

## My Journey to Libertarianville

By Marc J. Victor, Attorney

I've always been a loud mouth. Even as a young boy, my mother would often say, "Someday, that mouth of yours is going to get you in trouble." Today, as a criminal defense attorney, I use that "mouth of mine" to help get people OUT of trouble. It wasn't always that way.

Like most other loud mouths, I was always interested in politics. However, like almost all other Boston area Jews, I was surrounded by long time liberal Democrats. Although there may have been a time in my youth when I was in the presence of a Republican, such unpleasantness was always kept from me. I had always been informed that Democrats were "for the people" and Republicans were "for big business." If there was more to the analysis, I never heard it.

Being most comfortable in the midst of any controversy, I think my youthful pronouncement that I had decided to be a Republican was more of a reaction against the Democrat Party monopoly than a statement of principle. To their credit, my parents informed me that my Republican leanings were OK so long as I did not publicize them in front of the elder generation. I think they believed it was just some crazy phase I was going through. Ultimately, they were correct.

At some point, I became a Republican because I agreed with what Republicans were saying. In addition to sounding whiny and wimpy, the Democrats always struck me as needing a babysitter to help with living their lives. The Republicans were talking about individual responsibility and low taxes. I really bought into the limited govern-

ment concept. I started arguing with Democrats about everything; whether they wanted to argue or not. I began my college career as a political science major at the University of Massachusetts in Boston. The school is not known for its great libertarian bent. I don't know if being a socialist was a requirement to become a professor, but it sure seemed like it to me. I recall the permanent Marxist information table being a popular spot among many of the students. Everyone in my political science classes knew me. Some knew me as the loud mouth Republican idiot. Others just knew me as the loud mouth. I loved it.

Somewhere in the midst of my battles with liberals, I began to notice there were some pesky issues where the liberal Democrat voices made some sense. I couldn't deny their good points on various individual rights issues such as free speech, sodomy laws, homosexuality, pornography, and separation of church and state.

Being tired of shoveling snow and a fan of the summertime, I transferred to Arizona State University as a justice studies major. In addition to having a few conservatives around, there was no Marxist table to be found at Arizona State University. Although my Republican views had started to moderate on some individual rights issues, I was still fool enough to extol the virtues of the war on drugs.

One day after class, I participated in a heated argument about the drug war. During my long walk to the poor man's parking lot, the economic based argument against the drug war started to sink into my hard head. I could feel myself having to change my deeply held view about the drug war and adopt a pro-legalization position. Later, I realized those great Republican pronouncements about individual responsibility were not compatible with a war on drugs.

When I entered law school at Southwestern University in Los Angeles, I was a confused conservative; not comfortable with either the Republicans or the Democrats. In one sense I was better off because I could argue with both the Republicans and Democrats. Merely rejecting both parties didn't stop me from being a loud mouth.

Although I had positions on various issues, I lacked a coherent philosophical base.

One day, I met Professor Butler Shaffer. He told us to refer to him either as "Butler" or "God" if we weren't comfortable using his first name. I figured out quickly this guy wasn't a typical law professor. He showed up to class one day wearing a tee shirt with the word "anarchy" on it. I was intrigued. Butler posed questions about self-ownership and the legitimacy of the constitution. He insisted that all political questions were really different versions of the same question, "Who makes the decision over property; the owner or someone else?" He boiled all questions down to a property analysis. I harassed the guy. After endless hours kicking around the questions Butler posed, I started to understand. Butler gave me a book by Murray Rothbard that discussed the monetary system. I also read Economics in One Lesson by Henry Hazlitt and Libertarianism in One Lesson by David Bergland while I was pouring through the required law school reading.

Butler invited me to two discussion groups entitled the Mencken Forum and the Nock Forum respectively. I attended both faithfully and became a libertarian junkie. I couldn't get enough of the freedom philosophy. After flirting with the Libertarian Party, I came to the realization that such a party is a contradiction in terms.

Although I sympathize with political Libertarians, I do not count myself among them. On the other hand, I do not believe there is or can exist a centralized plan for freedom. I have come to believe there are two groups of people; those who coerce others and those who do not.

After almost ten years as a practicing criminal defense attorney, I can say few libertarians have fought the state more regularly. I am a libertarian on the front lines in the war against tyranny; an epic multigenerational and honorable struggle. I have hosted regular discussion groups, given speeches, hosted a radio show and sponsored debates. In 2000, I co-founded the Freedom Summit ([www.freedomsummit.com](http://www.freedomsummit.com)) with my partner and libertarian guerilla warrior Ernest Hancock.



Although neither the Mencken Forum nor the Nock Forum continue, the Freedom Summit exists to hopefully rescue lost libertarian souls from the intellectual chaos that prevails today.

In the end, my mom was right. It is my loud mouth that will most likely get me into trouble. On the other hand, I wouldn't have it any other way.

Marc J. Victor is a practicing criminal defense attorney located in Chandler, Arizona. He can be reached via his website, [www.attorneyforfreedom.com](http://www.attorneyforfreedom.com).

## Obama vs. Root: A Once in a Lifetime Opportunity for the Libertarian Party!

By Wayne Allyn Root, LP Presidential Nominee Candidate

A recent commentary in the Wall Street Journal explained why Barack Obama is beating Hillary Clinton- the answer is, not surprisingly, SALES.

The article sums it up,

"With no disagreement on policy, Democrats opt for a top salesman... if you are selling a dream you need the best possible salesman to make it seem somehow possible. They found him in Barack Obama."

If it is true that the Democrats have found their salesman (unfortunately to sell a corrupt, damaging and dysfunctional liberal "tax and spend" "Soak the small businesspersons" "redistribute the wealth from the taxpayers to the

non-producers of society" dream), then I believe that the Libertarian Party has a once in a lifetime opportunity standing before them.

You see I am not just Barack's match as a salesman and communicator of a political message. I am Barack Obama's college classmate. Yes, we are graduates of the same college (Columbia University), same class (Class of '83), same major (Political Science). We graduated on the same day 25 years ago. Never before in the history of American politics have two college classmates run against each other for President. Talent aside, sometimes you just need a bit of luck. Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined running for President in the same election as my college classmate.

On so many levels, this is the opportunity of a lifetime. The Columbia University classmate story will give the Libertarian Party a unique angle to attract national media attention. What media outlet in the country could re-

sist seeing the two college classmates running for President, side by side, debating and discussing issues, values and visions. Third party candidates rarely (if ever) get this kind of media exposure.

But the real opportunity of a lifetime is the ability to so clearly contrast the stark differences in the paths we've each taken in the past 25 years since college graduation. No two political opponents have ever been able to point so clearly to how their philosophies and political visions have changed lives. I would be proud to ask the American people to choose one vision or the other. I believe a majority of Americans would choose mine.

Let's now compare the stories of two young men who graduated Columbia University on the exact same day in June, 1983. Both were children of non-privileged backgrounds. Barack, a product of bi-racial parents, grew up as the rare black kid in Hawaii. Root, the blue collar son of a butcher, grew up the rare Jewish kid

in a virtually all-black public school on the Bronx borderline in Mt Vernon, New York. Both of us later benefited from attending exclusive private schools (in both cases with help from our grandparents) that prepared us for entrance into Columbia University. That however is where the eerie similarities in our lives end. Obama and I took very different paths after graduation from Columbia. Those paths will illuminate the value of the Libertarian conservative economic message.

I chose the path of an entrepreneur and small businessman. I've started businesses, funded businesses, risked my own money on business ideas to achieve the American Dream. I've created jobs; pumped tens of millions of dollars into the American economy; made hundreds of payrolls so that my employees could raise families, pay mortgages, and share in the American Dream themselves; and paid health insurance and payroll taxes for my employ

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