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## - Pharmapolitics and the Vitamin D Hypothesis

- The following observations, while not individually proof of anything, are collectively provocative:

- On average, who would spend more time outdoors - an American of today, or an American of 50 years ago? An American of 50 years ago, or an American of 100 years ago? What social change have we seen in that time?

- If you had to associate an American political party with "rough and tough" outdoor jobs, which party would that be?

- Going entirely off stereotypes, who would be more likely to "follow the label" and make regular use of sunscreen? A liberal or a conservative?

- What is the origin of the word "redneck"?

- Who would be more inclined to spend time outdoors? A person from a rural area, or a person from an urban area?

- Which part of the country receives more sun exposure by virtue of latitude? The North or the South?

- If you had to associate a political party with the chemical testosterone, which party would that be? Which vitamin is known to be correlated with testosterone levels?

- Deficiency in which vitamin is associated with severe covid symptoms? Which party didn't think covid was a big deal?

- Holding sun exposure constant, who gets more Vitamin D - people with lighter skin, or people with darker skin?

• So the thought is that, somewhat ironically, the more Vitamin D you have the less inclined you are to take D. Stated more concretely, we have:

Hypothesis: A double-blind, controlled experiment would find that political moderates administered Vitamin D espouse more conservative views than those given a placebo.

I say "political moderates" because effect sizes are generally small in psychology, and because people may cling to long-held beliefs even when medically disposed to reject them.

As someone with a history of wavering political views and a recurring interest in the modern American political divide, I can say that the differences between the parties feel almost chemical at this point. That is, liberal views are as incomprehensible to the conservative mind as laziness, say, is to the caffeinated mind. There's this sense I have that especially conservative and liberal moods can "wear off" - not unlike drugs. Do either of you guys have any experience with this sort of thing? Also, what are your thoughts on the Vitamin D Hypothesis? Does it sound plausible? Can you think of any other chemicals that might produce an effect?