

# Where do liberals disagree with libertarians?

This question previously had details. They are now in a comment.



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So much of what I write is about the different perspectives that libertarians have from progressives (and from conservatives). To answer this question as fully as I can, I would should just point to my [table of contents](#)....

.... or perhaps I could extract a few of the more salient philosophical and world-view disagreements. (I'll leave it to the links for those who want even more. ;)

- **Model:** Progressives believe that government is most fairly modeled as the entire community coming together and speaking from their hearts about what is best for all.
  - Libertarians believe that government is most fairly modeled as a small group of megalomaniacs, psychopaths, bureaucrats, and narcissists who battle to use the legitimized violence of government to control our lives and to steal from us.  
<[How did government originate?](#)>
- **Charity:** Progressives believe that using government (violence thru laws) to implement “charity” is “charity”.
  - Libertarians believe that charity requires *voluntary* giving.  
<[How can good people refuse to support government welfare?](#)>
- **Welfare:** Progressives believe that government centrally-planned welfare is the application of our wealth that will best help the poor.
  - Libertarians believe that amongst the infinite number of possible charities, few people, when given the freedom to choose, would ever select a charity as inefficient, as ineffective, as counterproductive as government welfare.  
<[The success of Nordic socialism](#)>
- **Greed:** Progressives believe that anyone disagreeing with their particular plan to help the poor is “greedy”.
  - Libertarians believe that there are an infinite number of ways to help the poor. We truly wish progressives well in their endeavors, but we believe that the solution quite probably lies in a different direction. We don't presume to know where; instead, we want to give people the freedom to search and to innovate for ever better solutions.  
<[How does a libertarian society alleviate poverty?](#)>

- **Monopoly:** Progressives fear that corporations, if not overseen by a omnipotent, benevolent government, will force us to buy things we don't want, at too high a price, without a selection of choices, by keeping competitors out.
  - Libertarians know that government, run by politicians who are more power-hungry and violent than the people in corporations, already uses its legitimized violence to force us to buy things we don't want, at too high a price, without a selection of choices, by keeping competitors out.
 

<*Is capitalism inherently oppressive?*>
  
- **Critical Services:** Progressives believe that without the violence of government forcing us to do what we don't want to do, we would not have the critical services that we all want.
  - Libertarians believe that if people want a service, we can create it in an infinite number of ways. While any such created service may not look like how the government provides it today, the service implementations we would *voluntarily* choose would be lower priced, more effective, more innovative, more flexible, and cause fewer unintended problems.
 

<**Would we all be much better off if we unbundled the monopoly “government services”?**>
  
- **Big Business:** Progressives believe that Big Government is necessary to keep Big Business at bay.
  - Libertarians believe that Big Government gives unfair advantages to Big Business, and kills off the little guy — especially the poor and minorities.
 

<*Who is killing the mom and pop stores?*>
  
- **Efficacy of Voting:** Progressives believe that voting is the way to have one's voice heard.
  - Libertarians believe that voting is a sham, where we are given an infrequent, periodic, false choice between pre-selected psychopaths, narcissists, and megalomaniacs. Being free to use our dollars and our associations to express our voice every single day in every trade and interaction we undertake gives us much more power much more often.
 

<*How is voting counterproductive?*>
  
- **Foreign Intervention:** Progressives believe that Pax Americana is necessary; it's just that their team would manage it better.
  - Libertarians believe that we should not allow rulers to force unwilling Americans to fund, support, or kill for the dictators, peoples, or corporations that the ruler likes.
 

<*What do libertarians think about the US military?*>
  
- **Democracy Works:** Progressives believe that voting leads to the best solution.
  - Libertarians do not believe in a “best” *single* solution. They believe that people are quite different, and thus allowing a diversity of solutions, which are free to evolve over time, best matching

human nature.

*<How does democracy resemble hell?>*

- **Omniscience:** Progressives believe that if only we found a sainted ruler who knew all of our needs and really, really cared about each and every one of us, then he could legislate us to utopia.

- Libertarians believe that no individual human can ever know the hopes, desires, dreams, and tradeoffs of hundreds of millions of diverse people, let alone the infinite number of ways that those desires might be satisfied.

*<What mistakes do politicians repeatedly make?>*

- **Little Guy:** Progressives believe that if we could find rulers who cared about the little, down-trodden guy, why, then government would work.

- Libertarians believe that the friction of government itself hurts the little guy, tilting the field to Big Business.

*<Can small government libertarianism eliminate crony capitalism?>*

- **Using prejudice to fight prejudice:** Progressives believe that imposing laws to favor groups that they prefer to make up for past injustices is most effective to combat “prejudice”.

- Libertarians believe that there are an infinite number of ways to undermine prejudice, but that if using violence to be prejudice is wrong, we shouldn’t right it using violence to be prejudice. We wish progressives well in their efforts, but want to allow other possible solutions to compete.

*<How do libertarians stand against racism?>*

- **Government as God:** Progressives believe that an omniscient, prescient, omnipotent, benevolent government is just one election cycle away.

- Libertarians have no blind faith to want to submit to such a paradoxical, mythical creature, synergized from limited, fallible humans, their overlords.

*<Would libertarians support an omniscient God as a political ruler?>*

- **Society as Real Entity:** Progressives believe that there is an entity called “society” with a discernible interest, purpose, will, etc. and that they speak for it.

- Libertarians believe that “society”, “community”, “civilization”, “nation” are simply convenient terms to describe all the individual people in a convenience grouping. Any interest, purpose, will, etc. can only reside in the individual humans in the group. One could delineate a segment with somewhat similar viewpoints, but that would be a gross generalization of but one voice in the group.

*<What is Individualism?>*

- **Act Together:** Progressives want us all to act together to solve, in concert, the big problems that many of us see.

- Libertarians are fine with people acting together, but only if they do so voluntarily. Using threats of violence to force the unwilling to support progressive solutions is bullying ... and unnecessary.
  - <*Should abortions be funded by the government?*>
- **Arrogance:** Progressives have great faith that they know exactly how to solve the big problems, and that anyone not supporting their solution is stupid, or worse wants to continue the problem, and needs to be violently forced down the correct path.
  - Libertarians are humble. They do not presume to know the one and only solution to what have turned out to be intractable problems. They want to allow different people to support different possible solutions as they see fit. They see no assurance that using violence against people to force them down any particular path will solve the problem, and they think the violence itself is the biggest problem.
    - <*Is a decent provision for the poor the true test of civilization?*>
- **Racism:** Progressives believe that anyone disagreeing with their solution to reduce wrongful prejudice or gaps in outcomes across ethnicities must be “racist”.
  - Libertarians believe that there are lots of different potential causes and an infinite number of potential solutions in this space. Insisting on one (violent) path assumes knowledge not possible, and prevents other, much more successful, paths to be explored. Again, we hope progressives’ solutions work, and we believe opening up the space to a multitude of solutions freely competing is wiser — and our solution’s lack of violent threats is more ethical.
    - <*How do libertarians stand against racism?*>
- **Narcissism:** Progressives believe that they are the Good Guys and anyone doing things differently than they do must be evil and deserving of (legal) violence and oppression.
  - Libertarians see a diversity of human beings, most of them quite different from the libertarian himself, the vast majority trying to to the best they can. They feel no onus to violently remake other people in their image, and are willing to let each person live in peace as they so choose, using words and incentives ,not violence, to urge others to follow their suggestions.
    - <*Are libertarians or authoritarians more narcissistic?*>
- **Protection from Corporations:** Progressives believe that government is the only thing standing between us and being ruled by corporations.
  - Libertarians believe that government *is* the evil corporation that already rules us.
    - <*When is the free market not always the solution?*>
- **Rich Are Evil:** Progressives see the rich as per se evil (unless of course they support progressive politics).

- Libertarians discriminate between those who become rich by creating wealth for us all, and those who become rich by stealing wealth (most effectively through government). It is only the latter rich that we label as evil, as we label anyone who uses violence against the otherwise innocent and peaceful.

*<Should the justly and the unjustly rich equally be condemned?>*

- **Robin Hood:** Progressives see government as a Robin Hood, stealing from the rich to give to the poor.

- Libertarians see government as the Sheriff of Nottingham, stealing from the poor to give to his cronies, with only us Robin Hoods standing in its way to return the stolen wealth back to the people who created it.

*<Was Robin Hood a hero or a villain?>*

- **Morals v. Ethics:** Progressives do not believe in universal ethics, but only in community morals, which they believe that they uniquely know and which must be then imposed on the remainder of the unwilling community.

- Libertarians believe that there is one major universal ethic — self-ownership — which we all must follow. All other moral issues are fine to vary across different individuals and across voluntary communities; but there can be no compromise on self-ownership without introducing slavery. Using violence to force others to follow one’s personal morals is a violation of self-ownership.

*<How do human ethics differ from individual morals?>*

- **Assumed Consent:** Progressives assume that individuals have already given their consent in politics and therefore anything government rulers decide to do to them is just.

- Libertarians believe that consent requires active consent, otherwise one is effectively a slave.

*<Are libertarians more focused on liberty or government?>*

- **One Correct Solution:** Progressives fear that if they allow different people to choose different solutions, some might make the “wrong” decisions!

- Libertarians believe that “better” v. “worse” are subjective judgements, and that allowing a diversity of solutions will better fit the inherently diverse nature of mankind.

*<Should the US split into two countries: Republican and Democrat?>*

- **Objective Wealth:** Progressives believe that wealth is objective.

- Libertarians believe that wealth is subjective.

*<When is inequality acceptable?>*

- **Money is Wealth:** Progressives believe that money is wealth.

- Libertarians believe that money is at most a temporary storage of labor, and that it is a very poor proxy for wealth.  
<*How is money different from wealth?*>
- **Poor as Monolith:** Progressives believe that “the poor” are all pretty much the same, are all deserving, and need to be cared for the same.
  - Libertarians believe that there are many different segments of poor, each of which requires an exploration of alternative solutions.  
<*Why do poor people suffer?*>
- **Capitalism as Theft:** Progressives believe that capitalism is a system for redistributing an otherwise naturally-occurring equality of wealth from the poor to the rich.
  - Libertarians believe that *free market* capitalism is the engine through which the clever *create* wealth for all humans — both rich and poor — and earn riches themselves that incent their cleverness and persistence in the face of a natural resistance to change.  
<*How does free market capitalism create wealth?*>
- **Model of Competition:** Progressives believe that “perfect competition” is the correct (albeit impossible-to-achieve) measure for a well-functioning marketplace. Its impossibility proves the need for government oversight.
  - Libertarians reject the economic assumption of “perfect competition” and believe that freedom of entry, freedom of choice, innovation, and creative destruction are the signs of a well-functioning market, all of which are hindered by government.  
<*Must an unhindered market be perfect to be preferred over a planned market?*>
- **Wealth is Evil:** Progressives believe that wealth is almost always an evil, which must be defeated by government action.
  - Libertarians believe that the just accumulation of wealth is not only ethical, but also beneficial to society, and that on the other hand, the use of government violence to enrich cronies is the best example of unjust accumulation of wealth and is an evil not possible without government.  
<*How can you become wealthy without doing evil?*>
- **Source of Wealth:** Progressives believe that government control is necessary to make a country wealthy.
  - Libertarians believe that individual people innovating and cooperating and trading voluntarily is the real engine of wealth creation.  
<*How would libertarians fix Venezuela's problems?*>
- **Taxation:** Progressives believe that taxation is the price we pay for freedom.

- Libertarians believe that taxation is a euphemism for theft.  
<*What is the argument that “Taxation is theft”?*>
- **Rude Boys:** Progressives believe that “good people” should threaten violence through government in order to end rude behavior.
  - Libertarians believe that we can easily use freedom of association to avoid and punish rude people. No violence is necessary. Instead, the *initiation* of violence is itself a violation of the more important universal human ethic of self-ownership.  
<*Should schools ban certain clubs?*>
- **Central Planning:** Progressives believe that we need a central plan to take us to a better world.
  - Libertarians believe that no single plan can fit the diversity of humanity; that instead we need hundreds of millions of individual plans for how each person can achieve what *she* uniquely wants for *her own* life. The resulting outcome is spontaneous and unknowable, yet serves us all best.  
<*How does a free market economy win against a centrally planned & controlled economy?*>
- **Ruler Ethics:** Progressives believe that rulers may ethically initiate violence.
  - Libertarians believe that *all* humans must respect the universal human ethic of self-ownership and that no human, even a ruler, may ethically initiate violence.  
<*Why do some people get so angry about libertarianism?*>

And there are many other differences...