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Government is Good

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[Dan Slaby](#) · 3 days ago 🔒

"Although conservatives portray government as incompetent, public sector programs have actually amassed an admirable record of success in a wide variety of policy areas."

<http://www.governmentisgood.com/index.php>

↑ 0 ↓ · flag

Anonymous · 3 days ago 🔒

Tell that to Native Americans. Or the Japanese Americans locked up in WW2. And Martin Luther King did not march because government treated blacks well.

Or the current EPA experiment controversy-

These experiments exposed people, including those with asthma and heart problems, to dangerously high levels of toxic pollutants, including diesel fumes, reads a EPA inspector general report obtained by The Daily Caller News Foundation. The EPA also exposed people with health issues to levels of pollutants up to 50 times greater than the agency says is safe for humans.

Read more: <http://dailycaller.com/2014/04/02/report-epa-tested-deadly-pollutants-on-humans-to-push-obama-admins...>

Or the 6 billion dollars the US State Department can't find.

<http://www.cnbc.com/id/101556214>

The State Department has no idea what happened to \$6 billion used to pay its contractors.

Or the IRS targeting scandal

February 6, 2014: Catherine Engelbrecht testifies before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee that after she filed two applications for her non-profit Tea Party group, True the Vote, her family, her private company and her nonprofit organizations experienced 15 separate audits or inquiries by federal agencies, including the IRS, FBI, OSHA, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (even though her company does not sell alcohol, tobacco nor firearms), and one member of Congress.

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/a-timeline-of-the-irs-targeting-of-conservative-evangelical-and-pr...>

Or why the "most transparent administration" became anything but transparent

http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/politics/2013/03/barack_obama_promised_transparency_...

Or Rand Paul getting conservative and liberal groups fired up over government overreach concerns
Paul said Feinstein's allegations had shaken Washington. "I look into the eyes of senators and I think I see real fear," he said. "I think I perceive fear of an intelligence community drunk with power, unrepentant and uninclined to relinquish power."

<http://www.sfgate.com/politics/article/Republican-Rand-Paul-fires-up-a-Berkeley-crowd-5332740.php>

I am a conservative. I love my country. But like the Founders, I have a healthy skepticism of government regardless of which party is in control. That does not make me anti government.

↑ 0 ↓ · flag

Robert Harrison Lane Signature Track · 16 hours ago 🔗

As a very strong Independent the government has done good- take for instance this recent court ruling

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/judge-dismisses-case-u-s-yemen-drone-strikes-3-u-s-citizens/>

some like Ron Paul who said that the awaki was a US Citizen and his Constitutional rights were violated- when he didn't get a trial before the US took him out with a drone (Paul didn't care that undoubtedly more innocent civilians would have died while he awaited trial) I say he was a terrorist.

Or some would argue military action is all about profit or other foot in their mouth stuff but our government has acted to say it's not okay to kill 3,000 innocent people and we need to stand up against that

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-politics/wp/2014/04/07/rand-paul-in-09-cheney-pushed-iraq-w...>

↑ 0 ↓ · flag

Greg Wilson · 15 hours ago 🔗

I agree with you that he deserved to be taken out. In fact I hope hell has a special place for American born terrorists like him. However this is a Constitutional Law class and his killing raises important Constitution questions. When is it all right to deprive a citizen of his rights? Who decides? The judge did not decide, she just dismissed the case.

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[+ Comment](#)

Greg Wilson · 2 days ago

Of course if you spend trillions of dollars you are bound to make somebody's life better. Conservatives don't hate the government, quite the opposite. However they believe that the government should protect the liberty of every American. The government is inefficient by design and therefore should only do those things that it needs to do and let the free market take care of the rest. How can you think that it is the government's right to tell us what food to serve in school cafeterias???

Take for instance the computer you are using to post your thoughts. In the 80's the computer that you are using would have cost over a million dollars! Thanks to the free market it is now a few hundred. If the government made them they would cost 10 million and do half as much.

Look at the national debt. It is outrageous. So the question should not be how much good has the government done, it should be how much good have we lost because the government took money out of the private sector and wasted it.

Conservatives want the government to protect our liberties. Liberals think they know what is best for everyone and want the government to force their "good" ideas on everyone else no matter the cost.

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[+ Comment](#)

Dan Slaby · 2 days ago

First, the government does not exist for economic efficiency, but for justice and protecting the rights of people, which it does through the court system and many of its functions. Second, the free market is a fraud; the free market is an economic fiction to support a political agenda of wealth consolidation. Third, the national debt is the lowest percent of Gross National Product in several decades - government debt is an economic investment and more should be invested in infrastructure development, Fourth, most innovation was funded by government investment on which private enterprise profits (computers and internet, for example). and finally, your characterization of conservatism and liberalism is so archaic and based on 19th century capitalism - and has no real understanding of the role of government defined in the Preamble. Most economists now consider the economy a complex system with financial markets affecting price more than consumer supply and demand.

We need more government involvement in restraining the fraud in the economy and politics, not less. The private sector does not provide an efficient allocation of resources, but works to increase the economic disparity between the rich (who are takers) and poor (who are the givers).

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Dan Slaby · a day ago

Here are a few references:

Harcourt, The Illusion of Free Markets: Punishment and the Myth of Natural Order

Martinez, The Myth of the Free Market: The Role of the State in a Capitalist Economy

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[+ Comment](#)

Greg Wilson · a day ago

I am talking about the United States. If you are talking about a different country, please let me know. Otherwise while you are entitled to your opinion you can not make up fiction and call it fact. There is a psychological trick that I learned about in college. If you tell a lie often enough people will begin to believe it as fact. Your nation debt analysis is such a lie. You should be more cautious about who you believe without checking it out. Debt as a percentage of GDP is currently 101.6%. In 2007 it was 63.9%. For the 60 some years before that is averaged around 60.3%. I know you don't believe me so I will let you see for yourself <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/united-states/government-debt-to-gdp>

Most innovations were NOT funded by government investments. Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, Michael Dell, Government grants to help start their businesses...ZERO. The Railroads of the 19th century that helped create this country. Free Market. Electricity for your house. Free Market. Phonograph, camera, ad infinitum, Free Market

Now Solyndra got government subsidies of \$500 MILLION. But we got such great cheap solar cells from them that we don't need oil anymore.....no wait, they went bankrupt.

You have no real understanding of the problems created by a big powerful government throughout history. Stalin's Russia, Hitler's Germany, Mao's China, and the list goes on and on. Gosh none of those believed in the free market either.....

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Dan Slaby · a day ago

Didn't mention America, for good reason. The Transcontinental RR was funded by US Government land grants, not free market but oligarchs. The internet was invented by DARPA (government). Government, in the Constitution, created patents for encouraging invention. NASA has been one of the most successful government operations with moon landing, shuttle, space exploration, Salk polio and other vaccines, and the list goes on and on, all accomplished by your fellow Americans who you seem to disparage just to uphold your political ideology. My appreciation go out to government workers who uphold this nation in spite of the vitriol of those who think that money is the only value of the Constitution.

Do you need more book references written by credible authors on the failure and corruption of the free market?

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Dan Slaby · a day ago

Debt to GDP by CBO is 73%

<http://www.marketwatch.com/story/us-debt-now-about-73-of-gdp-cbo-says-2013-09-17-1091240>

Congratulations, America! Your deficit fell 37 percent in 2013.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/10/30/congratulations-america-your-deficit-fell...>

↑ 0 ↓ · flag

Anonymous · a day ago 🔒

Deficit is different than debt. You still spent a lot more than you brought in, adding to the national debt. 17 trillion and counting.

<http://www.usdebtclock.org/>

Obama in 2006:

'The fact that we are here today to debate raising America's debt limit is a sign of leadership failure. It is a sign that the US Government can not pay its own bills. It is a sign that we now depend on ongoing financial assistance from foreign countries to finance our Government's reckless fiscal policies. Increasing America's debt weakens us domestically and internationally. Leadership means that "the buck stops here." Instead, Washington is shifting the burden of bad choices today onto the backs of our children and grandchildren. America has a debt problem and a failure of leadership. Americans deserve better.'

<http://www.snopes.com/politics/obama/debtlimit.asp#rxj491EWqb3OkWOZ.99>

↑ 1 ↓ · flag

Dan Slaby · 14 hours ago 🔒

The biggest problem with the debt and deficit spending is providing overseas defense expenditures to protect corporate interests; our defense should be sized to our defense needs, corporations should be paying the cost of this defense, and tax loopholes to the wealthy who hide income offshore should be terminated.

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[+ Comment](#)

Greg Wilson · 17 hours ago 🔒

Dan,

You really should read the entire article of your first link regarding the CBO and 73% debt to gdp ratio. It states that the ratio is TWICE AS HIGH as it was in 2007 and higher than anytime since WW2. Thanks for making my argument for me. GDP and Federal Debt can be calculated in different ways for different purposes but the FACT remains that in the past 6 years the debt has skyrocketed!!!!

And if I may be so bold as to point out that the DEFICIT (Not Debt) fell after the House (Budgetary Control per Constitution) went to the Republicans.

↑ 1 ↓ · flag

Dan Slaby · 15 hours ago

I did read the article, and just wanted to point out that the debt declined to 73%, but I copied the headline and couldn't change the font.

The decline of the deficit is not related to Republicans, but more complex, including the restoring the upper income tax rates as well as some spending constraints.

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[+ Comment](#)

Greg Wilson · 16 hours ago

And I DO NOT disparage government workers. I think the Government should do what only the government can and leave the rest to the states or the people. (see amendment 10). Patents are DEFINATELY something our government should do! DO you know what DARPA is and why it created the internet (not Al Gore)? DARPA is part of the military (something only the government can do) and the internet was created as a computer network designed to keep working in case of nuclear attack, so the US would still have a functioning command and control for our armed forces. NASA started as part of the Air Force (military again, government responsibility again). And funding research into things in the interest of the country is also acceptable.

However I don't think the government should be funding crap such as: \$107,000 to study the sex life of the Japanese quail, \$1.2 million to study the breeding habits of the woodchuck. \$150,000 to study the Hatfield-McCoy feud. \$84,000 to find out why people fall in love. \$1 million to study why people don't ride bikes to work. \$19 million to examine gas emissions from cow flatulence. \$144,000 to see if pigeons follow human economic laws. Funds to study the cause of rudeness on tennis courts and examine smiling patterns in bowling alleys. \$219,000 to teach college students how to watch television. \$2 million to construct an ancient Hawaiian canoe. \$20 million for a demonstration project to build wooden bridges. \$160,000 to study if you can hex an opponent by drawing an X on his chest. \$800,000 for a restroom on Mt. McKinley. \$100,000 to study how to avoid falling spacecraft. \$16,000 to study the operation of the komungo, a Korean stringed instrument. \$1 million to preserve a sewer in Trenton, NJ, as a historic monument. \$6,000 for a document on Worcestershire sauce. \$10,000 to study the effect of naval

communications on a bull's potency. \$100,000 to research soybean-based ink. \$1 million for a Seafood Consumer Center

<http://www.areddy.net/mscott/porkabs.html>

But worse than that is using the power of the Federal Government to attack and harass their political opponents. The IRS targeting Tea Party groups. Catherine Engelbrecht was a businesswoman in Texas who ran a business for 20 years with no interference from the Federal Government. She decided to voice her political opinion (as guaranteed in Amendment 1) and start a non profit political entity. After she applied for non-profit status, she was harassed by multiple government agencies on numerous occasions, including the FBI, ATF, the IRS, and OSHA .

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2013/05/30/why-you-should-care-that-the-u-s-government-has-targeted-catherine-engelbrecht-and-her-organizations/>

There are many more stories of political abuse like this. So are you willing to toss out the First Amendment just to uphold your political ideology

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Dan Slaby · 15 hours ago 🔗

Military is not the only purpose of government.

I checked your source on claimed pork, but there is no way to fact check a list, and I'm not sure that this list is genuine.

The IRS did not target conservatives, but targeted all applications with political words in their intents; the 501(C)(4) was specifically identified for social welfare and not political intents.

There were just more Tea Party fundraising scams than liberal. The are more stories you say, but telling stories is not the same as telling the truth.

↑ -1 ↓ · flag

[+ Comment](#)

clinton mathews · 15 hours ago 🔗

Small government vs. Huge government. Our founders believed in very limited government, by consent of the governed, as do I. The enormous growth of government in the last 150 years, and particularly the last century, has severely contracted the individual rights so important to the founders (see the Declaration: We hold these truths to be self evident....). In the interest of the Collective, we have moved from 'individual rights' to focusing on 'common good'.

The marxist socialism introduced in Europe in the late 1900's has caught on here in the US, but we dare not call it by that name, since it has repeatedly failed all over the world. It is popular with the masses, who love the idea of free lunch and health care paid for by others, and even free cell phones. These are people who believe the government can and should do everything, even picking winners and losers in the marketplace. Think Solyndra!

The following is a lecture overview from a 'free' on-line US Constitution course at Hillsdale College that

provides some balance to the left-wing Yale view of the 'living organic constitution' presented by Prof Amar:

"In the early 20th century, a new political theory—known as Progressivism—rose to prominence in America. This theory held that the principles of the American Founding, expressed most eloquently and concisely in the Declaration of Independence, were irrelevant to modern life. Progressives taught that stringent restrictions on government power were no longer necessary to protect liberty, since human nature and science had advanced greatly during the 19th century. Progressives did not believe that individuals are endowed with inalienable rights by a Creator; rather, they believed that rights are determined by social expediency and bestowed by the government. In conjunction with this new theory of rights, Progressivism holds that government must be able to adapt to ever-changing historical circumstances."

↑ 1 ↓ · flag

[+ Comment](#)

Dan Slaby · 15 hours ago

Coming from a conservative school with a right-wing political correctness spin, I disagree with its definition of Progressivism and I also disagree with the idea that individual rights have been contracted in the past 150 years, but expanded.

↑ -1 ↓ · flag

clinton mathews · 12 hours ago

And you, sir, are coming from a socialist school with a radical left-wing spin. I suggest you read the early progressives, Wilson, Goodnow, T.Roosevelt, Dewey, FDR, and the self-proclaimed progressive, HRCClinton for their definitions of progressivism/socialism. As to your comment that individual rights have expanded, it is clear that race and women rights have expanded. However, as social welfare rights have expanded, the majority of citizens have experienced contracted individual rights. In summary, I don't want to pay for your health care and I don't want you to pay for mine!

↑ 1 ↓ · flag



Susan Ye Laird

Signature Track

· 12 hours ago

A Chinese saying goes like this: 'money can't solve all your problems but if you have no money, that's the first problem you need to tackle'. Government is a necessary evil. US federalism is created on the premises that a Republic was more sustainable if it was composed of peoples with diversified religious beliefs and disparate value systems.

In regards of health care, I simply don't see how a national insurance market can make it more affordable if most professional providers and arbitrators are strictly organized and

regulated under State jurisdiction.

↑ 1 ↓ · flag

Dan Slaby · 11 hours ago

I used to be a libertarian, read Milton Friedman, Hayek, and voted Republican until George Bush. There are major flaws with libertarianism and free market economics, and the awareness of their flaws comes from gaining knowledge about complexity and mathematical dynamics.

Human beings are a member of a species that have survived because of cooperation and adaptation in a struggle for existence in natural world.

Libertarian individualism, like the free market, is a legal fiction, useful for property rights and monetary exchange. The notion of capitalism and socialism is 19th century ideology useful for political diatribes, but has little meaning in the dynamics of a financial market, or the global economy.

Every libertarian gets a free ride in society because they refuse to pay for the full costs of maintaining the social, political and economic infrastructure that enables property rights, refuse to recognize the costs of resource depletion and degradation, and refuse to account for the costs of deleterious consequences of poverty and disease that are not factored into free market economic analysis.

From a practical standpoint I have never met a libertarian who changed their own diapers in childhood or emptied their own bedpans in old age; libertarianism can only apply to the privileged, healthy, and wealthy individuals who feel no moral obligation to other people.

I'm for human rights, which apply to individuals, but I'm not for the sociopathology that radical libertarianism depends on. We live in a republic, and that is why the Preamble begins with "We the people ...".

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[+ Comment](#)

Dan Slaby · 11 hours ago

Health is not an individual issue. It is a population issue, first with the genetic inheritance to disease and susceptibility; second, communicable diseases affect everyone in a population to the degree that they have been vaccinated or immunized; third, is the risk of accidents, personal or involving others; fourth is the risk of intentional violence and availability of instruments of violence such as guns, fifth, the ease and rapidity of travel carrying disease across continental areas, and sixth, the change in climate which spreads tropical diseases to new areas. Both states and nations have porous borders that provide no barrier to the spread of health risks. Inequality of health services will promote travel to areas where health care is more accessible, like Americans going to Mexico for pharmaceuticals and health services

denied in border states.

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[+ Comment](#)

Greg Wilson · 11 hours ago

You were never a libertarian if you think it means you have to change your own diapers. Being a libertarian means you don't need a government worker to change your diapers! You are good at liberal talking points that sound impressive but have no truth to back them up. Libertarians are more generous to the needy and sick than liberals are. AL Gore 1997 \$353 / Biden averaged \$369/year for the past decade. Hell I beat that myself and don't have near the income of either of those.

↑ 1 ↓ · flag

Dan Slaby · 8 hours ago

Conservatives and liberals are equally charitable, Conservatives to religious organizations and Liberals to secular organizations.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2012/10/21/study-conservatives-and-liberals-are-equa...>

↑ 0 ↓ · flag

[+ Comment](#)

Greg Wilson · 10 hours ago

You can not make this stuff up!!!! Obama is out criticizing the private sector for not paying women the same as men. This is so important to him he is signing two executive orders meant to force government contractors to pay women the same as men. However the White House pays women over 12% less than the men who work there. His picks, his employees, his "war on women". HAHA! I guess that is do as I say, not as I do.

<http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2014/04/08/inside-politics-equal-pay-gap-reaches-white-house/>

<http://www.cnbc.com/id/101564589>

<http://newsbusters.org/blogs/kyle-drennen/2014/04/08/cbs-destroys-white-house-rhetoric-gender-pay-gap-nbc-and-abc-ignore>

<http://www.aei-ideas.org/2013/12/gender-wage-gap-in-obamas-white-house-female-staffers-earn-less-than-87-cents-on-the-dollar-compared-to-men/>

↑ 1 ↓ · flag

Dan Slaby · 8 hours ago

Pay inequities were set before President Obama, but here's the latest from a non-partisan news site:

<http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/4/7/president-obama-equalpaygapgenderinequalityexecutiveo...>

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Greg Wilson · 8 hours ago

OH...MY...GOD... Al Jazeera (aka The Terrorist Times) is a "non partisan" news site.

Also it says nothing that was not in my links but does fail to mention Obama's failure to practice what he preaches.

↑ 1 ↓ · flag

Dan Slaby · 7 hours ago

The quality of reporting on Al Jazeera America beats all the reporting in the USA owned by conservatives.

↑ -1 ↓ · flag

[+ Comment](#)

Anonymous · 10 hours ago

Actually, the people who wrote the Constitution had a lot more in common with the Libertarians than the Progressives or the Socialists.

You're right, I did not change my diapers. But the government had nothing to do with that activity either.

As for the

> libertarianism can only apply to the privileged, healthy, and wealthy individuals who feel no moral obligation to other people.

That is a fib you find on message boards and not in factual articles.

<http://abcnews.go.com/2020/story?id=2682730>

Arthur Brooks, the author of "Who Really Cares," says that "when you look at the data, it turns out the conservatives give about 30 percent more." He adds, "And incidentally, conservative-headed families make slightly less money."

And he says the differences in giving goes beyond money, pointing out that conservatives are 18 percent more likely to donate blood. He says this difference is not about politics, but about the different way conservatives and liberals view government.

"You find that people who believe it's the government's job to make incomes more equal, are far less likely to give their money away," Brooks says. In fact, people who disagree with the statement, "The government has a basic responsibility to take care of the people who can't take care of themselves," are 27 percent more likely to give to charity.

Conservative states are also leading the country in job growth.

And the wealthy voted for Obama. *Obama Wins 8 of the Nation's 10 Wealthiest Counties*

<http://www.cnn.com/id/49726054>

↑ 1 ↓ · flag

Dan Slaby · 8 hours ago

The conservative giving is mostly accounted by church donations - these are tithes (church taxes required by membership). Church giving is basically a quid-pro-quo donation.

↑ -1 ↓ · flag

Dan Slaby · 8 hours ago

Those who were rich and voted for President Obama have the appreciation that government had a role to play in their prosperity by setting out a Constitutional framework that supports business. Government is good for business. I thank them.

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[+ Comment](#)

Dan Slaby · 7 hours ago

I can understand the contentious nature of the notion that government is good, but this thread has become nothing but partisan in its outlook.

If the framers of the Constitution were against big government, then why did they do the Constitution and not just stick with the Articles of Confederation? We have to work with what they started, and the Preamble is the guide to good government.

The debate will go on between the wealthy takers who freeload off the government and the makers (common people) who work to make the takers rich and powerful. The people will win the debate even as much as the libertarians and conservatives try to disenfranchise the people and suppress their vote.

It was Karl Marx, a communist, who advocated for the "withering away of the state" and it is Grover Norquist and the neoCon libertarians who want to "reduce the size of government so it can be drowned in a bathtub". I'll keep my Constitutional government and advocate for its reform to serve the people.

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[+ Comment](#)

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