look for.

My wife and I have been involved in college admissions for a while now. My wife works in the admissions office of a high school, so we see how it all works. Every year, we hear horror stories about how the kid with the perfect SAT scores, the grade point of like 4.7 on a 4 scale.

Even with the grades, extracurricular activities, and the high SAT scores from all the SAT classes, that kid doesn't get into Stanford or Harvard because the admission rate is so low for selected colleges now that even with perfect credentials; you are not assured getting in.

The people try to come in with all sorts of hooks, traveling to impoverished countries to build houses or to help administer medical care. It's getting into even mathematically, where it can make you look like you have canned experience.

It can be too designed to look good to admissions people. But, the deal is, nothing is going to give you a hundred percent chance of getting into a selected college. Unless, you succeeded at such a crazy thing, such as you're basically a celebrity because of your achievement level.

You're a nationally ranked athlete in addition to having excellent grades. That will get you in a selected school. Apparently, if you are a successful film actor, famous, that will get you in there along with excellent grades.

Or if your parents are going to give millions of bucks to the school, apparently like the Trumps…Apparently, his grades on tests weren't that great, but his parents still donated. They are real estate moguls. They donated like 1.6 million (USD) to Harvard Medical School.

That helped him ease his way into Harvard. But short of that, all of the highest achieving students all over the world are applying to ten or twelve or more schools, a bunch of Ivies, Stanford, George Washington University, Bard, and so on, but our kid that went through this process and applied overseas to Oxford.

She applied to a zillion schools. You hear the stories. Stories of the kid who is perfect and doesn't get into any of the Ivies. This is perhaps because, a couple reasons: one, it's easier now to apply to a bunch of colleges because there are computer-based applications.

The selective school still requires an individualized application, but some of the less than highest, less than most selected, school are slightly less selective or slightly easier to apply to because of computer application.

That's reason one so kids about twenty years ago will apply to two or three or four schools and that doesn't happen with the high achieving kids. The ten thousand or fifteen thousand of those high achieving kids around the country each year.

Now, those kids don't apply to 2 or 4 but up to ten or more schools. Some places keep track of how many schools have been applied to and then record for one year. A year or two ago some lunatic kid applied to forty-four schools.

And because people are applying to three or four or five times many more schools, each school gets five times as many application; instead of admitting 20% of applicants, they admit 5% of applicants.

And nobody can be sure of getting into any one school. The second reason is that since the time that I was in school and now; there has been a modification where everybody in America decided - parents across America - parenting became a burden.

When I was growing up, people liked kids, lived in the same house with the kid, did some parenting stuff with and for them, but nobody saw parenting as a job. The word didn't even exist. You trusted your instinct as a person with kids and to get you and your kid through; you trusted the local schools, the public schools.

It's getting roughly through the eighties, and increasingly till now; people began to take parenting seriously, which includes cherishing and nurturing the gifted. So, now, there are thousands of gifted kids who are appreciated and underserved by whatever their situation is.

But there are now tens of thousands of kids who are given special attention for being gifted and that means that those kids are given special treatment. If you are a gifted kid and if you are listening to this, now, everyone gets special attention and special prodding to take a zillion AP courses.

There is an appreciated and nurtured gifted kid who is likely going to apply to a gazillion colleges, highly selected colleges. There are, like a said, over ten thousand of these super student's every year, but like the Ivies, most of the Ivies, only Cornell has a decent size.

Cornell now may admit three or four thousand students to each class. Look it up, but the Ivies; a Harvard, Princeton, Yale only admits about 1600 students a year. That means if you are one of the 10,000, you better have a hook in addition to fantastic grades or test scores.

With our kid, we went through the process. We could see, as the process went on, because, the college admissions process takes a year of solid processing - probably another close to a year of getting ready to do everything and by the end of it.

I have a rough sense where our kid was in terms of all the kids in the country. In terms of where her credentials ranked her roughly upon the high achievement kids, I could predict what school she would get into and what school she wouldn't based on where I ranked her and the class size of each school.

Which, it was good to have an understanding so that there was completely freaking out because I was ninety-nine point nine something percent certain that she would get into at least George Washington.

Because George Washington has a big class size, I was confident; and George Washington doesn't necessarily attract one hundred percent, unlike the Ivies. It doesn't necessarily attract a hundred percent of the top students in the country.

So, I could see by doing the math that she would get in there and some other schools. So, I was probably the least freaked out member of your immediate family during that period. But, to get back to the point, these annual crops of students who are trying to be as perfect as possible to survive the ridiculous current admissions don't need to be perfect.

Perfection won't save you unless it's some weird hyper perfection which means you are among the top two dozen percent in the country in some field, like movies, apps, or Olympic gymnastics or anything.

You're an Olympic level athlete and have perfect grades; you will probably get into a highly selected school, but short of that it's not the worst thing to take a look at, not what you want to do professionally.

But also what you might want to experience in terms of going on a goofier adventure, growing up and going to high school in the seventies, it wasn't a serious time. The whole country was going a little nuts; it was the disco era much of it.

We had Vietnam. We had Watergate. America had lost confidence in its institutions and plus we were in the middle of the sexual revolution. And, people, a little bit older than I was when I was in high school, were in the discos banging the hell out of each other, eventually causing the herpes epidemic.

You went to bars if you were in your twenties. A lot of people went to bars, pick each other up, bang each other, gave each other herpes; yes, so, by the late seventies, there was a herpes epidemic, by the early eighties the AIDS crisis had started.

The people didn't understand what was going on with that, but it was starting to be understood that during the seventies before herpes/AIDS, the idea was that humanity had finally broken free of ultimate strengths.

That everybody was going to be having as much sex as they wanted now in the new modern world and also an assumption that went with that was that everybody was into sex and that it was natural that everybody was having a lot of sex.

Then gays came along and Nancy Reagan started people to say, "No"; the children of hippies of the sixties generation. A lot of them were not of high school age and were growing up in families where the parents were still fuck ups.

They never entirely recovered from being hippies or you didn't have to be a hippie to have a hard time recovering from the 60s and the 70s. So, you had a conservative wave of young people who were who were not as interesting as seventies people in going nuts.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 356 - On the Nurturance of Talent by Oneself

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

April 1, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: You mentioned in prior sessions about coming to grips with the world, as you are very different. What about the youth that are gifted and talented and needing moderately to even highly different than the norm assistance?

Rick Rosner: Alright, so let's start off with this. When I was a kid, I had to walk five miles through the snow to get to school. It was harder for nerds when I was a young nerd than it is now. Nerds are more a part of our culture.

Half of the world's billionaires made their billions from computer coding and social media apps. It's a nerdier world now and Zuckerberg and various other billionaires whose names I forget. They got their hot wives and girlfriends, and make millions.

I know one dickhead that spends a million bucks on his wedding in the forest to some smoking hot girl. So, if you are a nerd billionaire, you don't have to come to grips with the world; the world must come to grip with you.

However, most gifted and talented are not going to become billionaires. There comes a point. You got to go back into my childhood, which included a bunch of uplifting sleazy movies that fills nerds with the idea that even though the hot girl usually goes out with jocks, one special hot girl will eventually see your kindness, your specialness, your intelligence and will decide to go against pride and be your girlfriend.

That's horse shit. At some point, you do need to take a hard look at depending on what you want. The 2016 election brought out a lot of Gamergate, angry, nerdy, sexist, racist, controlling, socially isolated - except for saying shitty stuff on social media - guys whose best form of recreation and business is making people upset.

There are a lot of angry guys out there who have given up on social success in terms of getting a girlfriend and their economic success in terms of getting a decent job and decided to troll, not to be stereotyping, but there probably is a little stereotype in play.

So, you can live that, especially now that we live in a paradise of pornography. This thing of not being able to get laid, can be outsourced to the one billion pornographic websites. But, look at yourself and decide; do you want to be the angry anti-social, awkward person for the rest of your life?

If not, how long do you want to be that person? Is there anything you want to do about it? Anything you can do to be less at odds with the world, knowing full well that the world is full of bullshit. I am the oldest sibling in my various families. My parents got divorced; my step parents got remarried, divorced, all that…I've had, at various times, four siblings.

Nobody had the same two parents. I was the oldest of all of us. I could have used an older sibling to explain how things work, even though I thought sports were boring and stupid. I was irredeemably terrible at sports.

I would take a shot at doing sports because sports was the ticket to social acceptability, when I was little in junior high and high school. And I'm sure the whole regimen of high school has decayed somewhat, but not completely.

So, it's not jocks versus nerds as much as it used to be, but it's still cruel people versus awkward people. You must decide which aspect of yourself you absolutely must hold on to and which aspect of yourself you will try to modify to fit in better.

And when I was a kid in 1976, I suddenly became pulled to lift weights. Now, there is less emphasis on looking like a jock. You need to still be the kid who has channeled his desires to get laid into a lifting weight looking jock to some degree, tattoos around his biceps.

I feel Rambo is no longer a thing, and there are more ways to talk to people without directly talking to them. When I was in my twenties, the way you tried to get laid or at least make out with somebody is to go to a bar or disco dance, buy drinks and try to talk to people over the loudness of the music.

Now, you could, much more reasonably and easily, attempt to meet people via dating sites and other sites instead of getting laid by disco dancing; you get laid by typing.

Jacobsen: What about for the opposite case? What about a woman's case who is different intellectually from her peers, against the norm?

Rosner: Okay, well, so, the situation is obviously different and the way it's presented. I'm not a woman, so I can't tell you directly. I will deal with what is presented is guys not being able to get a girlfriend.

Awkward guys, and then women of all types could meet with semi-awkward types, girlfriends and girls end up looking at boys with terrible guys…So, I mean, women's problems are generally to find a guy who is not a shit head and protecting yourself from shit heads.

So, that you are still interested in finding other guys, and avoiding having terrible experiences with shitty guys. Again, this is a very exclusive talk because, straight guy talk, straight woman talk, because, of course, the situation: there are equivalent or similar situations for gay people and trans people.

The specific assumption is that in becoming a socially successful or socially fluid person is that you want to find somebody who you can stand being with and for that person to want to be with you. And there are plenty of people for which that doesn't apply to.

There are temporarily asexual people; people who want to put of that stuff until they have accomplished their life goals. There are people who have had enough relationships to know that it's not that much of a priority for them, but for a lot of people regardless of gender or orientation, a successful relationship is still the benchmark of being able to get by in society.

It's what you want out of going into the world and meeting people and every gender and orientation has stereotypic, or statistically felt more frequent, pitfalls. Most of which we are not qualified to talk about now.

Women need - I'm talking out of my ass, but women need armor to negotiate the world of assholes until they can find somebody who is not an asshole. That's what they want. Guys must negotiate their own awkwardness and rejection until they find somebody who wants to be with them. Gay guys, I don't know.

If you are a hot gay guy, it's not that your life is perfect. I'm sure that I am not qualified to talk about it. Relative to other genders and orientations, there's a plentitude, a relative plentitude, of somewhat less than painful looking up for gay guys, as you say, "on average," but who knows.

However, even if that's true, you still must sort out what you want if what you are getting is what you want, but everything boils down to how much effort will it take to negotiate this is society, what are the easiest ways to become adept at negotiating society and how much effort are you willing to spend.

And, the internet is extremely, I think, helpful for giving you a rough outline as to some of the principles to getting by in society, of some pickup artist who is sleazy. At the same time, take a gingerly poke at it online to see if there are any principles that aren't horribly scummy tools that can help you be less awkward when talking to the people that you want to make connections with: principle number one, become a person who merits the attention of other people.

To become an interesting, to become a good, person; not to become a peace corps worker or anything but to become your own best self. In high school, I was mostly terrible with girls and was resentful of that situation.

But looking back, I was a mess. It took a few years of messing with myself to become somebody who, maybe, merited the attention of people whose attention I wanted. Another principle is to learn how to go up to people and talk to people and if they reject you in one way or another, or if they don't heartedly embrace you as their friend, to be able to walk away from that and still put yourself in social situations.

There are a bunch of principles like this which, you can also look at your circle of friends, if there are friends of yours who seem to fall into relationships easily, look at what they are doing. You don't want to project desperation and neediness; people who are successful at meeting people, hanging out with them is a fun casual thing.

I know people who very quickly become very serious, glom on to somebody and that scares people away, but if you are somebody who seems to be fun to hang out with, then people will hang out with you.

And you don't need to let people know how desperate you are to make connections. And, which leads to another thing; don't be desperate to make connection. Find interest out in the world besides trying to fit in, that's something more troubling now than desperation in the 70s, where the world is a more interesting place.

I keep saying that the 70s sucked relative to now, but that's because that there is a lot of stuff to be interesting. Go out and pursue your interest, you may meet people via that. I mean, in the 70s, I went to a couple comic book/science fiction conventions, hoping to meet someone.

One of the five conventions, they were 92-95% guys; I was hoping to meet that somebody that belonged to the 5% of attendees who are female and then make some connection. And now, I don't go to Comic Con. I've never been, but I assume it's probably much less of a sausage fest if you go there.

You can see everything you are interested in and find other people who share the same interest. Also, my desperate in the 70s. My desperate friends and I did not know how to meet girls and did not even know if we would ever have a girlfriend.

The internet is a source of, "it gets better," not for gay teens, but for any teens who are trying to get out into the world. It's not a perfect source of information, but it's a huge source information and you can go on it to yourself a reasonable view of the adult world you are moving into and your possible place in it.

And, there are more mentoring situations available. There were zero mentoring contexts when I was a kid. There are paid mentoring deals where you can find an organization including Johns Hopkins that has the institute for gifted youths or whatever they call it.

There is an institute for educational advancement; there are a bunch of organizations that are dedicated to gifted kids getting the resources that they need and, you know, most of the resources are to help kids succeed academically and professionally.

But the same people who can help you…who can mentor you academically and professionally, probably went through the same gifted kid traumas and situations that you are going through and they can help you, you know, negotiate in a non-academic, non-professional…they give you advice about not their field but about being gift in the world.

Jacobsen: There is always more, but we'll stop there.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 357 - Cycles in History: The Future of Kindness

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

April 8, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: So, you wanted to talk about the future of kindness. What is our future of kindness, and what is your future of kindness?

Rick Rosner: Well, alright so, the present and past of kindness pretty much hinge on the Golden Rule. But you don't even, for everyday acts of kindness, you don't even need to apply the logic of the Golden Rule. We know what people want, from being around people forever, so kindness is generally, not being mean to people.

With possible exceptions of being mean to people where it would improve their lives to be mean to them, in an intervention, where being mean to people will stop them from hurting other people, then you can extend that to other creatures, within reason.

You can extend to the products made by people that you don't want to wreck stuff, if it would make people feel bad, unnecessarily. Then there are the different levels of charity. There is the saying, "Feed a man a fish you feed him for a day, teach him how to fish then you feed for a lifetime."

So, it's kinder to do something that leads to long-term benefits. Under Judaism, it is kinder to give to a charity then you don't take credit for, maybe the people don't even realize they are given charity, because that can be demoralizing. But basically, everything boils down to being nice to people.

The mid-future, we will have the dilemmas of who has feelings as AI proliferates and we merge with AI. Also, the problems of maintaining a sense of proportion, maybe purposefully losing a sense of proportion because say 80 years in the future there are some augmented humans who are 50 times smarter and more perceptive than natural humans.

Under that system, somebody could argue that those are the people that deserve all our considerations because they are feeling things much more intensely with all their added cognitive power. You want to maintain some lack of proportion where the smartest beings don't get all the kindness.

That we don't want to forget where we came from and where many humans will still be. The same way it is dopey to be cruel to animals because they are dumber than we are. Also, a part of kindness will be figuring out the setups for happiness, AIs or humans merged with AIs trying to fulfill those set-ups within reason.

And trying to figure out those set-ups themselves are reasonable, it still all boils down to being nice to thinking beings, but it will be tougher to sort out what thinking beings are, what they want, whether it's best that they want those things, so you have a robotic assistant that has been programmed to appear to be conscious with feelings and drives, but is basically not.

It is simulating that stuff because maybe it is an easier problem in hardware and programming. But maybe, that thing would be more effective with feelings, and maybe there is an argument to be made for sophisticated pieces of machinery that simulate feelings, to have actual feelings.

I don't know what that argument would be, why you would be arguing to turn an inanimate object into a thinking being with all the potential suffering and risks that might entail, and that doesn't seem necessarily like a great move.

On the other hand, if you have a thing that is on the verge of thinking, but it exists in an equivalent brain damaged world because all the half-assed-ness that went into its construction, maybe, it would be a mitzvah to make it fully conscious.

There are going to be all sorts of arguments around who deserves kindness, consideration, legal rights, financial resources, and it all boils back down to having good models of what's happening in the brains or information processors of these various things.

My conservative buddy Lance: that's the thing people are resistant to because it is tough.

My buddy Lance last night went back to the black box argument saying he is not interested in if people have racist thoughts. Because I was arguing that everybody is racist to a certain extent, according to the definition of racism, basically making judgments based on people's appearances and what you know about them, whether you act on those judgments or discriminate.

That's one form of racism. It is making judgments. A different definition of racism is to be mean, be bad to people based on race. Lance was throwing out the first definition altogether, might as well disregard it, because you can't tell what people are thinking, the brain is a black box.

So, even 80 years after behaviorism, some people will resort to black box arguments. And there will be different degrees of black-box-ism in the future when people try to make things easy for themselves, by saying we can't know what is going on inside the heads of various entities.

That's in my mind a bullshit excuse. The end.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 358 – Manly Manning Up

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

April 15, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: We were talking about growing up in the 60s and 70s.

Rick Rosner: That came up. I have a stereotype view of who a good man might be. Someone who tries to be conscious in the world. That tries to be a conscious kind parent, partner, who tries to treat the earth kindly.

The person who is trying to make the world a better, kinder place. That wasn't so much of a thing when I was growing up in some ways. If you make me keep talking, I am going to offer a bunch of examples.

Jacobsen: So that lays the ground.

Rosner: …Hold on, don't get me wrong, to be clear, I have approved of striving through goodness in the world but if my background makes me cynical…Perhaps a little jealous because I didn't get to grow up around…even I grew up in a time when bullying was thought to be good for you.

Jacobsen: What is the beginning of the story for you? One, you have a unique story, but one aspect of that hasn't been fully explored. It is growing up in the Manly Era.

Rosner: Alright, I am so old that I was born in 1960. So, the leader of the country was one of the generals of the most bloodthirsty yet apparently justified conflicts in human history. We won World War Two with determination and industriousness and bravery, and thugness, and we thought of ourselves as justifiable in our evil as the people we were fighting.

But I am a Baby Boomer, I was among the generation that was hurt by people by men who went overseas and then slaughtered people in war. I have a dad. I have a stepdad. I have a father-in-law. None of them fought in World War Two, but they all either flew around, attended to, or guarded nuclear weapons during the Korean War era.

My dad was a navigator on a B36, which has the capacity to drop on H-Bomb on Russia. So, at the time I was born, violence and the thread of violence were very much open and into the fabric of America.

There was a relief that we can have everyday lives. That the world would end of the possibility of nuclear war but there is. There was our outcome. There was an undercurrent of threat and fear. There was no push at the time I was born, not that I would have been aware of it, because I was zero years old.

There wasn't a push for the softening of men and then how they're presented as visual jokes in movies, but they weren't as pervasive a presence in American life.

Jacobsen: What were your parents and stepdad?

Rosner: My mom was growing up and went to a dance at the officer's club at Kurland Air Force Base. She saw my dad in his uniform at some dance. My dad was fantastically handsome in the 1950s. He looked like a movie star.

He was pretty in high school, but full of zits. But he heals up and cleans up; my dad in a 1955, 1954, was a beautiful man and for her it was love at first sight. He is liked by her. My mom was cute. She was as beautiful for female as he was for a man.

She was cute and had a good head on her shoulders. My dad was okay with being into this marriage and stuff. The marriage lasted for five years. They get divorced when I was zero years old.

Jacobsen: How did that affect you?

Rosner: What if they had stayed married?

Jacobsen: Yes.

Rosner: I can't imagine them ever…I mean they are completely mismatched.

Jacobsen: Okay.

Rosner: I mean, my mom would have been pissed off all the time at how my dad is. My dad is still a practicing CPA at age 86. He is one of the old-time brave CPAs, Mexican CPA, but he lacks any skills behind CPA.

His social skills are great when it comes to talking to clients about tax returns when it comes to maintaining a marriage or doing anything but taxes he is a little bit helpless.

Jacobsen: That seems like it comes from the times of manly culture and expectations.

Rosner: No, he did fine. He married three times. He is a fun guy and often easy going, drives sporty cars, makes a good living, so it was more a he was a little clueless about life skills and needed somebody who is going to be patient.

Somebody who is completely spacey. It made my mom crazy or annoyed. It eventually makes my stepmom annoyed; she was married to him for 15 years. She called him coma years. His third wife gets the hell out of it pretty quick too. It didn't thoroughly last with either my mom or stepmom.

So, my mom moves where there is another guy who became my stepdad. She was in love with him before she met my dad. He waited for her to be done with this first marriage, so in 1962 she married my stepdad. My stepdad was a true man in the sense of the in the 1960s content.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 359 - Technological and Political Disruption

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

April 22, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Hong Kong, you are dealing with one people, one language for the most part: ethnically and linguistically unified. Different than most aspects in India. You have a tremendous number of languages that can prevent an ease of unification.

It needs to be a translation of all the information throughout all the structures, so it's more difficult. And that can put a buffer on the success of India economically, technologically compared to China. It does seem to be showing in some of the statistics on growth rates in terms of G.D.P., for instance, or P.P.P. China looks like a more likely candidate than India now.

Rick Rosner: Okay.

Jacobsen: So, it seems reasonable.

Rosner: All that seems reasonable, but, at the same time, they have so many more people than we do that even some of their crappy cultural aspects leads to the waste of human capital they have a human capital waste.

Jacobsen: Yes.

Rosner: We need to continue to be the dominant technological country in the world. We need to maintain excellent colleges, universities; we need to continue to be a place where technical innovation is valued and where yahoos don't pollute the culture, so nobody wants to live in America.

Jacobsen: Also, the big secret weapon in the United States is the genius passport, the H-1B.

Rosner: Yes, if that it goes away, then we shot ourselves on the balls. Which we could do, but then that leads to another question, which is: America's political system had sixteen years of political hiccups.

You can take the twenty-first century in American politics from starting with Bill Clinton's Oval Office blowjobs.

Jacobsen: That's true.

Rosner: He gets blown. Al-Gore gets pissed off when the whole Clinton thing comes out. This is the way I understand it, which may not be entirely accurate. However, Gore is annoyed with Clinton for humiliating the office of the presidencies.

Doesn't seem to sufficiently help Gore get elected; Gore loses election 2000. We get a new president and leave our VP in there eight years followed by Obama who is a decent confident guy, but perhaps too conciliatory.

So, we have eight years of Republicans fucking over everything he wants to do. We all settled and saw lessons of how you can fuck up government, which the Republicans don't hesitate to do for eight years.

Now, we go four years of a unified Republican government, but they accomplished something because now they can take credit for everything. But it's government by yahoos, a-holes. So, some people argue Democrats are infected with greedy corporations too, but that's an argument that fucked things up badly.

Anyway, we may be looking at another few years of super bad government. So, the twenty-first century sucks for America politics. We're looking at twenty solid years, twenty. Two thousand and one 2001 through 2021 of bad politics.

You can imagine getting a whole lot better for a while after that. Now, that may or may not screw up America forever. Our democracy is durable. We've been through terrible periods, so it's an open question as to whether Democracy formally met its match in terms of people manipulated by media and the rise of the empowerment of yahoos.

So, we don't know whether America is screwed for good or whether we will come out of it, or whether the bias wrecked America. We could have permanently; there's a possibility we could have permanently fucked up politics yet still be a free country for technology if technology could still flourish.

Even though our political leaders are all jerks; so, that's question one: Is America screwed forever, or screwed technologically? Question two is: Does it matter for the lives of Americans to see the future?

Because you look at other countries that at one time ruled the world. England, Spain, Rome/Italy, life in England or in Italy or anywhere in Europe is pretty good if everybody gets to fully participate in the technological advances of the age.

Regardless of whether their country is *the* country; so, the US could screw itself up and become a once-great country and American citizens could still enjoy 98% of the fruits of technological advancement minus a certain amount of national pride because now China is *the* country.

It could be that all the great entertainment is coming from along some region that stretches from Shanghai-Hong Kong, if that's even geographically reasonable, or the US entertainment industry moves to Vancouver because global warming has made Vancouver nice.

So, the US loses its coolness and is now. America becomes still a cool place, but not the coolest. Does that matter? Not to any great extent; unless, we become a religious dictatorship along the lines of *The Handmaid's Tale*. Or Cory Doctorow's *Rapture of the Nerds*.

Regardless, the future is going to be creepy. Humans plus technology into the future. The people at the forefront of that - the two or three or four billion citizens of the most advance countries - in the world will find their lives being radically changed.

First from generation to generation, one generation will live at a certain level of normalness plus weirdness, but they'll be able to hold on to the values they always held for their entire lives. Go back to the twelfth centuries, so outside of war and conquest changes people's social landscapes, both social belief and lifestyle landscapes change on a large average scale.

But the deal is if you were a shoemaker, it's likely your dad was a shoemaker; your kids will be shoemakers; your dad was working on the cathedral. You might grow up to work on the cathedral. Your kid might grow up to work on the cathedral.

Now, you have lives where somebody was. There are a few people alive today. There is a very small percentage of people alive today who remember the transition from primarily horse and buggy transportation to powered transportation, who remember the coming of the phone, who remember the coming of radio T.V.

The Internet hits most people in the mid to late nines. Smartphones start coming out 2007. Now, we're lousy with them. Our basis for behavior has been weirdified, but we still do pretty much what we've always done.

Most people, they've always talked on the phone. They've always watched TV, have always traveled via cars and subways, buses, airplanes. All of those things are in place for most of our lives. There are changes that don't rip us apart lifestyle-wise.

So, each generation has its own way of being. We're not the twelfth-century people. We are not going to stay to the same generation to the generation. We are the people where everything each generation has its way of the being.

Then the next few generations are going to see people have to super add-ons within their lives, not from generation to the new generation, but within people's behaviors. These will be changes to our values too. Our values will adjust.

The generations who are among the first to have expected a lifespan of 150 years. Those people either are already born or will be born throughout the rest of the century. A lot of those people will have to acknowledge new partnership structures through childbearing.

People will access all sorts of genetic tweaks. These will be options, choices. People who can choose to have their thought, their ability to process information, severely automated or shared with other intelligence entities.

We're going to have to make all sorts of choices, and so the weirdness is going to hammer us at a more and more frequent rate. So, in living, in those times with the disruption, those times will be at least based on tech as much as it is on the politics of the time.

The medium future will be a time of technological disruption. The technological disruption will be at least as significant as the political disruption. I guess we'll stop there.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 360 - Lies, Damned Lies, and Fallout

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

May 1, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: I mentioned the Satanic Temple and Lucien Greaves and poor journalistic practices, especially from *Fox News*. The Arizona chapter has specifically mentioned this to me in an interview. What was your experience? Let's lay it out.

Rick Rosner: Let's be clear here, I don't have anything to do with any Satanic temple. You mentioned them in the context that you interviewed some people who are leaders of this temple, who have had gripes about the shoddiness of *Fox News*.

Jacobsen: They have been treated poorly.

Rosner: Well, they were not. *Fox News* didn't apply ethical journalism to them.

Jacobsen: They didn't apply journalism to them.

Rosner: *Fox News* is well known for conservatives calling everything fake news. If you examine various news outlets according to objective standards that have been applied to journalism, since journalism has been around, *Fox News* generally does the worst, they are the sleaziest, the most manipulative, the most exploitative of their viewers.

A few years ago, I was asked to give an arm of *Fox News* an interview. I thought, "How bad can they be?" At the time, it wasn't a political type interview. It was a human-interest type interview because I am a semi-eccentric guy with the second highest IQ in the world.

They wanted to talk to me about my IQ. How bad could it be? *Fox News* had the idea that they could do a daily paper, newspaper type thing, that people would get on their tablets, their iPads, and whatever else.

People's little computers. The *Huffington Post* is designed and came into its own. People prefer laptops and PCs. *Fox News* decided, "We can do daily paper, daily web paper for people's smaller devices, for phones and for tablets. "

Obviously, they wanted it to be young and hip. I assumed they wanted to talk to me. This recorder was 23 or 24. That didn't matter to me. She asked for the interview and I said, "That's okay. That's fine. I will give you an interview. However, you absolutely cannot. You must promise not to say who I work for."

Which is a late night show I was writing for, because I knew from getting into trouble in the past for talking to reporters, my show did not want any press coverage of me on a personal level being associated with the show for various reasons.

Among them, I am not speaking for the show because the show has its message. It is a late-night show. Its message is: "We are funny ass show, good guests, great host. You should watch the show."

I mean it doesn't take a genius to figure out that's the message and that the story that says look at this weirdo over here who writes for the show dilutes that message. The people who work on the

show want a coherent message that doesn't get messed up by some asshole who works on the show, whatever their personal weirdness.

So, I said, "Promise not to say whom I work for." She said, "Okay I promise." I did the interview, we talked for an hour or two across a couple of days, got some stuff on video. Then a few days go by, it takes a while to write one of these things up.

She is working on it, she calls me to let me know, "We have to let you know that we are going to say in the story who you write for." I said, "You can't, you promised not to, or I wouldn't have given you the interview."

She says, "Well, we are, because, anyone can go online and Google you and anyone can see, a single Google search what show you work for." I say, "That doesn't matter. I will get in big trouble. You promised that you wouldn't say what show I worked for." She says, "Yeah, but we are going to do it." I go, "You can't."

She goes, "Well let me talk to my editor." The editor: there are e-mails, phone calls, this goes on for about two weeks. I insist, they say, "Well, anybody can figure it out." I say, "That doesn't matter; it won't matter to my bosses. It will matter that I consented to an interview in which it said where I work. This is a rule that I can't violate, a work rule that I can't break."

And they say, "Well that doesn't matter because..." We go back and forth. I plead. I get pissed. They get pissed back at me. After about two weeks of arguing they say, "Fine, we won't." But they were pissed, I was pissed too because they were politely wanting to break their promise.

Turned out that after she was done interviewing me. It seemed she was an asshole because you consent to an interview to set some ground rules. Now, those ground rules may be violated by assholes, but you can set them and expect them to be followed.

You can be super pissed if they are not. Even though given the history of journalism people, they agreed not to fuck me over regarding that.

At one point she asks, "Well, how do you get any sleep if you are up all night working on IQ tests?" Part of the interview was taking a bunch of IQ tests. A lot of these IQ tests take many, many hours to do a good job on. I said, "When you look at it, when you average it out, when I am working on a test, I probably don't spend more than 45 minutes a day on them. It doesn't occupy all of my waking hours."

I thought it was a good answer. She asked how did I get any sleep. Well, because I don't spend all my time on it, then the next day or later she asks the question again, "How do you get any sleep?" I said, "I already answered the question."

I stupidly passively-aggressively and flippantly answer, "I don't spend that much time on IQ tests. To be honest, I probably spend more time looking at porn than I do on IQ tests."

I was let go from my job after that interview. I can't say specifically why I was let go. However, it sure as shit didn't help. So, the article comes out; they kept their word after two weeks of me insisting they keep their word.

However, when it came out. The headline I don't know what it was, but the sub-headline was something you can look it, it is probably still somewhere online, 'Man with world's second highest IQ is addicted to porn.' It was brutal.

Speaker one: How did you feel when you read that?

Rosner: I was super upset because I am not addicted to porn. I don't look at porn any more than the average person. If we had to do percentiles of porn viewing, I don't know, probably 30 or 40 or more percent of American men with access to a computer look at more porn than I do.

Completely average in terms of my porn, not proud that I look at porn, but one of over 100 million men look at porn from time to time. And it's not that I am some sex fiend. I am a sexual person. For much of my youth, I did things to get a girlfriend.

However, now I am in my 50s, I take a testosterone blocker for my prostate, so my hair doesn't fall out. That may to some extent knock down my libido. I am not I am this crazy sex, Anthony Wiener esp., super-duper masturbator.

I've masturbated a lot; so have a lot of people, most people. So, this comes out. Within a day, I don't know, hours; I don't remember. An article comes out on another website based on the article that deals with interesting things going on in the world of TV.

That article says, "Late night writer is addicted to porn." That article names the show I work for. At that point, a couple of days I am in big trouble at work.

Jacobsen: How so?

Rosner: My family is not happy with me. They understand that I got fucked over, but it's a terrible thing; it's a lie. They fucked me because I was so insistent that the reporter hold to her promise they found another way to fuck me.

There was yet another way that they fucked me. I maybe shouldn't have talked about anything regarding my work. Among the things I said was that only about 4% of the jokes that I wrote made it to air.

That doesn't mean that I am a terrible joke writer. It means a bunch of good writers are writing a bunch of jokes throughout the day which, gives the host the most jokes, the most quality jokes you can submit.

So, you got a bunch of skilled writers who get more skilled over time, and more productive over time as they get better and better at writing jokes, and eventually after a show is on for year, if you have a skilled staff; that staff will write many more jokes than ever make it to air.

That's a good thing. The better stuff you can give to help the show; the more selective the show can be and the better the show will be. I say 4% or so. The reporter said 98% of what I write doesn't make it on the air.

So not only did they cut my success rate in half, but it was sloppy reporting and perhaps malevolent reporting to cut my success rate in half. 4% to 2%. It felt they were trying to fuck me for being stubborn with them.

Maybe, I should have been warier because it was Fox and maybe Fox doesn't give a shit about accuracy or decency. I couldn't raise a stink about it because I was working for the show, and protesting that they had lied about me being addicted to porn would have led to more coverage. I felt that would have led to more irritation on the part of my employers.

So, I sucked it up and hoped it would go away. Eventually, it faded from page one of Google if you happen to Google my name, I don't know how many pages deep you must go now. Probably page three or four, but, at the time, I can't say what goes on.

However, at the time I had the greatest job of my life, a job I had for over ten years. Three months after that article came out I had no job. I haven't had a job since. The only satisfaction I got is that the *Fox News* enterprise went out of business.

That's a small satisfaction, a small solace. So, they lied about me, and they may have caused. I don't know, they may have caused severe career and economic damage, professional damage.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 361 - Ungentlemanly Ill-Wishing

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

May 8, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: So, Trump had a series of unfortunate events in 2017. Can you expound on those as far as you see them?

Rick Rosner: A little bit. He had a particularly terrible healthcare effort. It was super unpopular. Only 17% of Americans approve of senate's efforts to replace healthcare, mostly because it was a massive tax cut for wealthy people and for insurance companies a total of almost around 100 million dollars.

Until healthcare was done, they couldn't get going. They try to do the tax reform. Trump's efforts to do anything is clownish and, obviously, not favoring the people who voted for him, which would be the big swathes of people who voted for him.

These conservative heartland people who are struggling. He got caught with backed up photos of *Time Magazine* hanging in front of his golf club, calling him "Man of the Year" or something like that. That never happened.

Yet, he gets support from people who voted for him and that support hasn't significantly eroded. I read an essay a couple of days ago that says the people who did vote for him have been conditioned to not be able to have their minds changed by any evidence and that the best we can do is to try to make sure they don't have political power in the future.

As opposed what other people said soon after the election, which is that we must reach out to them and understand them and try to persuade them, or recently people are saying they are unpersuadable, which seems based on the last six months.

It seems reasonable. Some have these particularly good insights, but other people may not have except for the small optimism that Nate Silver provides. He says that Trump seems to be losing overall support approval at the rate of about 1% per month, which after another several months would put us in the middle of the 2018 elections.

His approval may be in the twenties, which has been disastrous for the four presidents who had approval in the twenties. Every day, I check out the daily gallop poll results because they have the most immediate feedback about how people feel about what he has been up to.

Jacobsen: What's going on with his vice president, Pence? He seems to be quiet.

Rosner: Well, Pence is a quiet guy. He's not a flamboyant guy. He quietly goes about his business; however, he managed to be as implicated in at least knowing how he is tolerating cabinet members who were compromised by Russia.

So, he made the Russia thing and comes up with conclusive evidence that the Trump Administration was acting unethically. He may be as treasonous or whatever; he may be implicated also.

I'm trying to come up with some fresh thing to say about this whole mess. A guy came up to me at the gym. Nobody is talking about this publicly, but I have this feeling that this sentiment is out

there. A guy came up to me at the gym, a conservative guy, a fairly conservative guy especially for L.A, ex-military, and he said, "I wish Trump would die."

People don't come up to each other and say that stuff generally, but I get the feeling that given that Trump is proving to be increasingly terrible and that there seems to be no way to hold him to account because the Republicans, while deploring some of the things he does, are pretty terrible themselves and don't seem to be earnestly committed to holding him responsible for anything.

That this is a thought that's maybe running through the heads of many millions of Americans. Not that this wish is coupled with any desire to act, but people are sad that he seems to be undissolvable from office.

There's a tradition of not wishing the president ill out loud. For one thing, you don't know what the comment might get you. You could have the secret service or FBI reach out to you to see if you are threatening the president.

That most people are aware of that being a possibility if you wish the president ill. Two, it seems un-American or ungentlemanly to wish the president dead. Nevertheless, a lot of people wish that he would disappear.

People don't talk about it because it seems scary and bad manners to wish ill on anyone. I guess that's it.

Jacobsen: Ok.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 362 - Reinvention

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

May 15, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: You were a fake high school student, and a stripper and bouncer. When?

Rick Rosner: Into my 20s, early 20s, from 20 to 26, I was a bouncer and a stripper. I went to college in my hometown half-assedly. I didn't like a class, so I would quit going. So, I accumulated like a year's worth of Fs. I get a lot of As too.

If I like the class, I would go to class because my expectations for myself are low. I had a lot of time to read and think. For decades now, I've had a theory of the universe; though; I've been thinking about maybe it will come to fruition.

Maybe, it doesn't; but the fucking up gave me a certain amount of freedom, I went back to high school one last time before all my hair fell out at age 26, and I graduated at 27. I wanted a place to think about the universe. I wasn't there to hit on girls.

And my last semester, I moved to New York City where my girlfriend for my last semester at the University of Colorado became my fake legal guardian; "my fake" because I made it all the way to graduation without getting caught.

I used a fake identity for a long time. So, MTV was casting for 18-year-olds to play a game, to be contestants on a game show they had in development. So, this was another chance to be 18 again. I thought that I might meet a lot of funny people.

I offered to work through them, and because of that I eventually became a writer. If I start up as a fact checker on the quiz show, then I became a writer and was a TV writer for the next 25 years and worked on twenty-five hundred hours of programming on all the major networks.

I was nominated for seven Writers Guild Awards and an Emmy. Eventually, I married my fake cousin because I was working in TV. We've managed to have a - knock on wood - nice life in LA. So, brutal levels of screwing up both, later on before I ever worked for ABC, I was a contestant on *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*.

They asked me a flawed question. When you're asked a multiple-choice question, the answer should be among the choices they give you. It wasn't there. So, I sued *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*, which is something I couldn't let go.

But now, I chose to sue them which wasted so many thousands of hours of me pursuing a ridiculous lawsuit. Not ridiculous because I was wrong, I wasn't; they were wrong. Ridiculous because it's a game show and because the legal system thinks it's a freaking game show: get over it.

But every few years, I want to do something stupid and pointless to see how to do it and see how it works out. So, I've done…I fucked up a lot, but there's something to be said for imperfection and screwing up if you look at the biographies of so-called 'great people'; a lot of them were flawed sometimes at the personal level, sometimes at the relational level.

Some of them had substance problems. A few people, even mother Teresa, received a bunch of criticism for being a shady operator: nobody is perfect. I mean you can strive for perfection, but you shouldn't savagely beat yourself up for falling short of perfection.

The possible inspiration in failures and screwing up, in taking weird detours. You're a gifted kid; you're young; obviously, by virtue of being kid, other people are in charge of a lot of your life. So, there aren't that many ways to go off the rails.

The way parents are now - helicopter type parents; you won't be allowed to go off the rails and it's relatively easy to be on a course of perfection with a highly scheduled course that includes carefully chosen extracurricular activities, prep for AP, for SAT, for ACT.

Among the high achievers, at the school everything is regimented, it's easy to have a life that is so regimented that it feels as if you are on some close to perfect path to where you want to go. Then if something happens to wreck that perfection, it can bump you.

But nobody gets through even early life perfectly. The perfection you get from having a highly helicopter, helped out, regimented, academic and extracurricular career, and life offers the illusion of perfection or the illusion that perfection is attainable.

Because thanks to all the structure you're given and your own high levels of motivation, you feel like you can pull it off, but nobody makes it through any significant chunk of life without failure. You're gonna fail at some point.

It's how you deal with failure that is the test of a person. But you could even fail at failure, I did plenty of that too; I like compounded right. I did one stupid thing and that I did another stupid thing on top.

You can even argue - which I have in a YouTube series, where I as the political liberal argue with a political conservative my vision of - America allows for failure with the social safety net, the tolerance of America.

They offer for difference and reinventing yourself, allows for people to fail and to get back up and with a little help to take another shot at building a life.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 363 - Platonic Forms and Ideas, Memes and Archetypes

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

May 22, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: What about dissociation of memes defined insofar as they might be considered in the context of Platonic Forms and Ideas?

Rick Rosner: All right so, Platonic Ideas and Forms are the idea that there are in-built structures in reality itself. The Forms exist kinda in a space, an abstract space, beyond everyday experience. They exist within that space because of their perfection.

You have the Platonic solids, which are geometrically perfect. It's why it is composed of 4 perfect prime equilateral triangles along with 6 edges of equal length and a cube is 6 perfect sides, along 12 edges of equal length, and so on.

They're perfect forms, the Ideas (or Forms). Numbers are Platonic in their simplicity and unity. The "2" is a much more Platonic number that "2.7349," but it has a unitary existence and utility, expression.

I would argue that non-contradictory Gorms are more likely to exist in the world. That these are ridiculous examples. *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* is still on the air, close to twenty years after it first premiered; it is still broadcast in probably more than 80 countries, in more than 80 versions.

Because *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* isn't a non-contradictory structure. One person trying to answer questions. The audience wants for that person to win; it's a really simple structure. Once you get past all of the other game shows compared to *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*.

There were other shows that were annoying, which had the flavor of *Big Brother* meets a quiz show; where the players can band together to eliminate at the end of each round, it is supposed to be the person is supposed to be the weakest link in the *Weakest Link*.

It never turns out to be the weakest link. The person who's worst at answering questions is never the one who's eliminated. It's always the person who's best at answering questions, because that person is a threat to everybody else.

So, the show didn't work. It was contradictory because the best people and people you wanted to root for always got kicked out. It always came down to two having to choose between the final players, who were always two or three dickheads who managed to survive by voting dickishly.

So, it was a contradictory show; a show where you want to root for the best people, but the best people never made it. That made it a harder show to watch. It's not on the air anymore. It's not in agreement with itself, and with the principles of what makes T.V. good and people wanting to cheer for the right people.

So, simple Forms agree with themselves and don't contradict themselves, so are better able to survive in the world, you see simple ideas that are based on simple Forms, like unawareness or the idea of oneness as things. On everything that is a thing.

Or that one is the simplest number, expressing the number of things. Two things like that. You've got one thing. The idea that things exist in discrete numbers, counting numbers one, two, three, and four.

That's a convenient and non-contradictory way of being in the world, but then there is one apple. It is not one and a half apples, sometimes, or 1.2 apples; it takes a special set of circumstances to not be able to determine a oneness of a single apple. So, you're drunk, or the apple is seven hundred yards away and you can't see if it's one apple or a couple apples, but in most contexts a single apple is a single apple, in a straightforward way.

So, the idea of distinct, discrete quantities. If these quantities are consistent over time, all these are non-contradictory properties as opposed to a frickin apple That's one apple some of the time and zero apple some of the time and 4 apples rarely, but still some of the time.

So, archetypes are simple Forms; archetypes, stereotypes, and memes are things that tend to have some durability in the world because they are simple. In the case of memes, they can be clever. They can be simple expressions of a more complicated thing, the way words are often.

So, they have handiness, when a word or a meme is expressed as a Form or describes a Form that is itself durable and in the world, because itself is non-contradictory. That utility makes things like archetypes and memes survive culturally.

Like a meme or a concept that says, "Jocks are so much smarter than people who are not," because in sports you have to think about so many different situations. So, your thinking can get better. That, as a concept, nobody's ever heard that concept.

That's not an archetype. The archetype is dumb jocks, because jocks who are physically impressive, stereotypically, don't have to be that smart because they get by on their physical beauty and fitness and perfection.

It's jocks versus nerds throughout evolution. So, the idea that I have found when I first started to try to have a relationship. I was having a bad time in my first relationship. My first, super hardcore, big time relationship when I was like 22.

23, I didn't know how to navigate this relationship. I would turn to my jock friends, who've been dating since junior high school, because they were popular in junior high school and had some insight to give me because they've been dating for eight years.

Whereas, I'd only been dating for a couple years. They'd had relationships and stuff, but the idea that jocks are full of wisdom is not an archetype or a meme. Because, the idea of a dumb jock is much more consistent with the dynamics of the world, the statistical tendencies of the social world.

The more frequently occurring version of the world where under evolution when traditions are stable; it's the dumb, physically perfect organisms that are successful at reproducing. It's all the flawed geeky organisms who are forced to have to come up with different strategies.

They are the only ones to rise to the occasion of reproducing when things are in flux and this requires perhaps more thinking or flexibility in behavior. Those under what you think of as traditional evolution: jocks are dumb and adapted, and geeks are smart.

When in situations where you are having to survive on the margins via developed cleverness, so I don't believe that archetypes are embedded in our brain, via evolution; they arise culturally, because they reflect common occurrences or properties, ditto for memes.

But archetypes and memes exist within a realm of cultural evolution rather than biologically. So, you could probably, if you really searched, you could find exceptions to that. For the most part, you might find a population of crabs that have lives of weird behavior.

You don't know why they do this thing, but then you study them for 2 years. You find out that it's this behavior, this thing, they do with their claws, that looks ritualistic or perhaps even like a tick, or an O.C.D. thing in crabs.

It turns out to serve a function or at least historically served a function. It kinda got embedded in their thinking. I'd buy that that's a fact that happened. But I don't think it's that kinda thing, a general thing.

In general, our brains are super flexible. They embrace cultural efficiencies as they're exposed to them. As people, as we're animals, and as we grow up. So, that's enough of that.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 364 - Punks in Cyberspace and the Real World

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

June 1, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Why is the science fiction of going to Mars unlikely to become a reality as it is traditionally presented to us in the books and movies oriented with a science fiction perspective? No matter how brilliantly portrayed to us.

Rick Rosner: Alright so, what isn't going to happen in science fiction in the real world, we're not all going to Mars; people may colonize Mars. That's a multi-century project to terraform Mars and not that many people are going to go leave on the trips to explore the terrain. Same with trips that are light-years away.

So, even if so, it will take 20, 30, 40 years. Even if they're hauling ass, but in the time it takes to colonize Mars or to mount an expedition to Alpha Centauri, the Earth is going to be wildly transformed, which is as we were saying earlier not captured by much science fiction where that science fiction aims for a sense of scale and excitement.

Science fiction might be the genre that is most active in terms of having three short stories, where you're going to explore a single idea or single feeling, So, it takes advantage of short form, but the future's not short form and a lot of the things going on though amenable to short stories aren't going to adequately capture the grand scale transformation of life in the next 200 years.

Cyberpunk, which started in the '80s flourished to the '90s has captured what life is starting to resemble now. And only now is a lot of this sensibility making it into movies or its part of our vocabulary. As I said, we don't yet have a vocabulary of the dismantling of consciousness.

We have metaphors for it. *Childhood's End* from the '50s by Arthur C. Clarke, I remember, but it presents the idea of the dismantling of humanity once it has reached a certain level of development and is no longer needed now that this next level has arisen.

There's another story from the '50s; *The Nine Billion Names of God*, which the purpose of humanity is to come up with all possible different names of God and once we've done that we wake out of existence.

Nobody that I've seen has addressed the waking out of normal human existence or that long state into weirdness that we're going to run into starting 20, 30 years from now and going for the next few centuries.

I'm sure there are short stories that have tried to capture the narrative point of view of consciousness distributed across three or four or five people, where you can see that shared consciousness in a way that can play out narratively - as a bunch of different people's voices playing out in a single awareness like the movie *Inside Out*, which has five characters each embodying a basic emotion inside one person's head.

So, I assume over the next ten or twenty years that we'll begin to develop a vocabulary of alternate forms of consciousness that will anticipate some of the changes that are coming, but not a lot of science fiction that is doing that right now. There you go.

Jacobsen: Cool. Okay.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 365 - Rosner Summer Camp

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

June 8, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: How was the summer camp for you? For some, that is a common experience.

Rick Rosner: Ok so, after finishing the few miserable weeks of summer camp, I decided that I will no longer allow people to bully me. Only the ones that were quality bullies were allowed to bully me.

That was around 43 years ago and fast forward now when I'm 57. I go to 5 different gyms a day and do 150 sets a day. With around 5% fat in my body, I have around 97% of the strength of my age and height.

Since January 1st 1991, I haven't missed a single day at the gym. I was attacked by some guy who hit me several times in my knee. He was trying to collapse my knee, and then went for my arm and tried to bit me.

His skin was left there as I was wondering and waiting if I needed to do something and react, and take the shot. I went from being the 14-year-old guy who was hoping to get a girlfriend with my knowledge, decency, smartness, and brains.

I was barely naked, dancing when this happened. For someone who was homophobic, this was a certain conflict. I knew this might cause a violent reaction. But I kept dancing almost naked in front of that guy.

So, back when I was 14-years-old, I haven't started the transformation yet, but the idea was there. The initial idea was given to me by our gym teacher Max who slapped everybody's face. He thought I was more than a pussy.

He thought I was a rich pussy because my step dad was the owner of some of the property that was downtown. Apartments without a lot of value, where some cheap people lived. One time at the school gym while we were playing basketball or something.

We were taking the tops off as we were supposed to put the jersey on. I yelled out loud to the gym coach asking, "Where are the blouses?", realizing I had refer to the dresses that the girls were wearing at that time.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 366 - Mitigating Risk (1)

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

June 15, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: We share the hope for the hollowing out of the more harmful aspects of religion. Many religious individuals share this concern as well. In common, decent people, it is a common desire to see religion cause less harm.

Rick Rosner: I expressed hope that in the future that there will be a hollowing out of some of the more pernicious aspects of religion as technological points. As technology explains more and more of the world and takes over more and more of the functions that religion has prompted, religion traditionally promises people.

But then I had a second thought which is that, since our thoughts are created and stored in our brain and the mind is the source of the reacting to the environment with memories and all that, and various stimuli are the contents of our awareness, the heart of our mind's construction from moment to moment.

It means that at some moments you could believe in religion, in other moments you can believe wholeheartedly in science. And you can hold both those things in your head with difficulty simultaneously, but not with that much difficulty simultaneously.

And we don't have enough information and awareness; we don't have an infinite amount of information in our awareness at any given time. So, we don't have infinite resistance to believing something that may go against other beliefs we have.

So, people may continue to be religious if in the future, even as they're more and more tech and are persuaded by the efficacy of technology, as long as religion still satisfies emotional or cultural needs, it would be hard to eradicate it.

There is no need to eradicate it unless religion, religious beliefs, are messing up the world. I've always liked this quote from F. Scott Fitzgerald: 'The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in mind, at the same time and still retain the ability to function.'

Jacobsen: That runs back to Aristotle.

Rosner: Even if…I never read Aristotle.

Jacobsen: He said, "The mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain the thought without accepting it."

Rosner: I mean that's a good quote too.

Jacobsen: I mean the basic assumption behind that quote is you already have another thought in mind.

Rosner: So, while I don't have that much beyond that, that's more like half a thought.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 367 - Mitigating Risk (2)

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

June 22, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: I want to take it a little bit deeper with that. If F. Scott Fitzgerald is stating that the trademark of a first-rate mind is one that can hold two ideas that are different simultaneously, then the assumption is that a decision has not been made.

So, that comes from that is the ability to be thoughtful, to deliberate, to reason in general.

Rick Rosner: You could boil it down to your unresolved consideration; you are undecided about some issue at hand, which some people have to decide immediately because it undermines something in their mind at the moment that is previously held.

It's hard to persuade them otherwise even with fresh evidence or any persuasive argument. Lance was yelling at me. This is what we do with our web series. He was yelling at me about something. What is the probability that Trump will be charged with collusion with Russia?

Jacobsen: Did you mention the survey?

Rosner: Maybe, 40%, if you are wrong, are you going to give me $1,000? There's no wrong there. I'm not signing a proof of probability to it. It's undetermined. He was giving me shit for saying that there's not enough information yet.

I'd say that that in certain areas it's not wrong to not decide what's true or not because there's not enough information to decide. There are different things to know or attempt to know about the world. In most everyday things that are critical, we gather enough information to make the state of everything that we're trying to determine into the state of certainty.

With the standard example being the red traffic light, now, there might be situations where it doesn't matter what state the light is in, a little town at 4:30 in the morning where you the air is clear, you can see for a mile in either direction along a straight road.

You don't have to care about the state of the traffic light. But in a busy city, your safety depends on knowing the state of the light and reporting cross or not cross. You accumulate enough environmental cues including photons of certain wavelengths from the traffic lights.

The odds that you're thinking about the state of the traffic light green or red are less than one in a trillion. If people do make mistakes, they get distracted; they forget where they are; they step into traffic, but somebody who's paying attention will wait for the significance of a traffic light.

It's not a question that will naturally ascertain the state of the light to near certainty. And most situations are like that, but given your experience of streets and sidewalks, your next step is likely along the street.

You're likely to still be on the sidewalk or on the curb or taking one step into the street. You're likely not to be stepping into a hole. It's based on your experience. If you're prudent, you're not looking at your phone.

You're looking at the state of your environment to have more certainty by visually inspecting what's going around you. So, most everyday things that are critical are things that you can ascertain their state to near certainty.

Another thing, there are still everyday things, where you can't ascertain the state: Does a girl like me? It's up in the air. You need to accumulate more information before whatever you would do if you thought that she likes you.

Then there's stuff where it's hard to accumulate information in a moment-to-moment fashion like Trump with various investigations and levels of collusion. It's gonna take time. Or trying to figure out whether your team is going to win a game, you have to wait for the information.

So, there's some uncertainty on questions of life or death. To think we can still screw up, because if you have an average lifetime, you have three billion critical decisions of the type including deciding on the weather light is green or red.

The odds of screwing up are one and a billion that maybe you will screw up three times. You might get in a wreck. I have gotten into wrecks quite recently. I got in a wreck in Albuquerque. The Sun was on my face. I didn't even see a traffic light. I rolled through to what turned out to be a red.

So, I didn't have enough information. I was assuming that there wasn't a light there. I bounced off of my car, smashed head-on into it, into another car. That was all my fault. I didn't gather enough information.

Jacobsen: Those were abrupt. So, depending on the channel of information, the context, I mean, which we've carved out of overtime. We've carved our environment. We've carved each other for selection up to latest various traits.

That we have sensory organs, cognitive capacities. Things like this. We've honed ourselves. So, we're high fidelity within a relatively broad spectrum of environmental possibilities. So, whether that's something relatively abstract like games or math to the things that are mundane, but pretty concrete, including knowing whether to cross the street if they're showing a good to go and walk sign or not.

Because we have a lot of visual information, we're getting a lot of photons to get an image. So, it's relatively high fidelity barring some visual impairment. Then, that makes me think, what does this mean for contexts in which there are clear deficits?

So, the person who doesn't have any social skills. They have the same cognitive capacities and sensory organs. So, they can see things they can understand; they can see. But they can't, where they can see things and can have a conceptualization of things, but they don't have that immediate understanding of what goes on in a social situation.

I mean, what they do in a social situation is completely inappropriate.

Rosner: You are talking about people with social deficits often. In the past century, from most people being looked at as awkward or bad cases, to people being looked at as people with specific ranges of deficits, that have a particular ideology.

That these deficits can be addressed in various ways via therapy or protecting those people, but since we value the lives of other humans. Aspergers isn't particularly dangerous. It can in a lot of instances lead to people who want to be socially successful and are Asperger.

You're going to have frustration. Unless, once they're lucky, or unless they get training or learn to train themselves myopically through life-and-death deficits, we generally note those people and take measures to protect them.

Jacobsen: I mean, historically, those people would probably be weeded out or would have some use in a specific ritualistic sense, right?

Rosner: I mean, as somebody who grew up in the 70s, my metric for social success was whether I could get a girlfriend or whether somebody could get a girl. There is probably a number of people on the autism spectrum - higher than ever before.

Maybe partially because of environmental or cultural factors, maybe partially because we are able to identify people better than ever before, people get tossed into it because there are funds available to address these problems.

But these problems, some people would argue, are not problems. I'm arguing from a point of view that some people are perfectly happy to be on the spectrum and have the altered behavior and perception and thought that goes along with it.

There are all these people who are socially awkward and thus less socially successful. And that's something you probably have in all animals.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 368 - The Future of Remembering

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

July 1, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: We were talking off tape about the future of remembering. What are you taking into account when you are thinking of future of remembering?

Rick Rosner: Well I am thinking that in the future our brains will be augmented with. devices that. that will expand our abilities or help us maintain a decaying ability.

One of those abilities is a memory. One way of picturing the future is. when the brain starts to get old you go into some small business the way. Schwarzenegger walked into some joint in. his… I don't know. what movie is that?

Jacobsen: Daycare movie, *Daddy Daycare*.

Rosner: *Total Recall*, you go to a joint and then 20 minutes they implant a whole new set of memories. and I just want to. it wasn't Daddy day care.

Jacobsen: Daddy Day Care is the one where he says, "It's not a tumor."

Rosner: Really? Because in *Total Recall* he pulls something out of his nose. some kind of. anyway. I am just going to say that's now how to remember. artificial remembering works. Where. for the past six weeks or so I have been tweeting. on Twitter I have been tweeting exerts from my memoir and trying to remember more stuff.

My guess is that. or artificial memory to most efficiently remember for you when your brain starts to go in the future. won't be just one quick scan of the architecture of your brain, and what neurons connect to what other neurons. I am guessing that. it will have to ride with you. be a part of your brain for a long time and. witness a lot of your remembering over a period of months or ideally years. If you don't actively remember something, that would be harder to find structurally via some short-term scan. We have been talking about how memory is constructivist. and that the brain might be constructivist, that it is not. it may not. memories may be encoded in. not just individual neurons but in networks of neurons, that can also encode lots of other memories depending on. which pattern they are part of.

Memories might be encoded in patterns of neurons firing. You do not get a good idea of the pattern unless you get the neurons to fire to actually have that memory. So I am thinking in the future when you get artificial memory. you will get modules that will become part of your brain over time, learn how your brain works, it will take months and years. Then there will probably be exercises, prompts in recovering memory; making you recall stuff like. Try to recall the year. What happened to you in 1982, you will be prompted and given images from 1982, at the memory parlor or at home when you are trying memory exercises. you will be given prompts about who is your third-grade teacher?

Your friends? Everything will be designed to actively get you to remember stuff. Because I believe those memories will be a lot clearer for the artificial memory to recover than some structural scan that just tries to map the dendritic connections in your brain. And that's it.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 369 - Nude Art Modelling and Innovation's Futurescape

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

July 8, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: What is the future of innovations? Robots are taking over automation.

Rick Rosner: I have not been doing a lot of thinking about this. I have blindly accepted that future innovation will be done by the automated people are working in combination with AI or by AI itself. The most obvious steps forward, beginning ten, twenty, thirty years from now, are going to be in serious combination with AI or by AI on its own.

But thinking further about it, having been in the art model off and on, since I was twenty-four so more than thirty years, I have been working a bunch of places including the art places where you get good art.

Places like Art Centre Paladino or Cal Art or SVA New York. If the art is done by art students at art colleges like the University of Colorado, schools that don't specialize in art. That's a much lower level of skill and artistic insight.

So, I can imagine that what innovation isn't done by AI for humans, then the concerns with AI's will be that level of innovation and artistic creation that will make human innovation look crappier relative to it.

They will have such powerful technology that though human art will be crappier it can still be fun. So, you've got innovation with several flavors, probably many more flavors than that, but off the top of my head there will be pure AI innovations which takes a while to come.

Because AI is helpless at this point without being human directed. You will have AI that really innovates and other innovations being done by augmented humans. You will have innovations by defiant human people.

People who don't like the coming status quo of everything being mediated through AI and who have diligently determined or developed the practice or their craft to be able to continue with the human arts of creation without resorting to AI.

This is a what my buddy Lance Richlin, a sculptor and painter does; he sticks to old forms, the ancient Greek sculptural methods, Renaissance painting methods. I tell Lance, at least he paints deep metaphysical themes, pains like modern people.

People talking on their cell phones in cars or they are texting while driving. He refuses to give in to modernity. So, you will have some innovation, some creativity coming from defiant defenders of human craft and art, and then you will have the casual creators of ridiculousness with t-shirt themes and memes done by regular people joking around.

So, that's it.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 370 - In the Long Run...

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

July 15, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: What about long-term solutions going into the future compared to the past?

Rick Rosner: John Maynard Keynes said that during the Great Depression, when somebody must've asked him what's the best long-term solution. And he was saying, f- long-term solutions. We need to do something about now.

And the deal is, we're perishable. We are flowers that bloom for a day and then die. We're done in, even though our lifespans are longer, now by,20 years or so than they were when Maynard Keynes said in the long term we're all dead—in the long run we're all dead.

We're still all dead eventually and pretty quickly. I have been helping my mother in law move into her senior living community, where the average age is, the mid 80s. And I'm the mid to late 50s now, but we do not have much time.

Unless there are great strides made in medicine, I have got, another 20, if I'm lucky, 25 years of competent life left. That's just nothing. But anyway, we are, we are born and live and pass away fast. It's understandable that our framework is short term.

We have evolved creatures and we've been evolved to create the next—to have sex, have babies, and send the next generation off to do the same thing.

Evolutionary forces tend not to work more than—I mean, an evolutionary victory is spitting out the next generation. Now, we're—humans are in a slightly different position than a lot of animals in that human babies are born incomplete.

Because our evolutionary tactic, the thing that helps us occupy our niche in the world is having a big brain. But brains can only be so big before they kill the mother during childbirth by getting caught in the birth canal.

So, women, when they give birth, their pelvises split apart, the baby's head gets forced out. The baby's head at the point of birth has overlapping plates that can get compacted as the baby passes through the birth canal to make the skull just a little bit smaller. But anyway, human brains are as big as they can possibly be and not kill moms.

But that's not big enough. So there's still a lot of growth and wiring that needs to go on after birth. Which means that human babies take, at least ten years to raise. Nobody now would let 10 year olds out into the world on their own.

You can argue that human babies now take 18 to 20—well Donald Trump was just talking about how Don Jr. really can't be held that much responsible for meeting with Russian.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 371 - Future of Partnerships

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

July 22, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: What will be the future of partnerships?

Rick Rosner: What you see in terms of partnership choices in the future may reflect mating strategies. When you have today and for the past few decades, you have unusual mating arrangements, like people in a three-way mating arrangement or a four-way.

It's sensational. It is something you'd see in an HBO like a sex documentary. It's seen as fascinating or titillating. But in the future, differing mating arrangements other than two people closely bonded for a period of time will become more common.

Partially because there's more support for alternate lifestyles due to increased information via the internet and social media. Increased tolerance. And to say increased tolerance, the gender fluidity was something that was largely unheard of a decade or two ago.

Those people could change their minds about who they are sexually. People didn't know that that was a thing and to the extent that they did know it was a thing was like, "Oh, come on, how much more are we going to have to deal with new genders or gender orientations?"

As time goes on, people will grow to be more at home than just with tolerant attitudes. Expansive attitudes. But in terms of mate selection, alternate or non-traditional partners— the non-traditional joining of people may in itself be a sexual strategy.

Maybe, a sexual strategy that in relationships where a woman is in love with more than one guy or is in love with a woman and a guy. A guy is in love with two women. Those things may turn out to be, for some people, ways to have relationships, where perhaps one or more of the people in the relationship felt closed out of partnerships in the past.

Either due to personal preferences or due to just not being able to find a niche to be successful in, not being able to find a way to be sexually successful.

Jacobsen: What niches in the future will be exaggerated, as some niches are more exaggerated now?

Rosner: What roles will offer certain people chances of sexual success the way the job role offered people success for 100 years?

Jacobsen: Yes, also, the characteristics or factors that comprise them. For instance, the modern LA version of the big booty with the Kardashians, for example.

Rosner: Well, I can tell you with regard to fashion, which is not to say body styles. But if you look at the history of fashion, some new part of the body is always being revealed or emphasized. In the '80s, leg holes kept getting higher and higher.

Instead of going straight across, at the lower thigh, they kept creeping upward until eventually you had thongs, so more and more of the upper thigh and butt was revealed. In various times in history, we've had side boob eras.

So yeah, we right now are in an era that emphasizes the butt. So, we can assume that trends in what we reveal about what we focus on in the body will continue to change. There will be the parts of the body that we focus on that will continue to change.

There won't always be the emphasis on a single body part that we have now. But there will always be novelty. It won't signify much. Fashion exists to perpetuate itself via novelty. Sometimes, it reflects something maybe important about the culture.

The way that fashion has shifted to allow for heavier people; the way that body consciousness in fashion has shifted in America and the rest of the world over the past 20 years to accommodate people who are on average much heavier than they were in the '70s.

But, fashion is fashion. It shifts around to give people an excuse to buy new stuff. And I have read arguments that say that trends in fashion have been replaced by an ominousness in fashion where anything that worked in the past can now be seen as fashion now.

That somebody could dress as they dressed 20, 25 years ago, walk down the street without drawing any attention because we now live in an era of any thingness. It may be due to increased information.

That if you can see all of fashion, all of the history of fashion, laid out in front of you just by clicking around on the internet, then there's less era wise or now wise enforcement of fashion rules, because people have more information.

Similarly, in terms of competing for mates, there may be more of an anything goes because people have more information. And more access to all sorts of different people via social media. So who is going to be successful in the future at attracting mates?

I don't know if it's new. But it certainly is more important now than in the past, is people who accept all body types. People don't apply rigorous physical standards of sexual attractiveness of the past. They will do well now and into the future in which we're growing more accepting of people as they are now. When I was growing up, we might get in the weeds here but…

Jacobsen: We have two minutes.

Rosner: Okay. Throughout most of the 20th century, there were severe constraints on who was allowed to have sex. Married people were allowed to have sex. People who took themselves out of the realm of social approval, of course, could have sex, which meant like prostitutes. There was a huge prostitution culture in the US in the first half of the 20th century. But beyond that, people weren't supposed to have sex. I mean there were times when people had sex, like World War II, standards were—it wasn't overt. Standards weren't overtly low. Sexual prohibitions weren't overtly lowered, but people about to go off to maybe die, yeah. There was a lot of people hooking up before they went off to battle and such. There was still urgency.

But there were still huge prohibitions on sex outside of wedlock. Now, most of that is eroded. And eroding along with that are standards about who's attractive. Rigid standards of sexual fitness. And people who are able to see the beauty in everyone are going to want to be offered greater opportunities.

That's about it.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 372 - Hollow Spheres and Blackish Holes

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

September 1, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: What happens in a hollow sphere for a passing photon? How does this relate to the posited astronomical bodies, blackish holes (rather than, similarly, black holes)?

Rick Rosner: If you are on the surface of a hollow sphere, you feel the pull of 10 meters per second per second that is holding you on the surface of this hollow sphere. If you drill a hole into the sphere and go into the center of the sphere, you are apparently weightless, wherever you are in the sphere.

The math works out that way. Any photons you should from the surface of the sphere as they crawl out of the gravitational well will lose the same amount of energy as any photons shot from inside the sphere through the hole you've drilled in the sphere regardless of where you are shooting from.

So, the gravitational acceleration experienced or a photon would experience as it climbs out of the pit - or the shape of the pit - is it curves downward until you hit the surface, and then it is flat all the way to the center and all the way from the center to the surface again, and then it curves back up.

It is like that shape you have seen. The cone that is pinched with the tip of the cone cut off. And the net effect of passing through all the little hollow spheres all the way to the center of a body is that it looks like the bottom half of a circle, roughly.

And in a blackish hole, we're saying the scale of space itself tightens up. So, there is more space inside. There is more volume inside a blackish hole than what you see outside of a blackish hole.

That is another thing that buffers the gravitational curvature and evens everything out. At the neck, you get the super severe effects.

The end.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 373 - Up, Up, and Away, and Away

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

September 5, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: What is the upper limit to the size of possible universes?

Rick Rosner: If there is a set of all possible universes, which is an iffy proposition considering the profusion of possible universes there may be, it boggles. It is the set of everything, basically. Who knows if the set of everything can even be a set? There are some questions raised.

For instance, there is a thing called the Anthropic Principle in physics, which some people find to be a useful tool. The idea is that you can draw certain conclusions in physics from our existence.

That the universe has to follow certain rules in order to permit evolution - for there to be planets to exist long enough for us to evolve on those planets, for us to evolve to be able to think about the universe on a planet.

Some people like to extend the Anthropic Principle in certain directions such that every possible universe should, maybe, permit the existence of things that can observe that universe.

That seems to me to be too strong a thing. You can imagine a universe that comes into and winks out of existence prior to any conscious observers evolves. You can use a similar anthropic reasoning to draw conclusions about the possible size of the universe that could contain species like us.

You couldn't have a universe that only contains ten atoms. That universe, only as long as it had 10 atoms, couldn't evolve observers like us, have people evolve on a planet like us. It couldn't contain Earth.

We know the planet Earth is roughly 5 billion-years-old and the universe existed roughly 9 billion years before Earth congealed into existence. You can imagine a universe that contained things like us, people like us, or conscious observers like us.

That is only 2 billion years old, where a planet congeals into existence. It only takes it a billion years. Once the planet exists, evolution reaches a point of having conscious beings, where evolution moves fast. It is only another billion years for that to happen.

That would be a lower time limit. You couldn't have us show up much faster than that in a naturally evolving universe. And you may be able to make anthropic arguments about the upper limit on the size of a universe that contains organisms like us, at least, maybe, we're only seeing the parts of the universe that are apparently 14 billion years old.

But, maybe, that is only a bud within a larger universe that grew independently, budded off. That larger universe is vastly older and, maybe, you only find creatures of our level of sophistication within the more limited universe that are on the scales of being only 10 or 20 billion years old.

You tend to find more complicated creatures proliferating through larger universes and not creatures like us. Where, we are limited to a smaller universe - the 13 billion-year-old apparent age variety. That is a possible set of principles to look at.

There is this other thing that shows up, which is a possible ladder of existence. Which, I find problematic because it contains infinities. To get to that idea, every normal human has a brain, which processes information.

But we each also have a mind, which is the information-space that we're conscious of. We are not conscious of the space itself. But we are conscious of the awareness of what we are aware of, what we're thinking about from moment to moment.

We are conscious of a set of information. Because that is the information we're working from, at any given moment. We are aware of certain things. You are aware of where you are. Maybe, it is on the computer. Maybe, it is on a bench having lunch. Maybe, it is the afternoon and 2pm. Maybe, you are pissed off and in traffic.

Your mind, at any given moment, is the information that you're aware of at any given moment. That mind, that information that you're of; you're aware independently of it. You do not feel you're aware.

You are not aware of your brain clickity-clacking like a giant computer, or of neurons sending electrical signals to one another all over the place - and dopamine and serotonin being emitted and absorbed. All of that.

You are aware of the contents of your mind from moment to moment. It may be possible to mathematicize the information you're or everybody is aware of. It may be possible to develop a physical model of that information that you're aware of at any given moment with a set of principles and a geometry.

If somebody said, "A penny for your thoughts," in the year 2052, you could send them a mental map of exactly what your thoughts are. It is a little mind-map. A little universe of that, that you could zap to them the structure of what is in your brain moment-to-moment.

You have your brain doing brain stuff moment-to-moment. Then you have your mind, which may very likely exist in its own information-space. Then to take it one step further, which is what IC does; that if our mind is an information-space. Then, perhaps, the universe is similarly an information space, where the information it contains has its own geometry and physics which we live in.

If any of this is reasonably close to true, then the information-space that we live in, which is the universe; outside of it and beyond it in an entirely different space, there is the brain - organic, mechanical, or whatever - that supports the information being processed in the information-space that is our universe.

It may be possible that every information-space requires some kind of other space. Some kind of another world that is the physical support for this information. To imagine that, if somebody obliterated your brain, a piano fell on your skull and squashed your brain.

Most people would assume that your mental space would cease to exist. That you cannot have the mental space, your mind, without the brain, the physical hardware that supports your mind.

So, it is a two-part deal. If that applies to the universe, the two-part deal is that we live in this physical space and the physical space implies the support space, the hardware, that allows the universe to exist. That it can't just support itself.

If so, that implies a ladder of existence. If our physical world is a physical information space support by a physical world outside of it, then that implies the physical world outside of it is itself an information-space that is supported by a physical world outside of it, and so on out to infinity, which is problematic.

Because it is this huge-ass ladder to infinity. But to really have our dinky world of 10^85th protons, we really need an infinity of containing worlds? That seems problematic. It may be legitimately problematic.

In that, it may not accurately reflect what is going on in our universe with any supporting structures, which may or may not be necessary. Or it may be something problematic. That as we learn more about the universe or the principles of existence.

Maybe, a thing that we will have to get used to or think more about, or something. But one way of thinking about it rather than thinking about it as this infinite ladder towards infinity of information-spaces being supported by further information-spaces.

You can think of it as pairs of information spaces.

If the universe is a big mind-space or information-space with a support structure to contain it because our minds are a certain size with a certain amount of information. It is a 2 or pound thing in a universe with 10^85 protons.

Our universe around our brain is a vast support system. But it is still just a system between our mind and this vast support structure. If you imagine the universe needing its own vastly larger support structure, then that is fine too if they are no upper limits on the size of universes.

You have our mind within the big ass universe. Our universe supported by an outside vastly bigger ass universe. That is fine. That is a pairing between a big ass world and a bigger ass world.

Maybe, that is the deal. That every world that can possibly exist has an implied much bigger supporting world. That is alright. Because, even though you have big and way bigger, everything is still finite.

It is the principle of no biggest possible universe. If it is a real principle, then is no problem. Because you have got all the way up to but not including infinity. You can have all these pairs of universes. The big ass and big triple ass universe, and big octuple ass universe and so on.

Then it is a relationship between the structure and its container and so on. A Big Bang universe has T=0 but does not have a matter zero. A Big Bang universe pretty much always has the matter that it started with when everything started.

It was all packed together into this one infinitesimal point. The amount of matter was a point and then blew up, but the amount of information was always the same. An information universe, which you and I like to think about, is much more likely to have a T=0 but also an I=0. It is information zero. It is a mass-energy and space zero.

If we live in an information universe, that has big bangy aspects but is really built on information. Then it is reasonable to think that that universe has an implied beginning with a null universe out of which it coalesced as it generated and absorbed more and more information, as it was able to contain more and more information.

A metaphor for that might be a babies mind. Let's say it almost contains nothing at birth, but as it arranges itself and gets more sensory input, as the dendrites get paired away and so on, the baby's mind takes shape and contains more and more information.

Until, by age 5, a five-year-olds consciousness is not much different from an adult's mind in terms of the information it contains on a moment-to-moment basis. But it started from an almost null information state, whether before or after birth...

Anyway, it is easy to imagine a baby's mind started with zero information. It is easy to imagine that any kind of information-based universe implies a past that contains a point of zero or null information. No space, no matter yet, stuff coalesces into existence.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 374 - Out With the Old, In With The New

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

September 6, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: When you're dealing with the way we think, and when you're dealing with the structure of information as it is represented in the world, how much is old information? How much is new information?

Rick Rosner: You and I think the universe may be older, much older, than it appears to be. If that is so, another question might be, "How good is the universe at eradicating old stuff and replacing it with new stuff?" If it is 100% good at it, then you need more sophisticated theoretical arguments to establish the universe is older than it appears to be because there is no physical trace.

But if the universe still allows some stuff older than its apparent age to survive - and my image of the old stuff that is allowed to survive is keeping a hard candy in your mouth for a while. It gets ablated, eroded, but still some of it survives right until the end.

There might be structures in the universe that might be eroded through radiation and other stuff that might erode information, but the old stuff still survives in an eroded form. An associated question might be, "What percentage of the universe is older than the apparent age of the universe?" Then you can get specific about some celestial bodies that may be older than the apparent universe.

Then there is the metaphor used by us. The physics of the universe has much to do with the physics of thought. The physics of thought can be mapped, pictured, or expressed in a physical space that has some of the same physics as the universe itself.

How much of our consciousness is built from old stuff? How much is built from new stuff? I think the metaphor is capacious enough, has enough room, to have models of memory that have something to do with the way the universe looks.

In that, when we remember old stuff, obviously we cannot remember anything but old stuff, we have, kind of, a general idea of what we're remembering. That quickly becomes, if we have the available memories, quite specific - second grade.

We have a rough memory of being younger, of our teacher, how the school was like, maybe our classmates. That makes sense in terms of information. It also makes sense in that a lot of people in neuroscience like to say that the brain's job is to be a prediction engine.

It helps you cope with the world by helping you predict what will happen next, which means that your brain needs models of various degrees of generality. If you are meeting a new person, your general models of what people are like may be more helpful than the more specific models if you are running into a specific person again.

So, it makes sense that memory would function in both generalities to be helpful at prediction and with specificities. It also makes sense that the universe might contain information at various levels of generality and specificity.

We know what that feels like in terms of experience. The representation of that may include old burned out galaxies where the structures get ablated or seared away by new radiation that might be streaming out of a central black hole or might be coming from other parts of space.

If the information is stowed safely down a black enough hole, maybe, it won't be washed away and some specificity might be washed away.

One more thing, there is a hypothesis. You could hypothesize that we know, in some way, as life has evolved from no life at all through simple plants and animals to the fairly sophisticated consciousnesses of mammals and then the world that humans have built via their consciousnesses.

We know that is in some way an increase in order. You can wonder. Does that increase in local order on our planet and on quite a few other planets throughout the universe increase the order of the universe itself?

I would hypothesize that, yes, it does. The universe makes use of any available mechanism for preserving and generating and processing information. No matter how localized to a certain planet and specific to a set of organisms.

It may not make great use of it. I think it's a reasonable hypothesis to say that, yes, any mechanism for processing information is somehow reflected in the universe's processing of its own information for its own purposes.

I don't know exactly how it works. I talked to an AI guy yesterday. He said that AI is far behind where people think it is because we haven't been able to duplicate the processes happening in the brain at all. But all we have are simple schema and algorithms.

I would argue the brain itself uses simple algorithms and neural networks and other stuff. Anything that works and is easy to set up, probably exists in some form in the brain for the brain's own purpose.

I would suggest similarly that there is a chance. Any form of order in the universe is somehow used by the universe for its own purposes, even if it is for a slight increase in the universe's net efficiency.

The end.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 375 - An Era of Wonders, An Epoch of Suckiness

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

September 7, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: What can we say about social media? You have been having some troubles with Twitter. Also, you had some thoughts on superhero movies. Please elaborate.

Rick Rosner: I can only surmise mathematically. I am getting fewer likes, retweets, and so on, drastically fewer. Only a few days ago, there was something on social media. People running the medium or algorithms running the medium do something called shadow banning, which is reducing your reach - reducing the amount of communication that you can have with other people on the medium.

The limiting of the number of people who can see your postings. There is overt explicit banning. If you are running a Nazi feed, where you are saying, "Kill all the Jews," they will send you a notice saying, "No, you are done." Twitter has been slow to do that.

I have been posting scathing but not obscene or particularly offensive tweets from a liberal perspective on Trump and his minions. I may have generated some complaints, since there are ways to report a feed that you do not like - to complain about it to Twitter.

Twitter's algorithms received them and then decided something was wrong with what I have been saying and has been shutting me down. I am not allowed to advertise. But I have been advertising something. That may be frowned upon.

I have been putting out four-letter words with asterisks. Twitter doesn't like that either. You cannot even chat with somebody via instant messaging because they tell you to go to instant messaging to resolve these things - so no good calls and then you get these typed responses from a hotkey. It delivers an unhelpful paragraph.

It is really hard to address anything to know what you can do, what you need to change, when things will change; in short, Twitter sucks. It is unfortunate for an important social medium. It is usually the source of breaking news.

It is also the source of social protest. It is useful. But Twitter's growth has been limited by how miserable it is and how pissed off everybody is who uses it. It only has about 330 million monthly active users.

While Facebook has about 1.5 billion, almost 5 times as many, though, Facebook sucks too. Young people think Facebook is for the old and have gone elsewhere. In general, all social media kind of suck.

I think that is an indication of the limits of non-sucking of human administered tools. We are mentally the same people, or at least in terms of our brains the same as people who lived 10,000 years ago.

We have better equipment, better algorithms, better communication relationships with our technology, but humans are still the highest order executive functions for, at least, the big decisions of what goes on in large institutions.

Social media, government, entertainment, that means there is an inherent ceiling that you can't go beyond because humans suck - because we have limited mental and executive capabilities.

Now, within Google Translate, you told me. Anytime you have AI or machine learning; if it is sufficiently complex, the machine learning starts doing things black boxy. You cannot tell exactly what they're up to from the outside.

You told me Google Translate developed its own private language, not spoken by any human on Earth because Google doesn't talk. But it made it mathematically or informationally more efficient. Instead of translating from each possible pair of languages, Finnish to Croatian, Urdu to French, if it is translating 110 languages into each others, then, instead of having 100*109/2 or something like 6,000 different handshakes, Google found it more informationally efficient to have a metalanguage at the core, where all the other 110 languages go into the core.

Google finds the meta-word that equals the word in Urdu and then links it to the meta-word or word equivalent in French. Instead of having 6,000 different handshakes, Google has 110 links from each human language to its metalanguage in and then back out.

Somehow, that is more efficient in the way consciousness may be a more efficient problem-solving or information-processing tool than having apps for each conjunction of events or types of information.

You have sneaky and black boxy forms of emerging, if not intelligence then, sophisticated information processing, but everything is still for humans' benefit and humans are still in charge of the important decisions.

For example, take superhero movies, they have credits that are 8 minutes and may encompass 8,000 people. The movies themselves moment-to-moment have a lot of awesomeness. They are awesome graphically.

Since they are an investment of $300 million - $200 million for the movie and $100 million for the publicity, and the script has been gone over a million times and is as packed with decent dialogue moments and turns of plot, and the actors have been physically trained and beautified to the nth degree, and the stunts are great, except, it is still a superhero movie that has characters coming out of children's comics books from 45 or 55 years ago.

So, there is a ceiling to a superhero not sucking with the ceiling being it is still a frickin' superhero movie. As we move into the era of humans being more and more linked with machine learning and - we can hope - being able to handle more linked and complex relationships between data, that the sucky ceiling will be lifted.

Certainly, the stuff in conjunction with us has led to better lives for us compared to people 2,200 years ago. The suckiness ceiling has already lifted immensely. We can hope that it keeps going in conjunction with our non-organic information processors get better at understanding and manipulating the world.

The end.

[End of recorded material]

Ask A Genius 376 - A (Apparent Non-Socialist) Socialist Civilization

Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner

September 8, 2018

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: What is our future civilization?

Rick Rosner: We have a future where things will be cheap. By the way, we live in a socialist civilization right now. Nobody acknowledges this. But dead people give us everything; they do not hang onto anything.

Inheritance is the engine that runs our civilization and economy. People die and then their stuff gets owned by other people. Giving 100% of your stuff, it doesn't get more socialist than that.

However, the future will be less socialist that way because people will die less and less. Anyway, there are several dimensions or axes. That you have to look at. People will be sort of enclaved. You can argue people are enclaved now.

Every once in a while, a new type of person is celebrated in the media. The Yuppies in the 80s, Hippies in the 60s, Beatniks in the 50s, Women's Libbers in the 70s, all sorts of variations. Buppies, DINKs - Double Income No Kids.

People form new lifestyles all the time. In the future, there will be a greater spectrum of lifestyle. There will be a certain amount of enclaving, of people teaming up to share lifestyles, because of accepting technology or rejecting it.

Although, people will have the same amount of mobility in the mixing of lifestyles, as there will be more to choose from than from those now. It will be enclaving of picking ways of life and picking the philosophical beliefs that support those.

At the very traditional end, we will have humans living as we do now, and dying, because it is too weird not to. That supported by religious or philosophical beliefs. At the other end, you will have people living wildly technologized lives, which given trends in technology will probably be merging with technology and with each other.

The ability to accomplish new stuff, new and powerful stuff. It will be at the high technology end. There will be more traditional humans crafting or home crafting stuff. That may have some quaint appeal. That will not be as powerful as the highly augmented and technology powerful people are doing.

The traditional lifestyles will be eroded by the awesomeness of established technology. Technology comes along with the early adopters trying it out, even though it sucks and is unwieldy and it takes a lot of technical expertise to use.

That new technology becomes established. People begin to understand what is good and easy about it. Once it is well-established, it goes to work on the rest of the population. Similarly, there will be a constant erosion of traditionalist stances, as the great stuff of the future proves to be too attractive.

Anyway, you will have a big spread of people from the most traditional to the most wildly experimental. But across the whole spectrum into all the lifestyles, you will see an accelerating increase in standards of living or in simply powers over the world.

Because it is weird to talk about standards of living when you're talking about entirely new standards of living. People at the very highest technology end will continually be exploring.

That's enough of that.

[End of recorded material]

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