

EXHIBIT A

Fw: New York City Bar Event Yesterday

From: Mark Moody (mwm@mwmoodly.com)
To: mwm@mwmoodly.com
Date: Friday, February 16, 2024, 10:12 AM EST

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Mark Moody <mwm@mwmoodly.com>
To: Noam Chomsky
Sent: Sunday, April 16, 2023, 06:04:37 AM EDT
Subject: Re: New York City Bar Event Yesterday

Dear Professor Chomsky:

Thank you for considering answering my questions. I believe there is something special about the way you think (as I believe there is something special about the way we are all capable of thinking), though the truth of your response resonates.

And thank you for answering the 'first language' question too - food for my thought; it's been a thrill for me to correspond with you.

On the off-chance that you might feel like answering 1 of my questions that you find more interesting, I attach them again.

Mark

On Saturday, April 15, 2023, 11:15:02 PM EDT, Noam Chomsky wrote:

Unfortunately, the attached questions seem to have disappeared. At least, I can't find them. On "how I think," and similar questions, I doubt that I'll have much to say. Nothing special that I'm aware of. I'll be guided next week by the questions Diane sends. If these come up, will try -- but my own focus of attention is on the kinds of things I talked about and others like them.

Noam

On Sat, Apr 15, 2023 at 2:14 PM Mark Moody <mwm@mwmoodly.com> wrote:

Dear Professor Chomsky:

Yes, you do have a blurb on the Graeber-Wengrow jacket - I hadn't noticed that before.

And you're right, there is essentially no overlap of my questions (apart from the added topic) with what you talked about. When Diane and I first discussed it, the interview was presented to me as a blank slate - hence I went where I wanted.

I suppose, if you were to make me choose, what I'm most interested in is how you think, and how that might be teachable; so if you're willing, I'd like to know how you'd respond to the opening tranche of 6 questions which were guided by your conversation with Daniel Ellsberg and David Foster Wallace's - in my view - astounding commencement speech.

I'm glad to hear you're doing a follow-up with Diane; I think she's terrific (even if I don't know her so well), with an inspiring activist soul.

Sincerely yours,

Mark Moody

On Saturday, April 15, 2023, 01:46:36 PM EDT, Noam Chomsky wrote:

Graeber-Wengrow is very important. I think my blurb may be on the jacket. Gives some insight about the last 10-20,000 years, but that's the tail end of human development. The best sources are pretty technical, and presuppose a lot. And won't bear on your question for the reasons mentioned.

Thanks for the questions. I see there's essentially no overlap with what I was talking about. One of the problems with formal talks. It's what the speaker finds important, not necessarily what's in the mind of the audience. There are some interesting issues raised. Too much for a letter but if there are some you think are particularly important, would be glad to have a look.

Diane's scheduled a replay next Thursday, just for discussion

On Sat, Apr 15, 2023 at 4:31 AM Mark Moody <mwm@mwmoodly.com> wrote:

Dear Professor Chomsky:

Thank you so much for responding to me so quickly; I can't imagine how you do it.

There was NO misunderstanding on your part (I'm sorry if I made it appear that way; I didn't intend to), and you have nothing to apologize for - certainly not to me.

Attached is a slightly edited version of the first draft of questions I wrote for Diane for the New York City Bar Event. If it's not already obvious, I feel a privilege, beyond the many privileges I have already had, to get the opportunity to ask.

Notwithstanding, thank you for your answer regarding our first language; but can you point

me to what you consider to be the best sources of "our best understanding today"? I wonder if you've read Graeber and Wengrow's Dawn of Everything (having little to do with language of course, but in my view revolutionary in a related field of thought)?

Sincerely yours,

Mark Moody

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On Saturday, April 15, 2023, 01:04:31 AM EDT, Noam Chomsky wrote:

Sorry about the misunderstanding. I was told the format was about 30 min talk and then discussion, so kept to that.

Please do send your questions. I'll be happy to try to respond.

On the question you raise at the end, our best understanding today is that the human language faculty emerged pretty much along with anatomically modern humans, Homo sapiens, in the range of 2-300,000 years ago -- very recently in evolutionary time. There's genomic evidence that the small number of humans began to separate about 125,000 years ago, plus or minus. There are some differences among the surviving languages. The first group to split are all and only the languages with rich use of clicks. But the core systems seem the same. There is, however, no way to find out what the languages were that were spoken more than a few thousand years ago -- some specialists would argue earlier, but nowhere near the appearance of Homo sapiens, our species.

Noam Chomsky

On Fri, Apr 14, 2023 at 11:20 AM Mark Moody <mwm@mwmoodly.com> wrote:

Dear Professor Chomsky:

My name is Mark Moody. I'm a member of the New York City Bar and a lapsed litigator. It's only a small snapshot of who I am, but I was so incensed at not being able to vote for Bernie in the 2016 Democratic primary (because I was registered as an Independent, already sick of Democratic Party lies) that I sued the New York City and State Boards of Election. I continue to believe that, as a matter of functioning law, I should have won on the merits. Here's an article: <https://nypost.com/2016/05/02/ny-primary-results-stand-but-judge-questions-closed-system/>, and here's a memorandum of law I wrote in support of obtaining a preliminary injunction: <https://www.scribd.com/doc/310850890/Moody-vs-New-York-State-Board-of-Elections-Lawsuit-PDF#>. I now less naively understand that my lawsuit never had a chance before it was killed by the First Department (interestingly, after the Court of Appeals).

Originally, Diane and I were going to conduct an interview of you together (which is why I have your email address, and I hope you won't think me presumptuous or rude for using it). I wrote a first rough draft of a series of interview questions for you for Diane that we ultimately decided not to pursue because we had very different visions of the purpose or utility of an interview of you. I have long greatly admired your work; I imagine it might be boring for you to hear such sentiments from people you don't know by now. Perhaps my admiration is best illustrated by the fact that one of my favorite Hollywood moments is when the Cash family celebrate Chomsky Day on your birthday instead of Christmas in 2016's Captain Fantastic. Priceless.

It is with this preface that I wrote the following question to the panel (which you may have seen) roughly 36 minutes into yesterday's hour long New York City Bar Event: "Wasn't this supposed to be a conversation, rather than a speech? Chomsky's very interesting, brilliant, and a long time remaining hero of this audience member, but to learn from him, his ideas have to be tested not swallowed. That's supposed to be America's beating soul - an educated citizenry, not a lectured obedient one." My inspiration for the draft interview that I wrote was your remarkable conversation with Daniel Ellsberg - I've never seen you (or him) (and very

few others)) do an interview like that: 2 old friends with profound mutual respect talking unscripted about matters of interest to the public. It was, for me a breath of fresh air, and showed me a side of you that I'd never had access to. It has appeared to me that even in friendly interviews, you're often prepared for combat rather than dialogue - which is unsurprising to me given the treatment you have received for 40 years at the hands of ideologues posing as journalists.

I don't wish to interview you (that is why I declined co-host status), but I do wish to learn from you (which is why I initially agreed to be involved in crafting questions), including on 2 questions where I have a profound disagreement with you. The vast majority of the interview I drafted, however, was my interest in getting your take and learning from you. So why am I writing to you? If you're willing, I'd like to edit and finalize the draft questions I wrote and send them to you for you to consider answering. Should you think it necessary, I am willing to sign a document prohibiting me from publishing them; I'm solely interested in understanding your methodologies as well as your thinking on a few precise areas. At present, the draft questions are only 4 pages long, and if you agree, I will limit myself to no more than 5 pages. There's only 1 topic I'd like to add after the New York City Bar Event yesterday - of course there are hundreds of issues and topics that I could add, curious about your thoughts, but my project at the moment is specific.

In being unable to get on the same page as Diane, I knew that an opportunity of a lifetime (for me) was passing me by, hence my willingness to risk being construed as rude or presumptuous for sending this email.

I hope that you'll agree to my request, but even if you won't, perhaps you could point me in the right direction to answer a question which (I'm embarrassed to say) only sprang to my mind in the last couple of weeks and was unrelated to the draft interview: what was humanity's first known language, and what is the best research and/or writing supporting that conclusion (if there is one)?

Sincerely yours,

Mark Moody

PS I have also copied your wife on this email.

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Chomsky-Questions.docx
26.4kB

Part 1. How Chomsky thinks/AI.

Q1. I saw an interview you recently recorded with your very dear friend Daniel Ellsberg (a man who I consider to be 1 of the very most important figures of contemporary America). The format of the interview was new for you, I believe (as it was for me, and may be for many people watching or listening to this), in as much as you and Mr. Ellsberg were not moderated; instead, you moderated each other. In other words, you just had a conversation with each other. It struck me as a startlingly effective format for disseminating information; perhaps because the information imparted by you both came alive as part of your lives rather than information being imparted solely for the sake of facts. To some extent, perhaps the information was transformed from expertise to humanity. When I asked myself why the conversation was so effective, I came to the conclusion that it was because the exchange allowed those of us who haven't attained such significant renown as you or Mr. Ellsberg to understand that good ideas are most effectively communicated to the world when they are clothed with integrity. It occurred to me that Joe Rogan's youtube success might be largely attributable to this giving an audience a fly-on-the-wall perspective. The obvious lack of a script lent the interview between you and Mr. Ellsberg a profoundly human credibility, like a small window into how a parent teaches their child, both consciously and subconsciously; a small window, perhaps, into how human beings most effectively learn. Does my description of the interview resonate with you, and was the format of that interview planned between Paul Jay, Mr. Ellsberg, and you, or did it happen suddenly, without preparation, as Paul Jay suggested it did?

Q2. If you could do other conversational interviews with anyone who might already willing to be in the public eye and sit down for a conversation with you, who would you do such interviews with?

Q3. Are you familiar with David Foster Wallace's 2005 commencement address to Kenyon College (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCbGM4mqEVw&t=143s>) where he gives a – speaking for me personally – life-altering explanation of how to think as a free human being. He makes the point that the most obvious and important realities are often the hardest to see and talk about. Do you agree? If so, why? Do you have any personal examples of this happening to you? **Obviously, this question was crafted without knowing whether you'd seen Wallace's commencement address, but with the link supplied, I'd love to know what you think having watched it (it's about 22 minutes long).**

Q4. Is it your experience that your thinking gets clearer when you remember that you are not the center of the universe (as Wallace explains), i.e. your humility keeps your ego at bay? What I mean by that is that because we all – every single one of us – are at the center of our individual lives, the only person who is always with us, seeing what we see, and the only person who can know for certain whether we're telling the truth, whether to ourselves or others, is the individual.

Q5. Is it, in your experience, possible to teach a friend or a student to pay attention to the very obvious, and if so, how?

Q6. On March 8, you wrote an NYT opinion piece about AI. You appeared to marvel at AI as a staggering achievement of technology (“marvels of machine learning” you called it) while

simultaneously pointing out AI's clunkiness when compared with each and every individual human brain. You wrote "the human mind is a surprisingly efficient and even elegant system". Can you explain for me, as though I was 15 years old, and of average education, what you think makes the human mind efficient and possibly elegant? If you could, and please don't use the child learning language example that you used in your piece, talk about the mind's architecture (and other examples) that compel you to your conclusion.

Part 2. Anarchism

Q1. I want to stay away from the theory, or definition, of anarchism, George Orwell, Hemingway, and Christopher Hitchens having, in my view, written well and expansively on the subject (if there are other accessible thinkers on the subject, who are they?) and focus on its practicalities. In your view, what are the most successful human efforts, in the last 500 years, to create anarchist societies, and do you have a sense of what organizational structures made those societies successful?

Q2. This is a 3 part question. First, is it conceivable to you that the United States could become an anarchy? If so, how, organizationally, can you conceive of that transition taking place? And third, if the United States were to do so, what would daily life look like? Would there still be a president and 50 governors, a Supreme Court of the United States and 50 state supreme courts?

Q3. In an anarchy, are there laws as we understand them in contemporary America, and if so, how do they get written and what would they cover?

Q4. Are there areas of human existence where law, in your view, should play no role? If so, what are they, and why?

Part 3. Vaccines

Q1. As a semiotician, do you think that the definition of words change organically and without educational manipulation, and if so, what fosters that process, and has your research revealed a rule of thumb as to how fast a word's meaning can change without manipulation by the hunter knowing that the lion can't tell its story?

Q2. What do you think is a workable definition of the word vaccine?

Q3. With the benefit of hindsight, and the additional information that comes with it (from the malign pharmaceutical companies and those injured by their vaccines), do you see any need to retract your support for vaccine mandates?

Q4. How does a sudden governmental medical mandate, potentially violating the only thing we truly own (our bodies) square with your conception of anarchy, understanding that society can collectively, and over time, develop proven appropriate collective mandates (e.g. polio, rubella, measles etc)?

Q5. What research (please provide all sources that you relied upon), had you done into the science underpinning the Covid-19 vaccine before taking the – in my view – extraordinary step of supporting a mandate?

Q6. Is there any part of you that believes the conclusion that you reached with respect to vaccine mandates – given that your age places you, and your wife, and many of your friends presumably, atop the group of people most vulnerable to Covid-19 – was driven by fear?

Q7. If so, do you think it possible that in your own slightly altered words, your consent was manufactured?

Q8. Have you done any research into the claim that the pharmaceutical companies did not test to see whether the ‘vaccine’ prevented transmission before claiming it did and releasing it to the public with FDA approval? If so, what did you conclude, and what information did you rely upon to reach that conclusion?

Q9. Would you be willing to have a public discussion with Jay Bhattacharya, Martin Kulldorff, or Sunetra Gupta?

Part 4. Donziger

Q1. Are you familiar with Steven Donziger? Could you give us a brief outline of your understanding of Donziger’s case?

Q2. The reason I had to ask whether you were familiar is – and I’ve noticed this with lots of controversial topics – that when you type “noam chomsky steven donziger” into google or duckduckgo (or any other search engine), the first 20-30 results are about Steven Donziger from corporate news organizations like Reuters, none of those several results which I clicked on contained any comment by you about Donziger. Is this because you’ve never publicly commented, or is it because the search engine algorithms are manipulating the results? Whether you’ve commented or not, do you know how search engines can be programmed to do this in a way that would be comprehensible to a young person who is not a computer programmer?

Q3. What did you make of the recent Supreme Court decision that – for now – legitimates corporate prosecution across America?

Q4. The 2 justice dissent (<https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/22-274>) denying *certiorari*, written by Justice Gorsuch and adopted by Justice Kavanaugh does no justice to the actual history of Donziger’s case. 3 stark examples of this are: (i) the fact that Donziger spent over 900 days under house arrest pursuant to a criminal statute that has a maximum sentence of 180 days; (ii) the fact that the private law firm appointed by the federal judge to prosecute Donziger had previously represented Chevron; and (iii) the fact that Judge Kaplan hand-picked Judge Preska to preside over Donziger’s contempt trial. Do these strike you as startling omissions from the dissent’s scanty narrative, and are you aware of the Supreme Court of the United States omitting startling facts in other cases? If so, which ones?

Q5. Justice Gorsuch's most stirring language in support of freedom and liberty, hinting at the rancid danger that is currently the law in this land – that private companies can lawfully take a citizen's liberty – in my view comes too late (in the last paragraph of the dissent), and too little (Gorsuch wrote: "the prosecution in this case broke a basic constitutional promise essential to our liberty. In this country, judges have no more power to initiate a prosecution of those who come before them than prosecutors have to sit in judgment of those they charge.") Do you agree that this is too little too late, and if so, could you describe what you may see as the current dangers of this non-decision?

Q6. Do you believe that Justices Gorsuch and Kavanaugh were used to author the dissent in order to persuade – within the context of manufacturing consent – democrat minded, and leaning, voters to ignore the dissent, or at the very least to interrupt such voters' capacity to understand just how clearly the Supreme Court should do the opposite of what it did?

Q7. Under what circumstances, if any, should a private company ever have the power to take away a citizen's liberty?

Part 5. This is the added topic I referred to in my email Professor Chomsky

Q1. Presumably you agree that voting for the lesser of 2 evils means that a voter – as an individual – is nonetheless voting for evil?

Q2. If that's the case, and the Republican and Democratic parties keep vomiting up evil candidates (while Trump is evil, Biden's near half-century track record is surely just less ostentatiously mimetic), isn't an educated citizen (like you) obligated – no matter the potential invitation of greater or lesser evil – to place themselves in staunch opposition, no matter the (thus far) historical failure of third parties? I ask this because it seems to me that you continue to draw a distinction between the duopolistic parties, and it makes no sense to me (idealist as your life's work has proven you to be). Your own analysis suggests that *every* president since at least Eisenhower is a war criminal.