

Contemporary Issues

Top Ten Things You Need to Know



Can liberalism solve global issues?

1

- There is much debate as to whether the principles of liberalism are the best way to deal with problems
 - Characterized by
 - free and fair elections,
 - rule of law,
 - separation of powers
 - Protection of civil liberties such as speech, assembly and religion

- Look at the most stable areas of the world - have adopted liberal principles



Security

- Case Study: Israel
 - Treating Palestinians illib
 - Wall
 - Expanding territory
 - Repressive police forces



- Supports many liberal ideals
 - Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Issue: must respect sovereignty (relates to individual freedoms to govern self)
- Difficulty of enforcement



Liberal economics

- Greater international trade believed to encourage global peace
- Golden Arches and Dell Theory

Correlation does not imply causation.



Thomas Friedman :
No two countries with a
McDonald's have ever gone
to war since opening the
McDonald's.
(Golden Arches Theory of
Conflict Prevention)

Issues with liberal economics

6

- International organizations (e.g. IMF, World Bank and EU) promote trade liberalization and demand right wing economic policies from those borrowing funds
 - Ignore plight of workers or environment
 - Encouraging Americanization of global culture

Dealing with Natural Disasters

- Classical liberal view
 - Philanthropists and charity from individuals will help to overcome unexpected disasters
 - Less bureaucracy/red tape
 - Choice of what you want to support



Dealing with Natural Disasters



- Modern liberal/socialist view
 - Don't want to depend on the charity of others – HOPE to get help
 - Government better organized to act quickly
 - Any major charity also has bureaucracy and red tape

Pandemics

9

- Cannot respect rights like mobility to keep people safe
- Need to quarantine, have curfews, limit interactions (trade)



- *“Liberal ideas may be under attack, but they retain a powerful appeal. Liberal democracies won out over fascism and communism for a reason; equality and freedom are too compelling to resist for long. They are likely to survive any current threats from any of today’s deeply illiberal forces for the same reason.”*

(Alan Wolfe)