Moderation timeline

April 4 - Earlier first DM by Jonah was reproduced in a clarification post - ref

Moderation posts by James, mostly in Praeternatural thread starting April 7:

- “You statements” - ref
- Please communicate in ways that respect other people - ref
- this is not acceptable behavior for this forum … cease and desist - ref
- Pointing out 8 more you statements, “I reject” x3 - ref
- Stop blaming others for your behavior - ref
- April 15 - Suspension post in CCC thread - ref

April 9th - Simon ref phone conversation w/ Simon same day?

Selected posts made by GeoffDann

- April 4 - abuse of power accusation, escalation appealing to rest of admin team - ref
- April 7 - “It is absolutely essential, to avoid further conflict, that Jonah responds to my 5000 word refutation of materialism” - ref
- April 8 - “I think maybe you aren’t looking very hard.” to a different person - ref
- April 8 - “you are putting me in an impossible position. You have identified the wrong problem” - ref
- April 9 - “I stand by my actions.” - ref
- April 10 - “Outro post” after phone call w/ Simon - ref
- April 15 - “OK, I can’t stay out of this” - ref

Email review (post-temporary suspension)

“I have a proposed solution” email Mon, 21 Apr 2025
Copied unedited here, with *purple editorial inserts* from a rule/boundary-holding analysis mode

Hi Simon

Explaining stuff to you has helped clarify this in my own mind.

This situation occured for two clear reasons *highlighting as 16th cited example (first 15 were "you statements", but suffuses claims about other interpretations as well) of lack-of-perspective-taking via absolutist language. so much frame control*

Firstly because Jonah both *Rule 6 take responsibility for your actions*

(1) Warned me to be more respectful towards other people's belief systems (especially his UTOK-style naturalism)

and

(2) Failed to engage with my detailed post on materialism/consciousness, which was a direct response to his stated support of Dennett in the new paradigm.

When I reacted by cranking up the pressure demanding a response *Rule 3 respect others boundaries*, another admin intervened to say I should not demand a response (that it wasn't necessary for Jonah to engage). My response to that was to explain exactly why I felt it was necessary.

Secondly I stated that I'd concluded collapse was inevitable 35 years ago and that I had turned out to be right and everybody else had been wrong. No specific reason was given for what was wrong with this statement, but presumably it was (again) the perceived disrespect for other people's beliefs. *missing the difference between behaviors and ideas, people and beliefs*

There were other reasons, but those were the most direct points of conflict.

I am not interested in the politics and the psychology. The real problem here is not my methods *Rule 7 listen to others?- This is a pretty fundamental disconnect* but the ideas that are behind them and driving them. Jonah's PhD in the Hard Problem hasn't been much use to him, has it? The truth is he has not been able to sustain an objection to my position. *Rule 9 personal attack-mainly about continuing to personalize confrontation after warning and "cease-and-desist", with light insults on top* There are very good reasons why I am attacking old-paradigm naturalism and Hanzi's hidden-in-plain-sight postmodernism. There is a reason why Hanzi accused me of "fascism".

I think the deeper problem is my epistemological position -- my New Epistemic Deal, which I've both specifically explained and have been defending in many different threads. But the problem is *not* that people don't agree with it. On the contrary, most of the feedback I've had about the ideas themselves has been positive. *so close (to understanding that people aren't reacting against his ideas) and yet so far (lapses back into "they must be against my ideas on an even deeper level")* The problem is that it threatens the coherence of the core 2R ecosystem. It suggests that UTOK and Hanzi (and possibly some others) may not belong on the real map of the new paradigm at all, and may eventually have to be removed, unless the people involved change their positions. In other words, it guarantees conflict, and the conflict it guarantees is exactly the right conflict needed to actually bring the new paradigm into focus.

What I am saying is that I believe it is not possible for 2R to respond meaningfully to my NED. *closed to possibility of progress, looking for a fight* Various responses are possible. 2R could:

(1) Agree that this looks like a viable epistemological basis for the paradigm shift, and put me on your map -- which would need to be redrawn as a consequence. *This would be major progress, for everybody.*

(2) Provide a clear objection -- a clear reason why the NED is unacceptable to 2R as an organisation. Explain which of the 8 principles are being rejected, and why. This would provide a way forward -- it would provide a means for other people to make a decision about who they

think is right and who is wrong, and exactly why. *This would also be major progress, for everybody.*

(3) Suggest alterations which actually improve it rather than compromising it for "political" reasons. *This would also be significant process.*

It is very hard to see how anybody could argue that my NED, as well as the new cosmological proposals, aren't directly relevant to what 2R claims to be trying to do. I believe that nearly everybody who engages with the subject matter will conclude that what I have proposed bears a strong resemblance to what 2R claims to be looking for.

My suggestion for a way forwards is for 2R to commit to responding to what is a very detailed, formal proposal for the paradigm shift 2R claims to be looking for -- a much more detailed proposal than anybody else has offered. I am talking specifically about my proposed 8 point epistemological agreement (the cosmology is more speculative, but the NED was designed to not be dependent on the cosmology). Presumably this would be much easier if I am available on the forum to answer questions about it (this could be in a single thread). But it does require a *commitment to engage,* because I am very explicitly accusing 2R of being incapable of doing exactly that. It looks to me like 2R **needs** the new paradigm to remain out of focus in order to be able to hold itself together. It looks to me like even if the new paradigm was offered to 2R on a plate, it would not be recognised, and it would be rejected, because it would directly threaten the cohesion of 2R itself. I am saying that the way 2R is set up *guarantees* that this problem will occur, regardless of what the new paradigm actually is.

If I am wrong then there will be a willingness shown to engage with my ideas. *trying to manipulate via negging* If this happens then *framing baseline conduct as conditional upon other people doing what he wants* I am willing to abide by all of 2R's forum rules, without question.

If I am correct then there will be no response, and no engagement. 2R will claim the problem is entirely my behaviour, continue to ignore my ideas, and try to ignore me. They will decide to exclude me, and hope that my book bombs and that I disappear back into the wilderness. *projecting the worst onto others motives, victim claim with persecution narrative* I will respond to this by shining a spotlight on everything described above. *seems like this is intended as a threat of bringing some negative consequence*

Please pass this message on to the team,

Thanks,

Geoff

Moderation decision of the admin team

In light of repeated behavior violating forum rules, repeated doubling-down and blame-shifting in conflict, and an overall closed stance not indicating any visible possibility of near-term

perspective-taking progress, the admin team has decided to impose a long-term suspension of GeoffDann from the forum. Term of suspension is set at 1 year for default expiration. (If any admin wants to engage with a petition or re-evaluation before that time, they may.)

We declare again our stance that we have no ideological beef with any of GeoffDann's beliefs, and we wish him well in his path elsewhere on the internet and in life. In particular, we invite him to email us a post celebrating the publication/availability of his book, which we'd be happy to post on this forum on his behalf. (And which could include an invitation to anyone interested in connection and/or book study hosted by GeoffDann outside the forum.) We're also ready and willing to delete any book quotes GeoffDan wants deleted.

Supporting opinion, written by James

To me GeoffDann's April 8th claim of "you are putting me in an impossible position. You have identified the wrong problem" is a perfect illustration of both the problematic behavior and the perspectival gap.

By behavior, I mean how we talk and how that impacts other people. I've been pointing out that "you statements" and similar flatly declarative claims employ "God's perspective" language that, in crossing "over the net" of collaborative dialogue norms, creates perceptions of aggression, coercion, manipulation, and frame control. If we want to connect in a space of exploration and difference with other people, then we need to remember that we perceive everything via our own personal perspective — and our language needs to reflect that awareness.

I would describe the perspectival gap as missing the distinction between the object layer (the contents of one's beliefs and opinions) and the relational layer (the way one expresses their beliefs to others). It is possible to hold strong opinions loosely, allowing perspectival space for others to feel valued and respected as people who also have beliefs. I see GeoffDann as mentally fusing object-level confidence in his beliefs with relational-layer behavior of using absolutist language, which is why the labels "combative" and "disrespectful" have been so prominent.

To say, "How can I not be combative about this?" conflates and confuses *difference* with *conflict*, and if someone cannot or refuses to see that people are open and willing to encounter different ideas while at the same time loathe to engage in verbal combat… I think we're stuck there. GeoffDann continues (in the email above) to insist that "The real problem here is not my methods", and even while acknowledging that "most of the feedback I've had about the ideas themselves has been positive" he has persisted in "defending in many different threads" his "epistemological position".

Even in his April 10th "outro post", in which GeoffDann said "I've just had a long chat with @Asimong on the phone. He's made me see that perhaps I'm not a great fit with 2R right now,

and as a result I've decided to move on, at least for now." the two things identified as not fitting here were first that "trying to co-ordinate that [everything fit together] with one other person's ideas would have been impossible" (???) and secondly his beliefs about civilizational collapse. To me naming those two things misses so very hard the clear feedback he's been receiving from three admins and other persons.

If I were to respond yet another time with the intention of breaking through this stuckness, to GeoffDann I would say: "No dude, my problem as forum moderator absolutely is with your methods, including your method of ignoring and shrugging off everyone who is telling you that your methods suck. I hope that you can find ways to develop your relational awareness, so that you can stop tricking yourself into thinking that people are secretly your enemies because they double-secretly can't tolerate your ideas. I think the real story is much more simply told in people's relational feedback, and if/though you can't see it now, I hope that you will at some point countenance the likelihood that there might be something that you're not seeing."

I completely believe that GeoffDann cares about steering humanity towards better futures, is motivated by good desires at heart, and is wanting to be a force for good in the world. However, good desires don't equate to effective behavior or productive impact.

Minority opinion, written by Simon

Regarding the material facts of the case, I have nothing to add. All the communication appears to have been reported accurately and fairly. However, I believe that there could be solutions better than the one reached here, for all parties, and I will start by setting out the background to this, and then what would have been my preferred solutions.

From my personal correspondence with Geoff, it is clear to me that he has good, constructive intentions. He believes that it would be both in his interests and the interests of 2R as a movement to address what he sees as a realistic way forward, to help in the creation of a culture that takes collapse seriously and is focused on a culture, and practical solutions, that are beneficial to the world in the longer term. He believes that he sees weaknesses, or blind spots, in the way that the 2R community is addressing the metacrisis, and he was hoping that his ideas would fill this gap in a way that would strengthen the approach of 2R to its goals. The fact that he has these good intentions does not imply that they would be effective, nor that others would agree with his approach.

The way in which people interpret "rules" – such as are laid out in the forum's "about" – inevitably varies from person to person, along with the importance and salience they are given. While recognising that there are several instances where Geoff's communications can reasonably be seen as breaching more than one of these rules, (as well documented above) it seems to me that Geoff's attitude has been coloured by what he sees as the vital importance of the "truths" he is trying to convey. This is not an attempt to excuse or exonerate, just a setting in perspective. I say more relevant to rule diversity below.

My own approach to this kind of conflict and misunderstanding – where it is clear at least that all sides have good intentions – rests in the importance of maintaining dialogue, and in taking a restorative approach that seeks to restore or regenerate relationship. This is very obviously not one-sided. I firmly believe that people learn and change largely from positions of relative psychological safety, and there is no way that I want to prioritise Geoff's sense of safety over that of other members of the forum. While I recognise that the supporting opinion leaves open some potential channels of communication, it is my view that we could have more openness.

Recent evidence in the last few days comes from a small group including Geoff taking forward some of these issues by e-mail. A third party in this conversation (that is, not Geoff or me) wrote "As an aside, this kind of exchange would be nice to see on the 2R forum." The challenge, it seems to me, is to allow exchanges of the kind that Geoff sees as important in a way that, and with suitable guard rails so that others are not confronted with a quality of conversation that leads to them not feeling safe. This parallels an observation that I shared with all recently, that in last year's "Gathering of Tribes" different people have different levels of comfort with different behaviours: notably noise (e.g. times when music can be played) and social nudity. This is a different context, with different dimensions of tolerance, and that is why it is my opinion that one set of "rules" is inadequate for a forum that has ambitions to be larger than Life Itself and those close to it. We would need to explore the various dimensions that either upset different groups of people or lead to them feeling safe to engage.

My preferred solution set

I would like to see my dissent here understood in positive terms, thus I suggest a menu of possible actions that I would see as wholly positive.

1. **Restorative Circles.** I've had experience of this in the context of co-housing community life, and found it highly effective. However, in the context of a living community, there is more natural commitment to finding ways forward, and I recognise that in the context of a forum there may not be sufficient commitment to put in the time and energy needed. I don't know if there is something similar or better adapted to our situation now.
2. **A study group on Geoff's book**, with perhaps a dedicated section of the forum, similar to an idea that has been floated for "tents". I see this as the central pole of how Geoff's potential contribution can be digested and assessed. I see this as potentially a help to both "sides" here. 2R could potentially learn of issues that need to be addressed to broaden the appeal of the movement; and Geoff could potentially learn more about how to present his ideas in a way that does not alienate people into disengagement with him. (A study group has now been explicitly allowed for in the majority opinion, though with no forum connection.)
3. **Well signposted sections of the forum.** To me, this would be a very valuable experiment in exploring what different rule sets help different kinds of conversation, as I was suggesting above. Yes, some sections are likely to end up in "debate" rather than Bohmian dialogue; some would favour different flavours of neurodiversity; some would appeal more to poets and artists; some might suit different gender identities. The aim would be to have a variety of cultures in different sections of the forum and for this to be

very clearly signposted. This, I believe, would itself be the most adventurous and the most metamodern approach I can see, and seems to me the most in keeping with the overall philosophy of 2R as I understand it.

In conclusion, I remain in hope that we as 2R stewards can in the future find and agree more positive and deliberately developmental approaches to addressing any similar issues that may arise.