

T.D. Dougherty, CACOR Member, 02 April 2023

The following is a stream of tweets that I encountered on 29 March 2023 in my work as operator of the CACOR Twitter account.

I was impressed by the facts and logic.

I requested and received permission to extract the text and share it. I have done some very minor changes in wording and punctuation.

The originator was Dr. Stan Willenbring, a retired professor of physiology, whose Twitter account is < @StanWillenbring >. His biographic information on the account is:

PhD, prof of physiology, climate realist, 365 hiker. Caution: disputatious.
Southern Appalachia.



I have given the material this title:

“Our Genetics Will Determine Whether We Go Extinct.”

My observation is that Dr. Willenbring descriptions explain how **libertarianism** is even more problematic than even I had found it. It appears libertarianism will actually be the death of us.

Now, here are Dr. Willenbring’s observations, which I believe link directly to the global problematique that was so much discussed in the CACOR archives of late last century.

In my view, if there is something positive in our circumstances, perhaps it is the possibility that humans have had the intelligence to develop civilization and then refine it to the point where we know how we ought to behave toward each other and Earth’s ecosystems.



“Our Genetics Will Determine Whether We Go Extinct.”

1/24

This is a response to a request from someone, that I "convince" people about why I think human extinction is imminent. I'll start with some groundwork concepts and terminology.

It is very long (23 segments). Many might look at it and say TLDR [too long, didn't read]. That's OK. There won't be a quiz. 😊

2/24

It is important to bear in mind that I am talking about genetic traits that have been bred into, or out of, our species. As such, this has taken place over thousands of years and cannot be corrected by anything less than a similarly long evolutionary process.

3/24

Humans are now the ultimate apex predators, but that wasn't always so. In our early existence, we were small, soft, slow, and weak. We would have never survived without working together in groups. Thus, our primary adaptive trait is community...

4/24

along with language that made it possible. It is the loss of that community that I believe will now become the trigger for our extinction.

First, let's define the language of this discussion.

5/24

ALTRUISM—Simply put, it's the behaviour of preferring the well-being of the group over our personal interests. It made community possible. We even have a set of loci in the brain for it within the network used for making decisions, particularly modifying our sense of reward.

6/24

PSYCHOPATHY—This is the inability to consider (to even recognize) others as persons, as individuals with feelings and intrinsic worth. Psychopathic individuals treat other persons (all living things) essentially like objects.

7/24

Psychopathic behavior is marked by pathological lying, impulsivity, inability to feel empathy, and lack of remorse. Brain studies (Kent Kiehl, etc.) show that psychopaths do not have normal function in the altruism loci. Psychopathy is what we commonly think of/refer to as "evil."

[For information on Dr. Kent Kiehl, see < [HOME – Kent A. Kiehl, Ph.D. \(kentkiehl.com\)](http://kentkiehl.com) > Ed.]

8/24

PSYCHOSIS—The primary characteristic of psychosis is an inability to make sense of reality. Psychosis is characterized by delusions, confusion, paranoia, and most of all irrationality. Psychotic individuals (even mild cases) are notoriously bad decision-makers, frequently...

9/24

screwing up their lives by launching off into wild plans that don't work. Bipolar disorder (manic-depression) is a form of psychosis (not depression). By contrast to psychopathy as "evil," psychosis is what we commonly refer to as "crazy."

10/24

It's important to realize that these conditions exist in bell-curve distributions (what people now commonly call a spectrum). In fact, altruism and psychopathy are opposite ends of the same spectrum. Psychosis is the extreme end of a spectrum with rationality as the other end.

11/24

Let's use the spectrum of intelligence as an example. Average IQ is 100, with a range of normal IQ from 90 to 110. We define a genius with a somewhat arbitrary line at IQ 125, but in a social conversation, you would probably not notice any difference between...

12/24

a person with an IQ of 120 and a person with a 126 IQ. They would both seem very smart, even though one is officially a "genius" and the other is not. Similarly, on the psychosis spectrum, we set an arbitrary line to define the mental health disorder clinically, but...

13/24

others who are out in that direction on the bell curve, though not past that line, have milder issues of irrationality. They might not suffer paranoid delusions, but they may believe nonsense, chase after esoteric religions, etc.

14/24

Likewise, someone who falls short of the clinical line for psychopathy may not be a rapist or murderer, but is instead just that grouchy jerk who annoys everybody in the neighbourhood.

15/24

Psychopathy is about five times (some would say ten times) more common in men than women. Psychosis is similarly five times (perhaps ten times) more common in women than men. The clinical disorders of psychosis and psychopathy are simply the extremes of these traits, but...

16/24

there is good reason why the lower level expression of these has been conserved in the human genome. The "me first" nature of psychopathy is essential to self-preservation, and the loose mental associations of psychosis are the foundation of creativity and innovation.

17/24

It is worth noting, that irrational people are easily manipulated. Thus, it is no surprise that persons with psychosis (most often women) are the prime prey of psychopathic predators (most often male).

18/24

So, back to our discussion. In the primitive/paleo world, men hunted and women stayed in the camp growing food and tending offspring. Men could go out to roam and hunt because they were bigger, stronger, faster, never pregnant, and didn't need to nurse any infants.

19/24

However, being out there in the more dangerous world away from camp, often alone, they needed a strong trait for self-preservation. Women by contrast worked closely and cooperatively, and developed a more altruistic nature. They were our first innovators. They invented agriculture!

20/24

So, what have we done in the generations since then. For one thing, we have constantly waged war, and as part of that, we have continuously rewarded psychopathy. The end result of that has been exceptional reproductive advantage for psychopathy. The most aggressive men...

21/24

added their genes to the human gene pool at a far higher frequency than their less psychopathic counterparts.

These traits have become so pervasive that we now see them even in the female population. Hence, the drive for women wanting to become combat soldiers, police, etc.

22/24

In addition, technology has allowed us to live without each other, such that we now have almost no real community at all. Thus, we have been steadily losing our skills for constructing and operating as an effective communal society.

23/24

We could possibly relearn skills, but only if we were predisposed to do so. However, we can't teach people to be genetically different. The traits embedded in us by our genes (nature) form the template upon which all learning (nurture) has to occur. We've skewed that bell curve.

24/24

The road back to where we need to be is very long, and the road ahead, toward our extinction, is now very short. I probably won't live long enough to see the outcome, but I'm betting we cross the extinction finish line long before we even look at the map for the other direction.