



Liberalism in the United States of America +6

I'm a conservative, but all I see are liberal answers. Why is that?

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Lonnie Veal, Operations Manager (1994-present)

Answered Dec 31

I like Chuck Matthews answer from June the Best. He gives an explanation of Personal Conservatism that goes Deep, Dense and Cogent. He's actually elucidating that having a Political Viewpoint is Complicated. But today people throw the words Conservative or Liberal out like they're Madison Ave Ad campaign slogans ... They're NOT.

I consider myself a Conservative. To Me— My brand of Conservatism means a Focus on the Greater Public Good from the perspective of Pragmatic Policy...

Do we, as a Society, Need Something?

Can we Do it?

What will the COST Be?

How do we Pay for it?

That's kind of how I boil down "What is Conservatism" to an essential Cliff Notes short list.

Religion or Evangelicalism is NOT Conservatism. A Government that places Religion at its center or turns to Scripture for legal explanation is a Theocracy, pure and simple. And Logic, Pragmatic Social Policy and Democracy cease to exist when Fundamentalism takes control...because Dissent Becomes Heresy.

Refusal-To-Change really is NOT Conservatism. Conservatism should be able to pragmatically adjust to Deep Social Changes...not attempt to force everyone to pretend that it's still 1950. Or to somehow argue that it's good Conservative Value to enforce on a Black Voting & Tax Paying Populace in a City that they have No power to remove all Civil War Statues that honor Proud Racists. Or to say that Document that was written in the 17th Century, however hallowed, can effectively deal with current Technological and World Economic issues the Original Framers could not even dream of back in the days when traveling to the next town took several days and you didn't need an army because every man had a musket.

Never Raising Taxes and Only Giving Tax Cuts is NOT Conservatism.

Conservatism should be able to assess Need and Levy Taxes for the Common Good. Roads, Quality Public Schools, TeleCommunications, Public Health

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when their 'Wishes' Do Not Add Up. True Conservative Voters should be able to vote intelligently as Adults, not just wish for things like privileged children who never have to pay for anything. And that includes the mature understanding that not everyone in your Locality is Wealthy...and that the people who are not as Fortunate do not carry the stain or sin of sloth or laziness and thus are Undeserving.

A Real Conservative is NOT a Neo-Calvinist. Calvinism is a twisted version of Protestantism that used to be quietly rampant across this nation in the past. It marries Economic Success to Religion and posits that God only smiles on people who are financially successful. Its modern day variant is called **The Prosperity Gospel**. This is plainly and simply **The Religion of Money**. The More Successful you are, the more of God's Favor shines on you. If you are Poor, it is because of personal Moral Failure. And your poverty and financial misfortune is your just punishment. Which Means that Society should not even be bothered to offer a helping hand or a Safety net. This form of thinking also falls into line with the notion that the **Wealthy Have the Right to Rule**. As a Conservative, I firmly stand by the assertion that The Wealthy do **NOT** have *ANY RIGHT* to Rule.

Unfettered Free Market Capitalism is NOT Conservatism. Old style Conservatism from the days of the Rockefellers had absolutely no problem with Bank or Industry regulation. They saw the Market as an aspect of the Economy that had to be monitored so it didn't get too overheated or slump into a deep freeze. Go bad in either direction and Society as a whole pay a heavy price. Sensible Polity fails if you just sit back and *'Let the Market correction run its Course...'* In a technical sense, the **Great Depression** actually was just 'A Deep Market Correction that ran its course'. But for Society at Large...it almost Destroyed Us. What Policy Makers Learned from that time was thus: *"Markets Do Not Really Care about People; Policy Does."*

A Real Conservative does NOT see Liberals as Voices to be Silenced. A Conservative listens to what a Liberal has to say. (And like Conservatism is Complex and Layered— so too, is Liberalism)

A Liberal may propose a solution, and the Conservative may argue to corral the cost, or limit the scope of a Law or Policy to test against unseen ramifications or unforeseen consequences. Debate goes back and forth and Compromise is reached. Thus does Polity move forward. A functioning Democratic Republic does NOT mean *"I Won the election, so you Shut up and Sit Down."*

A Real Conservative is NOT a Libertarian. Not to cast aspersions on Libertarianism is a Philosophy. Just like Conservatism and Liberalism, Libertarianism has many flavors and complexities— but I consider Libertarianism to be too flawed to serve as a central pillar of a functional Polity. *(Granted— it's just my personal opinion! So don't light your flamethrowers, folks!)*

A Lot of the Policy Makers and Politicians who are now in control of various agencies and in Trump's cabinet are **not** really Conservatives...but **Free Market**

what these people stand for, their policies fall clearly in the wicket of Free Market Libertarianism: Pull back government interference and let dynamic market forces determine what the Individual Citizens want and need.

Libertarian voices have always been present in Conservative Discourse, but never given free-reign— and possibly with good reason. Just as a real Conservative would argue against a Liberal Single Payer Health Plan Policy expansion on the basis of ballooning cost structures...that same Conservative would argue against a Libertarian Free Market approach to Schooling on the basis of historical evidence of how such an approach neglects poor districts and burdens society with unskilled and unemployable citizens who are dead-ended in poverty. Free Market Libertarians basically argue that the Market will 'Correct' the imbalance on its own, and that the reason it never worked before is because it was never given free-reign to succeed. But again— There's usually a historical reason some ideas are never given 'Free-Reign'. Sort of like not allowing a child to play with matches in a wood frame house. Yes, if he survives the fire, he will have learned a valuable empirical lesson...but the family is now Homeless!

So, to the Person asking the question ***"I'm a conservative, but all I see are liberal answers. Why is that?"***

When you say you are a Conservative— What does that even mean? Do you even know what Conservatism is?

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Danielle Fraser
Just now

A fantastic answer. Basically how I see myself before the so called "conservatives" left me. So I had to support the liberals. What you gave is very close to the Clinton Democrat platform.
Reply

Eric Waters
Jan 1 · 101 upvotes

A fantastic answer. I'm a liberal (but it's complicated, natch), and I absolutely love this answer. The conservatives you describe are the ones I respect and would love to have conversations with. I just wish I saw more of them. I know they're out there, but I really wish more of them would speak...[\(Read More\)](#)
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Lonnie Veal: The problem that has to be overcome is that the GOP has boiled itse...

Brian Blose
Mar 29 · 3 upvotes including Lonnie Veal

That used to be my working definition of conservatism. Unfortunately, 90% of current people calling themselves conservatives are hooked on what Donald Trump is selling.
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Lonnie Veal: I think some people would call it the successful 'Commodification' ...

Upvoted **140** Downvote



...see more/any conservatives like you have denied. Great answer although it doesn't really answer the question it does summarize a great ideal of what conservatism is!

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Lonnie Veal: The thing is— it's a question that can never really be given a real an...

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Daniel Albert, American citizen and writer living in Norway
Updated Mar 9

I am going to answer your question, but I need to build a premise. Please be patient and keep reading, even if you don't immediately agree with what I am saying. Feel free to fact check anything I say as well.

My perspective is one of a liberal, or more precisely, the perspective of someone who will go with the best possible system you can demonstrate to me. Show me it works better than what we currently have, and by better, I don't mean by hurting people in the process. I am not willing to throw people to the wolves even if we can gain by it.

I was a conservative Republican.

I was so in the 1990s, when I believed in the platform of being against government waste, mismanagement, pork barrel spending, immorality in government, uncivility in politics, being tough on crime and in favor of whatever policies will bring us as close to full employment as is feasible.

The funny thing about me is literally none of my priorities or principles changed. If it weren't for what conservative Republican means today, I would still identify as one.

Show me the right answer, if mine is wrong.

Right now, I see that Republican states are the ones with the worst crime rates, especially murder rates. You can look it up yourself, find the 25 states with the least amount of crime, and that list contains almost every Democratic state. There are a few outliers. And some Republican states are well managed. But, given how difficult it is to handle the problem of urban crime, I find it fascinating that the Republican approach results in states with even worse crime rates on average.

But you can skew the data. If you only show individual cities, with a population above several hundred thousand people, and only include those places as data, you can trick people into believing Democrats and liberals cannot handle crime, as most of the places on the list of several hundred thousand citizens and above are Democratic strongholds.

Upvoted 140 Downvote



If you include literally everywhere in the United States, Republican states have a worse murder rate and crime rate.

Let me demonstrate that using all of the data, not just selected bits.

Self-Identified Ideology, by State

Sorted by Conservative

Gallup Daily tracking, January-December 2014

	% Conservative	% Moderate	% Liberal	Conservative advantage (pct. pts.)	n
Mississippi	48.9	30.9	12.9	36.0	1,948
Alabama	46.5	31.3	15.3	31.2	3,097
Wyoming	41.6	40.2	12.8	28.8	540
Louisiana	45.7	31.0	17.4	28.3	2,563
North Dakota	41.0	40.8	13.5	27.5	481
Arkansas	43.8	33.0	16.4	27.4	2,022
Utah	44.6	34.1	17.4	27.2	2,102
Tennessee	43.2	34.0	16.8	26.4	4,225
Idaho	43.0	34.9	17.7	25.3	1,341
Oklahoma	42.9	33.2	18.1	24.8	2,745
South Carolina	42.3	33.7	17.7	24.6	2,745
Kentucky	41.8	33.8	18.2	23.6	2,885
South Dakota	38.8	39.9	15.5	23.3	539
Nebraska	40.1	38.0	17.6	22.5	1,267
Montana	43.1	31.7	21.1	22.0	958
West Virginia	39.8	35.9	18.1	21.7	1,268
Missouri	39.8	36.5	18.4	21.4	3,503
Texas	39.9	34.9	19.0	20.9	12,725
Georgia	39.2	35.1	19.0	20.2	5,326
Iowa	38.9	36.3	19.6	19.3	2,051
Indiana	39.8	34.8	20.6	19.2	3,938
Kansas	38.4	36.3	20.4	18.0	1,715
North Carolina	38.9	33.9	21.5	17.4	5,817
New Hampshire	36.9	37.1	20.2	16.7	871
Ohio	36.9	37.3	20.8	16.1	6,365
Virginia	36.4	36.9	21.0	15.4	4,890
Wisconsin	36.4	36.7	21.5	14.9	3,670
Florida	36.6	35.7	21.7	14.9	10,221
Alaska	35.6	39.3	20.8	14.8	537
Michigan	35.7	36.0	21.8	13.9	4,979
Arizona	36.1	36.1	22.3	13.8	4,303
Nevada	36.8	33.5	23.3	13.5	1,488
New Mexico	35.2	37.8	21.8	13.4	1,506
Pennsylvania	34.8	36.9	22.8	12.0	8,392
Minnesota	34.7	36.0	24.4	10.3	3,257

Illinois	31.6	37.7	24.6	7.0	5,678
Oregon	33.8	33.7	27.5	6.3	2,865
Delaware	28.6	43.9	23.1	5.5	496
Connecticut	31.7	36.2	26.9	4.8	2,078
Washington	32.1	35.6	27.4	4.7	4,331
Maryland	31.2	36.8	26.7	4.5	3,123
New Jersey	29.9	37.8	25.5	4.4	4,530
Rhode Island	28.4	41.2	24.5	3.9	654
California	30.2	36.5	27.5	2.7	17,351
New York	29.4	35.8	27.6	1.8	9,860
Hawaii	27.7	37.5	29.6	-1.9	583
Vermont	26.6	38.8	29.8	-3.2	570
Massachusetts	25.7	38.1	30.3	-4.6	3,727
District of Columbia	18.0	35.1	36.3	-18.3	383

GALLUP

This is a list of the most conservative to the most liberal states, in that order.

There's not a lot of solidly liberal states, so we're gonna count some swing states that often go Democrat here.

[List of U.S. states by homicide rate - Wikipedia](#)

This is a list of the liberal states with a lower than the national average murder rate. In order of smallest to largest murder rate.

1. New Hampshire (Swing state)
2. Maine (Swing state)
3. Minnesota (Swing state)
4. Massachusetts (Very very liberal)
5. Connecticut (Very liberal)
6. Vermont (Very very liberal)
7. Hawaii (Very very liberal)
8. Rhode Island (Very very liberal)
9. Washington (Very liberal)
10. Oregon (Very liberal)
11. New York (Very very liberal)
12. Colorado (liberal)
13. Wisconsin (swing state)
14. New Jersey (liberal)
15. California (exactly the average murder rate) (Very liberal)

Ok, Who is not on the list that counts as liberal?

Answer: Maryland, Delaware, and Illinois. Not a big list.

Edit - and about Illinois. there's an issue with the idea that Chicago's gun

Makes it difficult for those laws to do a damned thing. Thanks, [Marc Clamage](#)



Marc Clamage

4h ago · 1 upvote from Daniel Albert

As a Massachusettsian, I take exception to your description of the People's Republic as very, very liberal. It is, in fact, very, very, *very* liberal. And yet we like to elect Republican governors. Go figure...

The dishonest example from the Right I particularly take umbrage to is Chicago. "Chicago has the toughest gun laws in the country and look at the crime rate there!" What they fail to mention is that East Chicago borders directly on Gary, Indiana. Indiana has among the laxest gun regulations in the country and a Chicagoan intent on procuring a gun can simply cross a street, walk into an Indiana gun shop, and make a purchase. If Indiana had tighter gun controls, gun violence would not be such an issue in Illinois.

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Daniel Albert

2m ago

Absolutely. In fact, let me add your comment to my answer.

Reply



Now look at the states with the *worst* murder rates. Notice how 90 percent of them are Republican strongholds, with the above exceptions? Not just Republican, *VERY* Republican.

It doesn't end there. Look outside the USA, to the *most liberal* nations on Earth.

More-liberal places outside of the United States also boast a super low crime rate, and places where fewer people per capita are murdered. Nordic countries in particular, Canada, Australia, and Europe in general, but look outside of there and you'll find dozens upon dozens more countries with lower crime rates, without resorting to a fascist or authoritarian regime.

[List of countries by intentional homicide rate - Wikipedia](#)

Sort by the rate. Notice how the upper 1/6th of the list is full of countries from Australasia (Australia and NZ), East Asia (Japan and South Korea, with very progressive social safety nets), Northern Europe, Southern Europe, Western Europe, even Eastern Europe? **This is a who's who list of liberal nations**, with few conservative outliers.

Canada makes the next 1/6th of the list. That's basically **every** single liberal nation, especially all of those more liberal than the USA.

Now find the USA. See how far down we are?

Is that enough data to be persuasive?

Especially when it comes to crime, poverty, drugs, and murder, the authoritarian approach to crime, the Republican / conservative approach to it **only looks at a punitive approach**. Whether it be life in prison or the death



people keep on breeding and nothing is done to **prevent** crime.

We only ever seem to look at the approach of what to do once the bullets have already been fired and innocent people have already died.

Liberal countries, and indeed, US states, take a prevention approach, and a rehabilitation approach. Which results in a lower recidivism rate.

Why Norway's prison system is so successful

That makes Norway's incarceration rate just **75 per 100,000 people**, compared to **707 people for every 100,000 people in the US**. On top of that, when criminals in Norway leave prison, **they stay out**. It has one of the lowest recidivism rates in the world at **20%**. Dec 11, 2014

That quote is from the plenty capitalist and plenty conservative publication **Business Insider**. I am not cherry picking some liberal blog.

Now look at the **US government data on the USA**.

National Institute of Justice

Bureau of Justice Statistics studies have found high rates of recidivism among released prisoners. One study tracked 404,638 prisoners in 30 states after their release from prison in 2005.^[1] The researchers found that:

- Within three years of release, about **two-thirds (67.8 percent)** of released prisoners were rearrested.
- Within five years of release, about **three-quarters (76.6 percent)** of released prisoners were rearrested.
- Of those prisoners who were rearrested, more than half (56.7 percent) were arrested by the end of the first year.
- **Property offenders were the most likely to be rearrested, with 82.1 percent of released property offenders arrested for a new crime compared with 76.9 percent of drug offenders, 73.6 percent of public order offenders and 71.3 percent of violent offenders.**

Check out Norway's recidivism rate versus the US recidivism rate.

That is the rate at which people go to prison, are released, and go on to commit more crimes. Norway's approach brings the number down to 1 in 5. In the USA, almost all of those released from prison go on to commit more crimes. Five years go by, and 3 in 4 prisoners go back to prison.

What a waste of taxpayer dollars, and think of all the victims. Especially since our crime rate and murder rate is much higher to begin with, now we're just letting them repeat it. Because all we care about is punishing those who have committed the crime, and we do not give a single shit about stopping it from happening again.

What people do not understand is that someone on the edge of civil society, with a mental illness, drug addiction, or starving, or going without shelter, or medication, is already someone with nothing to lose, who is desperate, who is willing to do anything, anything to stay alive or get their needed fix.

That is a person who is pushed to the limit and will take a risk to get what they want, regardless of the consequences if they get caught.

The states with the worst crime rates in the USA have the death penalty. It isn't preventing shit. Norway has no death penalty and a much lower rate of murder or even violent crimes.

Why?

The reason why is crime prevention.

1. Those who commit crimes go to a place that focuses on preparing these individuals for having a job, with pay and benefits that cover their immediate medical needs and helps them clear the drugs from their system, and start anew. This help is what they need to prevent from falling back into drugs or crimes when they get out of prison. The USA basically kicks them onto the street in a state of being virtually un-hire-able, having done zero to prepare them for work, and puts them right back into the shitty neighborhoods with lots of drugs and no places of employment, so they never recover.
2. Universal healthcare prevents badly needing medicine or a doctor or mental healthcare from being a major cause of crime.
3. The approach of treating drug addiction like a medical problem in need of a doctor and full time care, as opposed to locking them up in prison, is not only cheaper, but way, way more effective.
4. Welfare programs keep people from turning to crime to feed and clothe and house themselves in the first place.
5. Proper gun controls allow people to have guns, but not if they have a history of mental illness, domestic violence, or other crimes. And you must get extensive training and pass difficult tests and get a license. That means fewer desperate people are walking around armed like they are in a war zone.
6. The rehabilitative approach to crime means that criminals do not fear for their lives when the police show up, which means they are far less likely to shoot and kill a cop. They know their sentence will be much worse if they do that. So, instead, they cooperate and don't risk being shot.

All of those differences causes crime to drop, violent crime to drop on top of that, murder to become almost unheard of, especially compared to the USA, so



national news, they happen so often that you've completely lost track, and the minor ones don't even reach your eyes.

There shouldn't even *be* such a concept as a 'minor' school shooting. That's how far we have fallen.

Australia had a mass shooting and changed their approach to guns and crime prevention and haven't had a mass shooting since then. The USA has a small percentage of the world's population but is the location of the majority of the world's mass shootings.

This is just one example of the differences between liberal policy positions and... well, anything else.

And the reason I support the liberal approach is because I've spent years looking at data from all over the world, the same data you can google and research yourself. Stick to reputable journalistic organizations, neutral searches, government data, and encyclopedias, and you will get the same data I am getting.

I also now live in Norway, and I have seen firsthand the differences in how they do things and why their different approach works.

Norway is not an anomaly, it's only ranked 14th in this category. But it is still light years ahead of the United States. Look at the 13 countries above it on the list. Look at several dozen nations below in on the list, but still near the top.

Are those liberal countries, by and large? Pretty much all the liberal ones. Plus some otherwise socially conservative ones with universal healthcare and extensive welfare systems and strong gun controls, like Japan.

Don't call it a conservative or liberal approach. Don't tell me whose idea it is, or which party supports it.

- **Does it work?**
- **Does it work better or worse than the current policy?**
- **How many years of data do we have, seeing this different policy in action?**
- **Have we given our current policies a fair chance?**
- **Who suffers as a result of this policy?**

Norway's approach, and liberalism's approach, to crime, healthcare, keeping wages ahead or at pace with living expenses, economic growth and stability, lessening corruption, and many other indicators of good governance, it works. It works in a hundred different countries, to varying degrees. Depends on how liberal the nation's policies are.

And liberal does not mean as far to the left as possible. If liberalism were a pole,

far rightism and anarchy. Liberalism is the opposite of every extreme, and opposes all of those extremes with equal weight.

By this metric, liberalism works.

It does work better than the current non-liberal policies in the USA.

We have several decades of data from right wing states, and the way to the right of center USA, versus the world as a whole. Likewise for very liberal countries and US states.

Those policies have been given a fair chance to work. Liberal ideas are working, non-liberal ones have worse results.

The only people who suffer are the ones who have not enacted these better policies. Norway has plenty of rich people. They do not suffer, they pay about the same amount in taxes as American rich people. The middle class doesn't suffer. The poorest classes don't suffer. The unemployed don't suffer. Even criminals do not suffer in Norway, and almost all of them become law abiding productive members of society again.

So by every possible measure, the results are better.

If I know that, then I don't have any questions for conservatives to answer.

Instead, we have Quora giving me a feed of questions every day, about politics.

Most of the questions I get are spam and troll questions designed to make statements instead of seek answers.

The ones that seek an answer present the question as a kind of 'stump the liberal' challenge, believing there can be no possible retort to the amazing bit of logic displayed in the question. All of these are easy to smack down, akin to swatting flies.

Rare is the time when I get questions from genuine non-troll account, non-alt account, non-anonymous conservative Quorans who are remotely interested in getting a really thought-provoking question out there to the opposing side.

I don't have any questions for a conservative. I know exactly what conservatives claim to value, and I value pretty much the same things.

I know what motivates conservatives.

I know where they get their information, and what their favorite TV pundit has to say. I listened to right wing talk radio for years, I bought every book by Sean Hannity and Rush Limbaugh and Michael Savage and Ann Coulter, and even closely follow respectable conservative intellectuals like George Will.

I know what all their arguments are.

I know what they think the data is and why, mainly because it is presented in a

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the

I know how it feels to be part of a team, and to want to root for that team. I know how it feels to feel like you are The Good Guy and want to defeat the bad guys.

I used to crusade on internet forums for Conservatism, debating every liberal I could come across, and not just trying to prove them wrong, but to expose their bad thought processes to the world.

Eventually I found some who actually knew what they were talking about. I could not stump those liberals.

They stumped me.

I joined the club.

Find me a better solution, show me the data. On that day, if your case is that profound, that well-researched, and you can actually blow liberal ideas out of the water, I will cease to be a _____ and become a _____.

Show me the money. I don't give a damn about labels or teams or the righteous feeling you get from smugly crushing an opponent in a debate to the delight of everyone watching. I was there, I did it, I am over it now.

I am not interested in winning a debate. I am interested now in simply being correct, with the best possible ideas.

You can win me over to your 'side' with the best possible ideas, the best data, the clearest evidence there's a better alternative.

That is where my loyalties are.

So, if I had questions for you, whether you call yourself a conservative or not, it is this:

- **What system of government, economic policies, foreign, and domestic policies, are better for human society than the kinds of policies and laws you will find in Norway?**
- I know that some countries which are just as liberal as Norway on these issues boast similar and maybe even slightly better outcomes, in a few cases. **But do you have something that is significantly better AND has a *different* approach?**
- **What long term government data do you have that shows these policies are consistently or overwhelmingly better over a period of 20 years?**
- I am not concerned about the minor inconvenience of paying part of your income in taxes, or if they prevent you from buying a second yacht. When I say suffering, I mean people are starving, dying, or being subjected to crime or abuse of state power. **Who suffers as a result of your proposed policies?**



I am not at all concerned with national or tribal identity, party affiliation, or any other labels.

What I ended up with are a bunch of policy positions that work, and are more liberal than what US Democrats propose.

The reason why you see more liberal answers than conservative ones is because I do not spam a bunch of questions designed to stump my opponents so I can make them feel bad, and get a little tingly in my dingly.

My goal is to inform people about what I have found to be the best possible set of policy positions, which actually have a proven track record, with data I can show you, data you can google on your own.

If someone's goal is to make an anonymous account and post a bunch of troll questions, most of them aimed at liberals, all you will get are troll questions, and liberals countering the presumptions found in such troll questions, for those who are on the fence and curious as to what liberals believe.

If someone's goal is to stump the liberal, be passive aggressive, insult the liberal, bait the liberal, then they will post a bunch of attempts at doing so. Liberals will respond.

If someone's goal is to actually learn what someone else thinks and why, I'm going to respond to those questions too, no matter how few and far between they are.

I don't have the goal of trolling, harassing, or posing brain teasers for my political opponents. I think of them as potential allies, who need only see the data to be convinced. Sometimes, even a lot of times, I am wrong with that assumption.

Call me an optimist.

I'm a human being, and I want to see intelligent questions designed to get thought-provoking and wise answers based on data and experience. Empirical knowledge.

Liberal and conservative are labels which should only apply to policy positions. And they're fairly bad at describing those positions.

Ask good questions, get good answers. Who cares what labels we apply to them. Judge the answers by which one is the most informative and helpful, and upvote those, so more people can see them.

Write your own, better answer if you have one. Then show me.

I want to know the best answer. Don't taunt me, don't troll me, don't downvote me into silence, don't make this a game of you versus me. **Enlighten me.**

3.4k Views · View Upvoters

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is this answer useful?

Yes

No



Pamela Sue

This is a great answer, and I only wish more Republicans would come to the same con...

1 more comments from Marc Clamage

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Chuck Matthews, Ex-Republican. Academic, veteran, conservative, and philosophical skeptic.

Answered Jun 4, 2017 · Upvoted by [Carter Moore, Degree in Political Science, former Congressional aide and Federal employee](#)

I felt the need to answer this question from a conservative perspective, since I am by nature conservative. Some have called me various names such as "RINO" and "libtard" because I tend to argue from a broader perspective than what many consider "Conservative," and my conclusions are often at variance with many of the planks of the Republican platform. I should also disclaim some of the following to say that I was once a member of the Republican Party, and am now registered as Independent.

Here's my thesis (and has been for some time): The Republican Party is no longer conservative. The policies put forth by the Republican Party are at variance with the principles of the Constitution and with those of our founding fathers, conservative scholars through our history, and interpretation by the Supreme Court at various points in our history. There are too many splintered interests in the Republican Party, with no real core values to reinforce what the conservative movement is about.

Over many years, I have determined for myself that the Republican Party departed from a politically and fiscally conservative message to one of social and religious conservatism. While William F. Buckley admonished that conservatives "stand athwart history yelling stop," I also believe the conservatives have historically recognized growth and change and progress through society. Indeed, when I was growing up, it was the Republican Party that promoted economic growth and technological advancement. It was conservatives who promoted STEM disciplines in public schools – and American public schools must be the envy of the world.

When I was in high school, I met a group of people who described themselves as "technocrats." They held some interesting views that I am still trying to rationalize, but the gist was that their view of technology and science was very conservative. essentially and eventually using conservative, rational thought to

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of liberalism (what are you trying to liberate?). And we (collectively) have made insults out of the words that describe arguments on the other side of any debate.

We have all committed the error of the broad brush and overgeneralization. I argue that academia (for example) is largely a conservative occupation since we question everything. Intellectual skepticism is part of the discipline, and any new ideas must be proven through a rigorous process. And new ideas are not necessarily liberal; they are just new ideas until they are proven through logic (pretty conservative).

Similarly, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) are not liberal. Nor are they really conservative. They are tools that we use to communicate, design, build, gather requirements, and implement solutions. If you have ever met a civil engineer, you will find some pretty sound, fundamental points of view that are what they are – and this defines conservatism. As an aside, I also argue that, by their nature, accounting, finance, and management science are also conservative disciplines.

Conservatism is not about “falling in line,” as many pundits say in the media. Conservatism is about cold, rational logic. And if a conservative’s point of view is disproved by the facts, then a good conservative will clean up his or her assumptions and move in a more productive, logical direction. Think of a farmer who makes a mistake planting crops one year, or a small business owner who works very hard to feed his or her family. This is the basis of conservative thought.

Conservatives understand the fundamentals of accounting, economics, and social engagement. If a conservative’s community isn’t working, or if a neighbor runs into trouble, then the conservative will jump in to help out – rebuild the neighbor’s barn, or rally the community to help feed someone in need. Taxes are just another way of helping us all out with roads, schools, police, fire protection, utilities, community centers, and on and on.

And on the liberal side, the social contract is the same. Liberals look out after everyone in the community, engage in political debate, find common ground, run for office, try to engage everyone...

Wait. This sounds like what conservatives do, too, right?

Both sides understand the need to maintain social norms, establish justice, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity (sound familiar?).

The real difference between liberals and conservatives is in the nature of government and how to implement the broad policies that each side wishes to promote. Conservatives generally want to contain the power of public officials and provide the important checks and balances that a watchdog provides; we have strayed from that. Historically, most of the rules and laws dealing with ethics and reform are conservative policies. Conservatives have strayed from

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such as welfare, Social Security, and Medicare. The thing is, the way these programs were devised and constructed was pretty conservative. They are meant to pay for themselves as long as the government does not borrow from them. As I said, accounting is pretty conservative: you either balance your books or you don't.

So, now, let me try to answer the original question:

If you are seeing only "liberal answers" then I pose the following: You need to reexamine your definition of conservatism. My answers in Quora tend to follow themes of navigating college, professional coaching, and the mechanics of research. My answers tend to encourage the writer or questioner to search for additional help, to take responsibility, and to think for oneself.

However, I often read answers in many other topic areas and from across the political spectrum. Often, I find myself questioning where the writer is coming from and what perspective the question reflects. I don't see all questions and answers as political - or even fitting within any measure of the political spectrum.

I try to avoid questions that start with, "Why don't conservatives..." or "Why don't liberals..." Instead I try to focus on what I perceive to be real questions. These kinds of questions often are attempts at trolling. I just don't want to waste my time.

And perhaps that's where we have lost track of conservatism versus liberalism: How can we ask better questions in order to get back to civil dialog?

And this is about as conservative as it gets: Questions are good. Always ask questions. Good, solid Socratic dialog can be used to teach and learn; it can also be used to understand what is common ground. Therefore, I submit that common ground is conservative, too, even when liberals agree.

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Magnus W. Magnusson

Thank you for this considered answer. Yes, unfortunately the Republicans have gone ...

3 more comments from Maurice Sasseville, Eugen Gassmann, Yiannis Papadopoulos



Habib Fanny, Political Animal, Physician, Goofball, and All Around Nerd.

Answered Jul 1, 2017

There are 2 issues at play:

- American conservatism really is an outlier in terms of world politics. And this is true whether you're talking about guns, the size of the welfare state, or global warming.

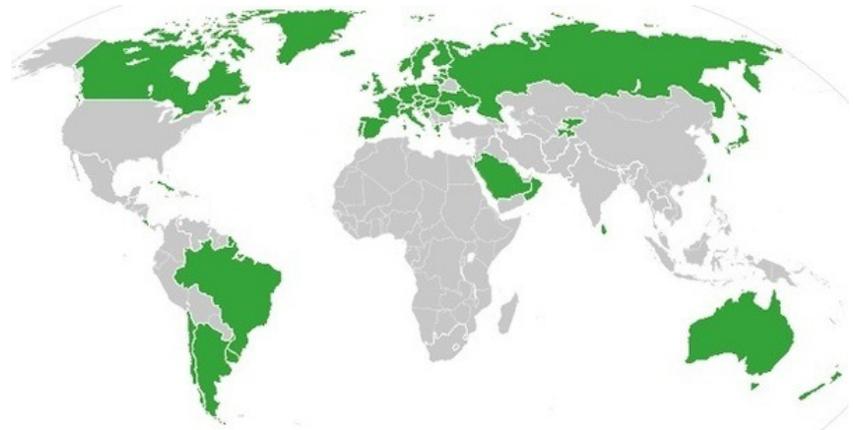
The map below shows global civilian gun ownership rates. People who don't

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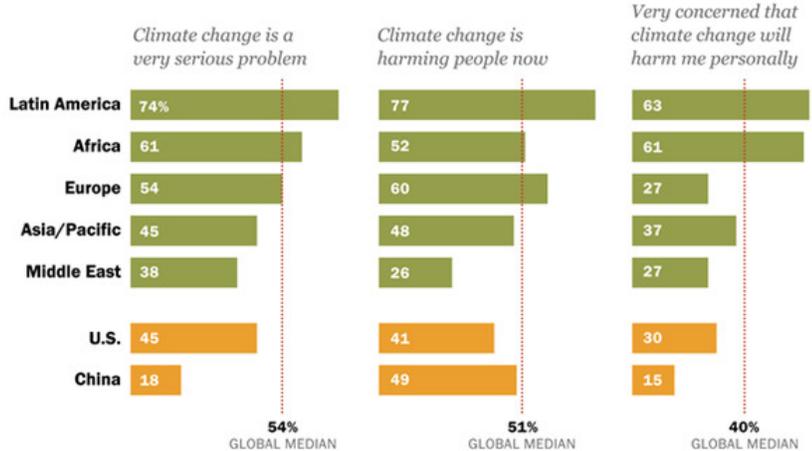
Below is a non exhaustive list of countries that provide some form of socialized health care:



As you can see, it's usually something nations above a certain threshold of wealth do. This is because it's a more efficient way of distributing health care resources than leaving it to the lottery of birth and wealth.

And here's some data about global warming:

Regional medians



Note: Russia and Ukraine not included in Europe median. Asia-Pacific median includes China. Source: Spring 2015 Global Attitudes survey. Q32, Q41 & Q42.

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Here, the difference between the US and the global median is comparatively small, but we're still on the right end of the spectrum.

- The other issue is that of your feed. You can selectively follow and upvote more conservative voices. If you do that, over time, you'll get more and more answers relevant to what you want to see.

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Your response is private.

Is this answer useful?

Yes No

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Sam Sinai

The healthcare map has a mistake, Iran has socialized healthcare. Indeed the newest ...



Tom Clyne, Fifty years ago I was warned against the dangers of nationalism.

Answered Jun 10, 2017

In pondering the question posed by the OP, I started by realizing that the definitions of liberal and conservative are somewhat ambiguous, and are applied to disciplines of many sorts, from political philosophies, to cultural issues, to economic principles and so on. In real-life use, conservatism or liberalism are not subject to the rigorous definitions that academics might use, and are instead applied to right-wing vs left-wing positions on the issues of our time. I started considering a few of those issues and whether my liberal attitudes might actually be conservative, depending on who evaluates them, and on what basis they are evaluated. Here is where that led me...

Am I taking a conservative position if I favor the husbanding of our natural resources and the protection of our wilderness areas?

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Am I taking a conservative pro-family position if I support gay or other non-traditional families?

Am I taking a conservative pro-life position if I support childcare and child welfare programs for working parents?

Am I taking a conservative, religious position if I believe I have a personal obligation to help an individual I encounter who is in need?

Does being a conservative require of me that I support the civil rights of all citizens?

Does being a conservative require of me that I support the civil rights of any person, regardless of whether they are American citizens?

Does being a conservative require of me that I oppose the minimum wage, and that I oppose any government programs that help working families, such as food stamps, heating subsidies and subsidized housing or programs that mitigate homelessness?

Does being a conservative require of me that I oppose government programs that interfere with the free market - that benefit some businesses to the disadvantage of others, that I oppose "corporate welfare".

If I am a conservative, do I believe that a fair business model requires a business to price its wares and services such that the price accounts for the full cost of doing business - including the cost of supportive infrastructure, the cost of services such as police, fire and other emergency preparedness, and the cost of any injuries to employees or consumers of its goods and services, and any environmental consequences.

Is it conservative to heed Pres Eisenhower's dire warning about this great danger to our democracy? "In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists, and will persist."

Am I a conservative if I believe that our government is obligated to a soldier for the lifetime care of battle injuries, including PTSD; and for robust support services to ensure that any combat veteran is well-served by the communities they fought to defend?

Am I taking a conservative position if I oppose gerrymandering?

Am I taking a conservative position if I expect our President to exhibit basic human decency, have a civil demeanor and to tell the truth?

Am I taking a conservative position if I support the idea of an well-educated and informed citizenry?

Am I taking a conservative position if I declare it the obligation of each citizen to



Am I taking a conservative position if I believe that our government must avoid favoring any one religion - or more accurately - any religion at all?

Am I taking a conservative position if I value human life enough to oppose most war, and to oppose the death penalty?

Conversely...

Am I taking a conservative position if I defend the right of a citizen to conscientiously choose to have an abortion in accordance with the law?

Am I taking a conservative position to claim that when faced with an incurable profoundly debilitating disease, it is my right to end my life - after consulting with my physician, my family, and others who are close to me?

Am I taking a conservative position if I expect the law to be uniformly applied to all citizens?

Am I taking a conservative position if I believe that a smart path to having good police officers is to aggressively prosecute officers who commit crimes?

Am I a conservative if I oppose "the blue code of silence" that shields bad cops from their wrong-doing?

Am I a conservative if I oppose the use of torture on religious, ethical and practical grounds?

Am I a conservative if I support a soldier's personal right to be a conscientious objector consequential to deeply-held personal beliefs, and believe it is their personal obligation to claim that status if that is their belief?

Am I a conservative if I decide "better safe than sorry" as the most prudent and rational approach when evaluating the issue of climate change?

Is a conservative consistent with his politics if they go into the clean energy business because it is likely to grow and provide good paying jobs to themselves and their community?

Am I taking a conservative approach when I advocate for energy independence as a strategic defense imperative to be implemented through conservation and the development of alternative sources of energy?

Am I taking a conservative position if I demand that corporations tell us the truth about the content of their products, and whether those products are a danger to us?

Am I a conservative if I believe that ethics should have a pre-eminent position in the actions of individuals, the actions of government, and the actions of businesses and corporate entities?

Can I be a conservative if I believe that ethics are far more important than any

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governance?

Am I a conservative if I believe strongly enough in our nation that I accept that it is my privilege and duty to pay my share of taxes to support the activities of government, even if I strongly disagree with some of those activities?

Am I a conservative if I believe that individual human beings have rights superior to those of artificially generated entities such as corporations?

If I am a conservative, do I oppose *ad hominem* attacks on my opponents?

Frankly, I think I could make a case that a number of my left-wing positions begin with conservative philosophy.

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Erik Midtskogen, Software Engineer and Cabinetmaker (1996-present)

Answered Jan 25

Maybe its because, over the past few centuries, fairness and reason have been making progress in human affairs—albeit slowly and unsteadily.

The word “conservative” has a set of meanings. Here’s Webster: [Definition of CONSERVATIVE](#)

So, in a nutshell, a conservative is a person who tends to resist modernization and tends to look to the past for values, customs, and policies. And the fact is that the past is defined by slavery, absolute political power in the hands of emperors, denial of access to education by the masses, and concentration of wealth in the hands of a small oligarchy while the masses struggle (and often fail) to survive.

In the history of major national debates between conservatives and progressives, the conservatives have a notably poor track record. In the 1770’s the conservatives favored King George. They lost. In the 1860’s the conservatives favored slavery. They lost. In the late 1800’s through the 1920’s the conservatives opposed universal primary education. In the 1910’s they opposed child labor laws. In the 1920’s they opposed women’s suffrage. In the 1930’s they opposed Social Security. They opposed the Civil Rights Act of 1964. They also promoted the ideas that seatbelts in cars were dangerous, that cigarettes were safe, and that the government should stop meddling in matters of public health and safety—despite the fact that we all, one way or another, pay for externalized costs of harm to our fellow citizens.

The latest debate that conservatives are in the process of losing is a real doozy: climate change. They call the idea of harmful man-made global climate change a hoax, carefully orchestrated by tens of thousands of scientists spread out all

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the

netted every year by people who make money in ways that add levels of greenhouse gasses to the atmosphere that, if continued indefinitely, will be stopped eventually by Mother Nature herself in ways that we humans will find very unpleasant.

So what you're seeing here is basically the slight tendency of fact and reason, over time, to unseat prejudice and intellectual bankruptcy.

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Your response is private. Is this answer useful? Yes No

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Amy Lautenbach, A lady who thinks outside the box. And who types on a touchscreen- please forgive any typos I don't catch a... Answered Oct 8, 2017

I'm a conservative, but all I see are liberal answers. Why is that?

Likely for several reasons.

- 1. This is a worldwide site, and what the average conservative (worldwide) thinks is far, far left of what American conservatives would consider a conservative viewpoint. So a "conservative" viewpoint from a German or Swiss citizen may be "liberal" to you.
2. The more educated people are, the more liberal they tend to be on average. Thus, a site like Quora, designed to be a question and answer site for those looking for informed responses, would be expected to trend liberal.
3. What topics you choose to follow inform the feed you see. Mine are only about half political to any extent (and only that much due to a work history in forensic science). If you add more nonpolitical areas of interest, your feed will change.

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Andrei Saito Ramalho I once have heard a joke that in US there are two major political parties: the conservati...

1 more comments from Joe Kyle

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