



Freeman on the land

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Freeman on the land, also known as **FMOTL**, **FOTL**, **Footle** or simply **freeman**, is a form of pseudolegal woo in various English-speaking countries. Freeman believe they can opt out of being governed, and that what normal people understand to be "laws" are merely a form of "contract" that applies only if people consent to it.^[1]

Freemen hold that we are all subject to a massive international legal conspiracy perpetrated for the profit of the elites, but you can hack the system if you just use the right form of words.^[2] They believe only in their version of natural law, which they call "common law." In practical terms, they believe this means they do not have to pay taxes, debts, mortgages, etc. because we were all deceived and if you say the right form of words this fact will be accepted.

Freemen believe they can declare themselves independent of government jurisdiction using the concept of "lawful rebellion": that all statute law is contractual and therefore only applicable if an individual consents to it. They assert that what everyone else regards as "the law" doesn't apply to them as they have not consented to a contract with the state,^[3] even going so far as to claim they have a lawful right to refuse arrest if they do not consent. They insist that the government is a corporation, are obsessed with maritime law, and call themselves things like "John of the family Smith." Essentially, they're hilarious and somewhat less threatening sovereign citizens.

No freeman arguments have ever succeeded in court; some have even explicitly ruled that the term "freeman on the land" has *no legal significance* when the argument is raised.^[4] Actually using the arguments gets people into worse trouble, including fines, asset seizures, contempt convictions and criminal records. This won't stop freemen from claiming the arguments work.

**It's not even
a good idea**

Pseudolaw



**I have a theory,
which is mine**

- Brian Gerrish
- Crime woo
- David Wynn Miller
- John Harris
- Militia movement
- Paul Randle-Jolliffe
- Peter Hendrickson
- Provisional Imperial Government
- Pseudolaw
- Robert Beale
- Sovereign citizen
- States' rights
- Tom Cryer

v - t - e (<http://rationalwiki.org/w/index.php?title=Template:Pseudolaw&action=edit>)

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History

The "Freeman on the Land" movement inherited various indefensible legal concepts from the older tax protester and sovereign citizen movements in the US such as Posse Comitatus in the 1970s and 1980s, the redemption movement in the 1980s and 1990s and the Montana Freemen in the 1990s. Freeman concepts of admiralty law and common law, their obsession with capitalisation of words and various theories on finance can be traced back to almost identical theories from these earlier movements.

The freeman movement itself appears to have originated in Canada with "Mary Elizabeth: Croft" (*sic*) and her 2005 book *How I clobbered every bureaucratic cash-confiscatory agency known to man ... a Spiritual Economics Book on \$\$\$ and Remembering Who You Are*^[5]. This evolved into a Canadian movement, with advocates such as Robert Menard — who appears to have actually coined the phrase "Freeman on the land,"^[1] with the phrase achieving currency some time around mid-2008.^[6]

It then crossed over to the UK with organisations such as the British Constitution Group and people such as John Harris, Brian Gerrish, the Anti-terrorist, Raymond St Clair and Dominic Lohan. Freeman arguments came to UK public attention when they tried recruiting amongst the more anarchist-leaning protesters at the Occupy London protests in late 2011, and even got two articles in the *Guardian*.^{[7][8]} These were promptly slapped down by actual lawyers who detailed how this was dangerous idiocy that would send you directly to jail.^{[9][10][11][12]} Freeman ideas are now an object of amusement for the British legal profession.^[13]

Freemen have also shown up in Ireland, causing similar concern amongst the legal profession there^[14] and a similar lack of success in practice.

Freeman ideas are closer to libertarianism than anarchism,^[12] with some libertarians considering them a very positive sign (*e.g.* the Libertarian Alliance in the UK^[15]). Although many of the ideas originated amongst backwoods white supremacist groups, it must be noted that current freemen thankfully do *not* commonly^[16] espouse any such racism as part of their thinking.

How it's marketed

"These ideas are most attractive to desperate, vulnerable people who are going through terrible times in their

lives."^[12] If someone is selling a simple explanation of why your life is messed up, the false hope it offers is extremely attractive — even if the explanation is complete rubbish and the suggested actions consistently just don't work.

Robert Menard in particular sells his DVD and book packs for C\$250, but notably *doesn't use freeman legal tactics himself*^[17] — he leaves that to his victims.^{[18][19]}

There is no free lunch, no magic bullet. If the world is wrong, then fixing it will take rational assessment, planning and hard work — not clever hacks with magic forms of words.

How it works (or not)

The freeman position is not entirely lacking in moral force: considering government-created law to be a damnable imposition is a defensible stance with a long and respectable history. But their theory of the world is utterly spurious, and their practical approach is made entirely of magic beans and crack.

A lot of freeman ideas revolve around bizarre interpretations of entries in Black's Law Dictionary^[1] — a favourite reference for freemen — and inventing or seeing distinctions where there are none to support their beliefs (such as common versus statute law, "policeman" versus "police officer," "understand" versus "stand under," words in CAPITALS having a different legal meaning to those in lower-case, etc.).^[20] A lot of pareidolia with words and concepts is used to derive and justify ideas in freeman theory.

Freemen are typically members of the green ink brigade and often indulge in various other conspiracy theories, as well as holding strong anti-government and anti-corporate sentiments. Freemen often try to escape tax and debt repayment by arguing that they are not required to pay tax, or even to argue that borrowed money was theirs to start with.^[21] Freeman ideas are so far-out that even arch-crackpot Alex Jones thinks they're "quackery,"^[22] and agrees that using them will probably get you sent to prison.

Freeman methods fail to understand that the law derives its authority from the fact that the state has the means and the will to use force to impose it. You can argue that the authorities have no jurisdiction over you, and you can choose not to recognise their authority, but as long as the authorities have force to back up their rules they can enforce sanctions against you. Freemen would argue that this would be unlawful imprisonment — but at the end of the day you'd still be in jail.

Common law

Freemen have an obsession with common law, which normally refers to what is known as case law:

“ As distinguished from statutory law created by the enactment of legislatures, the common law comprises the body of those principles and rules of action, relating to the government and security [rights] of persons and property, which derive their authority solely from usages and customs of immemorial antiquity, or from the judgements and decrees of the courts recognizing, affirming, and enforcing such usages and customs; and in this sense, particularly the ancient unwritten law of England. ”

—*Black's law dictionary*, 6th edition, 1991

They use this entry to justify a different definition, one which is heavily reliant on the concept of natural law^[wp].

They see common law as applicable to everyone or, as they put it, "applicable to men and women, flesh and blood human beings,"^[23] but statutory law as dependent on choice, an offer of contract, only applicable to their "person" (their "legal person") and not enforceable except by consent.^[24]

Freeman definitions of common law include "you do not cause harm or loss to another, while you never breach the peace, and never employ any mischief in your promises & agreements" (Veronica: of the chapman family)^[25] and "There are only three ways to break the law: harm another human being, damage someone else's property, use fraud or mischief in your contracts" (Robert Menard).^[1]

Legal person or strawman

See the main article on this topic: Strawman theory

Freemen believe that an individual has two personas. One of them is a physical, tangible human being, and the other is their legal *person*, *personality* or *strawman*: a legal fiction created when a birth certificate is filed with what would normally be considered someone's name (e.g., JOHN SMITH), capitalization being a particular obsession.^{[24][20]} They believe their birth certificate *is* their legal person, and will attempt to present it in court when said person is called for, rather than identifying themselves as that person.^[1]

Freemen believe that all legal actions, restrictions and statutes can only be applied to their legal personality, and that, by separating themselves from their legal person, they can free themselves of having to abide by statute laws they don't like (or acts, as they would insist they are not laws).^[26] They typically use a slightly different spelling of their name, usually "John of the family Smith" (variations include "John of Smith" or even "John: Smith"), entering into what is referred to as *Lawful Rebellion*, or by filing a *Notice of Understanding and Intent and Claim of Right*. They also believe that use of titles such as Mr/Mrs refer to their legal fiction as opposed to themselves, and will therefore refuse to be identified using them, in case this creates "joinder" (see below).^[24]

Because of their obsession with admiralty law and all things maritime, freemen believe that their legal person is required to operate in commerce. It is therefore defined as a vessel or ship in the legal realm, floating on the sea of commerce.

Notice of understanding and intent and claim of right

A *notice of understanding and intent and claim of right* is a made-up pseudolegal document freemen use in an attempt to declare sovereignty. They will sign such a document, sometimes with a notary, and then send it to the Queen and sometimes various other figures such as the Prime Minister and police chiefs.

It usually consists of a series of lines beginning "Whereas it is my understanding" followed by an assertion which is untrue or completely illogical. Various parts will state their bizarre interpretation of the law and their understanding that they do not consent to it. They are typically much like this example:^[27]

“ I, Veronica: of the Chapman family, hereinafter known as Veronica: Chapman, a flesh and blood human being in possession of a sovereign and individual spirit, a living soul, do hereby make Oath and state the following is My Truth and My Law:

Whereas it is my understanding that in terms of earthly existence there is no species more supreme than a living, breathing, imaginative human being blessed with a living soul, and

”

...

Whereas it is my understanding a living soul who chooses by free will not to be a member of any society can be referred to as a Freeman-on-the-land, and

Whereas it is my understanding a Freeman-on-the-land remains entirely and solely under Common Law jurisdiction, and

Whereas I Veronica: Chapman am a Freeman-on-the-land, and ...

Fee schedule

The notice of understanding is typically followed by a "fee schedule" or "penalty schedules," listing a series of acts and associated penalties the freeman will attempt to levy against the government for perceived transgressions. If the state arrests or incarcerates a freeman against their will, they will then attempt to charge the state a fee for this action. This does not work out in practice and has attracted penalties in return.^[18]

Lawful rebellion and the Magna Carta

Lawful rebellion in British freeman theory holds that one can lawfully choose to cease abiding by the laws, rules and statutes of a country by simply opting out of society. Lawful rebellion is often used as an alternative to the *Notice of Understanding and Intent and Claim of Right* method, although they are sometimes used together. This claim supposedly stems from clause 61 of the Magna Carta.^[24] It fails when used in court.^[28]

Clause 61 is an historically and constitutionally significant clause. It gave twenty-five barons the right to meet and overrule the will of the king and seize his assets, essentially usurping his authority, should this be considered necessary. This was based on *distrain* (the seizure of someone's property in order to obtain payment of rent or other money owed), but it was the first time it had been applied to a monarch. It was one of the first times that there had been any kind of restriction on a king's power from below, and arguably it was one of the first checks and balances on the monarch and furthermore the first step toward a constitutional government. Nevertheless, clause 61 was only in effect for three months, as King John later renounced it and Pope Innocent III released King John from his oath to obey it. This led to the First Barons' War^[wp] between the king and his barons.

Freemen claim that clause 61 allows them to cease obeying the state. This sometimes involves sending an affidavit direct to the Queen declaring one's intent to become a freeman and removing their consent to be governed. Some freemen believe that the Queen represents the highest authority in the land as *the* sovereign, but that she derives her authority from the people. This then makes them sovereign, such that there is no higher authority than themselves.

The actual text of Magna Carta's clause 61 explicitly refers to the King and the Barons (25 of them being required to invoke the clause) — nowhere is there any mention of the people, free or otherwise; nor would there be, given the feudal system in place at the time. The phrase "Lawful Rebellion" appears nowhere in clause 61, being an invention of freeman mythology.



Start of Clause 61 of the Magna Carta of 1215. "*Cum autem pro Deo, et ad emendacionem regni nostri, et ad melius sopiendum discordiam inter nos et barones nostros ortam ...*"

Freemen claim that the Magna Carta cannot be repealed, but this simply is not true. It was, in fact replaced by the Magna Carta of 1297, passed by Edward I in return for new taxes. It is this 1297 version (without any clause 61 or anything resembling it) which is now "in force", although by 1969, all but sections 1 (freedom of the church), 9 (freedom of the city of London) and 29 (right to due process) had been repealed or superseded.

Contracts and statutes

Because of their conception of common law as the only true law, freemen believe that any laws made by the government are not "laws," but are instead invitations to contract, or "acts," giving rise to the freeman maxim, "Acts nor laws." They do not believe that statute law applies without an individual's consent, and that we are merely conditioned and deceived by the authorities to believe that they do. Freemen claim that statutes can have the force of law as a binding contract under the correct conditions.

Freemen believe that the government has to establish what they refer to as *joinder* to link yourself and your legal person. When they ask you whether you are "John Smith" and you confirm that you are, then you are establishing joinder. You have then connected your physical and human *persons*.^[24] (In real law, joinder^[wp] means joining related cases together, not establishing identity.)

The next step is to obtain consent. Statutes are seen as invitations to enter a contract, which are only legally enforceable if one enters into the contract consensually. If one does not enter into a contract, statute laws are not applicable. Freemen believe that the government is therefore constantly trying to trick people into entering into a contract with them. They often return bills, notices, summons and so on with the message "No contract—return to sender".^[24]

Legalese

Notices (*e.g.*, those issued by courts, the police or some government agencies) are supposedly written in "legalese," the *deliberately deceptive* technical jargon language of "a company called the Law Society."^{[24][29]} The claim is that legalese looks like English and uses English words, but is *not English*. For instance, freemen assert that the word "must" in legalese is synonymous with "may" in English, "summons" means "invitation," "demand" means "offer," and "understand" (as in "do you understand?") means "stand under," as in "do you stand under these words?" (*i.e.*, accept the terms of our contract).^{[26][20]} They claim that all these terms are sneaky ways of getting you to contract with the government without realising. No source is provided for this use of language.

For a worked example, see this freeman analysis of a leaflet about the UK TV licence: The DECEPTION of: INCLUDE(S) used by TV LICENSING oop's sorry! CONSIGNIA (CUSTOMER MANAGEMENT) LTD also Traded as TV LICENSING (<http://www.tpuc.org/node/609>) ^{img}.

Admiralty law and court appearance techniques

Freemen see a distinction between (what they call) common law and statute law, which they refer to as "admiralty law," "law of the sea," "maritime law" or the "universal commercial code" (a distortion of the US-only *Uniform Commercial Code*) — something that only applies to corporations, *e.g.* legal persons, not flesh-and-blood humans.^[20] They see admiralty law as being the law of commerce, the law of *ownership*, *citizenship*, and indeed anything else ending in "-ship." They see evidence of this in various nautical-sounding terms used in court, such as "dock," "birth (berth) certificate," "-ship" suffixes and any other fancy word they think might have a vaguely naval sound.^[30] Freemen will take this further by referring to the court as a "ship",

its occupants as "passengers" and claiming that anyone leaving are "men overboard". This gives their legal arguments a hilarious nautical theme.^[20]

They see courts as being a place of business intended to make profit for the government corporation. They sometimes refer to these courts as "de facto courts." When they receive a summons to appear in court, they insist that this is not a summons but, in fact, an invitation to a place of business to discuss the matter at hand.^{[24][20]} When one initially enters a court they are then operating under "admiralty law" rather than (their version of) "common law." American freemen will sometimes try to argue that if the flag in the court has a gold fringe, this signifies that it is an admiralty court. British courts tend not to have flags of any type, so the claim has largely failed to cross the Atlantic.

Freemen believe that a victim must exist for a common law crime to have been committed.^[20] One attempt at defence will be to demand to see evidence of a victim. They may also complain that the trial is unfair because the judge and prosecution are on the same team, both being employed by the state. If a freeman has had their property confiscated, they will request that it be returned to them.

They will try to claim common law (rather than admiralty law) jurisdiction by asking "do you have a claim against me?" which supposedly removes their consent to be governed by admiralty law and turns the court into a common law court, forcing the court to proceed according to their version of common law. (This has never worked.) Any cooperation with the court is seen as accepting their terms of contract, and freemen will therefore refuse to do anything asked of them. When asked to stand or approach the bench, they will often refuse to do so, or only do so as long as their "inalienable God-given rights remain intact," in order to prevent them inadvertently entering into a contract.

Freemen will also attempt to "put the judge on their oath" to force them to act in accordance with common law, which entails asking to see evidence of this oath.^[20] Judges typically give short shrift to this kind of request, and either adjourn the hearing or threaten the freeman with contempt of court. The freeman might then ask whether the judge means civil or criminal contempt; this is because freemen believe that civil contempt would come under admiralty law, and therefore require a consensual contract, and that criminal contempt would require a victim. When judges leave the courtroom, Freemen will attempt to claim common law authority and then attempt to dismiss the charges themselves, often with a cry of "ship abandoned" or "man overboard."^{[31][32]}

They will never accept legal representation, as to do so might entail contracting with the state. They also believe that professional lawyers and solicitors owe a duty to the crown before their client due to their oath, and therefore cannot represent them effectively. Professional lawyers are all part of the legal system and therefore not to be trusted.

Court appearances are by far the most hysterical part of the freeman delusion, as various YouTube videos will attest. Watching freemen trying to apply their delusions to reality is like watching a video of a slow-motion train wreck onto which someone has dubbed delusional gibberish. The fact that freemen put these videos — and note that most filming in court is illegal in the UK^[33] — on YouTube at all suggests powerful cognitive dissonance, since they typically make the protagonist look very foolish. Techniques used to overcome the manifest failure of freeman logic in court include editing out key moments in favour of voice-overs and mistaking adjournments for acquittals.

Cestui Que Vie Act

Many freemen are big on the *Cestui Que Vie Act* of 1666. They claim that this act declared all English citizens dead and lost beyond the seas unless they objected within seven years of their birth, after which they would be

declared dead without reasonable doubt. The state would then claim all the property of its citizens in trust.^[34]
The relevant part of this rather short act reads:^[35]

“ Whereas diverse Lords of Mannours and others have granted Estates by Lease for one or more life or lives, or else for yeares determinable upon one or more life or lives And it hath often happened that such person or persons for whose life or lives such Estates have beene granted have gone beyond the Seas or soe absented themselves for many yeares that the Lessors and Reversioners cannot finde out whether such person or persons be alive or dead by reason whereof such Lessors and Reversioners have beene held out of possession of their Tenements for many yeares after all the lives upon which such Estates depend are dead in regard that the Lessors and Reversioners when they have brought Actions for the recovery of their Tenements have beene putt upon it to prove the death of their Tennants when it is almost impossible for them to discover the same, For remedy of which mischeife soe frequently happening to such Lessors or Reversioners.

If such person or persons for whose life or lives such Estates have beene or shall be granted as aforesaid shall remaine beyond the Seas or elsewhere absent themselves in this Realme by the space of seaven yeares together and noe sufficient and evident prooffe be made of the lives of such person or persons respectively in any Action commenced for recovery of such Tenements by the Lessors or Reversioners in every such case the person or persons upon whose life or lives such Estate depended shall be accounted as naturally dead, And in every Action brought for the recovery of the said Tenements by the Lessors or Reversioners their Heires or Assignes, the Judges before whom such Action shall be brought shall direct the Jury to give their Verdict as if the person soe remaining beyond the Seas or otherwise absenting himselfe were dead. ”

The intent of this act is obvious: that anyone lost at sea for more than seven years can be declared legally dead for the purpose of redistributing their estate. How anyone can arrive at a different conclusion is bizarre.

Government

Freemen are typically strongly anti-government and believe that the government is a "corporation" (number uc2279443).^[36] Their proof is that the government and various parts of it were listed on the website of credit agency Dunn and Bradstreet under "corporations" as having a credit record.^{[37][24]}

In reality, any entity (corporation, government, individual person, charity or whatever) that borrows money or works on credit will have a credit record so that creditors can assess the risk of lending. Nor are credit agencies the arbiters of what is and isn't a corporation. The idiosyncrasies of how a credit rating organisation's website lists entities are not evidence for outrageous claims.

Freemen believe that the UK and Canada are now operating in bankruptcy and are therefore under admiralty law. Since the abolition of the gold standard in 1917, UK currency is now backed not by gold but rather by the people, or rather the legal fiction of their *persons*. They describe persons as creditors of the UK corporation.

They also claim that when we vote, we are in fact electing directors of a company for profit, that MPs are directors and the voters are employees of the "corporation". Indeed, having a Social Security number (in the US), Social Insurance Number (in Canada), or National Insurance number (in the UK) makes you an employee of the corporation.^[24] Exactly who is supposed to get the profit from this "corporation" is unclear.^[38]

Birth certificates

There are three main beliefs about birth certificates in freeman mythology:

1. The government uses them to create your strawman and legal *person* to which all your legal responsibilities, debts and liabilities belong.^{[26][20]}
2. As a form of registration, they transfer ownership of an individual to the state. This is what allows the state to seize your children if you don't play by *their* rules.^[26]
3. They are financial instruments or birth-tracking bonds (*a.k.a.* live birth bonds) that are sold by the government and then traded on the sea of international commerce, using you as security (an idea taken from the redemption movement).

Freemen claim the government secures the value of its fiat currency using its own citizens' birth certificate "bonds." It is claimed that the value of an individual's "bond" may reach into the millions. This can supposedly be proved by entering the numbers on one's birth certificate into various stock-tracking sites to show the current value of one's "bond" on the market. In reality, of course, any "bonds" found matching these numbers will be real financial instruments which match by complete coincidence.

Notwithstanding this, freemen believe that one can access the money represented by one's own "bond" through various pseudolegal methods and by filing forms with government agencies. There are plenty of conmen, fraudsters and snake-oil salesmen selling methods on how to achieve this to gullible fools. Naturally, none have ever been shown to work.

The value of one's birth certificate "bond" can also supposedly be used to discharge one's debts and financial liabilities through a process known as "acceptance for value" or "A4V", without the freeman having to gain direct access to the funds himself. The UK Treasury has stated that the existence of these bonds, as well as various other freeman financial concepts, are myths.^[39]

Freeman successes



Freeman failures

Despite the numerous failed attempts to use freeman legal methods, freemen will always insist that they do work, even clinging to this delusion when arrested and thrown in the cells. Below are some examples.

- Judge challenged to produce oath by man disputing summons. (<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/ireland/2011/0811/1224302232246.html>) Full panoply of Freeman delusion on display here, down to Black's Legal Dictionary being produced in court. End result: conviction, and when The FreeMan Bobby of the Family Sludds wanted to appeal—"I can't accept a bail bond from someone whose signature can't be verified," the Judge said, remanding Mr Sludds to Cloverhill prison.
- Two men are arrested and charged with growing cannabis. (<http://news.scotsman.com/glasgow/Freemen-are-told-they-will.6676742.jp>) They claim to be "freemen on the land", but the courts state that they have

"no personal circumstances applying to them which affords immunity to prosecution", that there was "no legal significance" to the term "freeman on the land" and that they would be tried anyway.

- Freeman Mark of the family Bond gets arrested (http://www.eveningnews24.co.uk/news/norwich_court_case_posted_on_youtube_1_751533) (more (http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/norfolk_man_s_dramatic_stand_off_over_unpaid_council_tax_1_745837)) after refusing to recognise the court and giving police his notice of intent. He gets a suspended 3 month jail sentence anyway, on condition that he pays off his debt
- Freeman "Brian-arthur: alexander" tries to get out of speeding (<http://www.kamloopsnews.ca/article/20101224/KAMLOOPS0101/312249983/-1/KAMLOOPS01/kamloops-freeman-says-laws-do-not-apply-to-him>) by telling a judge the law doesn't apply to him. The judge disagrees and the police suggest further charges of obstruction and mischief for his freeman shenanigans.
- Mika Rasila gets stopped by the police for not having a licence plate. (<http://news.nationalpost.com/tag/mike-rasila/>) He tells them that he doesn't consent to their laws and that he isn't an employee of the "corporation of Canada". It doesn't work and they arrest him and impound his van. A judge later gives him a fine of \$1,250.
- Freeman Darren Pollard gets arrested (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ww-rAeNElj4&feature=player_embedded) despite telling the police officer he doesn't consent or contract. Not surprisingly it fails and they take him into custody anyway
- Darren Pollard gets arrested again (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q5TeBpsOTE4&feature=related>) after refusing to appear in court despite trying to claim that he was "Darren of the family Pollard" and not the legal fiction of Darren Pollard they were looking for.
- Freewoman Mary Gye recollects her account of being arrested for not having road tax or car insurance and having her "conveyance" impounded. (<http://www.davidicke.com/forum/showthread.php?t=80419&page=5>)^{img} This in spite of all the freeman woo she tried. She was later sentenced to 14 days in HMP Styal women's prison for criminal contempt when she brought a tape recorder into a court hearing over nonpayment of council tax.^[40]
- Freeman Ben Lowrey is arrested (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTicurNEEOQ>) for driving a motorcycle without registration, insurance, MOT or a crash helmet. Subsequently fined £500.
- New Hampshire resident Ian Freeman (AKA Ian Bernard) arrested, tried and jailed for 93 days (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RlcT-3niVes>) for dumping a couch. Within seconds of his trial commencing, he was rearrested and hand-cuffed for refusing to sit down when asked. He has since attempted using the freeman woo while defending a parking ticket. (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o6IS-edTEH4&feature=related>)
- James-Michael: Tesi arrested. (<http://www.star-telegram.com/2011/07/21/3238352/man-in-sovereign-citizen-group.html>) After refusing to pay a fine for not wearing a seatbelt, he flooded the court with woo-woo documents basically refusing to pay. The court ignored this, and issued an arrest warrant. A police officer pulled him over, which resulted in gunfire and Tesi being wounded.
- A Freewoman attempts to use the entire panoply of freeman woo to deny a court's jurisdiction in child custody proceedings. (<http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Fam/2011/B15.html>) She was sentenced to nine months for contempt.
- A person is a "person" (http://www.ctvbc.ctv.ca/servlet/an/local/CTVNews/20100618/bc_legal_person_case_100618/20100618) , a Canadian judge rules, after freeman^[41] David Kevin Lindsay tries to get out of paying tax by asserting otherwise. Lindsay has also been designated a vexatious litigant.^[42] (Whether entering into litigation counts as consent to said laws is not clarified.)
- Star: Hills' house is foreclosed upon (<http://docs.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/california/caedce/1:2010cv01871/215063/7/>) when her attempts to just stop paying her mortgage fail, and even her fee schedules (<http://forum.davidicke.com/showthread.php?t=149145>)^{img} don't work. Despite having bought

the entire \$250 package from Robert Menard.

See also

- Social contract
- Redemption movement
- Sovereign citizen
- Strawman theory
- Tax protester

External links

- The People's United Community (<http://www.tpuc.org/>)
- Freeman-on-the-Land Forums (<http://www.fmotl.com/>)
- World Freeman Society (<http://worldfreemansociety.org/>)
- The British Constitution Group (<http://www.thebcgroup.org.uk/>)
- Raymond St Clair Freeman on the land (<http://www.raymondstclair.com/>)
- Freeman on the land forum on the David Icke website (<http://www.davidicke.com/forum/forumdisplay.php?f=60>)
- The Freeman Movement and England (<http://forums.randi.org/showthread.php?t=155358>) : A major thread on the James Randi Educational Foundation forums discussing and debunking freeman ideas
- Examples of Freeman success stories (<http://forums.randi.org/showthread.php?t=177447>) , another fun thread at the JREF forums

Sources

- John Harris Talking About 'Life' at Truthjuice 17th Feb 2010 (<http://www.tpuc.org/content/john-harris-talking-about-life-truthjuice->)
- John Harris - It's an illusion 2, at London (<http://www.tpuc.org/content/john-harris-its-illusion-2-london>)

Footnotes

- ↑ ^{1.0} ^{1.1} ^{1.2} ^{1.3} ^{1.4} Robert Arthur Menard: Freeman On The Land (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mtoFqh2PTUk&feature=player_embedded) ; transcript (<http://forum.worldfreemansociety.org/viewtopic.php?p=15198>))
- ↑ This paragraph adapted from the excellent summary (<http://forums.randi.org/showpost.php?p=6055250&postcount=124>) by LightinDarkness on the JREF Forums.
- ↑ *e.g.*, [1] (<http://forum.davidicke.com/showpost.php?p=1059525087&postcount=27>) ^{img}
- ↑ 'Freemen' are told they will be tried (<http://news.scotsman.com/glasgow/Freemen-are-told-they-will.6676742.jp>)
- ↑ How I clobbered every bureaucratic cash-confiscatory agency known to man ... a Spiritual Economics Book on \$\$\$ and Remembering Who You Are (http://www.hackcanada.com/canadian/freedom/mary_croft.pdf) She actually lists David Icke as a source in this book.
- ↑ Google groups (https://groups.google.com/group/viewfromspace/browse_thread/thread/942cc510e1a87e3f5ba01284e8c1fc86?hl=en&ie=UTF-8&oe=utf-8&q=%22freeman+on+the+land%22#5ba01284e8c1fc86) . Google group's earliest record of its usage seems to be June 2008 (in a locked post).
- ↑ Yes, defaulting on debts is an option (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/nov/15/debt-agencies-economy>) (Jon Witterick, *Guardian*, 2011-11-15)
- ↑ We are the change: welfare, education and law at the

- Occupy camp (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/nov/15/welfare-education-law-occupy-london>) ('commonly known as dom' [Dominic Lohan], *Guardian*, 2011-11-15)
9. ↑ The law is not the enemy of protest but an essential tool of impartiality (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/libertycentral/2011/nov/16/law-protest-occupy-freemen>) (Carl Gardner, *Guardian*, 2011-11-16)
 10. ↑ The freeman-on-the-land strategy is no magic bullet for debt problems (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/nov/18/freeman-land-strategy-bullet-debt>) (Legal Bizzle, *Guardian*, 2011-11-18)
 11. ↑ Comment is free, but woo is sacred (<https://legalbizzle.wordpress.com/2011/11/15/comment-is-free-but-woo-is-sacred/>) (Legalbizzle, *The Bizzle*, 2011-11-15)
 12. ↑ ^{12.0} ^{12.1} ^{12.2} Freemen of the dangerous nonsense (<http://www.legalweek.com/legal-week/blog-post/2125364/freemen-dangerous-nonsense>) (Adam Wagner, *Legal Week*, 2011-11-16)
 13. ↑ "Nonsense or loophole?" (http://judiciary.sut1.co.uk/docs/benchmark/benchmark_feb2012.pdf) (*Benchmark #57*, February 2012, p 18) — ~~blatantly plagiarised~~ lovingly referenced from this very article.
 14. ↑ Law Society of Ireland *Gazette*, April 2012 (<http://www.lawsociety.ie/Documents/Gazette/Gazette%202012/April2012.pdf>), p12
 15. ↑ Kersey, John. "The Freeman on the Land Movement: Grass Roots Libertarianism in Action." (<https://libertarianalliance.wordpress.com/2010/12/02/john-kersey-on-freemen-of-the-land/>) *Legal Notes* #50. Libertarian Alliance, 2010.
 16. ↑ Well, mostly. (<https://diggerfortruth.wordpress.com/2012/03/31/the-standford-hill-possy/>)
 17. ↑ No attempts to cash in alleged "birth bond" (<http://forums.randi.org/showthread.php?t=176799>) ; unanswered questions (<http://forums.randi.org/showpost.php?p=5992520&postcount=47>)
 18. ↑ ^{18.0} ^{18.1} Terry Bouffard's fee schedule fails (<http://forums.randi.org/showpost.php?p=6154645&postcount=182>) (JREF Forums) — Judge: "Where do you get this stuff?" The freeman in this case also had his \$7000 car seized.
 19. ↑ Rob Menard's FOTL Claims (<http://forums.randi.org/showthread.php?t=176799&page=10>) (JREF Forums)
 20. ↑ ^{20.0} ^{20.1} ^{20.2} ^{20.3} ^{20.4} ^{20.5} ^{20.6} ^{20.7} ^{20.8} "How To Be Truly Free" talk transcript (<http://truthproject.co.uk/howtobetrulyfreetranscript>) ^{img} (Chris of the family Kettle)
 21. ↑ Section 16 - See here for how the concept of fractional reserve banking is perverted to justify this claim (<http://www.fmotl.com/Fundamentals.htm#BM16>)
 22. ↑ Alex Jones calls freeman ideas 'Quackery' (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LPH5ikNKaVE>)
 23. ↑ e.g., [5] (<http://blog.scrapperduncan.com/2011/11/22/political-self-sabotage-the-freeman-on-the-land-movement-has-a-conflict-of-interest-with-occupy-london/#comment-6638>) , [6] (http://weareangry.co.uk/Portals/23/.../FREEMAN_-_Freeman_Guide.pdf)
 24. ↑ ^{24.0} ^{24.1} ^{24.2} ^{24.3} ^{24.4} ^{24.5} ^{24.6} ^{24.7} ^{24.8} ^{24.9} John Harris: It's An Illusion (<http://www.tpuc.org/node/558>) talk, a primary Freeman text; transcript (<http://www.saveourearth.co.uk/blog/2009/12/its-an-illusion-by-john-harris-please-read-each-and-everyone-of-you-this-is-so-important/>) ^{img}. At 38:04 in this video, John Harris cites Baby P as an example when talking about social services taking people's children away from them. Baby P^[wp] was a case in the UK of a child who died at the hands of his mother and her boyfriend. Social services and the various other agencies involved were widely criticised for *ailing* to take the child into care and not identifying the risk to the child. Not only is it intellectually dishonest to cite an emotive real life example that actually contradicts your argument, to misrepresent a tragic case like this in such a way is downright offensive.
 25. ↑ definition of common law (<http://www.fmotl.com/>)
 26. ↑ ^{26.0} ^{26.1} ^{26.2} ^{26.3} Meet your Strawman (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ME7K6P7hlko>) (YouTube)
 27. ↑ Notice of Understanding and Intent and Claim of Right (<http://www.fmotl.com/NoticeOfUnderstanding.htm>) (example for your use)
 28. ↑ Failed appeal against Occupy London eviction (<http://www.judiciary.gov.uk/Resources/JCO/Documents/Judgments/cityoflondon-v-samede-appeal.pdf>) — "*First, he challenged the judgment on the ground that it did not apply to him, as a 'Magna Carta heir'. But that is a concept unknown to the law. He also says that his 'Magna Carta rights' would be breached by execution of the orders. But only chapters 1, 9 and 29 of Magna Carta (1297 version) survive.*"
 29. ↑ The Law Society is actually the professional body for solicitors in the UK. Surprisingly enough.
 30. ↑ "Dock" in fact is from (https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/dock#Etymology_4) the Dutch *dok*, meaning "animal pen."
 31. ↑ Freeman In Gloucester Court 29th Jan 2010 Part 1. (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uU7G6XIMt2Q>)
 32. ↑ ENGLISH FREEMAN IN COURT PART 1 (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWb_89i6vmk&feature=related)
 33. ↑ Filming judges' summaries will be allowed in the

- future (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-14800838>) (BBC)
34. ↑ *e.g.* [2] (<http://tpuc.org/forum/viewtopic.php?p=49170&sid=4ee4c230dfa52c38fe0485356b091554#p49170>)^{img}, [3] (<http://www.tpuc.org/forum/viewtopic.php?f=4&t=5340>)^{img}, [4] (<http://www.fmotl.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=37&t=4029>)^{img} and even poetry about it (<http://www.conspoetry.com/cestui-que-vie-act-1666>)^{img}.
 35. ↑ Cestui Que Vie Act, 1666 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/aep/Cha2/18-19/11>)
 36. ↑ *e.g.* [7] (<http://www.politicsforum.co.uk/forum/viewtopic.php?p=578523&sid=91733391387d3240788c71d10cbc20ed#p578523>)
 37. ↑ *e.g.* Meet Your Strawman (<http://www.yourstrawman.com/>) .
 38. ↑ MPs get a fixed standard salary which is way below an equivalent job in the private sector (though the expenses are pretty lavish).
 39. ↑ Re: Freedom of Information Act 2000: Birth Tracking Bond etc (<http://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/29165/response/76103/attach/2/foi%20gol.pdf>) (HM Treasury, 18 March 2010)
 40. ↑ Girl Gye in Prison! (<http://forum.davidicke.com/showthread.php?t=84422>)^{img} (David Icke forums)
 41. ↑ CBC - Another State and Police Sanctioned, Propagandized Media Smear Campaign Against Freedom (<http://usuryfree.blogspot.co.uk/2012/03/cbc-another-state-and-police-sanctioned.html>) (David-Kevin Lindsay, *The UsuryFree Eye Opener*, 2012-03-02)
 42. ↑ Dump owner's crusader still vexatious, court rules (<http://www.kamloopsnews.ca/article/20110617/KAMLOOPS0101/306179968/-1/kamloops/dump-owners-crusader-still-vexatious-court-rules>) (Kamloops Daily News, 2011-06-17)

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Categories: Cover story articles | Pseudolaw | Extreme wingnuttery

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Pseudolaw

From RationalWiki

Pseudolaw encompasses any legal theory developed or action taken that relies heavily on frivolous arguments trumped up in legal language. Pseudolaw shares many homologous and analogous traits with pseudoscience such as the use of argument from authority, equivocation, and quote mining. Like pseudoscience most of the proponents of pseudolaw are laymen with little to no legal experience (outside their own trials and incarcerations). While an overwhelming majority of those in the legal profession reject the arguments, there are a few cranks with law degrees and licenses that push pseudolaw as well.

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Signs of pseudolaw

Much like pseudoscience, one of the first hints that a legal theory is pseudolaw is when it bucks against established legal consensus and precedent. However, while necessary this is not a sufficient condition. Much of currently accepted law was once against precedent. The primary thing to look for is if the legal theory or argument has been tried before a court and whether it was rejected. If an argument has been rejected by the courts on a repeated basis anyone attempting to push that argument is practicing pseudolaw.

While the ultimate test of pseudolaw is how it is ultimately perceived and used in a court of law (just as with pseudoscience the ultimate test is how it performs with predictions against empirical reality) there are many red flags that can identify pseudolaw even without a court ruling. These include, but are not limited to:

- Over reliance on technicalities such as spelling or grammar. For example, some people argue that the traditional use of all capital letters for names in court briefings is a different entity than the actual person in the case.^[1] See, for instance, David Wynn Miller.
- Quoting Supreme Court cases out of context, usually one or two sentences, or sometimes even a phrase. Tax protesters are fond of quoting Supreme Court opinions that say that the Sixteenth Amendment "conferred no new power of taxation." *Stanton v. Baltic Mining Co.*, 240 U.S. 103 (1916); see also *Brushaber v. Union Pacific Railroad Co.*, 240 U.S. 1 (1916) to argue that the income tax is illegal. However, the ruling is not

**It's not even
a good idea**

Pseudolaw



**I have a theory,
which is mine**

- British Constitution Group
- David Wynn Miller
- Federal Reserve
- Flat tax
- Freeman on the land
- Gold standard (economics)
- John Harris
- Militia movement
- Obama citizenship denial
- Posse Comitatus (organization)
- Strawman theory
- Tax protester
- The United States as a Christian nation

v - t - e (<http://rationalwiki.org/w/index.php?title=Template:Pseudolaw&action=edit>)

saying that the 16th amendment did not provide power to tax income, but rather that Congress already had that power. This is classic quote mining.

- Reference to other arguments that have been rejected as frivolous by courts. Pseudolaw concepts flock together and cross-pollinate.
- Arguments that refer to the United States of America Incorporated or to the Federal government somehow seeming to be a private enterprise or company.^[2]
- Jurisdictional challenges that focus on claiming the federal government has no right to try cases in states. A favorite is to claim that any court with gold fringe on the flag is a "maritime" court not a real court.^[3]
- Arguments that try and say that the court, police, public officials, etc. have no authority over an individual unless that individual has consented to that authority. This is often phrased as along the lines of "once you accept an attorney, you're bound by contract to the court, but if you refuse an attorney they have no authority."
- Intense hatred of lawyers and the bar, reference to the bar as being run by the Illuminati or Masons, and encouraging people with little to no legal training to refuse appointed attorneys and proceed *pro se*.^[4]
- References to the Titles of Nobility Amendment (the so-called "missing 13th Amendment" to the United States Constitution). Similarly, some pseudolawyers even argue that persons who use the title of "Esquire" (generally practicing attorneys)^[5] are not citizens and cannot hold public office.^[6]
- References to the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) in cases which do not involve private commercial transactions (for example, citing the UCC in criminal, traffic, and tax cases)^[7]
- References to "admiralty law" or "maritime law" in cases which clearly do not involve any matters which occurred at sea or in navigable waters.
- References to "military" or "martial law" in matters that do not involve the military or members thereof.
- Pseudolawyers are fond of making up jargon from Latin, that they claim derive from common law and give people special rights that others do not such as *juris spurious* when used in filing claims.^[8]
- On a similar note, pseudolawyers often misuse legal terminology, often because they do not have a full understanding of the concepts they are attempting to discuss.
- Extraordinary claims such as being able to get anyone out of jail, no matter what they were convicted of, in a matter of weeks.^[9]

High profile pseudolawyers

Pseudolaw practitioners can fall into several categories, primarily laymen with no legal training or license who "advise" clients, and true lawyers that have embraced crankhood to push some particular pseudolaw theory. From time to time one of these pseudolawyers will gain press attention because their ideas are being used in increasing numbers, or in a high profile case, or because they themselves are being prosecuted.

One recent (as of October 2007) example is that of Tommy Cryer, a Louisiana-based attorney who has been a popular speaker in the tax protester movement. Cryer claims that there is no law that makes individuals liable for income tax and pushes his theory using all the classic pseudolaw methods discussed above.^[10] He was recently prosecuted for willful failure to file an income tax return but was found not guilty by the jury.^[11] Because of the rarity of such an event Cryer has received some media attention and tax protesters everywhere are trumpeting this as a victory for their cause. In reality, Cryer got off by convincing the jury he did not *willfully* fail to file because he didn't know he had to. He was still found liable for the tax and will never be able to use such a defense again. But Cryer has used his "victory" to continue making money on the lecture tour (despite others such as Sherry Jackson who have attempted to use his defense and lost).^[12]

Another example is that of Tony Davis and his International Legal Services (<http://www.intlegalservices.com/default.asp>) business. Davis pretends he is a lawyer, though he is really just a convicted felon with no legal

training. For the small price of \$12,000 he promises to get anyone out of jail no matter what crime they committed or when based on a technicality he claims makes every conviction in the last 60 years null and void.^[9] True to form with most cranks and con men, while his theory was rejected outright by every level of the court system, he continues to claim that he is right and victory is around the corner.^[13] A similar pattern has occurred with Mitch Modeleski a/k/a Paul Andrew Mitchell and his "Supreme Law Firm" (<http://www.supremelaw.org/>), who has filed a number of frivolous lawsuits and threatened a number of people with baseless suits.^[14]

Law, authority and hucksters

Though not strictly pseudolaw, many people have attempted to use their position as a "lawyer" to somehow gain authority on issues or even run scams similar to televangelists. For example, Andrew Schlafly (mildly e-famous for his blog, *conservapedia*) has a law degree, but has not been involved in any serious legal practice and has not participated in any meaningful way in the legal system. But he uses his position as a "lawyer" to attempt to gain authority to argue his polemic points, such as the link between abortion and breast cancer.^[15]

Other examples include individuals such as Jay Sekulow of the American Center of Law and Justice, which is essentially a giant anti-ACLU crank organization.^[16] Sekulow files *amicus curiae* briefs on cases other people have brought up, then pretends on his daily radio show that he is an integral part of all of these cases. He then starts begging for money; he has essentially made a living pretending to be a lawyer and hating the ACLU.

Neither Sekulow nor Schlafly have participated in a meaningful way in the legal system. While they are lawyers in the loosest sense of the word, the only thing they do with these credentials is use them to fleece the gullible and push an ideologically-driven agenda. This is not technically pseudolaw but it is an important element in the abuse of the legal system.

Pseudolaw and conspiracy theories

Pseudolaw often goes hand and hand with other conspiracy theories. Most pseudolaw practitioners believe there is a vast conspiracy to cover up a group of elitists that control all the judges, courts, juries and the government as a whole. This is why their ideas never work in court--not because they are wrong, but because there is a conspiracy to suppress them (just like the vast materialist conspiracy propping up the Darwinian orthodoxy). This dark group holds all the classic labels such as Masons, Illuminati, and Zionists. There is also a tendency to believe that violent revolution is coming and that people should stockpile supplies, weapons and ammunition. Many of the far-right militia and extremist groups that have dominated press coverage of domestic terrorism over the last couple of decades have relied heavily on pseudolaw concepts and conspiracies.

Debt elimination scams

Some debt elimination scams are based on pseudo-legal arguments. One such scam known as the redemption movement that has been circulating for years in different forms claims that the United States Treasury Department has a trust fund established for every U.S. citizen with a Social Security number, which funds can (somehow) be accessed by filing the appropriate paperwork at the county courthouse declaring oneself a sovereign of the "united states of America" and disclaiming federal citizenship in the "United States of America" (note the pseudo-legal obsession with making distinctions where none exist based on capitalization). Then, goes the theory, one need only print a "Sight Draft", or "Bill of Exchange", transferring one's home loans and other debts to the U.S. Treasury Department. These bogus documents are rejected by lenders as a matter of course, and courts have repeatedly found in favor of lenders and against those attempting this method, declaring such documents worthless.

The cost of pseudolaw

The greatest cost is to those that buy into the theories and wind up spending years in jail and often losing all of their life work in the processes. While some of these people may be just greedy and looking for a way out of paying their fair share, some may honestly be seeking something and get pulled in by the cult-like mentality of the movement. Family members of those in prison also face tremendous costs, such as when Tony Davis would go to people and claim to be able to get their family members out of jail for thousands of dollars. When it failed and people tried to get their money back, Davis sued them.^[13]

There is also an inherent cost to the legal system in processing the frivolous claims, and to all aspects of government when pseudolaw is taken to the extreme, such as the case of Ed Brown. Ed Brown was a tax protester who bought into all the conspiracy and pseudolaw theories. After his conviction, he and his wife holed up in their house and refused to leave, threatening violent action against law enforcement. The eight month standoff was extremely costly both in terms of dollar figures and the time and energy of law enforcement.^[17]

Finally, like all examples of irrationality, there is the intellectual cost of destruction of reason. For all of these reasons, pseudolaw is a dangerous trend that needs as much vigilance as any of the pseudoscience movements.

External links

- Idiot Legal Arguments at ADL.org (<http://www.adl.org/mwd/suss1.asp>) , a mindbendingly dense and often snarky list of refutations of US pseudolaw theories, written by Bernard Sussman for the Anti-Defamation League in 1999.
- The Tax Protester FAQ (<http://evans-legal.com/dan/tpfaq.html>) , a somewhat more accessible presentation of US pseudolaw as used by tax protesters.
- Comedy website Cracked.com (http://www.cracked.com/article_17240_7-retarded-tax-evasion-schemes-people-are-actually-trying.html) 's intensely snarky list of "7 Retarded Tax Evasion Schemes (People Are Actually Trying)".

Footnotes

1. ↑ Discussion and court cases surrounding the all caps issue (<http://home.hiwaay.net/~becraft/NamesInCaps.htm>)
2. ↑ Pseudolaw rant about the USA, inc. (<http://home.iae.nl/users/lightnet/creator/federalgovernment.htm>)
3. ↑ Pseudolaw rant involving maritime courts and the gold fringe on flags (<http://www.apfn.org/apfn/flag.htm>)
4. ↑ Biblical pseudolaw rant against lawyers and the Bar Association (http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/sociopolitica/esp_sociopol_rothschild01.htm#Ministry%20of%20Justice-%20American%20Bar%20Association)
5. ↑ The first thing we do, let's remove the citizenship of all the lawyers.
6. ↑ Essay which makes exactly this argument (<http://www.supremelaw.org/library/esquires.html>)
7. ↑ Bizarre pseudolaw book referencing the Bible and misusing legal terminology (<http://www.authorhouse.com/BookStore/ItemDetail.aspx?bookid=20674>)
8. ↑ Motion of Particulars from a victim of pseudolaw (<http://www.scribd.com/doc/455690/Federal-District-Court-Defendant-Motion-for-Bill-of-Particulars>)
9. ↑ ^{9.0} ^{9.1} Ex-convict appeals to inmates' hopes for freedom (<http://www.statesman.com/news/content/news/stories/local/10/28/1028tony.html>)
10. ↑ Summary of Cryer's pseudolaw delusions (<http://www.gcstation.net/liefreezone/>)
11. ↑ Cryer found not guilty (<http://www.shreveporttimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070713/NEWS03/707130321/1062/NEWS03>)
12. ↑ Example of one of Cryer's current paid gigs (he needs the money to pay back taxes!) (<http://givemeliberty.org/CONVENTION/GML2007/Registration.aspx>)
13. ↑ ^{13.0} ^{13.1} U.S. Supreme Court rejects ex-convict's legal argument (<http://www.statesman.com/news/content/news/stories/local/10/30/1030tony.html>)

14. ↑ Site critical of Paul Andrew Mitchell (<http://www.paulandrewmitchell.com/>)
15. ↑ Schlafly and his breast cancer rant (<http://conwebwatch.tripod.com/stories/2005/medicine.html>)
16. ↑ ACLJ on the ACLU (<http://www.aclj.org/TrialNotebook/Read.aspx?id=68>)
17. ↑ Local editorial on the standoff (<http://concordmonitor.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071007/OPINION/710070391&SearchID=73298253103380>)

Articles on RationalWiki related to pseudo-studies

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Woo

From RationalWiki

Woo is a term used among skeptical writers for pseudoscientific explanations that have certain common characteristics.

The term comes from **woo-woo**, an epithet used in the 1990s by science and skeptical writers to ridicule people who believe or promote such things. This is in turn believed to have come from the onomatopoeia "wooooo!" as a reaction to dimmed lights or magic tricks. The term implies a lack of either intelligence or sincerity on the part of the person or concepts so described.

Despite the terrible name, it has become quite a popular term. Woo is sometimes synonymous with bullshit, though there are differences. Bullshit is generally just a lie pulled out of wherever, about whatever. Woo is understood specifically as a pseudoscience, uses a science-like formula, and attempts to place itself as scientifically supported.

Woo most always contains most of the following characteristics:

1. A simple idea that purports to be the one answer to many problems (often including diseases)
2. A "scientific-sounding" reason for how it works, but little to no actual science behind it, quote mines of studies that if bent enough could be described in such a way to support it, or outright misapplication of studies.
3. It involves the supernatural and paranormal (not necessarily)
4. A claim of persecution, usually perpetrated by the pharmaceutical, medical, or scientific community
5. An invocation of a scientific authority
6. Lack of scientific research, but abundant testimonials
7. A claim that scientists are blind to the discovery, despite attempts to alert them
8. A disdain for objective, randomized experimental controls, especially double-blind testing
9. And, usually, an offer to share the knowledge for a price.

Woo is usually not the description of an effect but of the *explanation* as to why the effect occurs. For example, homeopathy does actually work, but as a placebo — the explanations for why it works, *e.g.* water memory, are woo.

Woo is used to blind or distract an audience from a real explanation or to discourage people from delving deeper into the subject to find a more realistic explanation. You can't make money if nobody buys your bullshit. (As such, "woo" that has zero paying customers is more like just ordinary batshit crazy.)

Style over substance

Pseudoscience



Popular pseudosciences

- Alternative medicine
- Astrology
- Creation science
- Homeopathy
- Supernatural
- Ufology
- **Woo**

Random examples

- Chinese astrology
- H2Om
- Human Potential Movement
- Peanut butter argument
- Polygraph
- Sound science

Resources

- Pseudoscience portal
- List of pseudosciences

v - t - e (<http://rationalwiki.org/w/index.php?title=Template:Pseudosciencenav&action=edit>)

See also

- Water woo
- Audio woo
- Automotive woo

External links

- ScienceBlogger Orac (<http://www.scienceblogs.com/insolence>) uses the term prominently in his weekly "Your Friday Dose of Woo", a review of pseudoscience that has recently interested the author.
- James Randi Educational Foundation (<http://www.randi.org/>) is an organization developed to publicly debunk "the paranormal, pseudoscientific, and the supernatural," often collectively referred to by Randi as "woo-woo."
- 125 Fake cancer cures (<http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/factsheets/fakecancercures.html>)
- "Kooks in the wild" (<http://www.abarnett.demon.co.uk/atheism/kookparade.html>) , including kook ratings.
- 2009 Golden Woo Awards (<http://skeptico.blogs.com/skeptico/2010/01/the-golden-woos-2.html>)
- 187 Fake Cancer "Cures" Consumers Should Avoid (http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/EnforcementActivitiesbyFDA/ucm171057.htm?utm_campaign=Google2&utm_source=fdaSearch&utm_medium=website&utm_term=fake%20cancer%20cures&utm_content=2) (FDA)

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Categories: Pseudoscience | Neologisms | Woo

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Sovereign citizen

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The **sovereign citizen** movement claims that a person has the right under common law (or at least their bizarre sham definition thereof) to declare him/herself as essentially a nation unto themselves, and therefore may not be subject to the law of the land where they live. It is closely associated, among other things, with such extreme right wing causes as the tax protester movement and the militia movement in the United States. The term freeman on the land is a pseudolegal term assumed as a title by some would-be sovereigns, deriving from a complex and not-easily-explained conspiracy theory involving admiralty law and the Uniform Commercial Code.

Though a few stateless people exist in the world (most in permanent diplomatic limbo due to lack of any citizenship), and in the United States a few have somewhat arcane legal status allowing them to be citizens of their place of residence (currently recognized only in American Samoa and Swains Island) but not the U.S. at large, the idea that one can renounce one's citizenship in order to evade the laws of the land is not a right recognized in most countries. (U.S. courts generally consider this argument frivolous.)

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Scams

This claim is also associated with a few bizarre "debt elimination" scams which hold that if somebody files all the right paperwork with the government declaring themselves a sovereign citizen, they then have access to unlimited funds from the U.S. Treasury to pay off all their mortgages and other debts, similar to the theories of the redemption movement. The gist of the argument is that the Social Security Act established accounts at the U.S. Treasury for every American citizen and that declaring oneself a "sovereign citizen" gives one the legal right to issue "sight drafts" or "bills of exchange" which draw on your personal U.S. Treasury Account to pay off debts. This is not true, and those who have fallen for this scam have found the only person who gained access to any funds as a result was the scammer who charged them money to learn about this bizarre debt elimination method at his seminar.

An indication of the intellectual limitations for many members of the movement is indicated by the response of a Texas motorist to a December 4, 2008 traffic stop. "I am Texas Republican sovereignty. I do not recognize this as a legal traffic stop." He has been reported to have said this.

**It's not even
a good idea**

Pseudolaw



**I have a theory,
which is mine**

- Citizen's Rule Book
- Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association
- David Wynn Miller
- Federal Reserve
- Freeman on the land
- John Harris
- Obama citizenship denial
- Paul Randle-Jolliffe
- Posse Comitatus (organization)
- Pseudolaw
- Redemption movement
- Tax protester
- The Annotated Citizen's Rule Book

v - t - e (<http://rationalwiki.org/w/index.php?title=Template:Pseudolaw&action=edit>)

Political sociology

The sovereign citizen movement appears to be a direct descendant of the Posse Comitatus movement. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center the movement may have as many as 300,000 members (<http://www.splcenter.org/get-informed/intelligence-report/browse-all-issues/2010/fall/sovereign-citizen-kane>) .

Although populist antistatism is associated with rural and small town whites in the American West, it has also appeared among urban African American squatters (<http://www.wsbtv.com/news/24701116/detail.html>) in the American South. The *Atlanta Journal Constitution* has recently described (<http://www.ajc.com/news/dekalb/da-paper-terrorists-stealing-595202.html>) them as "paper terrorists" for having the effrontery to squat in empty luxury homes in south Dekalb County. DeKalb Deputy Chief Assistant District Attorney John Melvin expressed class outrage when he commented (<http://abcnews.go.com/US/georgia-battling-sovereign-citizens-squatting-foreclosed-homes/story?id=11445382>) that, "It's amazing that these groups of citizens who like to proclaim they're Robin Hood only choose million-dollar homes. Shocking." Presumably they should do their squatting in mobile homes or hovels.

Given the willingness to act on, rather than merely propound, their ideas, together with the selection of valuable properties for squatting, makes the movement resemble the "social banditry" that erupted in the past in predominantly peasant societies presenting extreme income inequality. This is egalitarian redistribution of wealth tricked up in the familiar, traditional language that politically legitimizes action. That it is occurring in an advanced industrial society, in the alienating suburbs of Atlanta, is novel.

See also

- Freeman on the land, which adopts many sovereign citizen ideas

External links

- 'Sovereign' Citizen Kane (<http://www.redcrayons.net/?p=122>) , an expose on the "sovereign citizen" movement and the murder of two police officers by "sovereign citizens" Jerry and Joe Kane
- Sovereign Citizens Movement overview (<http://www.splcenter.org/get-informed/intelligence-files/ideology/sovereign-citizens-movement>) , Southern Poverty Law Center

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Categories: Pseudolaw | Extreme wingnuttery | Scams | Vigilantes

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Libertarianism



From RationalWiki

“ Libertarians secretly worried that ultimately someone will figure out the whole of their political philosophy boils down to 'get off my property.' News flash: This is not really a big secret to the rest of us. ”

—John Scalzi^[1]

Libertarianism is the antonym of "authoritarianism."^[2] In modern usage, it mainly refers to a largely American political and social philosophy that advocates laissez-faire capitalism as a panacea for virtually *everything*. More left-leaning people consider this to be synonymous with oligarchic corporate rule after the fashion of the American Gilded Age, while the reality-based community tends to realize that one cannot just yank economic theories out of the air and magically expect them to work.

Libertarians themselves tend to believe that the axiom of motivated human action is self-evident, that is, value is subjective and created through transaction, and people subjectively pursue it in their own way. Libertarianism claims that freedom extends to all economic and social spheres and is limited only when it comes into conflict with the same rights of others. The US political party most aligned with libertarianism is the Libertarian Party, whose candidate obtained 0.32% of the popular vote in the in the 2004 Presidential elections.^[3] There is also an "Objectivist Party," formed as a spin-off from the Libertarian Party by those who thought that the party's 2008 presidential candidate, Bob Barr, was too left-wing,^[4] and a Boston Tea Party (no connection other than ideological to that other tea party) formed as a spin-off by those who thought the Libertarian Party had become too right-wing on foreign policy and civil liberties after the LP deleted much of its platform in 2006.^[5]

As it is a philosophy rather than a set of specific issues, libertarianism holds that freedom is good in itself, and then deduces from this the opinion that it also tends to bring about optimal financial prosperity and social/political peace. Government, libertarians believe, is the biggest threat to freedom, because they think it interferes in the lives of its citizens, and does much more harm than good.

Libertarians do not believe that people — individually or through their institutions of government — have the right to interfere through coercion in the affairs of others, and that extends to other nations. This is sometimes referred to

It doesn't stop at the water's edge:

Politics



Key players

- Politicians
- Political parties
- Government

Theory

- Political philosophy
- International relations
- Political spectrum

Practice

- Propaganda
- Diplomacy
- War

Random strands and actors

- Cornucopian vs. Malthusian debate
- Georgism

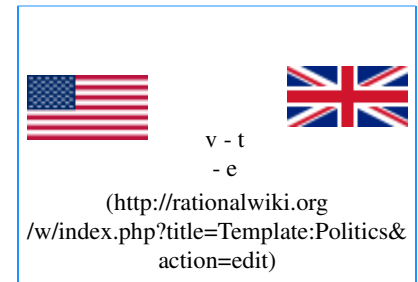
- Politician

Other concepts

- Dictator
- False flag operation
- Racial pride

Country sections

as a non-interventionist foreign policy, or isolationism, though usually not in a xenophobic sense. Most of them are not pacifists, however, and strongly promote the concepts of individual responsibility and self-defense, which may extend to the notion that national defense is one of the few legitimate functions of government. Like all people who identify with certain political groups, libertarians have varying views on certain issues, although they agree on general principles. Belief in the power of the free marketplace, however, is usually non-negotiable, as they claim that other liberties would probably not exist without it.



Examples abound in the 20th century of societies that failed badly because of the policy of top-down control exercised by their government — and of one that happens to account for over a fifth of the world's population, and has been generating close to double-digit economic growth for over a decade, ever since it gave up on such extremities of economic top-down control. The "free" world hopes that the trickle of economic freedoms afforded their people will result in some minimal political freedoms developing.^[6]

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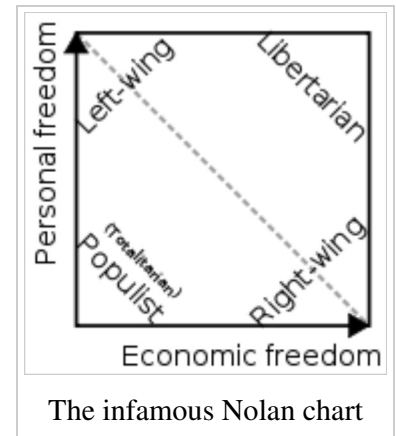
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Critical definition

There are many critics of libertarianism on both the left and the right. Many accuse libertarians of oversimplifying political issues by relying on such maxims as "the government which governs best is the government which governs least." Some libertarians, however, don't see this as a weakness, but rather as a strength. More frequently, however, the core of libertarianism is seen by its proponents to be the "Non-Aggression Axiom." Though various phrasings exist, this fundamental libertarian philosophy is often stated along the following lines: "You may do as you wish, as long as you do not initiate the use of force." It is applied in various ways to reach policy positions.

Libertarians advocate extensive individual rights. Libertarians advocate a society where "anything that's peaceful and voluntary" would be allowed so long as it does not infringe on anyone's life, liberty, or property, or engender force or fraud. However, the exact nature of a right as "positive" or "negative" differs among libertarians. For example, one might say smoking in public is a personal liberty that affects nobody, whereas another would say it *forces* secondhand smoke upon those around them, interfering with their own right to not inhale smoke.

In the United States, libertarians are closely associated with opposition to gun control, government surveillance, entitlements, and prohibitory drug policy. While the United States Constitution supports extensive liberty (particularly in the Bill of Rights), libertarians are rarely elected to offices. Cynics have suggested that refusal to provide adequate pork to their district hurts their chances in legislative elections - other cynics point out that if they don't win an election in the first place, how can their "porcine provision" skills be tested or judged? The narrow usage of "libertarian" as a label is also a cause, as some who takes "moderate libertarian" positions are frequently called a "free-market liberal/Democrat" or a "pro-___ rights conservative/Republican" - or even derisive epithets like "libt kiddies."



The infamous Nolan chart

Inspirations

Many libertarians are inspired to their political philosophy through one of a small number of influential fiction books. The works of novelist Ayn Rand (*The Fountainhead*, *Atlas Shrugged*) and Robert Heinlein (*The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress*) are often cited. For example, many libertarians in the United States might quote Rand's *Atlas Shrugged* when they speak of government:

“ The only proper functions of a government are: the police, to protect you from criminals; the army, to protect you from foreign invaders; and the courts, to protect your property and contracts from breach or fraud by others, to settle disputes by rational rules, according to objective law. ”

—Galt Speech^[7], *Atlas Shrugged*

Other libertarians may point to such works of non-fiction as *Libertarianism in One Lesson* by David Bergland, which posit a clear set of axioms and then delineate how society might follow them and how it would be best for everyone.

Arguments against strict libertarianism

While a preference for maximal personal freedom is pretty much universal throughout most of the political spectrum (though less so on the fringes), libertarianism presents several difficulties:

- Libertarian business structures greatly resemble governments hierarchies. It is contradictory to opine that citizens do not need rulers while maintaining that workers need managers.
- Marxists see no distinction between profit and taxes, as libertarians do. Both are considered theft of wages, the former by a business owner and the latter by a government.
- Strict libertarianism relies on the distinction between positive and negative liberties, a distinction which is

not universally accepted by philosophers.^[8]

- Strict interpretations of freedom to associate offer little incentive to remedy problems created by social stratification; in particular, the principle of "personal ownership" often leads to a blame-the-victim mentality (e.g. Rand's use of the term "parasite" to describe those dependent on public services).
- No matter how many whine about it, governmental regulation often corrects problems in the market, the best examples are in health care regulations, such as enforcing credentialing for physicians so they are not some nut in a lab coat pretending, making sure pharmaceuticals have the ingredients they say they do, and work, and are relatively safe, ER's being required to treat people regardless of their ability to pay. Many Libertarians don't have an answer for what to do to correct these problems, they just shout the repeated two-word answer without explanation: "free market!"
- To many libertarians, environmental damage is just a cost of doing business.^[9] Regulations to stop or correct for negative externalities caused by private companies are seen as "anti-business." Apparently, not even disastrous economic catastrophes that affected the lives of millions are reason enough to hold the corporations that caused them accountable. For example, Rand Paul (a professed ardent libertarian) criticized government regulation and enforcement to clean up the millions of gallons of oil spilled into the Gulf of Mexico as an un-American boot heel on the throat of British Petroleum.^[10]
- Libertarians generally split into those who hold their views on utilitarian grounds and those who base their philosophy on natural rights. Those rights usually include Locke's "life, liberty, and property." This group might be just as accurately called *propertarians*. While these rights are in principle also affirmed by many non-libertarians, raising "property" to the same inviolable status as "life" causes some problems: a sweeping interpretation would denounce all taxation as illegitimate expropriation, making it impossible to finance even the most essential public services.
- Libertarians like to ignore certain periods of history such as the Gilded Age, where libertarian ideas were widespread and in effect, ("No, it was crony capitalism!") or recast them as a golden age. This can lead to lots of lulz; like thinking Abraham Lincoln was the spawn of Satan.
- Libertarians want to push the government away from the banking and finance industries, often recently stating banks/depositors/investors should not have been bailed out by the government in the credit crunch of 2008.^[11] None would however wish their own funds to evaporate completely if they had money in these accounts (or investments) and their bank acted irresponsibly. This highlights the often championed "This pain needs to happen for freedom! ...but not to me" witnessed in a good amount of libertarian thinking.
- You are reading this page using something originally created by the big, bad gummint.

Like many other political positions, libertarianism is also subject to fundamentalist thinking; in libertarianism this can lead to both figurative and literal arms races, as well as an attraction to fringe groups such as the tax protester movement, and calling for a resumption of the gold standard.

Branches and disputes within libertarianism

While libertarians all generally agree on the premise of the Non-Aggression Axiom, there are internal rifts and disagreement over what extent the Non-Aggression Axiom applies to. On the one hand, there are the Libertarian

Party types (colloquially called "Minarchists") who take a position of advocating minimal government, and on the other there are the market anarchists who believe that all the services the government provides are unjust monopolies, which the free market can handle better if let go of by the State. Market anarchists can be split into two groups, "anarcho-mutualists" who believe in a free market but not in capitalism or class, and anarcho-capitalists who believe in *completely* unregulated capitalism.

There is usually little room in between these two, but even then, there are still different branches within these umbrella terms. On the Minarchist side of the libertarian ideology, there are the *paleo-libertarians*, who advocate a strong return to the Constitution and are somewhat conservative in their arguments to preserve moral law, much like the Old Right paleoconservatives. Ron Paul, who is often viewed as a Libertarian, would more fit the paleoconservative/libertarian framework, and not actual libertarianism. Additionally, there exist the geo-libertarians (who advocate simply a tax on fallow and unused land), neo-libertarians (often regarded not in any sense as libertarians, as their political views conflict with the very principles of the Non-Aggression Axiom), and other branches with their own nuances. On the Anarchist side of the spectrum, things tend to be more homogeneous, with the major disagreements usually only amounting to how to achieve a libertarian society and solutions to ethical dilemmas.

This ideological division occurs not only externally in political theory, but philosophically as well. On the one side, there are the deontological natural rights theorists (Murray Rothbard being the most prominent advocate), and on the other are the utilitarian libertarians (David D. Friedman is often the most associated with this view). A few minority nihilists and radical subjectivists exist within these circles, but these views are often seen to be in conflict with the general premises laid out by the Non-Aggression Axiom.

Left-libertarianism

The word 'libertarianism' was used before the current usage came about to refer to anarchists, who are against hierarchies brought about by stratified classes and a state controlled by the wealthy elites, and thus oppose capitalism. Many call themselves 'libertarian socialists,' a philosophy championed by Noam Chomsky. The use of "libertarianism" to describe anarchy dates back to the late 1850s, with *Le Liberaire, Journal du Mouvement Social* being the name of a journal published by anarchist Joseph Dejacque. The term 'libertarian communism' originated in the 1880s, when the French anarchist congress adopted it. As late as 1954, a largely anarcho-syndicalist movement named *The Libertarian League* was set up in the US. The current Libertarian Party in the US only came into being in early 1970s, well over a 100 years after anarchists had begun using the term to describe themselves. In the US, to quote Murray Bookchin, the "term 'libertarian' itself, to be sure, raises a problem, notably, the specious identification of an anti-authoritarian ideology with a straggling movement for 'pure capitalism' and 'free trade.' This movement never created the word: it appropriated it from the anarchist movement of the [nineteenth] century. And it should be recovered by those anti-authoritarians...who try to speak for dominated people as a whole, not for personal egotists who identify freedom with entrepreneurship and profit." This ideology is now called "libertarian socialism". Many left-libertarians of this school favor equality as much as liberty and argue for fraternal health societies, civil disobedience through the black market, non-capitalist free trade and competitive worker co-ops.

Brief attempt at (right-)libertarian taxonomy in the US

There is a good deal of overlap between these groups, but the hardliners tend to lavish hate on each other.

- Anarcho-capitalists/Rothbardians: Deontological anarchists in the vein of Rothbard. Walter Block of the LvMI is one. (Most anarcho-capitalists fall into the Rothbardian camp, though a few like David D. Friedman take the more utilitarian approach, and a few like the Voluntarists follow the pure pacifism of Robert LeFevre.)

- "Beltway libertarians": The more utilitarian of the bunch and usually associated more with the Chicago school than the Austrian school. The term "Beltway" is used as a pejorative by the hardline anarchists and deontological types to paint them as sell-outs because they've gotten some traction in DC. Prominent Beltway types include the late Milton Friedman and Nick Gillespie.
- Crank magnets: Usually conspiracy nuts, survivalists, Sovereign citizen types, or gold bugs who think the gummint is out to get them. There are racists, white supremacists and dominionists who want to bring back "states' rights" to resurrect segregation or official state religions or both. Also includes fans of the seasteading, micronation, and vonu movements, "life extension", Galambosianism, Liberty Dollars, and pretty much anything from the Loompanics book catalog. Finally, there are those who take up the mantle of libertarianism because it opposes some federal law they don't like. This usually includes prostitutes, potheads, polygamists, woo-meisters, and peddlers of some form of illegal quackery. May suffer from an excess of colloidal silver in the bloodstream. Alex Jones is the epitome of the crank magnet libertarian.
- "Paleo-libertarians": A term coined by Lew Rockwell. Their policies are mostly the same as the "Taft Republicans" of the Old Right. They are advocates of the Austrian school, originalism, states' rights, and generally socially conservative despite opposing the drug war and "bedroom laws." Ron Paul falls into this camp.
- Deontological minarchists: Largely the venerable predecessors of the modern libertarian movement, who were an influence on Rothbard but rejected anarchism, influenced Rand but rejected orthodox Objectivism, etc. The Foundation for Economic Education and Ludwig von Mises go here.
- Randroids: Usually generic deontological minarchist libertarians, the only difference being that they strictly follow the tenets of Objectivism. Rand herself hated the Libertarian Party and denounced them as poseurs. Alan Greenspan is probably the most famous Randroid, and we all know what happened there.
- "Techno-libertarians": Generally Silicon Valley inhabitants who attempt to apply hacker culture to politics. Lots of overlap with techno-utopian movements like transhumanism and Singularitarianism. Also overlaps with the seasteading, life extension, and digital-currency crank magnets. The most likely of any of these groups to oppose intellectual property rights, traditionally supported by other types of libertarians. See also Eric S. Raymond and Bitcoin.
- Vulgar libertarians: Their true ideological motivations are unknown, but they use the language of the "free market" to shill for corporations that don't want to deal with regulations or taxes. They can usually be found at some DC think tank cranking out bogus research while being bankrolled by Koch Industries or Exxon. Steve Milloy is a prime example.
- South Park Republicans: People who say they are libertarians, but dutifully pull the lever for most anyone with an "R" after their name (not, however, for Ron Paul) every election. In between elections they shill for military interventionism, and attack liberals, but never conservatives, for being enemies of liberty. Their idea of a "libertarian Republican" is Rudy Giuliani. Their only real claim to being libertarians is their irreverent attitude, but this really just boils down to being a jerk for the sake of being a jerk. Glenn Reynolds and Matt Drudge have made a lucrative career pushing their buttons.
- Civil libertarians: Those whose main attraction to libertarianism is civil liberties of the ACLU sort, anti-war issues, gay rights, marijuana, privacy, police abuses, womens lib, conscription, and so forth. They may view liberals as unreliable on these issues, or they may hold conservative economic views, but in either case they are wary of progressives and liberals, and prefer to align with libertarians. The Cato Institute used to emphasize outreach to them in its early years via *Inquiry* magazine and *The Libertarian Review*. Today, Radley Balko might be a prominent example.
- Partyarchs: Those for whom the Libertarian Party and the libertarian movement are one and the same thing. Ideologically suspect to the more hard-core, they differ from Beltway libertarians primarily in that they prefer to throw all their effort into building the Libertarian Party. They typically want to trim and gut the party platform to attract more people, and/or disseminate an oversimplified version of the libertarian message in the name of "effective communication". Fond of using the World's Smallest Political Quiz and

other materials from the Advocates for Self-Government. Examples: Michael Cloud, Wayne Allyn Root.

Quotes on libertarianism

Libertarianism is a political philosophy that engenders much passionate feeling in both support and opposition. (Though with less than one percent of the popular vote, this passionate feeling is presumably limited to a rather small group.) This section relates a few of the pithier quotes on both sides of the debate, usually in reference to capitalist libertarianism.

Opposing

- "A Libertarian is just a Republican who takes drugs." - *essayist Bob Black*.^[12]
- "He always pictured himself a libertarian, which to my way of thinking means 'I want the liberty to grow rich and you can have the liberty to starve.' It's easy to believe that no one should depend on society for help when you yourself happen not to need such help." - *Isaac Asimov on Robert A. Heinlein and libertarian ethics*^[13]
- "That's libertarians for you — anarchists who want police protection from their slaves." - *Kim Stanley Robinson*
- "A libertarian is just a Republican who wants to smoke dope and get laid" - *Thom Hartmann*^[14]
- "I'd rather vote for Bob Hope, the Marx Brothers, or Jerry Lewis. I don't think they're as funny as Professor Hoppers and the Libertarian Party." - *Ayn Rand*^[15]
- "One of the more pretentious political self-descriptions is "Libertarian." People think it puts them above the fray. It sounds fashionable, and to the uninitiated, faintly dangerous. Actually, it's just one more bullshit political philosophy." - *George Carlin*^[16]
- "We even find some men, who drew their first breath, and every other breath of their lives, under this very restriction, now live in dread of absolute suffocation, if they should be restricted in the "sacred right" of taking slaves to Nebraska. That perfect liberty they sigh for—the *liberty of making slaves of other people*—Jefferson never thought of; their own father never thought of; they never thought of themselves, a year ago. How fortunate for them, they did not sooner become sensible of their great misery! Oh, how difficult it is to treat with respect, such assaults upon all we have ever really held sacred." - *Abraham Lincoln's "Peoria Speech," 1854*^[17]

Supporting

- "If the natural tendencies of mankind are so bad that it is not safe to permit people to be free, how is it that the tendencies of these organizers are always good? Do not the legislators and their appointed agents also belong to the human race? Or do they believe that they themselves are made of a finer clay than the rest of mankind?" - *Frederic Bastiat*^[18]
- "Legalize Freedom: Vote Libertarian!" - *Slogan of the US Libertarian Party*^{Do You Believe That?}^[19]
- "This country is a one-party country. Half of it is called Republican and half is called Democrat. It doesn't make any difference. All the really good ideas belong to the Libertarians." - *Hugh Downs, on the 20/20 TV show in 1997*
- "I don't want to abolish government. I simply want to reduce it to the size where I can drag it into the bathroom and drown it in the bathtub." - *Grover Norquist*.^[20]
- "You speak as if you were fighting for some sort of principle, Mr. Rearden, but what you're actually fighting for is only your property, isn't it?" — "Yes, of course. I am fighting for my property. Do you know the kind of principle that represents?" - *Ayn Rand*.^[21]

- "The existence of the state is inseparable from the existence of slavery." - Karl Marx.
- "However, it is important to remember that the true purpose of regulation is to limit competition, not protect the public." - "*Health freedom*" supporter DayOwl^[22]

Simple

Systems that attempt to boil themselves down to "a few simple rules" seldom are actually simple; for example, ancient Judaism's Deuteronomic reforms started out as just about half of the modern book of Deuteronomy, but eventually grew to encompass the whole Torah, large swaths of the rest of the Jewish Bible,^[23] and ultimately to the vast body of commentary known as the Talmud. Esperanto, though defined in only sixteen grammatical rules, is actually quite a complex language, since its rules are defined in direct relation to established rules in Indo-European linguistics. Even some sports -- particularly golf -- have a strong element of common law in their rule systems.

There is essentially no guarantee that a society built on a libertarian legal structure would remain that way without redeveloping some sort of common law structure, or even a statutory structure that codifies all precedents. Given that most societies governed by rule of law already have this, it's hard to see what would be accomplished other than a massive reinvention of the wheel.^[24]

The United States, for instance, is almost a truly libertarian country, even today, since the only laws it has are to "adjudicate between free men." Starting with a base, at least at the federal level (after the collapse of the Articles of Confederation) of a fairly simple Constitution, and some Roman and English common law, the country's government has evolved as a balance between virtually total liberty, and adjudicating the inevitable conflicts that arise between free men (or, in the case of drug laws, sodomy laws, etc., between the government and *one* somewhat unfree man). This adjudication has taken the form both of legislation to deal with issues that arose, and judicial analysis of the application of such legislation. Of course, 240 years offers a lot of opportunity for "free men" to need adjudication, so now, to self-styled "libertarians," the results look needlessly complicated. Such is life in the real world.

Heroes

- Bob Barr, 2008 Libertarian Party candidate for President. A former Republican and congressman, Barr left the Republican party in 2004, endorsing the Libertarian candidate. Within the libertarian community, respect for Barr shifts constantly. Most consider him, even after his conversion, at best a moderate libertarian. One of the founders of the Libertarian Party has asked people to stop donating money to him, because he is a poor representative of the Libertarian Party and the Libertarian Party's principles, but to still vote for him as a vote for the party.
- Milton Friedman, an American Nobel Laureate. Although often regarded as a libertarian, he departs from the laissez-faire principles in his support of the Chicago School's economic ideology of Monetarism instead of the free market ideology of Austrian economics. His book, "Free to Choose", probably the one most widely read, is an excellent treatment of the free marketplace. Friedman controversially advised the Pinochet regime in Chile to follow a course suggested by his economic theories, his reasoning being that a return to democracy without an economic recovery would be impossible. Pinochet peacefully stepped down from power in 1990,^[25] but the long-term effects of Friedman's role are still hotly debated.
- Ron Paul, a Christian libertarian, was a candidate for president on the Republican side in 2008, and

managed, for the first time, to be included in televised debates. He was able to get much more TV airtime than any previous libertarian. Some libertarians consider him a paleoconservative. Many differ from his views on immigration and religious faith, and think that his federalism (not to mention his refusal to address allegations of racist connections) is a cop out.

- John Stossel, of ABC NEWS fame, produces hour-long special programs that contrast the Libertarian approach to issues against a statist approach. One of them, "Sick in America", attempts to rebut Michael Moore's "Sicko" film, and can still be seen on YouTube. His book, "Give Me a Break," tackles libertarian principles by presenting simple examples. Stossel's critics, however, believe he relies far too much on scoffing and not enough on hard evidence.
- John Locke, whose philosophy and essays had a profound effect on Thomas Jefferson (ref: U.S. Declaration of Independence), and laid the basis of modern libertarianism. His theory of value and property was especially significant.
- Ayn Rand, who preached Objectivism and denounced libertarianism, is nevertheless the author of several works that were influential in setting many a reader onto a libertarian path. She objected to those libertarians who supported removing age of consent laws.
- Neil Boortz, talk radio host and self-described libertarian
- Mikhail Bakunin, an influential libertarian socialist, and strong rival with Marx, though it is suspected that this rivalry could be more personal than ideological.
- Robert Heinlein, who postulated libertarian societies in many of his science fiction novels.
- Stan Jones, who managed to turn his own skin blue through the use of colloidal silver.^[26]
- Penn and Teller, stage magicians and skeptics who for eight seasons in the noughties hosted "Bullshit," about evenly split between attacking woo of one kind or another and advancing libertarian causes such as gun rights and the legalization of prostitution.

Associated organizations

The following institutions and groups are closely or loosely associated with modern libertarianism:

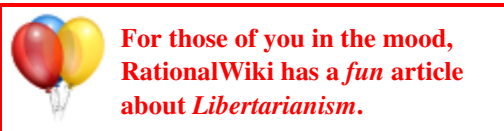
- The Libertarian Party in the United States
- A small number of Republican Party members, loosely organized in the Republican Liberty Caucus
- A very small number of Democratic Party members, loosely organized in the Democratic Freedom Caucus
- *Reason* Magazine
- The Ludwig von Mises Institute
- The Cato Institute
- The Independent Women's Forum
- The Free State Project
- The Foundation for Economic Education

Not to be confused with

- Librarianism, also a philosophy, but more about cataloging books and helping people find them, no matter what the book is about. Librarians also hate totalitarian regimes, as they tend to be real jerks when it comes to stocking unpopular or controversial books. Just don't talk in their libraries.

See also

- Plutonomy
- Going Galt
- Rugged individualism
- Debate:Are we too hard on libertarians?



External links

- History of the Libertarian Movement (<http://bradspangler.com/blog/archives/288>) , Samuel Edward Konkin III
- 24 types of libertarian (<http://www.leftycartoons.com/the-24-types-of-libertarian/>)
- See the Wikipedia article on anarcho-capitalism. The real ideology which this page largely describes, according to "someone"
- Libertarianism (<http://liberapedia.wikia.com/libertarianism>) An above average Liberapedia article
- I Am The Very Model of A Modern Libertarian (<http://world.std.com/~mhuben/plofker.html>)
- Slacktivist: The barrel of a gun (<http://slacktivist.typepad.com/slacktivist/2008/02/the-barrel-of-a.html>)
- The basics of Libertarianism, with nice music (<http://www.isil.org/resources/introduction.swf>)
- Critiques of Libertarianism: A Non-Libertarian FAQ (<http://world.std.com/~mhuben/libindex.html>)
- Post about the 2008 James Randi Amazing Meeting by Rebecca Watson of skepchick.org (<http://skepchick.org/blog/?p=355>) where Watson and commenters discuss the problems inherent in combining libertarianism with skeptical thinking.
- The Scourge of Public Libraries (http://rebirthofreason.com/Articles/Landauer/The_Scourge_of_Public_Libraries.shtml) (*Warning: Poe's Law in action!*)
- Zompist: What's wrong with libertarianism (<http://zompist.com/libertos.html>)
- Take the Libertarian Purity Test (<http://www.bcaplan.com/cgi-bin/purity.cgi>)
- How to explain things to libertarians (<http://puna.net.nz/archives/social/How%20To%20Explain%20Things%20to%20Libertarians%20at%20Pandagon.htm>)
- Chomsky (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RxPUvQZ3rcQ>) and Friedman (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0PaN9M4WwHw&feature=related>) on libertarianism.

References

- *Radicals for Capitalism* by Brian Doherty

Footnotes

- ↑ [1] (<http://www.scalzi.com/whatever/002984.html>)
- ↑ According to, e.g., the Political Compass.
- ↑ Libertarian Party gets 0.32% of popular vote (<http://www.fec.gov/pubrec/fe2004/tables.pdf>)
- ↑ <http://www.nolanchart.com/article4501.html>
- ↑ <http://lastfreevoice.wordpress.com/2008/06/06/a-brief-history-of-the-boston-tea-party-part-one/>
- ↑ Hint: They hosted the 2008 Summer Olympics, and made most of the things you bought last year.
- ↑ The Galt Speech is available at this (<http://galtse.cx>)

- hilariously named website
8. ↑ Positive and Negative Liberty (<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/liberty-positive-negative/>) , Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
 9. ↑ Why Libertarians Must Deny Climate Change (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/georgemonbiot/2012/jan/06/why-libertarians-must-deny-climate-change?newsfeed=true>) , George Monbiot
 10. ↑ Rand Paul: Obama Sounds 'Un-American' For Criticizing BP Over Gulf Oil Spill (VIDEO) (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/05/21/rand-paul-obama-sounds-un_n_584661.html)
 11. ↑ Business Insider: Bear Stearns Should have Gone Bankrupt (<http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&cd=6&ved=0CD8QFjAF&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.businessinsider.com%2Fbear-stearns-should-have-been-allowed-to-go-bankrupt-2009-6&ei=4pIJTeXPDISasAO94-TuCg&usq=AFQjCNG30abBifTkTqUOWrShst7xMixiQA&sig2=MZqUn8mTlcSA6Uw9ze3S8A>)
 12. ↑ <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/5065/libcon.html> third sentence.
 13. ↑ *I. Asimov: A Memoir*, 1994. Page number depends on edition, in the 1995 Bantam paperback edition it is on page 311
 14. ↑ This is a tougher quote to "prove": He says it on his radio show once every two or three weeks, but may not have committed himself to print.
 15. ↑ http://www.aynrand.org/site/PageServer?pagename=education_campus_libertarians
 16. ↑ *Napalm and Silly Putty* by George Carlin
 17. ↑ Speech on the Repeal of the Missouri Compromise ([http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library](http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=51)
 18. ↑ Frederic Bastiat: *The Law* (<http://www.constitution.org/law/bastiat.htm>) . See the Wikipedia article on Frederic Bastiat.
 19. ↑ According to the internet, but the party website doesn't mention it (<http://www.lp.org/search/node/legaize+freedom+vote+libertarian>) . Their current slogan appears to be "Smaller Government * Lower Taxes * More Freedom".
 20. ↑ "Conservative Advocate (<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1123439>) ." *Morning Edition* (NPR): May 25, 2001.
 21. ↑ Atlas Shrugged: the Trial of Hank Rearden.
 22. ↑ Commenting (http://scienceblogs.com/insolence/2010/03/big_supplement_lashes_out_and_john_mccai.php) on the medical science blog Respectful Insolence
 23. ↑ Or at least the parts such as Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the bulk of Job, etc. that aren't prophecy, simple narrative, or worship music.
 24. ↑ And this, to a non-libertarian at least, is a best-case scenario. Libertarian theorists haven't successfully convinced their critics that an unregulated market won't lead to corporate oligarchy or even neo-feudalism, a scenario that already exists in some industrial areas and was famously lamented by Tennessee Ernie Ford in his hit protest song "Sixteen Tons."
 25. ↑ After a 17 year reign in which 3,197 people were murdered, about 29,000 people were tortured, and he personally pocketed US\$28M.
 26. ↑ BBC News on Stan Jones (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/2297471.stm>)

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Anarchism

From RationalWiki

“
SPREAD
ANARCHY
”
Don't Tell Me What To Do!!

—Graffiti.^[1]

Anarchism is a political philosophy that advocates some form of political anarchy as preferable to active government. Modern anarchists argue that all governments exist only to perpetuate their power and apply this maxim equally to both democracies and dictatorships.

Any information relating to anarchists should be reported to your local police.^[2]

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Types of anarchism

Anarchists differ from Marxists, who believe that the state and class rule are synonymous, and a tool of the enforcement of one class' rule over another. Marxists feel a transitional state (the "dictatorship of the proletariat") is necessary to safe-guard the revolution until it has been finalized and will then wither away to a

stateless, classless society, or communism. Anarchists by contrast favor going directly to a stateless society, arguing that a dictatorship of the proletariat will inevitably be a repressive, self-perpetuating state and will not wither away. Mikhail Bakunin, a Russian anarchist who founded the anarcho-collectivist tendency, engaged in an ideological struggle with Karl Marx and his supporters in the 1870s inside of the International Workingmen's Association (the First International.) Marx won control, but the criticisms Bakunin leveled at Marx (such as its "transitional" absolute state becoming very permanent, with the danger that (pseudo)scientific "socialists" would become a new ruling class), have obviously proven extremely prescient.

Anarchists, like many ideologues, spend an inordinate amount of much time arguing over how many precisely-delineated strains of anarchist thought can dance on the head of a pin.

Mutualism

Mutualism was the anarchist school of thought starting with Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, the first to call himself "anarchist" (though earlier thinkers had ideas much like his) and he wrote the book *What is Property?* in 1840, a critique of property-rights ideas, which contains the famous declaration "Property is Theft." Proudhon advocated mutual banks or a Bank of the People (similar to a credit union) for wage workers and independent craftsmen (in his time being driven out by mass production) to fund themselves. His mutualism supports what he called the "anti-capitalist free market" one with cooperative businesses competing and trading, while having a different conception of property, namely possession, or active use and occupancy instead. Mutualism has been revived as sort of a middle position bridging the gap between anarcho-socialist tendencies on the left and the market anarchism of the libertarian movement, with Kevin Carson as its best known modern theorist.

Anarcho Egoism

Egoism originated with Max Stirner in his 1844 book *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* (in English, *The Ego and Its Own*; another translation might be *The Individual and His Property*) which argued for an extreme though moral rational self-interest, rejecting conventional morality and values besides this along with the usual opposition to hierarchies, the state, capitalism, organized religion, etc. Stirner's work was little known in his time (though he was a friend of Marx and Engels, who critiqued *The Ego and Its Own* in their early book *The German Ideology*,^[3]) being rediscovered later in the 1890s. Some have theorized he influenced Friedrich Nietzsche. Very few anarchists are egoists or Stirnerites. Egoism tends toward a might makes right philosophy and is rejected by most anarchists on that ground alone. More recently Ayn Rand appropriated the Egoism label for her own philosophy which she later named Objectivism; Rand's egoism has little to nothing to do with Stirner's and in any case she was outspokenly opposed to anarchism of any sort.

Individualist anarchism

Individualist anarchism was originated by American thinkers in the mid-19th century, around the time Proudhon and Stirner were writing. They held similar ideas to mutualism, although being more anti-collectivist than Proudhon. They were primarily supportive of independent craftsmen in opposing rising industrial capitalism, which at that point had not yet fully taken over so much as in Europe. William Greene, Benjamin Tucker and Lysander Spooner were the prominent thinkers here. Historians locate individualist anarchism as a mainly American phenomenon and the two classic histories on the subject^[4] trace its roots back to early American



The anarchy symbol. If you see this, there may be dangerous anarchist ruffians out and about.

experiments in utopian living such as Modern Times and New Harmony, and further back to the thought of people like Henry David Thoreau and Thomas Jefferson.^[5]

Anarcho-collectivism

Anarcho-collectivism was begun by the Russian anarchist Mikhail Bakunin (mentioned above). While naming Proudhon as "the father of us all" he felt mutualism was not far enough, particularly as capitalism expanded in the time since, along with the state. Bakunin was also opposed to religion, declaring that "the idea of God denies humanity. God being everything, man is nothing," and "if God really existed it would be necessary to abolish him" turning Voltaire's dictum on its head. More generally, he opposed organized religion, one of his most notable works being *God and the State* (1882), a position held by many anarchists since who view the church as another oppressive hierarchy alongside the state. Bakunin's anarcho-collectivism criticized Marxism as something that would lead to a new ruling class party hierarchy, while advocating full collective worker management of production, a doctrine later expanded on by the anarcho-communists and anarcho-syndicalists.

Anarcho-communism

Anarcho-communism was founded by Prince Pyotr Kropotkin of Russia (who dropped his noble title at the age of twelve). His vision was of a moneyless, gift economy made up of free communes in an equal society, following the same dictum as Marx of "to each according to his ability, to each according to his needs" though in a voluntary, democratic manner. Other thinkers like Emma Goldman and Errico Malatesta expanded upon anarcho-communism. Kropotkin's anarcho-communism refers more to voluntary communal living in communes and free sharing of everything, as opposed to the Marxist-Leninist conception of a dictatorship of the proletariat. Kropotkin's book *Mutual Aid: A Factor In Evolution* posits an equal role for cooperation in driving evolution as opposed to competition alone, and can be seen as a salvo against social Darwinism. Steven Jay Gould felt he was onto something here^[6]

Christian anarchism/anarcho-pacifism

Leo Tolstoy, the Russian known for writing great literature such as *War and Peace*, was also a dedicated anarchist who helped to organize peasant communes (mirs), and free, democratically-run schools for their education among many other things. His book *The Kingdom of God is Within You* set forth his own radical interpretation of the Christian Gospels, believing that Jesus wished to liberate people from oppression peacefully and redistribute wealth back in the hands of its creators, essentially an earlier version of liberation theology. However Tolstoy also opposed violence absolutely, even in self-defense or to defend others, which influenced Gandhi later. Other anarchists, while admiring Tolstoy's great work in helping Russian peasants and his compassionate moral code, believe this is an overly idealistic view that would require a "community of saints", arguing that failing to protect innocents by force if absolutely necessary is itself a moral evil. Many would agree that nonviolence is still a good tactic, even that it should be the first used, but do not go so far as Tolstoyans. Some groups such as the Anabaptists (Hutterites, Amish and Mennonites) are very similar in their beliefs to Tolstoy, pacifist along with holding possessions in common. They are not strictly anarchist, however, and usually believe the state is legitimate and ordained by God but that Christians are to be a separate people and not participate in the functions of it except as strictly required (i.e. paying taxes, etc).

Anarcho-syndicalism

Anarcho-syndicalism is a tendency which believes that direct democratic trade unions could overthrow capitalism and the state (possibly with a general strike), afterward federating among themselves freely to create

a non-hierarchical society. Anarcho-syndicalists view industrial unionism as the vehicle through which the state can both be overthrown, and around which society would be organized after the revolution. Production would thus continue without disruption, with workplaces democratically managed by workers and collectively owned. Anarcho-syndicalism has some similarities to De Leonism, with the main difference being that De Leon rejected anarchism and would have the state re-organized as a "dictatorship of the proletariat" rather than abolished entirely.

Anarcho-capitalism

Some people call themselves "anarcho-capitalists", and wish for capitalism without a government. Anarcho-capitalists believe that an anarchic system of competing private contractors can perform all of the functions of government better than a coercive government can. Anarcho-capitalism is a form of extreme laissez-faire capitalism. Most anarchists dismiss it as not being a type of anarchism, and being instead an oxymoron, since anarchists usually reject capitalism as another form of hierarchy and as something that exists only because of the state.^[7] Many anarcho-capitalists also seem to be obsessed with replicating the most coercive functions of government in the market via private defense agencies and private courts and prisons; whereas other anarchists view "national defense", police, and prisons as the most heinous aspects of the state and things they most want to abolish.

There does exist a "market anarchist" tendency on the left wing of the modern libertarian movement who agree, and reject the capitalist label. They may use terms like autarchist, agorist, or mutualist to describe themselves. For them, a completely laissez-faire free market (which would emerge in the absence of the state) is not the same thing as capitalism (which exists by the grace of the state through such things as corporate personhood and gunboat diplomacy). Many market anarchists also reject trying to replicate the most coercive functions of the state in the free market.

Anarcha-feminism

Not a separate tendency per se, this was partly based on the works of Emma Goldman, herself a dedicated feminist who advocated rights to birth control, abortion, free love, open relationships along with equality for women in general long before such issues were considered acceptable for discussion, let alone to enact. Goldman argued prominently that voting rights for women by themselves would change nothing, that equality had to come along with a broader social revolution. Anarcha-feminists have followed her reasoning, critiquing sexism as simply another form of hierarchy (patriarchy here) while struggling for the same goals as other anarchists, especially devoted to making sure women have the same rights in anarchist movements and the idea of gender equality receives focus along with the rest. Free love advocacy and womens' liberation have a long history within anarchism going back to individualist anarchists Ezra Heywood and Moses Harman, whose freethought periodicals *The Word* and *Lucifer the Light-Bearer* were persecuted by Anthony Comstock under the Comstock Act for their open discussions of birth control and denunciation of marital rape^[8], and continued to be influential through the writings of Emma Goldman and Ben Reitman, who were also prosecuted under the Comstock Act with Reitman sentenced to prison for advocating birth control.^[9]

Green anarchism

Green anarchists believe an ecological society living in harmony with the earth is incompatible with either capitalism or the state. They often look to Kropotkin's communal ideas as a potential model for an ecological society, absorbing other influences as well from individualist anarchism to anarcho-syndicalism to distributism. Most green anarchism divides between those following Murray Bookchin's Kropotkin-influenced writings, and

those who tend more toward Edward Abbey's less well defined (and probably more libertarian and individualist anarchist) preference for direct action over theory. This is sometimes portrayed as a divide between the "garden" or "urban village" model of environmentalism (Bookchin), and the "wilderness" model (Abbey)^[10].

Anarcho-primitivism

Primitivists go even further than green anarchists, viewing civilization itself, from modern labor-saving technologies to language as anti-ecological hierarchical institutions. They advocate the complete abolition of industry, capitalism, and even agriculture, returning to a hunter-gatherer mode of life which they argue is more leisurely, free, and in tune with nature. They believe wilderness and wild life have a right to exist for their own sake, therefore such a lifestyle is least destructive by humans. John Zerzan is probably the most prominent thinker of the primitivist tendency, although Bob Black also contributes greatly. The methods of how to achieve this primitive back-to-nature society are contentious. The British primitivist magazine *Green Anarchy* once praised Unabomber Ted Kaczynski (arguably close to primitivism in his views) and the Aum Shinrikyo cult in Japan who released Sarin gas in the Tokyo subway. Needless to say, most green anarchists and those of other tendencies reject primitivism.

Insurrectionary anarchism

Insurrectionary anarchism is a recent innovation and seems to be influenced by postmodern philosophy, nihilism, guerrilla warfare tactics, and anarcho-primitivism with some Kropotkin and Stirner thrown in. It is a murky area difficult to understand for those not already steeped in postmodernism. Insurrectionary anarchists tend to define themselves in contrast to organizational anarchists such as anarcho-syndicalists. Any form of organization at all is suspect, probably at least proto-statist if not explicitly so, and deserving of deconstruction through the lens of postmodernism - so a permanent revolution, in the form of ever-shifting affinity groups that never coalesce into anything permanent and never-ending guerrilla insurrection, is needed.

An obscure insurrectionary anarchist manifesto from France, *The Coming Insurrection*, became an unlikely best-seller in the U.S. because of Glenn Beck mentioning it several times and calling it the most evil book he has ever read. Glenn Beck's sneaky promotion-through-denunciation of this book probably has something to do with the fact that he *agrees* with its profoundly nihilistic opposition to liberalism, though not with its proposed solution.

Modern anarchism

A few modern anarchists believe that humans can best live their lives without being told what to do by anyone, and oppose democracy. They generally have no idea how things like abortion and scientific-based policy would be decided, and oppose all rules. There is also a "lifestyle anarchist" tendency for whom anarchy has more to do with punk, veganism, shoplifting and squatting as radical acts etc., and a more puerile "kiddie anarchist" tendency for whom anarchy means things like the *The Anarchist Cookbook*, hacking and phreaking, and the Unabomber manifesto. Both tend to appeal mainly to teenagers, who either eventually either make the leap to more serious anarchist theory or just grow out of it.

The reality is that the various military industrial complexes have filled the world with AK 47s and the like make it much more difficult to achieve those ends because one warlord heavily armed can make it very difficult for 1,000 anarchists to do their own thing. But, as Bloody Mary sings in *South Pacific*, "If you don't have a dream, how you gonna have a dream come true?"

Some are called "anarchists without adjectives" not desiring to follow any one tendency but welcoming all

ideas. "Anarchists without adjectives" generally focus on de-legitimizing the state rather than on one particular conception of anarchist society, believing that all else will naturally follow and a world without government will likely be heavily mixed.

Because most modern anarchists are not interested in forcing their ways on others they tend frequently to blend into the background, living their anarchist lives happily out of the spotlight. Well, except for the free skool movement and various communes and revolutions. The prime example would be the establishment of anarchist communes starting in 1936 during the Spanish Civil War, in which production and innovation were reported to have increased fairly dramatically. Workers seized control of the factories, peasants the farm land, free schools were set up to teach in new ways and universal literacy began to be achieved. They were eventually undermined by lack of funding due to state capitalist Russia controlling their money supply, attacks by the Stalinist-controlled Spanish Republican government and finally the victory of Franco, supported by many in the West. This was helped by infighting of the groups on the Republican side, plus lack of support. The 19th century anarchist belief in the Propaganda of the Deed (such as tossing a bomb or shooting some Royal Person) has largely fallen into disrepute, though it was very common at the turn of the last century, with several heads of state assassinated this way, giving us the "bomb-throwing" anarchist stereotype, which is unfortunate.

Anarchist organizations

Those who make no effort to understand Anarchism generally suppose that the very term "anarchist organization" posits a hierarchical structure which is anathema to the egalitarian virtues of the anarchist world view. This is not the case. Anarchists believe that human beings can organize themselves along non-hierarchical lines. Anarchists are not against organization, but rather oppose hierarchy, and do not advocate the 'lawlessness' and disintegration of society which the term 'anarchy' conjures up. Anarchist organizations strive for a maximal degree of direct democracy and the accountability of officers to the rank and file.

See also

- Anarchy
- Socialism
- Mobocracy
- Libertarianism, a term originally used by anarchists, such as "libertarian socialism" to distinguish it from authoritarian versions. Now used by radical classical liberals and supporters of laissez-faire capitalism. The former use is now ironically seen as an oxymoron by them, just as anarchists feel about such "right"-libertarian ideologies.

Footnotes

1. ↑ [1] (https://fbcdn-sphotos-a.akamaihd.net/hphotos-ak-ash4/314580_304582379571222_205344452828349_1170609_630232771_n.jpg?dl=1)
2. ↑ This is a joke in reference to the Westminster, U.K. police issuing a memo stating just that (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/jul/31/westminster-police-anarchist-whistleblower-advice>) .
3. ↑ Marx, Karl, and Engels, Freidrich: *The German Ideology*, 1846 (<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/>)
4. ↑ *Native American Anarchism* by Eunice Minette Schuster and *Men Against the State* by James J. Martin
5. ↑ Schuster (but not Martin, who as an Egoist rejected Christianity out of hand as being in any way compatible with anarchism) also finds its roots ultimately in non-conformist Christian groups during the colonial era who went in the same anarcho-pacifist direction later taken by Tolstoy. The anarcho-capitalist theorist Murray Rothbard tends to agree with Schuster here and points to the few successes in people living peacefully without government in early American

history mostly being Quakers.

6. ↑ Gould, Steven Jay: "Kropotkin Was No Crackpot", *Natural History* 106, June 1997, p. 12-21 (<http://www.marxists.org/subject/science/essays/kropotkin.htm>)
7. ↑ InfoShop Anarchist FAQ (<http://www.infoshop.org/page/AnarchistFAQSectionF>)
8. ↑ McElroy, Wendy: *XXX: A Woman's Right to Pornography*, St. Martin's Press, 1997
9. ↑ PBS American Experience, People & Events: Ben Reitman (1879-1942) (http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/goldman/peopleevents/p_reitman.html)
10. ↑ Bookchin, Murray and Foreman, Dave: *Defending the Earth: A Dialogue Between Murray Bookchin and Dave Foreman*, South End Press, 1991

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