



Meet The Women Of The Ron Paul Revolution

Grace Wyler | May 12, 2012

At first glance, the [Ron Paul](#) campaign — and his eponymous Revolution — looks like a serious boys club.

Exit polls indicate that Paul's supporters are predominantly male, and unlike his 2012 rivals, the Texas Congressman doesn't seem too concerned about changing that. Paul rarely, if ever, panders to the fairer sex, and his most visible advisors and acolytes are mostly men.

But behind the scenes, a growing number of women — and millennial women in particular — are taking arms in the Ron Paul Revolution, as grassroots organizers, party activists, anti-Establishment political operatives, and elected representatives.

"It's not uncommon...to joke about how an upcoming event will be awesome because there will be at least one girl for every 30 guys," said Bonnie Kristian, a Ron Paul supporter who serves as director of communications at Young Americans for Liberty. "In practice, however, the ratio is much better than that, and over the five years or so that I've been involved, I've seen a very steady increase in the proportion of women in the movement."

Kristian is part of a cadre of young women who have quickly risen through the ranks of Paul-inspired organizations, a cottage political industry that is working to remake the Republican Party in Paul's image.

These women are far more comfortable talking about Austrian economics and defense appropriations than about gender politics. And when Paul leaves Republican politics this year, they are ready to take over the mantle of his movement.

Ashley Ryan



Facebook

Ryan stole the show at Maine's Republican Party convention this month, beating out a veteran incumbent for the Republican National Committeewoman seat. At just 21-years-old, she is the GOP's youngest-known national committeewoman, according to the Paul campaign.

"Afterwards, a lot of Mitt Romney people, and people supporting the other candidates, came up and told me 'We need fresh faces, we need someone new,'" Ryan told Business Insider.

Ryan, who moonlights as a math major at the University of Southern New Hampshire, started volunteering for Ron Paul this January, and caught the eye of her fellow Paul activists with her tenacity during Maine's chaotic caucuses.

"I made people follow the bylaws whether they liked it or not," she said, laughing.

Ryan, a 2012 RNC delegate, said that she plans to cast vote for Paul in Tampa this summer. As Maine's new national committeewoman, she is also guaranteed a spot at the 2016 convention, and says she'll vote for "whichever Liberty candidate is running then."

Emily O'Neill



Emily O'Neill

Although she is only 24-years-old, O'Neill is a veteran of the Liberty Movement, and most recently served as press secretary for Michigan Congressman Justin Amash, a favorite among Ron Paul supporters.

Like most women of the Ron Paul Revolution, O'Neill dismisses gender politics and "war on women" rhetoric as a gimmick that both party Establishments use to distract female voters from more pressing issues, like government overreach and the federal debt. But she told Business Insider that she sees a [new kind of feminism](#) in Ron Paul's message, one that empowers women through individual liberty and personal responsibility.

"Feminism is about demanding equal treatment for men and women," she said. "Demanding government handouts is not the same as asking for equal treatment — if women are asking for special treatment than they are almost saying that they can't do it on their own."

Nena Bartlett



Nena Bartlett

Another key leader in the Anti-Establishment establishment, Bartlett is well-regarded in libertarian circles, through her work at the Cato Institute and as assistant campaign manager for Rand Paul's 2010 Kentucky Senate bid.

Bartlett is now the executive director of the Ladies for Liberty Alliance, a Washington-based organization founded in 2009 to address the deficit of female leadership in the Liberty Movement.

She is also the vice chair of the D.C. chapter of the Republican Liberty Caucus.

Julie Borowski



TokenLibertarianGirl via YouTube

Borowski is an up-and-coming grassroots activist, gaining popularity and minor celebrity status in the Ron Paul Universe as result of her YouTube Channel, [TokenLibertarianGirl](#), where she vlogs about Paul's policies and his presidential campaign.

Like many Paul supporters, Borowski is passionate about Austrian economics, and writes about the topic in freelance articles, as well as through her day job as a policy analyst for FreedomWorks, a conservative grassroots organization with ties to the Tea Party.

According to Borowski, women may have historically been turned off by libertarianism because of its focus on economics. But as more women are exposed to the subject, they are becoming increasingly interested in the Liberty Movement.

"There is a lot more exposure, so you are starting to see a lot more women out there," she told Business Insider.

Bonnie Kristian



bonniekristian.com

As director of communications at Young Americans for Liberty, Kristian is a key figure in a burgeoning political cottage industry that some libertarian Republicans like to call the 'Anti-Establishment establishment.' Her organization, which began as an offshoot of the 2008 Students for Ron Paul coalition, is now the largest Liberty Movement group on college campuses, and recently launched a PAC to endorse and fund like-minded candidates.

Although Kristian says she doesn't like to talk about the movement in terms of gender politics, she has [made the case for marketing libertarianism to women](#), noting Paul's lagging of support with the female demographic.

"To the extent that we can generalize about female voters, yes, I do think that the libertarian wing of the GOP is more appealing than the more establishment, neoconservative Republican mainstream," Kristian told Business Insider. "At the most basic level, I'd say that the liberty movement offers a consistency on fiscal issues, a freedom on social issues, and a restraint on foreign policy which is sadly lacking in establishment alternatives...I think that this new perspective of liberty is increasingly attractive to people of all demographics, certainly including women."

Corie Whalen



Wikipedia

Whalen is part of a subset of anti-Establishment operatives and activists who work at the intersection of the Ron Paul Revolution and the Tea Party movement.

The 25-year-old Massachusetts native actually got her start organizing Boston's 2009 Tax Day protest, one of the biggest rallies of the early Tea Party movement. Last week, she played a big role in Ron and Rand Paul's Tea Party Express rally in San Antonio, where she announced the Young Americans for Liberty PAC's endorsement of Texas Senate candidate Ted Cruz, a Tea Party favorite who has also been endorsed by the Pauls.

"I would say that there is about a 65% overlap between the Liberty Movement and the Tea Party," Whalen told Business Insider. "The rest of it is mostly just misunderstanding based on cliches. But really both movements are about reducing the size and the scope of government."

Piyali Bhattacharya



Piyali Bhattacharya

Another Young Americans for Liberty veteran, Bhattacharya has risen quickly through the organization since 2008, when she founded a chapter at Case Western Reserve University.

As [YAL's development executive](#), Bhattacharya is in charge of the organization's fundraising. She is well-known face in Paul World, and works with a stable of Paul-inspired organizations including the Congressman's Campaign for Liberty PAC and the Center for Freedom and Prosperity.

Bhattacharya has also starred in several vlog tutorials on libertarian fiscal policies— her [video on spending cuts vs. tax hikes](#) was a big hit in the Paul blogosphere.

Although women have traditionally been underrepresented in the Liberty Movement, Bhattacharya sees that changing:

"Back in 2008, most events and conferences were flooded with men, and very few women," Bhattacharya told Business Insider. "But more recently, the women are catching up — I see more and more of us every year, applying for and receiving internships and jobs in the movement, attending more events, and being more vocal about our presence."

But she adds that women are still underrepresented in the political work of the Movement.

"What's interesting is that there have always been greater numbers of women in the liberty movement who are involved with think tanks, policy institutes, and other educational organizations; the number of women involved in political work within the

liberty movement is far fewer," she said. "I think the aggressive nature of politics itself, and the fact that it's so traditionally male-dominated, makes for fewer women getting involved."

Jenn Coffey



jenncoffey.com

New Hampshire State Representative Jenn Coffey was part of the first wave of local and state politicians elected on the Liberty Platform in 2008. Since then, she has taken on a Republican leadership role in the statehouse, and [made international headlines for her Knife Rights bill](#), which ended all of New Hampshire's restrictions on carrying knives.

Coffey, who moved to New Hampshire in 2005 as part of the [Free State Project](#), credits Ron Paul with her political awakening:

"I heard him speak and it was just phenomenal," she told Business Insider. "He put out a call — that people have to be involved, they have to be active — and I took that to heart."

"I'm a mom, I'm a wife, I'm middle class, I work for a living," Coffey added, noting that New Hampshire legislators don't earn annual salaries. "There is nothing that I am doing that other people can't do, they just have to make the choice. I made the choice, and part of the reason I made that choice was because of Ron Paul."

Jenny Worman



jennywormanforcongress.com

Hollywood typically isn't known to be a hotbed for libertarians, but that isn't stopping Worman from running for an open Congressional seat there.

Worman is part of a wave of local and state candidates that have been endorsed by Paul-sympathetic groups like the Republican Liberty Caucus. Although she faces an tough battle in both the primary and the general election, her Congressional bid in a heavily Democratic district underscores how widespread the Liberty Movement has become.

Prior to her entry into Ron Paul politics, Worman was a relatively unknown actress and Hollywood stand-in, and served for six years on the board of the Screen Actors Guild.

Pinups For Ron Paul



pinups4paul.com

The ladies in the Ron Paul Pinups calendar may not be knocking on doors or caucusing, but the sexy stunt was actually one of the earliest attempts to popularize the Ron Paul Revolution.

“In 2008, I met so many great, spirited Ron Paul supporters, and I noticed one thing: These people were for the most part, intellectuals. They were nerds. They were not average people,” Pinups4Paul creator Juliet Annerino [told Politico](#). “I sensed a lack of familiarity with concepts like marketing and commercialism. I wanted to bring an element of accessibility to the Ron Paul Campaign that had the power to reach out to the man on the street, the non-political or even apolitical individual.”

Read more: <http://www.businessinsider.com/meet-the-women-of-the-ron-paul-revolution-2012-5?op=1#ixzz1ur4Ygd48>