

Bill Walton ([00:00](#)):

I worry that trends may be reversing. And what I mean by that is that we talked about extractive and inclusive, and I fear a lot of the politics today are becoming far more extractive than they were say 50 years ago. You mentioned getting permission of the king to develop your product. Well, that's not very different from going to the regulators and how many different job licensing requirements do we have in the United States? Where you can't walk a dog without a license. And so the ability of entrepreneurs to get into do something without asking permission that range of freedom is getting smaller, and smaller, and smaller with each passing year. It worries me.

([00:47](#)):

Welcome to the Bill Walton Show. I'm Bill Walton, and for those of you like me who feel like the world is only getting worse at a rapid pace, I was having a conversation, I guess four or five weeks ago on this show with George Gilder, the famous thinker and futurist, and he's written a terrific new book and talking about the good things are going to happen in the future. And I said, "Well, George, who else could I talk to that might make me feel a little less gloomy? Because as I look at debt levels in America, I look at several wars that are exploding and as we speak, we've got Israel now back as the tender box has been lit up there again, and we've got China looming and Taiwan south side of cheat sea and drug addiction and all sorts of things we read about." And I guess what I'm learning is that there is somebody we can talk to who might guide us in a more positive direction, shine a light on things that are better. And I've been really fortunate to get Marian Tupy on the show who's the founder of the [humanprogress.org](#) is with Cato Institute, been there over two decades.

([02:03](#)):

He is probably one of the most interesting thinkers and interpreters of events. He's written a book called... He covers something called the Simon Abundance Index and also Super Abundance: The Story of Population Growth, Innovation and Human Flourishing on an Infinitely Bountiful Planet, which I like the sound of that. And he's also written a very interesting, or has a very interesting PowerPoint on the Cato website called 10 Global Trends Every Smart Person Should Know and many others you'll find interesting. So Marian, great to have you with me today. And so we can all learn about things really aren't as bad as we read about in the paper, and I think you've written about it. That's one of the problems we have is that journalism tends to cover only the negative.

Marian Tupy ([02:59](#)):

Well, thanks for having me. Yes, as Steven Pinker from Harvard points out, "Journalism is about things that happen, not things that don't happen." And when a bunch of crazy fanatics fly an airplane into a building in New York, now that is something that obviously is very important, very traumatic. It'll end up on all the front pages. What is never covered is human progress that's happening in the background every year by quarter of a percent or half a percent, absolute poverty is declining, growth is increasing, etc. But there is never any point in time, any hour in a day or a day in a week when poverty simply decreases by 50%. All of these things are incremental and by that nature they are hidden. So that is why you never have a journalist standing in the middle of a city that is at peace saying, "I'm here in a city where nothing is happening." So that's part of the issue. The other part of the issue is that obviously, we have evolved to look out for dangerous and bad things. And so our mind is always on the lookout for those bad things because we have evolved in a time when the world was much less hospitable to human beings than currently is.

Bill Walton ([04:24](#)):

You had a great example in one of the pieces you wrote. I loved it, if you're 15,000, 20,000 years ago, you're out on the Savanna with your fellow tribesmen and you hear a rustling sound and you can conclude it's either the wind in the trees or it's a saber-tooth tiger coming through the grass. Your instincts probably are, you ought to assume it's a saber-tooth tiger because if you say it was just the wind, you could end up as dinner.

Marian Tupy ([04:57](#)):

Yeah. If you overreact to a threat which is non-existent by running away from the rustling bush, nothing happens to you. You just expend a little bit of energy. But if you under react to a threat that is real, such as a lion or saber-tooth tiger hiding behind the bush, then you become dinner, you have no descendants. And so this is a perfect example of a way in which an optimistic attitude or an optimistic predisposition to life, we'll be weeded out of the gene pool. There are other things at play.

Bill Walton ([05:33](#)):

So the optimist among us have all been devoured by the tigers?

Marian Tupy ([05:40](#)):

That is correct. When you think about vast expanse of human evolution. On top of that, of course you've got competition, not just competition between different newspapers. You have competition between newspapers and television, between television and internet. And so by publishing evermore shocking stories, that's the way that you can get access to the eyeballs, to the clicks. And in fact, there was a study that came out about two months ago that showed that for every additional negative word in the title of an online article, the click-through rate increases by 2.5%, which is huge. So obviously, all the headlines are going to be negative, and very few people actually read through the article, even if it is written properly, they will just look at a headline and say, "Okay, the world is coming to an end." So the bottom line is that for all of these different reasons, people have an impression of the world that is much more negative than it really is.

Bill Walton ([06:40](#)):

Well, I find that when we write titles for the episodes for the shows we do. I mean, if you put something really alarming and dire, people click on it. If you say, "The sun came out today and it's a wonderful day and a wonderful day in the neighborhood." Nobody caress.

Marian Tupy ([06:58](#)):

Exactly. Exactly. They've done psychological tests on people in the lab where people were asked... Where people who came in saying, "We are interested only in positive news." But when you have a split screen in front of a person with negative and positive stories, the eyeballs immediately gravitate toward the negative. Again, for evolutionary reasons, for psychological reasons and so forth.

Bill Walton ([07:22](#)):

Well, let's cover some of the good things that are happening. I mean, if you look, and I've done a little... Peaked ahead at your website and read some of the other books on this, and I guess one of the big things is that extreme poverty has fallen below 10% in the world down from 60%, 70% just 75 years ago. And the child mortality rates down, in fact, with the rise of Africa and Middle East, income equality worldwide is down. And we've also basically eliminated a lot of the diseases that killed people, malaria,

polio, and a lot of forms of heart disease. I mean, these are just some of the trends. What's the rest of the picture look like?

Marian Tupy ([08:12](#)):

Well, I always like to start with life expectancy. I mean, until a couple of hundred years ago, life expectancy around the world for thousands of years was about 25 to 30 years. Now it is 78 in the United States, it's 73 years globally, it's 85 in Hong Kong. So we live two or three lifetimes longer than our ancestors would have. That's to start with. The other thing that's important is I think calorie consumption. People, we really don't understand just how widespread and how omnipresent hunger was at all points in human life.

([08:50](#)):

Now, of course, our problem in the west is obesity, which we need to tackle through things like Ozempic and other drugs because people are simply having so much access to cheap calories that they simply become obese.

([09:04](#)):

Child mortality. I mean, that's something that should interest all of your listeners. In 1750s, just before the American Revolution in Sweden, for which we have data, we don't have data for all the countries, but for some we have data, and Sweden has very good data. So in Sweden in 1750s, 40% of all children before the age of 0 and 15 died before their 15th birthday. That was not an outlier. 50% of children before the age of 15 died in Bavaria. 50% died in hunter, gathering societies. Today, the global average is 4%, and in the Nordic countries is 0.3%. So that gives you a sense of just maternal mortality is down.

([09:50](#)):

Yeah. And don't forget income, that's very important. For thousands of years, the average income around the world was about \$2 per person per day in equivalent productivity. Today, globally, it's \$35. So the average inhabitant of the world adjusted for inflation is 18 times better off than he or she was 200 years ago.

Bill Walton ([10:16](#)):

Well, one of the things that I think we need to focus a little bit are the conditions that caused all that because the world grew at 0.2% or 3% world economy grew for what about a thousand years before, when was it roughly 1750 or 1800 when the economy really took off? And now we're looking at a growth rate, or at least until recently, that was close to 3%. So that's a dramatic increase. Yet their political and social and cultural conditions would cause that change. Can you get at some of the root causes, because it bears on today's debate about what kind of society we want to have, how centralized, how much regulation, threats to the rule of law, and I think there are conditions which caused this enormous progress. Could you amplify on what those are?

Marian Tupy ([11:11](#)):

Yeah, sure. The Bank of England did great research on this. Prior to 1750, global economy grew by 0.01% per year, which means that it took 6,000 years for GDP per capita to double. So let's say you are making \$2 per person per day at a growth rate of 0.01%. It takes 6,000 years before you go from \$2 to \$4. But after 1750, the average growth rate for the world was 1.5% at that level of growth. At that rate of growth, GDP doubles every 50 years. So we live in an unprecedented moment in human history where even a 2% growth rate, which by American standards consider pretty low, is really unprecedentedly high in terms of what our ancestors were used to.

[\(11:57\)](#):

Now, where does it come from? Where does it come from? Well, in my view, it comes from the spread of human liberty in the 18th century. 18th century is really very important. New ideas start penetrating the human brain and the human society, including things like equality before the law, equal dignity for all people. Now, we all know the caveats. We all know that women had to wait longer, minorities had to wait longer in order to have equal dignity. But before the 18th century, very few people were treated in a dignified fashion before the law and by authorities, and they used to be the nobility. And basically in 1700s, what tends to happen is that you have the increase of the middle class called the bourgeoisie, and they start demanding rights for themselves. And as a consequence of that, they get the ball rolling. First, it's the property of white men, then you have women, you have minorities, et cetera. Ever expanding growth of equal treatment under the law and equal dignity for every individual.

[\(13:03\)](#):

The power of government decreases so that you no longer have to petition the king in order to be permitted to import or export from your country. You can now do it yourself as an American, or as a Britain, or as a Frenchman. So both economic and political freedom increases, and as a result of that, all of these energies that people have to better their lives and consequently their entire community get unleashed. Again, if you were not born to the right social order until about 200 years ago, you couldn't really have a go. But certainly today, anybody in western society in the United States can had a go if they have a good idea.

Bill Walton [\(13:48\)](#):

This is Bill Walton, Sean, I'm talking with Marian Tupy, Cato Institute and humanprogress.org a website I highly recommend, and we're talking about the growth that we've seen in the last 250 years depended on some very specific changes in culture and our economic arrangements and power arrangements. And it turns out that more freedom and property rights and rule of law, those sort of basic things are where the essential ingredients and people talk about technical revolutions and certainly we had advances in science gave us the steam engine, ultimately electricity and the now demonized internal combustion engine. But there all were real technologies that fuel the growth, but the technologies didn't come first. The cultural changes came first. Would you agree with that?

Marian Tupy [\(14:45\)](#):

Yeah, I would. Let me make a couple of points. People always had property rights in a sense that people always knew what their house was and what their grain was and what their land was. It's just that property was not equally defended under the law. They didn't have equality of private property. That's the key is that people always had private property, but those property arrangements frequently got violated by the rulers. And it is really only more recently that private property gets defended and protected on a more egalitarian basis, whether you are Bill Gates or whether you are Marian Tupy or Bill Walton, we all can call the police and have our private property defendant and have access to the judiciary.

[\(15:34\)](#):

So that's one point. The other point was that the thing is that until very recently, people, well, let's see. If you invent something, you usually needed to get a permission from the high authorities in order to put your innovation in practice.

[\(15:57\)](#):

People were deeply suspicious of innovation, but if you wanted to innovate something, you probably needed the king or the duke to basically say yes to that innovation. How do we know that? Well, in Roman literature, for example, we have examples of Roman investors who bring innovations to the emperor. And the emperor has them executed because he doesn't want the innovation, for example, that there's an innovation of apparently an unbreakable glass 2,000 years ago. And the emperor asks the innovator, "Did you tell anyone?" And the innovator stupidly says, "No, I didn't." And so the emperor has him executed because he doesn't want unbreakable glass to be replacing all the jars and made from precious metal and things like that.

[\(16:43\)](#):

So people were generally very suspicious of innovation. And even if they were not, you still needed the government to permit you to put those innovations into practice.

Bill Walton [\(16:55\)](#):

When you talk one of your writings, something I've never really quite focused on, it is interesting you talk about up until the time we're talking about the societies were organized around what you call extractive institutions. And then later on the arrangements we're talking about are that are positive are called inclusive economic institutions. What's extractive and what's inclusive?

Marian Tupy [\(17:27\)](#):

Well, extractive and inclusive, that's North Korea versus South Korea. The extractive institutions in North Korea. North Korea has extractive institutions because the people are treated as a possession of the state to be squeezed for every ounce of labor and every ounce of productivity, and they're not treated properly. Whereas, in South Korea, which is a democracy, which is a free country, people have many more rights they can do with their property, whatever they like pretty much. And the government is answerable to them. Whereas, in North Korea, people are answerable to the government. In South Korea it's the other way around. So inclusive institution is one like South Korea that allows you to elect your leaders. Leaders are responsible for the delivery of public services, policing protection or private property rights. Extractive is basically you use your population as serves as slaves and you don't care about their wellbeing and you're not answerable to them.

Bill Walton [\(18:30\)](#):

Well, most of the world was in the extraction. We extract the business across all cultures and across all time. And that first changed in Europe, but then the change towards more inclusive institutions has now spread to the rest of the world. And what's been happening in Africa and South America, Middle East, I mean are some of those ideas taking root and is that what's causing growth there?

Marian Tupy [\(19:00\)](#):

Well, so you are correct. It really starts in Western Europe. It starts in the Netherlands. It starts in the UK where the government is much less powerful. It begins to be answerable to the desires of the ordinary people. And then of course it spreads to the United States. And the United States has the highest number of freeborn citizens who can vote anywhere in the world for like 60 years.

[\(19:30\)](#):

So does it spread to the other parts of the world? Certainly there are many more democracies than there were let's say in 1800s or even 1930s. Democracy spreads, especially up to 1989. I'm not a regional specialist, so I cannot tell you about each specific reason, but it's not just the spread of

freedom, which is important, but even in countries which are not free, these countries can benefit from the great discoveries that are made in rich countries and free countries. So let me rephrase that. It is free countries which provide the lion's share of all the innovations that happen around the world, and then even countries which are not free can benefit from those innovations by simply adopting them either through international trade or by importing those technologies. So freedom is very important when it comes to a generation of innovation, but nations can still become richer even if they are not free by simply adopting innovations which were produced somewhere else. Does that make sense?

Bill Walton ([20:46](#)):

It does, but the thing that I think is interesting is that democracy is not necessarily the thing. You need to have the economy advance. The rule of law, the protection of property rights, good judicial systems, those are I think are the soil for which economic growth happens and innovation happens. Think about Singapore-

Marian Tupy ([21:15](#)):

Yeah. There is something-

Bill Walton ([21:18](#)):

... It was not much of a democracy in the sense that you got vote him out, but he created institutions that made Singapore take off like a rocket.

Marian Tupy ([21:29](#)):

Yes, Singapore is definitely an incredibly rich country richer than the United States, but it is not on the cusp of innovation. Innovation is produced in freelands like the United States for example, or the United Kingdom, or Germany, or Israel. Singapore is not usually associated with tremendous steps in innovation. But there is something to what you're saying. Milton Friedman like to say that, "You cannot have a free polity, you cannot have a free society without free economics, but you can have free economics without political freedom." And the perfect example of that would be country like Chile. Between 1973 and 1990, they did have a free economy, but they had a military dictatorship. In a similar fashion in Singapore, it is not what I would call a hardcore democracy. I mean it is managed democracy at best, but they have a very high level of economic growth.

([22:25](#)):

The problem with dictatorships is that if you were to bet on which government is going to produce better results, then it's still better to stick with a democracy because for every good dictator, quote/unquote, "Good dictator," there's going to be 10 bad dictators. So it's always better to have a democracy. But yes, economic growth is possible without a democracy as China and Chile and many other countries remind us of.

Bill Walton ([22:54](#)):

I do want to get to a lot of the other trends, and I want to circle back to whether we think the inclusive regimes are under threat today. You've got a website that's very interesting, Ten Global Trends. Could you summarize what that's about?

Marian Tupy ([23:13](#)):

Well, that is really a derivative product of my first book that I co-wrote with Ron Bailey from Reason Magazine called, Ten Global Trends Every Smart Person Should Know and Many Others You Will Find Interesting. that sold very well because it's a non-ideological, non-technical, non-theoretical book that just filled with charts about different trends that are improving in the world. I think we have something like 78 showing about-

Bill Walton ([23:39](#)):

It's something ordinary people will understand exactly what you're doing. You don't need a technical background to get it?

Marian Tupy ([23:46](#)):

Correct. You just look at a chart and if the line is increasing, things are getting better or so. Yes.

Bill Walton ([23:55](#)):

Some examples?

Marian Tupy ([23:57](#)):

Well there are 78 of them, one of them could be for example, increasing literacy, right? 200 years ago, 90% of humanity was illiterate. Today, 10% of humanity is illiterate. Urbanization. Many more people live in cities than they used to. Something like 50% of humanity already lives in the cities, maybe even 60. And why would that be a good thing? Is because when you have a lot of people living in the cities, they produce more innovation. That's part number one. Part number two, when people move into the cities, they leave more land for nature. So nature can rebound. And in fact in the book there are a number of positive environmental trends, which I think is very important because these days, young people especially are freaked out about the environment. They think everything is bad. That is not true. The United States and the European Union have added 35% more new forests. In the last 20 years. We have 35% more forest than we used to. China, 15% more forests. So our forestation is one big thing.

([25:06](#)):

Another thing that's very important is, for example, fisheries. We are producing fish specifically for the purpose of getting eaten. Like 50% of all the fish that ends up on a plate anywhere in the world, it has been grown to be eaten. We don't have to catch them in the wild and therefore undermine the population of the fish in the ocean.

([25:26](#)):

Other things, decline in air pollution. You will remember in the 1970s how smoggy American cities used to be. Now the air is much cleaner in most western cities, rivers which were once declared dead, people can now swim in like the river Seine in Paris. People now swim in it. In London, Thames was a dead river. Now it's a home to dolphins and wales. Why? Because the environment has improved so much.

Bill Walton ([25:56](#)):

One of, I thought that one of the most interesting trend, I think it was number 21 on your list, that IQ scores are arising massively.

Marian Tupy ([26:04](#)):

Yes. Well, that's a global trend and there are many different ways. Or rather-

Bill Walton ([26:12](#)):

Is that true? Is that true about politicians as well?

Marian Tupy ([26:16](#)):

... Well, the weird thing is that if you look at the IQ scores of politicians, they do tend to increase with the seniority of the office. President... I know it's difficult to believe. Presidents tend to be smarter than senator. Senators tend to be smarter than congressmen. They tend to be smarter than local politicians.

Bill Walton ([26:36](#)):

Wait, you're making some assertions here. Is that statistically true that if you do IQs based on-

Marian Tupy ([26:43](#)):

Of course, I wouldn't be saying it otherwise. I mean I've seen those stats myself. I just didn't include it in the book. There was no reason to. But one of my assumptions when I moved to DC was that politicians were morons because I look at how this country is run and how many other countries around the world are run, and I'm thinking when I moved here 20 years ago, "It must be because politicians are dumb." That's not the case. Politicians are very smart. The problem is the set of incentives that they behave under or the set of incentives that they answer, they want to get reelected. There is no term limits. And consequently they will give the median voter whatever the median voter wants. But these are not dummies. The reason why they survive partly is because they're very smart, but they are basically responding to the incentives that the system has set up for them.

([27:36](#)):

When it comes to global IQ. Yes. So we don't know for sure the reasons why IQ is increasing globally, but it seemed to be that if you think about IQ as a ceiling, then it matters whether you reach that ceiling. Let's say that your genes give you a potential of an IQ of 120. To get there, you still have to have the proper nutrition and the proper intellectual stimulation in order to get there. And the working assumption is that over the last 60 or 70 years, so many people in the world are better fed and are intellectually stimulated that actually IQ scores are improving. In the West, however, we seem to have seen a plateauing of IQ scores and even small decline. And again, the working hypothesis is that since everybody in the West is already well-fed and intellectually stimulated everybody, or rather on average the society has reached its ceiling and can't move beyond whatever the genetic ceiling has been created.

Bill Walton ([28:44](#)):

It's Bill Walton-

Marian Tupy ([28:45](#)):

Does that make any sense?

Bill Walton ([28:46](#)):

... It does. I have a follow-up. Quick question. I'm talking with Marion Tupy, humanprogress.org and we're talking about IQs and why they're rising and why they're falling. And we talked about them increasing in the rest of the world, outside in the developing world so-called because of nutrition and better healthcare. I think I have a theory though, that maybe in the developing world they're using different tools. I mean, as I think about the smartphones we have now, you need different parts of your brain to think about using this. And for most of the world, the smartphones become the banking system,

the way people trade with each other, they shop, communicate, things like that. I wonder, but then it seems like the opposite happens here in the quote, "developed countries" where the more we use our smartphones, the dumber we get?

Marian Tupy ([29:45](#)):

I think that people in the West probably use smartphones just as well as anybody else. Plenty of people in developing countries are watching silly videos. I think, I mean hypothesis would be that part of the reason why our IQs in the West have leveled off and are even beginning to decline is because smart people don't have that many children and have them later in life. So that there is a bit of a discogenic idea going on here. And frankly, this is sort of cruel to say that in the past there was a higher penalty for stupid behavior. If you were dumb and did dumb things, you were probably going to die due to some sort of horrible accident. Whereas, now you get patched up in a hospital with tremendous medical equipment at great expense. So it's more likely that I think the lion's share is probably because smart people are simply not having kids as much as they used to or as much as other parts of the society.

Bill Walton ([30:55](#)):

I wanted to get your thoughts about where things are going from here because things have gotten better and the statistics are conclusive. Thanks to you and a lot of the work you've done and colleagues.

Marian Tupy ([31:09](#)):

And other people, I wish take I could credit.

Bill Walton ([31:12](#)):

Yeah, well you should take a lot of credit because you pull it together in one place. Again, I want to plug it, [humanprogress.org](#) website where it's a treasure trove and I highly recommend it. There's also a fairly inexpensive version of the Ten Trends on Kindle, which I have as well, which is also highly recommended. So if you want to be smart at the next dinner party you attend, show up with your Kindle on your iPhone and then you can hold forth about how things are actually getting better. But I worry that they may not be, the trends may be reversing. And what I mean by that is that we talked about extractive and inclusive, and I fear a lot of the politics today are becoming far more extractive than they were say 50 years ago. You mentioned getting permission of the king to develop your product. Well, that's not very different from going to the regulators and how many different job licensing requirements do we have in the United States? Where you can't walk a dog without a license. And so the ability of entrepreneurs to get in to do something without asking permission, that range of freedom is getting smaller, and smaller, and smaller with each passing year, it worries me.

Marian Tupy ([32:35](#)):

And it should. Yeah, sure. I mean, nothing in what I say should be misconstrued as me saying that things have to work out. No, I'm involved in a historical analysis and what I'm claiming is that life today is much better than what it used to be. I'm not predicting that things need to work out. We could still end up with a massive war. We could end up with a pandemic which is much worse than the one we just had. And of course we could kill the golden goose, which is global capitalism and American capitalism specifically, through our bureaucratic overage.

Bill Walton ([33:13](#)):

That's my concern. I mean the war, the massive... I mean that'll happen. That's going to be an event, but we can engineer and take good care of our institutions that promote growth. And it seems like the work you've done makes the case very strongly that these are the institutional societal arrangements that lead to growth and happiness. And absent these, you end up back in the bad old days of extractive economy and things get worse, not better. So we want to preserve those institutions and that's what I think a lot more people need to understand just how much good they do as proved by your statistics.

Marian Tupy ([33:58](#)):

Yes, every man and woman left to their own devices will pursue the best for them and their families, and therefore they will improve society by producing more and tending to our needs. But they have to have the right and the ability to have a go, to have a go without having to ask somebody else for permission to do so. And this is a big problem in all societies bureaucracies tend to grow. The deep state is just a different way of saying that there is a bureaucratic class in Washington DC which has grown over the last 100 to 150 years, and which is not answerable to the public or which is growing like a cancer, that is ultimately going to suffocate the economy and the society. You don't have to be a conspiracy theories to believe that such a class exists because all you need is every single bureaucrat or you need a bureaucrat, every bureaucrat on average to pursue his own interest by increasing his power, increasing his budget.

([35:06](#)):

And you will end up in exactly the place where we are now, where Washington is filled with what I've been calling for many, many years, the new aristocracy. It took this country, which I like very much, and which has been very good to me. It took us 250 years, but we have ended up with a new aristocracy. These are the government workers in Washington DC. They do very little. They are not answerable to anyone. They're highly remunerated and they have power over us that they should not have. And so what is necessary is to really reduce the power of the Washington bureaucracy substantially. We don't need to just work around the edges. The bureaucracy needs to be reduced substantially.

Bill Walton ([35:54](#)):

Have you written elsewhere or a book, or a monograph that takes your findings and based... And you're a very careful scientist. You can just tell by talking with you that you want to get this right and there's statistics that you're not just guessing you could prove it.

Marian Tupy ([36:13](#)):

I try.

Bill Walton ([36:13](#)):

I haven't seen anything. You hear republicans say, "Well, we want less government, no regulations, so on and so forth." And that's just treated as the thing. Yeah, of course we want that. But nobody, I don't think that I've seen explain why that's the case and or what the linkage is between that and the percentage economic growth?

Marian Tupy ([36:41](#)):

Yeah, there's a massive economic literature on, so-called Public Choice Theory by James Buchanan and his collaborators. Basically, the question they're asking is we assume that the owner of a company or the CEO of a company behave in their own self-interest. Why do we assume that when people join

government, they stop behaving in their self-interest? I mean, these are the same human beings. Why should they simply change the way in which they operate?

Bill Walton ([37:17](#)):

Yeah, I agree with, the example I always think of when I think of it that way is you get two kids that go to Illinois University or whatever, and they both graduate same year at similar majors. One of them goes into the agricultural commodity business of some type. The other guy goes for the agricultural department in Washington, and all of a sudden the one that ends up in the agricultural department in Washington is a disinterested public servant with no interest. And the one in the private sector is a greedy capitalist. And yet they're the same people with the same background and cultural, I don't know what we would call it, cultural characteristics. And that I thought was public choice. But what I'm asking is a little different question. Can we prove that the self-interested bureaucrats are putting regulations and other sort of restrictions in place, and can we show how much that has reduced growth? I mean, are the studies out there for that? Because I'd like to get out and do something about that.

Marian Tupy ([38:33](#)):

There are plenty of studies I cannot come up with one of them. I know there was some man called Burgh, B-U-R-G-H who did a study on the size of the state and economic growth rates. So if your listeners simply Google, size of the state and economic growth rate, they will get these results. Also, I highly recommend Economic Freedom of the World Report, which they can find on a website called freetheworld.org, I think freetheworld.org.

Bill Walton ([39:04](#)):

Is that the Heritage study or is that another one?

Marian Tupy ([39:06](#)):

That's the Cato/Frazier Institute study. Heritage has one, too, yes, these are compatible, but separate projects. One is done by the Heritage Foundation and the other one is done by Cato and Frazier. And what they do show is that the bigger the size of the government, the less growth there is. It's called the Economic Freedom of the World Report. So this is a good academically sound product. It has been worked with by the IMF and the World Bank and people around the world use it. So you can look at economic freedom of the United States, which I believe peaked in about 2006. And then we've been on a downward slide. So then when people say, "Oh my God, dog-eat-dog." American capitalism, we've been really sliding down our economic freedom score for at least 15 years or so.

Bill Walton ([40:07](#)):

So what's your next project? I mean, you've developed something I think is already wonderful, but you strike me as somebody who's ambitious for more. What's the next big thing that you want to explain for us?

Marian Tupy ([40:22](#)):

Well, I haven't decided yet, but certainly one project that I would like to get to before too long would be really a very easy to understand booklet for the young about what life under socialism is really like, because I spend my youth under socialism. Millions of-

Bill Walton ([40:41](#)):

You were born in Czechoslovakia?

Marian Tupy ([40:43](#)):

... Correct. And millions of people from around socialist countries, be it Venezuela, or Cuba, or Nicaragua are trying to come to the United States to escape socialism like I did. And then you have American kids saying good things about socialism, what gives? So I want to maybe at some point do a project sort of trying to bring it home and explain to American youth why they shouldn't be toying around with fire.

Bill Walton ([41:11](#)):

I'd make it another part of your website as well, something that's interactive. I mean, books are great, but I think there's something to something, maybe a game that could play on an iPhone or other smartphone, something like that. See, I'm already in the project, I happen to be an entrepreneur too. I'm already trying to figure out how we can get the biggest market share and something kids would actually pay attention to.

Marian Tupy ([41:40](#)):

No matter what you do, you end up in prison in the game.

Bill Walton ([41:44](#)):

No matter what you do, you end up in prison.

Marian Tupy ([41:46](#)):

That's like under socialism. No matter what you did under socialism, you always ended up in prison. So if you just want to-

Bill Walton ([41:55](#)):

There's a board game. There's a computer game,

Marian Tupy ([41:58](#)):

Right? How to avoid prison? Yeah.

Bill Walton ([42:02](#)):

I love it. Well, I'm glad I finally had a chance to talk with you. I mean, you're smarter than I imagined, and it's, I already imagined you were very smart, and I think you've done a lot of work to gather all the information we need to know about what works and what doesn't work. And again, I highly recommend it. Last word, last thought before we exit?

Marian Tupy ([42:26](#)):

All I would say is that United States continues to provide an environment for people who want to make this country better. It's been a good institutional setup. It has its imperfections. No country is perfect, but our institutional setup, both economic and political, provided for creation of a tremendously innovative and rich society, and I hope that we can keep it. Socialism is on the rise. So please watch out what your kids are learning. Preferably take them out of the public school, put them, give them education that is a non-Marxist one. Guide them towards information like human progress, and let's try to keep this institutional setup and this American freedom going for at least few more decades.

Bill Walton ([43:18](#)):

Beautifully said, beautifully said. Well, I want to work with you on that, and hopefully this is the first of many conversations we'll have to help you get the word out about your work and what we ought to be doing. So Marian Tupy, Cato Institute, humanprogress.org. Thanks for joining.

Marian Tupy ([43:34](#)):

Thanks for having me.

Bill Walton ([43:35](#)):

And thanks for all of you who've been watching and listening. Thanks for this. Again, another shameless plug for humanprogress.org. Go to it and learn. As always, you can catch us on all the major podcast platforms and on YouTube and Rumble, and we're posting the show to Substack as well. And we're on CPAC now on Monday nights and some other platforms we're working on as well.

[\(43:59\)](#):

Send us your comments to thebillwaldenshow.com or on Substack and we'll take them into the laboratory and hopefully come up with better shows and even more interesting shows based on your input. So thanks for joining and talk with you soon.

[\(44:16\)](#):

I hope you enjoyed the conversation. Want more? Click the subscribe button or head over to thebillwaltonshow.com to choose from over 100 episodes. You can also learn more about our guest on our Interesting People page and send us your comments. We read every one and your thoughts help us guide the show. If it's easier for you to listen, check out our podcast page and subscribe there. In return, we'll keep you informed about what's true, what's right, and what's next. Thanks for joining.