

Refuting libertarianism

- Introduction -
- What is libertarianism? -
- Pillars of libertarianism -
- Self-ownership -
- Non-aggression principle -
- Property rights -
- Specific issues -
- Is taxation theft? -
- Property is theft -
- Property rights contradict self-ownership -
- Advertising -
- Land ownership in libertarianism -
- Regulations -
- Why mandatory GM food labeling is great -
- Other regulations -
- Child labor - widespread in libertarianism -
- No worker protections = mass exploitation and suffering -
- Would private rating services solve the problems? -
- What even is the point of libertarianism? -
- If not libertarianism, then what? -

Introduction

Wars, propaganda, surveillance, taxes, draconian laws...the ways the governments are exploiting the people are numerous and the situation is only getting worse. This has increased the popularity of an ideology - *libertarianism* - that aims to answer these problems by either limiting the scope of - or outright eliminating - the government. How well does it succeed at its stated goal? Let's start with defining this belief system:

What is libertarianism?

Historically, libertarianism has meant different things, but we will consider the definition currently used by its proponents, since that is the ideology I want to tackle. From <https://www.theadvocates.org/libertarianism-101/> (archive) (MozArchive):

Libertarianism is, as the name implies, the belief in liberty. Libertarians strive for the best of all worlds – a free, peaceful, abundant world where each individual has the maximum opportunity to pursue his or her dreams and to realize his full potential.

Okay, sounds great. Let us confirm with another website - <https://www.libertarianism.org/> (archive) (MozArchive):

Many people believe that liberty is the core political value of modern civilization itself, the one that gives substance and form to all the other values of social life. They're called libertarians.

So, libertarians think freedom is really important and essential for human fulfillment. But what does "freedom" actually mean to them? How do they intend to attain this freedom?

Pillars of libertarianism

Libertarian understanding of "freedom" is dependent upon certain hard principles - which they sometimes call "axioms" (MozArchive). So confident they are in those, that they will take back your libertarian badge if you question them - *“If one is going to call themselves a libertarian, they must put those two philosophies first or, in all honesty, they aren’t libertarians.”* Anyway, let's see just how hard those axioms are and if they have anything to do with freedom:

Self-ownership

It seems that the entirety of libertarian ethics / belief system rests on this "axiom". Murray Rothbard's (prominent libertarian) book *“For a New Liberty: The Libertarian Manifesto”*, describes it (archive) (MozArchive) as such:

The right to self-ownership asserts the absolute right of Property and Exchange each man, by virtue of his (or her) being a human being, to “own” his or her own body; that is, to control that body free of coercive interference.

And the justification is this:

To put it with undue brevity, the activity of each inorganic and organic entity is determined by its own nature and by the nature of the other entities with which it comes

in contact.

Copper has a distinct nature and behaves in a [p. 28] certain way, and so do iron, salt, etc.

So everything that exists has an in-built "nature" - us humans, too. And ours is supposedly so unique that it gives us this "self-ownership" ability - in contrast to all the other entities:

Specifically, while the behavior of plants and at least the lower animals is determined by their biological nature or perhaps by their “instincts,” the nature of man is such that each individual person must, in order to act, choose his own ends and employ his own means in order to attain them.

Sounds self-serving. We have the exact nature that is required for us to become "self-owned", but nothing else does? It gets even funnier:

Possessing no automatic instincts, each man must learn about himself and the world, use his mind to select values, learn about cause and effect, and act purposively to maintain himself and advance his life. Since men can think, feel, evaluate, and act only as individuals, it becomes vitally necessary for each man’s survival and prosperity that he be free to learn, choose, develop his faculties, and act upon his knowledge and values.

We have “*no automatic instincts*”? Really? What is hunger, sexual desire, pulling your hand away from the hot stove, vomiting after ingesting a contaminated meal, etc? Unless you think you are controlling all of that 100% consciously. And sure, we “*can think, feel, evaluate, and act*” - but it's just a part of what we do. If you - for example - slip, will you be "thinking and evaluating" then, or responding automatically? The libertarians' world is so dreamy; everything

they do is "learning, choosing, developing, acting" and nothing external ever affects them...except - somehow - "violence", of course. Because that's totally "natural law", and not something the libertarians came up with to prop up their ideology. To spoil things a little, **the entirety of libertarianism is dependent on the idea that all our decisions are self-determined** - except the ones directly inhibited by someone else's self-determined actions (even this has irresolvable problems that we will explore in the following section). This might seem valuable as an ideal to strive for, but it collapses when it hits reality. In particular because...

...We are already influenced by outside forces way before we even gain consciousness. Such as inside the womb, a period which determines a lot of things about you ([archive](#)) ([MozArchive](#)) - *“The perinatal period therefore represents a critical stage of development, rendering the brain particularly vulnerable to organizing (and disorganizing) environmental influences. Indeed, when stress is experienced during this critical early-life period, its impact on brain function can be long-lasting or even permanent, compared with the typically transient effects of stress on the adult brain”*. One of the relevant factors is maternal iodine intake ([MozArchive](#)) which - if low - results in the kid being *“significantly more likely to have low scores (lower quartile) of verbal IQ, reading accuracy, and reading comprehension”*. Another is obviously breastfeeding (and the healthiest population on Earth - the Hunza - breastfeeds their kids for two years). Is it possible to "self-own" your way out of those problems as an adult? Maybe. Yet - even as adults - the environment can limit or expand possibilities. You can only pick from what is available; some - due to issues such as poverty or disease - will be less free than others. Therefore, we should focus on improving the conditions that affect everyone out there. Libertarian ideas are inhibiting this, because they blame everything that happens on individual choices, ignoring the environment.

And if we accept the effects of "pre-conscious" external factors, it naturally brings us to another

problem - **when does the self-ownership actually start?** This is a common issue dividing libertarians. Some believe that it begins at conception, others - at birth (fetus is a parasite (archive) (MozArchive)); and the most extreme ones say that you don't own yourself until you can support yourself (archive) (MozArchive). You don't have inborn freedom then - you have to either earn it or it has to be graciously granted by your parents. How is that different from freedom being granted by governments - a situation which libertarians hate? Already we can see that the alleged logic of libertarianism is based on shaky ground.

Non-aggression principle

Supposedly deriving from the above, the NAP states that (archive) (MozArchive) *“individuals have the right to make their own choices in life so long as those choices do not involve the initiation of force or fraud against others”*. Simple and clear, right? Well, it is anything but. Let's say you are physically attacked, and you manage to defend yourself without being hurt - in this case, how much has your freedom really been impacted? Not at all - in fact, you might have even gained confidence from the encounter. Therefore, violating the NAP is not necessarily freedom decreasing.

On the other hand - even if no one *“initiates force”* against you, that doesn't necessarily mean you are free, since there are a thousand ways to constrain someone without force. Just being born poor heavily limits your possibilities (and you can bet certain people had a hand in you being poor). How about advertising - no force used, yet it does control us very effectively (archive) (MozArchive) - otherwise corporations wouldn't spend so much money (archive) (MozArchive) on it. In the end, it is clear that ways to decrease someone's freedom without *“force”* exist, and are not necessarily less effective than the opposite. And if so, why is it

“force” that is the focus, instead of actual harm?

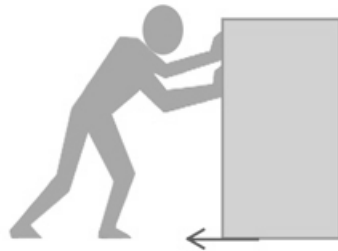
You can ruin someone's freedom by less direct means even more effectively than by *“force”* in some cases - if you spread a rumor that someone is a rapist, people might not want to associate with him anymore - which would be way worse than being beaten up once ([How False Rape Allegations Destroyed My Family \(archive\) \(MozArchive\)](#)). Under libertarian ethics, the woman who hurt him did nothing wrong - they were just words, after all. And thus, he could not have retaliated at all, or he'd be violating the NAP. Then comes the abortion issue again - what prevails, the self-ownership of the woman or the non-aggression against the fetus? Libertarians claim to have solved freedom (just obey the principles!) but instead keep digging more holes for themselves. Note: in this paragraph I took the commonsensical usage of the word *“force”*, but since libertarianism pretends to be this super logical ideology, they can't settle for common sense and need some hard rules. So let's see if they have them:

There is - actually - no definition of *“force”* that will allow you to reliably decide which behaviors to include under that label, and which not to. I mean, in physics, everything that happens is a force ([archive](#)) ([MozArchive](#)):

Types of Forces

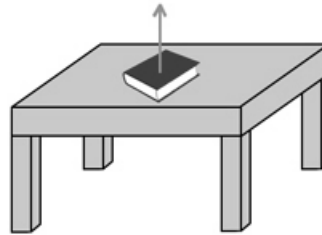
Contact Forces

1. Friction Force



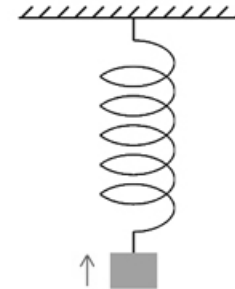
Pushing a box

2. Normal Force



Book on a table

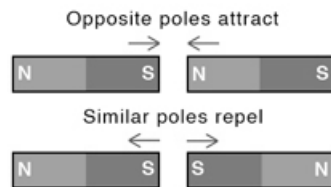
3. Spring Force



Weight on a spring

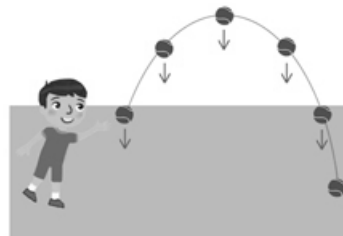
Non-contact Forces

1. Magnetic Force



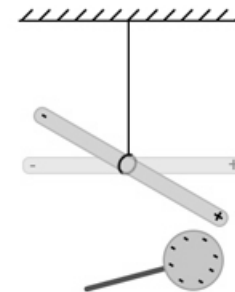
Interaction between two magnets

2. Gravitational Force



Trajectory of a ball thrown in air

3. Electrostatic Force



Attraction between two conductors

ScienceFacts.net

Yet, libertarians have arbitrarily decided that only some of those forces qualify for their definition of “*force*”. When someone feels your breath or even reads your words on the screen, there are also forces affecting him, then - yet no libertarian agrees that someone calling someone else bad words is violating the NAP (even though physics provides no distinction). Hell, even just **seeing** someone creates molecular changes in your brain, which from the physics

point of view are also (the results of) forces. So why not make walking near someone that hates you a crime in libertarianism? Though libertarians will never want this, they can't deny it because there is no non-arbitrary way to divide behaviors into “*force*” and “*non-force*” boxes (affecting someone **in any way** is a force in physics). There is also no reason to attempt such a feat, when there are clearly different situations that require different responses. Everyone accepts that intuitively, and yet libertarianism requires you to give up all your human experience in favor of the binary “*force*”/ “*non-force*” system. NAP is a rule for midwits. Some libertarians have figured that out (archive) (MozArchive) - but still somehow remain libertarians. If you do accept that the chaos of the usual human experience cannot fit into the binary “*force*” system, what even makes your belief system unique? You're just another person, looking to figure out what are the bad and good behaviors and what are the proper responses against them, instead of pretending that all human situations fit neatly into the “*force*” or “*non-force*” boxes. Why even call yourself libertarian at that point?

Summarizing: if you use the physics definition of “*force*”, then anything can be a crime if it affects someone somewhere. If you use the libertarian definition of “*force*”, then it's arbitrary in terms of whether some behavior fits into the “*force*” box or the “*non-force*” box. And because the binary distinction leaves no nuance in responding to situations, it creates a big problem whenever someone thinks they can kill you because you used force against them by throwing a leaf at them. Or whenever someone has hurt you without using “*force*”, which leaves you unable to defend yourself. This very unintuitive ideology creates way more problems than it solves, if it does indeed solve any at all. Moving along:

Property rights

From <https://libertyandanarchy.wordpress.com/2017/03/04/pillars-of-libertarianism-private-property-rights/> (archive) (MozArchive):

Firmly grounded in natural law, property rights begins with self-ownership and extends to all justly acquired property. Self-ownership simply means that you own the exclusive rights to your own body. Property can be justly acquired in two ways: original appropriation via the homesteading principle or through voluntary exchange.

So, libertarians consider property an extension of the body - so if you own your body, and it can't be aggressed against - then the same applies to your property. There are many problems with this, starting with fact that nature provides land, water, food, air, etc. for free. How much, and under what conditions, can I actually claim as mine? This is actually hotly debated among libertarians and there are many [contradictory theories](#) (archive) (MozArchive). The most extreme ones are completely fine with private ownership of the seas or forests - and since property rights are ultimate, their pollution would be a right of the businesses that own them. Of course, it's not possible to limit the pollution to exactly the space that you own - it will spread ([best seen with GMOs](#) (archive) (MozArchive) - “*Since the first GM crop was commercialized in 1996, there have been escape events in Canada with GM canola, GM flax, GM wheat and GM pigs*”) elsewhere, causing "aggression" against other people and their properties. Even if the polluter would then be punished, the damage has already been done - there might be a GMO growing on your property now, and you **will not be able to get rid of it, EVER**. And even if a property owner was somehow able to keep the pollution contained, it doesn't really matter. 500 years later, after the owner is gone and the business goes down, the next generations that would want to use that sea, or forest, or whatever - will still be affected by the poisons that were put in there, harming their freedom. So, the libertarian solution to pollution is completely useless, as we can see.

The most extreme kinds of libertarians claim that **you can kill someone entering your property**. Well, since it is his, and you violated it - off you go. But what harm has he caused you by entering it? None whatsoever (unless he destroyed something), therefore - property rights **do not follow from the NAP**. This is even easier to see in case of something like using, say, a flashlight someone left lying around. As long as you return it, no harm has been done - in fact, the owner might not even notice. We live in a world where businesses charge for just the **usage** of stuff (the chief one being land - just **daring to exist somewhere** is a violation, even though no one is hurt) and that is completely contrary to freedom - but it's the world libertarians want.

How free is a person born into a landlord's property? Remember, in libertarianism - property rights are absolute ([archive](#)) ([MozArchive](#)) - *“Essentially, libertarians view private property owners as the sovereign so-called “elites” over their property. Thus, if Doolittle were the property owner and developer of a vast swath of land (acquired via homesteading or voluntary/contractual transfer) then he could implement whatever form of government he desired over it”*. How is that different from what the governments are doing? And yet libertarians claim to hate that, even though the only difference is the scale (but actually, there is **no limit** to the amount of land you can own in libertarianism - as long as it has been *“justly acquired”* according to them). The libertarian position on property rights is contradictory and not conducive to real freedom.

Okay, these are the 3 foundational beliefs of libertarianism (that I've now exposed as vague, contradictory, and anti-freedom) from which other, more specific ones get derived. Let's tackle those now:

Specific issues

Is taxation theft?

From <https://www.libertarianism.org/columns/is-taxation-theft> (archive) (MozArchive):

When the government “taxes” citizens, what this means is that the government demands money from each citizen, under a threat of force: if you do not pay, armed agents hired by the government will take you away and lock you in a cage. This looks like about as clear a case as any of taking people’s property without consent. So the government is a thief.

Another example <http://kevincraig.us/taxation-theft.htm> (archive) (MozArchive):

It is crystal clear that "taxation" is "theft." The "prima facie" case is inescapable. The logic is air-tight. But there are all kinds of evasions and high-sounding rationalizations.

Lots of other libertarian sites make this claim. But is the logic really air-tight? Spoiler: no. In fact, this is the argument where libertarians **shoot themselves in the foot** the most! How so?

As you recall, **property rights are absolute** under libertarianism, so its owners can apply whatever laws they want there. If that includes taking all your earnings to allow you to live there - well, it's my fucking property. Get out if you don't like it! In other words, **property rights are the factor that enable taxation**. We could, therefore, modify the original libertarian case against taxation like this:

When the ~~government~~ property owner “taxes” citizens, what this means is that the ~~government~~ property owner demands money from each citizen, under a threat of force: if

you do not pay, armed agents hired by the ~~government~~ property owner will take you away and lock you in a cage. This looks like about as clear a case as any of taking people's property without consent. So the ~~government~~ property owner is a thief.

As we can see, if the libertarians want to claim that the government is a thief, they have to apply that label to any other property owner, as well. However, this makes no sense when you consider that the property owner owns everything on the property, including what its inhabitants create. Taxation - in that case - would just be the owner coming to take what's already his, guaranteed by the unlimited property rights. And could not be called "theft" at all. If you treat the government as just another property owner, they are well within their rights to extract any kind of payment for living on their property (according to libertarian ideas). And so, the libertarian has nothing to complain about, then. The only way out of this conundrum for the libertarians is to say that government's taxation is uniquely unjustified because their land has not been *"acquired justly"*. However, you can't actually prove that to be true for anyone else either - so again, either both the government and any arbitrary property owner are "thieves", or none of them are.

Now that we've established that the government can't be shown to be doing anything uniquely bad (that any libertarian property owner couldn't also do), let's talk about some practical aspects. Even if we assume that someone has acquired a piece of land *"justly"*, it doesn't help much the person who's been born there, and is forced to shell out the money just for existing, right? Similarly - if someone was raping you - him having the title of a "justified rapist" wouldn't actually remove the harm done. And again - since libertarian property rights are unlimited - the owner could just require you to work for him and give up your entire earnings in exchange for the right to live. This type of taxation would be much worse (for the plebeian) than what the current governments are doing, as they are only taking a **small percentage** of your

money and you are at least getting something for it (such as the animal control, sewage system, and police that failed to materialize in the libertarian city). The government limits itself, and there is at least a supposed ethical basis for the money transfer. The libertarian property owner would have no such limitations, and could just take it all and not provide anything in return. As usual, libertarians want a return to the ethical and functional stone age.

Yet, libertarians still get really angry about taxation, which can be seen in the way they speak about *“armed agents”* coming in to *“lock you in a cage”*. But why? What is the real reason taxation bothers them so much? It can't be that it's *“theft”*, because they are fine with business theft called "profit margins" or "markup"; which also - as expected - have basically no limits ([archive](#)) ([MozArchive](#)) - *“Pfizer has not challenged the estimate, which would imply that the 2023 price represents a 10,000% markup over the manufacturing cost”*, unlike government taxation; and the profits do not have to be returned to the people in any way at all. So it's clearly not for any noble ethical reason that libertarians hate taxation. So why?

Assuming that the tax was percentage based, the rich would pay more than the poor (in absolute amounts). Meaning wealth transfer downwards. This is exactly what the libertarians hate ([archive](#)) ([MozArchive](#)) - *“For the government to imply that the affluent should pay even higher taxes under the guise of promoting the common good is beyond brazen”*, because they want to accumulate more and more riches at the expense of the plebeians, without any of those damned ethics or institutions getting in the way. Or they are simply fanboying for the current rich, so that they too can sniff the feeling of a higher position even so slightly; same reason some attach to a school bully or a high level sports player (only to disown him the second he stops performing well). Regardless of whether you yourself would benefit from the lack of taxation, or you simply worship the real benefactors, you end up supporting the current system of the jungle, in which you're supposed to fight for survival, and climb up the ladder by abusing

or tricking others. Except with all governmental brakes (even if crude and inadequate) disabled, the "game" would become even more brutal.

Property is theft

What would happen if all the properties around had a law which required the occupants to pay 100% of their earnings for their right to be there? In that case - unless you were a part of the privileged class that owned property - you'd be doomed to a life of slavery, in which all your stuff belonged to the capitalist, or "property owner". This argument is related to an old idea known as *"Property is Theft"*, popularized by anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. Quoting from his book, "What is Property?":

The proprietor, producing neither by his own labor nor by his implement, and receiving products in exchange for nothing, is either a parasite or a thief.

AXIOM. —Property is the Right of Increase claimed by the Proprietor over any thing which he has stamped as his own.

The idea is actually older though, appearing in a 1797 novel:

Tracing the right of property back to its source, one infallibly arrives at usurpation. However, theft is only punished because it violates the right of property; but this right is itself nothing in origin but theft"

So, the libertarians have got it partially right with the *"taxation is theft"* idea - but they didn't go far enough. **The power to tax comes from owning property (land), making THAT the real theft.**

A common criticism of this idea is that it can't be theft, because there was no one to steal it from. But this is just wordplay, so common to cornered ideologues. The point is, anyone claiming a piece of land as his own can now decide what you can or can't do there, including to take your stuff. But **by what right** did he take the land in the first place? The Earth certainly did not assign it to him. Why should we respect the claim, then? The claimant would now be preventing other people's usage of the property, reducing their freedom. And **that is the spirit** of the claim that *"Property is Theft"* - but maybe a better word would be usurpation.

This is also the basis of (the criticism of) the whole work system of a libertarian society. The capitalist arbitrarily controls the means of production, and you cannot take the results even if you did the labor. Instead, the capitalist will sell the products for profit while paying you a chunk of it (even though he himself had no part in the making of the product aside from owning the property). That is another meaning to *"Property is Theft"*, greatly summarized in Proudhon's two quotes above. Of course, libertarians would consider this situation *"voluntary"*, since you decided to sign up for the job. However - since money is required for life (in the current society at least), and most people cannot hope to earn it in any other way than the corpo grind - it is no more voluntary than gun to head. You could say that taxation is voluntary by the same kind of logic, since the libertarians have decided to live in a certain country, agreeing to the tax laws. Of course both of those claims are unjustified, and both can only exist if we accept absolute property rights.

Property rights contradict self-ownership

This turns into the bigger issue of **property rights and self-ownership being in contradiction**. Imagine I was born onto someone's property (not my choice, obviously, so the standard

libertarian blame game cannot be played here). Would I then have the right to not be raped by the owner? After all, my body would be occupying his property. Logically, either my bodily control would prevail - which means I couldn't be raped; or the owner's property rights would - which means that I, too, would be his property that he could do anything he wanted with. So, despite the libertarians claiming that these two principles support each other - they, actually, **cannot co-exist**. One of them has to be given up or limited, taking libertarianism down with it.

The reality is that I would still have control over my body in that situation and could perhaps fend off the rapist if capable enough. Things still happen in the physical world regardless of what the humans think or write about it. **We have to adapt our beliefs to the physical reality, instead of expecting reality itself to follow our writings.** If the simple act of being born somewhere is enough to ruin the explanatory power of the libertarian principles, just how useful are they, really? To resolve the contradiction between property rights and self-ownership, libertarianism has to submit to reality and temporarily restrict property rights (which ruins their whole narrative of being perfectly logically derived) to let the violator (the person who doesn't want to pay the 100% tax, or be raped) leave.

But even if we give libertarians this advantage, practical freedom still cannot truly exist (for most people) when their principles are followed to the letter. After all, how free are you really when simply finding yourself on a property owned by someone else (whether by being born there or any other way), leaves you with only two choices: follow all his whims or leave? If you pick the former, then you might become a rape toy or have the entire output of your work taken. In case of the latter, well, you have to find another property, which might as well have the same or worse laws. We're of course assuming that everything in the world is owned, but why expect otherwise? Libertarianism has no limits as to what can be bought; there are no sacred cows that will be left for nature to rule, or be communal, etc.

If you think it's unlikely that most properties would end up with the same abusive laws, consider that there are people alive **today** that want to own as much as possible. So it's not out of the question that - if you took away every modern restriction (which libertarianism does) - the same few people would end up controlling most of the land; and since they are power hungry enough to attempt that in the first place, the rape toy or 100% value extraction might become the expectation. And since everything is owned, there'd be no recourse for a newly born plebeian other than to ignore the rules, kill the owner(s), etc. Meaning that libertarianism must collapse on itself first for it to support human freedom, fulfillment or anything else that's valuable.

Advertising

Another really good way to show the flaws of the libertarian pillars is the advertisement issue. If you've ever been on an internet forum, I'm sure you've seen those waves of posts advertising viagra, etc. on a board that is totally unrelated. If the forum is still functioning, then these are always swiftly deleted, and no one bats an eye. They are rightly considered as trash, thrown away and that is that. Then you go outside and see the same kind of spam on billboards, that suddenly cannot be deleted or adblocked away. And yet, the libertarian that's surely deleting ads from his own forums and / or using an adblocker, will justify outside spam like this (archive) (MozArchive):

A woman, like any individual, can choose whether or not to pay attention to advertisements.

Imagine if you were told to do that on a forum that's just been viagra-spammed, because the

advertiser had "property rights" in there, so you couldn't just delete the spam. No one would use forums at that point, since they'd have to wade through a hundred viagra ads to see one "real" post. Yet that is basically the reality we live in today in the non-digital sphere (archive) (MozArchive):

Yankelovich, a market research firm, estimates that a person living in a city 30 years ago saw up to 2,000 ad messages a day, compared with up to 5,000 today.

According to an Egyptian researcher (local)...

It is difficult to move a few meters in Cairo without being exposed to some sorts of advertising.

Visual examples (that I do not want to put here directly so that I don't add to the ad-spam load) are inside the report. The notion that you can just choose “*not to pay attention to advertisements*” becomes even more laughable when you realize that they are in the sky (archive) (MozArchive) or on the grass (archive) (MozArchive). **It is insane to recommend looking away as a strategy when there is nowhere to look away to.** And when the ad-photons hit your eyeballs, you have already been affected, so it's too late to look away anyway. Unless you want to be constantly watching out for billboards in the corners of your eyes, and just not be looking in those directions. That has to be extremely draining and again, the spots to look away to are getting lesser and lesser, what with the grass and sky disappearing.

Even if just looking away **was** viable, why should we need to do it? Ads provide nothing good to us, only to the corporations that throw them around. Yet, in a world functioning in accordance with libertarian ideas, being buried in ad-photons every waking minute you're

outside is acceptable, as you have not been "aggrieved" against. This is despite the fact that aggression isn't reliably defined and it is easier to defend yourself from a beating than from ads up in the sky - about which you can do literally nothing. Now, to justify the prevalence of advertising, libertarians insanely claim (archive) (MozArchive) that it doesn't work (well enough):

The claim that ads can easily manipulate consumers is refuted by history and everyday events. If it were true, no business that advertised would fail. But businesses fail every day.

No one says that advertising guarantees a businesses' survival; the libertarians have set up a strawman so fragile, the weakest wind blows it away. Many factors determine whether someone buys a product or not - among them being price, need, availability, and (again) the various types of advertising. And even when people buy, it might not be enough to offset the costs of the advertising campaign, or they finally figure out the product is really bad, or the business might die for any number of unrelated reasons such as lockdowns, robberies, bombings, bad press, etc. But the fact that “*ads can easily manipulate consumers*” is shown clearly in scientific studies such as this one (local):

Seventy-one percent of travelers often look at the messages on roadside billboards and more than one-third (37%) report looking at an outdoor ad each or most of the time they pass one.

Nearly one-quarter of billboard viewers say they were motivated to visit a particular store that day because of an outdoor ad message and nearly one-third visited a retailer they saw on a billboard later that week. Half of viewers reported receiving directional information

from a billboard and one-quarter said they immediately visited a business because of an outdoor ad message.

25% of people who see an ad “*immediately*” visit the relevant business. Absolutely insane effectiveness. Another example (archive) (MozArchive):

Of the 88 percent of consumers who notice OOH ads, 78% have recently engaged in some way. Over three-quarters (76%) used a mobile device to learn more about a product featured in an OOH ad, just over half (51%) used their mobile device to search for more information about an advertiser, and 43 percent made an online purchase.

78% of people who see ads engage with them, and 43% buy products advertised in them. But to the libertarian, that's just not enough effectiveness, because well, some businesses end up failing. Amazing. I guess the only way a libertarian would think of advertisements as manipulative and bad would be in case of a 100% effectiveness. As in, get exposed to an ad = buy product without fail. Nowhere else is this kind of accuracy expected, no computer model or scientific theory has perfect predictive value. No human endeavor gives the expected results 100% of the time. The world's best sports players perform historic chokes. Even math - the hardest of hard sciences - has its unsolvable problems, numbers that never end, etc. And yet we don't claim that nothing we do that's based on math works. But that's basically what libertarians are trying to do, by coming up with an unfalsifiable theory of independent rational “*agents*” to protect their love of ads.

Businesses - however - do not believe that theory and are aiming to get as close to the 100% ad effectiveness as possible. That is why they have invented marketing science (archive) (MozArchive). I'll just show you the same quotes as I did in my article critiquing the profit

motive, as they fit here just as well:

What combination of marketing inputs (positioning, messages, media advertising expenditures, distribution channels, new products, sales organization, etc.) will maximize long-term sales revenue or profitability?

What combination of positioning, themes, imagery, music, and colors creates the most effective advertising for a company or brand?

How can these design variables be manipulated to maximize market share or profitability?

How can the direct marketing to each of these target segments be optimized?

What are the optimal number and type of salespeople to maximize market share or profitability?

The goal is not to maximize customer satisfaction (no company can afford that), but to optimize customer satisfaction and/or loyalty.

So, on one side, we have the actual scientists who are analyzing the brain in terms of the factors that allow it to be manipulated into buying. On the other side, we have the libertarians who think this is all stupid since an "agent" can simply "decide" not to look at the ads or not to be affected. The contrast between the two camps is clearly apparent. **Libertarians rely on hopes and dreams, while businesses rely on science.** The science that allows them to consider the human brain as a system to be hacked and reprogrammed for endless consumption. And as

libertarianism denies it's possible, it is once again revealed as a cucked ideology, supporting one's own exploitation.

To deny that ads work takes some serious gaslighting on the libertarians' part, too. If that really was the case, then why has the "free market" not removed all those extremely wasteful businesses from the competition? After all, they spend giant sums of money ([archive](#)) ([MozArchive](#)) (*“Companies spend \$1.79 billion annually to market food to children”* - and this is just the food companies) to create and spread ads. Businesses - actually - are rarely outright stupid at least when earning profit is concerned, and since they have categorically rejected the libertarians' *“agent”* theory, they must have realized that it is worthless for bringing in the money. Just imagine if they gave up all the potential profits because they didn't believe people could be pushed to buy something! It's simply insane to even suggest this. Anyway, in a previously quoted article, libertarians take the gaslighting even further by suggesting that the ads are doing you a favor:

After all, advertising is information about products, including products many people may be unaware of but would be happy to learn about. Sure, ads try to be attention-grabbing, but so what? People are busy, and information is all around. So the value of advertising is obvious.

Oh yeah, despite all the aforementioned science that goes into creating them, the libertarians still pretend that advertisements are just *“information”*. And they help you learn about things you might not be aware of, because you're too stupid to figure out what you want and find it, so you need it shoved over and over in front of your face, by any means possible. Just buy, you "customer", and stop thinking too much! Yes, *“the value of advertising is obvious”* indeed - but for the ad-pusher, not for you. Continuing the gaslighting:

This point is not undercut by the undoubted fact that manufacturers present their products in the best light possible. Part of growing up is acquiring a degree of skepticism about the claims made in advertisements.

The entirety of the scientific magic that is applied to producing ads is downgraded to simply presenting *“their products in the best light possible”*. And if I can't resist this presenting, I'm just not grown up enough.

Anyway - since advertisements work so well - we can expect them to be everywhere, since the corporations do not want to lose to their competition (archive) (MozArchive):

*As technology continues to advance, the landscape of advertising will undoubtedly evolve. Emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and virtual reality offer exciting possibilities for creating immersive and interactive ad experiences. **Digital marketing agencies must stay ahead of these trends to remain competitive and effectively reach their audiences.***

The advertising world is - in the end - fighting for the most complete mind-control of a human (or consumer, which is all that you are for the business) possible. Meaning, if one company uses only "old-style" advertisements (that are only superficially able to convince someone to buy something), and another jumps into the new, high-tech ones that hit some deeper mental buttons - the caveman company will get outcompeted. Eventually, every company will have to get with the times and succumb to those more intrusive advertising strategies, or die. This also means that small businesses will get exterminated as they won't be able to afford the very expensive (archive) (MozArchive) high-tech advertising - *“Hardware investment – \$100,000 to \$300,000+ for construction and screens”* (and this isn't even the most modern tech). And in

libertarianism, there can't be interventions against ad-spam (archive) (MozArchive) as it's all "voluntary", so the ad junkyard is destined to get more and more junky. The biggest, most evil corporations will take over and fill your mind with trash 24 / 7.

It seems to me that the advertising issue buries all of self-ownership, NAP and property rights. How "self-owned" are you really when thousands of ads enter your brain every day and direct its functioning towards making you into a perpetual consumer? Why should ads not be considered an aggressive act worse than the commonsensical view of violence, when (again) they control us very effectively and we can't avoid them? Why allow unlimited property rights when they result in an ad-filled junkyard that no one likes except the few people who benefit from throwing the trash around? In the end, anyone who actually wants something good from this life and world needs to reject libertarianism. Let's finish this section with quote from Banksy about advertisements that I really like:

People are taking the piss out of you everyday. They butt into your life, take a cheap shot at you and then disappear. They leer at you from tall buildings and make you feel small. They make flippant comments from buses that imply you're not sexy enough and that all the fun is happening somewhere else. They are on TV making your girlfriend feel inadequate. They have access to the most sophisticated technology the world has ever seen and they bully you with it. They are The Advertisers and they are laughing at you.

You, however, are forbidden to touch them. Trademarks, intellectual property rights and copyright law mean advertisers can say what they like wherever they like with total impunity.

Fuck that. Any advert in a public space that gives you no choice whether you see it or not

is yours. It's yours to take, re-arrange and re-use. You can do whatever you like with it. Asking for permission is like asking to keep a rock someone just threw at your head.

You owe the companies nothing. Less than nothing, you especially don't owe them any courtesy. They owe you. They have re-arranged the world to put themselves in front of you. They never asked for your permission, don't even start asking for theirs.



Doing the above is not allowed in libertarianism

UPDATE August 2023: a few people over the years have reached out to me with concerns like

"well, ads suck - but how does a business sell its products without them?". This came up again a few days ago, so let me attempt a reply right now. First of all, if something is really needed, people will hunt it down regardless. No one has to advertise potatoes or raw milk; in fact, people will go to great lengths to grab the latter in a world of shitty processed milks, even when the legal system, etc. tries to put up hurdles. Continuing this train of logic, maybe **the products that wouldn't be able to get sold anymore, are those that people don't care about in the first place?**

It seems to me that ads are a solution in search of a problem. After all, what exactly is wrong with people buying only what they actually require? What they actually had to **sit and think** about, instead of having it shoved in front of their faces over and over again? A decade ago - when I was still somewhat sympathetic to libertarian "free market" ideas - I thought it's weird how none of their proponents seem to see the problem with ads. I have always thought of ads as something that breaks the entire "free market" ideology, making inferior products survive because of reasons totally unrelated to their quality. But no libertarian I've found has ever agreed with me. And so, I began to think that maybe the point of the "free market" wasn't to provide anything good to the consumer, but to give more power to the big businesses, that can afford massive marketing campaigns.

But, how does all this philosophical analysis help the businesses that want to sell their shaving razors, wallets, online courses, or mobile games? Again, maybe they just won't, and will die. In my world, "selling more products" isn't necessarily something to strive for. However, in an ancap (and maybe even current) world, it is the highest measure of success. Because, those sold products mean that the business gets to survive, its employees receive their salaries, and its owner can afford a comfortable life. But it is all built on a foundation of sand, that will collapse when the smallest wind blows. And that wind is the realization that the ancap (or current, to a

certain extent) world relies on buying, selling, and doing useless things - entirely to keep up the facade of "earning a living". Because, "handouts bad", or whatever - so we have to keep pretending to do something to justify our right to exist. Anyway, I kind of went off course; suffice to say that **there is no need to focus on selling products in a world where the life's essentials are guaranteed unconditionally**. And ads become useless, then.

Land ownership in libertarianism

Assume the current system went down and libertarians are now in power. Since their whole shtick is based upon property rights, they will have to decide who now gets all the property. The easiest way would be to just leave the current owners in place - but wait! As explained earlier, libertarians believe only in *"justly acquired"* property - which means that which happened without using (their definitions of) coercion / force / fraud. Therefore, to be consistent with their principles, they'd have to **prove that all the current owners have acquired their property justly**. This would entail establishing a chain of acquisition right from the first homesteading up to the current ownership and show that libertarian principles have never once been violated. Of course, you cannot go back in time and no one has recorded this information to the extent that is required. Therefore, if libertarians want to keep their property, they have to **give up on their principles** since they cannot absolutely prove it has been *"acquired justly"*.

What options remain for the libertarians? They could just ignore the above and stay with the current property owners even though they cannot justify their right to ownership (which would once again destroy their pretense of being based on cold, hard logic). Another way would be to admit that - since no one can show their property has been acquired following the libertarian principles - that it is all now without owner. Therefore, the first person who mixes her work

with a property (homesteading principle) can now lay a claim to it. So, if I manage to sneak into (what previously was) your villa while no one is there and move some furniture, I'm now the rightful owner. If you are a libertarian, you will surely get a kick out of this while I throw you out for trespassing ^_^ . As you can see, libertarians have **no viable solution to this problem**.

Regulations

Libertarians claim that regulations help big businesses (archive) (MozArchive), and if the government just kept its hands away, small business could actually compete (archive) (MozArchive):

In a free market, firms would be smaller and less hierarchical, more local and more numerous (and many would probably be employee-owned); prices would be lower and wages higher; and corporate power would be in shambles

It is true that big business loves **some** types of regulations - this is easily seen with GDPR, for example (archive) (MozArchive):

According to PwC, 68 percent of US-based companies expect to spend \$1 million to \$10 million to meet GDPR requirements. Another 9 percent expect to spend more than \$10 million.

There are also fines of “*up to €20 million*” for not complying with it, which big business easily affords but might be a problem for the small business. However, it is **not at all true** that all regulations help the corporations. Let us explore an example of one that is clearly negative for

the corporations but positive for the average person - GM food labeling laws:

Why mandatory GM food labeling is great

Monsanto and DuPont would not have spent millions opposing GMO labeling laws ([archive](#)) ([MozArchive](#)) if all regulations were beneficial to big corporations (as the libertarian narrative states). Since everything a corporation does is to increase profits, the only reason they'd attack labeling laws is that they know their profits would be negatively affected with them in place. Hey, we even have studies proving that ([archive](#)) ([MozArchive](#)):

In Study 1 [...] Labels such as “non-GMO” (absence labeling) and “contains GMO” (presence labeling) serve as negative signals for GM foods and tend to shrink their market share. The market share shrinkage effect is stronger under the mandatory policy (presence labeling) than under voluntary policy (absence labeling).

The above means that if you tell people there are GM ingredients in a product, they don't buy it. And that forcing businesses to report the information makes even less people buy GM than just relying on the companies to graciously let you know (which they don't want to; why do you think that is, if GM food is so great?). Let's read further:

In Study 2 [...] The results show that presence-focused labeling (“contains GMO”) makes consumers (i) more sensitive toward the GMO attribute, (ii) less sensitive toward price information, and (iii) more reluctant to make a purchase in a category.

Ha! “*Less sensitive toward price information*” means that the price **stops mattering** when the GM issue is involved. People **really** don't want to buy GM food.

In Study 4 [...] participants exposed to positive GMO labels tend to be less negative toward GMOs than those exposed to neutral GMO labels.

Reading this carefully, it means that even if you spin the presence of GM in a product positively, people still won't buy it. Industry tricks do not work here; people simply **do not want GM** regardless. And the only way you can prevent that from materializing (as shown by the studies) is by hiding that information. Is this the world you want? One in which a business wins because of selling products based on false pretenses? [Poll \(archive\) \(MozArchive\)](#) after [poll \(archive\) \(MozArchive\)](#) shows that ~90% of people in Europe and USA do not want such a world. [Libertarians do \(archive\) \(MozArchive\)](#), though. They do not think you have a right to know what's in your food. They think it's on the company to graciously tell you (or not) what their products contain. Of course, they excuse that by saying people simply won't buy from the companies that hide information, so that they will be outcompeted and only the honest ones will survive:

As a libertarian, I am against mandating the labeling of anything. It should be the choice of the seller, which ultimately is dictated by consumer demand. Perhaps more consumers will stop buying food products that aren't labeled.

You can assume there'd be many people still buying unlabeled products because of the additional effort required to seek out the labeled ones. So **why add that extra step** when it's so easy to just tell people what they are actually buying? This is just rewarding businesses for lack of transparency, and making it possible for a product to survive only because it hides information, instead of because people like it. Exactly the opposite of what we were promised the free market would do (reward good products and practices). But the libertarians want to save the business and burden the customer pointlessly at all costs:

If you are concerned about GMO foods, then you will have to do some research yourself and avoid foods that you know are likely to contain GMOs.

Why? When a simple regulation makes the problem disappear? This is simply rigging the game so that it is easy for businesses to do evil, but hard for the consumers to defend themselves from it. We already live in a world where most people need to work ~40h per week just to survive; some have to additionally take care of their kids, deal with family drama, housework, disease, legal bullshit, etc. The last thing they want to do after all that is researching if the food they are buying actually is what it seems to be, instead of a laboratory concoction that's going to slowly kill them. Remember - also - that if you accept no labeling requirements for GM food, then you also have to accept that for other things, according to libertarian reasoning. Now, you aren't able to know what the parameters of your computer, phone, anything are - without having to do yet more pointless "research". The question is what kind of a society do we want to have? The one that supports the 99.99% of regular people who want to know what they are buying, or the 0.001% of big businessmen who benefit from hiding that information? Hell, imagine I restated the “*research*” argument like this:

If you are concerned about cyanide in food, then you will have to do some research yourself and avoid foods that you know are likely to contain cyanide.

You can substitute *cyanide* for any other thing people might want to avoid such as sugar or seed oil. Either way, it is obvious to see how this argument fails completely. Yet libertarians always pretend ([archive](#)) ([MozArchive](#)) that unregulated competition will create the best possible product for consumers:

Its [the competition's] function is to safeguard the best satisfaction of the consumers

which they can attain under the given state of the economic data.

Consumers are satisfied when foods are adequately labeled (which can only be ensured by the state) - as proven over and over by the relevant polls. Libertarians - then - can shove their “*competition*” you-know-where, because the people have already decided that a regulated market is better. Remember that we **already have labeling laws** for things like nutritional information, etc. And GM food labeling is just an extension of the laws already existing for decades that are also unquestionably positive. The only entity that benefits from the lack of labeling laws is the business. That is why they paid so much to kill this initiative.

What would actually happen in a totally free market is **companies telling you only what they know you want to hear, and hiding everything else**. Again, this still happens today to some extent but libertarians (as usual) want to kill hundreds of years of progress and have a world of unrestricted business abuse. Here we have their attempt to maliciously enable companies to hide information from the small guy with freedom as an excuse (though notice how **the freedom concerns only what the business is allowed to do; the consumer's freedom to choose what enters his body can go to hell**).

Why not put the puritanism away in favor of something that gives better results across the board aside from hurting the bottom lines of the few giant corporations (which - even then - it does only because **they were not transparent in the first place**) that want to push their concoctions incognito? Again, they could still sell whatever they want to - they'd just have to tell us about it. So the only reason to oppose labeling laws is to let businesses get certain products past the people's lack of demand by selling them based on false pretenses. Libertarians - then - **end up being cucks**, supporting the exact policies that allow the abuse to persist **against their own best interests**. They'd rather be forced to spend additional effort to find products with

labels, just because the businesses (their Gods) cannot be inconvenienced in any way. As my legendary friend once said - *“Anacpism is cuckism”*.

Other regulations

As if the above example alone wasn't bad enough, libertarians make it clear that they want to remove all regulations (archive) (MozArchive) - not just the labeling ones:

When a legislature interferes with voluntary employment contracts, it infringes people's freedom to bargain with their own labor and possessions

And there's no principled way to draw a sharp line here: Once it's okay for a legislature to interfere with bargaining in this way, there's no stopping politicians from setting wages and prices, or requiring or prohibiting the hiring of particular people.

And this is actually the only consistent libertarian position - since according to them, **all employment is voluntary** - any regulation would decrease the freedom of the parties involved. Of course, this does not concern work regulations only - but **all of them**. Therefore, for example, environmental regulations would not exist (archive) (MozArchive) in libertarianism unless they followed from private property:

We advocate repeal of the laws that prevent full ownership of the air and water above and below land, thus denying individuals protection under the law against polluters. Private property rights must replace public property.

Under libertarianism, all the air and water in the world is owned by someone, and if that

someone wants to pollute it - so be it. The implications are staggering: unless you yourself own property, **you have no guarantee that your next breath won't kill you**. Since a business could pollute “*their*” air on purpose, and then force people living there to give up all their money in exchange for clean air - or even just not provide the option, and let them die. Some libertarians realize the problem (archive) (MozArchive) and try to argue for environmental regulations - but that is **going outside** the libertarian principles, which cannot prohibit using “*your*” property the way you want to.

Exploitative child labor - widespread in libertarianism

Coming back to employment, there can be no worker protection laws (MozArchive) in libertarianism - after all, if someone wants to work in a place without safety requirements, who's to prevent him? Child labor is also **all clear**:

As for child labor, there is nothing intrinsically wrong with the idea, so long as it is not abusive or recklessly dangerous. Why should it be fine for a 16 year old to work a few hours after school, but employing a 15 year old will result in stiff fines or prison. Shouldn't this be a decision left to the teen and his parents? We already have laws that take care of abusive parents, right?

But you can hear the doubt in the libertarians' words even above - right as they are justifying child labor. And libertarianism **cannot have** laws against abusive parents, since children are their parents' property - they can abuse them just as they would a teddy bear. Some libertarians disagree with this due to the implications, but it is consistent with their principles. By the way, we **do have proof** that child labor would be very dangerous and exploitative under

libertarianism, since that is what has happened historically ([archive](#)) ([MozArchive](#)) until the dreaded government got involved:

Another reason that businesses liked to hire children workers was because they worked for little pay. In many cases, children weren't paid at all, but worked for their room and board. When they did earn wages, children often earned 10 to 20 percent of what an adult would earn for the same job.

What a surprise, businesses like their cheap labor, ethics be damned.

In some cases, the businesses treated the children no better than slaves. They kept them locked up and forced them to work long hours. In other cases, the businesses felt they were helping the children out by feeding them and keeping them from starving.

Ha! I was wondering when this was going to come up. This is the standard capitalist / libertarian mindset: I am the almighty property owner - working for me and getting a share of MY profits is a great privilege! You'd have to suffer from a pretty serious case of Stockholm Syndrome to believe in this stuff.

Children often had to work under very dangerous conditions. They lost limbs or fingers working on high powered machinery with little training. They worked in mines with bad ventilation and developed lung diseases.

If you give full autonomy to businesses, this is what inevitably happens; since profit is the ultimate goal, why develop safety measures? Unfortunately, this is still happening today to the extent that it is allowed - but the **libertarians** want a return to a world where the situation is ten

times worse.

In the United States, a real effort to regulate and put an end to child labor began in the early 1900s. Many businesses were against it because they liked the cheap labor. Some families also needed the money their kids brought home. However, eventually laws were passed. In 1938, the Fair Labor Standards Act was passed that placed some limitations on child labor, set a minimum wage, and put limits on how many hours an employee should work.

Despite some resistance, we've got the protections and only the businesses ended up losing out. In the end, the money that the parents allegedly needed from their children was simply replaced by the minimum wage. It will take some time but hopefully we soon realize that we don't need the capitalists at all as well - but this topic will be explored in a later section.

No worker protections = mass exploitation and suffering

With the increasing automation, and no employment regulation **of any kind**, the workers would simply be ruthlessly exploited. Libertarians - again - admit all regulations are unwelcome (archive) (MozArchive), including “*minimum wage law, comparable worth rules, working condition laws, compulsory union membership, employment protection, employment taxes, payroll taxes, government unemployment insurance, welfare, regulations, licensing, anti-peddling laws, child-labor laws*”. Most workers have very little bargaining power over the workplaces; if someone doesn't want to work for the pay set up by the business, or dislikes the working conditions - there are a thousand others to replace him (unless he has some rare skills). **This creates a situation where the business has free reign to exploit its workers however it**

wants to - with the only defense being the dreaded government regulations such as minimum wage. Without them, you'd quickly end up in a world where only the strongest, healthiest workers survive; after all - if a business can find people willing to work 16 hours per day - all the others who can only endure 12 will be left in the dust. And yet, this is portrayed as a virtue by the libertarians:

In economics there are also people who are relatively weak. The disabled, the young, minorities, the untrained—all are weak economic actors.

If you can't deal with the increasingly hostile "free job market" - you're just weak. It's your fault, deal with it. Or work for less (or nothing):

Consider a young, uneducated, unskilled person, whose productivity is \$2.50 an hour in the marketplace. What if the legislature passes a law requiring that he be paid \$5 per hour? The employer hiring him would lose \$2.50 an hour.

Hey, why are we making it all about “*productivity*”? The “*productivity*” of your grandparents, or the blind, or the legless is probably zero. Do they not matter anymore? Why is “*productivity*” the master measure, instead of something like, I dunno - human life and dignity? If libertarians are so concerned with the money "losses", maybe they should start caring about businesses spending exorbitant amounts on advertising campaigns (archive) (MozArchive), or wars, or making products that break on purpose (archive) (MozArchive), or throwing away 30 million \$ worth of products (archive) (MozArchive) (so much for the "efficient free market"!) or... But they never care about any of this; rather victim blame the small guy - as a good social darwinist would. By the way, in a decade the “*young, uneducated, unskilled person*” will have trouble finding a job at all due to the aforementioned automation. The “*productivity*” of many / most

people will then be **zero**. And since there is also no welfare under libertarianism, those millions of people would have a real problem. **If there is no more need for so much productivity, why focus on it - just so that a business is allowed to hoard?! But libertarians really like the idea of having everyone have to work:**

Unemployment Insurance. Government unemployment insurance and welfare cause unemployment by subsidizing idleness. When a certain behavior is subsidized—in this case not working—we get more of it.

UPDATE December 2022: I was rereading this quote, and the part about *“subsidizing idleness”* jumped out at me this time. Guess what behaviors would be rewarded in libertarianism? Abuse of workers. Aggressive advertising campaigns including on the grass or in the skies. Environmental poisoning. Don't swing the sword so carelessly, libertarians, or you might cut yourself :D. Is *“subsidizing idleness”* so bad compared to those? Especially when you consider that...

...Unemployment is not necessarily bad anyway - if a job doesn't need to be done (archive) (MozArchive), why do it? In the libertarian world, however, everyone would need a job to pay for "rent" (in other words, daring to exist) and food - unless they own some property, again proving that libertarianism provides freedom only if you do so (even better if you own a business). **How do we even reconcile this job requirement with the upcoming robot revolution?** Just let everyone starve and die? Since - remember - being replaced by a machine makes your *“productivity”* zero - and libertarians really don't think such people deserve to live. Though the current system is not even close to optimal, at least the unemployed have some kind of safety net instead of being forced to find work immediately or perish. There is some pressure put on the businesses that way, which would not exist in pure libertarianism. And that's something

libertarians hate (as admitted in the above quotes) because **they are really social darwinists in disguise**. What could a seriously ill person do under libertarianism? Let's see what libertarians think (archive) (MozArchive). The question:

On average, disabled people are less productive than able people. Indeed, many severely disabled people produce nothing at all.

If taxes were abolished and if charitable contributions were inadequate (which they probably would be), the disabled would be left with no purchasing power to pay for their own healthcare. Many would suffer and/or die. This is not 'fair', but life isn't fair.

Is it the role of the State to redress Fate's wrongs? Personally I think yes. What do the Libertarians think?

And the answers:

No, it is not the 'states' role to committ a wrong against other humans in order to try to rectify a fact of nature. We humans need our rights protected, not abused, by the state - that is the purpose.

I do not see why people should be obliged in helping others especially when they had nothing to do with the state of the person in need. A system based on the possible occurance of calamities will turn into a calamity itself.

Charity and the good will of people will cater to the needs of the disabled.

Now let me attempt my own answer. First of all, as I explain in [another section](#), we don't have to care about how “*productive*” someone is or whether they have “*purchasing power*”. And if “*life isn't fair*”, then we can make it fair. We have big brains, and we don't have to carry over the jungle rules into civilization. We can just give people the resources and treatments they need without expectations. Also, it's not “*Fate*” that makes people sick (in the vast majority of cases), but our [toxic foods](#), air pollution, lack of safety testing, [overworking](#), social isolation, abusive relationships, threat of poverty, etc. Things we could fix and which would be **worse in libertarianism**.

Or check out [this gem \(archive\)](#) ([MozArchive](#)), where a libertarian slips up and tells us what their ideology is really all about:

In a truly Libertarian society, the disabled are either taken care of by their family, or they are considered weak and simply die. If they cannot make it on their own and their family will not or cannot take care of them, then they die and the resources they would be taken up will eventually be split amongst those who are not as weak. Something along the lines of natural selection and evolution, and how they are supposed to work.

See? **Libertarianism is social darwinism**, the purging of the “*weak*” while graciously allowing the “*not as weak*” to persist (but **who decides** the meaning of those? The “property owners”? Why?). By the way, “*natural selection and evolution*” don't work like this person thinks they do; there are no arbitrary “property ownership” titles in nature that decide who controls what. Even if they worked this way - again, we don't have to recreate the jungle here. We can structure our society however we want to. And to structure it in a way that sacrifices human life on the altar of the false “*productivity*” god would be quite insane.

Yet that is exactly what libertarians want. For the disabled to be forced to rely on the goodwill of family (that they might not even have) and / or randoms. Imagine how stressful it would be to wake up and realize that whether the next day even came depended on if someone got moved by your begging. And in a libertarian world, strangers would surely be even less willing to help than today, because the ideology teaches people to judge others in terms of how “*weak*” they are. I'm not saying that a charity-based system absolutely couldn't work - but **why be forced to rely on it, when strong protections could simply be baked in?** Yet libertarians don't want them to be baked in because they've completely absorbed the jungle mindset; the brutal fight for survival and position, the elimination of the “*weak*”.

Of course, the trick here is that the "strong" is simply the "property owner", or more specifically the businessman. And the entire point of this designation is so that the business is justified in abusing its workers. And - though the current government system is not even close to optimal - at least it provides some safety net for the disabled ([archive](#)) ([MozArchive](#)). Libertarianism - as has already been shown - would have basically none. But are there even better systems possible? Yes - the ones that give up money which enables the “*productivity*” false god to even exist. I mean, it should be obvious something's wrong with the existence of money when the poor give more to charity than the rich ([archive](#)) ([MozArchive](#)) - “*and what we found was that the lower-class people, or the relatively lower-class individuals, were inclined to give away 44 percent more of their points or their credits*”. So even "charity" - libertarians' beloved "solution" for the inherent cruelty of their ideology - works only because the "less successful" people are nicer than the "more successful"; or in other words, being an asshole makes you "successful".

UPDATE November 2025: heh. I just found out ([archive](#)) ([MozArchive](#)) what happens when you take libertarian "productivity" worship far enough:

Women working in sugar cane fields are still being “pushed” to undergo surgery to remove their womb and enable them to work longer hours without period pain, activists in India’s state of Maharashtra have said.

Screw natural human bodily functions. If they decrease the productivity of the people in whom they happen to appear, cut the bodyparts that generate them. Pronto!

Large numbers of women undertake long hours of manual work harvesting, gathering, lifting and loading large stacks of cane to trucks and tractors. A combination of poverty, low pay of less than £4 a day, and the threat of fines for missing or incomplete work days, was putting pressure on women to agree to hysterectomies, despite promises of reform, said labour rights’ campaigners.

What's the problem? They chose to work there. Stop intruding on voluntary agreements between two consenting parties, you dirty “labour rights’ campaigners”!

They say women have been told that surgery would “release them from the monthly problem” of period pains and allow them to work longer hours.

Wow! Amazing. Anything to create a more economically viable slave...oops I mean higher performance human, is a very welcome invention!

“Period pain or pregnancy means more missed days and more lost wages. While [sugar cane] contractors may not physically force them to undergo hysterectomies, they create conditions that push women into it. For many who have already had children, it feels like the only way to keep working,” said Manisha Vaijnath Tokle.

No force? Then it's acceptable. So says the NAP! Oh, you can't work any other way? Poor girl. Maybe you should have gotten some better skills, or not have made the kid(s). Weak economic actors need to know their place! “*Conditions*” are bullshit commie talk. You should be grateful the business is even giving you a chance to live!

According to surveys conducted by local NGOs in 2019, the rate of hysterectomies among women from one of Maharashtra's main hubs for sugar cane workers, Beed district, was 36% compared with a national average of 3%.

36%? Lightweight! We need at least 90! You mean there will be no more kids and humanity will die out? Whatever, we need our profit **now**! Okay, let's finish the sarcasm, because I want to reply to something seriously:

Campaigners blame child marriage, early sexual activity, pregnancy right around puberty and the gruelling workload on sugar cane farms done by girls in their early teens.

None of that strikes at the root of the problem. The first three can easily be imagined to happen without sending these girls to the fields. Even the “*grueling workload*” doesn't directly lead to cutting wombs, as long as bodily integrity of the human is put above maximum profits. Which is the real problem - putting the chase for profit above absolutely everything. What's happening here is simply an expression of the soul of the profit dragon, just a particularly cruel one. But in principle, it's not different from making people constantly be on the phone so they can be called to work at any time. Or making them do more tasks than what's been written in the contract. Or making them remain at work for longer than they were supposed to. Or making them endure conditions that ruin their health (excessive cold, too heavy lifting, etc). Or...

And if you want to come to me and say that this is just primitive Indians who still poop on the streets, etc - consider that the businessmen in your "developed" country would gladly do the same without extreme resistance from the legal or cultural systems. And yet despite those, some of them **are** in fact doing things on a similar level of cruelty! Did you know that some cosmetics are derived from cut parts of baby penises ([archive](#)) ([MozArchive](#))? This is simply the natural result of using "*productivity*" as the master measure of success - everything becomes a resource, to be numerically valued and sold. And every barrier towards maximum profits is an obstacle to be crushed.

Yet, the profit motive - though clearly a corrupting influence - doesn't cause **that** much damage **alone**. In theory, religious or other ideas about what the human is, and what he's supposed to be doing or not doing, could somewhat effectively tame the profit dragon by considering other things as more important. It would still be a constant fight between these two attitudes, but one that wouldn't be one-sided by default. To truly unleash the cruelty potential of the profit motive, you need certain moral, philosophical, etc. ideas that diminish human value. And the libertarian principles do provide exactly such a basis. Libertarian ideology locks up the tamer and enables full exploitation of what is now the "economic actor" and not a living creature with needs and wants, dreams and desires, fears, pains and traumas, inclinations and disinclinations, and an inherent respect requirement. In my opinion, we already live in a world where libertarian ideas are almost fully accepted (though it's never directly stated) since many decades, and thus the profit dragon is allowed to rampage unrestricted.

Would private rating services solve the problems?

One way libertarians try to squirm out of the problems with an unregulated market is by

claiming that (MozArchive) “*private rating services*” would develop, to which businesses would have to submit if they wanted to compete:

So the libertarian perspective on job safety regulation would be to allow private rating services to develop. Employers who want to attract the best workers, for the best price, would need to submit themselves to scrutiny of these rating services.

However, what reason is there to believe that this would actually happen? Say there is a service which compares businesses in terms of working conditions, whether they allow child labor, work duration, etc. Does this mean that the low-rated companies would suddenly stop existing? No, since there would be **no incentive** for a business to even care about the ratings. Of course people would prefer to work in a safe place, but the choice **does not belong to them**. The so-called "low-skill worker" does not have much bargaining power over the businesses that hire him since there is a thousand people to replace him; if he refuses to work in a dangerous place, others will do it instead. Contrary to libertarian claims, then, it appears that it is the **ethical companies who would be outcompeted**, since they would not be able to save money by employing children or skipping repairs, etc.

Let us now look at what actually happens in reality instead of libertarian imagination. In the failed libertarian city (archive) (MozArchive), “*the volunteer fire department collapsed for lack of funds*”. There was no sewage system, no animal control and no police - even though we've long been promised by the libertarians that private businesses could easily take care of those. If they couldn't, what makes you believe they could provide proper “*rating services*”? TripAdvisor is mentioned as an example of a successful rating service and yet it has a lot of problems (archive) (MozArchive):

And in September 2018, a high-profile investigation by The Times of London found that one in three (33%) of TripAdvisor reviews are fake. TripAdvisor has denied the results of the independent investigation. However, from our experience, this seems pretty accurate.

We've stayed at a number of hotels where we are absolutely bombarded by the hotel management to leave positive reviews for them. We had a restaurant offer to complete the TripAdvisor review for us. On our recent trip to California, a restaurant offered us a complimentary glass of wine for completing a TripAdvisor review.

So the “*rating services*” can easily be gamed, and of course the big business is the one that benefits (it can afford to reward customers for positive reviews more easily). If a rating service gained a monopoly, they could also accept bribes and then it would become totally unreliable (benefitting big business) - making you wait for another one to appear that would compete with it, where the same thing would inevitably happen. The so-called free market **has no viable answer to this problem**. This goes deeper than traveling though - let's check out ([MozArchive](#)) the libertarian logic in supporting no government enforced standards in anything:

Look at how we deal with choices in areas where the government does not mandate standards, say how food tastes in restaurants. Does this lack of regulations mean that restaurants can do whatever they want and get away with it? Does it mean they can sacrifice taste in favor of maximizing profit. No, of course not. Instead we have restaurant reviews in newspapers. We have word of mouth. We have Yelp and Zagat and other rating services. If a restaurant starts serving poor tasting food, the world will know about it nearly instantly, certainly faster than the government could respond.

These could be gamed the same way as TripAdvisor - but okay, let's assume that the “*private*

rating services” help us discover bad tasting food. It is kind of funny how libertarians always use banalities as examples to support their ideology. First it was trading cards, and now food taste... What if the food contained a toxic chemical (or a few) instead? Clearly, a regular person cannot detect such things - and in libertarianism, they don't have to be labeled. Would you like to end up with dementia (archive) (MozArchive) because a business decided to stick aspartame into their drinks and didn't tell you? Or a bunch of toxic preservatives (archive) (MozArchive) that will cause cancer a decade down the road? Do you think *“private rating services”* are capable of detecting those things? They'd have to send their agents to hunt down every single food available on the market, and send them all to labs for the analysis of ingredients. And keep doing that over and over, since new foods would be appearing constantly, or old foods might change their compositions. I can't imagine that being viable (just think of the costs!). Wouldn't it be more efficient and more effective to have every newly invented food undergo an inspection at launch, with actual punishments (like, at least forcing a recall) for labeling fraud or contamination?

We have some protections today, but not enough. Corporations still get lots of opportunity to trick the consumers. Check out this Cheetos ingredients list and see if you can spot the deceptions (Who knows what's hiding under the labels "Natural and Artificial Flavors"? And you don't know which oils you get in your Cheetos, nor in what percentages; though they are all horrible so this information wouldn't help you that much). What I'd like to have is the requirement to list all product ingredients, including chemical names (if applicable), latin name of originating plant / animal species (somehow, this often isn't listed even today, but might matter for some diseases), pesticides used during production, country of origin, etc. This is what would ensure the ultimate consumer freedom (at least as much as possible in a system based on the profit motive). But libertarians - in their quest to justify business abuse at all costs

- want to go back to the stone age and require people to shoot in the dark while buying anything at all, and risk poisoning themselves. As we've already learned to expect, the libertarian wants to put **all** the burden on the consumer and zero on the business. So, the food company can just put anything into their products, not tell you, and you're supposed to just figure it out, somehow. If you don't, you might die; hey, maybe then the “*word of mouth*” will spread about your death and people will begin to avoid the offending product...if they are lucky enough to hear about it in time. Hooray for the free market, where every grocery store is a minefield! The libertarian considers this “*freedom for both parties*”...hahaha.

What even is the point of libertarianism?

Since I've shown that the alleged logical underpinnings of libertarianism are not so logical (falling over at pretty much every hurdle on the way to the finish line), there has to be some reason it's even been invented. If it does not stand up to scrutiny logically, why does it exist? If you look at all the issues I've covered in this report, they all fail to logically support libertarianism - but there is something else that they all have in common. Can you guess what it is? Let's check it out:

- *Self-ownership* - allows the rich to blame the victim (the poor) for their plight, instead of conditions.
- *NAP* - of course, prevents the poor from reclaiming their power by violence.
- *Property rights* - an extension of the above.
- *Free market* - allows the so-called "elites" to pretend that it's just your lack of useful skills or laziness that makes you poor, even though it's provably impossible to lift yourself out of poverty in this world by honest ways.

- *Child labor* - more workers for the capitalists to abuse earlier, can afford to pay less for the adults; eventually all kids are forced to work since the adult wage isn't enough to live on (same trick used when the capitalists shoved women into jobs).
- *Advertisements* - keeps the poor in mental chains, teaching them they just need the newest product to feel content (instead of improving conditions), and redirects wealth upwards even more.
- *Regulations* - the less of them exist, the more opportunity the rich get to play around (eg. no need to care about safe disposal of toxic waste).
- *Taxation* - lack of it prevents the redirection of wealth from the rich to the poor, increasing the power gap.

What connects those issues is that they all try to justify the domination of the so-called "elites" over the plebs. That is the point of libertarianism - to keep power in the hands of the people that currently have it. To be effective, though, regular bread eaters had to be convinced that - somehow - this ideology helps them, too. What the powerful settled on is pretending that it's the big bad government that oppresses the plebs and if only that went away, their chains could be broken and they could begin climbing the ladder (assuming they were skilled and worked hard). What follows from this is that your neighbor is competing against you in the fight for position (jungle mindset) - instead of both being exploited by the higher castes. Anything and everything so that you don't look upwards and maybe question the entire need to "fight for position".

The trick worked pretty well, IMO; when I go to Wykop ("polish reddit") I see lots of people complaining about *“rozdawnictwo”* (handouts) - a common libertarian talking point, designed to make you believe that sharing is bad. You're supposed to "earn" everything in your life, including the right to live, and if you can't for whatever reason (like being injured, depressed, or

chronically ill) - off you go. And you earn it - of course - by doing the bidding of the powerful. This fuels the jungle mindset and justifies the so-called "elites" hoarding of resources and the squeezing of workers until their last drops of blood, sweat and tears.

Additionally, libertarianism **provides the net that's supposed to catch the people (rightly) worried about government overreach** - and then promptly throw them into the sea of business sharks that now have no restrictions from biting. Either way, the boot on the face is still there, even if the material of the boot has seemingly changed. Funnily enough, at the very top, government and business become one and the same; yet another time the Deus Ex: Invisible War portrayal of controlled opposition proves relevant. You can tell I just love that game :D. Anyway, is there evidence that libertarianism is actually connected to the so-called "elites"? Yes, there indeed is (archive) (MozArchive):

Ludwig Von Mises, who never held a paid job at any University, was maintained first by David Rockefeller and then for decades received money from the Volker Fund and related business men, like Lawrence Fertig.

David Rockefeller said: "Finally, in his most surprising statement, he revealed he considers himself a follower of the Austrian school of economics. Friedrich Hayek had been his tutor at the London School of Economics in the 1930s."

Read the entire article for more evidence. One other thing I want to point out is how everything in libertarianism relies on the existence of money - the likely enabler of most problems in the world. Even if you question a tenet of libertarianism, you never leave the big mental structure of money acceptance. Anyway, I guess this section makes a good ending to the report. There are still a few things to iron out here, I'll get to it soon. Edit: I'm deleting the section about

libertarians lacking feelings; it was just repeating what this section is saying in a more complex way. The higher-up libertarians (those that talk with a straight face about “*weak economic actors*”) surely do lack them; the rest has simply been baited with promises of freedom and assurances that the jungle is the only way to have it. After that, sunk cost and memes keep people inside the trap. Anyway, if we ever have a revolution, I really hope the new society isn't built with libertarian ideas in mind.

If not libertarianism, then what?

It's a question I've been asked a few times, and which must surely be on the radar of most people who've read a report like mine. Well, anything is better :D. But okay, I'll attempt a real answer. First of all, we need to **switch from a world based on power to the one based on ethics**. Meaning - before implementing something - we need to ask ourselves what kind of effects it will have and if they are going to be good for us. Instead of "someone on top" deciding for "ones at the bottom" - which is the reality of both business and government, and what libertarianism wants to push even further. This requires cooperation; as in, talking to others and making the decision for the good of everyone. Rugged individualism is not natural for people and has failed. As for specifics, one idea is something like Athenian democracy, where everyone gets a say in what happens in their local area. If you want practical comparisons, ads can only exist in a world based on power, where a "property owner" decides what to put and where; in a world based on ethics, no one wants them and boom they're gone. It seems to me that it's the hierarchy that causes most of our problems, so tackling that would be priority #1. Sorry I don't have anything more concrete; again, specifics are something to explore once we give up our current obsession with power.

[Back to the front page](#)