

(PRO)**boris7698**

Many people are pro-capitalism with the proviso of "it's not perfect but it works", and think that it should be regulated. I claim, on the contrary, that laissez-faire capitalism (unregulated capitalism) is perfect and is the best political system. This implies that there should be no regulation whatsoever, including organizations such as ECC, FDA, and FED. Most importantly, there should be no anti-trust laws.

There should be only three things that are the responsibilities of a government: the army, the police, and a judicial system.

My argument is simple: capitalism is not an economic system, but a moral system, of which economic aspects are a necessary consequence. This moral political system respects inalienable rights of individuals. These rights are: the right to life and to private property.

It is crucial to observe that within the sphere of inalienable rights, the freedom of each citizen is absolute (he can do whatever he wants). The only way to cross this sphere is to use force onto the sphere of inalienable rights of another man. An example would be punching another man in the face. Another example would be to compel another man to do something under a threat of punching him in the face. By "force", I mean actual physical force, or a threat of actual physical force.

It is the role of the political system to protect inalienable rights of the citizens, and the only system that does this is unregulated capitalism. Any other political system would force citizens to accept some ideas that they do not agree with, under a threat of being thrown into jail (an instance of physical force) if they disagree.

These observations imply that under unregulated capitalism, the only way individuals can deal with each other, is by persuasion (without any threat of force). In other words, they deal with each other *voluntarily*. As such, the common criticism against capitalism that leads to exploitation is impossible, just from the definition of the terms. One can't be exploited if he engages voluntarily.

Furthermore, I make no estimations of how unregulated capitalism will benefit a class of citizens (let's say, factory workers). Only the point of view of an individual is important, because individual is the smallest unit of a political system. Every such individual possesses Free Will, and it is impossible to treat Free Will statistically. It is

possible only to make estimations of what would benefit some group of people, but no such estimating person has the right to impose his conclusions on this group. This is simply because some members of the group may not agree.

In other words, a society or a group of people has no desires. Only individual members of the group have desires. A political system such as, say, Socialism, treats a group as if it was alive, and making its own Free Will choices, having its own desires. This is false. A group is not a separate alive being, and can not have desires. A group is only a congregation of individuals, each of whom desires something on his own.

In summary, unregulated capitalism respects the point of view of individual, because it protects legally his inalienable rights. These rights are inherent in the nature of Man, and already exist prior to formation of a political system. Because unregulated capitalism is the smallest possible system that protects these rights, no other proper political system is possible. (By the Occam's razor.)

Note that regulations such as FDA and Anti-Trust laws, are not merely innocent add-ons found in mixed economy of USA, they actually go against inalienable rights, and should be abolished. The basic right that is broken in these cases, is the right for individual to engage in action within the sphere of his inalienable rights. For example, under FDA he can not consume a drug that he decided that he wants, because the FDA may not have approved it. But to use the drug is within the sphere of his inalienable rights: it is only his life (which he owns) that is at the risk, if the drug is bad.

Likewise, under Anti-Trust laws a citizen may not make business decisions that propel his business forward, for fear of being penalized as "too successful." (For example, Microsoft's case with IE) However, there is nothing that precludes a man to be as successful as he can be, within the sphere of his rights. The right includes the capacity to engage in certain activity as result of making some decision. Both the activity and the decision are reached by use of his own mind (that he owns). If any man helps him (say, works for him), this association is voluntary under terms agreeable to both, which means that the argument extends to the rights of this helper person as well.

To conclude, laissez-faire capitalism is the only moral political system, because it respects inalienable rights of citizens.

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**admin****(CON)**

I'd like to begin by agreeing with my opponent on the first half of the resolution. Capitalism is not amoral. In fact I strongly believe it is immoral. Where I contest the resolution is in the claim that capitalism is perfect. Perfect is a very high standard that pro must conclusively prove in order to win this debate. It is insufficient that pro merely shows capitalism is a good or even the best system - pro must counter my attempts to problematise capitalism, and further show that it cannot be problematised. I don't agree with "it's not perfect but it works" - it is my position that capitalism is inherently flawed in the long run.

My opponent so far has given little justification for capitalism. His sole argument is that it is the only system that protects inalienable rights, along with a few other positions with no causal link. He also makes some weird allusion to Occam, without logically justifying why the laws of Occam apply. Simply name-dropping some famous thinkers and claiming their support is not sufficient to win a debate. Neither argument implies the system is "perfect," either. Let me therefore question some of the elements of capitalism a little deeper. Note also that it may be that *no moral system is perfect*. If this is the case, I still win the resolution.

At the outset, pro doesn't explain why those particular two rights are inalienable, and why no other possible right is inalienable. More importantly he doesn't show why we should value the protection of those rights in the first place.

In determining what rights to protect, society shows its character. These rights are balanced by responsibilities. So for instance take pollution, since pro wants to abolish the environmental protections of the state. Yet by poisoning the environment we also poison people, which contradicts the right to life. For example, a factory pollutes a river that a child swims in, and makes the child sick. Is the factory responsible for that illness because they polluted the river, or is it the child's for not checking the water quality? That's the conundrum between valuing the right to pollute against the right to life. Clearly in this instance pro would pick the right to pollute as being more important, even though pro pays lip service to the right to life as inalienable. This is not limited to an environmental domain, either. Take the food and drug administration, which again pro specifically says he wants to abolish. Personally I'm glad companies have to label whether there's any poison in their food, because if they didn't I'd probably consider that murder too.

Now remember, you might personally not like the FDA or the EPA etc. But that is not to say they are not fulfilling a valuable purpose.

And part of that is that there are goods that are tremendously helpful but which *nobody* is willing to pay for. This was an actual problem when street lighting was first invented. In the days of Jack the Ripper, lighting was rare and that was a huge public safety hazard. Yet since street lights did not generate a profit, private industry was not going to build any. Today we call these products public goods. Likewise there are many important services nobody pays for. In society we rarely rush to give money to parents for raising children, for example.

There might potentially be some ways to resolve these issues within a capitalist framework, but here comes another problem, because usually those solutions look a lot like oligarchic states. What's more, the values they communicate may undermine the very point of their existence. It's not easy to have a social security insurance company, for example, when the idea of a for-profit insurance company is individualistic, and the idea of social security is not. This clash in value structures means that insurance companies have inherent perverse incentives.

My opponent argues that you can't aggregate rights, only approximate averages of individuals. Clearly this is incorrect and I could give a number of examples. Women didn't have voting rights once upon a time. Yes, I am applying a single set of rights to a whole group (women) without needing to name every individual woman who was marginalized by a patriarchal policy, because *that literally happened*. People with certain disabilities are discriminated against today - often seen as less capable. And that's a product of our own (in my humble opinion, flawed) values we socially impose on others. That is not to say every disabled person is discriminated against or that everyone discriminates. It is just representative of a widely held belief or value that exists in society. We impose upon free will all the time, and that's why rights exist in the first place - the right to life, for example, takes away the free will to kill. So both of us agree that even if free will exists, it is not an absolute.

And that creates a serious problem because capitalism always aggregates wealth in the hands of those with capital. This is a logical consequence. In a capitalist structure, since capital is privately owned, it can be excluded. Since capital is the primary mode of producing output in an economy, this means it is advantageous for a capitalist to actually exclude capital from the open market. This centralizes production. A case in point would be big multinationals attempting to monopolize natural resources. This may provide jobs and an immediate economic investment, but at the long-term cost of concentrating wealth in the hands of the few.

Without governments to intervene, there is virtually nothing that can stop capital drift. Even consumers choosing brands are limited, since brands that do not try to acquire more capital are readily out-competed on both price and quality by those that do. So capital tends to move from the have-nots to the haves.

That's a problem because it creates a caste system in society. You have the fat cats at the top of the ladder leeching off the hard work of the larger blue-collar workforce. And it's exploitative because through exclusive domain in property law, there's no possibility for those oppressed to get ahead. There's a name for this economic and political structure, and it's called Feudalism. We did away with it in the middle ages because the serfs were kinda mad about being oppressed and liked liberalism instead. Since then political discourse has been heavily liberal-inspired. The explicit harm of feudalism is that people died, people rose up against it in social unrest, and people suffered needlessly.

So what values *should* we protect? I'd like to counter-model individualism with egalitarian integrative progressivism. That means we value each person's contribution and empower them to be as successful as they would like to be. It means respecting and caring for each other. And finally it accepts that every decision we make is part of a wider social framework, so to use a military analogy, "no man left behind." We can't afford to break down society because that undermines society as a whole. Just like dividing society on "racial," ethnic, sexual, gender or other boundaries helps break down society. Individualism is in direct conflict with each of these personal values. If we value ourselves as individuals above others, discrimination is perfectly justified. In fact merely holding private property is a form of discrimination, since you are discriminating who can hold that property's "rights".

I look forward to reading my opponent's response.

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 **boris7698**

(PRO)

My opponent is concerned with the breaking down of society. He considers the well-being of a society as a whole to be the indicator of a successful political system. This is a common view, but one with which I disagree. There can be a society that is efficient overall, but unfair to some individuals.

An example of such a society would be a caste system, in which person's vocation is legally determined at birth. This was India for two millennia, and it was prospering overall. A more dramatic example would be the institution of slavery. Under such a political system, the society also prospered (Ancient Rome, Greece, Babylon, Persia).

Clearly, there is something wrong in judging a political system from a birds-eye view. In contrast, I judge a political system from the point of view of an individual. I build the political philosophy bottom-up, from a single individual to a society of individuals, never losing sight of the rights of a single individual.

After all, the most basic thing that I know is the fact that I exist. Every baby experiences this "I exist" moment, early in its development. Therefore, the "individual" must be the place to start in order to develop any moral theory.

I will now sketch how individualism implies that ownership of the body, and of private property are necessary moral rights, guaranteed metaphysically by man's nature. They also give rise to all the derivative rights. (For a complete and original account see Ayn Rand's "Objectivist Ethics".)

Objectivist Ethics as the moral foundation for Capitalism

Living things have values, things that they desire to gain and keep. The ultimate value, which gives rise to all the other values is the desire to stay alive. For instance, an animal values food, because it values its life. It also values the ability to have a life in the nature of the specie. For instance, a lion could survive in a zoo cage, but a life in the wilderness would be better. (The lion would not be able to realize this consciously, but all of his essence will.) What are the basic values of a human being?

A human being is a rational animal. Furthermore, reason is his primary way of survival. He could not survive in the wilderness without discovering, through the process of reason, of how to make a fire, and how to build a warm hut. Therefore, to deny him to exercise this faculty would be arrest his very existence as a homo sapiens. Therefore, the ability to exercise the faculty of reason is of a primary value to him.

Just as it is in the nature of a lion to own the prey that he caught, it is in the nature of a man to own the results of his rational activity. If a man builds a house, it is his house. If a man turns a patch of wilderness into a

civilized patch, it is his patch of land. Otherwise, what is the point of using this faculty to create results, if one cannot use them?

To illustrate the next part of my thesis in concrete terms, I will ask you to recall the story of Robinson Crusoe. Recall that Robinson suffers a shipwreck and is stranded on a deserted island, where he must survive. Not only he wants to merely remain alive, he wants to survive as a civilized man; living like a monkey and eating bananas would not suffice.

Therefore, from Robinson's perspective, it is moral for him to (a) use his mind (b) act on his decisions, and (c) keep the product of his actions. For instance, he could domesticate wild pigs, in order to have a reliable meal. Consequently, here are formed the basic rights: the right to his own body (which is parts (a) and (b)), and of private property (part (c)).

Shortly after Robinson adapts and gets settled, another man by the name of "Friday" arrives on the island. By the principle of symmetry, and because Friday is a human being, Friday also has the same basic rights as Robinson. What is the metaphysics of these two men, now co-existing on the same island?

To illustrate this visually, I will use the device of a force-field from the "Star Trek" TV series. Imagine that a force-field bubble protects each man. The size of the bubble represents his rights. Also, a person would mark each of his private properties by enclosing it in a bubble that only he can enter.

Within his bubble, a person's freedom is absolute. This is a crucial point: neither Robinson nor Friday gives up any of his former rights. Before Friday arrived, Robinson's bubble would have been superfluous, but it would have been exactly the same size.

From the fact that freedom within a bubble is absolute, we derive all the other rights, such as, for instance, the right to free speech. This example shows why the right to private property is the foundation that makes all the other rights possible. On his own territory -- this could be a virtual real-estate of a private newspaper -- a person may say whatever he wants.

Because we lack the technology of "Star Trek", the force-field bubbles are simulated by a political institution, to which all members pledge allegiance. This institution has a government of consisting of three things: a code of

law to define the “geometry” and “locations” of the bubbles, a police force to enforce it, and a military to protect the island from invaders who do not want to accept the requirements of this political system. Finally, this institution is laissez-faire capitalism.

Note that the outlined protection of rights doesn't stop Robinson and Friday from voluntarily collaborating. For instance, Robinson can invite Friday to visit his house. Or he can offer him a job in exchange for room-and-board. Friday, in turn, may refuse.

I do not find it necessary to add anything else to the political system I specified. I make no stipulations of what would benefit a group, because this problem does not arise in my analysis. I can only say generally that a moral system, if consistently applied, will not generate immoral behaviour.

A society, to me, is just a collection of individuals. My analysis started with individuals, and found a solution for individuals to co-exist. Whatever the interaction between these individuals, it is voluntary and is not set in stone.

The Occam's Razor is a principle that states that if one has found a solution to a problem, there is no need to add more complications to the solution. The simplest solution is the right one. Here, I stated a solution for how individuals can co-exist, and that is my only concern. Furthermore, whatever add-ons we observe in other political systems, they happen to contradict the core requirements of laissez-fair capitalism.

I ran out of space, and placed the rest in a shared Google Doc.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/183pq-qLBVrr-eNbbtJGxmWJxpYJhoprlykPkSAcl3pA/edit?usp=sharing>

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admin

(CON)

I'd like to thank my opponent for continuing the debate.

As a point of order, I'd like to clarify that posting a remainder of arguments in a Google Doc is a breach of the rules. If pro wanted more characters to argue, he should have set a higher limit or removed the limit. The

rationale for this is that it means pro effectively has more "speaking time" compared to me. Summarizing key points and providing succinct analysis are key features of the formal debating construct.

Sociological modality

At the outset of the debate pro dismisses a society based on the interactions between individuals because of what I presume is an economic model of efficiency. In fact all those slave-based societies collapsed and, as I have argued previously, slavery was a major factor in their collapse. The reason for that is that economic efficiency is not the primary goal of society - rather it is in fostering positive relational structures that evolve responsively. The notion of "rights", as a premise for pro's model, ceases to make sense without a relational component. Nor does the recognition of existence necessarily imply individual rights, since our existence is inherently predicated on relational structures (for example, our parents). Nobody lives completely isolated from an environmental context. These relational structures are not distinct from individual rights (what I would call the psychosocial model) but form a ecology of syntactic structures more holistically defining the human experience, and should be accepted as a more generalized paradigm within which both our cases may be entirely compared.

To answer pro's sole, short rebuttal to the point: pro accepts that structural rights analytics as a form of aggregation can be used in the case of women's rights, but claims this is always negative. I would therefore refer him to the justice system, wherein typically "all are equal in the eyes of the law," which he has already said he agrees with. Clearly therefore not all relational structures are negative. This also rebuts his conception of voluntarism - people need to eat, so are forced into interactions that provide food. If only one entity owns all the food in the world, all people are forced to deal with that entity. And there are real fears that could happen eventually with growing inequality.

Discourses

The silences of pro's model entrench normative social and cultural power structures. Pro is happy to accept structures that defend his particular framing of personal rights, but will not defend the same rights based on the impositions of the structure. Just like a lack of gay marriage limits gay people, because the lack of gay marriage is a relational-social structure. Pro's very complaint is based on a perceived lack of protections of "inalienable" rights, so clearly these syntaxes are part of pro's discourse, but he never acknowledges them. Nor does he relate to structures as subjectification or moralizing, which were two of my key arguments, except to assert (his only evidence for the point being a portmanteau of fiction, literally) that his conception of rights

corresponds to basic human values. Because I'm not a sociopath (with all due respect to those who are), I value other people on a basic level, not just myself. But this leads me to a deeper point:

Naturalism

We have a fundamental disagreement also on what makes a right. Our right to life is not premised on some "aha" moment of self-awareness, that's a human right. We have that right because we are human, and therefore, rights are democratically negotiated between humans. The notion of rights being individually defined is problematic because the human experience is not generally defined by "staying alive" or "having stuff." We aren't rich vegetables. Nor does pro's model assure immortality and wealth to all. In fact, as I demonstrate, it shortens lives and perpetuates inequalities to form something *more* resembling a caste system. Prefer instead a model that accounts for rights as social values - whether those values are "being human" or other impositions defined by the social contract. To extend that analysis, such a paradigm resembles a genetic structure which can mutate, divide and reconcile in the chronosphere. In this way our rights can be self-correcting to account for alternative rights settings. For example, pro has no concept of animal rights.

Politic

Pro's model refuses to accept any benefits of even the status quo, and refuses to accept its own harms. There are costs and benefits to *any* model, and unless we examine them holistically we cannot draw a fair conclusion. Among his harms, he considers policies and not intentions. To give just one example, we both agree people should be able to access cancer treatments. However I'd go further and suggest that pharmaceutical companies should not be allowed to market anything they like as a "cancer treatment." And by the way, snake oil salespeople have done that before, and lots of people died, the free market failed, and that's why things like the FDA exist now. As I said in round one (with my river analogy) this is a fundamental paradox of rights. Pro doesn't grapple with it because he only considers one side of the story. He also had no response to my point about perverse incentives of value clashes in capitalism.

Environment

There's a difference between considering environmental factors (by which I mean more than just the natural environment) and subscribing to the absolute norms of that view. I'm yet to meet a serious environmentalist who actually wants to undo progress (environmental technology is very progressive including the discourse of environmentalism itself) but even if there was that doesn't mean the environment is excusable from relational analysis. Pro has not proven why environmentalism is "primitive" or why pollution is a necessary side effect of

progress or why progress is good. In fact commonly considered factors of environmentalism like climate change or dying species are a small part of the assimilatory, integrative whole, including our social, spiritual, emotional and physical well-being in the context of the economic, social, political and natural environments. These form interlinked ecologies that act as bodies of knowing and have moral values associated with them.

Inequality

Inequality is relative by nature. Loose qualitative anecdotal information (which, by the way, is totally false - poor people today are still literally starving to death, and we know rich kings in antiquity had great banquets) therefore fail to challenge the logic or politic of inequality. In fact statistics prove global inequality is increasing under the status quo. What's relevant to this debate, however, is the contextualization to understand how that would change in response to pro's model. In this pro strawmans my case. There are barriers to entry in any market, which form cultural, symbolic, political and economic capital outlays. If you own no capital, what can you produce? So you're forced into slavery. And that's an actual reality right now in places like SE Asia, where migrants from places like Laos are sold in places like Thailand because they lack capital. Inequality is a precondition for a caste system. This analytic includes land, which might seem non-scarce in some contexts now, but that (like all things) is inherently unsustainable - you can't support unlimited people with limited resources of any kind. It's the same as the economic problem of scarcity.

As a side note, streets are inelastic. Therefore there are no incentives for their maintenance at any given price point without competition. I for one only have one street going to my house.

In conclusion, pro has misidentified the problem, not proposed an effective solution that solves the problem, and refused to grapple with the harms of the model by relating them back to the original misidentified problem.

The resolution is negated.

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 **boris7698**

(PRO)

I would like to thank my opponent for continuing the debate, despite my breaking of the rules in the previous round.

The main point, that my opponent makes, is that “relational structures ... more holistically define the human experience” and that rights should be defined by society within the context of these relationships. This is opposed to my view that rights should be identified bottom-up from a basic principle with which every man would agree.

Let's look closer at my opponents view. Who would make the decision of what are the rights based on the relational structures? According to my opponent, it would be the people, through the process of democracy. But democracy is the will of the majority, and the will of the majority is a reflection of prevalent ideas. (Note: Democracy is not a new invention, the philosophers of antiquity rejected it as mob rule.)

For instance, the prevalent idea in antiquity concerning slavery was that it is moral. The earlier practice was to kill conquered people, and to allow them to live in slavery was seen to be a better thing. Another example is in India, in which the prevalent idea was that the caste system is good. (This idea was propagandized by Brahmanic priests.)

So wise is the majority. But what about the minority? Although my opponent desires a political system which would defend the welfare of everyone, what he proposes would doom the individuals of the minority. Each such person would have to live life according someones else's ideas.

Furthermore, a majority consists of too many individuals to actually institute the ideas. Instead, the majority chooses a representative who then makes actual decisions. In the end, that person decides for everyone, and those who happen to share the same opinion are lucky. Yet, everyone else are doomed to live a life that is not theirs.

What the position of my opponent amounts to is that statistics gets to decide what is good and what is bad. The members of such society, are not guaranteed to use the same principle to come to their opinions. For instance, is it good that women should be able to vote? One man would consult his holly book and say “no”. Another man would consult his holly book and say “yes”. But there is no ties to metaphysical reality here, the deduction of why this vote and not that vote, ends at the views of the individual voters.

Just because an idea is widespread does not make it correct, and it should not be used as the basis to define rights. The only way to define rights is to start with an axiom that is true for *every* man. The axiom that I chose

is the fact that every man agrees that he exists, and that he wants to remain to exist, as the primary value.

The next step is to recognize that he exists as a homo sapiens, not as a monkey, a sheep or an ant. What is the difference? The difference is that a homo sapiens has a faculty of reason and volition, that he can think rationally and make choices. For instance, what works for ants does not work for people. Ants are programmed to live for their colony, but people do not live for their society, because they are not programmed at all. They are equipped with a rational capacity, and that is it. The rest they must decide on their own, *individually*.

The "relational structures" to which my opponent refers to, make sense only after inalienable rights have been identified, established and are protected. Then, whatever "impositions" people attempt on other people by spreading ideas (for instance, of Christianity), the ideas may be voluntarily accepted or safely rejected, with the protection granted by the already established rights.

Furthermore, one may entertain the idea that the relational structures and rights are recursive, like the painting by Escher in which one hand draws the other. This would be circular reasoning. There must be a hierarchical order in which the rights are first, and human relationships second. Only then relationships can be voluntary.

I will now address some of individual points that my opponent made.

Access to Cancer Treatments

It is important to clarify what should be meant by "access" in the discussion of a cancer patient. In capitalism, a sick patient cannot demand to be treated (to have access to a treatment) as if it was a human right. He must find a willing seller to sell him this treatment, for the price he is willing to pay. (Note: there may not be such seller available.) My only claim is that the government should not interfere against the opportunity to make such a voluntary trade.

Now, if a seller sells a rogue "cancer treatment", it is a case of fraud and should be handled as any other fraud. Fraud is an indirect form of physical force. (For instance, a patient has agreed to a cancer treatment, but through a fraud, signed a document to have his kidney removed.)

However, that a treatment is safe should not be handled by a regulation that requires each treatment to pass a governmental test apriori. Law should treat everyone as innocent until proven guilty.

Note that it is not necessary for someone to die from a bad treatment, in order to identify it as fraudulent. I have already described, in the previous round, that private firms of high reputation can certify quality of products. This applies also to services. In the case of the cancer treatment, such a certifier can audit the scientific process through which the procedure was tested in the lab.

Poor Man

My opponent mentions extreme poor conditions in 3rd world countries such as Laos and Thailand, and says that poor people have no chance because they have no capital. This would not happen in capitalism. The reason that they can not make capital is because their country does not offer protection of private property. Their small private property would be ravaged by gangs of marauders.

In contrast, protection of private property is the fundamental feature of capitalism. A poor man would grow food on his property, knowing assuredly that it is safe. If he grows just a bit more than he needs, he can trade the excess for other types of food. Or, instead he can create something else of value (on the premises of his property), and trade that. His children would be able to capitalize on his legacy. Historically, many people lived in this fashion.

This last example also answers the claim that if one man owns all the food, then another man must work for him.

Also, it is impossible that a single man would own the whole resource on the free market. The free market landscape changes gradually. When a certain product becomes desirable, it is traded. As such, other people would accumulate the product or learn to produce it. For instance, in medieval times, Chinese porcelain was at first China's biggest export to Europe, but soon after the Europeans learned to produce the product by themselves.

Although there are indeed competitive barriers to entry in the free market, it is important to think in principles when evaluating a moral political system. The principle in capitalism is that each man is free to create whatever

he wants on his private property. He can then consume it himself, or trade it. But, he is not *required* to trade it, and he is not *required* to compete with anyone. He can consume *all* of it by himself. (I touched on this point in the previous round.)

The possibility of trading is a bonus. It allows people to create a division of labour *without sacrificing any of their rights*. (Note: slavery of antiquity is also a division of labour, but in that case, rights were lost.)

Summary.

To use the terminology of my opponent, capitalism allows relational structures to exist *on top* of the protected inalienable rights. Different customs can co-exist in capitalism, into which members can voluntarily join or leave.

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admin

(CON)

I'd like to thank my opponent for a spirited debate. This is the final round, so I will use it mostly to summarize what's happened. I see it as coming down to three fundamental disagreements.

What is the basis for rights?

Pro understood rights as being personally bound based on some innate, rational and moral desire to live and have stuff. That has been about the extent of his analysis - he has purely asserted that "every man would agree" with his conception. As a man, no. His evidence for this understanding is still nothing more than, literally, a children's fantasy story.

I've provided an alternative model - rights are reflections of our values. Values are how we relate to each other and our world. So if we value life, for example, we protect life (regardless of what we define life as). As humans, we have an innate right to life because we value our humanity. I used several elements of analysis to support this view which went ignored by my opponent. In the final round he criticized the potential for tyranny of the majority in democratically negotiated value structures. First, just because pro thinks it's not moral doesn't mean it's wrong. Second, in the previous round I demonstrated that any structures can be used for good or bad

ends. I for one would consider many exercises of his framework morally abhorrent. I should add that not every democracy is majoritarian - haggling for a price with a street vendor is an exercise in mutual democracy, for example, which involves *many* value exchanges. We all live under the ideas of other people, within the environment. We do not tend to independently invent language or mathematics, for example. Nor is there any relation to recursive rights, since in my framework, all rights have the same weight and come from the same basic principle. Indeed the only way rights could be recursive is if they were premised on other rights, which is a feature of pro's model.

Effect on government structures

Even granting his premise on rights, pro has to show deregulation follows. In fact he imposes quite a bit of market regulation, like fraud, and instead his model is simply to abolish any government agency that can actually investigate these things except the police. Either the police just replaces all these previous agencies, or the law will be inadequate to protect everyone. Pro has only specifically mentioned he wants to get rid of some environmental regulation (with a caveat) and the agencies responsible for food safety regulation and monetary policy. He has also specifically stated he has not considered the costs of this, only the benefits.

What I've said is that the reason governments handle these things is that the free market doesn't, or at least, doesn't do so effectively. I've also told you that capitalism has no means to resolve value clashes. Pro didn't want to talk about numerous arguments I raised to the point, like public goods. He drops the whole anti-environmentalist line in the final round. He also notably doesn't engage with my point that the lack of structures can impose itself on people in undesirable ways.

Effect on individuals

As a minor point we have also considered personal impacts. I particularly wanted to talk about inequality in this debate. Pro's entire rebuttal was premised on that inequality being "unimaginable." He could not imagine anyone who was less than a yeoman. He has never heard of the blue collar, the serf and the peasant. Everyone owns land, is perfectly free to make of their capital as they wish, and owns the fruits of their labor. I don't know about you, but I'm not even close to being that wealthy. In a wealthy economy like the USA he's ignoring the poorest third, in a poor country, between half and two thirds. That's under the status quo, and the number gets worse as inequality rises.

Pro has presented no solution to the problem of inequality. He has not denied the mechanism by which his model produces more inequality. Overall he has completely failed to answer the contention.

Conclusion

Pro needed to hit a home run in this debate. He had to destroy my counter-arguments. Not only that, but firmly establish his model in their place. Not only that, but he set it on himself to show that his model was completely perfect. Pro has failed to meet his burden at every step, and it's their burden to prove.

The resolution is negated.

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