

# We Are Born Impoverished

I just started reading Henry Hazlitt's *The Conquest of Poverty* and before I got too far I wanted to jot down some thoughts I've had on the subject.

As Hazlitt states in his very first line, "The history of poverty is almost the history of mankind... Poverty was the normal lot." I would observe that we are all born impoverished. We come into this world with only our minds and bodies, and both too undeveloped to be of any use to us. Time helps cure the latter, but not the former. For that, one must have two things: the love of a guardian, and freedom.

Our first steps out of poverty begin when we are wrapped in swaddling clothes, when we are fed, when we are brought to a warm place and kept secure. Our parents (or guardians) as an act of love and kindness share their wealth with us. They are free to give it, and we are free to receive. For quite a few years our parents' wealth is shared with us as we grow and learn and develop into a mature human being, at which point we approach the world eager to accumulate more things, either wealth or knowledge.

But there are forces that can prevent us from doing as we please and fulfilling our desires, from having freedom. Though mainstream society would categorically separate these forces, from the perspective of overcoming poverty, they are one and the same. A single force bent on gaining at the expense of others, accumulating something for nothing, thereby pushing everyone else back toward a state of poverty.

That force I would call *crime*, and I would define it as the violation of one's natural right to the pursuit of happiness. Crime takes many different forms, from petty theft to mass genocide; and many types of criminals, from shoplifters to tyrants. No matter the form nor the type of criminal, all crime destroys wealth and prosperity.

Thus there's a simple a test. Does an action create wealth or destroy it? A shoplifter takes what he hasn't earned from the one who has. The rightful owner is to a small degree more impoverished than he was prior to the act of theft. A tyrant forcibly restricts one's movements, prohibits one's actions, and even takes one's life, and to a larger degree that person is more impoverished (or dead) than he was prior to the act of tyranny.

As I said, it matters not from the perspective of overcoming poverty the form and type of criminals committing crimes. Criminals are pushing you back towards your natural state, the way you entered the world, the state that you've been struggling against your entire life to overcome in order to survive and find happiness. Whether a thief, a murderer, a politician, or a bureaucrat, he is the one who stands in the way of you accomplishing your goals and finding joy in life.

It has been my aim the last few years, and will be my aim going forward, to bring to light this terrible truth, and to shine a light on criminals without regard to their official title. Men are men, and all men are born equally impoverished and equally free. What's wrong for one man is wrong for all men. Crime is crime, whether private or public, and I hope we will all do our part in ridding the world of crime.

Skyler.