

Liberalism and Conservatism

Liberal / Conservative - - In what regard? Our Editorial Board feels that we need to talk about both fiscal (monetary) issues and social issues.

Monetary issues are pretty straight forward. Conservatives support living within your means and spending less rather than more, and generally have an aversion to incurring debt. Liberals are more liberal in regards to cash outflows, and are more liberal in regards to the use of Other People's Money. Liberals are more supportive of higher taxes and bigger government. Accordingly, liberals believe in "free" universal health care, which should be provided "by the government" to all citizens. The government should also provide cash welfare payments and other government services to the less fortunate, and either increase the level of taxes to fund these governmental programs, or borrow from the future. But enough said.... Otherwise, we will start repeating ourselves (yet again).

So.... What about social issues? Liberals support a more expansive government, and accordingly, a bigger role for the government in people's lives. Conservatives prefer smaller government, less regulation, and prefer to see social services delivered by the private sector and/or Not For Profit organizations.

Conservatives rely upon a literal interpretation of the US Constitution, support the Bill of Rights, and support the concept of personal responsibility, and the reliance upon the private sector, rather than governmental programs. They support laws that reflect what they feel are the best interests of society as a whole - financially and morally.

Liberals support more government regulation and restrictions on certain rights, such as the right to bear arms, and are more liberal in regards to other social issues such as gay marriage, abortion and embryonic stem cell research.

One last distinction - conservatives believe that the states should have more power and independence, rather than relying upon the federal government. Liberals prefer a larger role for government - whether it be at the federal, state or local level.

Conservatives, Liberals and Libertarians -

And let's not forget the libertarians (who should not be confused with liberals). Libertarians believe that the role of government should be extremely limited in both the economic and social spheres. On economic issues, libertarians believe in the private sector and the free market rather than government bureaucracies (the private sector and marketplace make better decisions on resource allocation). On social issues, the primary focus of libertarians is the maximization of civil liberties for all citizens. An appropriate motto for libertarians is "Don't tread on me".

Our Editorial Board believes that in regards to fiscal issues (and the size of the federal and state governments) "less is better". In cases where there is a necessary government program, those programs should be moved from the federal level to the state level as much as possible. On social issues, we support minimal (rather than "liberal" doses of) governmental intrusion into people's personal lives.