NewForum Kevin Audio Prep

📄 Fri, Feb 10, 2023 12:39AM   🕐 28:59

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

trust, punk, space, decentralized, crypto, web, people, movement, social capital, coin, regen, run, regenerate, strong cryptography, verifiable, grants, world, guilty pleasure, funding, question

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Today new forum is honored to have as a guest Kevin okie region OG, founder of good coin and super modeler, internet citizen and chaos magician, among other things, we will discuss about the web three and crypto ethos, region economy trust and his overall thoughts as we get ready for 2023. Welcome, Kevin. And let's start if you're ready.

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Yeah, that sounds great. Thanks so much for having me excited for the conversation. Our

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pleasure. So most OGS came to the space Cyberpunks advocating privacy, strong cryptography, you yourself mentioned on the bankless podcast that you also have solar punk values. So believing in a future where humanity has solved its major contemporary issues. We also have the lunar punks that thrive more in uncertainty. So to better understand where we are today, and what are the differences and similarities between these movements? And where do you place yourself.

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So basically, the Cypherpunk movement was a movement in the 90s that advocated for strong cryptography, as a means of protecting not just our digital rights, but all sorts of human rights. And so it's the basis of that movement that I think a lot of the ethos of the web three community around privacy, particularly, like us the use of strong cryptography comes from and and so that's one vector of values that I think that the space has, I've come to really respect and, and love the use of cryptography. I mean, you're basically just using math in order to protect your rights and protect your communications. And I think that there's something really

beautiful about that as a sort of a birthright, that we have math that we can invent, and, and, and use for our ends, I have traditionally been more on the left. And politically, that means that I'm focused on things like sustainability, solving problems with environmental and social good. And the sort of punk moniker that that I've seen developed over the last couple years is this thing called solar punk. So basically, how do we solve our contemporary problems around sustainability with an emphasis on climate, and also planetary resources. And that's the solar punk movement. So basically, it's an art movement that imagines what the world will look like if we solve our contemporary problems with basically our relation to the environment, but also to each other it from a economic and social justice perspective. So I think that it's It's the intersection of these two things where web three gets really interesting, because now we can solve some of these problems by programming our values into our money and building peer to peer monetary economies. And so what would it look like if if we helped solve some of our sustainability problems with markets, instead of using the state, I think, the design space that we've been playing in here, but um, you know, so this isn't just theoretical. This isn't just me waxing philosophical. I'm a builder. I'm a software engineer. And I guess I'm mostly known for founding gitcoin, which is kind of putting some of these ideas into practice has funded $72 million worth of open source software and pro social stuff and stuff. So it's part theory and part practice.

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What are your thoughts when it comes to the kind of lunar punk movement that kind of criticizes the solar punk saying that it's a bit naive that it's not like, ready for the unpredictability of the world? Can you be a Cypher punk at the same time as solar punk and at the same time, like looking for profit? Are you more accessible to technology? Like where do you position yourself and where do you see these different kinds of movements coming together? Are they completely different or can they intersect?

04:53

Yeah, great question. I think that there's been this band of punk that's done a good job of marketing itself, and it's Also it calls it self lunar punk. And by the way, keep in mind that these are not mainstream things. So there's not a general consensus definitions of what they are. My primary complaint about the lunar punk movement is that they keep on saying things about the solar punk movement that the solar punk movement wouldn't ascribe to themselves. I can't tell you how many interactions I've had on Twitter where people who who are run the lunar punk banner say, oh, solar punks, don't care about privacy. And then myself and other people who identify as solar punk say, Well, we do care about privacy. And it's like, like, it's really it doesn't stick. And so I mean, I think the most generous interpretation of that is, is that they're not hearing us. But I think that, you know, when you look at it, from a real politic perspective, they're trying to establish privacy as one of the most important values up the stack, even above environmental and social good, and it was, you know, it's not something that I would say I would even disagree with. And this, since the solar punk movement has gained a lot of steam, there's a way of sort of siphoning the mimetic energy there by defining the larger movement about it in a way that that paints your movement in a, in a more positive light, but like, hey, at the end of the day, I consider myself to be a Cypherpunk, to be a lunar punk, and also to be a solar punk. And so, you know, I think that these movements are like 99.9% had share the same values and DNA you could look at is like Cypher punk, lunar punk solar, I don't, this is a video

podcast. But for the audio listeners, I'm just making hand motions, they're all on the right side of my screen. And then there's like the status sort of like bureaucracies, which are like, all the way on the other side of things. And I think this solar punk lunar, punk and Cypherpunk, are so close to each other, that there's not as much daylight as as you would have, as you would think

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most of the newcomers in crypto during the bull run, don't necessarily have this understanding of the Cypherpunk movement or solar programming, do you think there's a need to understand it? Or do you think that it's more like as you explore and you discover the space you get interested? Or do you think they don't need to understand it, as long as they start adopting the technologies around them?

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I think it really just depends on who you are, and what you're trying to use the technology for, you know, we can program our values into our money. So what kind of monetary systems do we want to be involved in if you, if you're abusive and manipulative, you can build Ponzi schemes, if you care about environmental, social good, you can build that if you care about strong cryptography, you can build those systems. And so it there's no way of saying like, I'm just one actor, and I would never project on the entire space, like the whole space needs to do X. It's really about the people who are coming into the space, what job they're trying to be doing, and and whether or not the system guides them towards, towards doing that job. So I guess I'm not really answering your question. But I do think that there's no it's part is this space is like, really has a wide aperture is diffuse. And it's like really hard to generalize about the whole space Civic.

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Yeah, no, absolutely. Although my next question was a kind of a generalization, I apologize. And I know you meant it as a joke. But you said 2022 is the year of degen. And 2023 is kind of the year of regen. So I'd like to take one of your quotes, which is through conversation plus community by channeling more attention, talent and capital into a regen web three, we can create a gravity well towards regen with three. Could you briefly describe what regen is? And I'll still kind of discuss this code. And why do you think 2023 will be a defining year?

08:23

Yeah, I mean, I think each year is defining because we're laying layers of sediment in this space. And so region is basically the idea of a resource capacity that increases over time, it's regenerating resource capacity over time. And degeneration is decreasing resource capacity over time. And this can be like a long, slow, steady increase or decrease or it can be a sudden shock. Like, for example, the collapse of Terra Luna, and the collapse of FTX is systemic fragility to the space. And so you can have like immediate degeneracy and you've got you can have belong, slow decline. And so basically, the the idea behind regen is like, what if our resource capacity increased over time? And then, you know, the the sort of like adjacent idea

to this is like, not just talking about financial resources. So, my friend Gregory Landau, who is a thinker, and the founder of the regen network talks about the eight different types of capital, so spiritual capital, cultural capital, intellectual capital, of which this podcast is probably a type of intellectual capital, by the way, material capital living capital, which is like regenerating the biosphere, carbon climate change. I'm not remembering all eight forms of capital off the top of my head, but there's, but the idea is like, not just increasing resource capacity of financial capital, but also material capital and spiritual capital, intellectual capital. And so it's really about what kind of monetary system do we want to build? Is financial capital, the end all be all or is it a means towards the other types of capital. And so basically exploiting the design space out from one dimension to those eight dimensions. And then also saying, hey, let's build systems that regenerate over time, is the idea behind the regenerative crypto economic movement, at least how I would define it. And by the way, I wrote a book called green pill, which, you know, is all about how crypto could regenerate the world. I don't think that it's happening yet. That's why the book is subtitled how crypto could regenerate the world. I hope that by 2026, I can write the book How crypto is regenerating.

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We're laying the foundations, as you mentioned, right. This brings us actually to the to the next point. And this is one of the main focuses of the green pill podcast, which is really how do we make kind of region economy investable, you've had many guests on to discuss this topic. One of them, for example, is Yvonne Miyazono. So Head of Research at protocol labs that discuss impact certificates, obviously, through these different episodes, you've heard lots of different thoughts. I wanted to hear really what you thought about impact certificates. This idea that even mentioned around kind of not really gamification, but educating and showing awareness to the topic. So what are your thoughts on? How do we make it investable, this topic? How do we raise awareness around it? Not just like on podcast on a cultural level, but really an on broader scale? Level?

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Yeah, I mean, well, so the first thing I'll say is that I'm not spearheading the movement. I'm just like, one channel through which some of the memes through flow through and, you know, I just, I fell ass backwards into founding gitcoin, which was building region stuff. And our audience was developers and people in the space. So we're just like, five years ahead of everyone else, because we serve developers, and it just so happens that everyone needs developers in the space. Right? So I think that I'm just early is what it is. And, you know, it depends on the market segment, you're like, quadratic funding and get coin is already happening. Now. There's, there's other market segments, like, you know, how do we do civil resistant identity is an important one. And that's sort of happening with proof of humanity and bright ID and world coin. There's how do we capture carbon, which is externalizing. And that sub market sub segment is like, there's stuff happening there. Is it at the point where we're going to avert climate change as a human civilization? No, not yet. And so like, regenerative web three is this broad umbrella that we're creating, but there's many little segue sub segments and decentralized science right now is one that's pretty hot. And I think it's because a lot of people in science are fed up with academic funding bureaucracies. But what is decentralized science? I mean, it's just basically science that's trying to get away from the traditional funding and publishing intermediaries. So you know, this whole this whole system where you get funding

from either government grants or private grants, and then you publish an academic journal that sort of doesn't give everyone access to your to your publishing, how can we use things like quadratic funding in order to fund sciences? is kind of the subject matter there and in get coin grants is, is experimenting with finding funding infrastructure for

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that on that amount of bitcoin? It's true that I think, tell me if I'm wrong, like Bitcoin is just closing around of grantees with UNICEF innovate. So what are your thoughts on this? Like, is this like a step forward? That you know, you're starting to bring more major organizations on this new topic that they don't necessarily know much about? Yeah, that's

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starting to happen. I mean, the other main story behind gitcoin right now is that the protocol that I built in 2019, was centralized and monolithic. And get coins just finished up turning the corner from being becoming a Dao and being a decentralized modular protocol. And so the UNICEF round, which just happened and I think around $100,000 was raised in it was an experiment not only with partnering with UNICEF, but also an experiment with running a decentralized modular credibly neutral, get coin grants. And so that was quite exciting for get coin dial to to turn that corner. But um, you know, our, I'm saying our vision, but you know, I've disaffiliated from Bitcoin dial, because the dial doesn't have a CEO. And I think I had too much soft power over there. But um, you know, my sort of vision is that get coin and the grants registry could be deployed right now. Vitalik calls it a pillar of the Aetherium ecosystem. But there's no reason quadratic funding couldn't be deployed to any Dao, any layer one a or any layer to any NFT project could use quadratic funding to organize its community. But it doesn't stop within Web three, any city, any state, any country, any Reddit subreddit, could deploy quadratic funding or something like get coin grants to regenerate its local economy. So you start with this grounds up groundswell of communities regenerating themselves and then the some of that is a big movement towards regeneration. So that's kind of the strategy with with gitcoin grants and yeah, I mean, UNICEF is just a great example of a forward thinking or organization that is willing to leverage it. And so

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I mean, I would say one of the core pillars or components when it comes to Bitcoin is trust, you know, everyone trust is good coin, full edits deserve. But what does it accomplish when you look at the broader landscape of crypto and web three? And you've mentioned FTX? earlier? And there's many other examples that we could we could give? How can we build more trust in the space? Because, you know, if you talk to people that are not in crypto, the first thing that comes to mind as scams can trust, I just heard about FTX what is bitcoin etc. So obviously, we want to cater first to the people that are dedicated in the space that are building the tech before we kind of broaden our horizons. But there is a massive issue when it comes to user experience in building this trust. So what is your take on legitimacy and trust of the space in general?

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Yeah, well, gitcoin, like I said, I built it centralized and monolithic in the start. And there's too much trust in that, because you had to trust that Kevin, and walkie is not in the back fiddling the dials towards his favorite projects, you can't have a centralized pillar of a decentralized ecosystem. And so basically, we've gone have gone on a mission at gitcoin, to reduce the amount that people have to trust people like me, in order to use gitcoin. Also, there's a bunch of bugs in the software that I wrote, I'm not that good of a software engineer, we had to rewrite it from scratch. So So So I mean, I think that like, you know, building internet ecosystems where you don't have to trust someone like, you know, we've gitcoin grants 2.0, you could just fork it and run it in your own community. And I think that that's great. The problem was Sam Bateman freed was that he accrued too much social capital and trust. And he abused that because he basically was using customer funds to make the FTX arena and spend on all this crazy stuff. For core infrastructure, you don't want to have to trust it in my human relationships day to day, like, you know, if we're building rapport, and we're friends, like there's a certain amount of trust that's inherent in that. And I think that that's totally healthy, but for, for internet infrastructure that we need to be credibly neutral, and we need to be decentralized. I think it's a bad idea to have trust. So like, I almost go upstream to your question. And I think that like, if the question for me is like, what is the use case? And what is the relationship between us, and then we can decide whether we want more of a trustless architecture, or a trustful architecture and like, for friendships and for communities, I think it's important to have trust, but for core infrastructure that could be abused. I don't think it's as much of a good idea. So maybe I'm not answering your question, but that's how I think about it.

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You mentioned social capital, right that Sam had too much social capital. So yeah, a bad thing. Like, do you think we should actually use the Tech because it's kind of credibly neutral, but like, you can't stop people from having social capital, as they're more like involved in the space, right? Like, I mean, you yourself, you could argue you have a lot of social capital, and you're good with it. But that's not something we can really control. Right. So how does that play in? Well,

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if I could pay my bills and social capital, I'd be a billionaire. So I mean, I think it just really depends on the situation. So Vitalik wrote this great blog post about how Dallas differ from corporations. And he said that decentralization is important for credible fairness, decentralization is important for censorship resistance. And it's better for making decisions in environments where groups of people making decision by consensus is is better. So in those scenarios, you want to have trust lessness. So if you want credible fairness, if you have a public goods, funding infrastructure, like gitcoin, you want to not have to trust anyone, you just want to be able to prove that the inputs created the outputs. And there's no one fiddling the dials in the back. Decentralization for censorship resistance, I think applies in the SAM Beckman fried case where we're basically you had to trust that he wasn't misappropriating your funds. And that's a big problem with banks and centralized exchanges, particularly offshore ones where you don't have a remedy via the legal system. But um, you know, I think that outside of those

criteria, where Vitalik identified, the decentralization is important. It's fine to trust people and it's healthy to trust people. I trust my wife, I trust my kids, I trust my friends in Colorado. And so it just depends on situation, I

think. Right? So but when you trust people, what are your thoughts like when it comes to badges? Because I don't have the exact code of italic. But recently, I wouldn't say it was criticizing him, but he was observing that, you know, when it came to governance and dals tokens, were not necessarily always the best way to proceed. So when reputation and using badges verifiable credentials, do you think that's the right way forward? That you can trust that someone that worked more on a specific project or that has the experience should have more voting power, more influence within a group? Do you think that's the direction we're taking or we're more than experimental stage and we're not really sure if it's going to be governments tokens, verifiable credentials in the forms of badges, etc?

Yeah, really great question. So I mean, decentralized identity and reputation is a whole multi dimensional design space, and I feel out most about this thing called civil resistance, which is just basically telling one human from another and weeding out the bots. And so I can't speak for the entire space. But when I think about decentralized society, I think of you know, I sent you a pull up the that we did a podcast together. And what I think about there is, is two things like when I zoom out, and I think about a world where everyone's sending each other poll apps and sending each other verifiable credentials, the directed graph that happens between all of humanity, where, you know, I'm saying, I, I'm making x an attestation, about you, and you're making y attestation, about Alice, and she's making Z attestation. About About Bob. And it's that graph in that web of trust, that kind of becomes interesting. And, and basically, you know, what can you say about each edge of the graph? Well, it's, it's got a from person, it's got a two person. And there's some context with the poll app that I sent you. In the case that I, that I said earlier, I was sending you a post that said that we did a podcast together that might be useful in some scenarios for figuring out your identity. But it might also be not useful outside of that context. Also, if you don't trust me as the sender, then, or you don't have any insight or any idea about my reputation as a sender, then it's hard to glean any any ideas out of out of that. So, you know, basically, I think that Web of Trust is a really interesting model for, for maybe building up an idea of how much social capital each person in this space has. A web of trust is like what PageRank is, is based off of in Google, where you have, basically Larry and Sergey, what they figured out was that every link from one web page to another web page is a vote of the trustworthiness of that other web page. And if you assign a certain amount of social capital to all of the web page, and you just let it flow through that web of trust, then that's how you get PageRank. And I think it's gonna be a similar sort of thing with decentralized society, and with verifiable credentials, where you let the cat like the social capital flow through it in a PageRank type algorithm. I don't know that I'm totally answering your question. But

I actually did an episode with Michael Sena, one of the founders of ceramic networks. Oh, ceramic. Yeah. And he was really good with them. And well, yeah, actually, he mentioned like

Bitcoin actually, during the episode. Yeah, I mean, obviously. And it was funny because he was mentioning really the plug and play into the graph and the concept of like having a more intimate internet, but that's really why he got into the space. And with regards to verifiable credentials, there's always this idea of trust, but also of having this decentralized identity, like because it's more intimate, you know, you're more in control your identity, you can trust it, but obviously, that we're still building these blocks. So I think you answered my question. And with regards to that, and what previous guests probably said, as we started pushing the end of the episode, I wanted to ask you, what are your kind of guilty pleasures when it comes to web three, you cannot answer public goods are a good coin. You know, sorry. There are some random facts right? If you go on the supermodel or website that you know, you were a fifth grade chess champion, you know, things like that. So what are your guilty pleasures When it's not public? Public goods, I don't know. It could be NF T's defy gaming running. Yeah,

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I am a runner. I don't consider that to be one of my vices though. It is the way I unwind after being in front of a computer and like, I'll just turn to the side here and I have like a bunch of back issues from just being in front of the computer all day. And so doing yoga and being physically active and running in hiking is is something that I love to do outside of work. I you know, I live in Colorado, which is one of the most beautiful places in the world in my opinion and just communing with nature is something that I do once a day or twice a day at least but you know, I when I moved to Colorado I thought I'd be spending like backpacking through the mountains and it turns out I'm just working on the internet a lot that's because I love what I love what I do

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before you continue on the guilty pleasure site. It's true it is surprising that unless you know of some that there's not like mental health 1000 the space you know, like it's such a huge component of like keeping the right balance in life like exercises, do you know of any like kind of mental health Dow slash you know, like anything like for mental health or like just living? Well, you put it that way?

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No, I get going. We've we've had like people come in and do like guided meditations and talk about mental health and burnout and stuff like that. So we've had guest speakers that come in with that we'll do subjects on it, but I haven't seen any mental health dowels specifically, I do think it's an important thing as a founder and someone who's been through multi cycles to manage your own psychology. And you know, my way that I do that is like i Run i stay physically active. I do yoga, I spend time with my friends and family. I play a lot of like in between meetings like after this meeting. If we break early, I'll probably like play a game of chess on my phone just to unwind or like play games, or something like that.

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game of League legends like Sam

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I haven't gotten into League of Legends, but I've played some Warcraft and I understand the League of Legends is like an altar of Warcraft, like one of the custom games that you can play. So I should I should check that out, although I guess no one's trying to emulate Sam bacon fried at this point. So I

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mean, maybe you could organize like a chess tournament for public goods, you know, you know, I'm sure if you streamed it, if you figured out with someone from the gitcoin team, and you contacted streamers, you could actually raise a lot of awareness around public goods, chess and crypto in general, you know, so going back to the ledger, so Okay, chess? I mean, I play chess, too. I'm not sure we can say it's a guilty pleasure. It's a it's a Yeah,

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it's hobby to have. Yeah, I think so. Yeah. Yeah. I mean, it's like, what are the pleasures and and I don't know, how many of them are like, actually truly vices. But yeah, I think it's just like important to manage your own psychology. And that, for me, that's what's upstream from all this stuff. And like, the other thing that I'll say is that, like, people attach certain things to you based off of your reputation. And like, one of the things has been interesting for me, as gitcoin has started is that people attach all these different, like virtues to me, because I'm like, the public goods guy, or something like that. But like, I'm just like, this flawed, like, regular guy like anyone else. And so I need time to unwind, I get stressed out, I get I get short tempered when I've had a long day at work also. And so it's really like, you just got to manage your psychology and have a long term time horizon, I think. And, and that's what like, for me playing chess or StarCraft or, or running is about is like having hobbies outside of web three, the space can be all consuming. And it's, it's better to, I think, dip your toes in here and there and have a long term time horizon,

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for sure. I mean, this brings us to the last question, oh, you kind of answered it, which was like, kind of the final thoughts and what inspires you in the space? Is there something else that you would like to add? That wasn't asked or something that inspired you lately, it could be a person, a project and article family,

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I'm really excited about this idea that we can program our values into our money. And there's just some really smart people in the space that care so much. Like, you know, you said, Michael Cena came on from ceramic. And he's awesome, because he's really trying to build a world in

which you can leverage your reputation and make an income with it and build community with it. I'm excited about the optimism team, not only because of their technical ability, but because they care so much about public good. I'm inspired by the protocol developers and how they are maintaining this global economic network, the state machine that is Aetherium. I'm excited by people like that are that are working on region stuff, and web, web three stuff, I just think that there's so much innovation in this space. And I'm just inspired by anyone who has a vision, and is trying to pull it into reality by playing long term infinite games. And there's a lot of people in the space that are doing that. So it's a great place. It's a great thing to wake up and to work on this every day. I'm like, pinch me, I'm so happy to be working with so many smart, talented people on these great things.

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These are great final thoughts. It actually reminds me of, I don't know if you know, the cookie game, but very smart and stupid game at the same time. You just click on a cookie, and it just keeps growing and you have more and more cookies. So it's kind of like the infinite game of the more you do it, the better it gets and the bigger it gets. I'll check that out. Well, it's not it's not really game. It's more just a fun concept that like just everyone started playing it because you just click on it, it grows bigger and bigger and bigger and you can buy stuff to make it go faster. Anyways, thank you so much, Kevin for being part of today's episode. Obviously links to you and supramolecular and gitcoin will be in the description. If you want to get more involved in our community, make sure to follow us on our social platforms on Twitter. It's new forum on the screen and CO as usual, take a moment don't forget to share or like or subscribe to our channel. It's very appreciated. Thank you again, Kevin, and have a great day.

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Thanks for having me. This is fun.