

The Libertarians are Coming! The Libertarians are Coming!

Posted By [Owen Brennan](#) On June 21, 2011 @ 10:13 am In [Politics](#) | [3 Comments](#)

Don't spook the folks over at *Slate*, cause Stephen Metcalf sees [libertarians EVERYWHERE!](#)

And when he's not pondering the benefits of [alpaca droppings](#), Metcalf finds libertarians repugnant. They're so repugnant that he spent more than 4,000 words regurgitating the thesis that one of the Big Brains for libertarianism, Robert Nozick, renounced the philosophy.

Cato's David Boaz provides an authoritative [smackdown of Metcalf's article](#), which includes a quote from Nozick saying, "... the rumors of my deviation (or apostasy!) from libertarianism were much exaggerated."

But now Metcalf has something more than simple fact-checking to worry about: Libertarians might really be everywhere.

According to a new poll by CNN, The libertarian message is gaining traction. [As Nate Silver blogs at the New York Times:](#)

"Libertarianism has been touted as the wave of America's political future for many years, generally with more enthusiasm than evidence. But there are some tangible signs that Americans' attitudes are in fact moving in that direction."

Silver looks at the numbers and reveals, "63 percent of respondents said government was doing too much ... while 50 percent said government should not favor any particular set of values."

And there's enough data in the poll to make Mitt Romney renounce his social conservatism.

"... there have been visible shifts in public opinion on a number of issues, ranging from increasing tolerance for [same-sex marriage](#) and [marijuana legalization](#) on the one hand, to the skepticism over stimulus packages and the health-care overhaul on the other hand, that can be interpreted as a move toward more libertarian views."

There's been [a lot of griping](#) about Mitch Daniels suggestion that [there needs to be a truce](#) between social conservatives and the rest of the center-right movement. Perhaps it's just a matter of prioritization. Silver writes that the Tea Party has focused the center-right universe on the most important issues of the economy, jobs, the economy, jobs and jobs (which, not coincidentally, require free-market solutions).

"The Tea Party movement also has some lineage in libertarian thinking. Although polls suggest that many people who participate in the Tea Party movement have quite socially conservative views, the movement spends little time emphasizing those positions, as compared with economic issues."

[h/t Matt Welch](#)

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