



Is libertarianism the ideology of the future?

By Libertarian News Examiner, Garry Reed
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Many young people supported presidential candidate Ron Paul in 2008. (AP photo/David J. Phillip)

Is libertarianism growing around the world in spite of the political dominance of its antithesis, big government socialistic type regimes everywhere?

A blog in the UK publication *New Statesman* titled "[Twitter and libertarianism](#)" proclaimed on Wednesday, "Libertarianism is the ideology

of the future judging by the new *Prospect* /YouGov poll on the "twitterati".

The survey, the article claimed, "found that Twitter users are more concerned with civil liberties than the public at large."

But the article mentions only one other example from the poll; that while 57 percent of the public believe that increasing anti-terrorist police powers is more important than protecting civil liberties only half of British Twitters agree.

Prospect, the monthly UK magazine behind the poll, admits in its recently released, November edition that the "national poll of 2000+ people" conducted with pollster YouGov is "part of a fun feature about the politics of Twitter."

Typical for British politics, libertarianism is referred to in "liberal and civil libertarian" terms. For example, the magazine created a scale from their findings that placed Twitter users on the "More Liberal" end, far removed from the conservative "More Authoritarian" end of the scale.

Prospect quotes its own managing editor as saying, "It is clear that the urban, metropolitan, Guardian-reading 'chattering classes' have flocked online to become the 'twittering classes' —and they are now a real

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force in British politics.”

Just a few weeks ago back in the USA David Boaz was writing about a recent Gallup poll in the [Cato@Liberty blog](#): "Gallup often asks people how they describe themselves. But sometimes they classify people according to the values they express. And when they do that, they find a healthy percentage of libertarians."

What Gallup found was that 23 percent of the voting-age population identifies itself as "libertarian."

But "libertarian" is more than just politics. It's a social, philosophical, intellectual, economic, and ideological movement that may or may not translate into votes, especially into Libertarian Party votes.

Beyond the polls is anecdotal evidence of libertarianism's increasing popularity and acceptance in the United States.

Boaz, again [writing in cato@liberty](#), noted that on the same Monday night in the relatively small Washington DC area Reason.tv held an event that launched its new "Radicals for Capitalism" series of videos celebrating Ayn Rand's continuing influence, the [Future of Freedom Foundation](#) and the [George Mason University Economics Society](#) sponsored a lecture by Lawrence W. Reed, president of the

Foundation for Economic Education, and "an overflow crowd" attended the screening of a new film, "[The Soviet Story](#)," at the Cato Institute.

As Boaz put it, "It's got to be a sign of growth and health if the libertarian movement is offering three excellent programs on one Monday night in one area."

Stories like these over the past year prompted the Dallas Libertarian Examiner to ask, "[Gen Y - the Libertarian Generation?](#)"

CampusProgress.org noted earlier this month that while young people voted overwhelmingly for Obama, "the other candidate who captured the hearts and minds of youth voters was Ron Paul," the erstwhile conservative-libertarian-Republican candidate for president in 2008.

They also report that [Students for Liberty](#), a network of "pro-liberty student groups" comprising College Libertarians, Austrian economists, and Objectivists is the fastest growing libertarian student organization in America.

Is libertarianism the ideology of the future? Statistically and anecdotally, so far so good.

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