

Episode 9: Autodidactic Futurism, A Nerd Safari w/ Jo Pasamonte

Drew Stegmaier: Hey everybody. This is The Steg Drew Show and I'm your host, Drew Stegmaier. This show is new, evolving and finding itself. We don't yet know what it will turn out to be and that's exciting. I believe the world has a current civility deficit, and with this endeavor, I'll be exploring tough and taboo topics with compassion and incivility, so you can do the same with your friends, family, and coworkers.

What it do, baby. This was a banger with my buddy Jo. Jo is an autodidact, which is just a big, fancy word for somebody who is self-taught geek, lifelong learner. He is a futurist. He has spent much of his career working in anything from being a journeyman electrician's apprentice to.

Really going hardcore in Silicon valley, working for companies like Google, working in cannabis tech and working in augmented reality. Virtual reality, Joe is a man of many interests with much knowledge. And we talk about all kinds of stuff. Some of my favorite things we talk about are the idea of cultural appropriation and when it means we're complimenting another culture, versus when it can be actively harmful, we talk about the diffusion and spread of ideas.

We talk about getting along and how we can all learn to get along. We talk about capitalism and post-capitalism, and we just generally chum it up. Some sort of intellectual masturbation for lack of a better word and nothing. None of this stuff in this episode, uh, this is my own made-up disclaimer, represents, um, the official views of any of Joe's employers.

Cause I think some of the topics are a bit spicy and I hope you guys like it. Peace.

The Citizen Within is a micro publication by Rob Hardy. It's an Oasis for thoughtful, concerned citizens who care about leaving the world in better shape than we found it. So future generations can flourish. Basically it's a place for people who read the famous Margaret Mead quote, "never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed. It's the only thing that ever has" it's also for those who hear the quote and feel inspired and called to action, check it out.

What is up man? What is up?

Jo Pasamonte: Not much. And, uh, thank you for having me. I appreciate the invite.

Drew Stegmaier: Sure. For sure, man. I'm happy to have you, so to start things off, uh, why don't you just tell folks a little bit about yourself in, in your own words?

Jo Pasamonte: Um, what I was told from other people's perspective is that I have this uncanny ability to relate to people of all walks of life in some way, shape or manner.

Um, someone has described me as the person who can friend the in front of the wall, um, that was used as some sort of statement that my friend told to me because a lot of the experiences I share about people that are negatively perceived in most companies, for example, I tend to be their friends.

And people will ask me about that. How are you so-and-so's friend? And it's like, I don't know. Everyone has the opportunity to be my friend, as long as they don't physically try to like hurt me. Right. So right along those lines. Um, and also like, I believe that naturally humans are redeemable in their own sort of way.

Right? Like they may come off as hostile in the beginning because maybe they just don't trust people. And then you can kind of break through that hostility by showing them that you're actually not a hostile person.

Drew Stegmaier: So do you have a method for this?

Jo Pasamonte: I probably like to bombard people with a lot of questions about them, because believe it or not even people who have no content to talk about, tend to talk about themselves, um, whether it's a negative or a positive thing.

Once you get them to just talk about things, even if it's related to them, even in the most minute ways, um, to give you an example. Uh, when I first started at one of the companies, I just recently started working at the guy I had worked with, who was in charge of training me was a jerk. He was treating me like crap for the first two weeks, something along those lines, but I didn't relent.

Um, I would keep like, you know, asking them things like, oh, are you into video games? Well, you know, what are your favorite movies? Um, I see that you have a Yoda shirt. Do you like star wars? How do you feel about the baby Yoda that appeared in the Mandalorian? For example? And a lot of the times he'd come up with like, Ugh, hated it.

Didn't like that. Don't like this, don't like that, but, um, over time, He would then start to bring things up like, oh, did you play this one game? Or did you do this? How was your weekend? He wasn't doing that before for the first two weeks. Um, and after some, like, you know, time between us, like just working together and also understanding like each other, I noticed that the reason why he was treating me that way was because he thought I was going to take his job.

He thought I was brought in as a replacement to take away his job. So you a threat? Yeah, exactly. I was a threat to his own existence. His, his, you know, his means of survival. And I think that if he can convey to them, that sort of message that, you know, maybe what they're thinking is like misinterpreted or miscommunicated or just, just a poor assumption.

Um, you can find some sort of relate-ability and middle ground, and then eventually you can break that all down and be friends. Um, and we're, we're good friends. Now. He messages me all the time. Um, literally messaged me this today, asking about cryptocurrencies and stuff like that. We had a big discussion about that while we were working together.

Drew Stegmaier: Yeah. It's funny you say that. Cause I think we might've talked about this, but I used to host an organization called "tea with strangers" and um, you know, you meet strangers for tea. You talk for two hours and you have to have a little host bio. And I was thinking like, what the hell do I put on this thing?

How do you describe yourself to strangers? Um, and there's this quote from Abe Lincoln. I love which is I do not like that, man. I must get to know him better. And I think that's generally true. Like we don't like people cause we don't know them. If we truly know people. Then we would like them and, um, yeah.

Yeah. So unexpected. I wasn't expecting to go to this direction, but, um, there's this idea of like conscious or unconscious wounding, like hurt people, hurt people, healed people, heal people. And, um, I try to write about this and it probably didn't come out cause it's just easier in conversation. But if we're truly conscious, if we're woke right, that, that term is weaponized now.

But if we are awake, um, we can't actually hurt people. We can't consciously hurt people because we only hurt people when we're clueless. Right. W when we're confused, when we're puzzled, um, cause we're all a human family, right? We act harmoniously with people as brothers and sisters. So whenever we're actually hurting someone else, we're acting unconsciously.

So there's no such thing as consciousness. Does that make sense?

Jo Pasamonte: Yeah, I think that makes sense. Like, you know, you're, you're intense or not to hurt somebody, you know, just from a social perspective, but it can be perceived like that way. Right. Um, but then you don't have control over how someone perceives you in that interaction.

Right. You only have control over yourself. And that's another thing that I'm consciously aware of. Um, when I interact with people, I try to be more conscious of myself and how I convey any sort of like exchange as an individual. Like I try to be better at communicating that because, um, yeah. Um, there are people who tend to misrepresent themselves.

I like to say they're just bad at marketing, right? Um, probably one of them. Um, cause yeah, there are people who socially just cannot. Convey the right messages, because maybe it could be like, just a lack of, um, you know, having the confidence to kind of share what their thoughts are. Um, maybe they believe that a lot of them aren't competent enough to share these sorts of ideas.

And if they can't share these sort of ideas, um, they feel like they're not contributing. And then, so they tend to hold those thoughts in their mind and not say any sort of things. Right. And the thing is, um, everyone's words have value, right? How we perceive them and them as individuals is, is not exactly.

One-to-one how we feel about ourselves. How will we present ourselves? How we communicate from ourselves to an end, another individual that even changes based on the person, right? Like the way I interact with you is not going to be the same as the way I interact with my wife. You know, it's not going to be the same way that I interact with my children.

It's not going to be the same way I interact with my boss. You know, a CEO, a wealthy person, a homeless person. Um, you create kind of these sort of layers when you're interacting with people based on your own comfort levels as well. Right? So if you're comfortable being around all these different types of people on a social level, then you'll be comfortable.

You'll be able to feel comfortable wherever you go. Right. Um, whereas there are some people who are socially sheltered and in a way where going out is the terrifying thing. Oh, I don't want to go out because I might have to interact with somebody. I don't know. And I don't know how to handle that. That creates social anxiety.

That also creates a lot of your own personal, like, I don't feel like I should be here. You know, you start to question your own, your own value within society because you feel like you're not doing anything. Um, so. Um, I try to be the opposite of that. I try to be as welcoming as possible and I try to understand as much as possible.

Um, we may not think the same way, but I think it's important that I respect how you think, as long as you're not purposely going after people or hurting people. Right. Like, you know,

there are certain dangerous mindsets that I'm well aware of and you know, that I treat. And I also view as like, these are real threats to society.

Right. And it's not like from an, at a glance version, it's more like the cumulative actions that this one individual takes that has that. It gives me that like, you know, that belief that, oh, this is somebody who is dangerous, right? Yeah.

Drew Stegmaier: Yeah. It's funny you say that. Cause uh, I had a couple interactions recently with, uh, With some folks who read my newsletter and someone said something like, uh, they didn't want to respond because they were worried that it wouldn't sound eloquent.

Right. And two people mentioned this to me separately, and then I felt like some fucking failure of like, dude, I just want to hear from you. Like, I don't care if you use big words or not. I just liked talking to you. But I thought, man, I must've created some condition where people got the impression that they had to say something a certain way or they had to have some clever fricking argument or I wouldn't talk to them.

And I'm like, oh man that's not true. And um, I was talking with my girlfriend recently and I apologize if I'm like recycling that's I have a tendency to recycle conversations and I don't know how many times I recycled.

Jo Pasamonte: No, that's fine. Cause also you'll get a unique response regardless of what sort of topic you do .

Drew Stegmaier: Yeah so she mentioned basically this kind of maybe it was like hesitant or maybe embarrassment over like, like maybe not being smart. Right. Or not being as smart as me. And, um, first she's very smart. She just doesn't give herself enough credit. But, um, I like told her, her own bio in my own words. And she was like, wow.

And I was like, yeah, but that's actually your life.

But, uh, this idea of like, Hey, how do you know stuff? Well, when you don't enough, when you don't know stuff, you say, I don't know stuff. And therefore people explain it to you and then you know the stuff. And if you do that a lot, you end up knowing a lot.

Jo Pasamonte: Yeah, absolutely. Um, it's basically a information transfer, right?

Like if you think about just humanity in general, Um, people like to say things are like, you know, um, culturally appropriated, oh, that's cultural appropriation. Right? But like, if you look at the progression of modern society, it is a series of cultural appropriations that have come to make modern society.

What it is today. Not to say that it's right. In some cases, right? Like profiting off of one's culture. When you have nothing to do with that culture is it effectively appropriating that. But like, think about spaghetti. Think about ramen. Yeah. You know, think about, fuck. Think about the concept of a noodle.

Right? Every culture has a different type of noodle. You know, we've got funds that we've got, you know, these different types of handling a noodle. Could you imagine, like back in the day, the inventor of a noodle was like, yeah, anyone else who uses the concept of a noodle is a thief. Yeah. You know what I mean?

And you know, um, when you have these people settling in different lands and people discovering new lands and, you know, colonizing it, or just overall like settling in any foreign nation, right. What you're bringing with you outside of your physical objects is your knowledge. And you're sharing that with them, share your knowledge with them.

Oh, that's how you guys make TPS. Well, this is how we make log cabins. And then now they know how to make a log cabin, or they might make something unique utilizing some of the techniques you showed and then that inspires more invention and more invention and more invention. You think about that. I'm being selfish with our thoughts and our skills and, and any sort of invention, um, holds us back because in the right person's mind, That one concept that they may not have been exposed to.

You show that to them. And that becomes maybe the future technology. You had no idea what was going to be created, but it wasn't until they had that interaction, right? Like you look at, um, all electric vehicles. Um, you know, I'm not going to give Elon Musk the credit for inventing the electric vehicle.

Obviously he wasn't the first, but he, he tackled it in a way where he went head to head against the, you know, the gasoline industry, right? The, the ice engine industry, when they all said he was going to fail, he continued to work on a product to the point where its value was undeniable. When people started to purchase the vehicle, they started to talk about it.

Like, keep in mind they didn't market Teslas, they didn't have commercials. They didn't have any sort of, you know, any sort of like, um, guerrilla campaign to, to get Teslas, you know, off of the factory law. Right. Um, what they did was they just made a car that was incredibly attractive to them. And not, it didn't have to be just physically.

It also had functionality, like, you know, think about the whole thing about you go home, you charge your phone after a whole days of, you know, an entire day of using your phone. And

then imagine applying just that simple concept to your car. You wake up to a full tank of gas every day, but not only is it a full tank, it's at a fraction of the cost that you'd normally pay.

If you were to do the same thing at a gas station, right. That becomes a very powerful, you know, A user, you know, a user case that people tend to gravitate towards because a lot of people, you know, they, they would just love to one, have a vehicle that isn't going to heavily impact the earth through carbon monoxide, you know, and, um, you know, creating this whole ozone depletion because we're sitting there still burning fossil fuels.

Right, right, right. I mean, you attract them, then you also attract the people that just love the convenience of like every day their vehicle is just filled. Then you have the other people that are more economical financially. Right. Um, it's cheaper to, you know, fill your car up with electricity. Um, and if you have like a solar roof, um, you've just like created this entire sustainability loop.

Yeah. And. You know, when you consider that it's, it's, it's that sort of value that attracts people, right? And that's what makes the CA the car company itself so valuable. And because that company is now considered valuable, you now have other competitors that are looking at that as like, well, that's the new standard, so we need to adapt or die.

Right. And only now are they starting to kind of catch up to that? So, you know, um, now that they see that there is value to shifting to that market, you're starting to see all these sort of vehicle manufacturers scramble to make like sustainable vehicles. And then you consider that like, Europe has got this whole sustainability thing that they want to reach by.

I forget what year, maybe 20, 35 or something like that, where they want completely no more ice vehicles, um, internal combustion engines. Um, for those that don't know what I see. And that's a, that's a game changer, right? When you start with a simple idea of creating a valuable product that influences like the entire industry to shift gears from something more sustainable, um, you you've got an impact.

That is just basically something that, you know, is, is this concept that you've shared from one person to another, right? Like, like, you know, he didn't like Elon Musk didn't invent, you know, any sort of like new, you know, technology, but what he did was he made it, he exposed the value behind it. He exposed that and that changed the entire industry.

Right. So like, if you think about that, yeah. He wasn't an innovator. What he did was he created the valuable proposition that people want it. And other vehicle manufacturers were like, that's the way things are trending towards now because people like that stuff, it turns

out like, you know, we need to change the way we're thinking now, because socially, everyone is shifting their thoughts in that direction as well.

Um, you talk to a lot of the younger generations and, um, a lot of them tend to want to have sustainability in mind. Right. Um, they want to still live on a planet when they grow old as well. Right. So, you know, um, supporting that sort of technology, is there a way of, you know, doing their part and, um, it's, it's, it's kind of fascinating now too, to just kind of sit back and see how things are changed.

Um, such at such a rapid rate.

Drew Stegmaier: Yeah. There's this idea of a, I want to say this has gone. . First, they ignore you. Then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win. And, uh, you know, you could say there's a, uh, there's a cycle of innovation. Like, uh, there's the, uh, innovators, which make the thing, then there's the early adopters then there's I think the mainstream adoption.

And then there's the laggards. And then, uh, I, I think that's, that's it right? And crossing the chasm is basically going from early adopters to, you know, the main mainstream. And, um, it's funny cause how it circles back to this idea of cultural appropriation, right? As far as I understand, some people believe that term is a misnomer.

And I talked to a buddy about this. Um, this is a couple months ago on Twitter. He's from Nigeria. And there's this idea that imitation is the highest form of flattery. Right. And, um, so you could say cultural appropriation is the best compliment you could ever give somebody, you, you know, it's, it's like, um, I've made sushi right at home, you know, and, and some woke social justice work would be like, and you're over there.

Appropriating Japanese culture, drew you bastard at home. Like, uh, this food is fucking awesome. It's so awesome that I paid a bunch of money for someone to teach me how to make it. Then I bought supplies to make it. Then I made it with my ex-girlfriend and I made it with my mom because it was so delicious.

Is that not the highest compliment you could ever give to a culture?

Jo Pasamonte: Yeah. Like that's big props. Your food is so good. That I, you know, decided to create it because I loved it that much.

And, you know, like, just look at overall what American food is. It's literally a series of foods from different cultures repackaged. And, um, like, like what's the hotdog America tend to fit the hot dog. Right. Um, hamburger too. Like we didn't invent the hamburger. Like I think it's called like a schnitzel in Germany or something like that.

Um, so in general, like I think the one thing that we can all agree on is that food is good for us. And if you'd like the food, eat it, you know what I mean? Like if you made Filipino food right now, um, at worst, all we would do is make fun of how poorly executed it, but it wouldn't be like. Out of anger, it'd be like, oh, add a little bit more than this, that fix up the dish.

Um, and yeah, just from that sort of cultural perspective, right. Sharing in the food is, is great. And, um, you making it is definitely like a, you know, one of those, oh, like he respects like our food enough that he's trying to make it on an authentic level. Yeah.

Drew Stegmaier: Um, I think the appropriation comes when you claim it something that it's not, it's like, no, make no mistake.

This is me attempting to do sushi at home. Like I have no Japanese lineage whatsoever, you know, I would still call it sushi. I'm trying. Yeah.

Jo Pasamonte: And also like, what is that then? Am I not allowed to make pizza? Because that's from like Italy, like right. You know? Oh no, don't make a pizza. Are you Italian? What, but I love pizza.

You can't not eat pizza. It's my favorite thing. Um, but you know, I can totally understand like a local, you know, like, uh, I, I think, um, the, the one counter argument people have about that is, um, when they utilize that for like financial gains or as a disrespect to another culture, like, think about the Redskins, right?

Like that's a direct disrespect to, you know, the tribes and they know it, Kansas city chiefs, they know it, right? Like that is not necessarily like football. There's nothing, nothing has to be cultural about football. That might even be one of the most original American things we've got, but we're utilizing somebody else's culture as like a mascot, right.

And that's not paying proper tribute to what that represents, like in terms of their culture. Right? So like indigenous people, I could totally see why they believe that's like cultural, like to call things Redskins and you know, the Kansas city chiefs and they've got like this head dress and stuff like that.

Um, because it's like, almost like a direct, like cartoon ization of their culture that they take very serious. Right? Like, like not everyone is the chief. And it's kind of like, imagine if there was a team called the yellow skins and their, their, you know, their mascot was a dude in a rice hat.

Drew Stegmaier: I would feel so terrible.

Jo Pasamonte: Right? Like that's why it's like, I can see appropriation being fucked. Right. Cause that's also one way of colonization kind of. Marketing something that they have no right. To be marketing out of someone else's culture. Um, so yeah, I mean, I can see the two sides of it, but yeah, not everything needs to be like, boom, cultural appropriation, but like not everything has to be like, there can be inspiration, right.

We can be inspired by other people's cultures, um, other people's tattoos, um, all that, all those sorts of things. Right. They have meaning they have stories. Um, and it's important to properly pay respects to the cultures of derived from. But like, if you're going to make something that's inspired by it and you know that this is something you're completely doing for them, you know, for the money or whatnot, um, like understand like on what level, how far is it that you're taking it, that it doesn't disrespect that culture at least.

And in some way you can maybe turn that to a positive and help, like, you know, donate some of those proceeds to, you know, enriching that culture or creating more cultural education. Um, so that way everyone can properly pay homage if they do borrow these sort of like concepts that are very sacred. Um, because you know, there is like a kind of a thin line between respecting one's culture and disrespecting it.

Right. And there are a lot of people who, you know, kind of like in their own ignorance will, will take these sort of actions because they believe oh, money and like there's money to be made without really going into, like, what exactly are you doing here? Um, so, uh, I try to be like, you know, mindful of that sort of stuff as well.

And, uh, But I, you know, I, I don't, I don't also consider myself an authority and w what to call out in terms of cultural appropriation as well. Right. I just try not to do it myself. Right.

Drew Stegmaier: Right. Well, and I mean, I think people just needed to be self-responsible right. And when you have examples, I mean, I grew up a Washington Redskins fan, you know, being from DC and the name change thing has been recent.

And what I noticed is like, oh, this is the way things are, you know, or no one was mad about it when I was a kid. Like, why are they mad about it now? And, and who exactly is mad? Right. Because I haven't heard native Americans lobbying. That doesn't mean it hasn't happened. Right. It just means I have part of it.

But, um, there's this whole idea of like being offended on behalf of others. And I think that's totally separate from compassion. I think completely different things. And, um, I don't know why this is, but it's like this, uh, it's this social phenomenon where I think Chuck Palahniuk the

guy who wrote fight club talks about this, where he says, let's say you're a comedian and you tell a joke.

And it's a joke about handicap people, right? Whether or not people laugh about the joke, isn't about whether or not the joke is funny. It's about the audience. And usually if there is a handicap person in the audience, no one will laugh until they all look at that person who's handicapped and they see if they're laughing and they will follow.

Jo Pasamonte: .Okay. Do we get a pass? Oh, he's laughing. We got a pass guys. Let's laugh. Yeah.

Drew Stegmaier: Yeah. And they think it's funny. And, um, You know, that to me is very weird, right? Or there's all these, um, are these like self-help people online that are like, you know, an army of a thousand sheep led by a single line is better than an army of a thousand lions led by a single sheep.

Right. Like be a lion, you know, don't be a sheep. And, um, part of me is like, yeah, that metaphor sucks. Like the reality is that we collaborate to survive. Right. Um, we collaborate, we help each other. Right. So some of this sheep behavior is actually collaborative dynamics. Like, Hey, I'm not so sure about this.

Hmm. Let me see what Joe's doing. Oh, Joe's doing that. It seems like it's okay for him. I'll do it too. Right. And, um, I mean, I encourage people to think for themselves, but if you just take the vaccine for example, right. It's like, well, you might get a bunch of messages or see a bunch of people around you that seem to be doing this thing.

And supposedly it makes you safe. Right. But then if you do it, you're a sheep. Right. Or if you don't do it, you're a conspiracy theorist. And there's all these weird perspectives. And it's like, dude, everyone's just trying to be here and survive. And one of the ways we figure out how to survive is by copying others.

Right. Just like this appropriation, you know, or this imitation. Right. Monkey see monkey do. We are great apes.

Jo Pasamonte: Yeah. When the, I would say when the status quo shifts, um, those who were, who were comfortable, you know, in the previous status are impacted in a way where they've lost their comfort, right?

It's no longer this sort of idea that, oh, um, the things that I thought were once normal and cool and okay. Oh, those are suddenly bad, but I was raised that way. I was this right. But it's like, yeah. And at one point society thought smoking cigarettes was a healthy thing.

You know what I mean? So, you know, I think the one thing that's always constant is change. And when you have people that are adverse to change, um, you tend to have that pushback, right? Oh, you know, um, you even see this in companies. So like, Um, we're going to be using this new tool it's called, you know, monkey punch.

Right? It's a better tool. It does all the magical things for managing this project. And then you get that, you get that tool and you show it to the team and go check out this new tool I got. Right. And all the newer team members are like, cool. I've heard about that tool. It's awesome. Uh, I use that X company, right.

Then you get a lot of this more senior members that are like, ah, I don't know about that. Things have been fine, you know, do we really need that tool? Um, and uh, a big part of that is they don't want to learn it. Yes. It will make us 80% more efficient if we use this tool. Yeah. But we've got these processes that we've been using for the past five, 10 years.

Right. If we've got these processes that we've been using for the past five or 10 years, why do we need to change it clearly? Where, oh, maybe because it's 80% slower with this tool, we will now be 80% more efficient, put out 80% more output. Um, this is how our lives become easier, but the people that tend to push back are the ones that are impacted in a way where they don't want to make that change.

Yeah. And so a lot of that ends up becoming who do we go with seniority or the general consensus? Um, you know what I mean? How, how do you deal with that? And that, that in itself becomes politics within organizations, right? Yeah. I want to use all these new tools. I want to build this team that does X, but I've got this person up here blocking it because they are uncomfortable with the idea that what is the norm now is going to change if they introduce this.

And a lot can be said, like, you can apply a lot of that too. Just overall society, right? When you start, when this starts, the status quo starts to shift the people who are comfortable naturally feel uncomfortable now. And I think that a lot of civilians today's political climate is literally that sort of argument.

They're changing things that make me uncomfortable so that they can be comfortable, but I'm already comfortable. You know what I mean? And I don't know. Yeah.

Drew Stegmaier: Yeah. I think that's part of it. I think that's that's part. And then there's also a part of like, Hey, where's the line? And I think what we've touched on is, you know, how, how do ideas spread, right?

And you could say that like any sort of cultural change starts with the change of ideas. Um, so I, I did want to circle back a bit on, you mentioned Tesla and, uh, So this idea of patents, right? As far as I understand Teslas open source, a lot of their stuff, because their mega mission is sustainable transport, right?

Sustainable human transport.

Jo Pasamonte: Sustainability, um, sustainable energy, right? Like not necessarily transport. Their mission has gone beyond that scope to include like sustainable, like on the grid, electricity as well. So corporations should adopt their like power walls. Um, also build these sort of like solar roofs, which is why the solar, I forgot the name of the original company, but like solar, something was, yeah.

Solar city was fully, um, incorporated as part of the Tesla brand. And I think that that's what they're after sustainability because, um, currently you just have to look at the way things are. Um, if we are to take global warming series, Then having like these internal combustion engines running on fossil fuels obviously is not helping them.

Right. Yeah. Uh, I don't know what these direct impacts are, but I can tell you that just like eliminating all the vehicles, literally the millions of vehicles on the street emitting, these sort of guesses will probably have a positive impact. I, you know, I'm just taking like the very flat version of just understanding if you subtract something negative, um, the positive is the fact that something negative is reduced or no longer.

Right. Right.

Drew Stegmaier: Well, so, so I, where I wanted to go with that was as far as I understand, you know, they're, they're kicking ass as far as companies go and they've given away a bunch of their IP based on my understanding and. Why do we have patents? Right. Uh, as far as I understand the idea behind patents is to increase innovation,

Jo Pasamonte: right?

I mean, that's what they tell you on paper, right?

Drew Stegmaier: That's exactly the point that I'm trying to make, which is, um, I don't know that that's true. Right? I think that's a giant hypothesis. I think that's an experiment we've been running for a long time and it's basically based on, Hey, if someone makes something by guaranteeing that they'll get the value capture from that something for X amount of time.

Oh, people invent a lot more things. And I got to tell you, man, I think that's not true. I think it's the same argument of, we pay doctors a bunch of money and we don't pay nurses much and we don't pay teachers more. And if people are just same thing with our police officers, right? Yeah. If we think that the money, like people don't go into nursing for the money, right.

Jo Pasamonte: Yeah.

Drew Stegmaier: So I think when it comes to patents and spread of ideas and innovation, I just think it's not true. Right. I think if we got rid of patents, we'd still have a bunch of innovation, but there's this saying that, uh, you know, it's really tough to get Amanda to believe something when his salary depends on him believing something else.

So now we have all these structures in place where people have benefited significantly from having patents and they don't want to give that up.

Jo Pasamonte: Yeah. I mean, look at, um, you know, just the medical industry, there are medical industry patents. Like, does that even sound right to you that are holding patents over ways to cure people ways to improve health?

Oh man. Like why isn't medical stuff open source, like, dude.

Drew Stegmaier: So this is something that I want to ask you about because I tried writing an academic paper, like just for the hell of it, like that kind of style of writing. And um, sometimes I flip flop the idea of Alasta city and inelasticity in terms of economics, but basically it's how price fluctuates, right.

Relative to demand. And what's happening now with our medical system is we've decided that some people will get care based on price. Yeah, I forget what the price is. Just the fact that that is something in our model to me is absolutely insane. And I witnessed it so many times. Like I had a roommate who sprained his ankle skateboarding and he comes home and that thing looks like a fricking grapefruit dude.

Jo Pasamonte: I know that kind of, I know that kind of sprain.

Drew Stegmaier: You know, it looked gnarly. I was like, dude, you need that checked out. And he's like, um, they're going to charge me \$500 to take a picture of my leg. And then they're gonna tell me to put on ice. No, like I can't afford that. And I was like, this is so messed up.

Right. Or you have, um, these companies, price, gouging people for insulin because the alternative is death. Like, hi, would you like to buy this? And if you don't buy this, you die.

Jo Pasamonte: Yeah. Like we've somehow. Turned one person's life into a capital opportunity. Hey Eric. Yeah. Yeah. What I'm saying though, is that this is life and it's like, we've got the thing that can keep you alive.

The question is, can you afford it? Yeah, that's what we've done we've done.

Drew Stegmaier: And you know, for those listening, we're in America, if you haven't already got that and I can just say that, like we are one of those first world nations where we've had, we somehow turned healthcare into a DLC. Everything is a fucking DLC package and, you know, DLCs for those who don't play video games are just like, you release a game and that's not the entire game, but we'll walk some of the features and content behind premium.

Jo Pasamonte: And think about that. When we say healthcare premiums are basically access to types of healthcare, based on you paying how much more to get into that package. Oh, you want to, you know, get checked annually for colon cancer. Well, you need to be at this, you need to be silver tier on this package and if not, oh, you're on copper tier.

Um, if you hit your toe, you don't have to pay for that. But if you sever your toe, you're definitely gonna have to pay a co-pay of at least 150. Yeah. Like how was that? How are we nickel and diming us? Like we don't have a flat rate. Yeah. Well, you know, there's so many of these arguments as well. Oh. But if they don't, you know, if they don't get these premiums paid on this patent that they own, they're going to lose the pack.

And it's like, I don't care if they lose the patent, they're clearly not doing shit with it. Like give it to somebody who will do something with it. Like, oh yeah. If the companies don't try to pretend to make a new medicine, they're going to lose the patent. It's like, you're not trying to make a better medicine.

So you're going to lose the patent.

Drew Stegmaier: Yeah. I mean, I think it comes down to this idea that like competition is good. And I think in some sense, competition is good. Collaboration is also good. And it's based on that hypothesis right of well, if we don't reward innovation, people won't innovate and it's like, no, no, no, no, no, this is wrong.

Like if you've ever invented anything, the best reward is the joy you get from seeing other people use. It is the joy of inventing. And the flip side is. There's this argument of, well, we have these amazing, brilliant pharmaceutical companies hang up cures for this esoteric stuff. And, and that would all go away.

If we didn't reward it, it's like, well, hold that thought for a minute. Right? What happens when we do reward it? Um, all these other modalities that are super awesome, but hard to monetize, like breath, work and meditation, which are free. And we know work very well, get no attention right. Or fasting. Right. Oh, how do you fast?

Uh, you just don't eat and your health gets better. Right? Benefits, autophagy others. Um, we don't recommend those things because we can't monetize them, you know? And then that's another layer of just artificial crap that we've added on. Right. That's not a default layer. That's something we've snuck. Yeah.

Jo Pasamonte: That's a capitalism in a nutshell, right? Monetization of various services and products, because we need supposedly all these services and products to run the economy, this nation. And, you know, I kind of see it, like from the micro and macro level, there are two different arguments, right? Like, um, we can't have X, for example, without like proper monetization, um, like more workers, right?

You need to be able to pay them. And, um, the demand for these workers is still up there. Meaning like there still isn't a sufficient of now that people working these so-called jobs, the thing that gets me though, is when they monetize like these life or death things, when they clearly have enough money to save these people.

You know what I mean? Like why did you get into the save people? Um, and, and, you know, they, you know, they have this sort of like oath to save a person that's about to die. But at what point do they draw that line where, well, you got to wait a couple of weeks because you won't be on death's door until a couple of weeks, then we'll help you.

Right. Like, whereas the most effective way would w would have been to help that person at that very moment. Right. And then, you know, you've also got lobbying and you'll also got, you know, kind of the suedo science bullshit. Hey, um, you don't need to go to a hospital because hospitals are expensive. So instead drink this like mega Aetna.

Um, it's got protein boosts in it. It's got fighting and see, it's got all the nutrients you need, you drink one of these everyday. You'll never have it. See a doctor. Right? You've got these people selling holistic medicines and holistic is good, but not 100% yet. There are things that no matter how holistic you get, um, modern medicine can still fix.

Um, so, you know, you can't go both ways. I believe in a healthy balance. Right. I believe in, yeah, you should do things to take care of yourself and if possible, um, if there are methods of healing through holistic means, um, do so, but then you also have to draw the line of like,

if your death is like right around the corner, because you're being stubborn and you don't want to do a more modern medical science, um, sort of like method or treatment then.

You know, you're going to pull a Steve jobs where it's too late. That's what happened. Right. He tried to be holistic about recovering from cancer. He had a lot of time to recover from it. They said that he had the highest chance, um, when they detected it early and he tried to nurse it back to health, using holistic methods and then it fricking destroyed it.

Right. Yeah. Um, so find a healthy balance. People like, you know, know when to take care of yourself, you know, just from a holistic way, and then also know to take care of yourself from medical modern, you know, treatment kind of way, because I think that, you know, you want to be around, you've got people who love you and care for you.

Um, they want to see you around and it's important for you to make these sorts of choices that help you in the long run. And I get it. Some of you don't want to see a doctor because you can't afford it. And there are things that we should start to look into and vote for if you feel that way. Right? Um, there's a reason why the ACA exists and of so many people on both sides of the political spectrum take advantage of that system.

Um, because it helps them. It helps them stay alive. In some cases, they, there are a lot of people utilizing the affordable care act as a means to survive because they have no other alternative options. The other option is death. That's literally what we're we're with. Like, you know, I've seen these arguments with these guys saying, you know, they're going to, they're like, you know, um, Senate town halls or their house town halls, meeting their, you know, representatives and specifically saying, if you take away ACA, you're killing my wife.

If you take away the ACA you're killing my child because I can't afford to keep them on. Right. Yeah. And then you've got those other people who have, you know, the means financially to support themselves. And it's like, oh, too bad. You should've done a better job. You should have went to school. Now, does that make sense?

Let's just say, hypothetically, we all went to school. We all went to college. That was the standard. Where would we work? If we all did that? When we all be working jobs that made the same amount of money in the same industry, given that our infrastructure relies on various tiers of help. Right? Think about distribution.

You don't need to go to college to drive a truck. Right. Who's going to drive it. If that driver's a wall, I went to college. I don't need to transport shit. I don't want that. Right. See, we've taken the thing where we've. Education kind of like the barrier of entry to higher, you know, money, like higher means of income, but that's not necessarily true, like, because you can be

incredibly educated and still work, like maybe just a regular management position at Starbucks.

Right. Um, it depends on how you live and what your means are, uh, where you live location. All those things are affected. Um, but like people saying education equals success and higher means of pay. That's not necessarily true. It depends on what you're educated in. And whether that industry pays you at a level of what you were being educated in.

Right. Like, let's say we all just went to school as, you know, history majors. And like, that would mean that we're all capable of being like archeologists, right. Or like geologists or historian. Or, you know, the mere museum curators, but what's the demand for those roles, right? Like who's paying out for those roles.

I mean, I, as far as I know, like a lot of like museum directors, they were, they were sitting at that job for like 20, 30, 40 years. Like even as old people, they're still retaining these roles. Right. And you're not going to have two museum curators or three or four or five, you're not going to saturate that.

Right. Right. So, um, you know, I think that we have to start looking at what exactly does the cost of living mean at the lowest possible level and make that a four. In terms of like entry point in terms of access. I think it's important for us. Like people say raising the minimum wage to \$15 is going to raise the prices of everyone's food.

Right? Well, if even if we did that just from coast to coast, um, what that means though, is that these people suddenly making \$15 are also contributing that same money back into our economy as well. Right. They now have money to buy food. They have, they now have money to pay rent. They now have money to purchase shoes and various like, you know, things that they normally didn't have access to.

When you keep people at a baseline level where they just have enough to pay for rent and stay alive, that's practically like almost indentured servitude at that point. Right. Where they're just one layoff away from death. Yeah. Financial collapse.

Drew Stegmaier: It's tricky because. I guess the counterargument to that right, is that, uh, and this is part of what I saw in Brazil is they have pretty good worker rights in many cases, but they also have a lot of poverty because companies just are way more stingy when it comes to hiring.

Yeah. Um, yeah. And so there's, I mean, there's a couple interesting things you've touched on. So I think behind a lot of this is I'm thinking in spectrums and probabilities, um, you

mentioned like the person at the hospital, right? It's like, oh, we only help you. If your vitals are tanking, men will save and go.

Right. And, uh, there's this idea I talk about often with diabetes, which is, um, how I like to think of diabetes is just this spectrum of insulin sensitivity. Right. And so if your insulin sensitivity is basically screwed, that's what we call diabetic. Right. And then you might have to get a pump or, you know, you have to give yourself insulin.

Yeah. And if you're at a really high level of insulin sensitivity, then we call you healthy and we don't do these spectrums and governance. Right. And also when it comes to business, this is one of those really weird things, which is look for many businesses. They're just struggling to stay afloat. Right.

Businesses have a life cycle where they live and die. So raising the floor would kill some businesses. This is true, right? Yeah. For other businesses they can afford to triple the wages of everyone. And it doesn't mean anything like, yeah. Like Google salaries are ridiculous and I bet they could double them for everyone.

And still wouldn't be. Right. Yeah. Um, and so that, that's the kind of thinking that I'm not hearing folks talk about. It's like, look, look, it's not as simple as everyone should just make more or businesses will die. Right? It's well, some businesses will die and some businesses can hang. And, um, this is where I have a personal ax to grind with Amazon.

First. I like buying their stuff just as a customer. It's a great customer experience, but totally, they have these horribly inhumane conditions for many of their workers. And they deliberately forced turnover of the warehouse workers. They liked them to not be there more than three years, so they can't organize effectively and bargain.

And, um, they're just treating their people like trash. And then they bumped the wage to, I think, 14 bucks, maybe 15 bucks. Well that's much better than it was before. For many people it's still absolutely terrible. It's really hard to live, but we lost focus on that. And instead we focus on, well, all these other companies are way worse than that.

So they're the real bad guy now. And we just lost sight of the big picture, which is, Hey, um, and, and this is what I like to have these kinds of conversations. People can play by all the rules and still get beaten down by life. Right? Sometimes life kicks you in the nuts. There are people that work and they work hard and they still can't provide for themselves.

Yeah. What do you tell those people? Right. I mean, they're losing, right. They're losing the quote game of life. Like they're working hard and they're not able to provide for themselves, you know, saying just work harder. Isn't the right answer.

Jo Pasamonte: Yeah. I don't even believe that work harder is one of those things where that directly correlates to success.

Right? Like, think about what hard work means. If that was the case. If, if our, you know, our livelihood was based on how hard our efforts were, how hard we worked, um, think about like what farmers would be making construction workers, would we be, they would be the top of the food chain, right? Like who the hell works harder than those guys when they're manually like picking shit out of the ground?

You know what I mean? Digging holes, trenches, grading, waterways, um, you know, doing all these sort of labor intensive roles in the sunlight. Right. Um, you gotta, you, you have to say like, if that is how it worked, they'd be the highest paid in the world. If like hard work correlated to financial success, then yeah, the most financially successful roles would probably be like construction work and like farming.

Um, but then people then bring up the argument, but Hey, if you go to college, you know, you'll get a higher pay grade, you'll have this and that. But industries don't like to touch on what I was talking about before industries. Don't all pay the same, right? Every industry pays you differently depending on what you go to school for.

That's going to, you know what I mean? You go to school to go to be a doctor. You're going to get paid significantly. Right. You're going to make a lot of money, you know, but there's a lot of schooling involved and it's difficult. The barrier of entry to even, you know, get into that medical field and have like a job as a doctor is, is, is.

But the demand is there, right? Hospitals need them. They're constantly getting as many as they can. Um, but not everyone wants to be a doctor. Not everyone wants to be, you know, a historian, not everyone wants to be an archeologist. Not everyone wants to be a scientist. Um, and not all like not a single one of those fields pay the same.

Right. There's no global pay surrounding that concept. So like, you know, you look at a lot of the kids now where it's like, I want to, you know, I want a job that pays me a lot. Um, and you know, you look at those jobs and there are some that have a low barrier of entry, like think about this, um, you know, Senate sensitization people, right?

Um, like Senate sanitary services, garbage men, right. They make six figures. And, you know, the level of schooling is not as difficult as being a doctor. Right, right. Um, same thing with like air traffic controller. Um, it's not the same schooling as a doctor, right. There are different routes to making six figure careers and they all have different levels of, you know, um, entry, um, from an educational standpoint and also from an industry standpoint.

Right. Um, but you look at like a lot of these, like hands-on jobs, plumbing, electricians, um, carpenters, and, you know, you name all these, like these roles that kind of like keeps society together, right? These maintenance roles, these builder type of roles that those all pay six figures and the level for education there.

Um, you know, back in the day used to be journeyman work. I used to be a journeyman. Um, I used to be an electrician's apprentice and I just learned a lot of stuff related to, you know, Changing outlets and receptacles and going underneath and creating spot pipe, you know, connections, um, to be up to spec with city code.

And that was just for me, learning with my hands onsite with somebody who was more experienced than me. Right. And even then think about how back in the days the doctor used to be just this one guy who was like, I think I know how to work on people. Right. And this is my son. He's watching me work on people so that he can take over the family business.

Right? Like how far have we come from a medical perspective where now it takes years of education to get in there, but back in the day you would just inherit it right. To inherit the role. This is my son. He's going to be the next doctor one night die. Um, and so like, you know, we've, we've learned is kind of take these sort of roles and industries.

And, you know, capitalize on them and create education systems around them. But like, we haven't like taken just kind of the idea that, you know, there are some people who actually love working like fast food rolls. Right. But it just doesn't pay them the sort of money they need to sustain themselves. Um, and what's wrong with that?

You know, like, it kind of boggles my mind that people that just can't do what they love because it benefits society. Anyways, you need to have someone on the other side of that cash register, no matter what, right. Robots can't fully take that over. In fact, it's far more exploitable if robots took that over, right.

Okay. Robots back there, flipping burgers. I just jumped over the counter, fix myself, my own burger and leave. Is the robot going to stop me? It wasn't designed for that, right?

Drew Stegmaier: Yeah. I mean, I think the big point you're making is like, What the market pays, isn't really correlated with what we need, but basically, I guess markets are one way of functioning.

And, um, I think in some sense, or like democracy, it's like the best shitty system we currently have. So I guess as a futurist, like what do you see as for lack of a better term, post-capitalist ways of organizing and I'm not saying, and I guess there's two ways we could take this, right. There's full blown utopia.

Right? What is utopia for you? And then also what is a next step or a few logical next steps from our current hellscape.

Jo Pasamonte: I don't know. I feel like for us to even reach utopia, we'd have to globally come to integrate. Like it can't just be, oh, America's utopia, Canada's utopia south America, you know, Lizzy Tobia right. For utopia to be a thing even feasible globally, we'd have to come to an agreement. And, you know, that would mean like, for example, um, Israel to get along with Palestine and you know what I mean?

Vice versa.

Drew Stegmaier: Yeah, well it's funny you say that because, so I have some ideas about this and I haven't shared them publicly. I mean, I think I've maybe dabbled in them, but I'm hopeful that will transcend nation states, uh, partially thanks to crypto and. Balaji Srinini Boston talks about this song. I don't know if you follow him, but basically again, it circles back to cultural appropriation, this recurring theme, um, and evangelization and how I think how America was able to do a lot of what it's done.

At least part of the story is that, oh, we have this way of being, and it's the best thing on the menu, the menu of countries. Right? So it turns out that a lot of people want to come here. Right? And a lot of the debate I see about like, oh, America is trash or, you know, America is awesome. Uh, the one side of that debate is like, you have people who are immigrants who are like, bro, shut up.

This place is so much better than where I came from. You know, stop being such an entitled little shit bag. But the flip side of that. Hey, I'm not saying that this place. Isn't great. I'm just saying that we're a heavyweight and we're punching like a featherweight, right. Which is true. And, um, I think a lot of the promise that made America work was we conquer the world in some sense, it's straight up military conquest.

Like I don't want to throw that under the rug, but some of it is we get the best global talent because we're the best place to live. So the best global talent tries to immigrate here. Right. And how I could see these crypto enabled nation states working is you have a bunch of Bitcoin millionaires and billionaires that spring up, and you're already seeing remote workers, right?

People will organize in a decentralized way amongst a common set of rules right out what I call algorithmic governance. And after a while these people develop a strong amount of collective bargaining power. And when you get enough of that, you basically have, in some sense, the power of a state where you can say, Hey, everybody in this club wants these things.

And if you cater to the people in this club, you get a lot of money. And if you don't cater the people in this club, you get nothing. Right.

Jo Pasamonte: And you're not in the club.

Drew Stegmaier: Yeah. Well, and I think the thing is exclusion from the club, isn't a punishment, right? It's just, Hey, uh, like, like there's this parable of, uh, this guy goes and lives with a, um, like some guru, right.

And he's like, I know you're going to try to convert me, you know, back up, I don't need your stuff. And he's like, no, that's cool, man. Like, I'll do my thing. You do your thing. And then they lived together for six months and then the guy's like, oh, he fucking converted right.

Jo Pasamonte: This whole time that I was here.

I didn't know it.

Drew Stegmaier: Yeah. You realize it was like, oh, it was just a better way of living. So he copied it. He just did that. And so I think if you just operate in a better way, it kind of creates this, uh, positive cultural appropriation for lack of a better word. Right. These people begin organizing in a way that just makes more sense.

Jo Pasamonte: Maybe it's not appropriation though. Maybe what we're talking about here is something like new, like more like cultural acceptance or, you know what I mean? Like, yeah.

Drew Stegmaier: I need a better word for it. It's how the, uh, the diaspora of, of governance. Yeah. Um, yeah. And, and I see that, I see that how things will go or a possible way of being, because it, it just seems, um, I don't know, like to spring forth from within me, something that both makes sense and seems like the road we're heading on already.

Jo Pasamonte: Yeah. Like I think it goes back to the one thing I was talking about in the beginning. It's just that the one thing that's constant is change. Right. Right. And it's going to shift again, like from people being comfort, like comfortable to people not being comfortable, but the people who, the people who benefit, there's always going to be that generation that has shift that, that, that has brought it to that point where everyone is now, like the younger generation is in agreement that.

We all love this decentralized governance system. Right. Um, and they are now 70% of the population and it doesn't matter, you're maybe part of the surviving 30%, but they've now shifted everything. And whether you're comfortable or not, they've decided that's what it's going to be. They've decided.

Drew Stegmaier: Yeah. Oh, wow.. I hadn't thought of that. Well, and I guess to talk about your background a little, so like one step, right? One step from, Hey, where we are now to where we're going is, you could say the war on drugs or cannabis legalization where sometime in the past it was like, oh, this is terrible. You know, we can't have this.

And then a couple of places were like, Hmm, I don't know. Like, I don't know if it's so terrible. And then they're like, oh, let's try this thing. And then it was like, oh, maybe this isn't terrible at all. Maybe it might even be good for us. And now the tide is turning. And I think at some point in the future, we will look back and laugh like, wow.

Remember when we said people couldn't interact with these plants in this way? How stupid that was?

Jo Pasamonte: Um, it's so funny that you bring this up because I was, I was just thinking about this the other day I was driving on the road and I was just thinking to myself, as I passed a billboard that said, ease cannabis delivered to your door.

And it's basically a cannabis delivery service. Right? You say you order what you want online. They bring it to your door. Like back in the day that was called the drug deal.

Drew Stegmaier: Right.

Jo Pasamonte: And so like just seeing that. And I also remember reading articles very early in the day, this was early internet where it was like, California is going to legalize medical marijuana, and you would see all these like conservative news articles pop up saying, oh, California is a complete shit hole, but it's, you know what I mean?

Um, th the whole nation is just going to be high in dumb. Now what used to be Silicon valley is now cannabis valley, right? Like suddenly we were going to be a nation of penny. Like we're

going to be a state filled with pure on idiocy. Cause we were all smoking weed. Oh man, these guys are going to be so high.

You're not going to be able to accomplish anything anymore as a state because you know, cannabis super addictive. And you know, you can't, you can't make something of yourself. If you're always getting high on the marriage, a wine. And I just thought to myself, like, you know, when it was not even considered, you know, a medical, like, you know, opportunity, I used to think like, this isn't so bad.

I feel like this is just a change in your mental state, but it doesn't make me feel like I'm going insane or anything of that nature. And I feel like it's also good for the economy. Cause I bought a lot of snacks at seven 11, right. I'm sitting there doing my part, spending money on snacks. Um, but like, you know, it's okay for me to walk into a drug store and buy, you know, pills, cough syrup, you know what I mean?

All these like various types of things that have a chemical impact on my body. You know, like a real direct inorganic human synthesized impact on my, my system, that's legal, completely legal, but this, this straight from the ground, I can take a seed and put it into a piece of soil and get this miracle villain product, which will destroy nations.

You know what I mean? I can't do that. Think of the children.

Drew Stegmaier: It's funny. You say product that'll destroy nations because as far as I understand a lot of the war on drugs, um, this is going back to Vietnam era. Um, you know, 60 summer of love is that a common side effect of psychedelics is the refraining of violence as a means of problem-solving.

Well, if you're going to have a bunch of proxy wars and you need people to keep volunteering to go kill a bunch of people, they don't know who actually aren't threatening them. Right. That, that was, that was Vietnam, right? That was basically a war we made up. Yeah. I'm probably ruffling a lot of feathers by saying that, but..

Jo Pasamonte: Every soldier, but it's okay. Because freedom of speech, man, they fought for you to say that.

Drew Stegmaier: I'm not dissing the soldiers. Right. I get what you're saying. This is a well, it's important because some people might not have caught the nuance. So the act of serving your country, I think is as noble enact as anyone can ever have, right. That is a Supreme act of virtue.

Jo Pasamonte: 100%.

Drew Stegmaier: But what we have here, you know, there's a saying, um, Roman emperors usually didn't die in their beds. Right. Because they were out there dying in battle. Right. And now we have this fucking setup where the people saying, Hey, go over there and risk your life. I'll be here at home.

Yeah. Right. Um, the people telling us to go to war, you know, aren't warriors. Right.

Jo Pasamonte: Yeah. And understand like really what people were sacrificing. Right? Yeah. Like they knew that people weren't all going to come home from a war, but what they saw was the prize, the prize behind what they got from going to what they benefited.

Drew Stegmaier: Or even the chance that people might not come home.

That if they went, they might not come home. Oh yeah.

Jo Pasamonte: They risk themselves. Right.

Drew Stegmaier: Right. Right. And, um, you know, when our country was much younger, right. The first president was a general. Yeah. Um, I, there's a reason for that Thai because based on my understanding, you'll fight less wars. If you're the one fighting in them, you know, when you're the one doing it, you're not going to set up for that every weekend.

Jo Pasamonte: Um, and I totally agree with that. I, I think that a lot of people tend to develop these sort of opinions on things without being like having that firsthand experience. And it's not like, you know, everyone's entitled to having their opinion about things, but when you are contesting, somebody who's got first-hand knowledge or experience about any given subject, um, you know, the thing about opinions is that you can't be wrong.

Right. Cause it's your opinion, but simultaneously you're muddling. The concept of what's fact and fiction because, you know, no one can say, oh yeah, you're not even allowed to think that way that's wrong. Right. And you have a lot of people like that where they completely take advantage of sort of that I can say whatever I want, even if I completely have no knowledge of what I'm talking about.

No experience around what I'm talking about. Um, and you know, it's funny, um, you know, we were just talking about this like war and the people that don't fight them, send a lot of people, you know, who are willing to volunteer for that. Right. Right. And I was thinking the same concept can kind of be applied to, um, any given like, uh, like law, for example.

And let's just like, this is completely fictional. I don't know if this has ever happened, but let's just say.

We're a nation of 100,000 people, that's it. Right. And every year we have to sacrifice one person, but if we do that, the population will grow another 100,000, but we have to sacrifice one person, um, from your perspective and just based on what I've told you, does that seem all right? Does that seem like something, um, to agree to?

Like, would you agree to that?

Drew Stegmaier: Oh, man. I mean, I think it depends, uh, this is an interesting experiment because you know, the first thing I thought was, uh, would anyone volunteer? Right.

Jo Pasamonte: And what if no one volunteered, then you'd have to raffle right? Pick one selection. And it could be completely random. Right.

But let's just say no involuntary games. Yeah. Uh, to some degree. Yeah. But see, the thing about hunger games, right. Is that all it is, is an entertainment for the one percenters of, of that universe. Right? Like it was just entertainment. Right. Um, there was really no societal benefit, but what I'm saying is that let's just say for the sake of, you're a nation of 100,000 people and you want to keep your people going.

Right. But it requires one sacrifice to double your population.

Drew Stegmaier: Right. Like the ends justify the means. Yeah.

Jo Pasamonte: Would you agree to that? If that was the case?

Drew Stegmaier: Am I like the king of this 100,000? Okay.

Jo Pasamonte: Let's just, yeah. Hypothetically, I get to decide, right. You get to decide, this is now you putting to law.

Whether we enact the one sacrifice, but we stay as.

Drew Stegmaier: But I feel like this is something like king Solomon would say, which is, um, you know, let the people decide.

Jo Pasamonte: Okay. And let's say they, they all agreed to it. Right. So they agreed to it. And now the scenario is one person is selected at random.

Now keep in mind, everyone agreed to it. Right. But now they've selected somebody that's related to your family.

Everyone else agreed to it. That's it. Someone in your family is now selected. Right? Um, see the thing is, it becomes really real when it directly impacts you, but in the game of numbers,

Oh, just one in 100,000. Yeah, sure. Let's do that. Right. A lot of people tend to make that sort of decision pretty quick because it benefits humanity until it directly impacts you.

Oh, by the way, the, you know, the sacrifice scheduled for 2022 is your eldest daughter, your youngest child, your wife, right. Then you're like, fuck, you know exactly that society as a whole will benefit from it. Right. Because of whatever the case. But like once it directly impacts you, of course, you're going to be like, oh fuck this.

I don't want this system at all. I hate it. Like,

Drew Stegmaier: that's like, it's an interesting hypothetical, right? Because I think a lot of this is the same as the argument for compulsory service. Now, assuming you have a democracy. Um, that's, that's more functional than ours, which is right. If everybody has to serve in the military and everybody gets a taste of what that is, like, you bet your ass we'll have less wars.

Jo Pasamonte: Oh, right. Because

Drew Stegmaier: a lot of our militaristic activities, paradoxically come from a disconnect from the horrors of combat. Well, like what does that mean? It's like, well, it's simple. The people who say go commit violence, don't have as close a relationship being personal recipients of violence as the people that are saying should go commit the violence.

Jo Pasamonte: The horrors of war is completely like unknown to them.

Drew Stegmaier: Yeah. I mean, Eisenhower warned about the military industrial complex. That guy was the military, you know? Oh, gee. You know, that's, that's very telling thing. Um, and, and he warned us about it and, uh, it didn't matter, didn't matter one bit.

And, uh, that's..

Jo Pasamonte: Yeah. And also that's why our spending is so high. Right. We're as a militaristic nation, the reason why we spent trillions on our military budget and, you know, someone told me this was that because we're number one, we're also the biggest target. So we need to be able to fight potentially four or five countries simultaneously.

And I thought to myself, like, that's like kind of a crazy thing to like, unpack right. Is that like, when you're sitting up top as like the super nation, um, you know, number two and three are gunning for you. Right. And they're not that far behind, um, to be prepared for that sort of like, you know, scenario would cost literally trillions, which we spent, but you would also consider that when we stand to benefit as if we were at all contexts, some sort of general

consensus as nations, um, where we didn't have to be paranoid of each other and that sort of way.

And a lot of people would say like, that's why NATO was invented. Right. Has sort of this like chat room, chat room for like who who's got funk with each other. Right. Right. Who hate two right now? Ah, yeah. They didn't even come to this session. They hate us right here. Right. Um, And, and you think like, and this is what goes back to what I was saying is that like, for us to have a utopia, right.

We don't have to globally agree on like, you know, how to, how to act. And that's just like, I feel like that's just one of those things where we can't come to that. Yeah. Sort of consensus because we have such opposing views or such a note posing nation, right? Like we treat each other, right. Um, different tribes, whether it's like at a country level, whether it's at a state level, whether it says a cultural level, a racial level, um, political level, everything is starting to become tribalized.

Um, or everything was always tribal wise, but now it's like more distinct and more thoroughly communicated down than ever because of the fact that. Information and inherent confirmation biases easily spread through your networks. Right. It's easy to find yourself in your own echo chamber cause you've, you know, you've cultivated it.

Right. Um, and you know, like I have friends on various types of the political spectrum and I do that on purpose. Um, even if I disagree, because it's important to see how people's perspectives are on any given matter, because, you know, I don't think it's just two sides of a coin. I'm thinking like this is one of many sides of a polyhedra..

Drew Stegmaier: Oh, it's like a twenty-sided die, right?

Jo Pasamonte: Exactly.

Drew Stegmaier: Have a medic tribalism.

Jo Pasamonte: Yeah. And, and, you know, regardless of where you roll or where you stand, um, everyone's gonna kind of have their whole, their own perspective on things. Sometimes the arguments aren't necessarily aligning as well. Like, um, the one thing I have difficulty with is the gun control debate, right.

Because I feel like..

Drew Stegmaier: I think it's a shitty debate. Like I don't, I don't mean to cut you off, but like I talked about a friend, I talked to a friend about this last week. And, um, again, there there's

so many like parts to these debates that seem like obviously fucking common sense that you don't hear. Right?

Like the defund, the police one, the equip I often make is like, have you seen a single sign that says allocate money, better

Jesus. And when it comes to the gun debate, it's like, Hey, can we all agree that we should at least have better gun safety? Like hold the phone about taking them all away or making a lot more. Like, can we at least teach people? It's like, we've agreed that if you're going to have a car, you get a driver's license.

Cause cars can kill people. It's like, how about if we sell you a gun, we at least make sure you know how to use it safely. And I kid you not that's not a rule. And like, what's crazy is like those parts of the debate that I don't see present are astonishing.

Yeah. Well, because that part of the debate is based on the amendment.

Jo Pasamonte: Right. It's based on second amendment. So when people say like, no, it's, it's not like for example, driving is a privilege, right? That's a privilege offered us. You know, I would say even being a, an airplane pilot is a privilege, right. We don't all have to be airplane pilots. We don't all have to be drivers.

Um, but like as an American, you know, we, we cite the second amendment as one of those things where it's in the it's it's all right, because of the second amendment. Right. And the only time we take that away is if you've been naughty and you shouldn't, you know, you, you shouldn't own guns for any sort of legal reason that it's taken away from me.

The thing is the reason why I find the debate tricky so much is that like, yes, I know, I know guns, you know, a lot of the times, like aren't even used for hunting, right? A lot of the times people own guns because they're scared of other people who own guns. And a lot of the times that people own guns, um, They tend to use on themselves, right?

Like suicide is the highest thing that kills people with guns, suicide, like, think about that. We use it more for killing ourselves than we do against like aggressors or, you know, wildlife, like for hunting reasons. Right. And like, I look at that and I think to myself, like, you know, for us to like even have that sort of the, sort of like discussion about whether or not we own a weapon, the fact that we as individuals have that choice, right.

We get to choose whether we want to own them or not. Um, is like in one way, it's sort of that, and that's freedom. Right? My, I have the freedom of choice. It's one of my rights

afforded to me as an American. And so I can kind of see that argument as like, well, you know, it'd be very un-American of me to not exercise any of my given rights.

Right. Um, as long as you know, I didn't do anything that is illegal. Um, it shouldn't be held against me. And, you know, if you think about like the law and compliance, like that's true, right? Like if you're not doing anything wrong, there's really like, or anything illegal. Like there's no reason for me to punish you now.

Those are the people who argue that. Now the thing is, I actually agree with you in that. I don't think everyone should have a gun. There are a lot of people who shouldn't have guns, um, because you know, they come from like, for example, places of mental, you know, like mental health issues or things of that nature.

And then it goes back to what I'm saying. Like these people own guns, they killed themselves. Right. Um, so, you know, how do we kind of do this in a way where, you know, responsible gun ownership is taken into account and is part of our system on a national scale? Like how, how do we do that? And that's the thing is that people don't talk about that instead of people don't talk about that sort of compromise instead, it's more like, I want my freedom.

It's, it's they're number two on the list of things I could do. And it's like, it's like, okay, but also it's a very dated law. Yeah.

Drew Stegmaier: I mean there's a, there's a lot. So I guess I'm curious, just in the debate, like, what is your, not your like analysis of the debate, like the zeitgeist itself, but like, what are your feelings on guns?

Or like, if you were a king for a day, like, how would the rules be?

Jo Pasamonte: It's tough because I'm well aware of that. A good chunk of middle America is in the wilderness. Right. And those folks, they rely on the land to live, people go hunting and they actually eat, you know, the animals that they take out. There's some people who do it for support. Sure. But you know what I mean?

Um, it's, it's kind of like it, I would say that it's, it's one of those things where I don't have like a 100% feeling that any of them are. Right. You know what I mean? That's the honest take. That's the honest take? Like, I would say like any, I mean, this sounds really crass, but like anyone who doesn't have their head up their ass, um, has, has that recognition of like, uh, you know, again, or like, uh, spectrum based governance, right.

Of like: Hey, in this situation, This is what might work. And in this other situation, this might not work. Yeah. Like, uh, when my grandpa went to school, you know, he carried a large

sheath knife every day, because that was how he ate his lunch. They didn't have stabbings at his school and all the kids had these knives.

I was like, yeah, because the kids were just behave better and they weren't violent, you know, like the answer had no inclination to do that. The answer to school shootings, isn't Bulletproof backpacks. Right. You know, that's, that's just so off. Um, yeah. Uh, and like that goes back to like the whole mental health thing.

And do we invest in that? Right? Like if we were to just invest some of our medical infrastructure to free mental health services, Do you think we'd reduce potentially our school shootings and these random acts of violence?

Drew Stegmaier: Oh yeah. It's funny you say that. Cause like let's take, uh, I don't know. The GDP, like last I checked, it was like what?

Around 17,000,000,000,016 trillion.

Jo Pasamonte: Oh, I lost track after like three elections.

Drew Stegmaier: So, okay. Let's say that we can pretty reasonably say that a trillion dollars is definitely less than 10% of our GDP. Right? What if we spent 10% of our GDP on helping people get along better, right? Or like, what if we took some of this massive defense budget of figuring out how to blow shit up and allocated it instead towards helping people get along better.

Like what if we bought a Teddy bear for every single person in the country of China, right. As, as a, Hey, we want to be your friend gesture. Like we could actually afford that you get a wholesale with that many people it'd be pretty cheap.

Jo Pasamonte: Well who would make them?

Drew Stegmaier: Yeah. They'd have to be made here for it to be a real gift. But I guess the point I'm trying to make with this thought experiment is we don't even try that.

Jo Pasamonte: Yeah, we do the same things expecting different results. Or maybe the fact is we do the same thing because those are the results from what the people in power want. Right. Because you know, it doesn't even have to be like a political thing.

It really does boil down to who's in the seats of power.

You want to be a vehicle manufacturer? Well, I've created a vehicle coalition, so you live up to our standards or your cars are not road safe. Right, right. Um, you want to be this, uh,

well, I've created this, you know, regulation committee that keeps an eye on what you're doing. And if you get too big, I can pull the plug on that and you can shrink down a little bit.

Um, you know, we've, we've got all these different ways of, of governing, you know, what we have on a state to state basis. Oh. You know, like if all states were created equally, um, the loss would be very different. Right. We'd have global scale walls. Right. Um, even our identification systems are shit. The computers in places.

That should be up to date, our oldest balls, right. They're probably running on like cellar ones and these old Pentium three machines, right. With like these really old browsers, because like our states have to pay for that sort of infrastructure. But like, imagine if we just like, as a nation had a global scenario where all the states had the same, you know, management infrastructure, all the DMVs were actually interconnected.

All the ID systems were interconnected. Um, all of the data from state to state was shareable. Um, we'd have so much more information about each other and economically on a state level. Um, we'd be able to track down people who were fleeing the state because they'd appear in another state. And they couldn't make a new identity.

Right. Because the minute they try to use any sort of infrastructure they'd get caught. Right. Um, so it it's one of those things that like, we'd have so much more security. It's like, we just had all of our infrastructure on board together and we don't. Um, and that's what I'm hoping like down the line, blockchain, like, you know, does, I hope that at some point our government adopts or creates its own form of blockchain, just so that we can manage our infrastructure on a more global scale, just like right now.

Drew Stegmaier: Yeah. I mean, I, I think it's in the works and, um, there, you know, that there's a case for, for slow innovation. Right? Cause it proves safety and, um, it's interesting. Cause if you take the vaccine debate. Um, this is weird and like, this will probably catch me some flack, but, uh, it's not cop. I mean, I guess it's becoming popular to call out Elon Musk because of the Bitcoin stuff he's gotten into.

But, um, he says things like, oh, the data on the vaccines is unequivocal. And I'm like, I'd love to see a five-year study on the COVID vaccine. Oh, wait. It's five years old. It's like, how can you say the data is on a clinical, you know, like, like to me that that's like, dude, that is such a bold claim. That's just not true.

Um, like tell me the long term effects when there's not long-term and I'm not saying it's good or bad, you know, just more a case of, um, Right or, Hey, there is some risk here and for some people that level of risk is acceptable. And for others, that level of risk is not

acceptable. Um, yeah. And I think saucing, saucing, these giant things out like, uh, I mean, shit, I think I'm, uh, I talked about this in a newsletter yesterday, basically this idea of like crypto crushes, cancel culture and, uh, the issue with cancel culture.

What I think enables it is Cosby's jokes. Aren't suddenly on funny when we find out he did this bad stuff, right. But the moment I give Cosby a dollar, I can't say now, bill, you only use this dollar to make more funny things. I don't support you being a pervert. Okay. Bill got that. Like do that once I could go that dollar, he can do whatever he wants.

Right. Not with blockchain right now. I can say, now, bill, you take this dollar and you use it to write jokes and do nothing else. And so you have this programmable money really it's programmable everything with IOT. Right. But is that good or is that evil? Right? The answer is yes.

Jo Pasamonte: Totally.

Drew Stegmaier: And, um, you know, th that's, that's what I'm worried about because I see a lot of people think like this conspiratorial, like, oh no, and there's a global plan for domination and things will get so much worse. And then the flip side is like, Man, wouldn't it be better if we actually had decent digital ID for everyone?

Well, yes, both of those are plausible realities, right. I think both justice and corruption will increase and that's scary. Right. But I think it's truth, you know, I call it topian it's not utopian or dystopian. It's just topian.

Jo Pasamonte: Um, yeah. I, I think, uh, at least if we were to have like identification systems, we'd be able to do things like vote without any question on the authenticity of a vote, right? Like, you know, there's all this controversy about the vote count and stuff like that. It goes back to what I'm saying. Our infrastructure is what we invest in on a state by state basis.

Right, right. If California has the best computers, it doesn't matter because Iowa has the shittiest computers and no offense to lowans. What I'm saying is that if you guys don't invest in like, whatever technology, right. Just pick any state. Right. And we're not all on the same competing system and we all have different ways of identifying who's voting and who's not flooding.

Um, now you're in this position where votes are now, like in this weird discrepant period where we're not sure if they're accurate, right? Because we don't have systems in place from a

coast to coast basis. That helps us all feel confident in that system. And the fact that people are now against the idea of the way the voting systems are like suddenly now, right.

They had so many years of like challenging these systems. And only now has that come to, you know, the front, the forefront of, you know, debate is like, this can all be solved if it was on the blockchain, like seriously. Right. Because we'd all validate each other's overall identities. Right. The whole point of peer to peer networking systems is that your peers see your data and they go, yes, you're there.

And as far as we know, you're alive, because it doesn't say you're dead yet. And it hasn't been registered that you're dead. Yeah.

Drew Stegmaier: Right. Well, I want to, I want to ask you then, cause it's not a question of ability, right? It's not a question of capability. I think this idea that, um, our technology is an expression of our level of consciousness, right?

Or like when you have Donald Trump and then you have a DOE, a Joe Biden. Um, you know, it's like you have literally a TV celebrity, like that's not a joke. Like, you know, I ran the apprentice and then you have this guy who clearly has super cognitive decline and they make me, cause they can't walk up the stairs.

Right. It's like, well, these people are manifestations of our collective consciousness. Right. It's like, well, why don't you have Bitcoin? Or what, why don't we have blockchain voting? Like, well, because some people aren't even aware that that's a possibility or it's literally magic internet money to them.

Right. So you know, when we see something that we don't understand, that's not in our realm of possibility. It is magic. That is what magic is. Right. And. While it might make sense to someone like you or me. I think there's a lot of people that think that that's not real or not possible, or is magic. And then there's other people that recognize that it is real and it's a threat to wherever they are now.

And so they deliberately slowed down the adoption and muddy the waters.

Jo Pasamonte: Oh. Completely. Um, and like I said it's one of those things too, where until you've got like the sort of consensus that all the people there want this system in place, right. It becomes the majority thought. We're not going to see it move for a while.

Right. Where I think it's fascinating that you got to places like Africa and they're totally into the idea of like, you know, putting their identifications on blockchains. They absolutely love

the idea of even having an idea. Um, like think about the education there. Um, and I'm not saying their education is bad or anything not, that's not what I'm trying to get at.

What I'm trying to say is that people can actually utilize, let's say I went around and said, oh, I'm Drew Stick Meyer. And guess what? I also graduated from so-and-so college. Right. They just do that because the tracking and the ability to identify you first as a person, and then identify your credentials from an educational level is so poorly reported and handled that I could literally do that.

Even though you went through all the schooling, I can take your identity and your credentials and utilize that to uproot my own features. Right. Build off of that. Um, and that's a problem out there. Like we think about. Think about that out here, because we have enough infrastructure to, you know, have these colleges verify that you actually attended and graduated.

And do you know what your grade point average is? They don't have systems in place and a lot of the part of that nation or any given nation out there. Um, you know, it's very rare. And a lot of the times the people, the locals that are don't even trust their own, you know, governing systems because there's so much corruption and there are many cases of the banking system being corrupted as well, where, you know, you store your money there and then the bank takes off with your money collapses on purpose, like, think about like, not being able to trust your existing infrastructures because they're not reliable, they're corrupt.

Um, and then having a financial system that is now accessible, can't be tarnished. Can't be corrected. You have complete control over it. Has your ID have your means of transferring funds and receiving funds? Um, that's a game changer for places that don't have the existing infrastructure.

Drew Stegmaier: That's a game changer for everybody.

Jo Pasamonte: Literally everyone there.

Drew Stegmaier: Like not, not just people in places without infrastructure, like, dude, that's a game changer for people with the best information.

Jo Pasamonte: Oh, I mean, I completely agree. It's better than existing infrastructure in general, right? Yeah. Like, so you could see why they would even see that as a threat.

Oh shit. On Goldman Sachs and there's this thing that's better than me. What? I don't like that.

Drew Stegmaier: Right. Yeah.

Jo Pasamonte: Um, how much do we get the government to agree to us outlawing the sort of technology and the thing is they can't right. There's no easy way to confirm whether or not you're like on the chain, right.

There's no easy way to confirm what you're holding. Um, you know, outside of like KYC compliance, if you trade outside of that, outside of that sort of compliance. And for those who don't know, KYC means, know your clients, um, it's the standard where you identify yourself when you join crypto exchanges, right?

You like submit your ID and you like tell them like, you know who you are. And you know, if you submit to that, then yes, the government is aware that you are on the chain, but they're also not aware of how you're managing your fund. They'll only know when you sell it and they'll only know when you buy it, but they won't know that you exchanged it for a car.

Oh, I traded my crypto for a Tesla. They won't know that they'll still think you're holding it. Right. And there's no way for them to verify that information. Like, how would they know that transaction existed? Right, right. How could they regulate that? And that's the thing, like, if you outlaw crypto people will just work outside of it.

Like it's always been instead of embracing it and understanding that like it's inevitable, right? Like this, this has so much value as a technology to like the rest of humanity, not just our society, humanity benefits from this technology.

Drew Stegmaier: Right. Um, I think that's a good place to wrap parsley because dude I'm fucking spent.

Jo Pasamonte: Cool.

Drew Stegmaier: Yeah. To the moon. Where, so where can people find you follow along? Anything? You have the skill.

Jo Pasamonte: Yeah. I don't really have much to skill. Um, If you want, you could try to follow me, um, on my Instagram and I also have a Twitter handle. Um, but I can tell you pretty much that I post mostly nerdy stuff. I do a lot of 3d printing, a lot of dad's stuff.

So you see a lot of my children, but I'm, you can find me on Instagram at mal Mel bad monkey. That's M a O M a O bad monkey. And, um, yeah, I forgot what my Twitter is. I that's how often I use it. I only use Twitter. Mostly. I only use it mostly to track sales, like, oh, a certain graphics card is back in stock, hurting him, buy it right now.

Um, like I use it mostly for function and not to argue with the rest of society. So yeah, I, I'm not even going to give you my Twitter. It's not worth it.

Drew Stegmaier: This conversation was a pleasure addressed talking for the sake of talking and connection, which is part of the world I want to live in. You know, it's not a, Hey, Jo's on the podcast.

Cause he's got a book launch coming up, which, you know, I'm down for that too. But it's nice to talk just to talk like that. That's what I live for, man. So thank you.

Jo Pasamonte: And you know, I definitely appreciate you having me on and you know, it's always fun to just exchange thoughts and ideas, right. And also, you know, you've kind of created the space where I can share my thoughts and ideas regardless of how controversial one may think.

Right. Um, it's just fun to exchange. Right. So, you know, I think you're in the right pocket for these sorts of exchanges. Um, because you know, some people like drama, right? They get off on the drama and the salt and the shade. Um, and it doesn't all content doesn't have to be like that to be enlightening or entertaining.

Drew Stegmaier: Ahô! Alright!

Jo Pasamonte: Thanks for having me on man.

Drew Stegmaier: The Citizen Within is a micro publication by Rob Hardy. It's an Oasis for thoughtful, concerned citizens who care about leaving the world in better shape than we found it. So future generations can flourish. Basically. It's a place for people who read the famous Margaret Mead quote, never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.

Indeed. It's the only thing that ever has. It's also for those who hear the quote and feel inspired and called to action, check it out. I hope you all enjoy that, one quick thing and closing.. stegdrew.com/juicy. Steg Drew just like the show [.com/juicy](http://stegdrew.com/juicy). You can sign up for my weekly musings there on all things like we spoke about in this episode and other assorted weirdness just drop in your email stegdrew.com/juicy.

Thank you.