

Dear Jeremy Boreing:

The success of Daily Wire is welcome evidence of a readiness to resist *awakening* and restore the foundations of Western culture. But it is a just current event in the context of human history, and what is happening in the West has a deeper cause than the kinds of events that historians will describe. Science will soon discover this cause, and it entails a surprising prediction about the future. I am writing Ben Shapiro and Andrew Klavan about it because it is relevant to the kinds of arguments they make, but I am writing you because you are the *God-king* of Daily Wire in charge of its overall direction. It has implications about what will happen in the long run, and knowledge of that would help you choose goals for Daily Wire. I know that it will seem unlikely that anyone can say what science *will* discover, let alone predict what the long-term future. The argument for the prediction is spelled out in detail elsewhere. But it can be summed up rather briefly, and its unity and comprehensiveness will make it easy to tell whether you want to learn more. The argument begins in a historical context that you will recognize, even if you wouldn't describe it this way.

The direction of change in our culture is distressing because we seem to be losing a great treasure that we inherited from the Enlightenment. That was the highpoint of Western confidence in reason. In science, the rational pursuit of truth was expected to settle all disagreements about what is true in a way that everyone would accept. In practical affairs, the belief that we are rational beings who can be trusted to be moral showed that political institutions are legitimate only when they protect individual freedoms. And free markets were seen as rewarding entrepreneurial initiative and producing affluence.

But these days, no one believes that science will discover the complete explanation of nature that was expected of science

when it began. What modern physics claims to have discovered at bottom is so different from what we ordinarily believe about the natural world that no one can even imagine what corresponds to its laws. Worse yet, what researchers in specialized fields currently believe is called “the science” and used as a political weapon to silence objections to administrative edicts. Though respect for the moral autonomy of rational beings was built into the US Constitution, the claim that the rights it protects are prior to government is defended only by those who believe in God—and they are expected to admit that the premise of their defense is a leap of faith. And capitalism is portrayed as an inequality of wealth protected by government because it is ruled by the rich, if not an effect of systemic racism.

I call this decline from the Enlightenment *endarkenment*, and I believe that it is what divides our population into opposing political camps that cannot agree on facts about current events, much less values. Never in the lifetime of anyone alive has there been so much pessimism about the direction of change, so little trust that existing institutions will see us through, and so much willingness to consider basic change. But *endarkenment* cannot be explained by recent historical events, and though the advent of social media may have contributed to it, the cause lies much deeper—but not so deep that it can't be understood.

The Enlightenment and *endarkenment* are both effects of the same deep cause, and when science discovers that cause, confidence in reason will be restored. There will be victory over *endarkenment*. And fortunately, it is imminent.

I predict that physicists will soon make a discovery that not only solves all the problems of modern physics but also triggers a scientific revolution that fills the explanatory gaps in the life sciences. It will discover a series of inevitable stages of evolution that bring beings like us into existence,

and it will discover that Western philosophy caused a distinct stage of in the evolution of life. This stage of human evolution necessarily includes both the Enlightenment and *endarkenment*, and while those who still believe in the rational pursuit of truth fight the rising tide of endarkenment, what will win that cultural war is the scientific discovery that Western civilization is a stage in the evolution of life that follows the stage represented by all the other civilizations on Earth. I call it the *metaphysical stage* because it is caused by the exchange of metaphysical arguments in philosophy, and when science discovers *how* metaphysics caused the West to be so different from the rest, the metaphysical stage will culminate in what I call the *Second Enlightenment*. Admittedly, this prediction sounds unlikely, and I can't give the full justification here. But I can give you an overview that will enable you to judge whether it is worth considering further. Hear me out, and if you are interested, there is information at the end about how to learn more about the argument and where it comes from.

The Enlightenment was a product of the ancient Greek belief that beings like us are capable of perfect knowledge, or literally, a *complete* explanation of what is found in the world. But it took two forms in ancient Greece, and their incompatibility set them on different careers in history. While their interactions carried Western culture to the Enlightenment, the inability to reconcile them caused endarkenment.

Pre-Socratic philosophers expected to explain everything by using the empirical method to discover the *first cause*. Though they eventually agreed that the first cause is all the substances constituting the natural world, they never discovered kinds of substances that explained everything found in it. The other way of acquiring perfect knowledge was metaphysics, defined as the belief that *Reason* is a cognitive

power that knows *Reality* behind *Appearance*. It began when Plato argued that rational intuition knows about the Forms in a realm of Being that are responsible for everything intelligible about the visible objects found in space, the realm of Becoming, and the problem posed by this dualism led to metaphysicians defending other ways of showing how rational intuition knows Reality behind Appearance.

Despite the difference in their methods, both kinds of perfect knowledge were attributed to *Reason*, and after the Renaissance, the rebirth of ancient confidence in Reason as natural philosophy and modern metaphysics blossomed into Enlightenment optimism about progress leading to perfect knowledge of the true and the good. Its offspring took two forms, which were irreconcilable in a similar way. One offspring was empirical science, which was expected to explain all the kinds of things found in the world. The other offspring was a religion based on metaphysics, which held that everyone is a Rational being because they were all created in the image of God. Since knowledge of the difference between good and evil would cause Rational beings to choose freely to be moral, even when it was contrary to self-interest or opposed by strong desires, they could be trusted to be moral. And respect for their moral autonomy of Rational beings was the foundation for justifying liberal political institutions and capitalist economic institutions in Western civilization.

The cultural change currently distressing us is the loss of Enlightenment confidence in Reason. Scientific explanations of human cognition, such as those defended by Freud, Darwin, and Marx, led to disillusionment with reason. Though science has become our most reliable knowledge, it doesn't enable us to understand the basic nature of the world. For example, no one can believe that change is unreal, though that is true, if Einsteinian spacetime is what really exists.

However, science is naturalistic, and the undeniable advance of science over the past few centuries has made belief in a supernatural God untenable. Belief in a God who created the natural world for a purpose is just a leap of faith. And since science cannot explain the nature of the good, it cannot explain why we ought to be moral, so trust in liberal political institutions has given way to the belief that we need an administrative state, run by experts, to promote the common good. Indeed, the contemporary commonplace about there being no such thing as the True, with a capital T, has replaced the rational pursuit of truth with relativism. Everyone is supposed to have their own reality. Even major scientific discoveries are tentative when solutions to scientific problems are expected to turn up new problems. These days, no one claims to have an argument that shows how we can have perfect knowledge.

There is, however, a deep cause of the Enlightenment and endarkenment, and when a discovery made by physicists enables science to discover it, a scientific explanation will reverse the rising tide endarkenment and restore the genius behind the 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Enlightenment as what I call the *Second Enlightenment*.

The deep cause is *intuitionism*, the belief that knowledge comes from objects that are immediately present to us, as if they were given in a faculty of intuition. That is false because all knowledge depends on efficient causes at work in the brain, and intuitionism is a deep mistake because it is caused by an illusion built into the nature of *consciousness* (as the phenomenal aspect of experience). Like optical illusions, the illusion of intuitionism does not go away when it is recognized to be false. And this cause is so deep that it has been at work throughout the history of the West. After enabling metaphysics to give rise to the confidence in Reason that blossomed during the Enlightenment into science and

liberal political institutions, it caused a decline of confidence in Reason in both philosophy and science.

Metaphysicians assumed that perception depends on a faculty of intuition, and assuming that there is also a faculty of rational intuition, they argued that intuitionistic Reason enables us to know Reality behind Appearance. But advances in science made the beliefs about the nature of the Reality that metaphysicians claimed to discover behind Appearance seem downright foolish, and since they included the belief that God created the natural world, theists were forced to admit that belief in God was just an act of faith. Without a way to defend the claim that Reason knows the True with a capital T, intuitionistic metaphysics gave way to romanticism, the belief that intense feelings or acts of extreme courage put us in touch with Reality behind Appearance. And after romanticism, intuitionism led to post-modern philosophers preaching the gospel of relativism and spreading it to popular culture.

To be sure, science is a form of naturalism that does not seem to be affected by intuitionism. It began by rejecting the metaphysicians' assumption that perception depends on a faculty of intuition, and since scientists took themselves to be animals with sensory organs, they followed the pre-Socratics and used the empirical method to learn about the natural world. But what made science credible was the astonishing success of physics. As history shows, its success came from assuming that mathematics is known by a faculty of rational intuition. The Newtonian revolution gave physics a method that implicitly assumed that mathematically formulated laws of nature are the deepest possible empirical knowledge of the natural world. Since the use of *a priori* mathematics as a language to describe regularities blinded physics to some of some regularities about change, the method of physics itself caused the intractable puzzles that now confront it—and that

deprived other branches of science of a second kind of efficient cause, which is needed to explain the regularities they study completely.

Intuitionism was responsible for the rise of confidence in Reason in the West after ancient Greece as well as its decline after the Enlightenment, and it will make be possible for science to discover the cause after the discovery by physicists that space is a matter because that enables science to explain how consciousness is part of the natural world. This explanation reveals the illusion inherent in consciousness, and the key to explaining Western civilization is discounting the illusion of intuitionism and using it to explain how consciousness allows language-using brains that exchange metaphysical argument to cause the kind of cultural evolution that occurred in Western civilization. [This scientific explanation is hard for us to accept because it runs contrary to what we all naturally assume. It requires us to distinguish between *consciousness* (as phenomenal properties that are immediately present) and *reflection* (as what a language-using brain can know about the brain states causing its behavior by representing them as causes as part of the process of causing it) and to recognize that consciousness is not the efficient cause of any event but merely helps constitute what happens in the brain.]

But the discovery of the cause of the metaphysical stage will give us knowledge that pre-Socratics as well as metaphysicians would recognize as perfect because it will turn science into Reason. Since parts of consciousness are what intuitionistic metaphysicians mean by Appearance and Reason, ontological scientists will find themselves knowing Reality behind Appearance. But since science uses the empirical method to discover the first cause, it will be called *naturalistic* Reason (or *natReason*, for short). The certainty of its knowledge will not come from a faculty of rational

intuition but, rather, from discovering that an explanation of everything that leaves no grounds on which a refutation can be founded. It will be universally accepted because science is empirical knowledge and everyone will know that their beliefs are true by how they correspond to the natural world where they find their bodies. It will explain goodness as an essential aspect of the nature of life, and since that will show that beings like us have a spiritual nature by virtue of being parts of a form of life on a level of organization higher than multicellular animals (known as *societies*), we will know why we ought to be moral. NatReason will solve the hard problem of mind because it will show that language-using brains that exchange metaphysical arguments while falling for the intuitionistic illusion inherent in consciousness eventually conjure up a phantom Reality called *mind*. It will even explain the divine by showing that the world itself has all the perfections attributed to the Judeo-Christian God except for creating the natural world from outside space and time.

Simply knowing that this outcome of current events is possible will give you a perspective on what Daily Wire is doing that will help it succeed. But the complete argument is presented in a trilogy, called *Naturalistic Reason*, that I am self-publishing as I send you this message, and it is presented in enough detail that, if it is on the right track, it will cause the scientific revolution it predicts. The first volume, *Unification of Physics*, shows how interactions of space and matter explain *all* the laws of physics in quantitative detail. The second volume, the *Unification of Science*, shows how the reduction of physics to spatio-materialism reveals a kind of efficient cause, not recognized by physics, called *geometrical causes*, and shows how specialized sciences use it to explain the regularities they study completely enough to discover that evolution brings beings like us into existence on suitable planets throughout the universe. The third volume, the *Unification of Science and*



*Philosophy*, explains how consciousness is part of a world constituted by matter and space and uses the illusion inherent in it to show that Western civilization is a distinct stage in the evolution of life caused by the exchange of metaphysical arguments that culminates in the Second Enlightenment.

You will be skeptical of this prediction because it sounds too good to be true. But the argument is worth considering because it will give you a way of thinking about what you are doing with Daily Wire that will help you do it. You are fighting the rising tide of endarkenment, and looking back a decade or two from now, you will be seen as helping keep the we treasure inherited from the Enlightenment from slipping away. Knowing why the genius behind the Enlightenment will eventually be restored may help you restore it.

Since you will wonder about anyone who seriously asks you to consider such an unlikely argument, let me say something about myself and its origin. I have been working on this argument, pretty much on my own, for over 45 years, while teaching philosophy at American University for 30 years and since retiring from teaching over 20 years ago. As a philosopher, I have written this argument with a care that justifies expecting it to stand up under such scrutiny. There may be incomplete or mistaken arguments in it. But I am confident that the discovery that space is a substance that interacts with matter will eventually cause the scientific revolution I predict, and I am prepared to defend it on all fronts. My reason for writing you and a few others is to make what I have discovered public. I am about to turn 83, and I believe that it is my duty to tell others about my discoveries because my spiritual organism has given me the leisure and privilege to enjoy a life spent in such an exceedingly meaningful way.

Even to those who believe in the rational pursuit of truth, the prospect of reading a detailed all-inclusive explanation of the natural world in three volumes is daunting, so I am offering an easier way of learning more about it. An executive summary of the argument is presented in a short (150 page) book titled *Sapere Aude* that I am also self-publishing now. I am including a free Amazon link to an eBook version of it. (See below.) And there is more information about this argument at [natReason.com](http://natReason.com), including an introduction to the trilogy, a Table of Contents for it, a bookstore, and more information about me. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have and very grateful to learn about any problems that you think may cast doubt on it. You can reach me personally at [phillipscribner@yahoo.com](mailto:phillipscribner@yahoo.com).