

Donald Trump's Economic and Political World Views In A Nutshell

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I believe the Trump phenomenon is rooted in elements of Mercantilism and Structural Realism.

Trump's economic attitudes toward international trade, the balance of trade, and government intervention in economic activity have a mercantilist edge to them.

Within the Republican Party, where free trade, trade deficits, and non-intervention in the economy have become established core economic positions, Trump becomes an anti-establishment heretic for going against them.

In 2016 American Capitalism is in the advanced stages of decay.

On the right, Trump's neo-mercantilist economic worldview is clashing with the supply side neo-liberal economic worldview of the Republican Party.

On the left, Sanders' democratic socialist economic worldview is clashing with the demand side neo-liberal economic worldview of the Democratic Party.

If American Capitalism is not in the advanced stages of decay, how can Trump point out large trade deficits, currency devaluation, a high national debt and crumbling infrastructure as significant problems?

If American Capitalism is not in the advanced stages of decay, how can Sanders point to income inequality, low wages, high student debt, and crumbling infrastructure as significant problems?

Trump and Sanders are accurately calling out the economic failures of the dysfunctional supply side and demand side neo-liberal incrementalists in both of their respective parties.

Many have mistaken Trump as a Fascist due to some of his nationalistic rhetoric. I believe Trump is correctly identified as a Mercantilist, because mercantilists see economic activity in terms of winning and losing, as well as subordinating economic activity to the interest of the state.

Trump's style of mercantilism /neo-mercantilism is realistic instead of idealistic. On the other hand, established supply side neo-liberals in the Republican Party's style of supply side neo-liberalism is more idealistic than realistic.

This is a significant difference of economic worldviews within the Republican Party. Whoever wins this battle will have to reckon with whoever prevails in the battle between democratic socialism and demand side neo-liberalism in the Democratic Party.

The other side of the equation of what Trump has tapped into is Structural Realism. Structural Realism is a worldview in international relations that has a handful of core beliefs. In a nutshell, structural realists believe that anarchy is inherent in the international system, states are the most important actors in that system, and each state will do what is necessary to maximize their survival, security, and Independence.

The Structural Realist world view flies in the face of the complex interdependence, collective security agreements, and international institutions established to maintain the post WWII international order, supported by both the Republican and Democratic Parties.

And that is Donald Trump's economic and political worldview in a nutshell.

Donald Trump is a Neo-Mercantilist Structural Realist.