



## **‘Damn Smart’: Actor Kurt Russell Explains How He Found Libertarianism, Recounts Battle With Anti-Gun Interviewer**

Dave Urbanski

December 24, 2015

On the heels of his [pointed gun-rights defense](#) earlier this month, veteran actor Kurt Russell opened up a bit more this week about that contentious interview, along with how studying the Founding Fathers led him to libertarianism, what it’s like being “politically persona non grata” in Hollywood and how America allows everyone to “reach for the brass ring.”

As for Russell’s now-viral statements about gun rights in the face of terrorism — “If you think gun control is going to change the terrorists’ point of view, I think you’re, like, out of your mind” — Russell told the [Daily Beast](#) that the reporter “just wouldn’t stop” hitting him with the issue.

“He just went down this road and I went, ‘OK,’ and tried to bring it back a couple of times to the movie but he just wasn’t having it,” Russell told the Daily Beast.

“I just didn’t get where he was going saying that gun control was a magic wand of fixing the situation with terrorism,” he added to the outlet. “That isn’t going to stop them from what they want to do.”

When the Daily Beast brought up Russell’s “extreme minority” status as a libertarian in Hollywood, the actor admitted that he’s “heard some pretty rough things through the years that were really undeserved” — but his being a “hardcore libertarian” was even worse in others’ minds than being a Republican.

“I’m not a Bill Maher libertarian. That’s faux-libertarianism. He doesn’t know what it is,” Russell said of HBO’s liberal “Real Time” host. “I like him, and he’s a nice guy, but seriously, that’s not libertarianism. The other thing I’ve found is that a lot of liberals in Hollywood are faux-liberals, and a lot of Republicans in Hollywood are faux-conservatives.”

Russell said that the light went on for him when he was younger and decided to study the Founding Fathers and what they espoused during the birth of the United States.

“Well, I found them and I found libertarianism,” he revealed. “They were pretty radical guys, and damn smart, and I just believe in that old-time stuff and think they had great ideas.”

Russell added that years later he attended the 20th anniversary of the Cato Institute — a think tank dedicated to individual liberty, limited government and free markets — where he spent “some real time with some amazing people” and “that cemented it for me. I felt, guess what, there is a place where I can have a conversation and not be laughed at or smirked at.”

Indeed, Russell hasn’t been oblivious of his “politically persona non grata” status when it comes to social time with Hollywood types (“the hang” he calls it).

“The thing people did get to know about me if they engaged me is that I’m fair, I’m pretty energetic, and I’m pretty knowledgeable,” Russell told the Daily Beast. “I don’t pop off without finding out about stuff — and I like finding out about stuff, and don’t have that much of an agenda about it. I believe in limited constitutional government, free-market capitalism, reach for the brass ring. There’s this place where you can go do that and don’t step on anybody’s toes and still try to reach for the brass ring.”