

'Grand Illusion' of voter choice

If you are a "third party" or independent political activist and have not read Theresa Amato's book *Grand Illusion: The Myth of Voter Choice in a Two-Party Tyranny*, read it.

Amato was Ralph Nader's campaign manager for his presidential runs in 2000 and 2004.

Be warned that it will make you very, very angry at the ongoing conspiracy by Democrats and Republicans to deprive millions of Americans of the right to choose.

But it will also hopefully fire you up and inspire you to keep fighting the good fight.

Future issues

- The Wasted Vote Syndrome
- Libertarians, Greens challenge NC's election laws
- LPNC political director

Liberty Point

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An independent, quarterly newsletter of libertarian thought and action, designed as a guide to the understanding and appreciation of libertarianism for non-libertarians.

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Liberty Point

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Libertarianism for non-libertarians

By Brian Irving

Editor

Liberty Point is an independent quarterly newsletter devoted to introducing people of all political colors, shapes and sizes to the "blessing of liberty" as envisioned by our Founding Fathers and cherished by libertarians.

As the headline says, this newsletter is intended as a guide to libertarianism for non-libertarians.

The newsletter will contain articles, columns, comments and news reports from North Carolina libertarians. It will also include articles from other third parties and public advocacy groups that share a common cause with libertarians.

There are already many online resources about libertarianism. The primary concept behind *Liberty Point* is to publish a *printed* newsletter for distribution to the general public. A PDF version will be posted for download on the companion website <http://LibertyPoint.org>.

Liberty Point will use a guerilla distribution system. We encourage subscribers to pass their copy along to a friend, neighbor or co-worker. The success and growth of this newsletter will depend on subscribers.

We also encourage readers to leave their copies in public areas — doctor's waiting rooms, restaurants, bars, repair shops — even government offices.

If you're a libertarian and like what you read here, please subscribe and join our guerilla distribution army. If you're not a libertarian, but find what you read here interesting, we invite you to subscribe as well. And we welcome your articles, letters or comments.

The Essence of Liberty

by David F. Nolan

Libertarian Party Co-Founder

Editor's Note: This is a short version of an article by David Nolan, Libertarian Party co-founder. Nolan offers the five indispensable points of no compromise a person must adhere to in order to be a libertarian. I could think of no better article to include in the first issue of *Liberty Point*. Read the full article on the Advocates for Self-Government website (<http://theadvocates.org>)

You own yourself

First and foremost, libertarians believe in the principle of self-ownership. You own your own body and mind; no external power has the right to force you into the service of "society" or "mankind" or any other individual or group for any purpose, however noble. Slavery is wrong, period.

Because you own yourself, you are responsible for your own well-being. Others are not obligated to feed you, clothe you, or provide you with health care. Most of us choose to help one another voluntarily, for a variety of reasons – and that's as it should be – but "forced compassion" is an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms.

The right to self-defense

Self-ownership implies the right to self-defense. Libertarians yield to no one in their support for our right as individuals to keep and bear arms. We only wish that the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution said "The right to self-defense being inalienable..." instead of that stuff about a "well-regulated militia." Anyone who thinks that government – any government – has the right to disarm its citizens is not a libertarian!

No criminal possession laws

In fact, libertarians believe that individuals have the right to own and use anything – gold, guns, marijuana, sexually explicit material – so long as they do not harm others through force or the threat of force. Laws criminalizing the simple possession of anything are tailor-made for police states; it is all too easy to plant a forbidden substance in someone's home, car or pocket. Libertarians are as tough on crime – real crime – as anyone. But criminal possession laws are an affront to liberty, whatever the rhetoric used to defend them.

No taxes on productivity

In an ideal world, there would be no taxation. All services would be paid for on an as-used basis. But in a less-than-ideal

world, some services will be force-financed for the foreseeable future. However, not all taxes are equally deleterious, and the worst form of taxation is a tax on productivity – i.e. an "income" tax – and no libertarian supports this type of taxation.

What kind of taxation is least harmful? This is a topic still open for debate. My own preference is for a single tax on land. Is this "the" libertarian position on taxes? No. But all libertarians oppose any form of income tax.

A sound money system

The fifth and final key test of anyone's claim to being a libertarian is their support for an honest money system; i.e. one where the currency is backed by something of true value (usually gold or silver). Fiat money – money with no backing, whose acceptance is mandated by the State – is simply legalized counterfeiting and is one of the keys to expanding government power.

Read the complete article on the Advocates for Self-Government website (<http://theadvocates.org>). David F. Nolan is the inventor of the Nolan Chart (on which the World's Smallest Political Quiz is based). He was named one of the 2,000 Outstanding Intellectuals of the 20th Century by Cambridgeshire, the England-based International Biographical Centre in their reference work featuring the greatest thinkers of the past 100 years. © 1995, 1996, David F. Nolan. Used with permission.

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Debunking the 'cost of development' myth

By Chris Cole

*Editor's note: This is an excerpt from a letter to a *Huntersville Herald* front-page op-ed calling for the town to "do something" about the "costs of development."*

When the population of an area grows, what is the reaction of private companies, such as McDonalds or Harris-Teeter? They cheer for the increased sales and build new facilities to handle the expanded customer traffic.

Only government treats new customers as drains on their resources. There are private water utilities, private waste collection and treatment companies, and they make a profit doing so.

The solution to the "costs of development" is simple and straightforward: privatization.

A for-profit water utility would see new customers as a boon, not a curse. Get the government out of the very businesses that grow with development.