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Mike Alissi

Media Inquiries and Reprint Permissions:

Chris Mitchell
(310) 367-6109

Editorial & Production Offices:

3415 S. Sepulveda Blvd.
Suite 400
Los Angeles, CA 90034
(310) 391-2245

Stossel on What It Means to be a Libertarian

Nick Gillespie | April 9, 2010

Last night on Fox Business, John Stossel pulled together a great panel of folks to discuss what it means to be a libertarian. Among the congregated were The Cato Institute's David Boaz, Harvard economist Jeffrey Miron, syndicated columnist Deroy Murdock, and iFeminist.com's Wendy McElroy. Also holding court were the incomparable Judge Andrew Napolitano and P.J. O'Rourke.

The topics covered ranged from economic regulation to lifestyle issues to wars against drugs and terrorists (two very different groups!). Kudos to the Stossel squad for bringing together principled voices that also represented divergent perspectives.

It's good clean fun and will help clear up any confusion in readers and viewers who are struggling with impure thoughts toward maximizing freedom and liberty for all.

Watch big chunks of the show at the [Fox Business channel site here](#).

And read Stossel's syndicated col right here at Reason.com every Thursday. His latest, from yesterday, discussed just what the hell it means [to be a libertarian](#).

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Some Guy | 4.9.10 @ 7:23AM | #

You should have had Beck on the show just to say, "And here's what someone who isn't a libertarian may look like."

[reply to this](#)

Beck | 4.9.10 @ 7:33AM | #

Charity, Goodness, Faith.

That's all you need.

[reply to this](#)

Warty | 4.9.10 @ 7:51AM | #

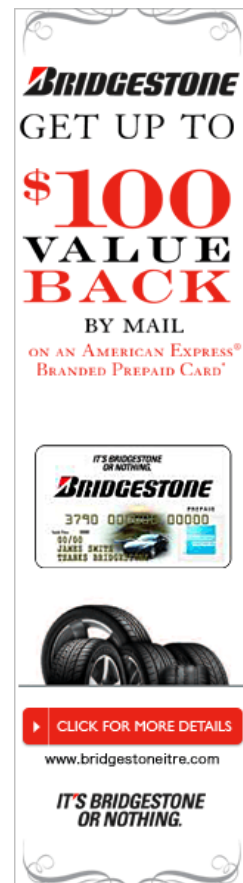
Were they all wearing top hats and monocles? Were they starving brown children and smoking dope while voting Republican? Were they really just anarchists? If not, they weren't libertarian.

[reply to this](#)

Snaps McShitDo | 4.9.10 @ 8:25AM | #

Thumbs Up!

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SIV | 4.9.10 @ 8:01AM | #
I hope the panel explicitly denounced slavery.

reply to this

Roland Martin | 4.9.10 @ 8:09AM | #
It isn't enough! Reparations!

reply to this

Adam | 4.9.10 @ 8:26AM | #
Deroy Murdock?

Were Rudy Giuliani and Dick Cheney unavailable to explain the virtue of unbridled freedom?

reply to this

I, Kahn O'Clast | 4.9.10 @ 8:29AM | #
Focusing on the poor, as Stossel's article did, is a losing argument (politically) and beside the point. It's the dead weight loss that government inflicts that makes the society as a whole poorer - wealthy and less so alike. It's also the inherent violence -- or threat of violence -- implicit in a system underpinned by confiscation. It's these and others that are good arguments for libertarianism, not really how it affects the poor.

A better approach might be a "soft" libertarianism in which markets were free to work, but with a modestly sized government whose focus was defense, communicable disease control, and, yes, a basic support system for the worst off. The tremendous benefits of deregulation would easily afford the costs associated with a safety net.

reply to this

I, Kahn O'Clast | 4.9.10 @ 8:32AM | #
BTW the net is mostly to make the rest of it more politically possible.

As for disease control, I had plenty of polio victims in school when I was a kid. Big fan of vaccination.

reply to this

Brett L | 4.9.10 @ 8:40AM | #
Splitter!

reply to this

PicassoIII | 4.9.10 @ 9:03AM | #
Caught the tail end of this. Judge Napolitano was in top form, smackin down both teams Blue and Red.

We can complain about Stossel's watered down libertarianism, but at least the message is being heard by a wider audience.

Up until now there's never been anything like this on TV.

There was an insightful segment where he quizzed some random people on the street if they knew the meaning of the term 'libertarian'. Obviously there may have been some selecting which to air, but none had a clue.

Hopefully his show will do it's part to change that.

reply to this

PicassoIII | 4.9.10 @ 9:07AM | #
In other news Jesse Ventura is going to substitute for Larry King tonight.

He's interviewing Ron Paul.

reply to this

Atanarjuat | 4.9.10 @ 9:14AM | #
One step forward, two steps back.

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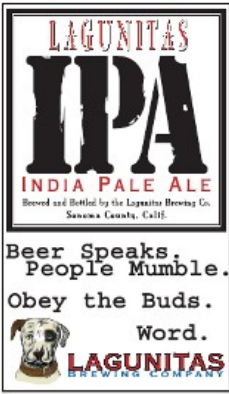
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hmm | 4.9.10 @ 9:18AM | #

I gave the show three and a half mustaches out of 5.

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