



20 Years of Political Correctness: Q/A with Jonathan Rauch

By: Nick Gillespie & Joshua Swain - November 8, 2013

The great advantage of a society that embraces robust and often-angry debate, "is not that it does not make mistakes," says Jonathan Rauch, "it's that it catches mistakes very, very quickly." For Rauch, such dialogue is at the heart of what he calls the "liberal science" of producing and refining knowledge.

A National Magazine Award-winning journalist and author, Rauch's path-breaking study of political correctness, *Kindly Inquisitors: The New Attacks on Free Thought*, has just been released in a 20th-anniversary edition by the Cato Institute. The new version includes an introduction by George Will and a powerful afterword by Rauch about how calls for censorship and regulation of speech have changed over the past two decades.

Nick Gillespie sat down with Rauch to discuss why free speech cannot and should not be abridged, even when it causes pain and discomfort. Rauch talks about how the weak defense of Salman Rushdie after receiving Islamic death threats radicalized his views and the inspiration he draws from figures such as Frank Kameny, a pioneering gay rights activist who never called for the censoring of hate speech.