

Why Redistribution Fails (Encounter Broadside)

James Piereson

**Download PDF / ePub / DOC / audiobook / ebooks*



 Download

 Read Online

#912417 in eBooks 2015-10-13 2015-10-13 File Name: B015VN58C0 | File size: 15.Mb

James Piereson : Why Redistribution Fails (Encounter Broadside) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Why Redistribution Fails (Encounter Broadside):

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Regardless of redistribution's morality, the U.S. government simply can't pull it off. By George P. Wood. According to American progressives, economic inequality is a social-justice problem for which income redistribution is a necessary political solution. In this Encounter Broadside, James Piereson sets the moral question about income redistribution to one side and focuses on a more practical question, whether government can do it well. He answers that it cannot. "The progressive case is based upon a significant fallacy," he writes; "it assumes that the U.S. government is actually capable of redistributing income from

the wealthy to the poor. For reasons of policy, tradition, and institutional design, this is not the case. Whatever one may think of inequality, redistributive fiscal policies are unlikely to do much to reduce it, a point that the voters seem instinctively to understand. Politicians, on the other hand, and unfortunately seem not to understand this. As a broadside, Piereson's argument is short and suggestive, rather than long and definitive. Nonetheless, it outlines the case for believing that even were redistribution moral—which it isn't—it would fail to achieve its aims. Thus, it should be rejected as public policy.

Democratic presidential candidates, including Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders, along with progressive economists like Thomas Piketty and Paul Krugman, have made a case for redistributing income from the wealthy to the poor as a means of reducing inequalities in income and wealth. Meanwhile, public opinion polls show that voters reject programs of redistribution in favor of policies designed to promote overall economic growth and job creation. While voters are concerned about inequality, they are more skeptical of the capacity of the government to do anything about it without making matters worse for everyone. In this Broadside, James Piereson explains why the voters are right and the progressive politicians and economists are wrong. As he demonstrates, the progressive case is based upon a serious fallacy: it assumes that the government is actually capable of redistributing income from the wealthy to the poor. For reasons of policy, tradition, and constitutional design, this is not the case. The United States currently has one of the more progressive income tax systems in the industrial world but it does little to redistribute income from the wealthy to the poor. One reason for this is that, though the government spends vast sums on programs to aid the poor, most of these funds flow to providers of services rather than to the poor themselves. Thus, whatever one may think of inequality, redistributive tax and spending policies are unlikely to do much to ameliorate it but will instead line the pockets of providers and advocates who wield great influence in Washington.

About the Author James Piereson is a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute and president of the William E. Simon Foundation. He is a frequent contributor to various journals and newspapers, including *The New Criterion*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Commentary*, *The Weekly Standard*, and *The Washington Post*. He is the author of *The Inequality Hoax* (2014) and *Shattered Consensus: The Rise and Decline of America's Post War Political Order* (2015).