



A Childlike View of Libertarianism

By Daniel Surman

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Check out this article from Guy Stagg in *The Telegraph*.

Libertarianism is an immature and incoherent philosophy. First, it is an intellectual non-starter: even founder Robert Nozick changed his mind about the perverse form of liberty which it fostered. Second, you have to be very naive to think that letting everyone take heroin and own shotguns would really make them more free. Third, the idea that deregulation would solve all our problems is, given the current economic crisis, frankly a joke.

So let's leave libertarianism to the middle-aged druggies trying to justify their habit, and the unruly children looking for an excuse to rebel. That's where it belongs. After all, there's nothing more petulant than ranting about the evils of council tax and the glories of Isaiah Berlin.

First off, Robert Nozick was a libertarian to the end, as he verified to Julian Sanchez in an interview shortly before his death.

But more importantly, I wonder if Stagg has ever heard of the strawman fallacy? Defining libertarianism as a philosophy where everybody takes heroin and owns shotguns is ignoring the fact that everyone may not want to take heroin or own shotguns. Furthermore, I have never heard a libertarian, when asked how to fix "all our problems," simply answer deregulation.

Stagg wants you to believe libertarianism is a childlike philosophy that ignores a complex world. In contrast, libertarianism is a unique ideology insofar that it acknowledges just how complex the world is! I am tempted to go on a rant about

F.A. Hayek and the fatal conceit, but I have a better idea. Stagg should grow up and visit the newly-created libertarianism.org to learn what the philosophy is all about.