



Episode 536: Are Libertarians Packaging the Message Wrong?

Guest: Jason Stapleton

WOODS: It is great talking to a fellow libertarian talk guy who is in the podcasting world as well. There's a lot we have in common, a lot of the same struggles, a lot of the same triumphs, I suppose, a lot of the same subject matter that we cover. So first of all, tell me a little bit about your show and what it is that you do Monday through Friday. Your show is just like mine in that sense, Monday through Friday. And then after you're done with that — I'm going to give you a sneak preview of the follow-up question — how did Jason Stapleton come to hold the opinions he holds today, which seem eminently reasonable to us, but not so much to the rest of the country unfortunately?

STAPLETON: Well, as you alluded to, I have a show that runs five days a week; it's called The Jason Stapleton Program, not because I'm particularly vain, but because I'm not very creative. And it was originally called The Live Show, because I — we had a shot at we'd actually do it live, and that's why I came up with The Live Show. And what I try to do is, I'm going after a little different group. I want to spread the message of liberty, and I thought the best way I could do that was with an entertainment-style show that covered current events, and so I try and look out over the news and pick out news events and what's happening in the world and try and explain why I think libertarianism or liberty and the concept of liberty will create more wealth, more opportunity for more people than any other system ever devised by man.

And I try not to be too terribly stringent with that. I recognize that there may be a better system than that one, but that I just don't think one's ever been created, and that if we can come up with a better one, I'm more than willing to juxtaposition, but right now that's the best that we have. And I really like capitalism and free markets, and I try and simplify, because what I really want to do is I want to reach out to people who have not been introduced to libertarianism or maybe who have a bad taste in their mouth. You can think of it along the same lines as — I know that you're a practicing Catholic, so if you're trying to reach nonbelievers, one of the things that turns them off is the constant passing of the plate and the person beating them over the head and giving them all the rules that they've got to follow and ostracizing them if they don't do it right and all of that.

And I really want to get away from that and I want to simplify what it means to be a libertarian, and so I created five basic principles, and they're based off of ten larger

principles that I believe I think it was Libertarianism.org put out. And if I could make it three I would, but five was about as few as I could make it. And every day I kind of preach that message of the five basic principles of liberty, which are limited government or a belief that liberty should be a primary political value, tolerance, peace, individualism, and free markets. And that's what I do every day, trying to spread that message.

WOODS: How do you come up with new material every day? He asks, given not entirely coincidentally.

STAPLETON: Yeah, well I try and look at the news. So I'm on a very tight timeline. It's an hour-long show. I have other businesses that I own and run, and so from about 8 o'clock to 10 o'clock is my research time. And so I take a look at what's happening in the world that day. I have a producer or someone who helps me produce the show, and the two of us scour the news. And because I have a pretty clear understanding of what I believe and why I believe it, it makes it relatively easy when I find something, for example, where in the UK here recently you had the city of London trying to impose a five-minute wait time on all Uber cars. So they're trying to make Uber less efficient, because they are just blowing the taxicab market out of the water. And we talked a little bit about the economics of that, about the freedom aspect of that, and so I just try and look at what's happening in the world around us and be a voice for liberty.

WOODS: How did you, Jason Stapleton, come to your views today? Now, you served in the military for some time. Did that have any role in it?

STAPLETON: Oh, most definitely. The Marine Corps' birthday – this is being – the Marine Corps' birthday is November 10th, and we are trying to work around an episode where I'm going to bring on some of my military buddies who want to talk about how the authoritarian nature of the military led them to libertarianism. And I was really a little nervous when I started my show, because I have so many friends in the military, and I was worried about how my message might be perceived, because I'm very against war. I don't think war is a good thing. And so I was worried, because Marines are pretty mean, nasty guys – and I don't mean that in – I mean that in the sense that they're warfighters, and I was worried about how I might be portrayed and how they might perceive the message.

And what I found was a lot of them feel exactly the same way I do, and I was in a Special Operations unit. I did counterterrorism, hostage rescue, explosive ordnance, explosive breaching; I was a sniper for a time in the Marines with 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, Kilo Company. And so I went all the way to the top. And when I got out, I started working as a mercenary for Blackwater and their cousin Greystone. So I was very much the neocon.

And what happened what I went to war, and I started to realize that all of the stuff they were talking about of us spreading the message of liberty and democracy around the world, about how we're keeping America safe, and I realized all that was a bunch

of bull, that we weren't doing any of that. And we weren't accomplishing what the government said we were accomplishing, and they had kind of pulled the wool over the eyes of everybody who raised their hand when they were young and gullible and said, hey, I'm willing to go and fight and defend liberty and freedom for America.

And while I still think that those are wonderful things for you to be in support of, for a man to raise his hand up and say I'm willing to, when our nation and our liberty is threatened, I'm willing to defend that; I'm willing to be the guy who lays his life down. I think that that is an admirable thing to want to do; that's just simply not what the military and the government is constantly engaged in in the 21st century.

And so that got me reading a lot and studying a lot, and I ran across a book by Ron Paul, which is *The Revolution: A Manifesto*, and it completely changed my life. It was like I knew I didn't fit in with Republicans, but I knew I wasn't a progressive. I knew I believed in personal responsibility in the sense that I ought to own what I create and what I earn. And when I read Ron's book, it was as though I had read something — a guy had put on paper everything that I believed but couldn't articulate.

And from that moment on, I realized that I was a libertarian, and I started making the move to get out of the contracting business and to start another career, and I became a very successful currency trader and started an Internet company, an education company that has been very, very successful. We've been able to sell a little over \$20 million worth of product online. And that gave me the financial resources to pursue this passion of sharing the message of liberty.

WOODS: I love that aspect of your story, because I get a lot of people — and I understand why. I understand their enthusiasm, but they I think are putting the cart before the pass. They say, well, what kind of job can I get promoting liberty? And maybe that's not the order in which you do it. It's a flukish situation, the one that I'm in, just a series of unrepeatable occurrences that happened for me. But generally, you get a job doing something else, and that gives you the wherewithal to do what you want to do. Otherwise you're going to be an intern at some think-tank for the rest of your life. Who wants that? Much better I think to do what you do and then be in a position where you can, without having to answer to anybody, put out your own product every single day.

STAPLETON: I agree with you, and one note to you and to the show that you've put together and the message that you preach, and I just think that you are going to go down as one of the great libertarian minds of our generation, because you and I are about the same age. What you do on your show every day and what you do with your books is just incredible. And people look at that and they say, well, I want to have that kind of impact. What can I do? And you're right, really the answer is to go and work for some think-tank somewhere, and I don't think that's the answer for most people. I think if we're going to really effect change, it happens first in our family and second with out friends, and then once we've kind of laid that message out, then we move on beyond that.

And I think, using your term, putting the cart before the horse, I think oftentimes we as libertarians think, well, it's an all or nothing thing. Like, I'm unwilling to accept any form of taxation at all ever, because I believe taxation is theft, so I won't even discuss the idea of a different kind of taxation that is less oppressive than the current one that we have. And I say, well, our enemy, the progressive, if you want to call him that, the socialist, he doesn't think like that. He doesn't look at it and say it's an all or nothing thing. He's more than willing to take a half measure. And over the past 30, 40, 50 years, he has been inching us towards the progressive state that we now have, and I think if we're going to turn the table back, that we have to start being willing to take inches as well. And that doesn't mean we sacrifice our principles. That doesn't mean we become any less objectionable to the idea of taxation or the idea of statism, but it's a difference in how we present the message and how we argue the message and how we share the message with others.

WOODS: Yeah, let's pick it up there, because you and I talk about so many different topics every single week, that we could I'm sure riff on any of those topics. But maybe it might be more interesting to talk about how we talk about the topics, to talk about the presentation of all this, given that you and I are engaged in that and we spend a lot of time around people who devote themselves to spreading the ideas. What are we doing right and what are we doing wrong, as you see it?

STAPLETON: Well, I think that the things that you're doing are very right. You have a very intellectual show, and you bring people on, and it is always about spreading the idea. And you do challenge people, but it never becomes an argument; it never turns into a shouting match or name-calling.

I just had a deal on my show where I read something from Jeffrey Tucker about libertarian brutalism, and I was using it to illustrate the point that when you become a character assassin, when you become someone who, instead of looking to lift people up, seek to beat them down, that you are counter – you're not achieving the end that you want. You're not achieving the goal that you want. You're not advancing the cause of liberty. All you're doing is you're becoming the nitpicker. You're becoming the guy who spends his day constantly looking for somebody to correct or for someone to call out.

And I said that's not what we want; that's not who we want to be. We want to be a group that's constantly lifting people up, that we may not agree with each other, because to call yourself a libertarian is really to paint yourself with a broad brush. But what we have to be willing to do is always move towards liberty.

And so where I think we get it wrong is we get under the assumption that we've got it figured out. One of the things, I made a comment – I have a private Facebook group, and I made a comment about intellectual property. And I said I can see some scenario where it would make sense to have some intellectual property protections. And I had a couple of different people come in the private Facebook group and really chastise me for that, and I even had one go so far as to say you can't be a real libertarian if you believe in intellectual property.

And so I went and I found an intellectual property rights attorney, a libertarian attorney and brought him on the show. And one of the things that we had a very nice discussion over the course of about an hour, and at the end of it, what we came away with was this is a very complex issue. And although he and I disagree, certainly there is room for that discussion inside the libertarian community.

And I think where we fall apart is we don't work to advance the message together. We spend our time trying to figure out who's got the right message and who's allowed to call themselves a libertarian or what not, and I think that does more to destroy what we're trying to build than anything else.

WOODS: All right, okay, that's good stuff. That gives me plenty to riff on here, so to speak. All right, certainly I agree with some of what you said there, because I run into this too. Sometimes when I'm making a joke even, I have to say expressly, by the way, this is a joke; I do understand that it would be statist to advocate this thing; it's just a joke.

STAPLETON: Because you know the emails are coming.

WOODS: I know the emails are coming. Or it would be a thing like, I know there are people who go to the movies, and every movie they have to judge whether it's libertarian or not, and the whole thing spins around whether it's libertarian. And I just — you know, I don't think anyone can accuse me of not being sufficiently devoted to the cause, but there are times in my life when I want to switch that part of my brain off and just enjoy my life. Let me give you an example. There was a time — I highly doubt we're going to do it. But there was a time when I was briefly considering moving to Massachusetts, and the reason for that is I grew up in Massachusetts; it's not because I like the government there or whatever. But I still have family there — not a lot, but I have family there. I have a lot of friends there. I know the place like the back of my hand. And I have many, many fond memories from Massachusetts. Now, I realize that Massachusetts is a terrible place politically, but my view was why should I let the S.O.B.s dictate where I'm going to live. The terrorists have won if I let them make that decision.

STAPLETON: Sure.

WOODS: I got called out on my own Facebook page, being told that I would be betraying the cause — so it wouldn't matter, all the tens of thousands of hours of blood, sweat, and tears I've put into this. None of that would matter, because I want to live close to my friends. "You can't live close to your friends, Woods," was what they were basically saying. And I feel like saying go jump in a lake, preferably an acidic one.

STAPLETON: (laughing) I can't tell you how good it makes me feel that this happens to you too, because I have people who listen to the show literally every day, and I get folks who come back and chastise me for the smallest thing. One of the things I was saying — I'll give you an example. One of the things I was saying on my show the other

day was I said, um, I think drugs are terrible, and I think that prostitution is terrible. And I said although I'm a libertarian and I think if you want to destroy your own body or you want to sell your body for money that you ought to be allowed to do that, I said if you ask me my opinion on that, I'm going to try and dissuade you from doing that, because I think that's a terrible thing. And I actually had someone come on the private Facebook group and question my libertarianness because I didn't think that — because he said I wasn't allowing a woman to do with her body what she wills. He just heard what he wanted to hear. And I think to myself, this is what we're fighting about. It's ridiculous.

WOODS: Right. Now, let me jump in here and say, having said this, that I don't think — I don't mean to be saying that libertarians — and this I think is a problem with some people who have this criticism. They think that this is some problem unique to libertarians. They're just so focused on differences and on being pure and so on and on. But then I think if that's what you think about libertarians and that they have this unique problem of focusing on nitpicking, you haven't hung around very much with, well, Republicans, Democrats, Marxists, socialists, whatever. This is a human phenomenon that crosses ideological borders. We see it among libertarians, because we're the ones we hang around with all day. But I mean, in the Republican Party, they're constantly talking about who's a real Republican and who isn't and it's everywhere.

And by the way, I don't mean to say that that's always wrong, and the reason that — but I am saying that there are times when people go to — first of all, it's the way they conduct themselves, where we're not actually having a good exchange; we're just yelling at people. That's not helpful. I want to talk about what makes this particular thing this person is saying or doing not compatible with libertarianism. Let's discuss it; let's hash it out.

But this is something everybody does, and I think it can be a good thing, because, especially among libertarians, one good thing about us is that we are very — well, let's say we're very acutely aware of the phenomenon of people who little by little want to sell out so that they'll be respectable, because we are not respectable on the political spectrum, and as our people get more and more well known — I can think of some examples of people who've gotten more and more prominent, and suddenly they wanted to distance themselves from their libertarian pasts, because there area lot of non-respectables there. So suddenly they start watching their language or whatever. That does need to be called out.

STAPLETON: Well, let me ask you a question, and you can be the teacher for a minute on this, because I don't know the answer. One of the things I look at is the success of the Tea Party and their ability to come in and affect government in what I would consider to be a positive way in many cases. Certainly they are not libertarian; certainly they do not hold the same beliefs that we hold, but their ability to affect the Republican Party and really gum up the works for an established, statist Republican Party has been amazing. And I look at that, and I say, why were they able to do that in a few short years and be able to do what libertarians have not been able to do in 30

years? What is the difference, Tom? Why are they having such a successful bout in changing government that libertarians have not been able to achieve?

WOODS: All right, that is an excellent question, and I want to answer it a little bit in reverse by looking at where they are today, how's the Tea Party doing today. I think today by and large they have been — not everybody — but a lot of them have been absorbed into the establishment, precisely because they didn't have enough nitpicking. They didn't have enough people saying, now wait a minute; this thing is being taken over by D.C. think-tanks who have big email lists and just want to milk us for all the donation money they can get from us.

They needed more of that, because now, they just — I get all these — I don't know how I got on all these lists. I didn't sign up for anything from these people. My email address is obviously being sold. I have a strong suspicion who's doing the selling, but that would have to be on one my drunk episodes. I'm going to start calling it that. An episode where I would say things I would never ordinarily say is a drunk episode. (laughing) Someday when I'm drunk, I'll name names.

But it's true that at the beginning, boy, did they have some success, and in case people have forgotten, for example, they knocked — I think his name was Bob Bennett, if I remember correctly — Bob Bennett out of Utah, was a U.S. Senator. They knocked him out of the primary. They didn't just defeat him. He didn't even get — he's an incumbent senator; he didn't even get through the primary because he supported the bank bailouts. And he said, gosh, you know — oh, it was a reporter who asked the local Tea Party guy, "Should a man lose his office over just one vote?" And his answer was, "He will lose his office over that vote." Now, that's a fantastic response.

STAPLETON: Yeah.

WOODS: Now, how they were able to do that, I think in large part it simply has to do with the fairly prosaic fact that a lot of them were already local GOP organizer types. I think a lot of them were already in the Republican Party, and so they knew who the local people were and they knew who the bad guys were, and I think they were already fairly politically organized, whereas I think a lot of libertarians have so given up on politics they're not organized. They don't volunteer at the local precinct and so on and on, so they don't quite know how to carry out something like that. That would be my guess.

Let me say one other quick thing, though. I have to say this just for the sake of completeness, because I can't let a reference to that Tucker brutality article go by without a comment. I've tried to stay out of that whole thing. I've tried to stay out of Jeff Tucker; I've tried to stay out of the whole drama. If there's one thing I can't stand, it is drama. Actually, that's not true.

STAPLETON: (laughing)

WOODS: Let me start that over, because I love drama as much as anybody else. Let me put it that way, all right? But if it consumes you, then it's a problem, and I don't like libertarian gossip all day long. I can take a little bit of libertarian gossip, because I'm human, but I don't really want to hash out who's in what camp and who's doing what to whom. You know, come on. I have too much to do.

But I will say, though, just for the record that that brutalism article was an example of character assassination. I don't think it was saying to us let's not engage in those practices; I think it was saying I, the author, am going to engage in this against unnamed people — we all know their names, so I won't need to name them — who are bad people who think libertarianism is just all about asserting your right to be hateful and bigoted and unreasonable, whereas the rest of us are humanitarians who want to promote international understanding.

I mean, that is a grotesque caricature of what plumbline libertarians believe, and if there is disproportionate — I don't think it is, but some people think it's disproportionate emphasis on defending the rights of people who are on the outs of society, that's because nobody else will defend them. And it's very, very easy to talk about free trade on the Stossel show. It is not very easy to defend the rights of some disgusting degenerate who says mean things to people but who has the right to do that. So I think the way that was done was an absolute textbook example of the way libertarians ought not to treat each other.

And by the way, when this article came out, it was a big deal, big deal, big deal. Then there was a big backlash, and then the author came out and said, oh, I don't know what this big backlash is for; there are only about a half a dozen of these people. Half a dozen of these people, you write a whole article about them? So none of it makes any sense to me, and I say, the less said about it, the better.

STAPLETON: Okay, that's fair. One of the things that I will admit to is that I do not follow the inter squabbles inside of the libertarian movement. I had no idea what's going on behind the scenes in the Libertarian Party.

WOODS: And who cares?

STAPLETON: That's exactly right; I don't care. So when I read the article, that's not what I read, because I am not privy to, as you said, all the people that everybody knows he's talking about. I don't know who those people are. I just simply looked at it — when I read it, I said, well, this is an example of someone who is saying let's lift each other up; let's make the libertarian movement and the libertarian discussion about humanitarianism and about the good that liberty brings to our lives and not focus on all of the bad self-righteous things that sometimes we get involved with. So I guess what I'm saying is I read something very different, largely because I was not privy to the rest of the story.

WOODS: Yeah, whereas I know what's being done in that article, and it was not nice.

STAPLETON: Fair enough, fair enough.

WOODS: Okay, but let's talk about — let's just forget about all the specific names of individuals. Where do you think — okay, certainly we have a problem with some people who will just spend all their time parsing every single word — and by the way, as I say, that is so not unique to libertarians. I can think of in the old days when I used to really — I used to write a lot in Catholic traditionalist circles, and I met an awful lot of very, very decent priests. And they would say one word that was slightly inaccurate, just because when you engage in public speaking or you have a talk show every day and you have to talk at the spur of the moment and you can't go back and edit things, you're going to say something that's wrong, but everybody knows what you meant to say, so it doesn't really matter. And there would be people lined up to tell Father what's what. And I just — ugh.

STAPLETON: And that's what happens on my show, because my show is shot live, and the only editing we do is I cut off the dead space at the beginning and the dead space at the end, and we insert a commercial in the middle for a break. But everything else there is completely there, and so yeah, you do have to understand that I talk for an hour a day, five days a week, and it's just me. And if every once in a while, I'm going to use the incorrect term or the incorrect word. But you cannot make those mistakes in some people's minds.

But let me just go back one to the discussion about effecting real change, because that's what I really want to do. I want to have an effect in a positive way on our world, and I look at the Tea Party, and I think exactly the way you do; I think the reason that we haven't had the effect is that we have a group of people who have largely just decided that they don't want to engage in the process anymore, that they don't want to be active, that it is much easier to sit around and have intellectual arguments about what the best society would be. And some of them are even advocating for the total destruction of our current way of life.

And I say to that, what I want to see is I want to see people get active. I think the way that you change things is internally. The way the Tea Party was successful was they infiltrated the Republican Party. They became a nuisance that turned into a fire, and the reason they lost a lot of that is exactly what you said; they've been absorbed by establishment. So the trick is, if it can be done, is to be able to infiltrate, to be able to cause enough problems inside of the establishment to effect real change and not be corrupted by it. And I don't know if that's possible, but I know that we're in a better position today than we were five years ago because the Tea Party and the Liberty Caucus and some of those types of people — and Rand Paul and even Ted Cruz and Mike Lee and those guys are creating problems for establishment Republicans inside of government.

And you know, I just, I think that's the right way to do it, and I just wish that more libertarians would come along side and say, you know what? I will; I'll get out and I'll run for office and I'll run and try and effect change in a way that we haven't tried before.

WOODS: I can see some of that. My view is pretty much Lew Rockwell's view, which is that if you feel called to do this kind of thing, then go ahead and do it. But at the same time, when I look at the amount of money that is being donated to super PACs, for instance — to Ted Cruz's super PAC, for instance; he's brought in tens of millions of dollars into that super PAC. But think of the — well, I guess not he so much, but you know what I mean. Think of what could be accomplished if even a tenth of that money were devoted to creating a K-12 liberty-based homeschool program like the Ron Paul Curriculum and put it on YouTube for free. Whereas we're never going to remember what any of this super PAC money was ever spent on, but we would forever remember what it was spent on if those donors had instead created a homeschool program to teach people these ideas. But they won't do it.

STAPLETON: We might, but the vast majority of our children are being sent to government-funded schools to be indoctrinated from the time that they're small children until they graduate from college.

WOODS: So spend some of the money explaining to the parents why they shouldn't do that. But that's where we go wrong right away, is that the very first lesson these kids learn is if you think something's really important, like education, then the government will siphon off the resources and hand it to you. That's the very first lesson that they learn, so no wonder they go wrong. They're warped from the moment they walk into that building.

Let me say in parentheses, by the way — this might sound like special pleading to my audience, but by episode — what are we? — 536, they know me well enough to know that I shoot straight with them. And I do want to say that one thing that's actually made me really glad about the show is that I haven't really had to deal with the type of people we were talking about. I used to get that on Facebook once in a while, and I think I scared them all away with my responses.

Because when I do an episode of the show — I'll do an episode on something like abortion, which is very controversial among libertarians, and I remember I winced thinking, oh, what's the response going to be? And everybody had friendly things to say. They may have said, okay, the guy should have addressed this issue or that issue, but nobody said, boy, that was a terrible waste of time. I had people who totally disagreed with me on that who said, now, that is a model for how you discuss a controversial issue. I mean, I get that kind of kind feedback and it really, really rejuvenates me. It really makes me feel good about things.

STAPLETON: Well, that's because you're doing it right, and I should make a special note too that the vast majority of the people who listen to my show are exactly that way.

WOODS: And it's the great silent majority, we might say.

STAPLETON: That's exactly right. I have thousands and thousands of people who listen to my show every day, and there's only a handful of people who are negative and

cause problems, so it's not right. But you really are doing it right. One of the things your audience should understand who haven't ever been involved in trying to run a show is how difficult it is to interview well. It is incredibly difficult to know how to question, to know how to take the conversation where you need it to go, and to make it feel effortless, and that's something that you do probably better than anybody else I've listened to.

WOODS: That's very kind of you to say. One thing that I actually am happy about with the interviews is that in some cases it sounds like a chat with an old friend, which is how I sometimes want it to be. Can't be with all guests, because I don't know them all that well, but one thing I like is that by this point, I'm 43 years old and I've spent the last 20-some odd years reading and studying about some of this material is that I'm at a point now where I know a little something about a lot of things, so that even though I'm not the expert on these topics, I can have an intelligent enough discussion with somebody who is that the finished product is entertaining and informative for people. That's really what I'm aiming at here. And incidentally, what you do — because you generally don't have guests on your show. I know you're going to make an exception for me someday —

STAPLETON: Wait a minute, you have an open invitation on my show any —

WOODS: Oh, that's what I meant actually; I meant precisely that.

STAPLETON: Whenever you can — because you're a very busy guy.

WOODS: It's gotten better. Thank goodness, it's gotten better. But I will say that what you do, I would find very difficult. Very difficult — which is what Mike Church did on Sirius/XM. He would talk for three hours, and he'd bring a guest on for one of the hours, but otherwise, it was just him talking. And you can just sit there and riff for an hour, and I used to do that on The Peter Schiff Show when we wouldn't get any calls, and I would say, oh my gosh, no calls, what are we going to do, talk? And I would sort of make it work, but I don't have quite that gift that others like you have.

STAPLETON: Well, my show — I always say what I wanted to do is I want them to be entertained, and I want them to learn a little something when they walk away. I want them to feel more empowered when they leave. And so when I ran my trading company — Trade Empowered is the name of it — and I used to sit in a live trading room three hours a day and trade, and everybody could come in and watch it. And if there's nothing to do, you've got to come up with something, and so I learned real quickly how to fill dead air. And I used to do it three hours a day, so coming in and doing it for an hour is really a cake walk. But that was something that I decided to do. It's a formatting deal for my show, and it differentiates me from somebody like you, so people feel like they're getting something a little bit different and they can still experience — for a guy who's sitting at his desk all day, man, one hour of content just isn't enough. And so I'm trying to create a space that is unique among libertarian talk right now in America.

WOODS: Well, I like also the emphasis on current events, because on my show, although we do do current events from time to time and sometimes we'll take an article that somebody wrote that's all wrong about some current event and we'll take it apart, the show is more topical in the sense of like a dictionary of libertarian ideas. And today I want to talk about insider trading, which we haven't done on the show yet. Or there's some topic that I want to know more about or I want to understand the libertarian position better, and so I focus on that, and a lot of people like that, and some people say I wish you had more current events. And I do get that, but also it's partly the way I prepare the show; for the sake of my sanity, I'm trying to do five at a time, and then by the time I get to the current event it's too late.

STAPLETON: Lining up guests the way you do, you can't possibly be right on top of everything. But oh, by the way, how is Contra Krugman going? How is that —

WOODS: Oh, that's doing well. We just released Episode 8 over the — well, let's see; I guess by the time this years it will have been Episode maybe 9. Yeah, because Krugman's columns vary so widely from week to week.

STAPLETON: Mm hmm.

WOODS: On the one hand, he'll write an article on healthcare, and you say, well, I expect him to write an article on healthcare. Then he writes an article on why are middle-aged white men so depressed, and his answer is because the Republican Party is terrorizing them with tales of impending doom.

STAPLETON: Right.

WOODS: But — what about the Democratic Party? Their whole point is that there's injustice everywhere, and the 1% is sucking up all the opportunities, and you can't possibly progress. They both have their doom narratives, you know? So he can't even see that. He's kind of blinkered on stuff like that. But thanks for asking; I mean, we like the format; it's a two-man show, and we're having fun with it.

STAPLETON: It's a great show. Everybody listening should go over and check it out. It really is good.

WOODS: Well listen, let me give you a final word — I mean, I can't believe we're basically at the end, but I want you to say to my audience what you'd like to say. Your website is JasonStapleton.com. Obviously we'll link to that at TomWoods.com/536. But anything you want to say to them as we say goodbye today.

STAPLETON: Well listen, I just really appreciate you having me on and letting me talk a little bit about what I'm trying to do, and guys, if you're looking for another show, if a half-hour of Tom Woods just isn't enough to fill your whole day, come over and check out JasonStapleton.com. You can download it on iTunes. And if you like it, stick around. We have a private Facebook group, JasonStapleton.com/Facebook, that's invitation only, but our standard is rather lax. And you can meet a couple other

thousand people who are just like you who are trying to figure out how to spread this message of liberty. And if not, then that's cool too. I just am really pleased I get the chance to — I feel really blessed that I get the chance to share this message every single day, because there are not very many people who have the ability to go out and do it, and I feel like if I have the knowledge and the expertise and the desire, that it's something that I should do, and I feel very blessed that God gives me the ability to do that.

WOODS: Jason, thanks so much for your time. Continued good luck with the show, and as I say, one of these days very soon, perhaps we'll be talking over on your platform. Thanks so much again.

STAPLETON: Thanks, Tom.