

In-Sight Publishing
Ask A Genius 111 - Governance and Leadership¹
Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner
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[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Historically, there have been issues with systems of governance and leadership. No system of governance is full proof. We also deal with problems of incompetence in leadership. I would argue, historically, that there are more ways to be an incompetent leader than a competent leader.

Rick Rosner: When we were talking earlier, you mentioned that Rome had like 5 consecutive competent leaders.

S: It was around the Pax Romana and cap-stoned with Marcus Aurelius.

R: Okay, so I haven't read that much about Rome, but the Roman system had a bunch of falseness and hypocrisy built in that what was really going on what wasn't what was said to be going on or what was said to be valued. There were Roman ideals, but those ideals weren't followed to a great extent. Instead, you had a bunch of corruption, self-serving, and power struggles.

The Roman system of conquering the world and bringing the world into the Roman system of commerce. Even though that was presented as a triumphal thing, it was presented an economic thing, an economic thing or for trade. The Roman system was a mess. It functioned for a few hundred years pretty well and it did some good things along with some horrible things, but much of the horribleness was facilitated by the lack of alignment between what was said was being done, what was publicly supported, and what was actually being done and supported.

I think the strength of America up until recently was that there was a reasonably strong alignment between democracy as valued and liberty and economic opportunity as valued and what actually happened. Certain people have always had huge advantages based on connections

¹ Four format points for the session article:

1. Bold text following and including "Scott Jacobsen:" or "S:" is Scott & non-bold text following and including "Rick Rosner:" or "R:" is Rick.
2. Session article conducted, transcribed, edited, formatted, and published by Scott.
3. Footnotes & in-text citations in the interview & references after the interview.
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For further information on the formatting guidelines incorporated into this document, please see the following documents:

1. American Psychological Association. (2010). Citation Guide: APA. Retrieved from <http://www.lib.sfu.ca/system/files/28281/APA6CitationGuideSFUv3.pdf>.
2. Humble, A. (n.d.). Guide to Transcribing. Retrieved from <http://www.msvu.ca/site/media/msvu/Transcription%20Guide.pdf>.

or wealth, but, in the past, politics was better able to serve the stated aims of the American system: all men are created equal, the American Dream. More recently, you have a political system that seems kinds of intractable or hard to root out, which doesn't serve democracy or equality.

More people vote democratic than vote Republican. Yet, Republicans own the house, the Senate, and the presidency, and are about—as soon as they appoint the next Supreme Court justice—to own the Supreme Court. So all of the major branches of government. This extends to state governments too, where Republicans have done some gerrymandering hocus pocus and manipulations of the system to hold power out of proportion to the level people want them to hold power.

And no one is governing as a centrist. One could've hoped that trump having lost the popular vote by 2.8 million votes would make efforts to try to be a centrist, but he is not; he's being—he's entirely line up with the Republican agenda, and the Republican agenda, while it pays lip service to things like reducing the deficit, is really about servicing its clientele and its major financial supporters, which as rich people.

Republicans talk about making American life better for regular people, but Republican policy fucks regular people and leads to rich people continuing to reap most of the gains to be gotten from gains in the economy, growth in the economy where middle class wages stayed stagnant for decades now and all of the real improvements in wealth have gone to the upper 1 or 2% of everybody in America in terms of wealth and income.

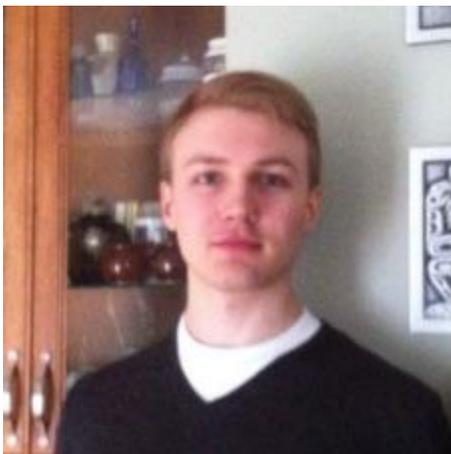
So there's a big misalignment between what is said right now in politics and what's actually happening.

[End of recorded material]

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