



Why I Defend Ron Paul Against His Republican Critics

First, in distinguishing themselves from their opponents, Republicans invoke “the conservative principles” for which they stand. These principles, they assure us, are also America’s “founding principles”: “limited government,” “liberty,” “individualism,” and the like. Thus, in the spirit of these eternal verities, Republicans — during election season, at any rate — incessantly call for *reductions* in the size and scope of government.



Now, Ron Paul’s vision for America is as close an approximation of that of the Founders as any on the scene today. For all of the criticism to which Paul’s Republican rivals have subjected him, not one of them dares to put into question his commitment to limited — *dramatically* limited — government.

So, when a Republican politician comes along who is passionately, unequivocally committed to restoring [the Constitutional Republic](#) that our Founders crafted for their posterity, a Republican who enthusiastically embraces the very “founding principles” that the GOP claims to affirm, and that Republican isn’t just criticized — this is bad enough — but resoundingly ridiculed as a ["crackpot" by his fellow Republicans](#), it is hard for a Republican voter not to get more than a bit perturbed.

I anger for Paul, it is true, but also for the millions of Americans who regularly vote Republican (including myself), for the readiness with which Paul’s rivals insult him over his positions has, ironically, exposed their own insincerity. You see, when push comes to shove, what we invariably discover *after* they are elected is that the vast majority of Paul’s embittered brethren are almost as committed to maintaining the Welfare State as their leftist counterparts in the Democratic Party. And they are *more* resolved to maintain, and *grow*, [the Warfare State](#) — as [Rick Santorum](#) made all too clear when he declared, during [the New Hampshire primary](#) debate, that far from bringing our soldiers home from the proverbial four corners of the earth, the dangers posed by Islamic terrorists insured that we would probably have to *increase* our troop’s global presence.

There is another reason why I defend Ron Paul.

For the activity of bullying, I have *zero* tolerance. Being weak and cowardly, bullies delude themselves into thinking that they’re strong and brave by fusing their individual identities with that of a collective, a gang or a mob. This, regrettably, is what appears to have happened to Paul’s Republican abusers: they have acquired a “mob mentality.”

That a mob mentality has taken over establishment Republican commentators when it comes to Ron Paul can be seen from the swiftness with which one after the other piles upon him as well as the shoddy quality of their criticisms. Distortions, insults, and outright lies abound.



Written by [Jack Kerwick, Ph.D.](#) on June 20, 2011

Take nationally syndicated talk radio show host and film critic [Michael Medved](#), for example. If Paul's Republican critics constitute a mob, then Medved is its ringleader, for no one more savagely and routinely — even obsessively — attacks the Texas congressman. Medved is not beyond imparting insights; as one who regularly listens to his show, I can attest to this. Yet his criticisms of Paul, almost to an argument, are worthless.

When he isn't referring to Paul as a ["crackpot"](#) and a "disgrace," Medved is guilty of completely misrepresenting Paul's positions. Because Paul rejects a constitutional amendment explicitly defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman, and because he thinks that *consenting* adult citizens shouldn't be *coerced* into endorsing another's understanding of marriage, Medved insists that Paul favors a literally anarchic situation with respect to marriage.

In reality, only one who thought that government itself should be abolished — an anarchist — could adopt the position on the issue of marriage or any other issue that Medved attributes to Paul. Clearly, Paul is no anarchist, for no anarchist would seek to hold an office in the government, let alone *the office of the presidency!*

Ron Paul is very clear about his position on this issue (as well as every other, for that matter) in his [Liberty Defined](#). "In a free society," he writes, "all *voluntary* and *consensual* agreements would be recognized," and when "disputes arose, *the courts could be involved* as in any other dispute." (Emphasis added.) There are two things here of which we must take note. First, in maintaining that such "voluntary and consensual" arrangements as marriage deserve recognition, Paul maintains that *the government* must recognize them. Second, the government provides this recognition by way of its *judicial branch*, by adjudicating disputes, issuing settlements, and the like.

Bullies are unfair. That Medved and the mob that he signifies act like bullies when it comes to Paul becomes obvious once we grasp that Paul's position isn't remotely as extreme as his detractors make it out to be. In fact, it isn't extreme at all. As Paul observes, common-law marriage requires no license and is "recognized as a legal entity" in 12 states. Does *this* practice portend the kind of mass chaos that Medved and company charge Paul of championing?

When Paul insists that marriage is a matter regarding which "the government" should refrain from interjecting itself, what he is saying is that *the federal government* has *no* role at all to play here. Yet he is also saying that neither should state governments embark upon the enterprise of *defining* marriage — not that they should literally stay out of the whole business of marriage.

Paul's positions, whether on marriage or anything else, may or may not be rationally preferable to their competitors. In order to determine this, however, his critics must be willing first to *understand* what Paul's views actually are. Through either a lack of ability or a lack of will, so far they haven't come close to doing this.

We'd like to thank the reader who pointed out the the obvious error: calling Ron Paul's recent book Freedom Defined, instead of Liberty Defined. This has been fixed in the text.



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