



**Episode 1,136: Dave Smith on Speaking Forbidden Truths on CNN; Plus: the Rotten State of Comedy, and More**

**Guest: Dave Smith**

**WOODS:** You've been doing really, really well. Every time I talk to you, it's the third time you've been on the show, and your star rises significantly between each appearance. Now, I can't take *all* the credit for that — [laughing]

**SMITH:** [laughing]

**WOODS:** — but I'll just say I'm very, very happy to see it. Now, in particular, you got quite an interesting gig, because you have made quite a number of appearances on CNN alongside S.E. Cupp on her panel. What's the name of the show?

**SMITH:** It's *S.E. Cupp Unfiltered*, and yeah, I'm a contributor to the show, so I'm on quite a bit.

**WOODS:** Yeah, that is really, really great. In fact, I made one of my emails out of one of your appearances. Now, I sometimes badger people who listen, if you're not on my email list, I'm going to come over there and smack you in the face, and when I email you, open it and read it because it's good. I send you guys good stuff. And one of them was about heroic Dave Smith, who goes on CNN and just drops truth bombs like he's Ron Paul 2.0. Because it was that one episode in particular where you gave like a 60-second briefing on foreign policy. Remember the particular one I have in mind?

**SMITH:** Yes.

**WOODS:** It got written up on Zero Hedge.

**SMITH:** That's right. I remember of course because I made the Tom Woods newsletter, which was a very big deal to me.

**WOODS:** [laughing] There you go.

**SMITH:** So let me just say that I love the newsletter, and also, just to correct you earlier, you've said I've been on three times, but I count every single time you air one of my episodes on your feed.

**WOODS:** Oh, that's true.

**SMITH:** I count that as an episode as well.

**WOODS:** That's true.

**SMITH:** So it's a few more times than that.

**WOODS:** It is. Yeah, you're right. Yeah, you're like a regular now.

**SMITH:** Yeah, that's right. I'm up there. I'm competing with Malice.

**WOODS:** Yeah. Okay, so just tell people who didn't see it or who, heaven forbid, didn't read my newsletter, which they can jump on at [TomsFreeBooks.com](http://TomsFreeBooks.com), what exactly happened that day. And was there any part of you that was slightly nervous, or did you know there are enough Ron Paulians out there that are just going to be shocked and staggered that I got on CNN and said this that I'm more pumped than I am nervous?

**SMITH:** I was definitely more pumped than nervous, but also, this was — I went on the Contra Cruise, so I spent a week on a boat with Scott Horton —

**WOODS:** [laughing] That's right.

**SMITH:** — and nobody is prepared to see me in a foreign policy debate after that.

But yeah, no, it's crazy because this was the thing, which is kind of the generic story and I've mentioned before on the show, but I was brought into this libertarian world, my initial moment was the Ron Paul-Giuliani moment. So this has always been like my issue, the thing that attracted me over to the antiwar and the libertarian world the most.

And you know, S.E. Cupp, God bless her, she's just out of her mind on this issue. And the particular clip that you're talking about, this was when — so this was a couple months back, and it was when at the time the Secretary of State, who is no longer involved, but he came out with his plan, which was that we have to stay in Syria to both defeat ISIS and overthrow Assad, which of all the plans for these wars, it's the most ridiculous one. It's like the easiest one to bat down. So I felt like I was set up. I mean, you really couldn't hand someone a better position to be in, where like after these last six interventions have been an absolute disaster, we're looking for a seventh one with the most ridiculous plan of all to intervene in a civil war and take out both sides.

But yeah, I was able to get off a good 60-second clip and Zero Hedge ran it, and I got some really great feedback online for it. So yeah, I love that stuff and I enjoy the battle very much.

**WOODS:** And it seems like your podcast has also exploded, *Part of the Problem*.

**SMITH:** Yeah, *Part of the Problem's* been doing very good. And you can take a lot of credit for it, Tom, because you had me on before any of these other people were having me on. But yeah, from doing your show and I did the Joe Rogan podcast a couple times and then the stuff — Fox News was using me a little bit for a while. They really liked me when Hilary Clinton was running and I wouldn't hold back on trashing Hillary Clinton. And yeah, everything, I just did Stefan Molyneux's show recently, and it just kind of picked up and picked up and now we've

got like a great little audience. We're like *The Tom Woods Show* if we did less homework with more cursing.

**WOODS:** [laughing] Well, anyway, I love it and I think you do a tremendous job. I also want to point out to people, I have a lot of listeners who are interested in starting a podcast or who have just started a podcast, or they've started a blog or whatever, and the key problem is: how do you get people to listen to you, how do you get people to visit what you're doing? And you've just given us what to mind is really the best answer, which is to get yourself on to other podcasts. Do what you have to do to get on there. Now, in your case, I was practically begging you to come on, so you didn't have to ask, but there's no harm in asking. And leveraging other people's audiences is an excellent way to build up your own.

**SMITH:** Yeah, I mean, one of the — you know, I get the question all the time. I'm sure you do too. But listeners of the podcast will be asking me all the time what other great libertarian podcasts are there or what's a great book on this, what's a great place to learn about this. so it's like the audience that we're talking to, at least a large percentage of them, they're looking for more content on this topic. So yeah, to me that seems like the best marketing strategy.

**WOODS:** Now, some of my listeners have of course heard every single time Dave Smith's been on the show, but not all of them, so for the sake of the newcomers, let's just start off with maybe a one- to two-minute overview about your background, how you came to be a crazy extremist like us, stuff like that.

**SMITH:** Yeah, well, I kind of hinted at it before, but yeah, I'm born and raised in New York City. I was always kind of a left-wing guy. I wasn't super political, but that's just the correct thing to be in New York City. I was never one of the crazy lefties, which, you know, it wasn't quite as insane back when I was in the world, which is like under the George W. Bush, so the left had some reasonable things that I was drawn to, like the Iraq War was a bad idea and the Patriot Act isn't good and stuff like that.

And then in 2007, I just happened to be watching that Republican debate with what people call the Giuliani moment, but I hate that term. It was the Ron Paul moment, where Ron Paul just heroically slapped won Rudy Giuliani. And I was just so intrigued. I was like, *Who the heck is that guy?* And I just started looking more and more into him, and shortly after I found you and Peter Schiff, and then you kept mentioning something about this guy Murray Rothbard, so I looked him up. And then once you find Murray Rothbard, it's like this rabbit hole that you just get sucked into and I've been obsessed with this stuff ever since. And then I was already doing standup comedy, and so then it started kind of bleeding into the comedy world and a lot of my material started being about how ridiculous this whole system is. And then yeah, I started podcasting shortly after that.

And there's an interesting thing about having this kind of anarchocapitalist, Rothbardian, libertarian perspective, where it gives you — it's almost like you're living in a time — you're like in the Middle Ages or something where everybody else thinks that disease is caused by clouds in the sky, and you understand that there's germs involved. Like you have this insight that nobody else has, and you can jump into this world and just see things in a way that none of them seem to be able to. And so yeah, I've really enjoyed it and I get to sit down and talk to my heroes like you, and I've been able to build a fun career off of it.

**WOODS:** I almost hate to ask you question like this that might put you in an uncomfortable spot, because I don't want you to feel like you have to denounce people in your field. But I am curious to know about your overall impression of your fellow comics, because the impression I get, let's say, from mutual friends of ours is that the comedy world has gotten noticeably more schoolmarmish and condescending and lecture-to-you-for-using-the-wrong words, even though these very people five years ago were saying all kinds of things that they would put you in prison for saying today. There's no self-awareness among these people at all. Do you feel like you are among wolves, or do you feel like, look, I'm an amiable enough guy; I'm not going to be in their crosshairs?

**SMITH:** Well, I mean, first of all, I'm not uncomfortable about it at all, to trash the state of comedy right now. I mean, I'm absolutely disgusted by it. And really, it's like whatever this like left-wing, social-justice-warrior poison is, it has really seeped into the comedy world. And yeah, it's like even when you said just a few years ago they would say whatever horrible thing they could think of, I mean, they still say it. But it's the typical kind of like left-wing thing, where they can say the most horrific things they want to, but it's within the rules and you're not allowed to say anything that's outside of the rules. And yeah, it's just awful.

And to see — I know you just recently had on a mutual friend of ours, Owen Benjamin. I mean, I saw comedians on Twitter cheering the fact that Owen Benjamin was getting censored online because he doesn't have the same views they have. And they have this kind of freedom where they know they can say whatever they want to. Like you can call NRA members child murderers. That's not a problem at all. But if he fires off with like a no-no word, then he's got to be censored. So I'm disgusted by it. There are some really good comedians who push back against it.

But yeah, for me personally, I think I kind of established myself a little bit before the Donald Trump era, before this thing had gotten completely out of hand. And then just the world that I'm in, a lot of it's online and podcasting and stuff like that, so I don't know, they really can't touch me. But I personally haven't had a lot of trouble with it, but maybe that's also something about my style, because I'm not like inflammatory on Twitter the same way a guy like Owen is, so I don't know. Although I had, you know, last year I got a bunch of nasty tweets and things like that when I was having some alt-right figures on my podcast because, you know, I don't know, I thought the alt-right phenomenon was interesting enough to have some conversations with people, and I got a lot of heat for that.

But you know, I don't know. Like I said, I got into this thing because I was so impressed with Ron Paul and then guys like yourself and Murray Rothbard, and to me, the thing that was so impressive about Ron Paul — it was like two things. It was like, number one, he was telling the truth. And number two, he could care less if he was going to get booed out of the arena. He was very prepared to just say what he had to say and get booed out of the arena, and that's it, so be it, that's fine. And I've always kind of appreciated that, and so I'm fine with it. I'm going to tell the truth like I see it, and people can call me whatever they want to.

**WOODS:** I guess what's demoralizing to me in particular about this is that I think of standup comedians as being people who are willing to give the whole world the middle finger.

**SMITH:** Yeah.

**WOODS:** And so they of all people should be banding together. Whether they like each other or not, they should say: look, one thing we can agree on is that comedians ought to be free to tell jokes.

**SMITH:** Right.

**WOODS:** Can we at least agree on that? They should be free to tell jokes. And another thing: we have a mutual friend we both met on the Contra Cruise who plays poker, and he plays in professional tournaments and everything. And I was shocked when I had him on the show when he said that generally professional poker players tend to be on the left. And I said, but they're getting regulated — you know, online poker and stuff, they're getting regulated like crazy by the government. The government ruined people's livelihoods. I have a friend who actually moved to Mexico so he could get his freedom back when it came to playing online poker. You would think these would be the people who would, of all people, stand together and say: look, we can't have these fantasy versions of what the state is all about. We know the state is force and we're not going to let them ruin our profession. No, instead, it turns into these mealy-mouthed conversations that go something like this: well, we do need some regulation. What is the matter with these people? Some people, it's like at some point in their lives, they have like a spine-removal surgery or something.

**SMITH:** Yeah, well, I've just come to the conclusion that if leftists were logically consistent, they wouldn't be leftists. So it's like yeah, you're right. There were like SWAT raids on private poker clubs in New York City. This is going back like a decade or something like that. But yeah, it's insane. And like for standup comedians to be ever advocating that people can't say offensive things, it's just so ridiculous. I mean, it's such a contradiction in everything that they stand for or should stand for. So yeah, it breaks my heart.

I remember back a few months ago, it seems like 80 years ago now, but back in December when the net neutrality debate was all the rage. And I see comedians actually advocating that the FCC should come in and regulate the Internet. And it's like, could you guys just think this through for five seconds? Like, this is just not how things are supposed to go.

But I don't know. Truthfully speaking, the mix of Obama and Trump did so much to destroy comedy in this country, and I hope we can recover from it. Like I said, there's still some great ones out there. But it's like Obama made them all just were like praising the leader. Like comedians are now walking around, they're like high school kids with a, "My principal is number one," T-shirt on, and then Trump just made them so angry that they're just detached from reality. And the combination has just been really bad for comedy, and it's sad for me to see.

**WOODS:** Somebody's asking about whether you would do a course on comedy writing, and before you answer that, let me remind people who were on the Contra Cruise, some of whom are listening right now, and for the sake of those who for some reason did not join us — you can remedy that this year, by the way. Dave Smith's coming back aboard the Contra Cruise, so check it out at [ContraCruise.com](http://ContraCruise.com). It's the most fun you could possibly imagine. That breakout session you did with folks certainly was made I think even nicer by the fact that the New York subway map was on the ceiling of that room. I mean, that was just a bizarre coincidence.

But you handled questions so well and it was so interesting, and I'm pretty sure your view kind of was that there isn't so much a science to comedy and it's not so clear that it could be

teachable, but yet after sitting in there with you for an hour, I walked away having learned a lot. And one of the things I learned was that Dave has mastered this science so much, he doesn't even know it's a science. So I actually think that if we do another session like that this year, I would record it and give it to you to use. You could give it away as a bonus to people who support you or people who subscribe at GaS Digital or something like that, because it would be well worth it, it would be something they could get access to nowhere else, it's an instant product for you, and I'd give it to you for free. Anyway, let's go back to this. Is this anything that piques your interest, like how to write a joke kind of thing?

**SMITH:** Yeah, I'll be honest, I'm a little turned off to the idea because, like I said, as you were kind of mentioning, my initial reaction to a class on comedy is: no, the whole point of comedy is we don't want to be sitting in class. We're like in the back row making fun of the class. But yeah, there are a lot of things I've picked up in my days in standup comedy, but I'd be more interested in – I did enjoy that Q&A session very much and I'd be more interested in just like talking to people. And yeah, I'll put that out if you want to record it this year. That'd be fun. But I don't know about the idea of actually having like a formal class. To me, comedy is one of those things where you have to just start doing it and then you ask other comedians for help on stuff or you kind of learn little things about the craft. But I don't know, every time I've ever seen an actual comedy class, it's usually taught by some like hack, failed comedian, who's just kind of like charging money from young wannabe comics to pay his rent. So I don't know, I'm a little turned off to the idea. But I did enjoy that Q&A very much.

**WOODS:** Yeah, honestly, it was one of my favorite events of the whole cruise. I just kept thinking: this thing just can't get any better.

**SMITH:** The cruise, by the way, for people who don't know, it is the most fun thing in the world. Like, if there is any way you can make it to the Contra Cruise, do yourself the favor and come on out. Yeah, it was just so much fun. I was planning out the next Contra Cruise on the ship last year.

**WOODS:** Yeah, and it was fun. We were sitting together at one of the bars or whatever, and somebody who wasn't even in our group walked by and recognized you and said, "Oh, it's Dave Smith."

**SMITH:** [laughing] Oh yeah, that's right. I forgot about that.

**WOODS:** Yeah, wasn't that fun? Yeah, so there you go, Dave Smith, a celebrity on board of this. It was really great.

Who are some of your favorite comedians and what's so great about them?

**SMITH:** Well, you know, I've got a lot. I always really loved Dave Chappelle, although I was a little disappointed in the last two specials that he put out. But you know, I just love funny across the board. I was a huge Jerry Seinfeld fan. Loved the show *Seinfeld*. I actually really like John Stewart and Stephen Colbert when they were on Comedy Central, when it was like during the – *The Colbert Report* during the George W. Bush years I thought was hysterical. And I even, when he's on, although I find him infuriating at times, but Bill Maher would make me laugh. And I really always loved comedians who would kind of have that quality of just bringing all the absurdity of our society into focus and anyone who can really just make you

gut laugh while making you realize a really powerful point, I always thought there was something so cool about that. I love the *South Park* guys. I think they do an incredible job. But I've always been a huge, huge fan of comedy, and that's partly going back to what I was saying before, why it hurts so much to see these comedians become leftist robots.

**WOODS:** I'm not trying to create more competition for you, but how does somebody break into comedy?

**SMITH:** Well, yeah, it's impossible to do, guys. Sorry, it's all over. No competition allowed. Honestly, I'm in New York City and that's where I started, and there's like a ton of open mics around New York City, and it's really as simple as you've just got to go there and do it and keep doing it. And before you know it, you meet people who run in those circles, you meet people who book shows and stuff like that. So it's a really unstructured world, where you just kind of have to like do it yourself and keep hustling.

**WOODS:** When's your next comedy special coming out?

**SMITH:** Well, I'm working on it now. It's really just a matter of me building the hour of material. So I put out my first comedy special last year, *Libertas*. If you want to go download that, you can go to [GaSDigitalNetwork.com](http://GaSDigitalNetwork.com) – or I think you have a link for that special, as well.

**WOODS:** Yeah, I think it's – is it [TomWoods.com/Libertas](http://TomWoods.com/Libertas), maybe? I don't know; I'll check it. I think it is. Yeah, it should be. Whatever thing you're looking for, it's always [TomWoods.com/](http://TomWoods.com/) that thing.

**SMITH:** So yeah, I've just been in the process of building up the next hour, so it's just a matter of getting to the point where I'm happy with the hour of material. I'm thinking I'm about a year away from doing it, so I still got some time on that one.

**WOODS:** Do you invite friends to come to that recording, or how does that work?

**SMITH:** Well, I put it out – yeah, that was for the recording of the special, I had friends and followers of the podcast and stuff like that, so I packed it out with my people.

**WOODS:** I'd love to be there. I'm just inviting myself over.

**SMITH:** Tom, of course you're invited. Of course.

**WOODS:** Oh, wouldn't that be awesome? All right. So that's good. What would you say – I mean, again, we could be talking about libertarianism, but you know, sometimes you've just got to talk about other things, you know? there are just other things in life, and I think what you do is so fascinating. And I wonder, obviously the best thing in the world must be when you just absolutely kill it. You walk off that stage and people, you just know they're going to be talking about it on the way home. You were the best one of the night. They just love what you just did. And of course when it's not so good, I guess it's not so good. But are there particularly rewarding things about it and particularly frustrating things about it?

**SMITH:** Yeah, there's a lot of both, and that's one of the things I was very drawn to about the comedy world. I mean, you get your — but they have, you know, like a symbiotic relationship with each other because part of the reason why killing is so great is because you're risking it going bad, so that's why there's kind of that reward. But there's nothing like killing with a new joke. That's the best feeling in the world, when you've got something you're not sure about it yet but you think it's good, and it gets up and it kills. And nothing worse than a mild reception.

**WOODS:** Yeah.

**SMITH:** Like I'll take bombing over — I'll take offending an audience. That's fine by me, and I'll take that over just kind of a [polite chuckle]. That's the worst. That leave you just feeling like nothing. But you've got to get a bunch of both.

**WOODS:** Yeah, no kidding. Now, there are other comedians out there who have maybe like a libertarian slant to them, but I'm not sure that there really is another Dave Smith. Even if there were, you would have no interest in telling us about that person necessarily, but I really feel like you kind of dominate this area, and you do it without trying to be the libertarian comedian. Because in the same way that when people try to make libertarian movies, they always come out wooden and stilted and dumb and predictable, and I just can't stand them. But whereas on the other hand, if it's a movie that just — maybe it has a libertarian theme in it or something, but that wasn't the primary purpose. The primary purpose was just to make a good movie that people would enjoy. Because people are not going to movies to be propagandized. If you are, then I think you don't understand what the movies are. And likewise, they don't go to a comedy club because they want to learn about the nonaggression principle.

**SMITH:** Right.

**WOODS:** But at the same time — so in other words, your job first and foremost is to be funny, but you want to balance that, though, by being funny in a way that still nevertheless advances kind of semi-forbidden ways of thinking.

**SMITH:** Yeah, the way you said it there is just perfect. It's like the job first and foremost is to be funny. That's it. Nothing comes above that. And I was lucky because I was doing comedy for a few years before I became a libertarian, and even when I was first introduced to libertarianism, it took me a couple years before I was completely sold. I was just really interested in it for a while. So I'd been doing comedy for years already, and so I had already kind of learned the idea of like your job is to go up there and be hilarious and kill. Like, that's the job.

And then I realized it wasn't going to be — it was an easier transition for me to go, okay, now — it just kind of naturally happened for me, because it's like these are the topics I'm really interested in, so of course I'm going to end up talking about them. But I never approach things from the point of view of like: oh, I have this point I want to make; let me bring that to stage. It'll always just be like if I happen to be reading about whatever and there's something that's absurd or something that's hilarious in it, it's like, okay, I can use that. That's what's really funny about this.



So I agree with you. I think it's like people suffer from like Ayn Rand syndrome, where they want to — because she did somehow pull it off with her novels, but you're not going to pull it off the way she did. It's like this idea that you're going to write a novel that's constantly just beating you over the head with the message. You're way better off, create the art. You are a libertarian, so that will come out. And you can kind of nudge at your points, but the role of entertainment or the role of comedy to me is to, number one, make you laugh, and then if anything I can maybe nudge you with an idea or nudge you with something that's absurd. But you know, nobody wants to hear their standup comedian lecturing them about the business cycle or something like that. It's just not going to work.

**WOODS:** Yeah, no, horrible. Nobody wants to hear about the business cycle. Let me ask you a libertarian question, though. Somebody in my private Facebook group — which you are a member of. I'm glad to have you. But I told you you are forbidden to look at any of these questions, because that would suck all the life out of this.

**SMITH:** That's right, and I followed.

**WOODS:** That's right. And I've only taken a couple of them, but somebody says that you and Jason Stapleton may have had a disagreement over the path to liberty in how rapidly it would happen, could it happen in a series of small steps, or would it have to be in a series of large jumps. And I think you were the large-jump guy. Is that stating it accurately?

**SMITH:** Yeah, that's fairly accurate. We just did this — when I was out in Los Angeles last week, we did like a meet-up and then we recorded a podcast with it was me, Jason Stapleton, and Marc and Brian from *The Lions of Liberty*, and they put it up on the *Lions of Liberty* feed if you guys want to go check that out. Great podcast. So yeah, I think that's a fairly accurate kind of summary of what happened. So Jason seemed to have the idea of we've got to kind of like, you know, the bus has been going in the direction of more and more statism; we've got to turn this thing around and move it toward less and less statism. And you know, I'm not opposed to that; I just think practically that the kind of — you know, the boiling frog metaphor, I don't think that ever works in our favor.

And I think that if you look at things like abolishing slavery or something like that, yeah, you can make the argument that the slave trade stopped first and then it — but to me it seems more like it's big, radical change. If you look at the collapse of the Soviet Union, it happened very quickly. Just to me, I think the role of libertarians is not to sit here and say: oh, well, you know, we should cut top marginal tax rates by 3%. I mean, we have the Republicans doing that. We have the LP. These guys have been doing that for years. Where does that ever get us? So I just feel like it's like we should stake out the correct position, which of course is anarchocapitalism, and fight like heck to get that.

**WOODS:** I agree with you, and part of the reason is there's a huge bureaucracy in place that exists to perpetuate itself. It does not exist to make my life better or your life better; it exists to perpetuate itself. So even if temporarily there is some little rollback, these people's whole existence is intended to bring that back. Whatever we roll back, they're going to be working 24 hours a day to reverse that. And so if you're going to try a hundred little, tiny changes, well, you've got people working 24 hours a day to reverse those changes. So what we need is not to say: those changes are pointless; we shouldn't bother. If somebody's doing the work to bring that change about and it happens, I support it, but I'm not going to delude myself into thinking this is a permanent victory. Instead, the big thing would be something

needs to happen to wipe that bureaucracy out, whether there's a financial crisis or a fiscal crisis, more like it. The funds just aren't there, something like that. There's a tax revolt or there's some kind of revolt at the state level or whatever that helps to dismantle the very bureaucracy that would be spending all its time trying to reverse all the good work you're doing. We would need a big move like that if we want to have really permanent changes.

**SMITH:** Yeah, I completely agree with you, and there's lots of examples you could look to for stuff like this. So it's like, you know — and like you said, there's nothing wrong with being like, okay, that was a good move. Like, we had that military sequester a few years back, and it's like, okay, so we slowed down the rate of growth in defense spending. But then Trump comes in and just ups it by another 65 billion or whatever it was, so none of that really sticks. And of course, like you said, all the incentives for all of these bureaucracies is to get more and more funding, so they end up winning out. And like, it's fine. I have no problem saying like I'm glad Trump did the tax cuts. I'm glad there's been some deregulation in the energy sector. Like, those things are good. But it's not getting us where we need to go. It's just not.

And back to the Jason Stapleton thing, the thing that — and I agreed with Jason on a lot. I think Jason's great. I'm not like trashing him or anything.

**WOODS:** Yeah, me too. Yep, absolutely.

**SMITH:** But the one thing that he said that I did take a little bit of exception with was when he said something about — he said, you know, Murray Rothbard, for as brilliant as the guy was, he was like, what did he ever actually get done? And this is almost like what they used to say about Ron Paul, kind of, like what legislation did he pass? So he said, "What did Rothbard do?" And then I responded — and to Jason's credit, he did say that I made a good point afterwards. But I was like, "Yeah, what did Murray Rothbard do?" And I go to this crowd. We had close to like 200 people there. And I go to the crowd and I said, "Hey, how many of you guys have been inspired by Murray Rothbard?" And it's like, huge cheers. Half the crowd is like wearing a Murray Rothbard shirt.

**WOODS:** Right.

**SMITH:** And I said, "How many of you guys have been inspired by Milton Friedman?" And it's like crickets. And I go, "You know who Milton Friedman inspired? All of the modern neocons." He's being celebrated right now on some like *National Review* meet-up. So it's like, I don't know, I just don't — so Milton Friedman was a big believer in this kind of like, oh, let's win this game of inches, so instead of just advocating for the correct libertarian policy, it'd be like, well, let's have a school voucher system instead of privatizing schools, or let's have a basic income instead of welfare, like all these things. And what ends up happening? What Milton Friedman ideas actually were successful? Well, the withholding tax. That is what he actually got. He got the war in Iraq, which he was a big champion of. It's like, basically all his bad concessions got in and none of the good ideas did. Minimum wage laws are still around. So I'd rather go the Rothbard route.

**WOODS:** Yeah, no kidding. And I might also add we could say the same thing that Jason was saying about Rothbard about John Locke. What did John Locke ever do? He wrote a couple of books.

**SMITH:** Yeah, that's right.

**WOODS:** That's all he ever did, but yet for some reason we still talk about John Locke and we don't talk about King Louis XI very much.

**SMITH:** [laughing] That's right, that's right. That's a great point, yeah.

**WOODS:** So all right, tell me about your schedule for this year in case folks would like to come out and see you. And of course you tend to be in the New York City area, so people should check you out. Where would they check out your schedule online?

**SMITH:** Well, in terms of the New York City dates, I usually don't promote those too much, but like if you tweet at me, I'm always getting up in New York City and I'll let you know where I am.

**WOODS:** Oh, great.

**SMITH:** I like to just kind of get in front of random crowds so I can kind of work out my material —

**WOODS:** Oh, yeah, that's a good point.

**SMITH:** — and then I bring it to my people when it's kind of ready to go. But yeah, I've been on the road for the last couple months, so I'm in New York for a little bit now. But I'm opening up regularly at the Soho Forum, which Bob Murphy is debating at and you're going to be hanging out at next week. And yeah, of course I'll be on the Contra Cruise this year. And I was just in Boston, but I'm going back there in a couple months. But if you follow me on Twitter, I promote all my road gigs.

**WOODS:** Okay, and incidentally, by the time this airs, actually, it'll be the day of the debate that I'm going to see you at.

**SMITH:** So today.

**WOODS:** Yeah, today, whatever date this is, April 16th, 2018, we'll be at the Soho Forum. It's going to be Bob Murphy versus George Selgin with Dave opening, so it's going to be tremendous. Just go up to Gene Epstein and say, "Tom Woods." You get a free drink at the bar. Details at [TheSohoForum.org](http://TheSohoForum.org). What is your Twitter handle or whatever they call it?

**SMITH:** It's @ComicDaveSmith.

**WOODS:** Okay, good. But I also had in mind, I think — are you going to PorcFest this year?

**SMITH:** I'm still trying to work out the details for that, so we'll see. I'm not sure I'm going to be able to.

**WOODS:** Okay, all right, so who knows? I mean, we do know that a major — You know where you *will* be going this year? Major part of your schedule of course will be the Contra Cruise, which I hope people will join us on. All right, I'm going to let you get going, but I'm looking

forward to seeing you tonight, and that's going to be a lot of fun. I'm glad that Gene has got you opening for these events, because it makes it ten times better, if you ask me. I mean, otherwise, it's going to be a whole lot of, what, Murphy versus Selgin on fractional reserve banking? What the heck? Anyway, and I'm glad everything's going so well for you, the podcast, the CNN gig, and your personal life seems to be going pretty well. This is like the year of Dave Smith, and it couldn't be happening to a nicer guy. Thanks so much, Dave.

**SMITH:** Thanks so much, Tom. It's always a thrill and an honor to be on your show.