

Fairness \$ Property is a social construct legally enforced by the government. For all people to be considered equal, each person should have an equal amount of property. Material equality should be the default. In a free-market economy with a basic income at or below the highest sustainable rate, those who choose to live off basic income would not be living off the work of others. Rather, they would be living off less than their “fair share” of property and allowing the extra to be used by those who choose to work.

Market Utility \$ The free market is the greatest generator of wealth ever devised. Money is the most effective means of socially producing utility, as it allows each individual to purchase whatever they need and want. One dollar in the hands of an impoverished person produces greater utility than a dollar in the hands of a rich one: with a dollar a rich person cannot purchase what he needs and wants as a poor person can. The transfer of money from rich to poor would increase overall utility. The government regulates the economy incompetently, but the one thing it can do well is mail out checks. A basic income is the most effective means of transferring money from rich to poor with the least government interference and the least work disincentive. The natural limit on the amount of basic income is the point where the work disincentive from the required taxes reduces wealth to where basic income would have to be reduced.

Keynesian \$ Keynesian economics works when implemented correctly. But properly implementing Keynesian economics is politically difficult. It requires politicians who are willing to spend a lot of money on stimulus when the government appears broke, and then become deficit hawks when the government is rolling in cash and everyone wants a piece of the pie. A basic income funded primarily by income tax would become an institutionalized entitlement expected by the population, and its cost would automatically increase or decrease directly in opposition to the economy. As unemployment rises, the amount of net receivers would go up, and as unemployment falls, so would net receivers. Keynes once said that the government should pay people to dig holes and fill them back up again. But anyone who sits on the couch and watches TV while living off basic income would contribute the same to society as those digging holes. And anyone who works more productively will create a net good for society.

Human Rights \$ Poverty is not a natural tragedy like cancer or earthquakes. Poverty is a human caused tragedy more comparable to slavery or government oppression. Slavery is the societal recognition of humans as property. Government oppression is when governments punish people for their beliefs or characteristics without due process of law. Poverty is when property laws deny people access to necessities. Human caused tragedies can be ended by recognizing that humans have the right not to be subjected by others. Humans have a right not to live in slavery and be free of government oppression. And humans have a right not to live in poverty. A basic income is not a strategy for dealing with poverty; it is the elimination of poverty. The campaign for a basic income is a campaign for the abolition of poverty—the abolitionist movement of the 21st century.

Georgist \$ Property is a product of creation, not of use. “I made this,” confers property rights. “It’s mine!” does not. Products of your labor are yours, and when someone appropriates them you become his slave. Land and natural resources, however, are not made but are of nature or God. They are gifts to humanity. Individual property of land and natural resources may be practical or useful, but it is still theft. Utility might justify this theft, but compensation is still required. Compensation should be in the form that offers the greatest choice of use to the victims as appropriation happened without consent. That form is cash. The most efficient arrangement would be that land takers pay the full rental or use value to a single entity that would divide the proceeds equally among the population. Taxes are the tribute paid for displacing you from land; basic income is your dividend.

1-Minute Arguments For A Basic Income For All Human Beings

Transhumanist \$ 200,000 years ago humans lived in hunter-gather societies. About 10,000 years ago, humans began to live in agricultural societies, and about 300 years ago, human society became industrial. Starting 30 to 50 years ago, we have lived in a service society. Theoretically, the last economic stage of society is a leisure society, where most people either work in the artistic or scientific fields, or do not work at all. So far, each phase has lasted only a small fraction of the time of the previous phase. If that pattern holds, service societies should last less than two generations, a time period nearing its end. Right now, worker productivity is advancing faster than the need for workers, and robots are inhabiting labs in research hospitals. We should prepare for a society where everyone would not work. A basic income can provide a living for people and customers for businesses.

Conservative \$ The welfare state may not be the society we would have created, but it has been around for four generations. People expect and rely on it, and it would be extremely disruptive to get rid of it. But while we may not be able to get rid of the welfare state, we can reform it. The current welfare state necessitates an immense and expensive bureaucracy, is prohibitively complicated for some intended beneficiaries, puts bureaucrats in charge of the lives of the poor, creates perverse incentives for people to avoid work and remain poor, and arbitrarily allows some people to fall through the cracks. Basic income would correct these problems. It would be simpler to administer, treat all people equally, retain rewards for hard work, savings, and entrepreneurship, and trust the poor to make decisions about how to use their money by taking them out of the hands of politicians.

Feminist \$ Patriarchy has put the world’s wealth into the hands of men. It has prevented women from being professionals and entrepreneurs, forced poor women into dead-end second-class labor jobs, and forced all women to become unpaid domestic workers and caretakers of the young, elderly, and disabled. Throughout history women have been forced to be financially dependent on fathers or husbands. Basic income would change this. Women would be free of financial dependence, and the young, elderly, and disabled would be fully supported. Women could afford to leave abusive husbands. Those who chose to be caretakers would be compensated, and no woman would be forced into a dead-end job, instead pursuing her own financial goals as she saw fit.

Libertarian \$ While it may have been theoretically possible to acquire property in a just manner, that is not what happened. Almost every tract of inhabited land can trace its title back to someone who acquired it by force. And not just land titles. Thanks to past government spending, targeted tax breaks, intellectual property, corporate charters, slavery, and meddling regulations, no property or wealth has been justly acquired. If we assume that those who have the least are the greatest victims, a basic income would provide the best possible rectification with the least government control, while producing the most just system of property distribution possible.

Liberal \$ A basic income would correct or ameliorate many inequities and inefficiencies inherent in market capitalism. The wages of unskilled and semi-skilled workers would rise as those who enjoy and are good at such work would not have to compete with those who are forced into it by financial necessity. The wages of highly skilled workers would fall as more people are able to take time to gain skills to compete for those jobs, lowering the cost of legal, financial, and health care services. A guaranteed income would soften the blow to workers displaced by advancing technology and the creative destruction of the market. Job seekers would be able to take time to find work that is the best fit for them, increasing efficiency in the distribution of labor. And entrepreneurship would flourish as those wanting to start their own businesses would have an income to survive on while starting a new enterprise.

Independetarian
\$ Property rights are not natural but are a social convention. They give individuals freedom in that the essence of property is the right to exclude others, to have a place where no one else has dominion over you. Each individual should have inalienable ownership over her own body and mind. But carving up nature leaves some people without the means to obtain the necessities to maintain their body and mind. Each person must have an inalienable property right to these necessities. Society owes you a living because society is preventing you from foraging the land to obtain the necessities of life on your own. Society could rectify this problem by letting individuals forage for necessities wherever they wish, by giving them the land they need to survive on their own, or by providing these necessities directly. But in modern societies, the most efficient way to provide for these necessities is with direct cash payments, a basic income.

www.basicincome.org