

## Rationally Speaking #170: Will Wilkinson on “Social justice and political philosophy”

Julia: Welcome to Rationally Speaking, the podcast where we explore the borderlands between reason and nonsense. I’m your host, Julia Galef, and with me is today’s guest, Will Wilkinson.

Will is the Vice President for Policy at the Niskanen Center in Washington, DC. He is also a writer focusing on politics and philosophy and society, for a bunch of venues, including Vox and The Atlantic and The Economist. In addition to all this, he teaches creative writing at the University of Iowa. Will, welcome to the show.

Will: Hi, Julia. Thanks for having me on.

Julia: Let’s jump in. There’s a topic that I’ve seen you write some pretty interesting posts about recently, in which you argue that the concept of social justice has come to refer to this specific cluster of ideas or policies that’s become very associated with the left wing in America. You argue that it didn’t have to be that way, that this isn’t the only or even necessarily the best way of defining what social justice should mean.

Can you elaborate on that? What is an alternate version of social justice that we could have had instead of the one we do have?

Will: The notion of social justice that we have that was dominant throughout the 20th century was largely about economic distribution. Like, who gets how big a piece of the pie from economic production. In that sense, it’s kind of a zero-sum notion -- like if you get more, I get less. It plays into a kind of class war politics. The ideals of social justice throughout the 20th century were largely identified with a kind of soft socialism.

The idea is dominated by the left partly because the right just conceded. The right just gave away the idea.

There are all sorts of normative political ideas, the idea of rights or the idea of liberty or equality. These are all what political philosophers call “essentially contested concepts.” Everybody’s constantly fighting over what freedom really means or what equality really means. The right, by and large, decided not to contest social justice. They just decided to just give it away to the left.

Julia: By “they decided to give it away,” you, I assume, don’t mean they decided to concede all the specific policies the left was arguing under the definition of social justice. They just didn’t argue with the definition that the left was using of social justice.

Will: Right. The argument goes back to Friedrich Hayek, the great Nobel Prize winning Austrian-American economist. And Hayek is one of my great intellectual role models, but on this, I think he’s completely wrong.

The argument for just not contesting the idea of social justice is mostly due to

Hayek. He basically said that the entire idea of social justice was like a category error, like it doesn't make any sense essentially. It's like a "loud color" or something like that. It's just mixing up categories.

Hayek thought that justice was essentially a matter of how individual people treat one another. So I can treat you justly or unjustly, but there's not a question of the justice or injustice of the distribution of economic goods or holdings, because nobody's doing the distributing.

Julia: Even governments?

Will: Yeah, this is part of that ... Clearly, governments do do distributing, but he thought that was a grave mistake.

Hayek, as I'm sure you know, has become the greatest proponent of the idea of prices as signals of information that tell people what to do. Market orders are spontaneous orders. They emerge from millions of individuals making all these little individual decisions in response to the economic conditions on the ground. The emergent pattern of holdings is essentially unpredictable. Nobody can plan it. Nobody can do that distribution.

His defense of the price system and free market -- he thought that because having free markets and a price system that is allowed to move freely ... Prices can go up and down in response to changes in supply and demand, and we want people responding to those changes in prices. The whole point of it is that we can't predict in advance what the most efficient allocation of resources is. People responding to these diffuse incentives create the kind of prosperity that we all want. That's what's responsible in part for broad-based prosperity.

He thought that that was desirable, that we definitely want people to prosper, that we want people to be wealthy and in particular, that we want the kind of system that leaves even the people at the bottom as well-off as they could possibly be. He thought that system just is a market system in which nobody, no particular agent, is distributing economic goods. The distribution is done through this completely decentralized mechanism of millions of people making millions of little choices.

Now, the difficulty with Hayek's argument is that he still has a normative standard that he's using to evaluate structures of institutions. He still has an implicit rule that the best system of rules that are going to govern our polity and our economy is the one that, overall, leaves people best off.

He was sensitive to the idea that that system of rules needs to actually be mutually advantageous, that there is a distributional aspect to the justification of a system of rules, that if a certain kind of market order left some people fabulously wealthy but left other people in conditions of utter poverty and despair, he wouldn't think that that was a good result.

But the kind of standard for picking or evaluating a system of institutions like that, one that's sensitive to how the institutions leave everybody and in particular, the

people at the bottom, that's largely what the idea of social justice is about in the abstract, not specifying any particular conception of social justice. The basic idea has generally been that social justice requires a system of political, social and economic institutions that leave everybody better off -- and in particular, leave the least well-off as well-off as they possibly can be.

Hayek accepted that in his own way, but he's so ambiguous about it. He denies that that is social justice. He's so focused on denying the idea that governments ought to be in charge of determining what the distribution of goods is, he confuses the idea of social justice with the idea of centralized management of economic distribution. But it doesn't need to be that.

Julia: Interesting. What is a response that you think the right, or libertarians could have given to the left's conception of social justice? Maybe to cast that more concretely, is there a specific policy or even an unofficial social norm that you think could be consistent with both the basic concept of social justice and also with the things that the American right wing or libertarian camps hold dear?

Will: Pretty much every conception of social justice is about, at some level, liberty and equality. Left wing versions of social justice put the emphasis on equality but that social justice requires real equality. That's actually the usage of social justice that is dominant right now. When certain folks on the right complain about social justice warriors, the kind of social justice they're actually talking about is not necessarily this notion of economic distribution that has ...

Julia: I was going to get to that.

Will: It's an interesting development. It has more to do with equal treatment under the law, has more to do with treating people with equal respect, ensuring that everybody, that their basic human dignity is acknowledged not just by formal legal institutions but by social convention and norms. A lot of "political correctness" is about weeding out the norms and often linguistic norms that seem to have presuppositions embedded inside them about inequalities in status, or inequalities in respect, or worth.

Contemporary social justice warring is about ensuring that everybody is treated equally, respected equally. That's become more preeminent recently on the left but historically, the kind of equality that social justice was understood to require, and this is what Hayek was responding to, is some notion of economic equality, some kind of economic egalitarianism. That's not essential to the very notion of social justice.

Classical liberals have always had a notion of equality that's actually quite a bit like the social justice warrior notion of equality, which is that equality is fundamentally about equality of rights and equality of status with respect to the state. When people talk about individual rights... That's a notion of equality that in virtue of being a human being, you have certain rights, and everybody has those rights to the same degree. They have them equally.

Our right wing ideas of injustice often have to do with different people being treated differently under the law. The equality condition is pretty easily met by a notion of equal rights, and equal rights carry with it an implicit requirement of equal dignity and equal respect.

It's worth pointing out that the classical liberal tradition in the 19th century was largely about this notion of equality of rights. The abolitionist movement, the suffrage movement, those were movements about establishing equality under the law for different kinds of people that didn't imply any kind of economic egalitarianism.

Now, in the 20th century, the idea of social justice became so deeply identified with socialism. And libertarianism as a particular ideology, historically, is a response to the threat of socialism. There's a sense in which libertarianism is continuous with classical liberalism, but it's also discontinuous. In some ways, as I put it before, libertarianism is like weaponized anti-socialism. It's specifically calibrated to oppose socialism.

That meant that a lot of the progressive aspects of the classical liberal tradition got dropped. The push for gender equality and racial equality and lots of other forms of equality, like equal rights, that were dominant concerns in many ways of the classical liberal traditions, a lot of those got -- not exactly dropped, but diminished relative to a very dogmatic notion of property rights, and a kind of an ideological love of capitalism.

You know how high school kids who get into Satanism, it's because they have Christian parents? Satanism really just is a kind of inverted Christianity. There's a sense in which libertarianism, mid-century libertarianism, is kind of an inverted socialism.

The identification of social justice with socialism, I think that's motivated this rejection of the very idea. If you bought into the idea of social justice at all, or you were buying into the idea that the distribution of economic resources was something that was legitimate to evaluate...

Basically the right's anti-social justice stance is the nuclear option in terms of economic distribution. It's basically saying that it's not even legitimate to think about the justification of the distribution of economic resources. All you can think about is that there's a kind of equality in rights that you can think about, that has to do with property rights, the assignment and the protection of property rights. But as long as property rights are well-protected, there's no other question of justice that really comes up. It doesn't matter if some people get super, super rich and other people suffer, because there's no basis ... You don't want to even suggest that it might be legitimate to do some remedial redistribution.

I'm sorry. I didn't really answer your question, which is, what is the notion that the right could have taken? Their emphasis has always been to defend capitalism against socialism. I think it's pretty easy to defend capitalism against socialism. People are better off under capitalist institutions.

In fact, in the essay I wrote about this on social justice... Deirdre McCloskey, the great economic historian, calls the era of modern economic growth the "great enrichment." And the fact there is that for almost all of human history, human beings have lived at basically subsistence. Then, around 1500 or so, there started to be positive levels of economic growth that were cumulative. Then, by the mid-1800s, that just took off.

The reason we're as rich as we are now and the reason that we can talk over Skype in these microphones looking at our computers, these just completely crazy technological advances that I couldn't even have imagined when I was a kid, is that we learned how to arrange institutions in a way that created huge amounts of wealth. The 20th century has seen a huge decline in poverty rates globally. We've seen rising standards of living. People live longer. People were healthier. People were more likely to get an education and more likely to get literate. There's a really clear sense in which all of that is due to markets.

You can articulate what it is that markets are doing in a way that sounds like social justice, that markets are institutions for social operation. The reason people trade is because it's a positive-sum game and that everybody's better off and that when people get better at economic cooperation, they get richer. It's hard to sustain cooperative norms and cooperative norms are sustained by things like equality of rights, treating people with respect, honoring people's right to choose their profession, honoring their rights to keep the fruits of their labor, and so on and so forth. All of the things that make markets work are the ingredients of social justice. It would be easy to have created a conception of social justice that was basically a defense of capitalism on moral grounds that wasn't so dogmatic.

Julia: Wait. Is this actually a different set of policies or norms than, say, libertarians or classical liberals have been advocating for? Or is it the same set of norms and policies but just rebranded, as actually about social justice? Not to put too fine a point on it.

Will: No, I think it's a little bit of both. On the one hand, I think it's just the same. If you set aside dogmatic libertarians and you just look at, in classical liberal thinkers from the 20th century, almost all of them have endorsed some idea of a safety net. Hayek, himself, semi-famously and slightly incoherently, argued for the ... He thought some kind of minimum income that was guaranteed by the state was justified in libertarian terms, but he didn't think of that as requiring redistribution in the way that he was critical of.

Milton Friedman was in favor of a negative income tax as a way of replacing the redistributive institutions of the standard welfare state. Rather than cutting people checks, you can just make tax rates respond to how much people make in a given year. And if you don't make enough, instead of writing a check to the government, the government writes a check to you. That makes sure that nobody falls below a certain threshold. I think ... Sorry.

Julia: Sorry. I was just going to say it's so interesting how the politics have ossified around certain positions in this debate in recent years, when you go back and realize that it

did not used to be that way. Even though it feels just ... The politics feel inherent to the positions now, but they haven't always been. This is actually pretty recent.

Will: Yeah, it is really recent. The idea that any kind of redistribution is inherently unjust is a very recent and strange dogmatic libertarian position, that is very, very difficult to justify. Which is why even the best ... The heroes in the pantheon of libertarians, like Hayek and Milton Friedman, didn't attempt to ever justify an outright, categorical ban on any kind of redistribution.

Now, I think once you focus ... I think there is a difference in the sense that we now have a clearer sense of the mechanisms that underlie economic growth. There are big debates in social science about whether it's institutions, whether it's changes in norms, whether it's technological innovation. The correct answer is that it's all of these, and all the debates are about which comes first.

Our understanding of the idea of a positive-sum game about the nature of collective action problems, and how hard it is to get pro-social norms off the ground, and stuff like that, I think we understand that at a deeper level now than we used to. Understanding the way in which the positive-sum games leave everybody better off, understanding how that works and the kind of ethos of reciprocity and togetherness that you need --points to the fact that it's a really good idea. It's just a positively good idea to have some kind of social minimum that ensures that everybody in a given society is definitely benefiting from the institutions that create rising prosperity.

It just seems "fair" that everybody in a rich society should get enough -- but that's a static way of thinking. The dynamic way of thinking is that in order to sustain these institutions that create enormous wealth and that encourage innovation, that encourage the increasing capacity of human beings to realize their potential, you need buy-in.

The systems that are the best systems, the systems in which people flourish the most, are a certain kind of liberal democracy. In liberal democratic systems, you're depending on a kind of popular buy-in to keep the institutions going. A kind of rule that assures every single person in that society that they're going to benefit from the system is just a critical part of ensuring that you have the extent of social buy-in that you need to keep those institutions churning along, to keep them healthy, to make sure that the norms that underpin them are norms that people remain committed to.

Julia: Can we probe a little bit more into the parallel between the economic notion of social justice and the respect- or rights- or dignity-based notion? I guess the parallel seems murky to me. I really like the argument about some kind of justice being necessary to even grow the pie that we're all sharing economically, and that it's not therefore just a zero-sum question about, "How do we distribute this pie that the heavens handed down to us?"

I'm just not sure how much that argument carries over to the newer, of-the-moment conception of social justice, that's about respect.

You can certainly say -- on some level, you can say, "Well, we just want to give everyone the same basic rights and dignity." That makes sense, but in practice, I think we are talking about status and relative respect. And those are, in some sense, zero-sum.

A lot of the fights over social justice concepts recently have been about transferring some of the status away from the groups that have traditionally held it. Not just status but influence and respect and decision making power and stuff like that. Transferring that to groups that have historically been more marginalized.

You could certainly argue, you could give some very good arguments for why that redistribution is fair, but it still seems somewhat zero-sum to me. So I'm not sure if the same arguments would apply. What do you think?

Will: That's a great question. Let me approach it by talking about a couple of my favorite institutionalist political economists, Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson. Their argument for what creates growth is a certain kind of institution. They think that places that have what they call "inclusive institutions" do a lot better than places that have extracting institutions.

Now, throughout most of history, societies are defined with, there's a kind of a ruling elite, and then, there's everybody else. The ruling elite basically gets everybody else to do stuff for them, and then, they just extract resources. That's definitely a zero-sum game.

Their explanation for why growth usually doesn't get off the ground is that... Here's the interesting puzzle. When you give more rights to more people, they will be motivated by that. If you extend property rights to people who didn't have them, they're going to be motivated to work because they can keep what they've earned -- but then, you've allowed a bunch of people to accumulate wealth, which is maybe translated into political power. So, you may have just opened the door to a challenge from a new moneyed elite who's going to fight against your authority.

Every time economies open up, at a certain point, they tend to create challenges from a new prosperous middle class. That gets shut down by the status quo elites who don't want to give up any other power. That forces the economy back into a lower growth or no growth equilibrium. Part of it is because they're modeling it as a negative-sum game, that if they extend rights and dignity and respect and status to everyone, then they're going to lose what they've got.

The question you ask is a lot like that. In the current election, the Trump supporters are primarily older, white men. That's his most devoted constituency. I think you're right. These are people who are seeing their relative status decline in our society and they're mad about it. People get mad about losses in relative status and relative power. They tend to retaliate. When they retaliate, when they try to hold onto their relative status and power, it tends to screw everything up.

The reason that you start losing ... I'm a 40-something white guy, so this is me. The

reason that I'm losing relative status is because we've made huge gains in equality of rights for women, for people of color. We have had a big demographic transition over the last several decades that have increased the population of non-white people. More and more of those people are coming into positions, power and status.

A lot of older white guys feel just downwardly mobile in the kind of respect that they are accorded by culture. That's definitely a certain kind of zero-sum game, but it's a toxic kind of game. Getting into the path of growth that I'm saying that is about social justice is about getting yourself out of that zero-sum frame, and realizing that extending rights and dignity and respect to everyone equally is a way to make everyone better off --including, in some sense, the incumbent elites.

Julia: They're getting better off in an absolute sense, just not a relative sense. But maybe the reframe, the goal of the reframe, is to get them to focus on the absolute sense and not the relative one.

Will: Yeah, that's a great way of putting it.

One of my problems with the current social justice discourse is there's not a sensitivity to ... I completely understand why not, but I think a little bit of recognition of the very real loss to certain kinds of older white guys, in terms of status and in terms of what they feel, in terms of the respect that they feel that they're losing -- just being cognizant of that, and realizing that any kind of change in relative power in a society always requires a certain kind of reconciliation, is important.

The whole reason the apartheid regime in South Africa was able to let go was basically because of Nelson Mandela's moral genius. He got black and colored South Africans to buy into the idea that they wouldn't seek vengeance against the white elites who had run the incredibly oppressive apartheid regime. You needed to give those people that assurance or else they wouldn't be willing to let go. If you thought that if we give up power, everybody's just going to hang us by the lampposts, then, we're going to hang on like our lives depended on it, because they do.

That's a limiting case to this kind of dynamic. But if you're trying to move toward equality, if you're trying to move towards social justice in the sense of equality of respect and dignity and status, you have to extend some kind of assurance to the people who are losing, that they're still going to be okay. And that we understand that they're suffering a loss, and that the loss that they're suffering is payment enough. We're not going to ask anything else of you.

That's hard because if you've been oppressed, if you've been on the wrong side of the boot on the neck, that takes a certain kind of magnanimity and generosity that's very, very difficult. There's something especially about Twitter and the internet where when people don't have to look each other in the eye, it's really easy to have a heated rhetoric that sounds almost vengeful, but that elicits a kind of resistance that's unhealthy. And Donald Trump is part of that.

Julia: No, absolutely. The other way in which the current format of discourse, especially

on social media, seems to make this hard is ... I guess it seems like a coordination problem to me, where if you have multiple nodes or leaders of a certain cause, even if many of them are taking that Nelson Mandela, magnanimous approach, the vengeful or righteous approach is just so much more tempting and appealing in a lot of ways. The incentives are such that the leader who's going to take that approach is going to get a ton of followers.

And even if he still is only a minority of the total conversation on the side of the social justice cause, still, that's going to be the one that the other side is going to respond to, and feel threatened by. It just seems like not at all a robust system -- or like very fragile, is what I'm trying to say.

Will: I think it's really hard to hit the ... I actually think there's a generational division of labor. The ethos of reconciliation that I'm praising requires this certain maturity that I just don't think you can from college kids or 20 somethings.

Julia: That's your 40-something privilege talking, Will!

Will: That's my 40-something privilege talking.

I think younger people are more likely to spot the injustices that have yet to be addressed and rectified. And that their indignation and often, their rash indignation or their intemperate indignation, is exactly what calls attention to problems that really do need to be addressed.

We're getting into a weird situation today partly because... it's very, very easy for the people, say, who are losing relative status to fixate on the very, very heated rhetoric of younger social justice warriors, who are pointing out the latest injustice, and just say like, "Look, it's never going to end. There's nothing we can do. There's no way we can ever satisfy these people, right?"

I think that's what you hear from the anti-PC people. They tend not to hear the more moderate, mature institutional reformers who are really trying to do something in a politically viable way that balances everybody's interest. Because those people just aren't making a ruckus in the same sort of way. The way that new media allows younger people to have a more direct voice creates this sense that there's more of this immoderate demand for immediate rectifications of injustices than there really is. I'm not sure that has changed a lot.

Anyway, my thoughts on this aren't clear at all. But I think you're right that it's hard for people on the pro-social justice side to coordinate on a single set of attitudes -- partly because of life experience, and partly because you can build a big constituency in new media by being indignant. You see that on both the right and the left.

Julia: I just thought of a potential counter-example to my previous point. I don't know if this is technically true, but at least the common wisdom about the Civil Rights Movement in the '60s in the US is that it was actually really helpful to have Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X playing their respective roles of, not to horribly

simply, but “good cop, bad cop.” I guess the narrative is that Martin Luther King, Jr. just seemed like a so much more palatable alternative, because he had this foil of Malcolm X with much more fiery rhetoric and demands.

So that story is in conflict with the story that I was telling about the race to the bottom. I’m wondering if you ... Do you think that it’s actually a historically accurate story? If so, why wouldn’t that apply today?

Will: It’s complicated. I think Malcolm X did make Martin Luther King seem more reasonable at one level. But he also made a lot of white folks think that Martin Luther King was just the thin edge of the wedge, that he was a stalking horse for the Malcolm X few.

The thing that’s important on that particular question is that Malcolm X was just right. As a matter of justice, if you’ve been violently oppressed, if you’ve been lynched, denied rights... you completely have a right of rebellion. Under any reasonable theory of justice.

The United States of America itself is based on a less serious level of abuse. If anybody would have been justified in taking up arms and forcefully overthrowing the standing elites, it would have been African Americans in the south. I think it’s completely justified, saying like, “Just, let’s all get guns and just settle this.”

But that’s terrifying. That attitude obviously elicits the worst in the people who have the most to lose from that. Being right about justice isn’t the same thing as being right about ...

Julia: Strategy?

Will: ... yeah, how to get it. That’s the important point, is that the path to social justice is very, very difficult. It requires a lot more than being right.

Julia: That’s a great place to end, and we’re just about out of time. We’ll wrap up this section of the podcast and move on to the Rationally Speaking pick.

[interlude]

Julia: Welcome back. Every episode, we invite our Rationally Speaking guest to introduce the pick of the episode -- that’s a book or blog or movie that has influenced their worldview in some way.

Will, since you are, as I mentioned at the very beginning of this episode, you teach creative writing at the University of Iowa...

Will: I should say that I don’t now but I did last year.

Julia: Sorry. You have recently taught creative writing at the University of Iowa. Which is, for those listeners who are not aware, a famously prestigious creative writing program. No small potatoes.

So, I was wondering if for your pick, you could cite a work of fiction that has influenced your worldview in some way. Is that doable?

Will: Yeah, that's doable. There are a number that I can mention. The easy one is Atlas Shrugged, which got me into being a libertarian, but that's boring.

I named my son ... His middle name is Melville because I love Moby Dick so much. There's a lot to talk about in that book.

If I go deeper back into my past, the book I was obsessed with as a teenager was Dune, by Frank Herbert, and all of the sequels to that. I was obsessed with the world of Dune. It's such a beautiful ... It's the work of just a richly imagined alternate reality that has its own weird physics. The navigator skill, they travel at greater than light speeds, because they take a freaking drug that allows them to see the future...

But the story of Paul Atreides, and the idea of this prophecy of, what is it called? I don't even know how to pronounce it, Kwisatz Haderach, the male Bene Gesserit priest or whatever he is. That inspired in me this idea that one might have some kind of profound, untapped potential. And that you might have some kind of like great power that you weren't aware of. I found that completely intoxicating.

I think it's probably not that different to how kids of the later generation read Harry Potter, or the Mockingjay books or whatever, where some kid discovers that they're really the chosen one. I liked the idea that "Maybe, like, could it be that I'm the chosen one?" Which sounds ridiculous and vain but that's what you are when you're 12.

But this idea that maybe I have powers that I didn't know about, which in some sense, I did. I didn't know that I was good at things that I was good at. That inspired me to try to figure out what capacities that I did have.

It was disappointing to me when I became older and learned that you can't just take a dose of some spice or something, and activate this latent superpower. And that any remarkable capacities that you do have are only going to be realized through just completely mind-numbing repetitive effort.

That's a huge disappointment, I think, for a lot of people. I think there are a lot of incredibly talented people who are so put off by the fact that developing their gifts is such a slog that they just don't do it. The temptation to not do it is immense. Because it sucks – like, actually developing skills is awful, and exercising them is also awful even if it's super gratifying.

Julia: Even in the fiction that portrays the hard work that goes into some achievement or developing a gift, it's usually portrayed through a montage. The montage is so catchy and fun and quick that I still don't come away with a true understanding of how much hard work it's going to take me.

Will: Yeah. Maybe you just need a montage and then you're going to be able to beat the big boss at the top of the mountain.

Dune, there's something so exotic about it, and it's also one of the sources of my interest in politics. It's a really interesting political work. It's a work about economic redistribution or distribution. It's about who controls this spice that's incredibly valuable. It's truly a book about the resource curse, about how conflicts over valuable resources can lead to really pathological social equilibria.

I am not sure that's how Frank Herbert was seeing it. He definitely did see it as a work of ecology. It's super interesting, thinking about it now in light of global warming and power, how we relate to our environments.

It was a really rich work that I think could have planted a lot of seeds in me. I, still, I don't think, have a good grasp on the effect it had on me. But it's a big effect, because it got to me really early in a really formative period.

Julia: Interesting. I haven't heard that framing of Dune before. Also, it reminds me of another thing that I want to talk to you about sometime, about the effect that fiction can have on the accuracy, or lack thereof, of our world view. Because it seems like the vision of discovering an inner superpower, that that can either help or harm someone in their quest to actually become great. We should bookmark that and talk about the relationship between fiction and truth at some other point.

Will: I would love to talk about that.

Julia: Cool. Will, thank you so much for joining me. It's been a pleasure having you on the show.

Will: Thanks for listening to me yammer on.

Julia: This concludes another episode of Rationally Speaking. Join us next time for more explorations on the borderlands between reason and nonsense.