



SEX, GENDER, IDENTITY

***Beyond Wokism
and Trumpism***

Corey deVos ♦ Keith Martin-Smith

Insight Map

Sex, Gender, Identity: Beyond Wokism and Trumpism

Keith Martin-Smith and Corey deVos



INDIVIDUAL

INTERIOR

EXTERIOR

- **Identity Paradox:** Identity, while self-evident and seemingly straightforward, is also the most complex dimension of our existence. It's a paradoxical blend of simplicity and complexity, with each individual's identity being as unique as a fingerprint.

- **Anger and Apathy:** Men are traditionally taught to express only two fundamental emotions - anger and disengagement. This limited emotional palette is a cultural imposition that often suppresses men's emotional richness and contributes to higher rates of alcoholism, depression, suicide, and other social issues.

- **Self-Authoring Freedom:** The self-authoring stage in the upper left quadrant offers a newfound freedom for individuals to explore and construct their own identities, rather than merely inheriting them.

- **Identity Transforms Biology:** With the advent of medical and technological progress, our upper-left identity, which used to be downstream from our upper-right biology, can now influence and transform our biological bodies.

- **Body Over Mind:** Athletics are a competition of bodies, not a competition of identities. However, there may be other solutions, such as multiple weight classes where similar body types can compete, regardless of sex or gender or identity.

- **The Value of Man:** Men often grapple with a societal emphasis on their extrinsic value (the value they create for others), overshadowing their intrinsic value (being valued for who they are).



- **Myth of the Given:** The questions 'what is a man' or 'what is a woman' are not fixed, but depend on the stage, quadrant, or perspective from which they are asked. This highlights the multipolarity of sex, gender, and identity, challenging the notion of a single, given definition for these terms.

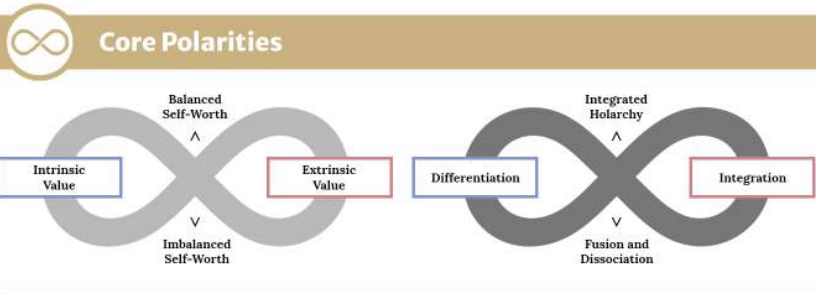
- **Political Dissociation:** The political right and left often dissociate aspects of sex, gender and identity. The right often emphasizes biology, to the exclusion of identity and culturally defined genders, while the left emphasizes only identity or gender as a social construct.

- **From Doctrine to Dialectic:** There are multiple styles of communication that correspond to each of the stages of development - Amber doctrine, Umber debate, Orange dialogue, Green discourse, and Teal dialectic.

- **Divisions of Labor:** The advent of agriculture and the subsequent division of labor created distinct social roles for men and women. This historical shift is the origin of many of the traditional roles and "spheres" associated with both sexes, and continues to influence our attitudes and perceptions around sex, gender, and identity today.

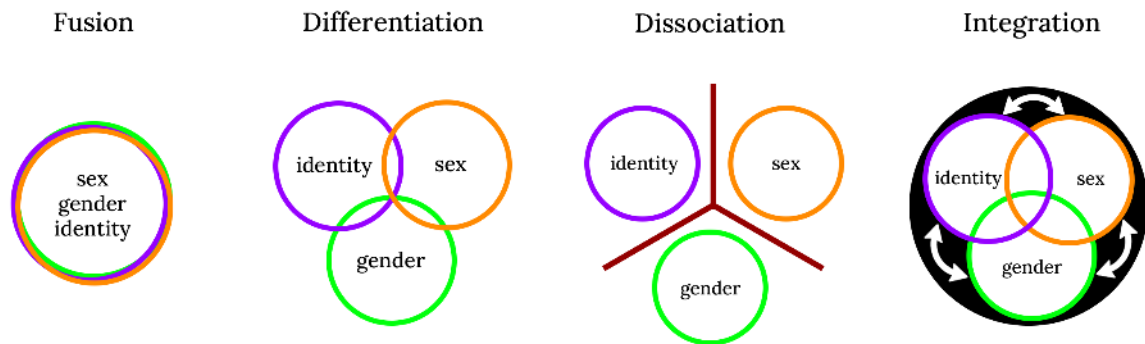
- **Public and Private Spheres:** The Industrial Revolution allowed women to move en masse from the private to the public sphere, providing an unprecedented opportunity to re-author their identities due to these technological and economic changes, allowing women to redefine their roles in ways that men have not yet fully experienced - but may when we've arrived at the next technological level of automation and artificial intelligence, allowing men to find a source of identity beyond their vocation.

COLLECTIVE



Grow Up			
Amber group-centric	Orange self-determining	Green self-questioning	Teal self-actualizing
<p>Fusion: At this stage, elements such as sex, gender, and identity are seen as one and the same. This is often observed in traditional mindsets where roles and identities are inherited and expected to be adhered to.</p>	<p>Differentiation: This stage involves recognizing that elements like sex, gender, and identity have their own distinct realities. This allows for a more nuanced understanding of these elements, their interrelated nature, and how we self-author our identity.</p>	<p>Dissociation: Differentiation can sometimes go too far into dissociation, where one element is over-emphasized at the expense of others. This can lead to a denial of the interconnected nature of these elements, and a general fragmentation of our understanding.</p>	<p>Integration: This is the stage where the differentiated elements are reintegrated into a comprehensive understanding. This involves recognizing the multipolarity of our identities and challenging the notion of a single, given definition for terms like 'man' or 'woman'.</p>

Open Up		
<p>Emotional Intelligence is critical in understanding and navigating complex issues related to sex, gender, and identity. Lack of emotional intelligence and self-expression can hinder our ability to fully engage with our own experiences, and those of others.</p>	<p>Intrapersonal Intelligence: Grasping the complexity of individual identity necessitates a deepened intrapersonal intelligence. This means enhancing our understanding of our own feelings, motivations, and desires, and recognizing how these internal factors influence our self-identification.</p>	<p>Ethical Intelligence: Navigating the intricate terrain of sex, gender, and identity requires a mature ethical intelligence. This involves developing a nuanced understanding of the ethical implications of our beliefs and actions, and striving to balance individual rights with societal norms and expectations.</p>



[00:00:00] **Keith Martin-Smith:** All right, everybody. Hello, hello. Keith here with my good friend Corey, and we are here to go back into the topic that I talked about last week, or whatever it was, a few weeks ago, on "what is a man". And there's been a fair amount of curiosity, questions, and things that have come in. And so Corey has some really interesting thoughts on this and some interesting perspectives, and so I thought we would just take, you know, 45 minutes or an hour, and just really dive into the nuance of these issues.

And, you know, just a warning up front, this is not going to be presented in a way that really is favoring any particular side. This is going to be a conversation, a both/and conversation. It's really about pulling some of these subjects apart to find the complexity that lives under them. And in finding and honoring and acknowledging the complexity, all the heat goes out of the room. Because you can actually find consensus if you're willing to see the problem for what it is, and unpack it in a way that's conscientious and nuanced. So that's what we'll be doing today. So, if you're hoping to get triggered, I think we might disappoint you, but we'll see.

[00:01:19] **Corey deVos:** I'm always triggered, Keith. I'm always triggered.

[00:01:23] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And Corey, I know you had an announcement that you would like to make, so let me make a little room for that.

[00:01:27] **Corey deVos:** Yeah, sure. But, so before we start, I wanna say two things. First off, I just wanna say what a pleasure it is to be here with you, man, and even more than that, just how delightful it's been for you to be part of this platform over the last several months. You've just done some really, really amazing conversations with Terri

O'Fallon and Kim Barta and, you know, so many wonderful people that you've brought onto the platform. And it's just, you know, you and I have been friends for, you know, decades now, it's just really awesome to be, you know, pushing this boulder uphill with you. So I just wanted to share that, just how happy I am to be here with you and to have you on integral life with all of us. So, um, you know, thank you.

[00:02:04] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Well I love being here. I love that you invited me here and it's, it's been a lot of fun.

[00:02:08] **Corey deVos:** Yeah. It really has been. Secondly, yeah, I just wanna take a brief moment just to acknowledge the passing of our dear friend Sally Kempton. She passed away I think three or four days ago. You know, Sally's been a part of the integral community for years, for, you know, just about as long as I have. And you know what a remarkable woman. We've got many conversations on IntegralLife.com that I really encourage people check out. Our most famous one actually is a talk that she did with Ken Wilber called "The Goddess Returns", where they go through a number of Hindu deities and talk about sort of how to embody and inhabit the energy and the intentionality of each of these major deities, and to bring that into our own practice of deity mysticism. She was also an exemplary teacher of meditation, a lot of people, I think, found sort of their seat in their meditation due to Sally Kempton. She's just always been so sweet and kind and graceful, particularly with me, she's just always been really, really supportive of me and of the rest of the integral family. So I just wanted to take a moment to acknowledge the sadness that I think a lot of us are feeling for her passing. So godspeed Sally Kempton, we love you.

[00:03:18] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Beautiful. Thank you Corey.

[00:03:20] **Corey deVos:** Yeah, yeah. So, you know, another thing I wanna say, Keith, is you, you really knocked it outta the park last month with your first sort of episode exploring this conversation. I really love how you framed it. I really love how accessible you made that framing. And today I think we'll go a little bit deeper, we'll try to be friendly, right, but we'll probably draw upon integral models a little bit more, talk about quadrants, talk about stages. All of which was included in your presentation, but you have this gift, I think, for really making this stuff accessible when you present it. And so, you know, all the more reason I'm looking forward to sort of deepening things a little bit

with you today.

And I'm excited to have this conversation in particular, because it seems to me that of all the culture war issues that are out there, many of which are really deeply complex, some of which are pretty silly, right? But a lot of them are really, really deeply complex and hard to solve. And what I think is interesting about the sex, gender, and identity question is, Integral seems to have a lot to say about this. Integral sort of very naturally sorts this out, right? Like as soon as you have sort of a coherent understanding of what quadrants are, of what stages are, I mean really even just those two components brings so much clarity, and therefore so much healing, I think, to this particular issue. We start to notice that like, oh, identity, gender, particularly gender roles, sex, this sorts itself out naturally into these four quadrants. And that gives us an ability to look at each of them individually, while also remembering that these are always constantly co-emerging. They're co-creating each other. They inform each other in some interesting ways. Some have more influence on others than vice versa, and we can get into some of that. Biology, for example, always has more of a causal influence on culture and on identity than vice versa. Right. It's, it's hard to change my body by changing my mind. You know what I'm saying?

So, you know, I think there's a lot here for us to discuss. There's a lot of sort of low hanging fruit, and some really, I think, interesting directions that this could go. But I do think that when it comes to all of these culture issues, this is sort of the one where integral, I think, can, do a wonderful job framing it, and hopefully bring a little bit more compassion, a little bit more empathy, and a little bit more clarity into these conversations that we see happening all around us, where people are just talking right across each other. They're using the same words, but they often mean very, very different things by those words.

[00:05:36] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Well, exactly. So let me just give maybe like a two minute summary of the talk, if people didn't hear it, so they have a frame of reference. So I, as you said, I sort of gave the talk in a way that was integral adjacent, right? I know integral theory really well, but I find it's not helpful I talk to a non-integral audience.

So basically what I did when I asked the question "what is a man", I said that the definition of a man is at least three things. There's a biological definition, which has to do with an X and a Y chromosome, deterministic, and that leads to secondary sex

characteristics, which occur on a bell curve. And you know, obviously sort of short and wiry and little body hair on the left side of the bell curve, and big and tall and fast and strong on the right side of the bell curve. And so biology is deterministic, and sex is mostly 90, at least 98% a binary, or you could argue it's almost 100% a binary depending on research you look at. And then secondary sex characteristics occur on a bell curve. That's just irreducible.

Then that influences the other two ways that we define what a culturally. So, you know, who do we in the West define as masculine or as a man? Why do we do that? And I point out, you know, we have pretty broad definitions here in the West. You know, most women I know say that Prince is very, very, very, very masculine and very, very, very sexy. But he's 5'2, he wore purple, he was very androgynous, right? But there's something about him that somehow, a certain *je ne sais quoi*, that was very masculine. And on the other side you have like a Chris Hemsworth, you know, six four, muscles, the beautiful hair, you know, whole thing. And so the cultural definition what a man is also exists on a bell curve. And it's, as I said in the last talk, it's very different in Thailand than it is in Texas.

[00:07:29] **Corey deVos:** Right. And it's very different in 2023 than it was in 1723.

[00:07:34] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Or 1953.

[00:07:35] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[00:07:36] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Yeah. Very, very different. And then what we'll get into today also is that that cultural definition is also really bound up in the cultural worldview, the macro view that we live in, if I live in a repressive regime versus a democracy versus a liberal democracy, versus, you know, a power based structure. All these other things will influence culturally what is allowed and how masculinity or "man" is defined. And there could be a microculture within that macroculture, where maybe me and Corey define it differently in a little community that we have here in Boulder.

And then the third and final point, which was the easiest ones, we have deterministic biology, we have culture, which exists on bell curves and depends on the cultural worldview. And then the third thing is we have, of course, psychology, which is the

simplest one. How do define myself? You know, I define myself as a man, I define myself as a woman, I define myself as nonbinary. It's really inarguable, it can't be reduced to anything, and it can't just be dismissed out of hand. That personal truth, the absoluteness of that personal truth, has to be acknowledged in some way. Or not. But you can't out of me. You know, you can punish me for it, you can put me in jail for it, you can kill me for it, but there's no way to actually, for culture to get my, how I believe my gender identity is, out of me. And obviously we believe, no one should be doing that, of course.

So those are three poles that I talked about. And I try to make the argument that on the left, the left tries to dismiss biology and really focus on culture and on psychology, and make those dominant, and say, "Hey, look, what is a woman? We don't know. It's whatever we want it to be, but it's certainly not about the genome, because 2% or really maybe less than .2% of people are born, intersex, therefore sex is arbitrary, and sex isn't binary, so we're just not going to talk about biology at all. A man and a woman is only defined by how I feel about it, and your responsibility to honor how I feel, socially." So the left makes that argument, they throw away biology, generally speaking, when they argue sloppily.

And the right does the other thing. They focus on the primacy of biology. "Well, you know, Keith, you have an XY chromosome, you're a dude. You can't compete against women, it's not fair, no matter how you self-identify. And I don't want you doing that. And I want to pass laws and regulations and things that will prevent that, because it's not fair. And if I'm a fundamentalist Christian, maybe I'll also say that I think that it's sinful and wrong for you to identify as the gender that isn't your sex." So there could be complicated things in there as well.

But the reason the culture wars are happening in my view is that the left refuses to talk about the primacy of biology, the right refuses to talk about the reality of psychology and culture.

[00:10:25] **Corey deVos:** Right.

[00:10:26] **Keith Martin-Smith:** So as you said at the beginning, Corey, the two conversations go right past each other.

[00:10:29] **Corey deVos:** Yeah.

[00:10:30] **Keith Martin-Smith:** That was way longer than two minutes.

[00:10:32] **Corey deVos:** No, but that was perfect. Again, great job setting the table. And, you know, I wanna riff on something you said, because there's sort of an irony in something you said. Because you framed identity as sort of being the "simple one", and you know, in a lot of ways it is, because it's sort of self-evident. Right? Like phenomenologically, all I really know is what my own sort of identity is, what my own sort of constellation is. Everything else, you know, biology, I have to learn about it. There's textbooks I have to go through. I have to... you know what I mean? It takes work, it takes effort in order to wrap our minds around the biological component of this, as well as the cultural component, both in terms of understanding the cultural constructs, but then understanding what it means to deconstruct a cultural construct. This is fairly, you know, fairly advanced stuff, developmentally speaking, when it comes to really wrapping our minds and hearts around those realities. So in a lot of ways, my identity is the most simple because it's the most self-evident.

At the same time, there's the irony there, I think, is that, you know, when we're talking about sex, gender, and identity, really what we're talking about is typology, and we're talking about different kinds of typology that exist in all four of these quadrants, right?

So biologically, interestingly, is the most simple typology. It's the most binary. It's predominantly male and female. And as you mentioned just now and in last month's episode, yeah, there's a little sliver of sort of exceptions to that, but it's a very, very small sliver. For the most part, sex, upper-right quadrant biology, males and females, is a binary, right?

Culture on the other hand, has many, many more sort of possible constellations of different kinds of gender roles, different kinds of expectations, different kinds of... you know, all the way down to the clothes that we wear, what's expected of men's clothes versus women's clothes, which brings us into sort of the whole question of drag, you know, which we can get to later on, we've got a few, I think, particular issues that we wanna talk about a little bit later on.

But, you know, there's markedly more variation when it comes to the possible orientations and positions in culture, in the lower left quadrant, than there are in the upper right. The upper right is the most simple, it's binary, and in culture there's just sort of this sprawl of possible gender roles and so forth, and expectations that, you know, we can internalize or not.

And then in the upper left, our actual identity is actually the most complex, simply because there's a nearly infinite.... there's as many identities out there as there are, you know, kosmic addresses, which is sort of a fancy integral way of saying, what is your overall stage of development? What quadrant are you looking at? What's your, you know, different lines of development, et cetera. All of these sort of components of the self culminate as a different kind of identity. And therefore identity is really, in many ways, sort of, we're all unicorns, we're all snowflakes, right? We're all, you know, but my identity is unique.

And there's a lot of common ground, and we can talk about how, you know, different cultural or social pressures and influences both inform our identities as men. But when it comes to Corey as a man and Keith as a man, we have sort of a unique identity there.

So in a lot of ways, it's simpler in the upper left when it comes to identity, but it's also vastly more complex, just cuz there's more to choose from, in terms of the spectrums in identity that we can talk about. Homosexual/heterosexual, cisgendered/transgendered, et cetera, and any number of others. masculine and feminine, being being a big one.

[00:13:57] **Keith Martin-Smith:** That doesn't even get into trauma in that quadrant, too.

[00:13:59] **Corey deVos:** A hundred percent.

[00:14:00] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Which is that my identity may be, I mean speaking personally, my identity has been very shaped by the trauma experienced as a child. I don't want to project that onto the entire world, but I would say, you know, it's disingenuous to talk about something like trans identity without being open to talking about shadow and trauma that may be influencing it, because it's as relevant to them as it is to me and to you.

[00:14:24] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[00:14:25] **Keith Martin-Smith:** I, I see people get really afraid of the conversation because I think they're afraid, and not without cause, that people are going to say, "well, it's because of trauma and trauma alone that you identify as trans, ergo, I don't need to acknowledge or honor your identity because it's it's kind of fucked up." You know, that's sort of the subtext, the really disingenuous subtext.

[00:14:46] **Corey deVos:** Or "it's a mental illness, and I don't want to reinforce your mental illness."

[00:14:49] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Right, right.

[00:14:52] **Corey deVos:** Yeah, that's right. And that's a really critical point. And then, you know, there's a fourth sort of piece that we probably wanna put on the board, because we just went through, you know, biology, gender roles and expectations, and identity, which is upper right, lower left, upper left.

We should also bring in the lower right quadrant. And in fact, the lower right quadrant is why so much of this is so heated in our culture right now in the first place, because there's any number of laws and policies and economic pressures, et cetera, that are actually shaping and informing this conversation, right? Bathroom bills. Are transgendered people, you know, what kinds of bathrooms should they be allowed to use? This is on a policy level that is actually exerting pressure, it's putting a certain kind of force into our conversations of biology, culture, and identity.

And I think this is a really critical one, because we can actually see how much of our, you know, let's just stick with the lower left. Let's just stick with gender as a cultural construct. We can see how many of those cultural constructs, they emerged in a lot of ways out of necessity from the various movements in the lower right quadrant. For example, the different stages of... you know, Ken Wilber often talks about the different stages of techno economic modes of production that we have, for example. So Ken Wilber often talks about how, when humanity shifted into the agricultural era, this put a new kind of pressure onto the two different sexes, onto males and females. It required much more physical labor, which also increased the likelihood of a woman having a

miscarriage. So therefore, we began to see in those societies this division of labor between men and women, where men were sort of handed the, you know, what's often known as the "public sphere", which a lot of feminists these days call the patriarchy, right?

Patriarchy's real, just, it was a lot more real 500 years ago or a thousand years ago than it is today.

[00:16:42] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And it was real by necessity

[00:16:44] **Corey deVos:** Exactly.

[00:16:45] **Keith Martin-Smith:** By cultural necessity. And the reason you know that's true is because you can look at powerful women before the Industrial Revolution, Elizabeth I, who had no interest in or awareness of gender roles, really, because the Queen is more powerful than any man but the King.

[00:17:01] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[00:17:02] **Keith Martin-Smith:** You know, her gender doesn't matter. If she's not married, she's the most powerful person in country. So I think there can be a real misunderstanding of the way power actually was playing out in a lot of the cultures in the West, and also the East, for that matter.

[00:17:17] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[00:17:18] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And it was with the Industrial Revolution and the freeing of the means of production from sex, that's when you could make a valid argument that oppression really began. That's why feminist treatise that I'm aware of, Vindication of the Rights of Women, uh, Mary Wollstonecraft, was written in 1718, something like that. I may have the date wrong, but, you know, right at the of the Industrial Revolution, she's like, "hey, you know, why aren't women equal to men?" But that idea hadn't come up at any point in human history, because you needed physical strength in order to not only eat and survive, but also to protect yourself from enemies. You didn't want to integrate

your army, you wanted really big strong people in the army.

[00:18:02] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[00:18:03] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Those would be men on the biological, on the secondary sex characteristics, right? All the big strong people, the biggest and strongest and fastest people, they're all gonna be men, just like they are today.

[00:18:12] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[00:18:12] **Keith Martin-Smith:** That's why we segregate sports by sex. Because at the highest levels, the best male tennis player would destroy the best female tennis player, and downhill skier, and boxer, and shotputter, and like, it's really across the board.

[00:18:29] **Corey deVos:** Sports is a competition between bodies, not a competition between identities. So that is, that's a great example of one of these issues that, you know, one of these, many, many sort of sex and gender related cultural issues that I think integral can kind of put to rest.

And it can put it to rest in a compassionate way. This doesn't mean that we're being uncompassionate to, you know, trans athletes, for example. I mean, in fact Keith, there may be other options here, right? I mean, we could say, we could say fairly easily, you know, that male bodies should compete against male bodies, female bodies should compete against female bodies. There's another option here though. There's a third option, which is just do something like weight class, for example. That actually I think sort of gets to the bell curve issue that you were talking about before, where similar body types, whether male or female, similar positions in those bell curves, can compete together. And maybe that's another sort of option that our society wants to explore at a later point in time.

[00:19:23] **Keith Martin-Smith:** I think that's an important point, and I just want to circle the idea that I want to acknowledge and honor the fact that it really isn't very fair to just exclude trans female athletes, because that's really who we're talking about here, because of what's happened. We can't just put them out to pasture and say, "well, tough luck, I know you're an elite athlete, but you can't compete." Like, you're right, the

solution isn't to ban them, the solution is going to be in some way, how do we actually transcend and include this new phenomenon that's happening culturally, in a way that doesn't make women have to suffer and lose to these people all the time, but also that doesn't force transgender women out of sports altogether. Because neither one of those is fair.

[00:20:05] **Corey deVos:** right. That's right. That's well said.

[00:20:07] **Keith Martin-Smith:** it really well, but I just, I want to just draw a line under that, because I get frustrated that there aren't more conversations around, well, how do we make this genuinely inclusive?

[00:20:16] **Corey deVos:** That's right. Yeah. You and I were talking in pre-show that, you know, both of us share the priority that when we're having conversations about this, especially conversations that really do land in people's identities in a big way, we have a lot of people in our audience who are transgendered or who are, you know, any combination of identities you wanna talk about. We have them all in our audience. And therefore we always wanna try to find ways to have sober clarifying conversations about this, particularly sort of in those lower quadrants, like how this stuff is landing culturally, how this stuff is landing socially, we wanna have those conversations and we wanna bring as much sort of discernment as we possibly can, while also holding this sort of radiating compassion for all of the individuals who are affected by this. For all of the individuals who, you know, do have sort of non-traditional identities, right? We can make room for all of this. We can make room for all of this.

The other point I wanna just get back to, cuz I think it's a really interesting one, and it's one that I've talked about a lot of times in various shows over the years, is just this pattern that we saw... you know, when we were in the sort of agricultural era as we were talking about, that required a certain kind of physical strength, and then those requirements actually sort of trickled into the rest of our identities and the rest of our gender roles and the expectations of what is a man and what is a woman.

[00:21:36] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And the power structures, right?

[00:21:37] **Corey deVos:** A hundred percent. Yep, a hundred percent. And then the industrial revolution happened, and all of a sudden you no longer need a big, burly dude to push a plow through a field, you just need an arm that can pull a lever on an assembly line, for example. Right? So this actually allowed for, for the first time in human history, it allowed for this massive migration of women out of what we would, you know, call maybe the "private sphere", hearth and home and all that stuff, out of the private sphere and into the public sphere, for the first time in thousands of years. This was made possible because of technology. Because of the technological innovations that occurred, women could shift their roles, could shift their identities, in a really, really massive way.

[00:22:28] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And they could be oppressed genuinely for the first time.

[00:22:31] **Corey deVos:** That's right. That's right. Because they're actually that,

[00:22:34] **Keith Martin-Smith:** In other words, Corey, you're a woman, I don't want you to pull that lever, even though you can. I want to exclude you from that job because you don't belong there. That's different than, "I don't want you to work the plow because I don't want you to..."

[00:22:45] **Corey deVos:** Die. Or a yeah.

[00:22:48] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Or, or to, yeah, to die because you're not physically strong enough to be out in the fields every day under the hot sun, la de blah de blah.

[00:22:54] **Corey deVos:** That's right. That's right. So I just wanna acknowledge that women have had an opportunity, and it began over a hundred years ago, to redefine, to self-author their identities and their gender roles and their cultural expectations, all of that, they had that opportunity. Men, interestingly enough, have not had that opportunity. We have not had a similar movement of men, for example, out of the public sphere and into the private. This is actually what gets a lot of men's rights activists riled up, because a lot of the issues that men's rights activists deeply care about, and that we deeply care about as well, are sort of the inequities that we find on the private side of the street,

right?

[00:23:37] **Keith Martin-Smith:** That's right.

[00:23:38] **Corey deVos:** We see this a lot within the many complaints coming from the men's rights movement, which is often about sort of how this stuff lands in the private sphere. And the fact that we don't have parity between, especially when it comes to things like sexes. Why do we allow women to make the choice to have an abortion, but men have no say in whether a woman has one? Well, you know, I'm sorry, but that is sort of a... you can't really expect full parity there. Right? So I think this is, this is a really critical conversation.

And just to sort of, you know, I just wanna kinda end that piece, I personally think that these new waves of artificial intelligence and automation is gonna put a new kind of pressure from the lower right onto every other quadrant. We're actually gonna start seeing, and we saw glimmers of it with COVID, when all of a sudden we were all forced back home, and men all of a sudden were like, you know, "Oh, I can't define myself just by sort of my vocation anymore. Like, I have a role here at home. I'm stuck at home." And that actually, you know, coming with that I think is a total restructuring and reconstruction of our own identities and our own sense of place and our own sense of value. Right? It's allowing men to move away from an extrinsic-only source of value, into sort of the intrinsic kind of value that men have been missing, I think, for pretty much all of the history, you know?

Warren Farrell often talks about how the role of a man for the longest time was to show love for your family by spending time away from your family. I experience that as a violence. I experience that as a very real oppression that, thankfully, new technologies are helping to sort of, you know, we can find new solutions due to these technologies that are arriving today. Where I feel privileged, truly, in the true sense of the word, privileged, that I have a job and a career where I can spend every day at home and watch my daughter grow up. Because I know that like less than 1% of men all throughout history have had that opportunity. And I see that as a tremendous thing, and I think that in the future we're actually gonna start seeing more of this, more opportunities for men to sort of reestablish themselves in the private, just as women have been able to reestablish themselves in the public. And I think that this is actually going to be good for both identities, for both genders, for both sexes, however you

wanna sort of parse that.

[00:26:01] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Yeah. Well, a lot there, and you know, what I hear you saying really is that what happened culturally was women were really invited culturally to deconstruct the cultural expectations of what it meant to a woman. And, you know, that's not worth talking about here, but it's obviously related to what is a man. And as of 2023, there still really hasn't been a public conversation and a reckoning with what are the cultural expectations on men? Are they fair? Have we thought through them? You know, that happened with women a generation ago, almost two generations ago now.

[00:26:35] **Corey deVos:** Multiple generations. Yeah, that's right.

[00:26:36] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Yeah, and it continues to happen, and, you know, women, metaphorically speaking, are raised to say, like, "do you want to be a mommy, or do you want to be an astronaut? Or do you want to be both?" And men are raised to say, "this is what you do, and this is how you do it. Oh, and by the way, here are the two feelings you're allowed to have. You can be angry, and you can be checked out. So have fun with that. Have fun with having two feelings."

Because it turns out, I've been doing men's work for the last 15 years, you know, and I've done a lot of work with men on a lot of stuff. And men are absolutely every fucking bit as emotional as women. A hundred percent. We're just conditioned to stuff it down, which is why we die ten years sooner. It's why alcoholism and suicide rates are, and incarceration rates, four to six hundred percent higher than they are with women. Why do you think that is? You know, that's not a biological determinacy. That's a cultural downward pressure that puts expectations on men that, psychologically, they can't live with.

[00:27:37] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[00:27:38] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And I see it all the time, and it's heartbreaking.

[00:27:41] **Corey deVos:** This is so critical.

[00:27:42] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And I get really upset when people talk patriarchy and men. And, you know, you and I could obviously peel that apart and show where there's truth in that statement, and where we would acknowledge and honor the truth in that statement. And, both/and, it's wildly inaccurate at the same time. men I know aren't part of the patriarchy, they're just suffering silently.

[00:28:04] **Corey deVos:** Right, right.

[00:28:04] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Drinking themselves to death, playing video games to death, checked out from their kids, checked out from their spouse, checked out from their culture. Right? And they're desperately looking for a way out.

[00:28:15] **Corey deVos:** Yeah. Yeah. It's true.

[00:28:17] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Sorry, that was kind of an impassioned plea there!

[00:28:19] **Corey deVos:** No No it was good, I like that juice man. You know, Keith is a guy, for example, who, uh, has enough emotional intelligence to actually express what the fuck he's feeling at any given time.

[00:28:31] **Keith Martin-Smith:** I may even cry if you get me in the right space.

[00:28:33] **Corey deVos:** A hundred percent.

[00:28:34] **Keith Martin-Smith:** I actually want to make a serious point on that. The thing that I really appreciate about a personality like Joe Rogan and his podcast, with his 11 million weekly listeners and viewers, you know, the thing that I've noticed from him and that I've taken to heart from him, is that he's willing to show vulnerability. He's willing to cry on air. This is like a big, masculine, muscular, tattooed, MMA fighting, foul mouthed comedian who's willing to, like, have real tears and real vulnerability in the public sphere. And we need more men like him doing that.

[00:29:06] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[00:29:07] **Keith Martin-Smith:** I'm happy to model that as much as I can, or am able to.

[00:29:10] **Corey deVos:** Well, and I think you do a better job of it than Joe Rogan does. So you got that going for you buddy. I like Joe Rogan. I like Joe Rogan. I think he's funny. I think he's entertaining. I think sometimes he can be a little too quick to hop on board some half-baked ideas and take his entire following with him and all that. So, you know, there's some complaints there too. But no, look, I will take positive, healthy role models for masculinity that have been so missing from our culture for certainly my entire life. You know, growing up, the role models that you were presented to was always like the bumbling husband in sitcoms. You know, the wife has got it all together, but we're all just a bunch of... yeah, Al Bundy or Homer Simpson or Peter Griffin or, you know, what have you.

You know, who my favorite masculine role model in culture is right now? There's a show, a kids' show that is absolutely unbelievable. It's called Bluey. And I call it a kids show, but it's as much for the parents as it is for the kids. And there's the character of Bluey's dad, his name is Bandit, and he is by far my favorite masculine role model in the entire cultural space. He just lands it. He's emotionally intelligent, you know, he loves his kid, he's engaged with his kid, he's engaged with his kid's development, they resist things like hover parenting, or helicopter parenting and all that stuff. Just a wonderful animated example of a good man.

Or, you know, another one, you know, that people like to point to is like Ted Lasso. I agree with that. Ted Lasso is a great portrayal of sort of an evolved man. Another example that I think is actually really insightful was the lead, I'm forgetting the character's name, from Everything Everywhere All at Once. The main husband in that was framed as an example of transcendent masculinity. Which I think is a, you know, is a, there's a really fascinating case to be made there.

But yeah, all of which is say I will take sort of these new role models of a more awakened or a more enlightened, or just a more embodied masculinity than what we've been presented over, you know, the generations.

[00:31:12] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Yeah, yeah, and I want to circle back to that to also point out, you know, you're pointing at fictional characters rather than real people in the

world, which is also problematic, right? It's like, I often tell the guys I work with when first start working with them, like, alright, name me someone in your life who really demonstrates vulnerability and strength. You know, and it's just, of course, it's crickets, right? And lot of times I say, well, name a fictional character, and you still get crickets, you know, depending on how much television they've consumed. But the archetype of the vulnerable, powerful man, doesn't really exist yet. It's not something that has yet been manifested in our culture. And it is something that is very powerful when you encounter it, because it's different, and it's new, and it's integrated.

[00:31:56] **Corey deVos:** Would you use Barack Obama maybe as a, as a possible example?

[00:31:59] **Keith Martin-Smith:** I don't know that I ever really saw his vulnerability, you know, if you look at the way he led, I mean, I would make an argument that he, you know, the way he passed the Affordable Care Act really set himself up for failure because when he realized that the Republicans were against him, his response was, "Fuck me? No, fuck you." He just blew past them. He fought fire with fire. He didn't seek consensus. And he rammed the bill down...

[00:32:28] **Corey deVos:** Wow. I have a very different opinion than you on that.

[00:32:33] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Yeah, yeah, I saw him as aloof, I saw him as the archetype of the self-reliant male.

[00:32:39] **Corey deVos:** Interesting,

[00:32:39] **Keith Martin-Smith:** You know, too cool for school.

[00:32:41] **Corey deVos:** Interesting. I remember him singing Amazing Grace on camera with a tear in his eye, and I remember being very impressed with that as an example of masculine vulnerability.

[00:32:54] **Keith Martin-Smith:** I think Bill Clinton was better at it, is what I would say.

[00:32:57] **Corey deVos:** Interesting. That's interesting. See, with Bill Clinton, I always got this sense of a sort of inauthenticity, a triangulated sort of vulnerability, whereas got a little bit more authenticity from Obama.

So there, we probably just triggered some people just by mentioning Obama as a role model.

You know, another thing I wanna get back to Keith real briefly is, you know, you're talking about like why men die earlier. And it's both because we expect men to do the more dangerous...

[00:33:25] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And suicide, and addiction, and incarceration.

[00:33:29] **Corey deVos:** That's right. Interestingly, with suicide, I believe men and women have about the same rates of attempted suicides, but men have a much higher rate of actually succeeding in their suicide.

[00:33:39] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Because they tend to use firearms and not pills.

[00:33:40] **Corey deVos:** Right. Yeah, that's right. I think a lot of this, you know, I think a lot of the data indicates that men die, both naturally and due to suicide, after two major events in their life. After losing their job, and after losing their spouse. And when they lose their job, what 's happening is they're actually losing their sense of extrinsic value. The value that I bring to the world. "My value comes from the things that I do for other people." Right? Same thing as getting back to Warren Farrell's "I love my family by spending time away from my family, earning money so that my family can, you know, can live and can prosper and all that." That's a good example of extrinsic value.

When a man loses his wife, when she passes away or, you know, they get divorced or what have you, the man is actually losing their, in many cases, only source of intrinsic value. This was the only source that was ever telling me that I can be loved just for being myself, not because of the things that I do, but because of the things that I am.

And I think that this is, for a lot of men, I think, sort of epidemic. I think a lot of men are seriously lacking that source of intrinsic value. It's hard to get it from our surrounding culture. We really only get it from, you know, our closest relations, I think. I think that this is something that, for our age group, we actually start feeling a little bit more prominently. Especially like once our parents die, right? Once our parents die. This does a number, this does a number on men and women, but focusing just on sort of the effects it has on men, you know? When a man loses his father, he tends to go through a really dramatic and often traumatic interior transformation because of that.

[00:35:22] **Keith Martin-Smith:** My father died a year ago.

[00:35:26] **Corey deVos:** I just wanna take a moment and, you know, feel that . So you could probably speak to this.

[00:35:30] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And you're right, it is... I mean, so yeah, here, here's the feeling, yeah, it's heartbreaking on so many levels. Not just the loss of the father, but the loss the relationship that we never had.

[00:35:41] **Corey deVos:** Right.

[00:35:43] **Keith Martin-Smith:** You know, because my dad born in 36, 1936. So, you know, we could talk about externalities, but we couldn't talk about internalities, to use your language.

[00:35:51] **Corey deVos:** Right. Yeah. Well, I'm sorry that you've had to go through... you know, this must have been very challenging for you.

[00:35:57] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Mm thank you.

[00:36:00] **Corey deVos:** Um, so yeah, I think that this is a really big factor. And I think that when it comes to asking the question, what is a man, we have to start bringing these things in, because we can see how much this lack of intrinsic value and this overemphasis on extrinsic value, just how much suffering it creates for men, how much

just sheer agony and loneliness and isolation this brings for a man.

[00:36:22] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And self judgment, I think. I think there's a big part of, you know, if my value is extrinsic and I'm told I'm part of the patriarchy and I'm told I have all the power and I'm told that I'm selfish and I need to give that power up, and my life is not in focus and I'm not making much money and things aren't coming together and I'm struggling, the only logical conclusion is that I must be a complete loser. Because apparently I'm part this power structure, yet I'm not getting any of the benefits of it whatsoever, you know? That's a conversation that's missing from this narrative. Obviously if we agree the patriarchy exists, and I don't, but if I agree that it exists, you're still only talking about, what, 0.1% men, you know, that actually are in power? That leaves everybody else out of it?

[00:37:08] **Corey deVos:** Yep. To me, it's always patriarchy, asterisk. If we can put an asterisk on it, I can concede that it exists.

[00:37:15] **Keith Martin-Smith:** I'll concede there's a phenomena, but I generally, yeah, I'd have to say, "what's your definition of patriarchy?"

[00:37:20] **Corey deVos:** Right, that's right, that's right. If you believe the patriarchy is something that goes back thousands of years and it was created to oppress women and to elevate men, no, that's not the patriarchy I believe in. If you believe that a patriarchy is the sort of oppressions that women felt when they were coming into the public sphere for the first time, a sphere that his historically dominated by men, then yeah, okay. So, in which case, the patriarchy began in, you know, the early 20th century.

[00:37:47] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Agree.

[00:37:47] **Corey deVos:** Mad Men. Mad Men is a great example of a patriarchy that, you know, sort of, kind of existed.

[00:37:52] **Keith Martin-Smith:** For sure. For sure, yeah. I mean, there was, you know, we could say the boys club was and is a very real thing.

[00:38:00] **Corey deVos:** Yep. Yep.

[00:38:02] **Keith Martin-Smith:** But it's breaking up, and, you know, to your point earlier, Corey, you know, it's like, we go back to the Industrial Revolution, we go back to the beginning of modernity, we go back to the promise of democracy, representational democracy, and what does that mean? It means, well, we move from a world in the people who have the rights are the aristocrats, and we go from that, we move to a world where all men are created equal. You know, the American Revolution, this revolutionary idea that we're going to blow class apart, and we're going to say all men, whether you're landed gentry or not, have all the rights that any other man has. And then modernity continues to grow and, you know, a hundred and fifty years later we include women. Well, men and women. And then, a little while after that, we actually include, well, men, women, and people of color as well.

[00:38:50] **Corey deVos:** Right.

[00:38:51] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And then after that, we include, well, men, and women, and people of color, and gay people. Still under the promise of modernity, all people are created equal. And now we move from men, women, people of color, gay people, and now trans people, right? And so it's the same movement of modernity and inclusion. And if you step back and you take a look at it through that longer lens of history, you see you have reason to celebrate rather than reason to throw your hands up. It's not as simple as the 1619 Project, that America was based on this horrible nightmare of slavery, and that's the only thing that's true. That's a real distortion of history. And it's frankly just not very accurate. There's truths in it, but it totally overrides what I just said. It overrides the fact that there's an inarguable progression of rights that moving further and further out to different identities.

[00:39:47] **Corey deVos:** To smaller groups of identities. So we started, we started with women who were 50% of the population.

[00:39:53] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Well first men that were half, right, regardless of class, all men.

[00:39:57] **Corey deVos:** Yep. And then we pulled in the other half of the population, women, well, white women, we pulled white women in. Right? Okay.

[00:40:03] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Correct. Yeah.

[00:40:04] **Corey deVos:** Then we extended those rights to black people, who at the time were about 8% of the population. Currently, I think about 13% in America. So, you know, we went from 50% to, you know, let's say 8 to 10% of people, huge step forward, massive step forward. Then we moved to gay people, who are, you know, upper limits, estimated around 5% of the population, and now to trans people who are, you know, maybe 2% or lower, maybe even less than 1%. Again, which isn't to say, "oh, it's a small number of people, so we don't need to be as concerned about them." Right? But it's just simply saying, "look at the triumphs of the progress that we've made over the generations."

[00:40:42] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And let's also, let's also acknowledge, you know, cause there's an easy argument built into this, I can hear someone arguing with this, right? When they said "all men" in 1776, right, it turns out it really wasn't all men. It turns out that the WASPs, the White Anglo Saxon Protestants, actually had all the power. And other religions, Jews and Catholics, right, they didn't actually, they weren't invited to the table of power. It wasn't equitable. And they fought and they fought and they fought, and it got better and better. And when suffrage initially happened, it was like, yes, women were all equal in theory, but it took another hundred years of fighting for them actually to gain equity in the ways that we just spent, you know, talking about.

And the same with gays, right? It's like, it hasn't been perfect. It's been messy every time. And it's messy with trans situation as well, because it's been messy all the way along. Progress isn't linear. And it only makes sense if you look at it from the long view and you see, okay, it never goes smoothly. It never goes easily.

[00:41:39] **Corey deVos:** Yeah.

[00:41:39] **Keith Martin-Smith:** All kinds of mistakes are made every time we've tried to do this. But it is moving.

[00:41:44] **Corey deVos:** Right.

[00:41:45] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Things are pretty equal with men, compared to 1776. You'd really have a hard time that's not the case.

[00:41:54] **Corey deVos:** Another reason I think why we wanna be careful with the kind of nuance that we bring to these conversations is, when we're looking at the trans question, that's a really, really fascinating one to me. Because just like we were talking about how the shift from agricultural to the industrial revolution gave you that lever, and that lever in many ways is actually what allowed this new parity between the sexes to emerge in in our culture. Right? Obviously a huge, amazing step forward. The trans issue is actually happening for very similar reasons. One of the primary reasons why the trans question is so pressing right now, is because it is now technologically possible for someone to change their biology, in ways that we could not 50 years ago. That's not to say that we didn't have transgender people 50 years ago. We certainly did, but the opportunities available to them, especially when it came to transforming their actual physical bodies, did not exist.

[00:42:53] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Biologically. So you're talking about, yeah, you're talking about what's allowable now is more of a biological transformation, which helps to deepen and sustain the psychological and cultural.

[00:43:08] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[00:43:09] **Keith Martin-Smith:** If I put a wig on and put makeup on, it's, you know, it's like, I'm going to look like Keith, you know? But if I'd started the process of gender transitioning when I was 18 years old and, you know, I'd had some surgeries and I was on estrogen and I was, you know, had hair removal and whatever all else, right? It's like, that's all technology, lower right technologies that, are helping make this change, I think better for the people that actually really genuinely want to do it.

[00:43:31] **Corey deVos:** That's right. That's right. And, the fact that, you know, it's coming from sort of our capacities in the lower right quadrant, our actual ability to make these transformations to our body, is fascinating to me because in a lot of ways I view the transgender question as being one of the first of many, many, many sort of

"posthuman" challenges to come down the line. You know, posthuman is sort of defined by the capacity for us to intervene on a biological level with our own bodies. We no longer need to be subject to our own biological determinism. We can now self-author our own biology as much as, you know, our identities or cultural roles or what have you.

And I think that it's just fascinating to frame it in that way, because we can actually see how, you know, why there's a particular pressure, and why now, right? Well, it's because things like hormone therapy did not exist decades ago, and you know, these things just simply did not exist. Now they do. It creates a new opportunity, a new possibility, and people are naturally self-selecting into sort of those new possibilities and opportunities.

And another thing we might want to point out is how, you know, it's like I was saying earlier, how, you know, there's sort of, there's different directions of feedback and influence that these quadrants place on each other. So, for example, biology oftentimes determines the sorts of gender roles that we have created for ourselves in our society. It's not often that our gender roles then in turn can, influence or reshape or, you know, what have you, our biology. So, you know, if you change someone's brain, if you change someone's body, you're going to change their interior experience. But thinking, "I feel like a woman" isn't going to give you the secondary biological characteristics of a woman. That's exactly what's starting to change though, because of technology.

So because of these new technologies, these new medical technologies that are available to us, we're starting to see that sort of new kind of influence between the quadrants. So now we are at the point where, yes, having a particular kind of identity can result in a transformation of your biology. That wasn't previously possible. That's never been possible before. But it is now. And I think that's one of the things that we wanna consider when it comes to the question of why is there such an increased uptick of people who identify, for example, as transgender, and who want to have the medical, biological interventions in order to actually physically transform their bodies, so that their bodies more closely resemble their identities. I think that's important and something we want to take into consideration.

[00:46:14] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Yeah. I think maybe Corey here maybe just take a slight lateral shift because I think it's an important topic, and we touched on the need to get into a little bit here, but maybe actually sort of overtly and explicitly go into a couple of the hot button issues, maybe around like transgender, what is it? Gender affirming care

for preteens and teens. And maybe the cultural requests being made from the left, or demanded from the left, that transgenderism be fully accepted by all Americans, let's say, we'll keep, we'll to U.S because it's we know.

[00:46:51] **Corey deVos:** Yeah.

[00:46:51] **Keith Martin-Smith:** So maybe we can wade into that, because it's a pretty messy subject. And if you don't mind, I'll sort of roll in with my opinion on the first one and we could take it from there.

[00:46:59] **Corey deVos:** Yeah. Sure.

[00:47:01] **Keith Martin-Smith:** So, you know, we talked about this when we were in the pre-call, but you to you know, I went through a really strong rebellious phase. You know, I had a very complicated childhood and not ideal in a lot of ways. So I went through a really strong rebellious phase when I was, you know, 12, 13, and acted out in lot of ways, and took on a persona, took on the persona of the rebel. And what I was saying was that I'm really glad that no one allowed me to get my face tattooed. Because I very well might have. was going through a very difficult transition identifying with a persona that is age appropriate for someone who's 12, 14 years old, that is, you don't know it's a persona, but it is absolutely a construct of ego. It's how you protect yourself. It's how you become socialized with a different peer group. It's how you differentiate from your parents and your place of upbringing. It serves all these powerful functions. And by the time you're 18 or 19, and you sort of evolve to the next thing, you begin to individuate more, the persona sort of runs out of gas. You sort of burn through it, and you're sort of like, "well, who am I really?" Right? "I'm not really a rebel. Like, who am I rebelling against? Like, why am I smoking cigarettes? This is stupid." You know, in my case.

And so, I think what I spoke to is, I think when concerned people, parents, speak of, "well, I'm worried that if my 12 year old goes through this rite of passage, which we don't do in this country, so they go through it culturally and messily and without much guidance, they're being enculturated with this idea that trans is kind of the new cool thing and it's really acceptable, and they take it on, but then they're allowed to get, or make the decision to get, surgery or hormone replacement or puberty blockers, that this could be analogous to me getting my face tattooed when I was 13 years old, and I'm glad that no one allows 13 year olds to get tattoos. There's a reason that you have to be

over 18 years old, because getting a tattoo, you know, kind of a big deal. In fact, the guy that tattooed my hand, I have a tattoo on my hand, and he said, "You know, I wouldn't tattoo your hand if you weren't as old as you are."

[00:49:05] **Corey deVos:** Yeah.

[00:49:06] **Keith Martin-Smith:** I was like, "great, thanks, I think?" So I think, you know, there's, again, this is a place for a nuanced conversation. Should gender transitioning care be banned, hard stop? I don't think so. Should it be allowed uncritically, hard stop? Of course not. If you a 12 year old and you're really sure that they appear to be genuinely transgender, you're not drinking yourself into oblivion every night and beating the shit out of them, you know, and you assess that with mental health professionals and you come to a nuanced decision. Is that a complicated case that I'm very open to hearing what you might want to do as a parent? Yeah. Maybe it would work for that child. But I think caution is warranted.

[00:49:49] **Corey deVos:** Caution is a hundred percent warranted. You said a lot there, and I've got a bit of a windup here. So the one difference I think in your... I love the face tattoo example. The one difference here being that a face tattoo can be an impulsive act. You can just decide one day, "oh, I need this," right? And you can go to the tattoo parlor and you walk home and now you've got a big, you know, tattoo on your face for the rest of your life. ,

[00:50:13] **Keith Martin-Smith:** A big "F YOU" you know, across your forehead.

[00:50:15] **Corey deVos:** Yeah, exactly. Fuck you on your forehead. For the vast majority of kids who were doing any kind of, you know, gender affirmation, you know, any of that, it's not an impulsive... there's a whole sequence of hoops that kids and their parents are jumping through. Now we can have any number.

[00:50:32] **Keith Martin-Smith:** So safeguards, you're saying there are very much safeguards in place.

[00:50:36] **Corey deVos:** Uh, you you have to go through, you know, years of interface with therapists. You have to... you know what I mean? It's not a matter of like, "mom, I

woke up today and I feel like, you know, I know I was born a female, but I feel like a guy, and so I wanna start taking these hormones." It's never an overnight thing like that. It's always gonna be something. Now we can talk about whether those sort of hoops...

[00:50:56] **Keith Martin-Smith:** I want to say thank you, because I was a little bit strawmanning a thing there, so I appreciate you actually backing up and giving some nuance there. Because that's really important, for me not to misstate the actual reality of what's going on. So, I just want to acknowledge that.

[00:51:11] **Corey deVos:** Sure. Well, what you said though, the example, the metaphor that you offered, I think is useful, because what I think you're really pointing to is not the impulsiveness of it, but the fact that you're making these decisions at particular developmental stages in your own growth, and you're making those not just within the developmental stages of your own growth, but you're making them in the context of the developmental stages of your surrounding culture and society.

[00:51:32] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And your peers.

[00:51:33] **Corey deVos:** That's right. And this is where I wanna do a little bit of windup, because one of the big reactions I had from your first episode, talking about sex, gender and identity, was how all of these move through a process that's very familiar to a lot of integral thinkers, which is this process of moving from fusion, a state of fusion where sex, gender, and identity are all the same thing. This is the typical traditional Amber mindset. If you're a male, you wear these clothes, with these colors, and this is your identity. It's sort of, you inherit it, it's handed down to you in a lot of ways, right? You just have to grow into these sort of expectations that you were born into in a lot of ways. That's an Amber state of fusion, right?

However, at Orange, sex, identity, and gender... you get a little bit more differentiation. You move from fusion to differentiation. We start to notice, oh, these things, you know, sort of have their own realities. And they can be related, but they're different from each other, right? Sex is its own thing.

Now, a lot of people will say, yeah, but, you know, the conservatives are, you know, they must be orange, they must be sort of the modern rational meme, because they're

looking at it, and they're looking at the biology. Orange is the source, the bedrock of all the physical sciences, so when, you know, someone says "there are only two genders", they're being scientific and they're being, you know.

Okay, I can follow that argument. However, alongside Orange, right, is also what Robert Kegan calls this capacity, this stage, of self-authorship. Right? So with self-authorship, what we're talking about is individuals who now have the freedom to not just inherit their identity, but to actually explore it themselves and to construct it themselves. Which further allows this differentiation between sex and gender and identity. All of this is coming through the self-authoring stage. So I think 9 times outta 10, if someone is just insisting, right, "there are only two genders, and I'm being scientific when I say that", that's actually not a fully orange modern, rational perspective. It might be a perspective that's actually coming from that sort of intermediary stage between amber and orange, what Susanne Cook-Greuter calls the Expert stage, or the skill-centric stage, we sometimes call the "Umber" stage, cuz it's kind of related to Amber, but not quite.

[00:54:03] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And I think a lot of the culture wars are actually rooted at that level of the Expert, where they are incapable fully rational thinking, but they're obviously not fully conformist. They're in between, which means "I cherry pick my facts, I have a narrative that I don't know is a narrative, I have a strong cognitive bias, I don't really understand cognitive bias." Right. "I'm going to take a stand using facts, but I'm gonna use the facts that validate my opinion, and I'm not going to consider your facts if they undermine my facts. My facts please."

[00:54:30] **Corey deVos:** It's the debate culture. Whenever someone says "debate me, debate me, debate me", chances are they're coming from that Umber, Expert stage of development. Because Orange exchange isn't so much like a debate, it's more like a dialogue. And then green exchange is more like discourse. And then integral exchange is more like a dialectic. Right? So you're actually moving from doctrine at Amber, to dialogue at orange, to discourse at Green, to dialectic at Teal. I like it cuz it alliterates, right? And if it alliterates, there's a greater chance of it being true, because it's more beautiful. But continuing sort of this thing, so...

[00:55:06] **Keith Martin-Smith:** So say that again, because I think that's... I haven't heard that before, and so just run through that progress of how we come to truth.

[00:55:15] **Corey deVos:** How we exchange with each other? Yeah. Yeah, so with Amber, it's about doctrine, right?

[00:55:21] **Keith Martin-Smith:** I've got the book. That's right. Yeah.

[00:55:22] **Corey deVos:** The truth is dropped on your head from the top down, from the authorities on down. Right? And that's just it, you don't question that. And you can't really have conversations outside of that.

Then you get to the Expert stage, which is the "debate" stage. " I have my truth, I have my principled sort of, you know, version of the truth...

[00:55:41] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And if I'm better at gathering facts than you, I'm gonna win.

[00:55:43] **Corey deVos:** That's right. And I'm gonna compete with your version of the truth and... exactly.

Then you get to Orange, which is about dialogue. There's more curiosity and exploration begins to open up at orange.

[00:55:53] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Steel man and strawman become part of the actual lived understanding. "Oh, I don't wanna straw man this person because that's inauthentic and I actually want to dialogue with you." So you tell me what you think, I'm not going to tell you what you think.

[00:56:05] **Corey deVos:** As does a greater capacity for perspective taking. " I disagree with you, but I can take your perspective and understand why, you know, how your view came in the first place. And I might disagree with your view, but I can see sort of the underpinnings that I might have some agreement with." A real dialogue begins to take place, right?

And then at Green, you get "discourse" where it's kind of like, "okay, it's not enough to sort of have two people in dialogue, we have to take a look at all the possible

permutations of perspective that are out there and put it all on the table. Everything needs to be on the table."

[00:56:40] **Keith Martin-Smith:** In other words, like, what are, what are the unseen assumptions I may have? What are unconscious power biases I might have? What are gendered expectations I may have, right?

[00:56:49] **Corey deVos:** That's right. That's right. This is the Green stage. And what I'll do is, I'll try to fold these two sort of trajectories together. At the Green stage, ideally what's happening is you're continuing, healthy Green is going to continue that differentiation process. You can now see that sex and gender and identity are not the same, right? You can see that fairly clearly, and you're paying even closer attention to, for example, the kinds of cultural constructs that needs to be deconstructed in order for us to come to a more healthy relationship with our sex, our gender, and our identity.

Unhealthy green, however, lapses not into differentiation, but into dissociation. And this I think is what we're seeing with so much of the wokism that's out there. I think this is so much what you were arguing against in your first episode, about how, you know, all of a sudden, no, it's not sex and gender and identity. It's only one of the three. It's only one, and everything else can be reduced to that. Right? So we're gonna deny biology, because "guys, biology is just the products of white men. You know, white cisgendered men created biology, so it's inherently biased, and you know, therefore we need to deconstruct everything, and, you know, so no, my identity is purely mine and mine alone, and has nothing to do with biology."

Well, congratulations. You're now dissociating.

[00:58:04] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Science is just worldview, right? They could sort of reduce you know. And it's like, "Well okay, you know, that's interesting as you type that on your computer and get in an airplane and fly across the country and, you know, it's a, it's an interestingly easily proven wrong belief.

[00:58:18] **Corey deVos:** That's right. Exactly. Sort of again, self-evidently wrong belief, because at Orange, the whole capacity for self-evident sort of arguments emerges in

the first place. Right? "We find these truths to be self-evident."

[00:58:32] **Keith Martin-Smith:** But wouldn't that put that unhealthy Green really at the expert stage? Like, wouldn't it actually not be Green? Wouldn't it really be pre-rational, essentially?

[00:58:40] **Corey deVos:** Well, I think you just described what wokism is. So what wokism doing is, it's taking fairly advanced Green pluralistic...

[00:58:48] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Nuanced concepts. Yeah.

[00:58:49] **Corey deVos:** Very nuanced. Look, the idea of privilege, for example, is a tremendously useful and nuanced idea if you are wielding it the way it's supposed to be wielded. The moment you take this very, you know, fairly advanced idea of privilege, which is a high Green sort of systemic observation of reality and the kinds of proximities that we share with each other, the minute you take that and use that as a substitute for, "Well, you're racist because you're privileged", or, you know, you start using it as a shorthand to write people off, congratulations, you're no longer, you're no longer Green, you've lapsed into Amber or Umber.

[00:59:27] **Keith Martin-Smith:** and let's, let's, let's make that clear. I think what I would say is that when you use something like privilege as a means to gain power over other people, then it's obviously not Green. So if I'm like "Corey, you're a white cisgendered male," and I'm doing that to dismiss your argument, which is basically attack, right, so like I don't have to listen to you, because of what you look like.

[00:59:52] **Corey deVos:** Yep. I can discard you.

[00:59:53] **Keith Martin-Smith:** That's obviously a pre-rational stance. I mean, obviously. No rationalist is gonna take a stance of like, "well, I refuse to listen to you because you're black." You know, it's like, that's not rational, that's racist, you know?

[01:00:05] **Corey deVos:** Yep.

[01:00:05] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And obviously, if you say to me, "well, you don't have a right to speak about trans issues, Keith, because you're not a trans woman," it's like, well, I can talk about white men, I'm not allowed to have opinion on anything else, you know, it's like, that's a ridiculous position to take, it doesn't make any sense. Now I need to be open, that I might be wrong because I don't live in that space, right? But that's different.

[01:00:26] **Corey deVos:** Healthy green is an invitation to take a close and critical look at our conditioning, our habitations, the various cultural constructs that we've assumed are... exactly. It's an invitation to take a look at all that and to dismantle the ones that are no longer working, or the ones that have become transparent to you. That is healthy green, and that continues to be really, really necessary and needed in today's world. Unhealthy green....

[01:00:51] **Keith Martin-Smith:** as, and then as we move a dialectic, I just to I want to finish this loop because we were, before we...

[01:00:56] **Corey deVos:** yeah, no, exactly, and I'm getting there, I just wanna say that, you know, if you are using the... oftentimes what we see with wokism is people who memorize the punchline, but don't understand the joke. Right?

[01:01:11] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Oh my God that's a brilliant metaphor. I love that. That's so accurate!

[01:01:14] **Corey deVos:** They know the answers, but they can't do the math that actually produces these perspectives in the first place. So it's these big, beautiful Green ideas that just get enforced in this oftentimes belligerent "us versus them" essentialist Amber to Umber kind of way. But, you know, again, healthy green is the world of discourse.

So then we go from discourse, from differentiation and/or dissociation, to a more integral enfoldment, right? Which we can call a dialectic. And so basically, you know, the gift that Green gave us, the gift that pluralism gave us... and by the way, this is the best way to tell if a woke person is healthy green or not: how pluralistic are they? Because the minute they start writing off views and values because it belongs to a certain kind of

category, that's no longer pluralism buddy. You know, like, bring back pluralistic green again.

But the gift of pluralism is that it does indeed put everything on the table. Now, it puts everything in a table in such a way... you know, in integral, we have a fancy word for this. We call it "non-exclusion". The idea being that everyone's allowed to speak their truths, everyone can put their truth on the table. But then we have to move to the next step, which moves from non-exclusion to enfoldment, where we begin to say that, "okay, we have all these truths, but some truths are more true, and other truths are more partial. And so we have to figure out, not just do this kind of you know, horizontal buffet of, possible perspectives, but we have to start stacking these and prioritizing these in certain ways. And that requires... that's more of a dialectic.

[01:02:47] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And what happens if you don't, you know, and Ken has pointed this out brilliantly, but if you say, "okay, we are all about egalitarianism and multiple points of view, we're going to do our diversity, inclusion and equity stuff, we're going to invite all people to the table, and we want to welcome all views," you know, the immediate thought is that, "well, you're being disingenuous, because you don't want a neo-Nazi at the fucking table, guys. And that's what Ken points out, like, well, everyone believes in like pluralism until the Nazi shows up, and then they go, "Oh shit, I guess we don't mean all voices." And it's like, yeah, you actually don't mean all voices. You're saying it, but it would be transparently absurd put it into action, because you'd have to allow anybody at the table. And with a lot of diversity, inclusion, and equity folks, at least the ones that I, the circles I've been in, you know, in places like Boulder and things, when liberals say they want diversity, they mean black people who think like them.

[01:03:38] **Corey deVos:** That's right, that's right. Right.

[01:03:41] **Keith Martin-Smith:** They don't mean conservatives! We don't... and they don't mean poor black people who dropped out school, you know, it's like, "No, no, I want people with master's degrees who are black, so that Boulder is integrated." And it's like, you fucking asshole. Like, like, that's not what... that's not pluralistic! It's not integrated. You know? Like, just because you have dark skin you shouldn't give yourself a crown for being so progressive. It's like a clown show.

[01:04:06] **Corey deVos:** Yeah. You know what's funny? You know what's funny about that? Because I just wanna make it clear everyone, Keith is the Boulderite in this conversation. I live in the next town over, I live in Longmont, which funny enough, we might say is less developed, in terms of our, you know, vertical. Maybe somewhat less developed, but way more inclusive and diverse of a community than Boulder ever will be. That's sort of the irony of this, right? Is that Boulder really prides itself on how beautiful, vibrant Green it is, and how just so beyond racism they are, which is very easy to say when 99% of your population looks like you.

[01:04:43] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And everybody has a pretty decent amount of wealth, you know?

[01:04:48] **Corey deVos:** Exactly.

[01:04:48] **Keith Martin-Smith:** I live in this little tiny apartment, you know, it's like, I a house in boulder.

[01:04:52] **Corey deVos:** Right.

[01:04:52] **Keith Martin-Smith:** So again, so if we take this back to Green, the idea is that, you know, what people on the left tend not to want to talk about is class. Classism. If we're going to talk about privilege, if you're going to stand up there as the white woman and lecture me about male privilege, it's like, okay, well, how much money do you have in your bank account? Because if we're going to talk about privilege, we should probably, like, that's actually a really big form privilege. But people don't want to talk about that, because they want to talk about the kind of privilege that oftentimes leaves them in a greater position of power.

[01:05:21] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[01:05:21] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And that's when we know we're not actually having a conversation about pluralism, we're having a conversation about this Expert phase.

[01:05:27] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[01:05:27] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And I know that right away with people. If when I go to those things and people start talking about DEI and, you know, and there isn't a conversation about class, I just say, "man, this whole room smells like shit, and I'm not interested in being part of a conversation that's going to pretend like class isn't something that we should be talking about if we're going privilege. Give me a break.

[01:05:47] **Corey deVos:** That's right. Yeah. Beautifully said, beautifully said. So all of this, I think, is what naturally begins to sort of take place. These are the natural processes I think that occur at Integral, and I think we're seeing, hopefully our audience is seeing some of this in this conversation, where we, you know, we make a cultural critique about just the amount of dissociation that we're seeing, right? Both on the right and on the left, each of which have totally dissociated from each other.

And there's almost a curative kind of loop, where it's like, okay, first we wanna get back to differentiation, but then we wanna kind of go up to a reintegration. And I think that this is sort of the promise and the hope and the power, in a lot of ways, of sort of the integral territory itself, is that it begins to allow us to understand that, you know, the question "what is a man" is, as you know, I think you made the case very clearly and poignantly in your first episode, you cannot at the integral stage answer that question without integrating Upper Right quadrant biological sex, Lower Left quadrant culture and cultural constructs and expectations and fashions and that whole space, as well as our upper left identities. And then we bring in this other piece of sort of the legal pressures, the economic pressures, the technological pressures coming from the Lower Right. This is the minimal way we can reconstruct an answer to that question of "what is a man" or "what is a woman." Right? We need all of these.

And this I think is really emphasizing the multipolarity that you were really emphasizing in your first course. And integral, we often talk about, you know, we have this concept of a "GigaGlossary" where the idea being that there's no such thing as just a "given" anywhere in this universe. So the GigaGlossary is sort of like the theory of relativity for language itself. So the theory of relativity tells us that the motion of an object depends on the position of all other objects. That's the only way that you can make sense of this thing called "motion", right? One object is moving relative to all the other objects sort of

in space.

The GigaGlossary is doing something very similar, but it's saying the meaning of a subject is relative to the position of all other subjects. So if you ask the question, "what is a man", it is a different question for every altitude of consciousness, for every quadrant of consciousness. And integral, I think, wants to take a look at all of those different possible answers to that question, and to fold them together, to find the patterns that connect those different kinds of answers, to tie them, to fold them together. Enfoldment, right? To really bring them together into a larger, greater, more useful, more compassionate vision of what it means to be a man, of what it means to be a woman, and probably most importantly, what it means to be a human being, right? So I think that's sort of the integral power.

Now, I wanna tie this back to your original question. This whole spiel was to answer your original question about, you know, children, adolescents, who are struggling with their own gender identity, and what kinds of interventions should we make available to them. And I wanted to run through that, because the problem that we're seeing is that these kids, these adolescents are having these questions emerge for them at a time in their own development which is already very confusing, very intense. Do you remember what it was like to be a 13, 14 year old? The amount of social pressure? Every... I mean, your entire universe stopped at the boundaries of like your school, right? Your classmates, that was your world, and you had to fit in, or you were a... you know, it's difficult. Adolescence is difficult. It's confusing. Kids don't know who they are, but have to pretend like they do.

[01:09:32] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Let's be clear, you're either in an in group, or you're ostracized, but either way, you experience the pain of ostracization, either because you have been or because you see others who have been.

[01:09:46] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[01:09:46] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And to that's one of the most painful parts of, you know, when I look back on that time period. And it's developmentally appropriate, right?,

[01:09:53] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[01:09:53] **Keith Martin-Smith:** But it is extraordinarily painful. It still is painful to me.

[01:09:56] **Corey deVos:** These are the years that kids are moving into self-authorship for the first time. This is their very first capacity to explore and to create their own identities. Right? This is the natural sort of path of that particular stage of development. And kids are hitting that path in a deeply socialized context, and that makes it that much more difficult, I think, to speak to the morals and the ethics of the question. To me it's a case by case basis. All I know is if my own daughter was struggling with this, and my own daughter was having suicidal thoughts because of this, as a lot of kids sort of out there report, I would have to look very, very carefully at the types of options... You know, I might say to myself, "Well, it's just a phase, once she's sort of further along in her development she'll be able to rethink this and da, da da". But you know what? If she kills herself before she makes it to that later stage, I haven't done a lot of good, I haven't loved my child the way I should have loved my child. Because I wasn't able to see her for who she is, not for who she's going to be, but for who she is right now. And we have to bring compassion to that. We have to bring compassion to the kids who feel lost and isolated and depressed, and who just sometimes just wanna leave this world, because of the enormous pressures, internal pressures, external pressures, that they're facing. It's hell. It's hell for these kids.

[01:11:30] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And let's be clear, what makes it so hard for them is because, you know, we talked about intrinsic and extrinsic value, and when you're 12 or 13 years old, the only value that you're capable of generating is extrinsic. You can't generate intrinsic value until you, you know, probably until your frontal cortex is much, much more developed, and you have the capacity for self reflection, and that doesn't come online for most of us until, you know, our later teens, right?

[01:11:52] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[01:11:53] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And for some people, never.

[01:11:56] **Corey deVos:** That's right. So all of which is what I think makes this heartbreakingly complex. I mean, it's agonizing. And anytime I see someone sort of

make light of the issue, or pretend that there's a simplicity here, I don't think there's any real simplicity here. And so I have to just, like, leave it to the kid, the parents, their doctors, their therapists. I don't feel like politicians should have much of a role when it comes to answering these particular questions. Now, if it happened to my child, I would probably want to do everything I could to help her through this, and hopefully there's a light at the end of the tunnel where suddenly she has a more... she's able to bring a different kind of awareness to her identity that you're just simply not capable of doing when you're an adolescent. Because hopefully once she's able to see her subject as an object and feel sort of liberation from that, and to see her inter-subject as an object and feel more liberation from that, then some of that pain and some of that suffering will begin to subside. It won't go away, but it'll begin to subside, and she can then make those decisions later in life, when she's, you know, maybe a little bit more equipped to do so.

However, this just is not the case for some of the kids out there. For some kids, the pressures are too much, they're too insurmountable. And we do sadly see an uptick of suicide rates for kids who are dealing with this. So that's when, you know, whenever people start saying, "I'm not gonna support your mental illness" or, you know, whatever those sort of more crude arguments are, it breaks my heart. Because to me that's a reaction that is not grounded in empathy and compassion. It's not grounded in actual best wishes for this individual child and, you know, the future that they can have. It's just, it's just ideological at that point. And that, and that's true for the left as well.

[01:13:46] **Keith Martin-Smith:** What I'm hearing you say, if I could sort of bottom line it, is that, you know, you're pretty hard position here is that this is really between a parent and the children, and it's really up to them. It's not up so much to government or politicians to arbitrate this.

[01:14:02] **Corey deVos:** Right.

[01:14:02] **Keith Martin-Smith:** You're saying that parents have a right to be ones run the show.

[01:14:07] **Corey deVos:** I, yes. And I would also involve doctors and therapists. I think doctors and therapists are critical here.

[01:14:13] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Right, we're talking about considering this in way that's nuanced and has support and has, what should we say, the capacity for critical analysis and disagreement.

[01:14:22] **Corey deVos:** Right. That's right.

[01:14:24] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Maybe my daughter is kind of traumatized and maybe, you know, brain chemistry is messed up. And maybe the this isn't a good decision for her to do gender transitioning.

[01:14:35] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[01:14:35] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And we've got to bite the bullet and get through it. We've gotta get through the next three years.

[01:14:38] **Corey deVos:** That's right. So I just, I, I just don't think there's a simple answer to this, the way that, for example, when we talk about women in sports, that's kind of, that feels a little bit more simple to understand, cuz like we said earlier, well sports are bodies competing, not identities competing, but we could also do different weight classes and that would solve a lot of that. That's a, it feels like a fairly easy problem to clean up.

But the question of emerging identity in adolescence, I mean, that's already messy and confusing enough, right? I mean, just take for, you know, just a, a neurotypical child, that is already difficult enough, and parents are already pulling out their hair about the various sort of decision points that present themselves when your kid is an adolescent. Throw this in there, throw any fear, you know, as a parent, being fearful that my kid might actually end their own lives, I simply cannot imagine anything more horrifying than that. So, you know, all I can do is lead with compassion and trust that this group of kids, parents, doctors, therapists will be able to make the right decisions for that individual, and not decisions for all the rest of society. Because I don't, I don't think we can make any easy rules there.

[01:15:50] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Thanks Corey. Well we're 80 minutes into this, I think, is there any loose strands we want to wrap up, or do we want to it up to questions and

comments and that sort of thing? Where are you with everything? I feel like we've tackled a a lot of territory in an hour and twenty minutes.

[01:16:03] **Corey deVos:** And I feel like, Jesus, I wish we had another three hours because any of the, any of the little bits we threw out, we could just unpack and unpack and unpack.

[01:16:11] **Keith Martin-Smith:** And I think there's always an opportunity for that, you know, if there's curiosity around any of these topics for anybody listening, you know, please reach out to me, reach out to Corey, let us know you want to hear more, and why and what. You know, I have no attachment to having this be the only conversation about it, you know, I'm sort of curious what it serves, if it serves. It serves me, it helps me understand things a lot better, it gives me a more nuanced understanding of where we sit in culture, right? I'm not here lecturing people on how they should view things. I'm as much sitting in the car with everybody else trying to figure out what are the best practices, and the best ways to compassionately, intelligently, and carefully look at some of these very powerful and important issues that are coming up in culture around gender, around identity, around sex, around power, around privilege.

[01:16:59] **Corey deVos:** That's right, that's right. I feel like I just wanna clean something up that I said. So I was talking about how a lot of times these questions are coming online for kids when they're adolescents, they're hitting the self-authoring stage, maybe later on down the line the severity, sort of the intensity, the urgency of that question might loosen up a little bit. I'm not saying that it will, I'm not saying that like people aren't gonna transition if they're in later stages of their development or their life. I mean, Lana Wachowski is one of our favorite artists, sort of here in the integral space, she transitioned in her, what, I think her forties, for example. This is someone who is tremendously developed, tremendously creative, tremendously respected and renowned and, you know, and loved, and you know, seen in a lot of ways. And, you know, she made the decision to transition in her forties, and that was the right thing for her to do. Right? Because it's not something that just goes away for a lot of people.

Now, for the kids who are being infected by sort of, you know, the social contagion of this, which I completely think is possible, that there selection pressures in culture that are causing more kids to identify in a particular way, maybe to be cutting edge or to be different or, you know, to basically solve all those problems that every single adolescent

is already struggling with, this just becomes a new tool sort of in the tool belt. You know, for those kids, that's why I would hope that maybe a little bit more development, a little bit more capacity to make subject into object and be less reactive and more responsive, hopefully that will take care of some of that. But for the people who are genuinely afflicted by this, you know, development... they can be at turquoise or, you know, chartreuse or whatever color you wanna throw at the table, and they could still make the decision to transition, because that's what brings them more happiness, more joy, more love, more fulfillment, et cetera.

So I just wanted to make that point, that I don't see this as like an early fulcrum that we just have to get through. But even for a lot of kids, that might be true.

So one of the things I often do when I'm doing shows, Keith, is I say to people, if you have any questions, let us know, and in the the meantime, we've got another topic of discussion that we can chew on a little bit.

[01:18:58] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Great. You can pretend I just said that.

[01:19:00] **Corey deVos:** So while we wait to see if anything comes in, two issues we might wanna talk about. So one is, there's a lot of states right now that are banning drag shows. A lot of federal judges are finding that unconstitutional.

[01:19:13] **Keith Martin-Smith:** This seems like a little bit a nothing burger to me. You know...

[01:19:16] **Corey deVos:** Does it?

[01:19:17] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Yeah, yeah, not as you and I are concerned, but like it has all the smackings of kind of... I mean, this sounds dismissive, I don't mean it as dismissive as it sounds, but right wing hysteria, you know? Like it seems it's a little bit of a tempest in a teapot that I feel like is probably reflective of deeper concerns around conservatives feeling like, "hey, the liberals are really hijacking too much, and this is just a bridge too far. I don't know that it has that much to do with the drag shows itself. I mean it is kind of weird, drag shows for kids, as someone who doesn't have kids, I'm

like, what is that about anyway? I don't even understand the concept.

[01:19:54] **Corey deVos:** I agree with you. I actually think that it's more of a non-problem, it's a mole hill, not a mountain, that has just become this political, like, battle line for, you know, really weird reasons. To me, I think it's silly, because I think that pretty much post Amber, we begin to see that like, you know, basing so much of our antipathy on the clothes that people wear just seems kind of silly. I mean, you know, a couple hundred years ago, dudes wore white makeup and powder wigs, and that was seen as the standard of masculinity. Teddy Roosevelt wore a pink dress when he was a child, because pink was actually the masculine color in the late 1800s. These things, as you pointed out in your last show, they are so mutable. They're constantly changing between, you know, different regions of America, let alone different regions of the world, let alone different eras in history.

So, to me, when it comes to like, what clothes people wear, which is all the drag issue is, what clothes do people wear, it seems very silly to me. I can understand at why an Amber stage of development would get kind of upset about it, because again, at Amber these things are fused together. Sex, gender, and identity are the same thing, and that's why you're gonna go out and you're gonna protest Target for selling, you know, little boy clothes with rainbows on it, because "there's boy clothes and there's girl clothes, and that's how it's supposed to be." Um, it feels a little silly to me.

[01:21:16] **Keith Martin-Smith:** I might play devil's advocate here and say, you know, I'm thinking of some of my conservative friends who, first of all, I think it would be important to acknowledge, hey, conservative friend, I get that you really care about this and you really care about your kids, and you're speaking up because you care about your kids being negatively impacted. And I would always start by honoring that, like hey, I get that you care, and I get that this matters to you. It is a tempest in a teapot too. I want to acknowledge... let me sort of walk that back a bit. It's a tempest in a teapot for me, but I don't have any kids.

You know I think for people even at the rational stage, there can be a concern of is there sort of DEI, wokish, overly liberal, more of this pre-rational Expert stage, is that actually running rampant through the schools? Are my children being indoctrinated, not in like this nuanced version of a post-rational world, but in this pre-rational dictates of "this is what you can and can't think, this is who is and isn't empowered, this is what..." And I'm

very sympathetic that if I had a kid who was in school and I felt like the drag show was indicative of this larger thing that I would be against,

[01:22:30] **Corey deVos:** A new doctrine.

[01:22:32] **Keith Martin-Smith:** If a school is trying to indoctrinate my child in the true sense of the word indoctrination, pre-rational, "this is what you believe, and we're not open to talking about it," you know, "we don't care what your opinion is. If you have any other opinion, it's because you're racist or you're anti trans" or they're going to start these pre-rational labels to dismiss your argument.

I think maybe as I talk through it, you know, I can be very sympathetic that it's not as simple as just Amber people getting their noses riled, this could be a really complicated developmental thing where someone who is rational or post-rational could be authentically reacting to essentially a pre-rational dictate coming in from the school.

[01:23:11] **Corey deVos:** I think that's all well said. I think there's probably two slightly different issues. One is education, which I think is totally worth us talking about. The other is, you know, I really just sort of label it as "fashion". Like again, going to Target, there's a lot of protests against Target right now among conservatives, and that's because they think that Target, by selling a certain kind of clothes for certain age groups, is part of this whole grooming kind of ideology, that their kids are being actively groomed and transformed into future gay people and transgendered people because of the clothes that are available to them in the store.

That's why I start to feel like it's a little bit silly, because I'm always gonna emphasize, I'm always gonna prioritize the side that leads to maximum self-expression. As we're talking about earlier, men need more ways to express themselves, not fewer ways to express themselves. So I am always going to lean in the direction of more self-expression, more self-expression.

That said, the other thing that you're mentioning about, that you're cautioning us about, that is also almost certainly taking place too. I don't think it's usually taking place, I don't think that, you know, people who wanna, you know, bring in more sex education to our kids, or who want to just simply educate our kids that things like, you know, gay

identities and trans identities exist, I don't think that's part of a sinister plot to groom your children and, you know, all those sort of narratives that emerge around it. But I do think this stuff is often wielded in a very, you know, dogmatic, doctrinal sort of way. And that can be, to the extent that it is cutting off debate, dialogue, discourse, and dialectic, to the extent that it's cutting those things off, yeah, that is something we need to keep a very, very careful eye on. I absolutely agree with that. But I don't think law is like, you know, they, they call it like the, "don't say gay" law in Florida. I don't think that's the solution. I don't think the solution is, if you happen to know one of your students is trans, identifies as trans, you're now legally required to report that to their parents, despite any possible consequences that might come out of that. I don't think that's the right Lower Right quadrant response to kinds of problems.

[01:25:20] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Yeah, and I think, Corey, you're just pointing out that there is... so two thoughts come to mind, you know, I think the right feels understandably under attack as culture is again evolving and moving into establishing new norms. And every time that's happened, right, with women's rights, I went through the before. You know, people of color rights, gay rights, every time it's happened, every time it's happened, the conservatives have fought it every time. No exceptions. They've been against it, against integration, against getting rid of Jim Crow, against Martin Luther King, right? Against, against, against, conservatives, almost all of them. And because they perceive correctly that their way of being is under attack, you know? "Hey, if this goes through, there's going to be black kids in the school. I don't want that. I'm going to fight it." Right? And they're honest about it.

And to me, this is another part of that... we need conservatives and we need liberals for the dynamic tension that they provide in culture. And I can be sympathetic that conservatives are always going to fight cultural evolution. I mean, it wouldn't make any sense if they didn't. To be a conservative is to say, "I want to hold the status quo and defend the status quo," and to be liberal is to say "the status quo isn't good enough, inclusive enough, fair enough, just enough, whatever enough, and we've got to move it." And so those dynamic tensions are always present, and this is just, you know, yet another expression of that. And I think we are going through a real growing pain culturally around the emergence and acceptance and rejection of trans identities.

[01:26:53] **Corey deVos:** Yeah. Yep. I don't disagree with any of that. And it's always a tricky thing, when it comes to, you know... first off, I try to be, try to be, I don't always succeed, but I try to be careful with my language, because for example, saying

something like "we need to integrate conservative points of view" is different from saying "we need to integrate Amber points of view," because a) I don't think all conservatives are Amber. I think that the left has a, obviously a ton of amber with it, a ton of doctrine, a lot of dogma, so I always try to be a little bit careful with that. That said, I do think that we often see a scarcity of truly world and beyond conservative voices, whose voices are actually loud enough to be heard, right? There's some of them out there, but I don't think for the most part, the worldcentric conservatives are having a very large impact on these culture war issues, or on governance, right? The GOP I don't think really fits the bill when it comes to this.

[01:27:56] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Sure, if you look at like the National Review, the conservative newspaper, you know, they're vehemently anti-Trump. I mean they are absolutely, totally opposed to him, and reject all of his claims outright. But they have a really small slice of the conservative pie. And you know, I enjoy looking at that online, because it comforts me that there are... it's like, well, there's enough conservatives to have this whole organization and these discussions and these opinion columns, because I have no problem with conservatism. There are parts of me that want to fight to hold certain parts of our culture as they are, and there parts of me that want to fight to change parts of our culture as it is. I think it's a healthy dynamic that I hold inside of myself. I used to be really, really liberal and progressive, and I've, I guess maybe it's part of aging, I don't know, but I definitely have become a little more conservative as I've gotten older, um, and, can take a longer view of things, and say, "well, seems like some of these things maybe are worth protecting." You know, not gender identity. I'm not saying that, but there may be other things that are worth protecting. Other cultural norms that maybe are worth protecting, or certainly conversation about.

[01:28:59] **Corey deVos:** Totally agree. Especially when we can trace some of the elements that are often associated with Amber conservative culture, and try to find the healthy versions of it. Right? Like you know, there's a lot of talk and consternation around sort of the types of nationalism that we're seeing coming from, you know, sort of hard right influencers. And you know, I reject...

[01:29:20] **Keith Martin-Smith:** A claim made by the left though, it's like if you mis-say anything, then you get called far right, which is a... Far right now doesn't mean anything, you know, it's like, what does it, anybody's far right that disagrees with the mainstream narrative.

[01:29:31] **Corey deVos:** I think that's true and I, I do think a far right exists. I do think there's still just like there's far left.

[01:29:37] **Keith Martin-Smith:** I totally agree. To me, it's like back in the day, someone called you a racist, it would be horrible, and you would like, you would sting and you would, God, it would have such a horrible negative impact on you. But today, it's like, well, they're calling everybody a racist. It doesn't mean anything any more.

[01:29:50] **Corey deVos:** But the thing is if you get underneath, like if you see one of those views being expressed and, you know, it makes you feel uncomfortable or just you have friction with it, you know, one thing that you can do is just dig a level deeper. Identify like, "Okay, I completely disagree with this view, but there's a value underneath it that's animating it that I can completely enfold with."

[01:30:10] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Steel manning the position.

[01:30:11] **Corey deVos:** So like, you know, I am not a big fan of white nationalism, right? I think white nationalism is a real current in this culture that we need to keep a really careful eye on, because 9 times outta 10 it is gonna result in violence, and we need to do a good job of having Orange regulate, down-regulate, those kinds of red to amber sort of expressions, because those can be very damaging to a society. And I recognize the need for a greater, more cohesive, more coherent, shared national identity between us. That, in a lot of ways, it's the lack of that that's animating much much of this

[01:30:50] **Keith Martin-Smith:** That, but it's also, you know, to me, it's laughably unrealistic for the left to think that they can dominate so many conversations talking about race and gender, and not think that they're going to inspire people to think along racial and gender lines, which includes white people banding together to be like, "okay, you know, all these people, all these people are talking about race. We're a race," you know. And so I can see how in some ways the left has created the very thing that it's trying to prevent by its overemphasis, it's overly simplistic emphasis on race. We talked about privilege way earlier, but having these conversations in ways that are too simplistic and encourage people to mimic what they're seeing with that level of simplicity and that lack of nuance. And so, hence to me, of course not very well educated white dudes are getting together and being like, "Hey, okay, blacks are grouping, we should

group." You know, it's like, what did you expect they were going to do? Sit around?

[01:31:42] **Corey deVos:** That's right, that's right. Especially on this media platform. So let's just be clear, all of this is taking place, all of these culture war issues are taking place on these flat, decentralized media platforms that are deeply postmodern, and are therefore... You know, if you read Ken's book from, you know, and I know you have, from like 25 years ago, Boomeritis. That book, like predicted the world that we currently live in. The only thing was, Ken thought it would come mostly through academia. It has come through academia, but what he didn't realize is that it was really largely gonna come through media and technology. And the fact that we live in these aperspectival platforms is generating this aperspectival madness in the first place.

[01:32:32] **Keith Martin-Smith:** In other words, I want to reinterpret what you're saying, make sure I hear you, that it's the idea that on Twitter or on Facebook or on most of the platforms, the quality of the content isn't organized in any way. I'm left that one post has equal value as the post below it, essentially. Which wouldn't be the case if we were in a lecture hall or... that would never happen if a group of humans were hanging out interpersonally, because I would be the like, "oh, that guy in the red shirt, he's a little bit fucking crazy, so I'm not gonna equally consider his viewpoint next to Corey's, because that guy's talking about Nazis and racism the whole time, and he's got that one eye that's going the wrong way, and you know, and he's missing a tooth, and you know, like, okay, you know, I have a context, but I don't have any of those contexts on social media."

[01:33:17] **Corey deVos:** That's right. Yeah. It's basically a space where, again, anything goes, anyone can speak their truth, but there's no curator, there's no enfoldment mechanism, there's nothing. You know, it used to be in classic media, say you had a, you know, I always use this example. You had an editor, you had had an anchor man. You had someone who was actually curating the information and prioritizing. Now there's problems with that too, it can lead to over-centralization and corruption and all that. But let's just say we're dealing with an entirely new set of problems now. And censorship, a hundred percent. Now we're dealing with a completely different... we've erred completely in the opposite direction. We've decentralized everything. That's right.

[01:33:54] **Keith Martin-Smith:** There is still censorship on some things, you know, I mean, I think the right makes good arguments that there was censorship from the mainstream media around alternate COVID narratives and things like that, that in hindsight, you know, there was a legitimate complaint there. I there's legitimate complaints that, on the right, that right views get censored in places like Google and things like that. I think the Twitter files... I think there's evidence that the right isn't paranoid, they're pointing at a phenomenon that exist to some extent, and that is really happening.

[01:34:23] **Corey deVos:** I agree.

[01:34:24] **Keith Martin-Smith:** We're getting way off topic, just for the record.

[01:34:27] **Corey deVos:** We are, but it's fascinating. It's all interrelated. But you know, I also think that if we were to shift from this uncurated space to, you know, a more integral sort of enfolding space, there is still gonna be accusation, because the minute you say "this truth is more partial than this truth" that becomes... it gets enacted as a form of censorship. So that's always, we're always gonna have that to some degree. So we could make the case that, you know, if someone came in here and started like going off on, you know, conspiracy theories about we didn't land on the moon, or, you know, whatever dumb conspiracy theory, obviously dumb conspiracy theory you wanna throw out there, we would censor that person. We would say, "Okay, thanks buddy. Oop. You know, you're not in the call anymore." Because we can't enfold that, that truth is too partial for the conversation.

[01:35:11] **Keith Martin-Smith:** If a flat Earther got on and was like, "look, I know you're talking about gender, but I want to talk about the flat Earth", we would be like, "okay, we'll just edit this right on out of the post-production."

[01:35:19] **Corey deVos:** That's right, that's right. I may have had to do that a couple times in the past.

[01:35:23] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Well, my brother, I think we've gone enough. I think, I think we've covered enough territory.

[01:35:27] **Corey deVos:** This has been awesome, dude. It's so fun, it's so fun to hang out with you and to, you know, to just to get into all this.

[01:35:34] **Keith Martin-Smith:** We'll be here all day if we don't keep an eye on the clock.

[01:35:36] **Corey deVos:** I know, I know. And this is, you know, this is the problem with integral. You can't say one thing without saying all the things.

[01:35:43] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Right, it's like everything leads into like, it's all nested conversations, right?

[01:35:47] **Corey deVos:** It totally is.

[01:35:48] **Keith Martin-Smith:** It, it's 9:00 PM We're still sitting here jabbering at each other.

[01:35:51] **Corey deVos:** But this is, but this is what it is, man. And look, I again, I just wanna say I love you so much. Like I really, yeah. I love the friendship that we share. I love the work that we're able to do together. I love the opportunity to be able to have conversations like this. It's awesome. And, you know, thank you for all you do, brother, and for all that you are bringing to this website.

[01:36:11] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Yeah and I appreciate you coming on here and sharing your thoughts and throwing down for a little while, and be willing to put your, you know, head on the chopping block here a little bit and wade into these waters, which can be controversial. As I said in our pre-call, I don't this is going to be that controversial because I think there's just too much nuance and complexity that we're talking about, and it's hard to get triggered. Hard to track all that nuance and be triggered at the same time. Again, I want to say that, you know, for anyone that's watching this sort of post-call, feel free to write either one of us with questions, or if you want follow ups, feel free to ask us, you know, "Hey, could you talk about this? Could you guys talk about this? Or could one of talk about this?"

[01:36:46] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[01:36:46] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Always happy to hear from you. And yeah, thanks everybody for taking your time and listening.

[01:36:51] **Corey deVos:** Real briefly, I also wanna invite people to check out Keith's first episode that we published just a couple weeks ago on IntegralLife.com. As soon as we get off with each other, I'm gonna actually make that available for free. So anyone who is watching this right now, who's not a member, you'll have an opportunity to watch that episode. It was really fantastic, and I highly encourage you to check it out.

[01:37:11] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Awesome.

[01:37:11] **Corey deVos:** So thanks everyone. Thank you Keith.

[01:37:14] **Keith Martin-Smith:** Thank you everybody. Thanks Corey.