



One-Third of Young People Say Individual Property Ownership Is Wrong, New Poll Shows

Michael Foust

June 4, 2021

Individual property rights are a hallmark of the U.S. Constitution, but one-third of young adults believe the concept is unfair, according to a new [survey by Arizona Christian University's Cultural Research Center](#).

The poll found that 35 percent of Millennials and 34 percent of Gen-Xers say they believe “individual ownership of property facilitates economic injustice.” That’s compared to 13 percent of Boomers and 16 percent of Builders.

At the time of the survey, the age range of Millennials was 18 to 36, Gen-Xers 37 to 55.

The Cato Institute, a public policy research organization that promotes limited government, says on its website that the U.S. Constitution “protects property rights” through the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments’ Due Process Clauses and, “more directly” through the Fifth Amendment’s “Takings Clause.”

That clause reads: “nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation.”

“America’s Founders understood clearly that private property is the foundation not only of prosperity but of freedom itself,” [Cato says on its website](#). “... Thus, through the common law, state law, and the Constitution, they protected property rights – the rights of people to acquire, use, and dispose of property freely.”

The report, released this month, is part of the center’s 2021 American Worldview Inventory, an annual report that examines the beliefs of Americans.

“It is no accident that a nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to justice for all protects property rights. Property is the foundation of every right we have, including the right to be free,” Cato says.

John Locke, the “philosophical father” of the American Revolution and the “inspiration” for Thomas Jefferson in drafting the Declaration of Independence, stated: “Lives, Liberties, and Estates, which I call by the general Name, Property,” according to Cato.

James Madison, the primary author of the Constitution, wrote, “[A]s a man is said to have a right to his property, he may be equally said to have a property in his rights,” according to Cato.

