

HST 203: ONLINE U.S.History Sp19 (Escobar)

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Taxation
by [Joe Escobar](#) - Saturday, April 20, 2019, 8:44 AM

This thread is for discussions on the Taxation topic.

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Coolidge's views on taxation
by [Kathy Holmes](#) - Tuesday, April 23, 2019, 5:34 PM

It is interesting to me in the first graph of U.S. Tax revenues from 1980-2009 that the income tax revenue has increased at a much slower pace than that of the total tax revenue. I think it is easier to increase the tax on things like gas, cigarettes, and inheritance because it is something people deal with less often and might not notice as easily whereas your income tax you can see the exact number that was taken out every month so it is more of a shock when that number is bigger but when gas prices increase 10c overnight it isn't always contributed to tax in our minds.

In the video "Calvin Coolidge speaks on taxation" I find myself agreeing with President Coolidge's view on taxation, "the expenses of government reach everybody" (1:00) Just as the expenses of government reach everyone, so do the benefits. When I get my paychecks and see how much tax is taken out, I don't always think of it as negative. I think about the fact that I have roads to drive on, I have access to public spaces such as the library, I get to live in a country that is protected by the men and women serving for us. "I want the American people to work less for the government and more for themselves. I want them to have the rewards of their own industry. This is the chief meaning of freedom." (2:07) I have mixed feelings about this statement. I agree that we should be able to work less for the government and more for ourselves but I am not sure that it is the chief meaning of freedom, in an economic sense maybe but not otherwise.

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Re: Taxation- The more you make the more they take..
by [Alexandra Selig](#) - Tuesday, April 23, 2019, 9:43 PM

Taxes, although frustrating to pay and sometimes seemingly unfair, do have their purpose as expressed by President Coolidge in his Taxation speech, delivered on the White House Lawn on August 11, 1924. Taxation is what has fueled our economy and government. Starting with cooperate income taxes in 1909 and extending to a broader federal income tax in 1913.

Federal income tax is not the only tax that aids in the governments (both local and federal) ability to function. Citizens who have been lucky enough to be able to purchase a home or property must also pay property taxes to the county in which they live. These taxes help to support our roads, our schools and other delegated needs for local legislations. The Death Tax or more politely known as the inheritance tax, is another way for the government to collect on moneys that will be paid out in the even of a loved one’s death. There are currently only seven States in the US that do not currently collect a state income tax and instead depend on other taxes like sales tax and property tax to fuel their economy and local government.

In his address President Coolidge explains how taxes are paid by all citizens. Weather that is through their income, purchases or other living expenses. He points our that those who are making more money will be depended on more to pay larger sums of taxes. This is supported by the graphed material provided in this week’s forum material. If we are looking at the average tax rate of individuals making less than \$40,000 versus the average tax rate of individuals making greater than \$100,000 a year, not only is the percentage in which they pay greater the total amount of taxes is greater as well.

Exp) If I make \$44,200 a year and my combined taxes are 5.5% then I am paying \$2431 in taxes for the year. If I make \$ 95,500 a year and my combined taxes are 14.0% then I am paying \$13,370 a year in taxes. That is a significant difference.

It is true that the more you make the more they take, but as Coolidge states in his address “One of the greatest privileges to be bestowed is economy in government”..

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Figuring out taxes
by [Steph McGuire](#) - Tuesday, April 23, 2019, 11:08 PM

First, I have to say that taxes always have been and probably always will be very confusing to me. So, please understand that I am not an expert. But looking at these charts, I would say that my conclusion is that it looks like for about one hundred years our taxes rose sharply. But after the year 2000 they start a slight downward trend. Again, the only thing I know about taxes is what I have read on this forum. This is something that I hope to learn more about now. I plan to read more about this as I can.

Mr. Coolidge’s position was hard for me to understand. (It had nothing to do with his accent. He was just a hard person for me to listen too). I understand him to be saying that he believes that cost of our government is being placed on the people’s shoulders and that he believes this is unfair. I am going to have to say that I agree with him. The government does do a large amount of taking what they believe is their fair share. He also says “taxes take from everyone a part of his earnings and force everyone to work for a certain part of his time for the government”. I do not see how this is entirely a bad thing. I honestly believe that it is a good thing for people to make some kind of contribution to their country (community). Just like giving to the poor, volunteering in your local library or picking up litter. Everyone should contribute somehow.

His claim is simply stating that he thinks that we should not let the government take so much of our income. They should not take their share first and then leave us to figure out how to feed our families and enjoy life with whatever meager earnings we have left. We should continue to work hard and be able to enjoy the fruits of our labors. I think that he understands that if we are not taxed to death, we might enjoy working. If we enjoy working we will be more productive. And if we are productive, so is our country.

Unfortunately, we have always let our government do this to us. I am a perfect example of this. I paid taxes for 25+ years only to realize that I have no idea how they get these numbers, where my money is going and how I can be more proactive. I was raised to work, pay my taxes and be patriotic. But I forgot the one thing my parents always told me (and I tell my children): ask questions. I have always considered myself an intelligent person, but this was eye opening for me.

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Re: Figuring out taxes

by [Alexandra Selig](#) - Thursday, April 25, 2019, 12:56 PM

Taxes are a burden that are supposed to be shared by all as a contribution to our society and government needs. Although it seems that a majority of the time those that pay taxes are not always those receiving the benefit of the taxes they have paid. Taxes help to support multiple government aided campaigns. For example Health Care. Taxes are used on local and federal levels to support Medicaid programs. Some of the individuals that benefit most from these programs are individuals that have either paid very little or nothing in taxes, while those who either do not qualify due to income or choose to go with private more expensive plans contribute significantly to taxes.

My personal opinion is that their needs to be a Flat tax that is the same no matter how much one makes. and the return should be based on what an individual has used, provided by government funding and by what has been contributed to the whole. I think our tax system has gotten way out of hand and no one for sure knows exactly how to fix it.

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History of Taxation in the US and Coolidge's take on it.

by [Hannah Harp](#) - Wednesday, April 24, 2019, 4:29 PM

After closely examining the Wikipedia charts and graphs on the history of taxation, I've observed a number of things that I actually found a little shocking. Previously, I had a pretty basic understanding of taxes as most people do, but I've never looked at them so in depth nor took the time to look at the trends through out history. The total tax revenue has increased DRAMATICALLY from 1980-2009 according to the graphs. But if you take a closer look, you'll see that in the 1920's and 1980's, the income tax rates of the wealthy drop way down in comparison. This raises the question, why? If the taxation rate for all Americans has stayed about the same, still to this day, then who is picking up the slack with those drops we saw for the wealthy? Some very good food for thought I think. With all of this in mind, I took a look at Coolidge's position, and found myself to largely agree with his position. His video on taxation proved to be very helpful in forming my opinion. After taxes spiked during World War II and failed to drop back down, I think it gives us a right to question our governments spending, where is all of this extra money being put towards if we're no longer at war? "700 million dollars is needed by the national government, and the remainder by local governments. Such a sum is difficult to comprehend. I think that if such a large sum of money is being provided by us, we should probably have a little bit better understanding or say in what it goes towards. "Taxes take from everyone a part of his earnings and force everyone to work for a certain part of his time for the government," Coolidge wanted to cut down this expense of the people. He understood that many people were working tirelessly, and just for a huge chunk of their income to go towards the government rather than support for their own life and family. What kind of life is that? As Coolidge said, "I want the people of America to be able to work less for the government, and more for themselves. I want them to have the rewards of their own industry. This is the chief meaning of freedom." I found the last sentence to be what compelled me the most. If people are putting all of this time and energy into working to earn a wage to provide for themselves, yet, they barely end up seeing any of it, how free can they really be? Our country is based all around this idea of freedom, but after hearing Coolidge's argument, I think that it could really bring this into question.

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The 3 Brothers Video

by [Trey Husko](#) - Wednesday, April 24, 2019, 5:28 PM

My initial reaction to watching the "3 Brothers" video is that it does attempt to show the Progressive Income Tax as being unfair to the brother who worked the most and is the richest of the three. However, I think it's flawed to think about it this way and I don't see my opinion being influenced as a result of watching this video. After researching the video more I discovered it was published by an organization called *PragerU*. Dennis Prager, a conservative radio talk show host, founded the organization with the goal "to present conservative views and to offset what he regards as the undermining of college education by the left" (Wikipedia "PragerU"). The video appears to have been made to try to make the current Progressive Income Tax look very unfair toward those that are the richest class having to make up the large majority of 70% of our Federal Tax Income compared to just 3% of the bottom 50% of the US (4:05 into video).

Out of all the different variables and factors they choose to change between the families is hours worked and why is that? By making the poorest of the three brothers, Tom, the one who chooses to works the least and that his wife also doesn't work at all it almost depicts poor people as just flat out lazy and having poor management of their money by using it all now and not saving towards the future. In fact, the video uses rhetoric and tone that is flat-out comical depicting Tom as the aggressive one when he says "I can't believe your being so... unbrotherly. You have a lot of money and I don't. I thought you'd be more generous." (about 2 minutes into video) and towards the end when the narrator says "Tom and Dick lived happily ever after with their new arrangement. Harry grumbled a lot, but whenever he complained his brothers called him greedy and selfish." (4:30 into video). Tom gets to live "happily ever after" making \$25,000 a year (which is not enough for him and his wife, let alone himself) but Harry doesn't because he has to pay a higher share even though he makes much more? Tom and his wife would barely be able to make it in today's economy, yet in the video they're said to enjoy living their life now and not later because they spend all their money and don't save.

Again I see this is as the video creators trying to make the viewers believe that this is all a form of punishment to Harry because he worked **more, not harder**, despite exact equal opportunity between the brothers. Yes, the other brothers and their wives probably could have worked more, but that's only applicable to this exact scenario where the only differences in their life is how much they worked. This is not a realistic depiction of life despite it meeting the criteria of equal opportunity for each of them.

The extra tax the rich have to pay is much less of a burden on them opposed to someone making ends-meet. 10% of a tax on income means much more to someone making \$25,000 a year compared to a tax of greater than 10% on someone making \$150,000 a year. Sure, it seems unfair they get taxed more for being rich regardless of how they got the money but in the end they'll be fine especially if they're saving their earnings such as Harry in the video. The people making \$25,000 a year don't have the chance to save money because everything they earn goes toward living right away. They have to think about now, not their future as bad as that sounds.

For all that I mentioned and discussed is why I wasn't really influenced by the video of my opinion toward the Progressive Income Tax that exists in the United States.

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Re: The 3 Brothers Video
by [Steph McGuire](#) - Wednesday, April 24, 2019, 10:05 PM

Good evening Trey,

I appreciate your input on the 3 Brothers video. I felt like I learned a lot while watching this video. I do not have a great understanding of how taxes work. So, I thought this video was great at explaining it. Yes, it does make sense that the wealthy pay more in taxes, as they have more income. But then I started looking at it from Harry's point of view and felt frustrated. It did not seem fair because he did work hard. But you are correct in what you said that this is not a realistic depiction of real life. Lower income people are not always in this position because they don't want to work. Just like a lot of wealthy people are not where they are because they worked hard for their money.

I wish I had thought to research who made the video as you did. It may have changed my mind while watching the video. Originally though, I was influenced by this video. Now I can see it the other way. I thought it was a bit strange when the narrator said "Tom and Dick lived happily ever after with their new arrangement. Harry grumbled a lot, but whenever he complained his brothers called him greedy and selfish" my first thought was that it sounded a jab at liberal minded people. But I then assumed it was me misunderstanding what the narrator was trying to say. I will re-watch the video and try to see it from this new way.

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Taxation and its Trend
by [Kaiser Slocum](#) - Wednesday, April 24, 2019, 5:36 PM

The taxation trend in the U.S. has been a very complicated series of increases and decreases. The tax rates for Americans increased just before the 1920s then steadily reduced until about 1930 when the rates rose very high. Currently there are only a few brackets, and the highest bracket's tax rate has steadily reduced as the tax rate for the lowest bracket has also reduced. When the Bush tax cuts were implemented, a few more people were included into the top bracket, but everyone in that bracket was paying 3% less. In Obama's *American taxpayer Relief Act*, the amount of people in the top tax bracket was decreased while increasing the tax rate by 4%.

By looking at the graphs, I noticed the income tax appears to be closely tied to the total tax paid by individuals. As the income rises in each bracket, the total tax rises by as much as the income tax rises, proving that they are somewhat proportional and that the only reason that wealthier people are paying more taxes is simply because they have a higher income tax. Another thing I noticed was that marginal tax rates have drastically increased since the 1920s and never came back down, just as the government debt and spending has been steadily and sometimes steeply increasing. Also, I thought it was interesting that the people that made between \$135k and \$286.4k in 2010 were contributing the most to the government income, probably because the majority of wage-earners in the U.S. fell into that category. (All previous paragraphs from main document "Taxation")

The issue of taxation in general is a very double-edged topic, with many good cases on both sides. In general, citizens of the U.S. would like to pay as few taxes as possible. In this way, I agree with President Coolidge when he said, "I want them to have the rewards of their own industry. This is the chief meaning of freedom." (Calvin Coolidge's speech on American Rhetoric.com)

However, there are many side effects of reducing taxes and consequently, government support. Many people have come to depend on government welfare checks to live, and if all tax revenue that the government spent went only to necessary expenditures, i.e. military, police, hospital, and infrastructure; than there would be a lot of people on the street corner. However, at the beginning of this nation, there was no government support and there still was not a lot of poverty. To cut government funding now, would cause a lot of chaos, but if people never got use to this "free money" than there would not be as much of a problem. Also, there is the problem of how much should people, who make different amounts of money, pay. On one side, it is unfair for those who make a lot to pay more than others simply because they work harder, but it is also unfair that those who just inherit a ton or got to their position with little or no work only have to pay the same amount as everybody else. (The Three Brothers video) This leads to the current problem in college financial aid. With most financial aid forms, a student is required to record the expected family income, even if the family does not give anything. This disadvantages students with families that earn a lot, but who do not contribute anything.

Basically, I do not know what the perfect solution is to taxes, but as a *generalization* I believe that having less government spending and fewer taxes is *generally* a good idea. With less money out of our pockets, people should be able to use that money to compensate for any services lost due to the government tightening its spending.

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Re: Taxation
by [Shaylee Welsh](#) - Wednesday, April 24, 2019, 7:36 PM

To begin with, I believe paying taxes is the right and fair American way to fund our government. Taxes rates and where the money goes is another topic. Coolidge is right that when we work a portion goes to the government. This has been the way the government has run for years and years. I stand with his statements he made and find them to be true. The best overall statement he makes is at the end when he says "One of the greatest favors that can be bestowed upon the American people is economy in government." I do not find anything wrong with any of his statements.

In regards to the chart, in times of great need and war, taxes go up and the tax bracket goes down. In times of prosperity in the country, taxes go down and the tax bracket goes up. In times of need, our country needs more help and I support his claim it is our civilian duty to help.

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Re: Taxation
by [Hannah Harp](#) - Sunday, April 28, 2019, 11:02 PM

Hi there! I just wanted to add on to the end of your forum post where you said, "In regards to the chart, in times of great need and war, taxes go up and the tax bracket goes down". I found in some of the charts from wikipedia that taxes spiked during world war II, and failed to come back down. Our nation has not been involved in an all-encompassing world war or Cold War since 1990, so it seems to me that something must be wrong with our government spending, as well as taxes. I agree with his claim that it's our civilian duty to help, but do you think he agrees with the spike in taxes and them never coming back down? In a way I can't help but believe he doesn't agree with this, and it poses a problem to his claim. Just some food for thought.

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A New Understanding of Taxation

by [Whitney Erickson](#) - Wednesday, April 24, 2019, 11:52 PM

I'll admit this is going to seem very naïve, but I have never been interested in politics, history, current events or anything relating to business or finances. Included in this long list of important occurrences in our daily lives in taxes. The multiple categories of taxes that we are subjected to everyday. Yes, I file my federal and state taxes come the new year, but it's such a natural phenomenon that I have not questioned what these taxes were for or why they were initiated in the beginning.

It seems there is a constant fluctuation of tax percentages as the years pass and that main historical events such as revolutions and wars increase the tax of the people in the need of the government and their necessity. Leaders of our time have done both try to improve the tax situation for the greater common, and also the latter of increasing and demanding tax increases for government decisions. The governments "foothold" in our economy.

Its hard from my standpoint, having this be all new information to me, but it seems like I might have to disagree with Coolidge and his speech and goals. To my understanding, and please fellow students if I am wrong or thinking 'crazy' I would love input, but it seems like taxing Americans (a fair and just amount, not increasing because the government wants something new and shiny without the populations input) is a way of circulating money. If we all worked for our money right out and never had to pay anything back to the government that is supposed to support our nation and help us make good economical choices and improvements, they wouldn't receive any money back without a type of donation from the public. The appropriate amount of taxation gives back to the government for necessary funding.

Even so, with the excess of taxation it has seemed to curtail our right of liberty. Taxation affects each individual, some more than others, and it has continued into the present. The so called tax relief, was not a large change to the economy. It minimized the lower tax bracket percentages but didn't even break a whole percentage in the higher tax brackets.

The three brothers video actually seems very 'real' to me. This is something that I do witness in my personal life with the different tax brackets existing in my immediate and extended family. I am in a lower tax bracket and receive taxes back when I file, and observe family members who make more income, save and use their money wisely paying for more things that I myself benefit from and use in the community. I liked the video because it was very remedial, cut and dry of how it seems the economy and taxes work in the present (at least in my reality).

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Three Brothers video: Who should being paying more? How does this apply to our own government?

by [Hannah Harp](#) - Thursday, April 25, 2019, 4:50 PM

I have to admit, the video of the Three Brothers on the progressive tax code really hurt my former opinion on the topic. Previously, I thought that the way our progressive tax code operates today was fine, or atleast, I didn't disagree with it. I also didn't have a very good understanding of it before. I think it's easy to get hung up on hearing people say things like, "We live in a society where the rich get richer, and the poor remain poor". To anyone I think this might sound a little unjust. My perception was that if these people are making a considerable amount more, why shouldn't they contribute more during taxes? After all, they have the money to do so, and the poor do not. After watching the video of the Three Brothers though, my thought process definitely took a turn. How it was explained in the video is that, these three brothers from the same household were brought up the same, had the same opportunities, the same housing, and lived in the exact same neighborhood next to eachother. The only difference was the amount of income they were bringing in based on their spouses, and the amount that they worked. One day, they all came together and decided to remodel/build a gate for their community. After all was said and done, the question of how they would split the costs came up. After some arguing, the brother that made the least suggested that the brother that made the most should pay the most, after all, he could afford it. The brother that

made the second most between the three stayed quiet, because cost wise it would have been cheaper for him rather than splitting it evenly three ways. The brother that made the least would pay ZERO. The foundation of his argument was based on the fact that his brother made way more than the other two, so it was only right to split it up this way, as does our government. But, when looking at these three grown men who had the exact same circumstances and opportunities, and eliminating all factors other than work ethic, how could this possibly be right? Basically, since one man decided to spend more of his life working, saving, investing, and just being a responsible adult compared to his brother who decided to spend more of his time away from work and spend all of his money rather than being smart with it, he's suddenly obligated to contribute more since he has more? This seems insane to me. I think this sends a message that if you are less responsible with your money, or work less, you are being rewarded for it by our government. When all factors are taken out of it, this has really made me reconsider my views on America's progressive tax code, and has definitely shed some light on it, for me atleast. I wish that this was a video that the entire world, and even our government was required to watch. It gives a really valid perspective that I think everyone should consider.

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Re: Three Brothers video: Who should be paying more? How does this apply to our own government?
by [Alexandra Selig](#) - Thursday, April 25, 2019, 9:23 PM

The Three Brothers Video definitely puts things into perspective. No matter how you turn it, someone will always have the opinion that taxes are unfair to them. I can see the need for taxes to effectively fund our government and to aid in needed resources that help individuals, whether that be medical, unemployment, retirement, disability or food. It is the way in which we estimate these needs and balance the cost of them through out the general population that is a cause for concern. I to have gotten tired of the common complaint that the rich get richer while the poor get poorer. America is a society that fundamentally supports free enterprise and the ability to become who you want and how your want, yet we want to punish those that have worked hard to establish themselves and create better financial security for themselves and their families. At the same time we reward those who consistently have chosen a different path for themselves by giving them tax returns that they never put in for or subsidizing their living needs through tax supported programs. This is not to say that all who get financial support from government aid whether local or federal are not in some sort of need. We as a People and as a Government have just made it easier to obtain and take advantage of. Taxes are no longer used as they were originally intended and the burden is definitely not carried equally by all. I for one am proponent for a flat tax. If everyone was required to pay say 8% of their annual income to federal and 2% of their annual income to state then the cost of taxes would be equally distributed. If I make only \$40,000 a year then my total tax due would be 4000, where as if I made \$100,000 a year my total annual tax would be \$10,000, and so on and so forth.

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Three Brothers video response
by [Kathy Holmes](#) - Thursday, April 25, 2019, 4:58 PM

After watching the Three Brothers video I was left a little shocked. Throughout the video, it seemed fair that Harry shouldn't have to be penalized for making more money than his brothers that CHOSE not to work more. When the video talked about the repairs costing \$30,000, I immediately thought "10k a piece, that's not bad at all." But then when the argument between the brothers took place I was confused. "my family makes more money because my wife and I work long hours and we save some of the money we earn to make additional money from investments why should we be penalized for that?" (2:12) I think this is absolutely true. Just because Harry makes more money, because he works more, and chooses to spend less money and invest he shouldn't have to pay more for shared luxuries such as roadways.

This has not changed my understanding of personal choice, saving or spending. Personally, I am going to save for retirement whether or not I am going to be taxed on the money. I agree that everyone has a choice about how much they work, how much they spend and how much they save and I don't think taxes should stop people from saving. The best thing you can do for your future is to invest in a retirement fund at a young age. I have both an IRA and a 401k, one where the money is taxed when I put it in so when I take the money out I don't have to pay taxes and one where the money is pretax when it goes in and when I take it out I will pay the taxes on it. I knew this before I put the money in the account and I agree that I should pay more money if I take out a sum of 50K than if I were to take out 5k, I am taxed a percentage of what is in the account when I remove my funds.

At the end of the video, the narrator says "Tom and Dick lived happily ever after with their new arrangement. Harry grumbled a lot, but whenever he complained his brothers called him greedy and selfish" (4:35) I think this is very much true in today's society, and even in some posts in this forum. If someone in a higher tax bracket complains about the amount of money they have to pay in taxes, people in the lower tax brackets do call them selfish and greedy because they have more money but chances are they worked more, or if not more, in different ways than those in lower tax brackets and have earned the right to be where they are.

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Is Progressive Taxation Fair?!

by [Kaiser Slocum](#) - Friday, April 26, 2019, 7:50 PM

One of the big controversies in this age of America is if rich people should be taxed so that they are no wealthier than anyone else and so poorer people can have a higher standard of living. This would be a form of socialism(of course, all experiments in socialism in the world has led to communism), and it is all about people being equally rich, or as I see it, equally poor. Very few people take into consideration *how* that person got rich. Typically, they got rich by ingenuity, taking risks, working long hours, days, and weeks. Although I do understand that the video about the three brothers is overly simplified, it is very true and cannot be ignored that by having a progressive task you are "punishing" the richer people for trying so hard to get rich. That is not liberty or freedom, to discourage someone from being creative and hard-working. In that sense, the progressive tax is a drift from our Constitutional rights. On the other hand, it cannot be ignored that they *do* have more money and can therefore afford to pay more taxes, not to mention that some people acquired all their cash from inheritance. However, it could be the poor people's fault, because they were lazy and spent all their cash and now do not have enough to pay their taxes. I do not pretend to know the "perfect" solution, but what I do know is that this progressive tax does hurt my attitude towards spending and trying to work hard. Why in the world would I want to carefully save my money if I am just going to have to give a large portion of it back because I am "wealthy."

According to Progressive Taxes by Joel B. Slemrod on econlib.org, there is a lot involved in progressive taxes. This author appears to be nonpartial in his view and uses economics and sound reasoning to attack this topic carefully while not condoning or condemning progressive taxation. In this article, he explains that a progressive tax is not necessarily more of a burden on richer people or poorer people. He said, "For example, because highly progressive taxes discourage people from entering high-paying professions, salaries in these professions will be higher than otherwise. Therefore, the taxes paid by the upper-income taxpayers who do enter these professions overstate the true burden of taxation on them. " In addition, Slemrod explained that it makes sense that richer people should have to pay more taxes because the government has to spend more on protecting their extensive assets as compared to a poorer individual. However, the author also recognizes the danger of too much progressive tax as it will discourage people from trying to get wealthy which will severely cripple or even destroy an economy. By the end of the article, I see the importance of a progressive tax while also realizing that the government has to be extremely careful to make sure that the progressive tax is the correct rate or there could be undesirable consequences.

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Re: Is Progressive Taxation Fair?!

by [Alexandra Selig](#) - Friday, April 26, 2019, 8:51 PM

I don't think that I could have put this into any better words. Like you I can see the point of a progressive tax while also disagreeing with it. Not only do the rich have to get rich some how but they also have to stay rich. Maintaining ones finances is not always an easy burden and that is outside of paying taxes. Look at the individuals who win the lottery and 10 years later have nothing to show for it. Those who have worked hard for their money and have worked even harder to maintain there standing in the wealthy class deserve to stay their. We are each born with every opportunity in the world to make it. Even those raised by Drug addicted parents and alcoholics, in the worst parts of America can change their stars and become something. It take drive and determination. Those who settle for less should not be rewarded with the funds raised by individuals who have

worked twice as hard. As I have said in other forum replies, I believe that a Flat Tax across the board would be fair. And those that do not pay into taxes should not get tax returns. For a country that pushes so hard for acceptance and diversity we sure are hypercritical when we are talking of ones wealth or status.

The use of taxes to manage our government, maintain our roads, fund our VA, pay our military, ext. are all essential needs for us to continue to have the country and freedoms that we hold so dear. IT is the way in which we obtain these taxes that is so troublesome and the antilogarithm that is used to decide who owes what.

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Re: Is Progressive Taxation Fair?!
by [Trey Husko](#) - Sunday, April 28, 2019, 6:03 PM

I don't consider myself to be on either side of the argument for or against progressive tax, but I can't really say I agree with what the author of the article said about how it will "discourage people from trying to get wealthy." At the end of the day even at a higher tax bracket you're making more money which I think other posts have been overlooking. The only amount that gets subjected to the higher tax brackets is the amount you make that falls in between those brackets.

To try and illustrate this more clearly I looked up the 2019 tax brackets (found here: <https://www.businessinsider.com/new-irs-tax-brackets-2019-income-tax-2019-1>).

Someone who makes \$84,000 makes about \$70,000 after tax brackets are applied. Someone who earns slightly more at \$100,000 gets subjected to the higher bracket of 24% for all his earnings between 84-100K which means you still make 12,000 out of the 16,000 after tax more than someone making 84,000. Punish isn't really the right word in my opinion to describe the progressive tax. Might it be more unfair toward the rich is certainly true. The main argument that people who work harder/more to earn more money are being punished is certainly interesting. It'd require a massive overhaul of our current tax system but if people think the current system, being progressive tax, is unfair then why do we not have a system that also factors in your hours worked each year that punishes those who are "lazy" and work less despite good wages compared to those who put in extra hours at a lower wage just to see that money taxed more. Again, I realize that system would be hard to implement and I'm not an expert either but our tax system is a really big topic that could be discussed about for ages.

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News Article: Government spending is hurting us
by [Hannah Harp](#) - Friday, April 26, 2019, 9:08 PM

I decided to look on USA Today News to get some opinions on our government spending. One statement that really stuck out to me was, "Debt not only suppresses economic growth, it suppresses future wages. The Congressional Budget Office projects that average income in 30 years will be \$5,000 less per year if the national debt continues its current trajectory. Using that same data, the Peterson Foundation calculates that average income for a family of four will drop by \$16,000 over the next three decades if debt rises as projected". I think this statement had a pretty condescending tone against our governments spending. Showing statistical data on how much the average income will drop, a whopping \$16,000 over the next few decades, was enough to convince me that we are in trouble. This amount is enough to make or break the average family in the US, and I think it really points out how irresponsible our government has been with spending thus far. The reporters are clearly against our government spending, and are projecting this opinion to the public as well. I have a pretty good feeling that anyone reading those statistics would probably air on the side of being against it as well. The report doesn't directly mention Coolidge, but it does seem to correspond with some of his thoughts such as wanting to cut down on public expense. Coolidge mentions, "I want the people of America to be able to work less for the government- and more for themselves. I want them to have the rewards of their own industry" in his video on taxation. I couldn't help but relate the report back to this quote, because with people taking this big of a cut in earnings due to the lack of responsibility in the governments spending, it doesn't really seem like they are seeing the rewards of their own industry. Rather, they are hurting over the governments industry. I think the data would support the claims above, as we see the taxes steadily clime, it would be fair to say that this would continue in to the future.

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Re: News Article: Government spending is hurting us



by [Kathy Holmes](#) - Saturday, April 27, 2019, 8:48 PM

I was interested in reading this article and had a hard time finding it. I finally came across it (<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2018/10/16/government-spending-how-rising-federal-debt-deficit-impact-americans/1589889002/>) and wanted to share my thoughts as your post was thought-provoking.

I have a different take on the article. At the beginning of the article, the reporter describes the difference between debt and deficit which was helpful for me as I knew there was a difference but I wasn't sure exactly what it was. The article then goes on to talk about the impact of our debt on the economy. This article is using a lot of factual information which makes me feel that the reporters are less against government spending and are just trying to educate their readers about the impacts of government spending. I do think this article is more educational rather than convincing. Although like you stated they don't directly address President Coolidge they do coincide with what he says "Until we can reestablish a condition under which the earnings of the people can be kept by the people, we are bound to suffer a very severe and distinct curtailment of our liberty. These results are not fanciful; they are not imaginary." (2:55) which is very similar to the article talking about how government debt affects us.

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Re: Taxation in the 1920's

by [Breanna Lindsey](#) - Sunday, April 28, 2019, 10:27 PM

The charts and statistics make it clear that the taxes in the 1920's were extremely high. Between 1920-1950 the USA went through a tremendous amount of damage and growth. Unfortunately, because we went through so much damage we needed a way to pay for our country. The the United States had to raise its taxes specifically the income taxes, to pay for the amount of debt we were entering. During World War One our taxes were almost at 80% and then a huge decrease during the great depression, and then during the second world war our taxes went higher than 90%. Unfortunately, the US could keep raising our taxes but America still would not be able to pay for the war or the debt it caused. "The sum of \$10 billion was often described as a "war debt," but a portion of that total was incurred after the war was over." This was spent on the war, helping allies, etc. The income taxes were necessary, but unfortunately the economy still fell tremendously causing WW1.

"War Debt Issue." *War Debt Issue*, www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1359.html.

"Taxation." *Google Docs*, Google, docs.google.com/document/d/1G8UEvsaBy9Xlc9xAmeq2SMdib-7zEUTXZTpZZDdPFSU/edit.

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