

Against



Authority

Hogeye Bill

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Introduction

Our subject is political authority, the authority rightfully due a state. So to begin, let's define "state."

state - an organization with an effective monopoly on the legal use of force in a given geographic area.

This definition is from Max Weber, who put it thusly: "A state is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory." Having this relatively sharp definition of "state" at our disposal, we can better understand and evaluate historic anarchist thought. We are at an advantage over even luminaries like Proudhon and Spooner, in that we have more experience with the modern state, an institutional analysis of the state, and new reasons to distrust and hate the state. We can stand on the shoulders of anti-statist theorists like Tucker, Nock and Rothbard, leverage our greater understanding of economics, and discover new wisdom and new understanding.

Anti-statists tend to see society and state as inherently opposing institutions. Society is the sum total of all voluntary human interaction. Aggression (the violation of rights, the initiation of force or threat of it) is morally wrong. The state is aggression legalized and legitimized.

Anti-statist assertions:

1. **Legitimacy** - No state has legitimate moral authority to rule an individual.
2. **Desirability** - All states are unnecessary and undesirable.
3. **Purity** - All states should be abolished *immediately*.

The political philosophy that supports all three anti-statist assertions is called "anarchism." Prior to the late 1700's, known anarchist writings were negative, purely a critique of the institution of state. They did not offer a positive alternative. An eloquent example is [Vindication of Natural Society](#) by Edmund Burke. Burke stresses that natural society - without artificial government - couldn't *possibly* be worse than the known bloody and tyrannical history of states. He shows how states fail, and the undesirability of states, but offers no positive vision of a stateless society. Modern anarchists have ideas about how such a society would be organized and brought about. Thus, for full-fledged anarchists there is an additional consideration: How a stateless society may work.

The first positive treatment of what came to be known as anarchism was a book by William Godwin called [An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice](#), published in 1793. This first effort at positive anarchism, we see with perfect hindsight, contained two major flaws. The first flaw, one might call *the utopian flaw*, consisted of the belief that the nature of mankind is sufficiently malleable to allow the abandonment of all legal systems. This attitude basically throws the baby out with the bath water. Since decreed law (state monopoly law) was illegitimate, early utopian anarchists jumped to the erroneous conclusion that *all* law was bad. This is understandable, since the polycentric law systems that predominated in the Middle Ages were forgotten, cultures with [polycentric law](#) were largely unknown, and like today, most people simply *assumed* that law and state were inseparable. Another flaw seen in early anarchism had to do with economics: a belief in the doctrine of *just price*. In particular, the early "classical" anarchists held the normative doctrine that "cost is the limit of price," also known as the labor theory of value.

Major Errors in Classical Anarchism

- **Utopianism** - the belief that people are quickly perfectible
 - *legal utopianism* - laws and law enforcement are unnecessary; crime would disappear in a stateless society
 - *economic utopianism* - scarcity and property wouldn't exist in a stateless society
 - *ethical utopianism* - people can achieve consensus on moral standards and property systems
 - *social utopianism* - people can avoid the creation of natural hierarchies
- **Just price doctrine** - all goods and services have an intrinsic just price

Much of modern anarchist thought has been updating the core anti-statist principles to reflect modern thought and scientific advancement in these two areas. As we will see, historians now know more about polycentric and spontaneous law in various cultures and civilizations throughout history. For example, hunter-gatherer tribes were generally not communistic as once thought, but had private property in scarce goods like tools and weapons. We know now that, for these indigenous peoples, land was simply not sufficiently scarce to warrant property status. Early utopians had assumed that these were "noble savages" with a communist bent, and that natural society had to reject private property. Now we know, with our greater understanding of the advantages of division of labor, and the concept of comparative advantage, that freedom of association, trade, and property rights are not only advantageous in terms of individuals' standard of living, but are also absolutely necessary to maintain the number of people on earth today. The modern anarchist tends to be ardently pro-property and pro-market, championing "anarcho-capitalism" - the radicalism of the 21st century. How times have changed!

The second flaw is perhaps the more contentious. The *labor theory of value* is still believed today by many people. Like the belief in astrology, otherwise rational people hang on to it. Discredited over a century ago by the marginalist revolution in economics, the labor theory yet survives.

There are reasons for this flat earth view of economics. First, some of the original economic luminaries held the labor theory of value. Adam Smith and David Ricardo supported it. It's fair to say that the high priests of "capitalism" planted the seed for the main criticism of "capitalism." Karl Marx quoted Smith and Ricardo to support his condemnation of capitalism. A second reason for the continued popularity of the labor theory of value is that it contains a kernel of truth, at least in its descriptive formulation. The price of a good (or service) *can* be gauged by the amount of labor expended in producing it. One can argue that other measures are more accurate, or more easily determined. One can argue that the *subjective theory of value* - supply and demand - is more general in that it explains a broader range of phenomena. One could argue that labor-time is an effect rather than a cause. But as a rough gauge for many goods, labor often suffices as a workable measure of price.

The problem with the *just price* doctrine is that it goes beyond the descriptive claim that labor-time can be used to measure or predict price; it claims that the measure *should be* the exchange price. In other words, it makes a normative claim - what the price *ought to be* - rather than a descriptive claim of fact.

There are other weaknesses in classical anarchist economic theory: it doesn't recognize the information function of price or know the meaning of scarcity, it ignores or underestimates the advantages of a division of labor, its theory of money is non-existent or naive. This is not surprising, given that the theories were worked out in the 19th century. But whatever other economic errors it makes, classical anarchism's most fatal economic flaw is its reliance on that *creationism of the left* - the labor theory of value as a normative principle.

Before we look at *how it may work*, focusing on the history of anarchism and the economic aspects - the differences between anarcho-socialism and anarcho-capitalism - let's cover the basics. We first will examine "**legitimate authority**" in an effort to discover its essence.

What is Legitimacy?

The first contention of anti-statism concerns the moral legitimacy of the state's alleged authority. What do I mean by legitimacy in this context? I mean the moral right to rule. I question the *authority* of the state, whether I am bound to obey simply because it *is* the state. Robert Paul Wolff expressed it thusly:

The defining mark of the state is authority, the right to rule. The primary obligation of man is autonomy, the refusal to be ruled. It would seem, then, that there can be no resolution of the conflict between the autonomy of the individual and the putative authority of the state. Insofar as a man fulfills his obligation to make himself the author of his decisions, he will resist the state's claim to have authority over him. That is to say, he will deny that he has a duty to obey the laws of this state *simply because they are the laws*. In that sense, it would seem that anarchism is the only political doctrine consistent with the virtue of autonomy." - Robert Paul Wolff, [In Defense of Anarchism](#)

This is essentially the same concept that 19th century American anarchists called "sovereignty of the individual" or "self-ownership." In Wolff's modern philosophical terminology, it is an issue of moral autonomy. It should be stressed that, in this context, "authority" should not be construed as expertise or council, but as dutiful acceptance of orders precisely because of *who they were delivered by*. A person may certainly act upon the words of experts, and take advantage of their greater experience or knowledge, without submitting to authority. So long as the decision to utilize (or not) that knowledge is ultimately left to the actor, that actor is self-owned.

One might submit to outright orders of authority figures without necessarily submitting to (moral) authority. If the reason for following orders is a utilitarian calculation, rather than following orders *because the state says so*, it is not submission to authority. In other words, to obey because you'll be harmed if you don't (or rewarded if you do) is not submission to moral authority; to obey *because you were ordered* is submission.

The distinction between rational utilitarian advice-taking and submission to moral authority has been made by many anarchists. The great anarcho-socialist Michael Bakunin explained it like this:

The Liberty of man consists solely in this: that he obeys natural laws because he has himself recognized them as such, and not because they have been externally imposed upon him by any extrinsic will whatsoever, divine or human, collective or individual. ... [Liberty amounts to] no external legislation and no authority - one, for that matter, being inseparable from the other, and both tending to the servitude of society and the degradation of the legislators themselves. ...

Does it follow that I reject all authority? Far from me such a thought. In the matter of boots, I refer to the authority of the boot-maker; concerning houses, canals, or railroads, I consult that of the architect or the engineer. For such or such special knowledge I apply to such or such a savant. But I allow neither the boot-maker nor the architect nor savant to impose his authority upon me. I listen to them freely and with all the respect merited by their intelligence, their character, their knowledge, reserving always my incontestable right of criticism and censure. ...

If I bow before the authority of the specialists and avow my readiness to follow, to a certain extent and as long as may seem to me necessary, their indications and even their directions, it is because their authority is imposed on me by no one, neither by men nor by God. Otherwise I would repel them with horror, and bid the devil take their counsels, their directions, and their services, certain that they would make me pay, by the loss of my liberty and self-respect, for such scraps of truth, wrapped in a multitude of lies, as they might give me.

I bow before the authority of special men because it is imposed on me by my own reason. I am conscious of my own inability to grasp, in all its detail, and positive development, any very large portion of human knowledge.

- [What is Authority?](#), Michael Bakunin.

So political authority is a particular kind of authority. Refusing to grant any *other* authority over yourself is self-sovereignty. If you admit that morality exists at all, that morality has any validity whatsoever, then you are rationally forced to the conclusion that humans, by default, are self-owned. Self-ownership means that for any moral agent, the will (or mind) has a valid property right over the body. In classic Lockean lingo: **Every man has the right of life, liberty, and property, and to pursue happiness in any way he wills, so long as he does not infringe on the like rights of others to do the same.**

This "law of equal freedom" as Herbert Spencer dubbed it, can be justified in many ways. Historically, it was first taken as a creation of God. Later, as enlightenment and science advanced, the supernatural justification was augmented (and eventually replaced by) natural and empirical considerations. The observation of animals, man, and societies and the scientific method led to the formulation of "natural laws" - principles and heuristics that explain or model human interaction and social patterns. The law of equal freedom was justified by saying *this is the kind of creature man is*, or *these are the necessary conditions for the life of man qua man*. Meanwhile, the contractarian theorists added that this is what men implicitly agree to when they join society; it is the rational basis for interacting with fellow men. Dr. Wolff appeals to the underlying assumption of any moral system:

The fundamental assumption of moral philosophy is that men are responsible for their actions. From this assumption it follows necessarily, as Kant pointed out, that men are metaphysically free, which is to say that in some sense they are capable of choosing how they shall act. - Robert Paul Wolff, [In Defense of Anarchism](#)

This idea that the state is illegitimate shows up very early in the history of liberalism. The writings prior to the late 18th century do not challenge legitimacy directly, perhaps too mired in statism to express such treasonous heresy, and prudently mindful of the rack and scaffold. The first known tract on the subject, written in 1548 by Étienne de la Boétie, aptly describes the servitude of the masses to the state. It left the denial of legitimacy implicit and unwritten but nevertheless quite obvious. Rather than a direct attack, the essay delved into the question of why people submit to state authority, why so many people believe that states have legitimate authority and act accordingly. What allows the few to rule the many? What makes it possible?

La Boétie might be considered the anti-Machiavelli. They both looked at the state as an institution in a practical manner, what we might call "institutional analysis" today. But Machiavelli wrote to instruct a ruler in how to gain and keep power, while la Boétie wrote to promote the opposite: liberty and resistance to tyranny. La Boétie is a philosophical anarchist - he satisfies only the first of the three anti-state assertions. He is not an anarchist in the full-fledged political sense, but he is a quasi-anarchist who inspired later anarchists and thinkers. Leo Tolstoy, the famous Christian anarchist and novelist, cited la Boétie as a major inspiration for passive resistance.



O good Lord! What strange phenomenon is this? What name shall we give it? What is the nature of this misfortune? What vice is it, or, rather, what degradation? To see an endless multitude of people not merely obeying, but driven to servility? Not ruled, but tyrannized over? These wretches have no wealth, no kin, nor wife nor children, not even life itself that they can call their own. They suffer plundering, wantonness, cruelty, not from an army, not from a barbarian horde, on account of whom they must shed their blood and sacrifice their lives, but from a single man; not from a Hercules nor from a Samson, but from a single little man. Too frequently this same little man is the most cowardly and effeminate in the nation, a stranger to the

powder of battle and hesitant on the sands of the tournament; not only without energy to direct men by force, but with hardly enough virility to bed with a common woman! Shall we call subjection to such a leader cowardice? ... Of course there is in every vice inevitably some limit beyond which one cannot go. Two, possibly ten, may fear one; but when a thousand, a million men, a thousand cities, fail to protect themselves against the domination of one man, this cannot be called cowardly, for cowardice does not sink to such a depth, any more than valor can be termed the effort of one individual to scale a fortress, to attack an army, or to conquer a kingdom. What monstrous vice, then, is this which does not even deserve to be called cowardice, a vice for which no term can be found vile enough, which nature herself disavows and our tongues refuse to name? - Étienne de la Boétie, [The Politics of Obedience: The Discourse on Voluntary Servitude](#)

La Boétie's disgust for the servile mentality is clear. But how can such behavior be explained? What causes such subservience, and how can it be overcome? Conquest and force of arms can explain compliance in the short run, but states cannot rule for long by brute force alone. In the long run, people acquiesce to being ruled.

La Boétie had the great insight that what kept rulers in power was their [mystique of legitimacy](#), and all that it takes to topple the rulers is a change in attitude - withdrawal of this grant of authority, this voluntary servitude. One could argue that La Boétie was an early advocate of non-violent resistance and mass civil disobedience.

You sow your crops in order that he may ravage them, you install and furnish your homes to give him goods to pillage; you rear your daughters that he may gratify his lust; you bring up your children in order that he may confer upon them the greatest privilege he knows - to be led into his battles, to be delivered to butchery, to be made the servants of his greed and the instruments of his vengeance; you yield your bodies unto hard labor in order that he may indulge in his delights and wallow in his filthy pleasures; you weaken yourselves in order to make him the stronger and the mightier to hold you in check. From all these indignities, such as the very beasts of the field would not endure, you can deliver yourselves if you try, not by taking action, but merely by willing to be free. Resolve to serve no more, and you are at once freed. I do not ask that you place hands upon the tyrant to topple him over, but simply that you support him no longer; then you will behold him, like a great Colossus whose pedestal has been pulled away, fall of his own weight and break into pieces. - Étienne de la Boétie, [The Politics of Obedience: The Discourse on Voluntary Servitude](#)

Why do people obey states? Étienne de la Boétie answers...

- **Custom** - people become habituated to servitude
- **Manufactured consent**
 - **Bread** - Return a portion of the spoils to the public.
 - **Circuses** - Entertain the public with patriotic sports and diversions.
 - **Ideology** - Convince the public that the rulers are wise, just, and benevolent; that the state promotes the common good; and is certainly inevitable, alternatives unthinkable.
- **Retainers** - Rulers develop hierarchies of subordinate rulers and hierarchies of privilege, both with strong incentive to keep the public servile.

It has always happened that tyrants, in order to strengthen their power, have made every effort to train their people not only in obedience and servility toward themselves, but also in adoration. - La Boétie, [The Politics of Obedience](#)

Both la Boétie and Edmund Burke point out the role of religion in maintaining the mystique of legitimacy. Religion is an ancient and powerful legitimizing force for statism.

Tyrants themselves have wondered that men could endure the persecution of a single man; they have insisted on using religion for their own protection and, where possible, have borrowed a stray bit of divinity to bolster up their evil ways. If we are to believe the Sybil of Virgil, Salmoneus, in torment for having paraded as Jupiter in order to deceive the populace, now atones in nethermost Hell. ... If such a one, who in his time acted merely through the folly of insolence, is so well received in Hell, I think that those who have used religion as a cloak to hide their vileness will be even more deservedly lodged in the same place. Our own leaders have employed in France certain similar devices, such as toads, fleurs-de-lys, sacred vessels, and standards with flames of gold. - Étienne de la Boétie, [The Politics of Obedience](#)

Civil Government borrows a Strength from ecclesiastical; and artificial Laws receive a Sanction from artificial Revelations. The Ideas of Religion and Government are closely connected; and whilst we receive Government as a thing necessary, or even useful to our Well-being, we shall in spite of us draw in, as a necessary, tho' undesirable Consequence, an artificial Religion of some kind or other. To this the Vulgar will always be voluntary Slaves; and even those of a Rank of Understanding superior, will now and then involuntarily feel its Influence. - Edmund Burke, [Vindication of Natural Society](#)

La Boétie and Burke wrote as quasi-anarchists, questioning the institution of state but not explicitly opposing it in principle. La Boétie can be construed as only opposing tyrants, certain current players or personnel in ruling roles. But he seems, with his triumvirate classification of states, to include *all* states in his considerations. If so, he satisfies anti-statist assertion #1, the denial of moral legitimacy, but not the others. Edmund Burke makes an eloquent case that states are even worse than statelessness, but does not come close to saying all states should be abolished immediately. He seems to satisfy assertions #1 and #2, but not #3.

Interestingly, neither of these gentlemen published their quasi-anarchist essays using their own name. La Boétie's "The Politics of Obedience" was distributed privately with due anonymity, and Edmund Burke attributed his "Vindication" to a dead man - the late Lord Bolingbroke, who had been known for radical opinions. Both apparently wanted plausible denial of any anarchist sentiments. Both soon became functionaries of the state and political elites. Both may have been anti-statist in their younger days, but both went quickly over to career statism.

What is Property?

Once we know what a state is, and what legitimacy and authority mean, we can define anarchism precisely. It is taken to mean a political philosophy which satisfies three conditions: it denies the state's authority, asserts the state to be undesirable, and demands the state's immediate abolishment. These are the features of all anarchist schools of thought. But these assertions are purely negative in nature - they do not provide a vision of a free society, a goal society without a state. This positive model or prediction of *how it might work* varies greatly among the different anarchist writers and schools of thought.

Some of the earliest proto-anarchisms, and even proper anarchisms, have been religious-oriented. Various groups of Quakers and Mennonites have declared civil law to be illegitimate - that only God's law written on their hearts is valid. These groups tended to be anti-parliamentarian, meaning that participation in state such as voting or running for office was considered wrong. Besides boycotting electoral activity, "non-resistants" would passively resist the draft, and for some, taxation.

Other categories of anarchism focus on size or technology. Leopold Kohr argued that "small is beautiful," and that when an organization is sick or malevolent, it is almost always because it is too big. Decentralization is a theme in all forms of anarchism, but here it takes the central role rather than merely strategic tool for reducing statist authority. Technology-oriented anarchisms range from Luddite anarcho-primitivism, hoping to roll back the industrial revolution and return to a hunter-gatherer lifestyle, to crypto-anarchism, which sees computers, the internet, and strong cryptography as the key to vanquishing the state. Other anarchisms are basically anarchist oriented special issue or identity groups. Green and eco-anarchism and anarcho-feminism fall into these categories.

The most salient forms of anarchism, the most prolific in theoretical writings and popular movements, have been the economic-oriented anarchisms. What one sees as justice in wealth and property, and the process of production and satisfaction of human material needs and desires, takes central stage. This is not to say that the other categories of anarchism based on religion, size, technology, and special issues don't have an economic component. But in the following economic schools economic theory drives and colors the political theory, and often the strategy and tactics pursued.

So, it behooves us to ask: What is property?

The fundamental economic concept is property. First let's define "property" in its most generic sense. This necessitates stepping back and asking, "What is the purpose of property?" Why have it at all? The answer to this is obvious after due deliberation: The purpose of property is to solve **the scarcity problem**. The scarcity problem is that humans desire more than they can gain or consume. Put another way: Man has unlimited wants and desires, but only limited goods and services are available.

"The science of mine and thine - the science of justice - is the science of all human rights; of all a man's rights of person and property; of all his rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." - Lysander Spooner, [Natural Law](#)

We use "scarcity" in the economic sense. In particular, something cannot be scarce without it necessitating exclusivity in use. You and I cannot both use my hammer at the same time, but we can both read "Huckleberry Finn" at the same time, or use Microsoft Excel at the same time. Thus the hammer, being scarce, is property, but the novel *qua* string of letters and the software *qua* string of bytes are not property. Intellectual property does not qualify as property under this scheme, since it does not satisfy the exclusive use condition. Some very common things may not be scarce simply because there's so much (given current demand.) The outdoor air we breath is not scarce. Neither was land in the hunter-gatherer epoch, when man had about the same population density as bears.

property - A socially recognized relationship between a person (or group) and a scarce entity regarding disposition and control. Also used to refer to the scarce entity in this relationship; "Owner" is used to refer to the person or group.

This is a rather tolerant and encompassing definition of property. It includes tribal communal property, worker-owned factories, geoist ground-rent, and absolute private property. The "socially recognized relationship" leaves the conventions and particulars spectacularly open-ended. Everyone from Rockerian communist to Randian capitalist should be on board so far.

It would be nice to detect a pattern or find a model for some of the known property systems. Even better, if we could only measure them using some commonality. One idea is to use a well-recognized system of property as a guideline or standard, and measure the "distance" from the standard system to the other system. Luckily, from both logic and history we can find our benchmark - Neo-Lockean private property, that is, the traditional "use and abuse" absolute jurisdiction *keep it 'till you trade it* property associated with "capitalism." I will call it "sticky property" here, to avoid ambiguities and unfortunate connotations. European anarchism from Proudhon on has been largely a critique of sticky property. So whether you are friend or foe of sticky property, you will recognize the concept.

sticky property - a property relationship characterized by private jurisdiction, homesteading, ownership lasting until consensual transfer, with no restrictions on who may own.

Homesteading is taking something from unowned status and making it become yours. It is how non-property becomes property. Most property theorists hold that merely finding something first does not by itself make something into sticky property - it also takes labor. One must "mix your labor" with it, or somehow imprint your personality upon it for it to become bone fide property. The classic Lockean examples are: cultivating former wilderness land, and drawing water from a public spring.

Sticky property has no restrictions on who may own; any person or groups may legitimately own anything so long as they acquire it through a consensual process of production and trade. In a sticky property system, an owner usually keeps his property until he consents to part with it. This voluntary alienation of property takes the form of a trade or gift. Sometimes sticky property is abandoned, returning to unowned non-property status, available for anyone to homestead.

The most famous anarchist critique of traditional decreed property is the 1840 essay "What is Property" by Pierre Proudhon. In this essay, he described and advocated an alternative form of property called "possession." This is privately controlled like sticky property (though less absolute as it prohibits destruction), but only while the object is in use. Hence another name for this type of property: usufruct. For example, a farmer owns the land only so long as he cultivates it. If he leaves it fallow for too long, anyone else may gain ownership by planting there.

possession property - a property relationship characterized by private jurisdiction, homesteading, lasting only while continuous use or occupation is maintained, with no restrictions on who may own.

A third type of property is collective property. Things can only be owned by certain specified groups or types of groups, and are non-transferrable (either entirely or at least to individuals and non-specified groups.) For example, many communists contend that "everyone" (the whole world in common) owns the land and natural resources. Others contend that the workers in a factory should own the factory. Yet others see municipalities, communes, or townships, bioregions, and guilds as the natural owners of land and/or capital goods. And of course, statist see the state as the sole ultimate owner.

collective property - a property relationship characterized by group, class, or caste jurisdiction, with limited power to transfer, and significant restrictions on who may own.

Now we define "propertarianism," which will be our standard of measurement.

propertarianism - support for sticky property systems

Hard propertarianism is the belief that only sticky property systems are desirable/moral.

Soft propertarianism is the belief that sticky property systems are morally permissible. It leaves open the possibility that other systems may be appropriate or desirable in some cases.

At this point we can look at various property "systems" (schemes, notions) in history, and try to use our concept of propertarianism as a basis for comparison. How propertarian or anti-propertarian is property system X? We get a rough estimate on a *zero to ten* scale by giving zero, one, or two points for each question below.

	0	1	2
Capital goods	collective	possession	sticky
Products of labor	collective	possession	sticky
Land	collective	possession	sticky
Profit from other's labor	crime	vice	neither
Is money necessary?	no	maybe	yes

Questions that property theories need to answer:

1. Which type of property is capital goods - collective, possession, or sticky?
Capital goods are machines/tools used to produce things, aka "means of production."
2. Which type of property is products of labor - collective, possession, or sticky?
This is intended to mean consumer goods, not capital goods.
3. Which type of property is land - collective, possession, or sticky?
4. Is profiting from someone else's labor ("usury") a crime, vice, or neither?
I.e. should it be forbidden, allowed but peaceably discouraged, or is it okay?
5. Is money necessary? No, maybe/don't know, or yes.

Index of Propertarianism

	0	1	2	
Anarcho-capitalism	Capital	collective	possession	sticky
	Products	collective	possession	sticky
	Land	collective	possession	sticky
	Profit	crime	vice	neither
	Money	no	maybe	yes
				10

Geoanarchism	Capital	collective	possession	sticky
	Products	collective	possession	sticky
	Land	collective	possession	sticky
	Profit	crime	vice	neither
	Money	no	maybe	yes
				8

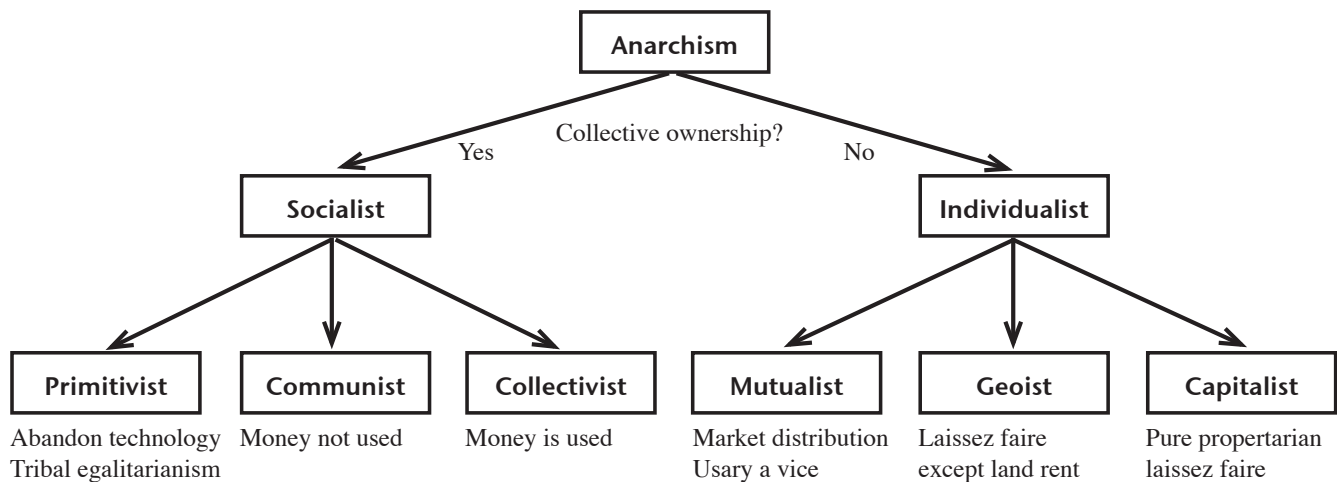
Anarcho-mutualism	Capital	collective	possession	sticky
	Products	collective	possession	sticky
	Land	collective	possession	sticky
	Profit	crime	vice	neither
	Money	no	maybe	yes
				7-8

Collectivist anarchism	Capital	collective	possession	sticky
	Products	collective	possession	sticky
	Land	collective	possession	sticky
	Profit	crime	vice	neither
	Money	no	maybe	yes
				1-2

Communist anarchism	Capital	collective	possession	sticky
	Products	collective	possession	sticky
	Land	collective	possession	sticky
	Profit	crime	vice	neither
	Money	no	maybe	yes
				0

Collectivists and communists do acknowledge that personal items such as clothes and toothbrush are an individual's sticky property, but other products are considered collective.

Here's another way to look at it - in tree form:



Left to right it goes from least proprietarian to most proprietarian. Anarcho-primitivism is not really an economic school, as primitive tribalism is its main thrust, but in economic theory it is identical to anarcho-communism. The main difference between the communist school (associated with Peter Kropotkin) and the collectivist school (founded by Michael Bakunin) is the position on money. The communists favor a "gift economy" without money; the collectivist may still use money, but in the form of labor notes rather than commodity receipts.

Mutualists are commonly considered more socialist than capitalist. This assessment seems quite mistaken. The index shows that mutualists are in substantial agreement with proprietarianism, and are closely akin to anarcho-capitalists. Probably mistyping mutualism as a kind of socialism is due to historical reasons, in particular the change in meaning for the term "socialism" that occurred during the 20th century. In the 19th century, anyone who had a plan to make society better was a socialist. Later, it came to mean opposition to concentration of wealth in the hands of the few. Thus individualist anarchists like Benjamin Tucker called themselves "socialist." Today socialism is usually defined as collective control of the means of production (capital goods.) By this modern definition, mutualists are *not* socialist, as they favor *private* ownership (sticky or possession) of the means of production.

Geoism (also called "Georgism" after its founder Henry George) is the most esoteric form of anarchism at this time. Only a handful of people call themselves geoanarchists - most geoists are minarchist rather than anarchist. However, geoism has an influence on other schools, particularly mutualist anarchism and the environmentalist schools. Minarchists tend to like the "single-tax" ground rent idea as arguably a non-aggressive way to fund their night-watchman state. Environmentalists often see ground rent as a solution to the tragedy of the commons and a way to make mining and logging firms pay society for their exploitation of resources and pollution.

What is Aggression?

"Be it or be it not true that Man is shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin, it is unquestionably true that Government is begotten of aggression and by aggression." - Herbert Spencer, [Man Versus the State](#)

In further examination of the state, we will need to use the notion of *political power*. Before we can adequately define "political power," we need to know what aggression is.

aggression

- the violation of someone else's rights
- non-consensual use or damage of someone else's person or property
- the initiation of violence (or threat of it) against another person

The first definition is most general and most abstract. We ask skeptics of natural law to be patient. In the next chapter we explain why rights language makes sense, even for those who consider natural law to be "nonsense on stilts." Similarly, we appeal to egoists to bear with us - we will show the non-absurdity of rights even for those who consider them "ghosts in the mind." To satisfy almost everyone, two other arguably equivalent definitions are given.

In line with our discussion of property rights, the second definition seems solid and clear. In light of our discussion about self-ownership, "person or property" could be shortened to simply "property." As we saw in the previous chapter, there are various systems of property. It follows that there are various criteria for *what actions constitute aggression*. For example, squatting an abandoned house is aggression with respect to sticky property systems, but not aggression in possession property systems. Charging rent or interest is aggression in possession systems, but not in sticky systems.

This conflict between different evaluations of conduct has been generally overlooked by anarchist schools in the past. There has been some "panarchist" thought that is pertinent to this issue, but it seems to address different governing systems rather than different property systems. We will attempt to enlarge panarchy's *competing governments* to *competing property systems* in the later chapter [Panarchy Unbound](#).

The third definition is an attempt to operationalize the notion of aggression; it has an empirical component lacking in other explanations. The implicit assumption is that the only way rights can be violated is by using violence - interpersonal force - or threatening to. "Person" should be interpreted as *an individual and his property*. The abstract notion of rights is made concrete by observing who struck first, or who fired the first shot. This formulation of aggression was proposed by Ayn Rand, and allows a bridge from theory to practice. But one must be careful: empirical observation alone cannot determine whether aggression occurred. History is a critical consideration. If someone sees Ms. Smith forcibly taking a watch from Mr. Jones, one cannot know whether aggression has taken place unless one knows the history of the watch. Perhaps it rightfully belongs to Smith, and Jones stole it from her yesterday.

political power - aggression perpetrated by the state, or the ability to engage in such aggression.

At the concrete level, the different anarchist schools have numerous disagreements over what constitutes aggression. This is a natural consequence of their different conceptions of just property. On a conceptual level, with the different property systems abstracted away, aggression is the central commonality of all forms of anarchism. Anarchism opposes the state because it is an instrument of legitimized aggression.

Virtually all anarchists base their political position upon the ethical principle of non-aggression. The critique of the institution of state, analysis of economic systems, authority, hierarchies, and so on all come down to the question of whether it constitutes or necessitates aggression. The way hot-button words like "exploitation," "wage slavery," "usury," "free trade" and "voluntary exchange" are understood ultimately comes down to whether these respective practices are seen as aggression or not.

non-aggression principle (NAP) - in the context of civilized society, aggression is morally wrong.

The hedge "in the context of civilized society" attempts to qualify the principle enough to account for emergency situations ("lifeboat ethics"), otherwise a rich source of counterexamples. If we restrict the NAP to an ethical environment where physical survival is not an issue (the realm of man *qua* civilized man), it seems to hold up splendidly. This implies a kind of middle way for ethical principles, neither absolutism nor relativism. It acknowledges that different life situations may require different principles of conduct. This restricted relativism might be called "modal absolutism."

The *initiation* part of the third definition is vital. If violence is used in retaliation against those who initiate it (for example by Ms. Smith to get her stolen watch back) it is *not* aggression. The first use - initiation - of force contrasts with retaliatory or rectificatory force.

Before the mid-20th century most anarchists appealed, not to the NAP, but to a similar principle - the law of equal freedom (law of equal liberty).

The Law of Equal Freedom (LEF) - "Every man may claim the fullest liberty to exercise his faculties compatible with the possession of like liberty by every other man." - Herbert Spencer, [Social Statics](#)

This principle was often cited in the 19th century by libertarians and anarchists of all stripes. The religious pointed to scriptural foundation: seeing the Golden Rule as saying essentially the same thing. The more philosophically-minded saw the law of equal freedom as a direct moral application of Kant's categorical imperative.

Note that the law is about freedom, and not equality in the modern redistributive sense. Spencer was careful in using precise wording: "*like* liberty" rather than "equal liberty." The equality is only in *what others should not forcibly prevent you from doing*. It is equality in a condition: absence of legitimate authority over someone else's life. It is not equality of talent, wealth, ability, productiveness, or beauty, but equality of moral jurisdiction.

Spencer's Law of Equal Freedom is redundant. For if every man has freedom to do all that he wills, it follows from this very premise that no man's freedom has been infringed or invaded. ... The concept of "equality" has no rightful place in the "Law of Equal Freedom," being replaceable by the logical quantifier "every." The "Law of Equal Freedom" could well be renamed "The Law of Total Freedom."
- Murray Rothbard, [Power and Market](#)

How is the non-aggression principle related to the law of equal freedom? The LEF talks about "the fullest liberty ... compatible with ... the like liberty" of others. Clearly aggression constrains liberty, thus is not compatible with maximum liberty. Also, aggression makes the aggressor more able to "exercise his faculties" than the victim, at the expense of the victim, thus violating the "like liberty" condition. If you grant that the *only* way to violate rights or violate the LEF is by using aggression, we have an equivalence between the two principles.

"Equal liberty means the largest amount of liberty compatible with equality and mutuality of respect, on the part of individuals living in society, for their respective spheres of action." - Benjamin Tucker, [Instead of a Book](#),

"What is crime under anarchism? Nothing but deliberate violation of the law of equal freedom." - Victor Yarros, [Adventures in the Realm of Ideas](#)

State Aggression

"Government is not reason. Government is not eloquence. It is force. And, like fire, it is a dangerous servant and a fearful master." - George Washington

"Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun." - Mao Tse-Tung

Anarchists see the power of social contract theory, but unlike the liberal statist, takes it seriously. A contract requires consent - unanimous consent of every participant. One is able to opt out of a contract, with due compensation for any consequent damages. This self-sovereignty, the right to enter or not enter into association, is a central anarchist theme.

A social contract of some sort seems to be the basis for voluntary association, but not for a state. Historically, states came about by marauding bandit gangs who realized that sustainable spoliation with oversight is more lucrative than pillage and destruction. The rate of return is higher, it's more dependable and less dangerous, and the masses can rather easily be indoctrinated into servitude. In short, the state is the organization of institutionalized plunder. Certainly the state has changed its spoliation technology over time, from plunder in kind to taxation to fiat money inflation. No doubt the control points of society have changed, and techniques for manipulating public opinion. But the essence of the state, as a criminal organization with aura of legitimacy, as a vampire feasting on the blood of society, does not change.

Here's how Lysander Spooner recounts the beginning of states in [Natural Law](#):

All the great governments of the world - those now existing, as well as those that have passed away - have been of this character. They have been mere bands of robbers, who have associated for purposes of plunder, conquest, and the enslavement of their fellow men. And their laws, as they have called them, have been only such agreements as they have found it necessary to enter into, in order to maintain their organizations, and act together in plundering and enslaving others, and in securing to each his agreed share of the spoils.

All these laws have had no more real obligation than have the agreements which brigands, bandits, and pirates find it necessary to enter into with each other, for the more successful accomplishment of their crimes, and the more peaceable division of their spoils.

Thus substantially all the legislation of the world has had its origin in the desires of one class - of persons to plunder and enslave others, and hold them as property.

But with increased commerce and later the industrial revolution, slave labor became less efficient than wage labor. In Spooner's view, the state came about because masters calculated they could increase the rate of plunder by emancipating their slaves and controlling them with a state.

These liberated slaves, as they were called, were now scarcely less slaves than they were before. Their means of subsistence were perhaps even more precarious than when each had his own owner, who had an interest to preserve his life. They were liable, at the caprice or interest of the landholders, to be thrown out of home, employment, and the opportunity of even earning a subsistence by their labor. They were, therefore, in large numbers, driven to the necessity of begging, stealing, or starving; and became, of course, dangerous to the property and quiet of their late masters.

The consequence was, that these late owners found it necessary, for their own safety and the safety of their property, to organize themselves more perfectly as a government and make laws for keeping these dangerous people in subjection...

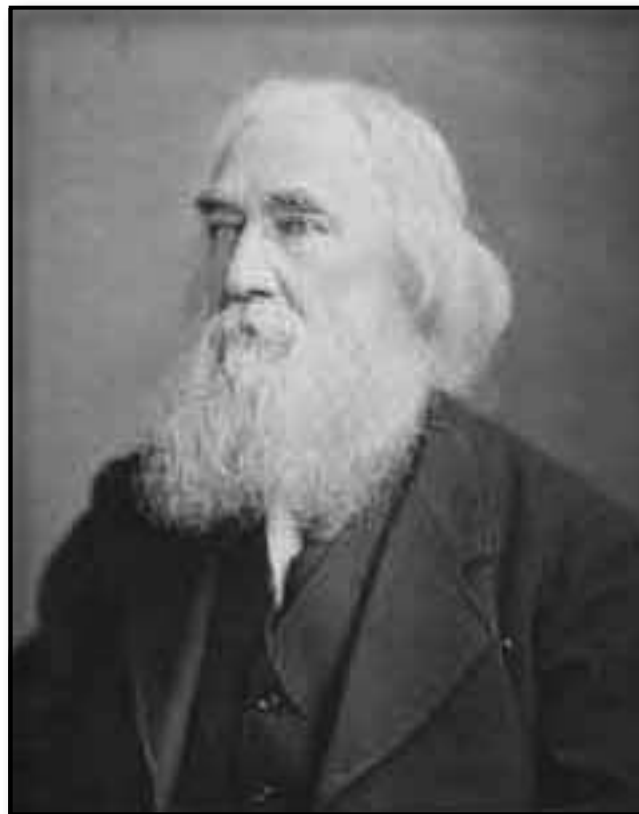
These laws have continued in force for hundreds, and, in some countries, for thousands of years; and are in force to-day, in greater or less severity, in nearly all the countries on the globe.

The purpose and effect of these laws have been to maintain, in the hands of the robber, or slave holding class, a monopoly of all lands, and, as far as possible, of all other means of creating wealth; and thus to keep the great body of laborers in such a state of poverty and dependence, as would compel them to sell their labor to their tyrants for the lowest prices at which life could be sustained. ...

And the real motives and spirit which lie at the foundation of all legislation - notwithstanding all the pretenses and disguises by which they attempt to hide themselves - are the same today as they always have been. The whole purpose of this legislation is simply to keep one class of men in subordination and servitude to another.

Spooner sums things up:

What, then, is legislation? It is an assumption by one man, or body of men, of absolute, irresponsible dominion over all other men whom they call subject to their power. It is the assumption by one man, or body of men, of a right to subject all other men to their will and their service. It is the assumption by one man, or body of men, of a right to abolish outright all the natural rights, all the natural liberty of all other men; to make all other men their slaves; to arbitrarily dictate to all other men what they may, and may not, do; what they may, and may not, have; what they may, and may not, be. It is, in short, the assumption of a right to banish the principle of human rights, the principle of justice itself, from off the earth, and set up their own personal will, pleasure, and interest in its place. All this, and nothing less, is involved in the very idea that there can be any such thing as human legislation that is obligatory upon those upon whom it is imposed. - Lysander Spooner, [Natural Law](#)



Lysander Spooner - Natural Law Anarchist (1808-1887)

The Anarchist Alternative

Spooner castigated legislation, the making of decreed law. Mutual protection associations should be voluntary. People should be able to opt out, start new ones, or even risk having no organized protection. Most anarchists agree with John Locke and the classical liberals that the social organization of justice is generally more just and more efficient than informal personal justice. Where anarchists part ways with statist liberals is denying government solipotence in the field. Anarchists deny that *only* a monopoly - the state - is capable of providing this vital social function. A free market is the only way consistent with liberty, just like any other service. The first thinker to assert that the monopoly on production of security, like all other monopolies, leads to poor quality and high prices, was anarcho-capitalist economist Gustave de Molinari.

If there is one well-established truth in political economy, it is this:

That in all cases, for all commodities that serve to provide for the tangible or intangible needs of the consumer, it is in the consumer's best interest that labor and trade remain free, because the freedom of labor and of trade have as their necessary and permanent result the maximum reduction of price.

And this:

That the interests of the consumer of any commodity whatsoever should always prevail over the interests of the producer.

Now in pursuing these principles, one arrives at this rigorous conclusion:

That the production of security should, in the interests of the consumers of this intangible commodity, remain subject to the law of free competition.

Whence it follows:

That no government should have the right to prevent another government from going into competition with it, or to require consumers of security to come exclusively to it for this commodity.

- Gustave de Molinari, [The Production of Security](#) (1849)

While Molinari takes a more-or-less value-free economic approach, others took a Lockean natural rights approach. Herbert Spencer wrote about [The Right to Ignore the State](#). Michael Bakunin stressed the right to opt out of any association. Lysander Spooner starts with Locke's argument for organized defense of rights, and draws the logical conclusions based on consent that Locke evaded.

Although it is the right of anybody and everybody - of any one man, or set of men, no less than another - to repel injustice, and compel justice, for themselves, and for all who may be wronged, yet to avoid the errors that are liable to result from haste and passion, and that everybody, who desires it, may rest secure in the assurance of protection, without a resort to force, it is evidently desirable that men should associate, so far as they freely and voluntarily can do so, for the maintenance of justice among themselves, and for mutual protection against other wrong-doers. It is also in the highest degree desirable that they should agree upon some plan or system of judicial proceedings, which, in the trial of causes, should secure caution, deliberation, thorough investigation, and, as far as possible, freedom from every influence but the simple desire to do justice.

Yet such associations can be rightful and desirable only in so far as they are purely voluntary. No man can rightfully be coerced into joining one, or supporting one, against his will. His own interest, his own judgement, and his own conscience alone must determine whether he will join this association, or that; or whether he will join any. If he chooses to depend, for the protection of his own rights, solely upon himself, and upon such voluntary assistance as other persons may freely offer to him when the necessity for it arises, he has a perfect right to do so. ...

Certainly no man can rightfully be required to join, or support, an association whose protection he does not desire. Nor can any man be reasonably or rightfully expected to join, or support, any association whose plans, or method of proceeding, he does not approve... To join or support one that, in his opinion, would itself do injustice, would be criminal. He must, therefore, be left at the same liberty to join, or not to join, an association for this purpose, as for any other, according as his own interest, discretion, or conscience shall dictate. - Spooner, [Natural Law](#)

Modern anarchists generally envision private defense agencies (PDAs) providing security services on an insurance basis. Besides the advantages of competition over monopoly, there are other reasons why free market defense services would likely be superior to government services.

- Higher customer satisfaction, since everyone could choose the types and levels of service they desire.
- "Victimless crime" laws would be significantly curtailed. Customers make the choices rather than government elites trying to mold society, and customers would pay the costs of prohibition rather than these costs being diverted onto the general public.
- Police would be more courteous and rights-aware. They would become peace officers instead of pigs, as people become customers or potential customers rather than suspects or potential criminals.
- There would be greater emphasis on *compensation to the victim* of crime. Restitution replaces atonement to the state and punishment by the state.
- Greater incentive to recover stolen property and find criminals. If PDAs, like insurance companies, pay for stolen property soon after it is stolen, there is incentive to find the criminal and recoup losses.
- A greater emphasis on crime prevention. Lower insurance payouts give PDAs an incentive to prevent crime; government police lack this incentive.

One of the most persistent delusions among statist is the assumption that there needs to be a monopoly in police and arbitration services. Most people do not realize that territorially based monopoly law is relatively new in the grand historical scheme of things. Before the rise of the nation-state, prior to 1500, Europe generally had a polycentric legal system. Legal jurisdiction was not solely based on location like most places today, but based on kinship and ethnic association, type of conflict (e.g. religious or commercial or family), and various other factors. Even conquerors like Alexander and the Roman Caesars often left indigenous legal systems in place. Jesus was convicted by a Jewish court, not a Roman court.

After five centuries of statist monopoly law, people have forgotten that the best and most judicious of their legal systems stem from voluntary systems of private law. British and American law is based on Anglo-Saxon common law - a system that saw judges competing in wisdom and fairness for customers, where law was "discovered" rather than legislated. Law Merchant was private law developed by early shippers independent of government oversight. It is the basis for international commercial law to this day.

Most tribal cultures had arbitration systems without decreed (legislated) law. There is often a culturocentric misunderstanding of tribal leaders. What are often termed "kings" or "chiefs" in history books are little more than militia leaders or on-demand judges. For example, the Celtic Irish "kings" were militia commanders with a few religious duties - they had no power to make decrees, only to lead armed defense in the event of an attack. Deliberative associations which are little more than appeals courts are often painted as legislatures, such as the Allthing of classical Iceland. You wouldn't know from most history books that Iceland had competing legal associations that David Friedman noted "might almost have been invented by a mad economist to test the lengths to which market systems could supplant government in its most fundamental functions."

Neither do most people appreciate how property law springs up spontaneously. In the settlement of North America, tomahawk rights (marking the corners of land claims with tomahawk cuts on trees), cultivation rights, homesteading rights, grazing and mining and water rights, were all worked out before formal government arrived. Governments tended to try to dispossess the "squatters" so blatantly stealing "public" land. In places where indigenous property conventions won out over government decree, squatters were renamed "pioneers" and liberty prevailed to a greater extent. In places where the state regimes dominated land use and distribution, economic and political freedom was severely retarded. We see the result in much of Latin America today, with squatter cities and property rights unrecognized except for the well-connected. How would laws be produced in an anarchist society? Let's let David Friedman tell us.

The answer is that systems of law would be produced for profit on the open market, just as books and bras are produced today. There could be competition among different brands of law, just as there is competition among different brands of cars.

In such a society there might be many courts and even many legal systems. Each pair of protection agencies agree in advance on which court they will use in case of conflict. Thus the laws under which a particular case is decided are determined implicitly by advance agreement between the protection agencies whose customers are involved. In principle, there could be a different court and a different set of laws for every pair of protection agencies. In practice, many agencies would probably find it convenient to patronize the same courts, and many courts might find it convenient to adopt identical, or nearly identical, systems of law in order to simplify matters for their customers.



Before labeling a society in which different people are under different laws chaotic and unjust, remember that in our society the law under which you are judged depends on the country, state, and even city in which you happen to be. Under the arrangements I am describing, it depends instead on your protective agency and the agency of the person you accuse of a crime or who accuses you of a crime.

In such a society law is produced on the market. A court supports itself by charging for the service of arbitrating disputes. Its success depends on its reputation for honesty, reliability, and promptness and on the desirability to potential customers of the particular set of laws it judges by. The immediate customers are protection agencies. But the protection agency is itself selling a

product to its customers. Part of that product is the legal system, or systems, of the courts it patronizes and under which its customers will consequently be judged. Each protection agency will try to patronize those courts under whose legal system its customers would like to live. - David Friedman, [Police, Courts, and Laws - On the Market](#), Ch. 29 [Machinery of Freedom](#)

The objections to private law can be puerile. One common claim is that there must be a supreme court, or legal processes would have no end. This is seen false simply by noting that processes can end in other ways. In a free society, there would likely be your court, my court, and if things are still not settled, an appeals court. Every pair of PDAs could use a different appeals court. Two out of three wins. Clearly there's no need for a maximum court ruling over all.

Another common objection is that private courts would fight it out violently rather than accept arbitration or deal with other PDAs. But PDAs have a greater incentive to negotiate and act peacefully than states. First of all, wars are expensive in money and personnel; PDAs cannot shift costs to hapless subjects like states can. Neither can they simply raise prices like states - their customers would go elsewhere, to more peaceful and reasonable competitors. If worse comes to worse, and armed conflicts occur, PDAs being non-territorial cannot use weapons of mass destruction as states do. Nor do they have the patriotic fervor or *the People's Romance* to rationalize killing "them" - the demonized people living in "enemy" territory. Thus any wars that *do* occur are likely to be small and localized, for clear purposes, and with careful distinction between combatant and noncombatant.

Listen Egoist!

Listen egoist, moral skeptic, and others who consider natural law to be "nonsense on stilts" or "spooks in the mind." You don't need spooks or morality to make sense of rights language. I want to convince you of this. I will not try to attempt to change your view of natural rights. My modest aim is to convince you that *language using rights jargon* can be translated into egoist and even amoral terms, and still make sense.

Instead of considering "rights" as an arbitrary postulate or brain-spook, I suggest that one can interpret the term in other ways.

Contractarianism

Maybe when people interact, there is an implicit contract made. Perhaps when people join together in society, they are in effect making promises like:

- If you don't kill me, I won't kill you.
- If you don't steal my stuff, I won't steal your stuff.
- If you keep your business promises, I'll keep mine.

There are many reasons why such "contracts" are reasonable. It's individually rational for most people; it's a Schelling point; it's the best strategy for Prisoners Dilemma games. We'll get into some of these rationales later. The point is: we can call these "rights."

Why does someone want to enter society instead of living as a hermit in the boondocks? To benefit from social interaction, in oh so many ways. It would certainly be reasonable to at very least *profess* to abide by such rules when in society, if you wish people to deal with you.

In a way, modern contractarianism presents a hypothetical person entering society with a choice of *if only everyone* rule-sets. Would you agree to moral/social/legal principle X if most/all other people did?

Here's how libertarian philosopher Jan Narveson explains it:

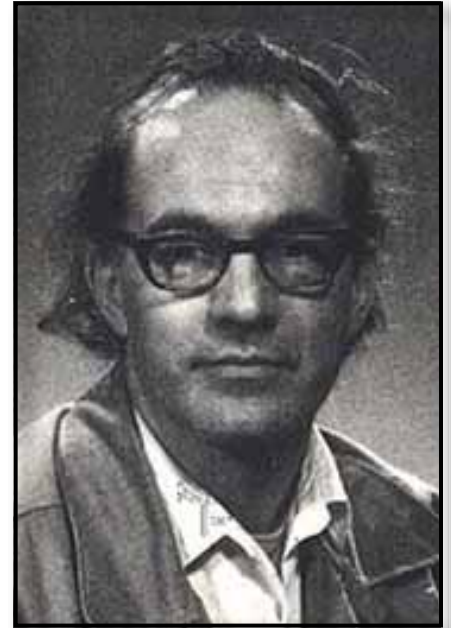
According to Contractarianism, the principles of morals are a sort of agreement, or "in a sense" an agreement. ...

Its idea is that the principles of morals are a kind of grand agreement. In theoretical principle, what makes it an "agreement" is that its rules are, at least implicitly, "iffy": each of us is to treat each of the others in certain ways provided that they do likewise. If they don't, the deal is off. And if it's off, the idea is, then we are both worse off than if it were on. Mutuality, reciprocity, is the byword. ...

The contractarian view enters the picture by proposing that the right set of principles to play this role is the set such that everyone, looking at those proposed principles from his or her point of view *ex ante*, can see that he or she will do better if everyone, including himself or herself complies with those principles than if there are none or some other set.

The kicker is "everyone including himself or herself." ... Now, at the point when it does overrule you, it looks as though morals is disadvantageous to you. On the other hand, though, when it overrules other people, it becomes quite advantageous to you. Morals is to the advantage of people other than the agent, typically; but of course, every single one of us is a person "other than the agent," all the time...

Let's take the example of one of the strongest and most fundamental of all moral rules - the rule against killing innocent people. ... Now and again, perhaps, it would be useful to you to kill somebody else. Suppose that morals says you cannot do this. On that occasion, it deprives you of a possible benefit. Meanwhile, however, suppose it was to somebody else's advantage to kill you. Morals deprives that person of the benefit of killing you; but of course, that means it provides you with the benefit of not being killed. It is not too much to say that it provides you with life. - Jan Narveson, [The Contractarian Theory of Morals: Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#).



Rational Self-Interest

Two of the most eloquent supporters of rights based on egoism were Max Stirner and Ayn Rand. To Rand, the fundamental ethical distinction is whether the beneficiary of conduct is the actor, or someone or something other than the actor - egoism or altruism.

A "right" is a moral principle defining and sanctioning a man's freedom of action in a social context. There is only *one* fundamental right (all the others are its consequences or corollaries): a man's right to his own life. Life is a process of self-sustaining and self-generated action; the right to life means the right to engage in self-sustaining and self-generated action - which means: the freedom to take all the actions required by the nature of a rational being for the support, the furtherance, the fulfillment and the enjoyment of his own life. (Such is the meaning of the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.)

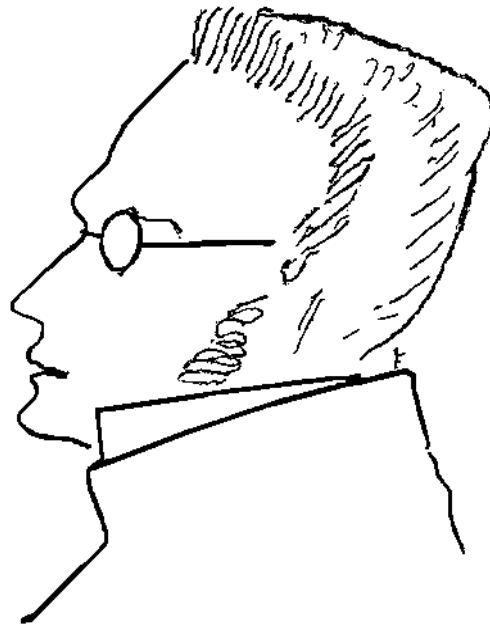
The concept of a "right" pertains only to action - specifically, to freedom of action. It means freedom from physical compulsion, coercion or interference by other men. Thus, for every individual, a right is the moral sanction of a *positive* - of his freedom to act on his own judgment, for his own goals, by his own *voluntary, uncoerced* choice. As to his neighbors, his rights impose no obligations on them except of a *negative* kind: to abstain from violating his rights. - Ayn Rand, "Man's Rights"

Note that Rand assumes a *universality principle* - that all men have the same moral prerogatives. This is basically the same as the the categorical imperative or the Golden Rule.

Max Stirner explicitly rejected such a principle. But in one interpretation of his main essay, "The Individual and His Property" (also translated as "The Ego and His Own"), he claims that, at least among the enlightened rational egoists, there will be a "union of egoists" which will, in effect, treat each other as if they had rights, in the mutual understanding that everyone uses everyone.

Let us therefore not aspire to community, but to one-sidedness. Let us not seek the most comprehensive commune, "human society," but let us seek in others only means and organs which we may use as our property! As we do not see our equals in the tree, the beast, so the presupposition that others are our equals springs from a hypocrisy. No one is my equal, but I regard him, equally with all other beings, as my property. In opposition to this I am told that I should be a man among "fellow-men" (Judenfrage); I should "respect" the fellow-man in them. For me no one is a person to be respected, not even the fellow-man, but solely, like other beings, an object in which I take an interest or else do not, an interesting or uninteresting object, a usable or unusable person.

And, if I can use him, I doubtless come to an understanding and make myself at one with him, in order, by the agreement, to strengthen my power, and by combined force to accomplish more than individual force could effect. In this combination I see nothing whatever but a multiplication of my force, and I retain it only so long as it is my multiplied force. But thus it is a union. - Max Stirner, [The Ego and His Own](#)



On the other hand, many interpret Stirner as totally amoral, without any concept of rights. Though he excoriates the state in his essay, one gets the impression that a good Stirnerite egoist would have no qualms about using the state as his property if given the chance, and exploit others without mercy!

It is not Stirner himself, but certain anarchists he influenced, who present a coherent case for rights based on egoistic expediency. Benjamin Tucker started as a proponent of natural rights, but later in his career changed to a Stirnerite perspective.

From the beginning of Liberty, Tucker placed emphasis on the rights of the individual and individual sovereignty. This natural rights approach may have been influenced by Lysander Spooner who at the commencement of Liberty was still living and contributing articles to it. Reminiscent of Spooner's outlook, was the statement in an 1882 issue that "there is but one single kind of 'legal' freedom; and that is simply the 'natural' freedom of each individual to do whatever he will with himself and his property, for his body here, and his soul hereafter, so long as he does not trespass upon the equal freedom of any other person." ...

Although Tucker maintained that he had not changed his fundamental opinions since he had begun Liberty, it is obvious that by the late 1880s his defense of Anarchism had changed from one asserting a natural rights justification to one asserting the Stirnerite version of egoism. By early 1888, Tucker was no longer defending property as a right, but rather claimed it to be only a social convention. Having abandoned natural right as the basis of Anarchism, Tucker replaced it with the concept of equal liberty as the touchstone of his Anarchism. "It is true ... that Anarchism does not recognize the principle of human rights. But it recognizes human equality as a necessity of stable society." "... the only compulsion of individuals the propriety of which Anarchism recognizes is that which compels invasive individuals to refrain from overstepping the principle of equal liberty. Now, equal liberty itself being a social convention (for there are no natural rights), it is obvious that Anarchism recognizes the propriety of compelling individuals to regard 'one' social convention ..." - Carl Watner, [Benjamin Tucker and His Periodical: Liberty](#)

So Tucker preceded Rand in combining egoism with the universality principle, transforming an amoral philosophy into a moral one.

Communications Ethic

Hans-Hermann Hoppe contends that, by trying to convince someone by argumentation, one implicitly assumes and acknowledges the self-ownership of that someone. In other words, one cannot deny self-ownership (and consequently some form of rights) without first assuming it.

The norm implied in argumentation is that everybody has the right of exclusive control over his own body as his instrument of action and cognition. Only if there is at least an implicit recognition of each individual's property right in his own body can argumentation take place. Only as long as this right is recognized is it possible for someone to agree to what has been said in an argument and hence can what has been said be validated, or is it possible to say "no" and to agree only on the fact that there is disagreement. Indeed, anyone who would try to justify any norm would already have to presuppose the property right in his body as a valid norm, simply in order to say, "This is what I claim to be true and objective." Any person who would try to dispute the property right in his own body would become caught up in a contradiction, as arguing in this way and claiming his argument to be true, would already implicitly accept precisely this norm as being valid.

Thus it can be stated that whenever a person claims that some statement can be justified, he at least implicitly assumes the following norm to be justified: "Nobody has the right to uninvitedly aggress against the body of any other person and thus delimit or restrict anyone's control over his own body." This rule is implied in the concept of justification as argumentative justification. Justifying means justifying without having to rely on coercion. In fact, if one formulates the opposite of this rule, i.e., "everybody has the right to uninvitedly aggress against other people" (a rule, by the way, that would pass the formal test of the universalization principle!), then it is easy to see that this rule is not, and never could be, defended in argumentation. To do so would in fact have to presuppose the validity of precisely its opposite, i.e., the aforementioned principle of nonaggression. - Hans-Hermann Hoppe, "A Theory of Socialism and Capitalism"

Game Theory: Schelling Points

A Schelling point, named after Thomas Schelling who originated the idea, is a "solution" or outcome of a game chosen because of its uniqueness. It depends greatly on the outlooks and values of the players, since it must seem unique to these participants. If you and a friend get separated in a large supermarket, often you can find each other by guessing where the other will try to find you. In the same way, we can often come up with solutions to games by noting some interesting solution that others will also see.

Consider now two players playing the game called bilateral monopoly. They have a dollar to divide between them, provided they can agree how to divide it. Superficially there is no resemblance between this game and that discussed above; the players are free to talk with each other as much as they want. But while they can talk freely, there is a sense in which they cannot communicate at all. It is in my interest to persuade you that I will only be satisfied with a large fraction of the dollar; if I am really unwilling to accept anything less than ninety cents, you are better off agreeing to accept ten cents than holding out for more and getting nothing. Since it is in the interest of each of us to persuade the other of his resolve, all statements to that effect can be ignored; they would be made whether true or not. What each player has to do is to guess what the other's real demand is, what the fraction of the dollar is without which he will refuse to agree. That cannot be communicated, simply because it pays each player to lie about it. The situation is therefore similar to that in the previous game; the players must coordinate their demands (so that they add up to a dollar) without communication. It seems likely that they will do so by agreeing to split the dollar fifty-fifty. - David Friedman, [A Positive Account of Property Rights](#)

In the same way, the "law of equal freedom" might be derived. While unequal "distributions" of freedom might be proposed by some ("you must be my slave on Thursdays"), most would see a dangerous slippery slope in such arrangements, reasoning that if they give in on that much, what's to stop further similar demands in the future. Similarly, other rights are derived: I have a right to my property and you to yours, I can speak my mind and you speak yours, and so on. Furthermore, once these rights/solutions are established by convention and well-known, the Schelling point is further reinforced. Thus, rights can be seen as a Schelling point in a Hobbesian game.

Game Theory: Evolutionary Stable Strategies

Consider the hawk-dove game. In this game, hawks, in interacting with other birds, use a strategy of aggression. Hawks challenge the territory of birds they encounter; doves may make an initial showing of defiance, but back down from actual fighting and run away. In this case, the hawk wins the territory, food, mate, or whatever the reward is. However, if the hawk meets another bird using the hawk strategy, then a fight ensues. The result of that contest is unclear beforehand - perhaps the hawk will be killed or mortally wounded, perhaps it will win. Thus, the expectancy is considerably less than the reward gained after challenging a "dove," a bird that runs away. In our game, hawk versus hawk often entails a significant expected loss, even worse than the dove's loss of some particular territory. Let's assume that this is the case.

Suppose we have a lot of birds playing this game. An evolutionary stable strategy (ESS) for a game is a strategy such that, if any player deviates from the strategy, he is worse off (or at least no better off). Looking at our hawk-dove game using these "pure" strategies, let's examine two extreme scenarios.

Suppose everyone uses the hawk strategy. Then on every encounter, there is an expected loss, since every encounter results in a fight. Now suppose one player decides to switch to the dove strategy. He is suddenly better off - he has a slight loss in territory, but he avoids the greater loss of possibly getting maimed or killed. This proves that *everybody a hawk* is unstable; hawkishness is not an ESS.

Now suppose everybody uses the dove strategy. When challenged, all are perfect "Gandhis" and avoid violent confrontation. Now what happens if one dove becomes a hawk? He literally eats the others for lunch. Every encounter wins territory, food, or mates, and being the only hawk, there is no risk of negative outcomes. The single hawk tyrannizes the other birds. Thus, an all-dove world is unstable; dovishness is not an ESS.

Now let's introduce a new strategy - the rattlesnake strategy. The rattlesnake does not attack, but it will certainly defend and strike back if attacked. Is this an ESS? Upon examination, we see that it is. Suppose all players use the rattlesnake strategy. Then, amazingly enough, no one attacks anyone. To an observer, it may look like a world of doves, as far as behavior goes.

What if one rattlesnake decides to change to a hawk strategy? Then he loses utility since he gets into a fight every single encounter. To a hawk, rattlesnakes act like other hawks. Clearly he's worse off than before. What if a rattlesnake switches to a dove strategy? Then, as far as behavior goes, he's no worse off, but neither is he any better off. To a dove, rattlesnakes act like other doves. Thus, we conclude that the rattlesnake strategy is an ESS.

In game theory, a form of rattlesnake strategy is called "tit-for-tat." If others know (from experience if not communication) that you will retaliate, they are less likely to attack; the costs are higher than attacking a dove. Since most people are not perfect Gandhis, there is generally a cost for aggression. Overall, in human society "all investment that takes the form of protecting rights must be, in the net, socially wasteful," as James Buchanan put it. "Gains are secured from the reductions in predation-defense effort." Thus, the non-aggression principle, and the notion of rights, might be considered as a principle or strategy based on solid game theoretic and evolutionary grounds - it is an evolutionary stable strategy.

Necessary Conditions for Life-Improving Actions

Rights may be thought of as necessary conditions for self-ownership or social heuristics for a "society of egoists." Perhaps it is also an individually rational strategy, or an implicit contract, with or without a veil of ignorance. Suppose the following conditions are necessary for a society where people are free.

- **Individuality** - Every person has a will. Every person has a will (mind, conscience, soul) that he uses to make choices and decide how to live. One's will is non-transferrable. A person is not autonomous unless he controls his will.
- **Liberty** - Every person must own his faculties. Every person has faculties - the talents, skills, knowledge and intelligence particular to him. One's faculties are natural property. A person is not self-owned unless he owns his faculties.
- **Property** - Every person must own the material product of his labor, and be free to trade it on any consensual basis.

Faculties are used to affect material goods and to provide services to one's self or other people. All material products of labor, including any incorporated unowned parts, become property. The fruit of one's labor is natural property. A person is not self-owned unless he owns his products.

The will and faculties are unalienable. Products are alienable; they can be traded and gifted.

The conditions for society being beneficial to a person's life are given by Ayn Rand:

Can man derive any personal benefit from living in a human society? Yes - if it is a human society. The two great values to be gained from social existence are: knowledge and trade ... But these very benefits indicate, delimit and define what kind of men can be of value to one another and in what kind of society: only rational, productive, independent men in a rational, productive, free society. Parasites,

moochers, looters, brutes and thugs can be of no value to a human being - nor can he gain any benefit from living in a society geared to their needs, demands and protection, a society that treats him as a sacrificial animal ... No society can be of value to man's life if the price is the surrender of his right to his life. - Ayn Rand, "The Objectivist Ethics"

Murray Rothbard gives essentially the same argument:

While the behavior of plants and at least the lower animals is determined by their biological nature or perhaps by their "instincts," the nature of man is such that each individual person must, in order to act, choose his own ends and employ his own means in order to attain them. Possessing no automatic instincts, each man must learn about himself and the world, use his mind to select values, learn about cause and effect, and act purposively to maintain himself and advance his life. Since men can think, feel, evaluate, and act only as individuals, it becomes vitally necessary for each man's survival and prosperity that he be free to learn, choose, develop his faculties, and act upon his knowledge and values. This is the necessary path of human nature; to interfere with and cripple this process by using violence goes profoundly against what is necessary by man's nature for his life and prosperity. - Murray Rothbard, [For a New Liberty](#)

Summary

Obviously some of these arguments overlap. Perhaps people, realizing that certain conditions are necessary for "the life of man *qua* man," implicitly agree to rights in a contractarian manner when they enter society. Perhaps these necessary conditions, or social practices evolved due to being ESSs, are Schelling points.

Another thing for moral skeptics and Stirnerian egoists to keep in mind is that only one of the explanations above need be true or sensible to deem "rights" as a reasonable concept. Even if you disagree with all but one, the one you agree with is sufficient to allow you to read and interpret rights language as making sense. Certainly you may continue to object to the adjective "natural" in "natural rights." But I hope to have convinced you that the "rights" part can make sense with non-mystic, rational, and/or empirical grounding.

Warning: Some writers quoted may slip in the word "natural." I ask that you to simply ignore that word and it's implications, and evaluate accordingly. In other words, please don't reject everything a writer has to say simply because he used the dirty word. More often than not, these writers are making points that don't rely on mystic interpretations of rights.



Ayn Rand

Panarchy Unbound

This is the basis of my system: "Laissez-faire, laissez-passer!" ... Thus I demand, for each and every member of human society, freedom of association according to inclination and of activity according to aptitude. In other words, the absolute right to choose the political surroundings in which to live, and to ask for nothing else. - P. E. de Puydt, [Panarchy](#).

Panarchy is basically the idea of competing governments. In de Puydt's original conception, people would register for the government of their choice, with a nominal administration fee for switching. The critical difference between this and the statist quo is that one need not move or emigrate to switch governments. Governments would co-exist and compete in the same geographic area, and new governments could start up anytime, so long as they could attract enough members to be feasible.

Before going on, we should point out that government in this sense is not a state. The word "government" can have two distinct meanings. Normally, people use the term to mean "state" - an effective monopoly on the legitimate/legal use of force in a particular geographic area. This is definitely *not* what de Puydt means. Another meaning of the word "government" is: an organization intended to provide security. This is the meaning of "government" when used, for example, by John Locke in his [Two Treatises on Government](#), by Thomas Jefferson in the [US Declaration of Independence](#), and most explicitly by Albert Jay Nock in [Our Enemy the State](#).

This double meaning of "government" is the source of many fallacious equivocations in political writings, not to mention one major cause of the popular misunderstanding of anarchism. Many people not familiar with anarchist thought assume that anarchists are against law, or police, or property. In their limited experience and narrowness of thought, they see these human goods as intrinsically connected with state. In fact, anarchists are not against law; we are against *monopoly* law. Anarchists are not against peace officers, but against monopoly police force. We are not against property in its general sense, but against monopoly decreed property schemes.

Unfortunately, this distinction is extremely hard to grasp for those indoctrinated and educated by statist systems and who have been immersed all their lives in the statist weltanschauung. Until a person realizes the difference between a state and an association for mutual security, they are unable to understand anarchism. Once a person has the epiphany and sees the difference, and starts to appreciate the fact that monopoly government is not the only way to provide security services, he is halfway to anarchism. At the very least, he understands the anarchist message and is likely to sympathize with it.

Now we can say how anarchy is related to panarchy. Anarchy is about a free society, a stateless society. Panarchy is about relations between stateless societies. Put another way, panarchy is the "foreign policy" of anarchy.

How can they be reconciled? - By not trying to reconcile them at all; by letting each party govern itself. Freedom should even extend to the right not to be free, and should include it. - P. E. de Puydt, [Panarchy](#).

Since anarchism opposes the initiation of force against others, it cannot force others to be free. Forcing others to be free is impossible - a clear contradiction. And as humanity includes diverse people, habits, opinions, and ideologies, it would be utopian not to expect some people to prefer various degrees and types of slavery over freedom. Furthermore, as we noted, much of current mankind has been trained like domestic beasts into servitude, and have not the imagination or ego to set themselves free. For the foreseeable future, if not as long as man exists, there will likely be states. The best anarchists can hope for is that the existing states let us be and let us pass - *laissez faire, laissez passer*.

What is most admirable about this innovation is that it does away, for ever, with revolutions, mutinies, and street fighting, down to the last tensions in the political atmosphere: Are you dissatisfied with your government? - Change over to another! - Four words, always associated with horror and bloodshed, words which all courts, high and low, military and special, without exception, unanimously find guilty of inciting to rebellion - these four words become innocent, as if in the mouths of seminarists, and as harmless as the medicine so wrongly mistrusted by Mr. de Pourceaugnac.

"Change over to another" means: Go to the Bureau for Political Membership, cap in hand, and ask politely for your name to be transferred to any list you please. The Commissioner will put on his glasses, open the register, enter your decision, and give you a receipt. You take your leave, and the revolution is accomplished without spilling any more than a drop of ink. - P. E. de Puydt, [Panarchy](#).

There is an excellent analogy in freedom of religion. At one time, churches had the same sort of monopoly that states now have. Religion was established by state. Bloody wars were fought over religion, dissenters were jailed, maimed or burned. Freedom of religious conscience was suppressed. No doubt in those dark times, the suggestion that different religions and cults could coexist in the same territory would have been greeted with derision by virtually everyone. And yet, out of the darkness, freedom of religion came about in some places. Today, people deal with their neighbors generally without knowing or even caring which denomination if any they profess. Episcopalians no longer brand Baptists, or whip Quakers through town - they invite them to neighborhood barbecues and their children play together. Panarchy is the political equivalent of freedom of religion.

De Puydt basically said the same thing as Gustave de Molinari, but with political rather than economic emphasis. De Puydt does gloss over some important issues - he assumes there is some impartial court to handle inter-governmental disputes. David Friedman shores up this area with his analysis of interaction between PDAs.

There are three ways in which such conflicts might be dealt with. The most obvious and least likely is direct violence - a mini-war between my agency, attempting to arrest the burglar, and his agency attempting to defend him from arrest. A somewhat more plausible scenario is negotiation. Since warfare is expensive, agencies might include in the contracts they offer their customers a provision under which they are not obliged to defend customers against legitimate punishment for their actual crimes. When a conflict occurred, it would then be up to the two agencies to determine whether the accused customer of one would or would not be deemed guilty and turned over to the other.

A still more attractive and more likely solution is advance contracting between the agencies. Under this scenario, any two agencies that faced a significant probability of such clashes would agree on an arbitration agency to settle them - a private court. Implicit or explicit in their agreement would be the legal rules under which such disputes were to be settled.

Under these circumstances, both law enforcement and law are private goods produced on a private market. Law enforcement is produced by enforcement agencies and sold directly to their customers. Law is produced by arbitration agencies and sold to the enforcement agencies, who resell it to their customers as one characteristic of the bundle of services they provide. - David Friedman, [Law as a Private Good](#)

Thus, de Puydt's idea simply needs expansion into the courts - laissez faire is good for economics, politics, *and* justice.

One knee-jerk objection to competing courts is the fear that they would be likely to battle it out when disputes between clients occur. Friedman showed how it would be irrational to do so, since such violence would be expensive, and would likely lose customers to more reasonable competitors. We can actually see in practice the ample incentive to negotiate and make prior arrangements, ironically from existing states. After all, states are in an anarchistic relationship with each other, but they don't generally go to war when a citizen has a dispute with a foreigner. Instead, conventions such as jurisdiction and extradition have been extensively worked out.

There is one more area, heretofore overlooked, that such laissez faire is applicable - property systems. Among some anarchists it is too often assumed that different property systems are inherently incompatible - that sticky property and communal property are such opposites that they cannot possibly coexist. Not so! This is easy to see if you simply look around and notice

A Brief History of Anarchist Thought

It is easy to fall into two errors when giving a history of anarchism. First, one is tempted to include various philosophies and movements with anarchistic proclivities, enlarging the scope of anarchism erroneously. Loosely anti-authoritarian sentiment does not constitute anarchism proper. Secondly, one is tempted to exclude writings of people who were not anarchists, or were not anarchists for long or predominantly, even when their thoughts are important in anarchist theory. But the fact is that many minarchists and non-anarchist proponents of liberty were pioneers in anarchist thought, and provide some of the most cogent theory. Here we attempt to steer between both shoals.

Avoiding the first error is easy, since we have defined anarchism fairly stringently as including three anti-statist contentions: 1) No state has legitimate moral authority over the individual (legitimacy); 2) All states are unnecessary or undesirable or immoral (desirability); and 3) All states should be abolished immediately (purity). Thus, we can eliminate the Diggers, Quakers, and Christian Non-Resisters as anarchist movements proper. As for the second shoal, we will include the writings of such people as Edmund Burke and Herbert Spencer, even though the former is widely considered "the father of conservatism" and the latter, in his later days, wavered from his earlier anarchism.

Finally, it will be noted that this history avoids the Eurocentrism of most traditional anarchist histories, along with the accompanying bias toward collectivist economic theories. Anarchism is about political authority - economic theory is secondary, and only relevant insofar as it is the consequence of that political theory. We will not dwell on quaint economic notions at the expense of anti-statist philosophy.



The first known anarchist essay, [A Vindication of Natural Society](#), was written by Edmund Burke when he was a student. No one knows whether Burke was actually an anarchist when he wrote it. He, like many young students, may have been rebellious, perhaps enough to reach the anarchist beliefs espoused in his essay. Then again, he may have been exercising his argumentative powers by making a serious case *opposite* to what he believed. Or, he may have been attempting a satire, as he later claimed after his authorship became publicly known while he held a government position. The first hypothesis seems most likely, but we will never know for sure. At any rate, Burke gave a strong and eloquent case against the state, with arguments which are quite convincing to this day. His arguments were repeated in his lifetime

by the liberal minarchist William Godwin, and modern arguments condemning the state are little more than repetitions of themes found in [Vindication](#).

The full name of Burke's essay is "A Vindication of Natural Society or, A View of the Miseries and Evils Arising to Mankind from Every Species of Artificial Society." It was first published in 1756 under the name of Lord Bolingbrook, a recently deceased well-known (but controversial) author. He starts by making the distinction between what he calls "natural society" and "artificial society." By this he means voluntary society versus social organization which is imposed, decreed, and/or regimented by external force - in other words, statist society. "Natural" in this context means nothing more than voluntary. Burke is not making any claim about man's nature here, only that it is society "founded in natural Appetites and Instincts, and not in any positive Institution." Burke noted that mankind has "fallen" into artificial, or political society. Then he asks whether this has been beneficial to mankind or not.

Burke then goes into the history of the state, and analyses the results. He notes that statism became a virtual religion, and shows how it has caused more harm than good. Although it provided some relief from the biased judge problem in natural society, artificial society introduces severe problems that overwhelm any possible benefits.

Externally, the state engages in brutal and barbaric wars, causes mass death and destruction, and encourages war technology. He asserts that "all Empires have been cemented in Blood." Burke calculates that States through history have slaughtered roughly seventy times the number of people living in the world. Thus, the violence of states, with war, occupation, slavery, and genocide, dwarfs the sporadic violence of natural society. Burke even attempts an institutional analysis of the state, as later anarchists would do.

These Evils are not accidental. Whoever will take the pains to consider the Nature of Society, will find they result directly from its Constitution. For as Subordination, or in other Words, the Reciprocation of Tyranny, and Slavery, is requisite to support these Societies, the Interest, the Ambition, the Malice, or the Revenge, nay even the Whim and Caprice of one ruling Man among them, is enough to arm all the rest, without any private Views of their own, to the worst and blackest Purposes; and what is at once lamentable and ridiculous, these Wretches engage under those Banners with a Fury greater than if they were animated by Revenge for their own proper Wrongs. -

Edmund Burke, [A Vindication of Natural Society](#)

He also writes of the "us versus them" mentality which contributes to the violence. Then he moves to the internal problems of statism. He points out, as Lord Acton did so famously later, that power corrupts: "The very Name of a Politician, a Statesman, is sure to cause Terror and Hatred; it has always connected with it the Ideas of Treachery, Cruelty, Fraud and Tyranny," and "this unnatural Power corrupts both the Heart, and the Understanding." He writes that states "frequently infringe the Rules of Justice to support themselves," and lie to support "the reigning Interest," citing "the Dungeons, Whips, Chains, Racks, Gibbets, with which every Society is abundantly stored." Burke, like la Boetie, notes the role of "flatterers" and "favorites." After examining various forms of government, he deduces that they are all worse than anarchy, what he calls natural society.

Anticipating later anarchist economists like Molinari, Burke observes that state court systems, being monopolies, are not very efficient at what they do, and that decreed or legislated law is more capricious than common law or traditional law.

All in all, Burke's essay brings up virtually all the major themes in the case against the state. Later theorists would make a positive case for anarchism - ideas about how a free society could be organized - but as for negative anarchism, the points made in [Vindication of Natural Society](#) stand solid to this day.

The First Positive Anarchist

Enlightenment thought, combined with the budding industrial revolution, brought on the first positive anarchist theories. The ideas were in the air, so to speak, and several people came up with positive anarchism independently, and roughly about the same time. Chronologically, the first known undisputedly anarchist thinker was Josiah Warren (1798-1874).

Josiah Warren developed his anarchist ideas soon after his participation in Robert Owen's fateful New Harmony utopian community, which lasted from 1825 to 1829.

Warren, undaunted by New Harmony's failure, realized that the problem was a lack of respect for individuality; that undue collectivization only brought about discord. Later, Warren created his own communities based on individualism and private property, and a "time store" which traded in labor notes.

Not only is Warren the father of anarchism, but also could fairly be considered the father of socialist economic theory, and perhaps even of geist land reform. Yet he was little known in his time, and was more an activist than a theoretician, even though he wrote two significant anarchist pieces: [Equitable Commerce](#) and [True Civilization](#).

Lest someone challenge the claim that Warren was the first anarchist, we provide the following excerpt published in 1833, seven years before Proudhon's [What is Property?](#) essay.

Laws and governments defeat their object. Their professed object is the security and good order of society. But the moment that any such power is erected over one's person or property, that moment he feels insecure and sees that his greatest chance of security is in getting possession of the governing power - in governing, rather than being governed. ... Strife for the attainment of this power, has in all ages up to the present hour produced more confusion, destruction of life and property, and more crimes and intense misery than all other causes put together.

I venture the assertion that the establishing of such powers has been the greatest error of mankind, and that society never will enjoy peace or security until it has done with these barbarisms and acknowledges the inalienable right of every individual to the sovereignty of their own person, time, and property. - Josiah Warren, [The Peaceful Revolutionist](#) April 5, 1833, vol. 1, no. 4



Individuality

Warren based anarchism on the principle of individuality, "the Practice of Mentally Discriminating, Dividing, Separating, Disconnecting Persons, Things, and Events, according to their Individual Peculiarities." He emphasized that different things and different people all have their individual properties, propensities, and qualities, and that the primary mistake of artificial society is that it treats them as the same. For people, this non-recognition of individuality creates conflict and discord. Even in human language, the individuality of people's minds make understanding of even simple phrases and propositions problematic. Even the concept of individuality will be understood differently by different people.

There is no certainty of any written laws, or rules, or institutions, or verbal precepts being understood in the same manner by any number of persons. This Individuality is unconquerable, and therefore **rises above all institutions**. To require conformity in the appreciation of sentiments, or in the interpretation of language, or uniformity of thought, feeling, or action where there is no natural coincidence, is a fundamental error in human legislation - a madness that would be only equalled by requiring all to possess the same countenance or the same stature.

Individuality thus rising above all prescriptions, all authority, every one, by the very necessities of nature, **is raised above**, instead of being under institutions based on language. Institutions thus become subordinate to our judgment and subject to our convenience; and the hitherto inverted pyramid of human affairs thus assumes its true position! - Josiah Warren, [Equitable Commerce](#)

Thus, harmony is created by recognizing the diversity of people rather than blindly forming groups and associations ("combinations" Warren calls them). The only useful associations are those which recognize the individuality of its members, meaning that they allow members to opt out when/if they no longer see it to their advantage to associate, and strictly limit the degree and personal cost of association.

The directing power, or the lead of every movement must be individual, or there is no lead, no order, nothing but confusion. The lead may be a person or a thing - an idea or a principle; but it must be an Individuality, or it cannot lead; and those who are led must have an individual or similar impulse, and both that and the lead must coincide or harmonize, to insure order and progress. - Josiah Warren, [Equitable Commerce](#)

As an example, Warren cites people walking on a sidewalk in a city. Sooner or later someone suggests that everyone might avoid collision by agreeing to walk on the right (or left). Since it is in everyone's interest to avoid collisions, people's interests coincide and thus harmony is achieved. Success, rather than authority, is the regulator. There is no "general will," but rather the interests of individuals that creates such coordination. The problem with political government is that it attempts to create harmony by overriding individual interests by creating unnecessary "combinations." While sometimes expeditious, it is clearly a danger to liberty and individuality.

Disconnecting all interests, and allowing each to be absolute despot or sovereign over his own, at his own cost, is the only solution that is worthy of thought. Good thinkers never committed a more fatal mistake than in expecting harmony from an attempt to overcome individuality, and in trying to make a state or a nation an "Individual!" The individuality of each person is perfectly **indestructible!** A state or a nation is a multitude of indestructible individualities, and cannot, by any possibility, be converted into any thing else! The horrid consequences of these monstrous and abortive attempts to overcome simple truth and nature, are displayed on every page of the world's melancholy history. - Josiah Warren, [Equitable Commerce](#)

Sovereignty of the Individual

To Warren, the fact of human individuality implies the necessity for sovereignty of the individual. "The true basis for society ... is **freedom** to differ in all things, or the **sovereignty of every individual.**" He points out that liberty, rather than forcing us to differ, on the contrary gives us a chance to take advantage when our interests coincide. It also allows experimentation, so that the best and most harmonious means can be discovered. "The **sovereignty of the individual** will be found on trial to be indispensable to harmony in every step of social reorganization, and when this is violated or infringed, then that harmony will be sure to be disturbed."

The state does not recognize the principle of individuality, with disastrous consequences.

Individuality was not recognized as the absolute right of every person, and was not known as the great principle of order and harmony. *Diversity could only beget enmity where conformity was demanded! ...*

How evidently the system had risen *above* the man! The idea of the absolute inviolability of every person must lead and predominate in any movement, or it will proceed in confusion and end in despair. - Josiah Warren, [Equitable Commerce](#)

As we will see, Pierre Proudhon says basically the same thing with his famous phrase, "Liberty, not the daughter, but the mother of order."

Warren emphasizes what would later be called "methodological individualism" by Max Weber and Ludwig von Mises.

If we would have a prosperous state, it must result from the prosperity of the individuals who compose the state. Where every individual is rich, the state will be rich. Where every individual is secure in his person and property, the nation, or state, is secure. Where every individual thrives, there will be a thriving state or nation. Where every individual should do justice, there justice would reign in the state or Nation. Where every Individual should be free, there would be a free state or a free nation. The liberty, freedom, or sovereignty of a state or Nation, must consist of the sovereignty of the individuals who compose the state or Nation. ...

There can be no FREE state or Nation, where every Individual lives UNDER, instead of ABOVE, the customs, laws, and institutions of the state or Nation!! - Josiah Warren, [Equitable Commerce](#)

Security of Person and Property

Warren observes that the rationalization for states has been the protection of person and property. Like Burke, he sees the abject failure of states to accomplish this end.

They never have, never *will* accomplish this professed object; although they have had all the world at their control for thousands of years, they have brought it to a worse condition than that in which they found it, in spite of the immense improvements in mechanism, division of labor, and other elements of civilization to aid them. On the contrary, under the plausible pretext of *securing person and property*, they have spread wholesale destruction, famine, and wretchedness, in every frightful form over all parts of the earth, where peace and security might otherwise have prevailed. They have shed more blood, committed more murders, tortures, and other frightful crimes in the struggles against each other *for the privilege of governing*, than society ever would or could have suffered in the total absence of all governments whatever! - Josiah Warren, [Equitable Commerce](#)

Warren concludes: "Rulers claim a right to rise above and control the individual, his labor, his trade, his time, and his property, against his own judgment and inclination, while security of person and property **cannot consist in anything less than having the supreme government of himself and all his own interests**; therefore, security cannot exist under any government whatever."

Anticipating Spencer's Law of Equal Freedom, Warren asserts that recognizing individual sovereignty will bring "the greatest practicable amount of liberty to each individual."

Practically, this often means simply avoiding "combinations" when at all possible, and carefully delimiting the power of associations when it is expedient or necessary to combine.

As an example of a permissible combination, Warren supposes that twenty people may see a need to build a bridge. There will be costs, and leadership is necessary. Warren suggests that the participants should be allowed to opt out with their portion of the costs returned to them, or that each person voluntarily but permanently invest a specific amount with the full understanding of the risk. Since the investment is a certain specified amount, only property is surrendered, not liberty. As each person's cost is definite and limited, even if it is ultimately lost it does not affect his security. "If each one is himself the supreme judge at all times of the individual case in hand, and is free to act from his own individual estimate of the advantages to be derived to himself or others, as in the above instance, then the natural liberty of the individual is not invaded."

Warren's Economics

In some ways, Warren's economic theory is fine. He accepts and celebrates the advantages of the division of labor, calling it "the richest mine of wealth ever worked by man." He clearly realizes how it helps create wealth and improves the standard of living. He also realizes that exchange is advantageous and necessary to the process.

After asking why so many people are poor, despite "the enormous advantages of division and exchange," he comes to an erroneous answer. Warren believes that virtually all economic problems stem from selling products for more than their cost. He expresses this economic principle as "Cost the Limit of Price," and bases it on a normative version of the Labor Theory of Value. Thus, Warren can justifiably be considered the father of socialist economics. (Not the father of *socialism*, since Robert Owen was already espousing non-economic arguments for the ideology.)

While Warren was sophisticated enough to worry about equalizing supply and demand, he somehow expected people to engage in occupations and produce amounts of goods and services without what Friedrich Hayek would later refer to as *the information function of price*. While modern economists would find Warren's economics naive, to say the least, one must realize that he lived before the marginalist revolution, and even Adam Smith and David Ricardo fell for the Labor Theory of Value. At any rate, Warren's facile economics need not detract from his political theories. No doubt to Warren the economic and political theories were complementary, but with our 20-20 hindsight we can separate them.

Warren's advocacy of labor notes as the only just circulation medium is similarly flawed, though we can agree with the political point that monetary experimentation should not be prevented by the state. While Warren was moderately successful using labor-time denominated notes for his "Time Store," Robert Owen failed in a similar but larger experiment in England. Why? Just as we would expect - supply and demand didn't match up. Owen's store accumulated unwanted items and fell short of demanded items, just as any modern economist would predict.

Believing that collecting non-labor profit was vice, Warren opposed interest on loans and rent from land. Although Warren could have made a fortune from selling a 99-year lease on land in what became downtown Cincinnati, he declined to take a profit and gave up the lease. It should be noted that Warren recognized the *right* to profit from "usury," but hoped that people would voluntarily limit prices to "true cost," i.e. the labor expended on production. This sets him apart from the (mostly European) socialists who would confiscate such profits or dispossess capitalists. Warren was a "peaceful revolutionist" and like later American labor-value individualist anarchists, expected his system to out-compete proprietarian capitalism.

It is important to clear up terminology here. While labor-value individualist anarchists like Warren tended to call themselves "socialist" and their system "socialism," these terms did not have the same meaning as today. In the early 19th century, socialism meant nothing more than having a normative plan or idea of how society should be. Later in the 19th century, "socialism" meant opposition to concentration of capital in the hands of a few state-privileged persons. Today, of course, socialism means something quite different - collective ownership of the means of production (capital). Thus, in modern terms, Warren and the classic American individualist anarchists were *not* socialist, but rather mutualist. Similarly, capitalism meant concentrated state-favored ownership in the 19th century, rather than private ownership of the means of production as it does today. Thus, while the classic individualist anarchist claimed to be against capitalism, in modern terms they supported most aspects of capitalism. In reading 19th century tracts, one must keep these terminological differences constantly in mind.

Warren's economic system came to be known as "mutualism." Mutualism might be considered a hybrid of socialism and capitalism. Like socialism (in the modern sense) it opposes usury - profiting from the labor of others or non-labor means such as the ownership of land. Like capitalism, it opposes collective ownership and supports private property. For natural (non-labor produced) property, mutualism supports possession conventions rather than sticky (Lockean) property conventions.

The French Connection

Meanwhile in France, a young student with a flair for contrarianism wrote a scathing critique of decreed property. In "[What Is Property?](#)" (1841), Pierre Proudhon's answer was "property is robbery." On the surface, this bold claim is contradictory, but what he really means is that property *as defined and decreed by the state* amounts to robbery, and that property not based on use and possession is unjust. His terminology can be confusing to unwary readers, since he *does* support unequivocally the type of property he dubbed "possession." Furthermore, he also supports sticky property for the products of labor. Thus, to understand his argument, one must realize that when he writes "property" he really means (in modern terminology) *decreed* or *traditional* property. When one realizes that France in Proudhon's time was still suffering under the vestiges of feudalism, his antipathy for "property" is quite understandable. Later in his career, Proudhon switched to more standard terminology and, demonstrating a greater understanding of the issue, came out in support of sticky property.

"Property in its modern form, which appears to be founded, in defiance of any notion of right and good sense, on a double absolutism, may in fact be considered as a triumph of Liberty. For it is born of Liberty, not, as it may first appear, against right, but through the operation of a better understanding of right.

... There is a corollary to this principle that property is the only power that can act as a counterweight to the State, because it shows no reverence for princes, rebels against society and is, in short, anarchist. The corollary is that property, an absolutism within an absolutism, is also an element of division within the State. State power is the kind of power that absorbs everything else into it. If it is allowed to take its own way, all individuality will quickly disappear, swallowed up by the collectivity, and society will sink into communism. Property, on the contrary, is a decentralising force. Being itself an absolute, it is anti despotic and anti-unitary. Property is the basis of any system of federation. This is why property, which is by its nature autocratic, automatically becomes democratic when it forms part of an ordered political society." - Pierre Proudhon, [System of Economic Contradictions, or The Philosophy of Poverty](#)

Elsewhere Proudhon was more succinct, writing "Property is liberty."

Proudhon's use of irony and "contradiction" in his writings, while perhaps stylish in his day, make his writings opaque to modern readers, and probably to readers of his day. Thus, there are two interpretations of his political thought. Socialists claim Proudhon as one of their own, and that he opposed property, except in some limited sense. Propertarians point to his assertion that property is liberty and a bulwark against the state, and see Proudhon as an individualist. At any rate, Proudhon was ambiguous enough so that he is claimed by both collectivists and individualists as one of their own.

Proudhon was quite clear that association *for its own sake* was to be avoided; he was an ardent anti-communist. He is generally considered the founder of anarchist mutualism, though this is a mistake since Josiah Warren got there first. But there's no doubt that Proudhon was a brilliant theorist, and did more to popularize mutualism than Warren or anyone else in his time. His work was responsible for igniting the anarchist movement, which soon spread from Europe to the rest of the world. Warren's work would perhaps have been relegated to obscurity had not Proudhon brought anarchism to the forefront of radical thought. Proudhon was the first writer to actually call himself an anarchist; before Proudhon "anarchist" was a term of derision. Proudhon's usage changed the meaning of "anarchism" from *chaos and anomy* to a *radical philosophy of liberty*.



Pierre Proudhon (1809-1865)

The idea of spontaneous order (or more accurately *emergent order*) was worked out by Proudhon. His motto "Liberty, not the daughter, but the mother of order" was used by Benjamin Tucker on the masthead of his anarchist periodical "Liberty."

Proudhon's economics was basically the same as Josiah Warren's. It held that labor was the only proper source of wealth or justification for property, and assumed the Labor Theory of Value in a normative sense. Proudhon, unlike Warren, emphasized the idea of federation, and was generally less averse to associations. Proudhon, like Warren, advocated the use of debt notes denominated in labor time for monetary purposes. While Warren started small and proved the viability of these notes at least on a local level, Proudhon had grander schemes of a national "mutual bank," and never successfully implemented his idea. Ironically for a self-labelled anarchist, Proudhon sought to use the French state as a source of startup capital.

Being working-class himself, a printer by profession, Proudhon tried to appeal to the working people and the proletarian mystique. In his day, "socialism" (so-called) was young and not yet dominated by statist. Proudhon and Karl Marx, friendly early on, soon parted ways due to the incompatibility of Proudhon's anti-state and anti-authoritarian core and Marx's proposed capture and use of state power to achieve socialism. This anarchist versus authoritarian socialism schism would continue for half a century, with Bakunin succeeding Proudhon as the libertarian champion.

Proudhon was rather unique among anarchists, in that he was culturally conservative. He opposed equality for women, and was reputedly something of a misogynist. He was very nationalistic about France, and an ardent anti-Semitic. For these and other reasons, the ideological leadership of the anarchist movement in Europe soon changed to the Russian Michael Bakunin, though Proudhon remained the well-respected "godfather" of European anarchism.

Proudhon's anarchist legacy gets mixed marks. Although a great proselytizer, his proclivity for socialist *class war* notions and his catering to vulgar proletarianism has, in hindsight, given anarchism a bad name. To this day, many associate anarchism with braindead anti-capitalism rather than principled anti-statism. But to be fair, the blame for this should probably fall on his followers and later socialists who appeal to his name rather than Proudhon himself.

The Economistes

While Proudhon had the anarchist insight that the state was unnecessary and oppressive, he lacked the economic insight that property was both natural and necessary. In effect, he looked at quasi-feudal property arrangements and threw the baby out with the bathwater, rejecting all property (at least in his early formulations.) However, there were contemporaries of Proudhon who were much wiser in this regard. They were the laissez faire economists, the intellectual descendants of the physiocrats Richard Cantillon, Francois Quesnay, and Jean-Baptiste Say. This group collaborated in the Paris *Societe des Economistes*, and included Frederick Bastiat, Charles Dunoyer, and Gustave de Molinari. Probably all of these *economistes* except Molinari were minarchist rather than anarchist. They were, like Henry David Thoreau, evolutionary quasi-anarchists, in that they saw the need for government withering away as people and society advanced.

There can be no question about the implicit anarchism of Comte's and Dunoyer's liberalism. Dunoyer, for example, thought that in the future the state would merely be an appendage of the market and would gradually wither and die as the market expanded. Perfection would be reached when "everyone works and no one governs," and "the maintenance of public safety would no longer demand the intervention of a permanent, special force, the government to this extent disappears." A colleague and fellow liberal, Augustin Thierry, echoed Dunoyer's sentiments when he wrote that "it was in losing their powers that the actions of governments [have] ameliorate[d]" and that, if given a choice between an oppressive state apparatus and "anarchy," he believed that "the excesses of the police are far more fatal than the absence of the police." In Comte's words: "the less [government] makes itself felt, the more the people prosper."

The anarchism of Comte and Dunoyer was dependent on their view of the evolution of societies. Like Molinari, they believed that "as we become more civilized, there is less need for police and courts." - David M. Hart, [Gustave de Molinari and the Anti-Statist Liberal Tradition](#)

These ardent anti-statist liberals are of great interest to anarchists, since their analysis does not depend on a monopoly government. On the contrary, virtually everything they have to say can be applied to voluntary security arrangements in a stateless society. One simply has to interpret the word "government" in the broader Jeffersonian/Nockian sense as an association for the protection of rights, rather than in the more common sense of coercive monopoly, i.e. the state. Also, one may have to forgive appeals to the deity in justifying natural law; rationalistic justifications based on empiricism or contractarianism are more convincing to the modern mind, and could easily be substituted.

The economists improved on anarcho-socialist thought in two ways. As already mentioned, they had a more sophisticated understanding of property. Secondly, they had a much better understanding of law, legal systems, and the production of security. Most anarcho-socialists tended to see all law as decreed law, analogous to their seeing all property as decreed property. Hence, they rejected law lock, stock, and barrel, and considered it an artificial imposition on man. The economists saw law as perfectly reasonable and natural constraints on conduct necessary for harmonious human interaction. Thus, it was an essential part of natural society. They saw decreed law as a violation of natural law in many cases, of course, but didn't reject law *per se*.

The law perverted! And the police powers of the state perverted along with it! The law, I say, not only turned from its proper purpose but made to follow an entirely contrary purpose! The law become the weapon of every kind of greed! Instead of checking crime, the law itself guilty of the evils it is supposed to punish! If this is true, it is a serious fact, and moral duty requires me to call the attention of my fellow-citizens to it. - Frederic Bastiat, [The Law](#)

Frederic Bastiat (1801-1850) pointed out that law and property preceeded the state, and explained in simple economic terms why property is necessary.

By the application of our faculties to these natural resources we convert them into products, and use them. This process is necessary in order that life may run its appointed course. Life, faculties, production - in other words, individuality, liberty, property - this is man. And in spite of the cunning of artful political leaders, these three gifts from God precede all human legislation, and are superior to it. Life, liberty, and property do not exist because men have made laws. On the contrary, it was the fact that life, liberty, and property existed beforehand that caused men to make laws in the first place. - Frederic Bastiat, [The Law](#)

Observing that people can generally defend their rights more efficiently by associating for mutual aid, Bastiat defined law as collective organization of the individual right of self-defense. He had his own formulation of the Law of Equal Freedom.

Force has been given to us to defend our own individual rights. Who will dare to say that force has been given to us to destroy the equal rights of our brothers? Since no individual acting separately can lawfully use force to destroy the rights of others, does it not logically follow that the same principle also applies to the common force that is nothing more than the organized combination of the individual forces? If this is true, then nothing can be more evident than this: The law is the organization of the natural right of lawful defense. It is the substitution of a common force for individual forces. And this common force is to do only what the individual forces have a natural and lawful right to do: to protect persons, liberties, and properties; to maintain the right of each, and to cause justice to reign over us all. - Frederic Bastiat, [The Law](#)

Bastiat wholeheartedly condemned statist law as a perversion of law. He also explains the motivations and incentives causing this perversion. This can be construed as an economic or psychological institutional analysis of state. This seems quite modern, anticipating the Public Choice school ("greed") and criticisms of well-meaning social engineering ("false philanthropy") so prominent a century later.

The law has been used to destroy its own objective: It has been applied to annihilating the justice that it was supposed to maintain; to limiting and destroying rights which its real purpose was to respect. The law has placed the collective force at the disposal of the unscrupulous who wish, without risk, to exploit the person, liberty, and property of others. It has converted plunder into a right, in order to protect plunder. And it has converted lawful defense into a crime, in order to punish lawful defense. How has this perversion of the law been accomplished? And what have been the results? The law has been perverted by the influence of two entirely different causes: stupid greed and false philanthropy. - Frederic Bastiat, [The Law](#)

Anti-statist theoreticians often used historical scenarios to illustrate the conflict theory of the (origin of the) state. This was to counter the Lockian social contract theory, which is superficially elegant but never ever actually occurred. Thus, Willhelm von Humboldt and others explained the origin of the state as a result of banditry upon land-bound agricultural communities. At some point, the bandit gangs realized that plunder could be increased by periodic looting and allowing the villagers to live, as opposed to a one-time killing and pillaging. Thus, the state is explained as sustainable spoliation. Bastiat takes an economist's approach, pointing out the incentives involved.

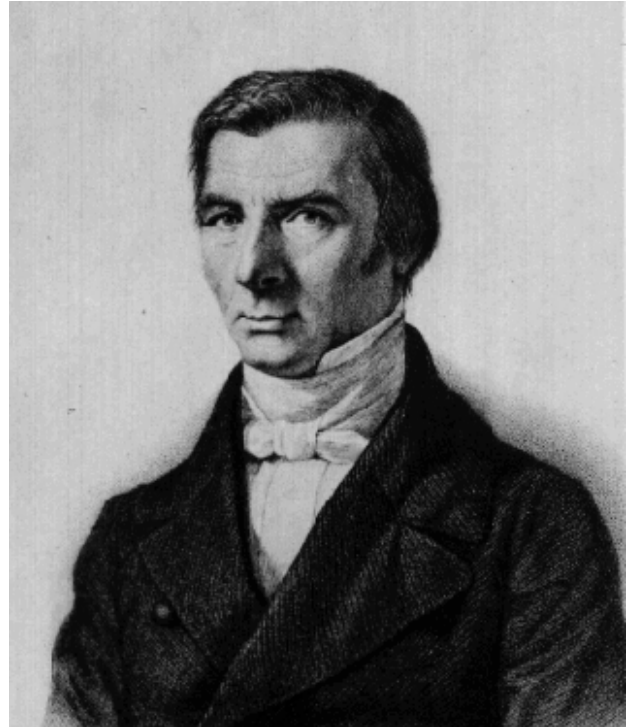
Man can live and satisfy his wants only by ceaseless labor; by the ceaseless application of his faculties to natural resources. This process is the origin of property. But it is also true that a man may live and satisfy his wants by seizing and consuming the products of the labor of others. This process is the origin of plunder. Now since man is naturally inclined to avoid pain - and since labor is pain in itself - it follows that men will resort to plunder whenever plunder is easier than work. History shows this quite clearly. And under these conditions, neither religion nor morality can stop it. When, then, does plunder stop? It stops when it becomes more painful and more dangerous than labor. It is evident, then, that the proper purpose of law is to use the power of its collective force to stop this fatal tendency to plunder instead of to work. ...

Thus, when plunder is organized by law for the profit of those who make the law, all the plundered classes try somehow to enter - by peaceful or revolutionary means - into the making of laws. According to their degree of enlightenment, these plundered classes may propose one of two entirely different purposes when they attempt to attain political power: Either they may wish to stop lawful plunder, or they may wish to share in it. Woe to the nation when this latter purpose prevails among the mass victims of lawful plunder when they, in turn, seize the power to make laws! - Frederic Bastiat, [The Law](#)

So we see that Bastiat, in effect, defines the state as the organization of lawful plunder. Franz Oppenheimer, a century later, formalized this definition in his book [The State](#). Bastiat observes that there are three basic choices when faced with this problem of state: either the few can rob the many, everyone rob everyone, or nobody rob anybody. Obviously, he favors the latter solution. Bastiat tells how to recognize legal plunder, and gives some examples.

But how is this legal plunder to be identified? Quite simple. See if the law takes from some persons what belongs to them, and gives it to other persons to whom it does not belong. See if the law benefits one citizen at the expense of another by doing what the citizen himself cannot do without committing a crime. Then abolish this law without delay, for it is not only an evil itself, but also it is a fertile source for further evils because it invites reprisals. ...

Now, legal plunder can be committed in an infinite number of ways. Thus we have an infinite number of plans for organizing it: tariffs, protection, benefits, subsidies, encouragements, progressive taxation, public schools, guaranteed jobs, guaranteed profits, minimum wages, a right to relief, a right to the tools of labor, free credit, and so on, and so on. All these plans as a whole - with their common aim of legal plunder - constitute [statist] socialism. - Frederic Bastiat, [The Law](#)



The bottom line is that the state is incompatible with justice, something with which Bastiat's debate opponent Proudhon would no doubt agree. Thus the minarchist Bastiat expresses a profound anarchist truth.

When justice is organized by law - that is, by force - this excludes the idea of using law (force) to organize any human activity whatever, whether it be labor, charity, agriculture, commerce, industry, education, art, or religion. The organizing by law of any one of these would inevitably destroy the essential organization - justice. For truly, how can we imagine force being used against the liberty of citizens without it also being used against justice, and thus acting against its proper purpose? - Frederic Bastiat, [The Law](#)

Unfortunately, Bastiat died before his student and protege Gustave de Molinari presented his seminal anarcho-capitalist paper, [The Production of Security](#), to the *Societe des Economistes*. We'll never know if that would have pushed Bastiat into the anarchist camp. We do know that the other members of the society resisted Molinari's anarchist thesis. Yet Molinari was simply following the logic of laissez faire - if monopoly was bad for all other goods and services, then it was bad for the production of security.

Gustave de Molinari (1819-1912) starts with the observations of his mentor, and the laissez faire school in general, about society. These same observations about "natural society" have been made by virtually all anarchists, and indeed virtually all classical liberals.

Man experiences a multitude of needs, on whose satisfaction his happiness depends, and whose non-satisfaction entails suffering. Alone and isolated, he could only provide in an incomplete, insufficient manner for these incessant needs. The instinct of sociability brings him together with similar persons, and drives him into communication with them. Therefore, impelled by the self-interest of the individuals thus brought together, a certain division of labor is established, necessarily followed by exchanges. In brief, we see an organization emerge, by means of which man can more completely satisfy his needs than he could living in isolation.

This natural organization is called society. - Gustave de Molinari, [The Production of Security](#)

But there is a pressing need "which plays an immense role in the history of humanity, namely the need for security." Molinari then defines government in the broad Jeffersonian/Nockian sense: an "establishment whose object is to guarantee to everyone the peaceful possession of his person and his goods."

He goes on to state the "well-established truth in political economy," that monopolies are not in the interest of consumers. Thus he reached the radical conclusion that shook his fellow economists: "*That no government should have the right to prevent another government from going into competition with it, or to require consumers of security to come exclusively to it for this commodity.*"



In the remainder of his paper, Molinari goes on to argue that government is no exception to the well-established natural law regarding monopoly. Furthermore, the only alternatives to competition among security services are monopoly and [statist] communism, i.e. common ownership. But this latter amounts to a disguised form of monopoly.

Molinari opines that the reason people resist a free market in security is that they believe that society is essentially artificial rather than natural. Thus they think that it is necessary to have legislation and authority to modify, remake, and mold society. This authority either takes the form of rulers and kings, or the form of Rousseau's mythical *general will* of the nation. According to Molinari, this belief in the general will is the essence of communism.

If there is no unanimity, if there is still dissension after the debate, the majority is in the right, since it comprises the larger number of reasonable individuals. (These individuals are, of course, assumed to be equal, otherwise the whole structure collapses.) Consequently, they insist that the decisions of the majority must become law, and that the minority is obliged to submit to it, even if it is contrary to its most deeply rooted convictions and injures its most precious interests.

That is the theory; but, in practice, does the authority of the decision of the majority really have this irresistible, absolute character as assumed? - Gustave de Molinari, [The Production of Security](#)

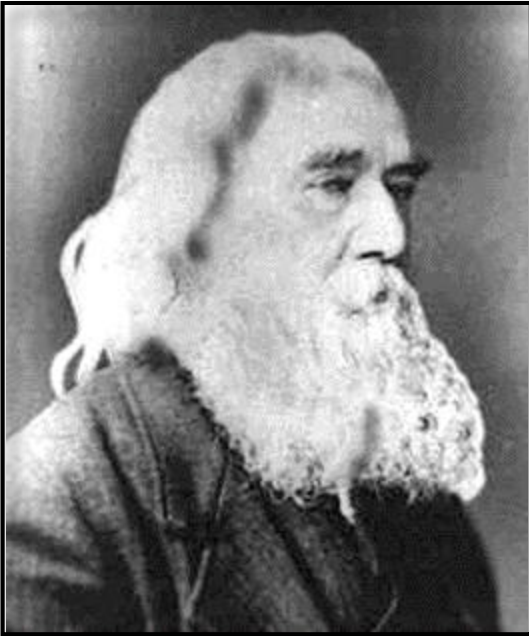
Molinari answers 'no' of course, and concludes that "the moral foundation of authority is neither as solid nor as wide, under a regime of monopoly or of communism, as it could be under a regime of liberty." Finally, Molinari gives some advantages to competing protection agencies, and how it might function.

Under the rule of free competition, war between the producers of security entirely loses its justification. Why would they make war? To conquer consumers? But the consumers would not allow themselves to be conquered. They would be careful not to allow themselves to be protected by men who would unscrupulously attack the persons and property of their rivals. If some audacious conqueror tried to become dictator, they would immediately call to their aid all the free consumers menaced by this aggression, and they would treat him as he deserved. Just as war is the natural consequence of monopoly, peace is the natural consequence of liberty.

Under a regime of liberty, the natural organization of the security industry would not be different from that of other industries. In small districts a single entrepreneur could suffice. This entrepreneur might leave his business to his son, or sell it to another entrepreneur. In larger districts, one company by itself would bring together enough resources adequately to carry on this important and difficult business. If it were well managed, this company could easily last, and security would last with it. - Gustave de Molinari, [The Production of Security](#)

Molinari has thus solved the utopianism problem of the anti-law anarchists. Rather than just *wish away* aggressive conduct by some individuals, Molinari takes the bull by the horns and shows how the lack of perfection in humanity can be handled while maintaining a free society. He is the first anarcho-capitalist, though his ideas would not be well-known for another century. In the second half of the 20th century, people like Murray Rothbard and David Friedman would take up where Molinari left off.

Lysander Spooner



Lysander Spooner, like Josiah Warren, was one of those American geniuses who developed his thought pretty much independently of others. It was only later in life that he developed close associations with other anarchists, such as Benjamin Tucker, William B. Greene, and other "Boston anarchists." In the classical liberal tradition of Locke, Jefferson, and Paine, Spooner championed natural law as the basis for his political theories.

Spooner was one of those rare persons who became more and more radical as he got older. In his younger days, he was a minarchist, and putting emphasis on the US Constitution and its precedents, the Magna Carta and Common Law. Since he was trained as a lawyer, this is not surprising. However, even in his constitutionist youth, his ultimate appeal was to natural law. Thus, he interpreted the Constitution as a man-made (and therefore flawed) attempt to describe natural law, and rejected the parts of the Constitution that violated this law. The very term "law," according to Spooner, referred not to man-made, decreed, or legislated law, but to higher natural law.

What then is LAW? That law, I mean, which, and which only, judicial tribunals are morally bound, under all circumstances, to declare and sustain? In answering this question, I shall attempt to show that law is an intelligible principle of right, necessarily resulting from the nature of man; and not an arbitrary rule, that can be established by mere will, numbers or power. To determine whether this proposition be correct, we must look at the general signification of the term law.

The true and general meaning of it, is that natural, permanent, unalterable principle, which governs any particular thing or class of things. The principle is strictly a natural one; and the term applies to every natural principle, whether mental, moral or physical. Thus we speak of the laws of mind; meaning thereby those natural, universal and necessary principles, according to which mind acts, or by which it is governed. We speak too of the moral law; which is merely an universal principle of moral obligation, that arises out of the nature of men, and their relations to each other, and to other things and is consequently as unalterable at the nature of men. And it is solely because it is unalterable in its nature, and universal in its application, that it is denominated law. If it were changeable, partial or arbitrary, it would be no law. - Lysander Spooner, [The Unconstitutionality of Slavery](#) (1845, 1860)

Spooner, like Warren, was an activist. He challenged the US Postal Service monopoly by starting his own mail company, forcing the postage rates down but eventually having to go out of business due to continuous legal harassment. Spooner is probably most famous for his

abolitionist activities. He not only offered free legal services to fugitive slaves and those who assisted them, but wrote what was considered the definitive legal analysis: [The Unconstitutionality of Slavery](#). This paper was extremely controversial even among his fellow abolitionists. William Lloyd Garrison's position was that the Constitution condoned slavery, calling it "a covenant with death and an agreement with hell." Garrison, more anarchist than Spooner at this time, favored secession by northern states so as to avoid having to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act. To Garrison, one should not support a state which endorses and enforces slavery. In later years, Spooner would come around to the pure anarchist position that constitutions were merely statist excuses for engaging in "legalized" crime.

The practical difficulty with our government has been, that most of those who have administered it, have taken it for granted that the Constitution, as it is written, was a thing of no importance; that it neither said what it meant, nor meant what it said; that it was gotten up by swindlers, (as many of its authors doubtless were,) who said a great many good things, which they did not mean, and meant a great many bad things, which they dared not say; that these men, under the false pretence of a government resting on the consent of the whole people, designed to entrap them into a government of a part; who should be powerful and fraudulent enough to cheat the weaker portion out of all the good things that were said, but not meant, and subject them to all the bad things that were meant, but not said. ...

The result - and a natural one - has been that we have had governments, State and national, devoted to nearly every grade and species of crime that governments have ever practised upon their victims; and these crimes have culminated in a war that has cost a million of lives; a war carried on, upon one side, for chattel slavery, and on the other for political slavery; upon neither for liberty, justice, or truth. - Lysander Spooner, [No Treason](#) (1867-1870)

With admirable integrity and consistency, Spooner criticized both the Civil War and reconstruction, unlike most of his abolitionist colleagues who opportunistically supported the war. He saw both anti-slavery and pro-secessionism as based on the same principle - sovereignty of the individual. He was a scathing abolitionist critic of the Republican party.

The man, who, like the Republican party, consents to the existence of slavery, so long as the slaves are but kept out of his sight, is at heart a tyrant and a brute. And if, at the same time, like the more conspicuous members of that party, he makes loud professions of devotion to liberty and humanity, he thereby just as loudly proclaims himself a hypocrite. And those Republican politicians, who, instead of insisting upon the liberation of the slaves, maintain, under the name of State Rights, the inviolability of the slaveholder's right of property in his slaves, in the States, and yet claim to be friends of liberty, because they cry, "Keep the slaves where they are;" "No removal of them into the Territories;" "Bring them not into our neighborhood," - are either smitten with stupidity, as with a disease, or, what is more probable, are nothing else than selfish, cowardly, hypocritical, and unprincipled men, who, for the sake of gaining or retaining power, are simply making a useless noise about nothing, with the purpose of diverting men's minds from the true issue, and of thus postponing the inevitable contest, which every honest and brave man ought to be ready and eager to meet at

once. - Lysander Spooner, [Address of the Free Constitutionalists to the People of the United States](#) (1860).

After the Civil War Spooner started associating with Josiah Warren, Benjamin Tucker and other individualist anarchists, and became a frequent contributor to Tucker's magazine "Liberty." His libertarian classics were serialized, and he elaborated on his philosophy in the grandly titled [Natural Law; or The Science of Justice: A Treatise on Natural Law, Natural Justice, Natural Rights, Natural Liberty, and Natural Society; Showing That All Legislation Whatsoever Is An Absurdity, A Usurpation, and A Crime. Part First.](#)(1882). Unfortunately, he never completed this project. Nevertheless, it is perhaps the best theoretical treatment of natural rights anarchist philosophy from the 19th century. This masterful work begins with a simple description of what natural rights are - so different from the straw man Platonic caricature so often put forth by modern utilitarians.

The science of mine and thine - the science of justice - is the science of all human rights; of all a man's rights of person and property; of all his rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

It is the science which alone can tell any man what he can, and cannot, do; what he can, and cannot, have; what he can, and cannot, say, without infringing the rights of any other person.

It is the science of peace; and the only science of peace; since it is the science which alone can tell us on what conditions mankind can live in peace, or ought to live in peace, with each other.

These conditions are simply these: viz., first, that each man shall do, towards every other, all that justice requires him to do; as, for example, that he shall pay his debts, that he shall return borrowed or stolen property to its owner, and that he shall make reparation for any injury he may have done to the person or property of another.

The second condition is, that each man shall abstain from doing to another, anything which justice forbids him to do; as, for example, that he shall abstain from committing theft, robbery, arson, murder, or any other crime against the person or property of another.

So long as these conditions are fulfilled, men are at peace, and ought to remain at peace, with each other. But when either of these conditions is violated, men are at war. And they must necessarily remain at war until justice is re-established. -

Lysander Spooner, [Natural Law](#)

Often in literature, writers have pointed out the similarity between banditry and statism. In [Common Sense](#) Thomas Paine famously wrote of "William the Conqueror ... a French bastard landing with an armed banditti, and establishing himself king of England against the consent of the natives." St. Augustine cites Alexander the Great's conversation with a captured pirate. Alexander says, "How dare you molest the sea?" The pirate answers, "How dare you molest the whole world? I have a small boat, so I am called a thief and a pirate. You have a navy, so you're

called an emperor." Lysander's formulation of this is eloquent and memorable, and perhaps his most quoted passage.

The fact is that the government, like a highwayman, says to a man: 'Your money, or your life.' And many, if not most, taxes are paid under the compulsion of that threat. The government does not, indeed, waylay a man in a lonely place, spring upon him from the roadside, and, holding a pistol to his head, proceed to rifle his pockets. But the robbery is none the less a robbery on that account; and it is far more dastardly and shameful. The highwayman takes solely upon himself the responsibility, danger, and crime of his own act. He does not pretend that he has any rightful claim to your money, or that he intends to use it for your own benefit. He does not pretend to be anything but a robber. He has not acquired impudence enough to profess to be merely a 'protector,' and that he takes men's money against their will, merely to enable him to 'protect' those infatuated travellers, who feel perfectly able to protect themselves, or do not appreciate his peculiar system of protection. He is too sensible a man to make such professions as these. Furthermore, having taken your money, he leaves you, as you wish him to do. He does not persist in following you on the road, against your will; assuming to be your rightful 'sovereign,' on account of the 'protection' he affords you. He does not keep 'protecting' you, by commanding you to bow down and serve him; by requiring you to do this, and forbidding you to do that; by robbing you of more money as often as he finds it for his interest or pleasure to do so; and by branding you as a rebel, a traitor, and an enemy to your country, and shooting you down without mercy, if you dispute his authority, or resist his demands. He is too much of a gentleman to be guilty of such impostures, and insults, and villanies as these. In short, he does not, in addition to robbing you, attempt to make you either his dupe or his slave. - Lysander Spooner, [No Treason: The Constitution of no Authority](#)

Lysander Spooner's economics were weak by today's standards, but not nearly so bad as the economics of Warren, Proudhon, and Tucker. Spooner did not oppose employment ("wage labor"), interest, or rent like these other individualist anarchists. He clearly realized that historical circumstances put laborers in a very bad position, and the state kept them there by the monopolies and privileges it bestowed on the elite, but he never condemned usury *per se*, and even wrote favorably of it. For example, in [Poverty: Its Illegal Causes, and Legal Cure](#) (1846), he came out in opposition to all state restrictions on interest. He saw these restrictions as discrimination against the poor, limiting credit to the wealthy.

Some commentators have misunderstood Spooner's position on employment ("wage labor"), and even gone so far as to take his writings out of context, claiming that he opposed it. In context, however, it is quite clear that he supports the right to employ or be employed. He *does* decry the historical processes of the past and statist monopolies on capital and land prevalent in his time, conditions which put workers in dire circumstances. To Spooner, free market capitalism is the solution; he wanted the workers to free themselves by out-doing the statist capitalists.

Where Spooner went wrong is in his misunderstanding of monetary economics. He thought

that, *ceterus paribus*, increasing the money supply would reduce interest to zero. Also, his understanding of prices, and the role of price, was naive. Even in his own time, his mistakes were aptly demonstrated by more economically literate libertarians, e.g. Edward Stanwood's article in "Liberty" entitled [Mr. Spooner's Island Community](#) .

Politically, Lysander Spooner's ideology was virtually identical to modern anarcho-capitalism; however his pre-marginalist economics background prevented him from reaching the same economic understanding.

In another of his later writings, Spooner discusses an important ethical distinction - the difference between *violation of another's rights* and *personal morality*. In [Vices Are Not Crimes: A Vindication of Moral Liberty](#) (1875), he argues that while the use of retaliatory or rectificatory force may be justified when someone harms the person or property of another, force is not justified if someone is simply harming himself or his own property. This piece can be considered an elaboration and application of John Stuart Mill's thesis in [On Liberty](#): "That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant." Spooner makes this same point in his logical and legalistic language, and applies it to several examples, in particular temperence and alcohol prohibition. Spooners introduction encapsulates his case.

Vices are those acts by which a man harms himself or his property.

Crimes are those acts by which one man harms the person or property of another.

Vices are simply the errors which a man makes in his search after his own happiness. Unlike crimes, they imply no malice toward others, and no interference with their persons or property.

In vices, the very essence of crime - that is, the design to injure the person or property of another - is wanting.

It is a maxim of the law that there can be no crime without a criminal intent; that is, without the intent to invade the person or property of another. But no one ever practises a vice with any such criminal intent. He practises his vice for his own happiness solely, and not from any malice toward others.

Unless this clear distinction between vices and crimes be made and recognized by the laws, there can be on earth no such thing as individual right, liberty, or property; no such things as the right of one man to the control of his own person and property, and the corresponding and coequal rights of another man to the control of his own person and property.

For a government to declare a vice to be a crime, and to punish it as such, is an attempt to falsify the very nature of things. It is as absurd as it would be to declare truth to be falsehood, or falsehood truth. - Lysander Spooner, [Vices Are Not Crimes](#)

The younger group of individualist anarchists, notably Benjamin Tucker, eventually rejected natural rights as the basis for anarchism in favor of Max Stirner's egoism. Unfortunately, by basing their case on expediency rather than a transcendent idea of justice, they sowed the seeds for the decline of anarchism in the early 20th century. Expediency amounted to a slow but inevitable betrayal of anarchism; for any given issue, it may be expedient to resort to statism and authority. To make a cogent case against the state, one must have a firm position *outside and independent* of the state - one must appeal to a higher law. It would take nearly a century for natural rights to again become "respectable," reasserted in the writings of minarchist Ayn Rand and championed by the "father" of modern anarcho-capitalism, Murray Rothbard.

Michael Bakunin

Meanwhile in Europe, a revolutionary meets Marx and Proudhon and creates a new type of anarchism. Like Warren and Proudhon, Bakunin held the normative labor-value dogma, but his critique of state is articulate and blistering enough to warm the hearts of anarchists everywhere. Like Spooner, Bakunin was a freethinker. Bakunin rejected God as an affront to human dignity and liberty.

If God is, he is necessarily the eternal, supreme, absolute master, and, if such a master exists, man is a slave; now, if he is a slave, neither justice, nor equality, nor fraternity, nor prosperity are possible for him. In vain, flying in the face of good sense and all the teachings of history, do they represent their God as animated by the tenderest love of human liberty: a master, whoever he may be and however liberal he may desire to show himself, remains none the less always a master. His existence necessarily implies the slavery of all that is beneath him. Therefore, if God existed, only in one way could he serve human liberty - by ceasing to exist.

A jealous lover of human liberty, and deeming it the absolute condition of all that we admire and respect in humanity, I reverse the phrase of Voltaire, and say that, if God really existed, it would be necessary to abolish him. - Michael Bakunin, [God and the State](#) (1871)

Also like Spooner, Bakunin recognized the existence of natural law. He defines liberty as the recognition of these laws by an uncoerced mind.

In his relation to natural laws but one liberty is possible to man - that of recognizing and applying them on an ever-extending scale in conformity with the object of collective and individual emancipation or humanization which he pursues. These laws, once recognized, exercise an authority which is never disputed by the mass of men. ...

The liberty of man consists solely in this: that he obeys natural laws because he has himself recognized them as such, and not because they have been externally imposed upon him by any extrinsic will whatever, divine or human, collective or individual. - Michael Bakunin, [God and the State](#)

Also like the other anarchists we have seen, Bakunin holds the conquest theory of the state, as opposed to the contract theory of Rousseau, Locke, and most statist liberals. Like Spooner, he sees the state as the tool of a minority elite enslaving the masses. Bakunin emphasizes the unholy collusion of church and state, and points out that the particular form of state does not alter its essence of privilege by aggression.

The State is an evil but a historically necessary evil, as necessary in the past as its complete extinction will be necessary sooner or later, just as necessary as primitive bestiality and theological divinations were necessary in the past. The State is not society; it is only one of its its historical forms, as brutal as it is abstract in character. Historically, it arose in all countries out of the marriage of violence, rapine, and pillage - in a word, of war and conquest - with the Gods created in succession by the theological fancies of the nations. From its very beginning it has been - and still remains - the divine sanction of brutal force and triumphant iniquity. Even in the most democratic countries, like the United States of America and Switzerland, it is simply the consecration of the privileges of some minority and the actual enslavement of the vast majority. - Michael Bakunin, [The Immorality of the State](#)

Perhaps Bakunin's main claim to fame is his role as Marx's arch-nemesis. Both Bakunin and Marx were extreme socialists, i.e. against private property, employment ("wage labor"), and (like their inspiration, Pierre Proudhon) the belief that equality of opportunity and economic condition were compatible with and necessary for liberty. But Marx's socialism was authoritarian; not only did Marx contend that a "dictatorship of the proletariat" was necessary, but he also asserted a necessity for party discipline and uniformity. Bakunin ridiculed the notion that a state could be a transition to statelessness, and warned that if such a dictatorship were ever achieved, it would be just as bad as, and maybe worse, than any other state.



They maintain that only a dictatorship - their dictatorship, of course - can create the will of the people, while our answer to this is: No dictatorship can have any other aim but that of self-perpetuation, and it can beget only slavery in the people tolerating it; freedom can be created only by freedom, that is, by a universal rebellion on the part of the people and free organization of the toiling masses from the bottom up. ...

But according to Mr. Marx, the people not only should not abolish the State, but, on the contrary, they must strengthen and enlarge it, and turn it over to the full disposition of their benefactors, guardians, and teachers - the leaders of the Communist party, meaning Mr. Marx and his friends - who will then liberate them in their own way. They will concentrate all administrative power in their own strong hands, because the ignorant people are in need of a strong guardianship; and they will create a central state bank, which will also control all the commerce, industry, agriculture, and even science. The mass of the people will be divided into two armies, the agricultural and the industrial, under the direct command of the state engineers, who will constitute the new privileged political-scientific class. - Michael Bakunin, [Critique of the Marxist Theory of the State](#) (Statism and Anarchy)

In retrospect, looking at what happened in the Soviet Union, Cuba, South Korea, and virtually every place else Marxism was tried, we see that Bakunin was right and quite prescient. Marx was dead wrong about his authoritarian state creating a "new man" and "withering away."

A strong State can have only one solid foundation: military and bureaucratic centralization. The fundamental difference between a monarchy and even the most democratic republic is that in the monarchy, the bureaucrats oppress and rob the people for the benefit of the privileged in the name of the King, and to fill their own coffers; while in the republic the people are robbed and oppressed in the same way for the benefit of the same classes, in the name of "the will of the people" (and to fill the coffers of the democratic bureaucrats). In the republic, the State, which is supposed to be the people, legally organized, stifles and will continue to stifle the real people. But the people will feel no better if the stick with which they are being beaten is labeled "the people's stick." - Michael Bakunin, [Some Preconditions for a Social Revolution](#) (Statism and Anarchy)

That last line is an anarchist gem - the ultimate put-down of statist communism.

The most succinct statement of Bakunin's philosophy is the Revolutionary Catechism written in 1866. Most of the essential anarchist themes are present: autonomy of the individual, the right to opt out of any association, and the primacy of man's rights are lucidly presented.

II. Replacing the cult of God by respect and love of humanity, we proclaim human reason as the only criterion of truth; human conscience as the basis of justice; individual and collective freedom as the only source of order in society.

III. Freedom is the absolute right of every adult man and woman to seek no other sanction for their acts than their own conscience and their own reason, being responsible first to themselves and then to the society which they have voluntarily accepted.

IV. It is not true that the freedom of one man is limited by that of other men. Man is really free to the extent that his freedom, fully acknowledged and mirrored by the free consent of his fellowmen, finds confirmation and expansion in their liberty. Man is truly free only among equally free men; the slavery of even one human being violates humanity and negates the freedom of all.

V. The freedom of each is therefore realizable only in the equality of all. The realization of freedom through equality, in principle and in fact, is justice.

VI. If there is one fundamental principle of human morality. it is freedom. To respect the freedom of your fellowman is duty; to love, help, and serve him is virtue.

VII. Absolute rejection of every authority including that which sacrifices freedom for the convenience of the state. Primitive society had no conception of freedom; and as society evolved, before the full awakening of human rationality and freedom, it passed through a stage controlled by human and divine authority. The political and

economic structure of society must now be reorganized on the basis of freedom. Henceforth, order in society must result from the greatest possible realization of individual liberty, as well as of liberty on all levels of social organization.

VIII. The political and economic organization of social life must not, as at present, be directed from the summit to the base --the center to the circumference--imposing unity through forced centralization. On the contrary, it must be reorganized to issue from the base to the summit--from the circumference to the center--according to the principles of free association and federation.

IX. Political organization. It is impossible to determine a concrete, universal, and obligatory norm for the internal development and political organization of every nation. The life of each nation is subordinated to a plethora of different historical, geographical, and economic conditions, making it impossible to establish a model of organization equally valid for all. ... However, without certain absolutely essential conditions the practical realization of freedom will be forever impossible.

These conditions are:

A. The abolition of all state religions and all privileged churches, including those partially maintained or supported by state subsidies. Absolute liberty of every religion to build temples to their gods, and to pay and support their priests.

B. The churches considered as religious / corporations must never enjoy the same political rights accorded to the productive associations; nor can they be entrusted with the education of children; for they exist merely to negate morality and liberty and to profit from the lucrative practice of witchcraft.

C. Abolition of monarchy; establishment of a commonwealth.

D. Abolition of classes, ranks, and privileges; absolute equality of political rights for all men and women; universal suffrage. [Not in the state, but in the units of the new society. Note by Max Nettlau]

E. Abolition, dissolution, and moral, political, and economic dismantling of the all-pervasive, regimented, centralized State, the alter ego of the Church, and as such, the permanent cause of the impoverishment, brutalization, and enslavement of the multitude. This naturally entails the following: Abolition of all state universities: public education must be administered only by the communes and free associations. Abolition of the state judiciary: all judges must be elected by the people. Abolition of all criminal, civil, and legal codes now administered in Europe: because the code of liberty can be created only by liberty itself. Abolition of banks and all other institutions of state credit. Abolition of all centralized administration, of the bureaucracy, of all permanent armies and state police.

F. Immediate direct election of all judicial and civil functionaries as well as representatives (national, provincial, and communal delegates) by the universal suffrage of both sexes.

G. The internal reorganization of each country on the basis of the absolute freedom of individuals, of the productive associations, and of the communes. Necessity of recognizing the right of secession: every individual, every association, every commune, every region, every nation has the absolute right to self-determination, to associate or not to associate, to ally themselves with whomever they wish and repudiate their alliances without regard to so-called historic rights [rights consecrated by legal precedent] or the convenience of their neighbors.

H. Individual rights. The right of every man and woman, from birth to adulthood, to complete upkeep, clothes, food, shelter, care, guidance, education (public schools, primary, secondary, higher education, artistic, industrial, and scientific), all at the expense of society.

Overall a very good platform, but there are a couple of questionable points. It would appear that point B is incompatible with anarchism, as coercion seems to be implied. However, maybe Bakunin intended some non-aggressive means for preventing churches from offering educational services, such as boycott and moral suasion.

Point H is a rather blatant inconsistency. The weakness of socialist anarchism becomes apparent - the glaring contradiction between liberty and equality (of conditions or result). How can people enjoy self-ownership, unqualified disposition of their persons and property, and at the same time others be guaranteed benefits of food, guidance, education, etc. at the expense of others. There seem to be only two possibilities: Either man must be coerced, or there must occur a fundamental change in the nature of man, or at least a sufficient number. Apparently Bakunin made this latter utopian assumption - one of the fatal errors of classical anarchism mentioned in the introduction. Realistically, people are not so pliable as to be molded by the wishful thinking of utopians. As for the other possibility of some people getting plundered to provide the benefits, we let Frederic Bastiat tell why this is mistaken.

The second half of your program will destroy the first. In fact, it is impossible for me to separate the word fraternity [or equality] from the word voluntary. I cannot possibly understand how fraternity can be legally enforced without liberty being legally destroyed, and thus justice being legally trampled underfoot. ...

He is struck by the spectacle of the inequality that he sees. He deplores the deprivations which are the lot of so many of our brothers, deprivations which appear to be even sadder when contrasted with luxury and wealth. ... Since all persons seek well-being and perfection, would not a condition of justice be sufficient to cause the greatest efforts toward progress, and the greatest possible equality that is compatible with individual responsibility? Would not this be in accord with the concept of individual responsibility ... that mankind may have the choice between vice and virtue, and the resulting punishment and reward? But the politician [or socialist] never gives this a thought. His mind turns to organizations, combinations, and arrangements - legal or apparently legal. He attempts to remedy the evil by increasing and perpetuating the very thing that caused the evil in the first place: legal plunder. - Frederic Bastiat, [The Law](#)

In short, it would take a state to force some people to supply the "rights" (properly: benefits) referred to in point H. As Ayn Rand said, "There is no such thing as the right to enslave."

Bakunin is usually given some blame for the terroristic violence which occurred in the late 1800s and early 1900s. He wrote in [Letters to a Frenchman on the Present Crisis](#) that "we must spread our principles, not with words but with deeds, for this is the most popular, the most potent, and the most irresistible form of propaganda." Thus, while Bakunin was an eloquent critic of the state, his economics was crude and his support for "propaganda of the deed" (terrorism) probably did more harm than good for anarchism as a movement.

Bakunin is the originator of collectivist anarchism and revolutionary anarchism. While the previous anarchists we've examined have favored an evolutionary approach, with means such as education and moral suasion and building freedom through creation of parallel structures, Bakunin believed that violent and sudden revolution could create a free society. The Russian Revolution would discredit that notion; that and other experiences demonstrate quite convincingly that people, after a revolution, will act according to their experience and simply set up another state. After the Russian Revolution, the Reds simply killed the bothersome anarchists and blithely set up their dictatorship.

This does not mean that a revolution can never work, but it indicates that, unless enough people have rejected the paradigm of statism and are able to self-govern, it is unlikely to have the desired result of statelessness. And if people *have* rejected the legitimacy of state and are already utilizing voluntary alternatives, violent revolution is unnecessary. The state has already withered away without major violence, by people "merely willing to be free" as la Boétie put it - and letting it topple on its own.





The Prince and the Christian

Peter Kropotkin was a prince in the Czarist regime, well-schooled and privileged, who became a soldier and later a geologist. His keen intellect made him an outstanding scientist; he made breakthrough discoveries in Asian geology, and contributions to the theory of evolution. However, in the area of political theory, he contributed little more than a polemic of agitation. He did repeat the critique of state that theorists from Burke to Bakunin had elucidated. Like other anarchists, he could savage the state, and the various futile attempts to limit the state.

America is just the country that shows how all the written guarantees in the world for freedom are no protection against tyranny and oppression of the worst kind. There the politician has come to be looked upon as the very scum of society. - Peter Kropotkin

Like other anti-statists, such as Jefferson before him and Albert Jay Nock after him, Kropotkin differentiated between "government" and "state."

The State idea means something quite different from the idea of government. It not only includes the existence of a power situated above society, but also of a territorial concentration as well as the concentration in the hands of a few of many functions in the life of societies. It implies some new relationships between members of society which did not exist before the formation of the State. A whole mechanism of legislation and of policing has to be developed in order to subject some classes to the domination of others. This distinction, which at first sight might not be obvious, emerges especially when one studies the origins of the State.

- Peter Kropotkin, [The State: Its Historic Role](#)

Kropotkin's account of the origin of the state was basically the same as the conquest theories we've already covered. His revolutionary theory is also unoriginal - largely warmed-over Bakunite revolution-worship. His naive faith that the flow of rich people's blood will somehow, magically, make everything okay and lead to a stateless society of equality and material plenty was even more utopian than Bakunin. His belief that if the educated privileged would only intermingle with poor people, and "organize" the inferior masses in some vague unspecified way, then a free society would materialize, gives an impression of elitist altruism mixed with mysticism.

The question "What is to be done?" is naturally put.

The answer is easy.

Leave this environment in which you are placed and where it is the fashion to say that the people are nothing but a lot of brutes; come among these people - and the answer will come of itself.

You will see that everywhere, in England as well as in France, in Germany as well as in Italy, in Russia as well as in the United States, everywhere where there is a privileged and an oppressed class, there is a tremendous work going on in the midst of the working class, whose object is to break down forever the slavery enforced by the capitalist feudality and to lay the foundation of a society established on the basis of justice and equality. It is no longer enough for the man of the people today to pour forth his complaints in one of those songs whose melody breaks your heart, such as were sung by the serfs of the eleventh century, and are still sung by the Slav peasant; he labors with his fellow toilers for the enfranchisement, with the knowledge of what he is doing, and against every obstacle put in his way.

His thoughts are constantly exercised in considering what should be done in order that life, instead of being a curse for three-fourths of mankind, may be a real enjoyment for all. He takes up the hardest problems of sociology and tries to solve them by his good sense, his spirit of observation, his hard experience. In order to come to an understanding with others as miserable as himself, he seeks to form groups, to organize. He forms societies, maintained with difficulty by small contributions; he tries to make terms with his fellows beyond the frontier; and he prepares the days when wars between peoples shall be impossible, far better than the frothy philanthropists who now potter with the fad of universal peace. In order to know what his brothers are doing, to have a closer connection with them, to elaborate his ideas and pass them around, he maintains - but at the price of what privations, what ceaseless efforts! - his working press. At length, when the hour has come, he rises, reddening the pavements and the barricades with his blood, he bounds forward to conquer those liberties which the rich and powerful will afterward know how to corrupt and to turn against him again. - Peter Kropotkin, [An Appeal to the Young](#) (1880)

It is unfortunate that Kropotkin's intellectual descendants, the anarcho-communists, rejected the strongest part of Bakunin's analysis, the anti-statism, and emphasized the weakest part, poor economics and self-immolating altruism in the name of "humanity." Kropotkin stressed this altruism, writing extensively about "mutual aid," but interpreted it as a negative-sum game. In other words, he saw mutual aid as non-profit selfless altruism; he seemed to have no clue about the insight of the individual anarchists - that social interaction could be a win-win situation. The modern notion of free markets, and trade being beneficial *ex ante* to both parties in a transaction, while understood by Warren, Spooner, and Tucker, were not acknowledged by Prince Kropotkin.

Kropotkin was one of the originators of the mistaken notion that anarchism opposes *social hierarchies* of all types, rather than only imposed, coercive hierarchies. This rejection of voluntary leadership and natural hierarchies is an example of social utopianism.

That is why Anarchy, when it works to destroy authority in all its aspects, when it demands the abrogation of laws and the abolition of the mechanism that serves to impose them, when it refuses all hierarchical organization and preaches free agreement ♦ at the same time strives to maintain and enlarge the precious kernel of social customs without which no human or animal society can exist. - Peter Kropotkin, [Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Ideal](#) (1896)

Another idiosyncrasy of Kropotkin was his idealization of the mir - the russian peasant village society. In this regard, he anticipated the late 20th century anarcho-primitivists. While Kropotkin was so conservative and reactionary as to want to return to pre-feudal agrarianism, primitivists want to go back even farther - to hunter-gatherer days. These anarcho-primitivists apparently don't know (or don't care) that the objective conditions for the hunter-gatherer lifestyle required human populations to be as sparse as the bear population. To return to such a society would require the elimination of over 98% of humanity. While this could happen by nuclear or biological apocalypse, this does not seem a reasonable basis for social activism!



Leo Tolstoy was the first Christian anarchist. He was an aristocrat, born into a family of Czarist Russian nobility, who became a famous novelist. His fictional masterpieces were War and Peace and Anna Karenina.

He is noted for his pacifism as well as his anarchism. His most notable pacifist-anarchist work is [The Kingdom of God is Within You](#). Although there were quasi-anarchist pacifists which preceded him, such as Anne Hutchinson in the 1600s and the Non-Resisters of the early 1800s, Tolstoy was the first known full-fledged anarchist in this Christian tradition.

Tolstoy was a supporter of geoism, and kept a photo of Henry George on his desk. His description of the state was apt: "Government is an association of men who do violence to the rest of us," he wrote. He had a novelist's gift of phrase.

I sit on a man's back, choking him and making him carry me, and yet assure myself and others that I am very sorry for him and wish to ease his lot by all possible means - except by getting off his back. - Leo Tolstoy, War and Peace Leo Tolstoy

He had a huge influence on Mahatma Gandhi, so his legacy goes on. To this day, Tolstoy is popular among adherents of non-violence and Christian anti-war activists.

Men need only understand this, they need only cease to trouble themselves about the general external conditions in which they are not free, and devote one-hundredth part of the energy they waste on those material things to that in which they are free, to the recognition and realization of the truth which is before them, and to the liberation of themselves and others from deception and hypocrisy, and, without effort or conflict, there would be an end at once of the false organization of life which makes men miserable, and threatens them with worse calamities in the future. And then the kingdom of God would be realized, or at least that first stage of it for which men are ready now by the degree of development of their conscience. - Leo Tolstoy, [The Kingdom of God is Within You](#)

Tolstoy's pacifism (as opposed to non-aggression) and theism (most anarchists are free-thinkers if not outright atheists) are unusual in anarchist thought. Yet such ideas are certainly compatible with opposition to state. Furthermore, as Gandhi showed, non-violent resistance can be an effective means for social change.

Benjamin Tucker



Benjamin Tucker was a synthesizer and popularizer of individualist anarchist thought. He combined the American liberal anti-statism of Jefferson, Paine, and Thoreau, Warren's sovereignty of the individual, the natural law and libertarian logic of Spooner, the liberal minarchism of Herbert Spencer, the free banking of Proudhon and William B. Green and Spooner, and later the egoism Max Stirner. With such eclectic tastes, he was tolerant of other anarchist views, as he had to be as editor and publisher of the longest-running English-language anarchist periodical. Yet, he demanded logically consistent "plumb-line" anarchism; as Voltairine de Cleyre wrote, Tucker could "send his fine hard shafts among friends and foes with icy impartiality, hitting swift and cutting keen - and ever ready to nail a traitor."

Tucker became familiar with American individualist anarchism when he was a student at MIT in 1872, after Ezra Heywood introduced him to William B. Greene and Josiah Warren. He went on to translate Proudhon's [What is Property?](#) and Max Stirner's [The Ego and His Own](#) into English, and published articles by anarchists from all over the world in his periodical [Liberty](#). There were ongoing discussions of intellectual property, natural rights vs. egoism, and other theoretical issues, as well as reviews of anti-statist literature.

The purpose of Liberty, boiled down to its ultimate essence, is the abolition of authority. Liberty denies the authority of anybody's god to bind those who do not accept it through persuasion and natural selection. Liberty denies the authority of anybody's State to bind those who do not lend voluntary allegiance to it. Liberty denies the authority of anybody's 'public opinion', 'social custom', 'consensus of the competent', and every other fashionable or scholarly despot, to step between the individual and his free option in all things. - Benjamin Tucker, "Liberty"

Liberty lasted for 27 years, from 1881 to 1908, when Tucker's print shop tragically burned down. He published authors ranging from Herbert Spencer and Auberon Herbert, to George Bernard Shaw and Frederick Nietzsche, in addition to articles by his cohorts Victor Yarros, Lysander Spooner and William B. Greene. A list of his contributors is a who's who of anarchism of the time. Tucker explained what anarchism was and was not, rejecting the legal utopian view that protection agencies and laws were unnecessary. In this important sense, he agreed with Molinari and those who would later be called anarcho-capitalists.

Anarchism means no government, but it does not mean no laws and no coercion. This may seem paradoxical, but the paradox vanishes when the Anarchist definition of government is kept in view. Anarchists oppose government, not because they disbelieve in punishment of crime and resistance to aggression, but because they disbelieve in compulsory protection. Protection and taxation without consent is itself invasion; hence Anarchism favors a system of voluntary taxation and protection. - Benjamin Tucker, "Liberty"

In a later essay, [State Socialism and Anarchism: How Far They Agree, And Wherein They Differ](#), he gave his definition of anarchism: "The doctrine that all the affairs of men should be managed by individuals or voluntary associations, and that the State should be abolished." Tucker held Warren's *cost the limit of price* version of the labor theory of value. That is, he opposed "usury," by which he meant interest on loans, rent on land and houses, and profit from the labor of others. But he was ardently free market, and upheld the right of contract. Thus, while he opposed usury as a vice (in Spoonerian terms), it was not a crime. No one should "invade" voluntary employment, rent-taking, or interest-taking; the individual right to contract should not be violated. This contrasted with the European anarcho-socialist revolutionary types, who generally favored expropriation. Tucker decried and denounced the violence and terrorism of "propaganda by the deed," which permeated the anarcho-socialist mindset of the time. Except in extreme circumstances, such as in Czarist Russia, he considered such violence both immoral and counter-productive.

Like Bakunin, Tucker opposed state socialism. Tucker called his own anarchist philosophy "scientific anarchism," and considered it to be a form of socialism. However, he used an outdated definition of socialism; by the modern definition (socialism as collective ownership of the means of production) he was *not* socialist. On the contrary, he was pro-capitalist - if you take capitalism to mean an economic system permitting private ownership of the means of production.

As far as we know, Warren and Spooner never called themselves socialist. Both supported private ownership of the means of production. Warren used "cost is the limit of price" economics, but Spooner did not. Spooner supported interest, land ownership, and employment, so he was basically an anarcho-capitalist. Some web pages are misleading on this, quoting Spooner out of context.* Virtually all anarcho-capitalists prefer individual entrepreneurship to employment - this preference does not make someone anti-capitalist or socialist. Nor does someone claiming that "labor shall be put in possession of its own" (Tucker's notion of socialism) make one a socialist in the modern sense - anarcho-capitalists would totally agree. The issue is not whether one has a right to the fruits of their labor, but whether one has the right to sell this "fruit" in advance.

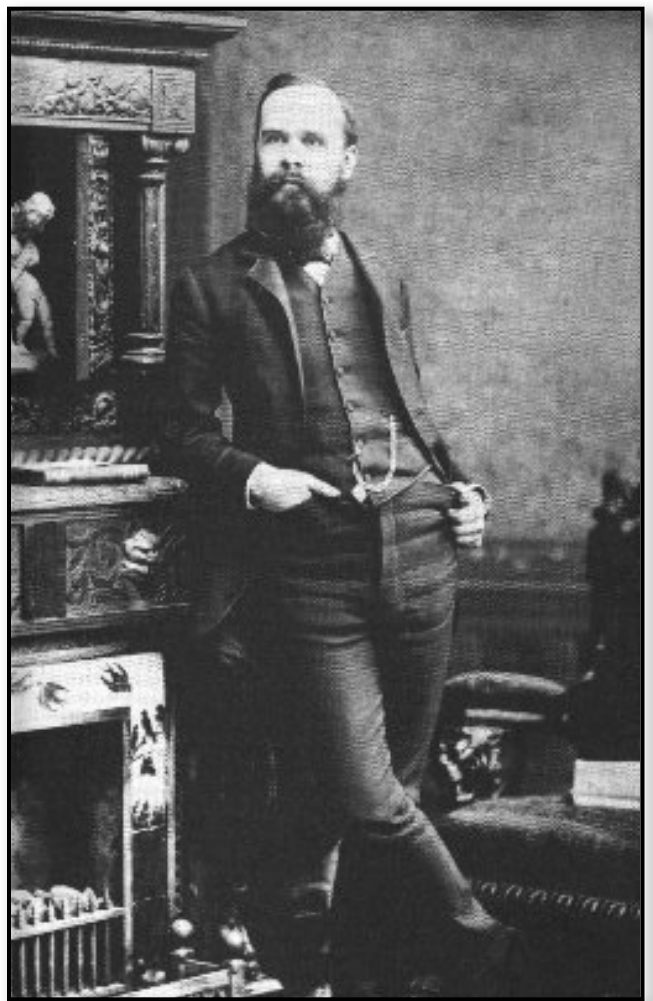
Of course, those who define capitalism and socialism differently will come to their own conclusions. Perhaps Tucker's system, with some aspects of socialism (labor theory of value) and some aspects of capitalism (pro private property and pro free market) would best be called propertarian (or individualist) mutualism.

It is not competition, but monopoly, that deprives labor of its product. Wages, inheritance, gifts, and gambling aside, every process by which we acquire wealth, rests upon a monopoly, a prohibition, a denial of liberty. Interest and rent of buildings rest on the banking monopoly, the prohibition of competition in finance, the denial of the liberty to issue currency; ground rent rests on the land monopoly, the denial of the liberty to use vacant land; profits in excess of wages rest upon the tariff and patent monopolies, the prohibition or limitation of competition in the industries and arts. -

[Benjamin Tucker, Why I Am An Anarchist](#) (1892)

Other than the treatment of unused land, Tucker's economics works out in practice to the same thing as anarcho-capitalism. Whether a free market would result in zero or positive interest rates is academic. Anarcho-capitalism is essentially Spooner/Tucker anarchism updated with modern marginalist economic theory.

Tucker's theory of property did differ from Spooner's in one important regard: Tucker denied the validity of intellectual property. Tucker contended that, for something to be valid property, it had to be economically scarce. Scarcity, in this context, means exclusivity - that a good used by one person excluded it from being used in the same way at the same time by others. A bicycle or land can only be used by a limited number of people, so might be property. An idea, invention, novel or song could be used by many, at the same time, without restricting others' use, therefore it was not valid property. This *validity of IP* argument continues among anarcho-capitalists to this day.



Voltairine de Cleyre

Voltairine de Cleyre was a radical feminist, talented writer and speaker, and articulate anarchist, unfortunately little known because of her relatively short life. Emma Goldman called her, "the most gifted and brilliant anarchist woman America ever produced." She gave lectures and wrote essays on such topics as Sex Slavery (the ownership of husbands over their wives) and why They Who Marry Do Ill (advocating boycott of legal marriage), in addition to anarchist history and theory. De Cleyre based her anarchism on the anti-state liberal American tradition, with Thomas Paine and Henry David Thoreau as major inspirations. She was also strongly influenced by Mary Wollstonecraft and Clarence Darrow. Voltairine was a freethinker, and was even named after Voltaire, the famous French freethinker and writer.

Voltairine's could excoriate the state as eloquently as anyone. Her prose was devastating, her poetry sublime.

Majority rule is both impossible and undesirable; that any government, no matter what its forms, will be manipulated by a very small minority, as the development of the States and United States governments has strikingly proved; that candidates will loudly profess allegiance to platforms before elections, which as officials in power they will openly disregard, to do as they please; and that even if the majority will could be imposed, it would also be subversive of equal liberty, which may be best secured by leaving to the voluntary association of those interested in the management of matters of common concern, without coercion of the uninterested or the opposed. - Voltairine de Cleyre, [Anarchism & American Traditions](#)



De Cleyre was obviously quite realistic when it came to the incentives of politicians. She was quite aware also that constitutions were a sham, and no real restriction on the state in the long run. Like Jefferson, she saw clearly that the judiciary could interpret words on paper in any way they like, and as part of the state, had the power-grabbing incentive to do it.

And yet even in the very days of the prophets, even with their own consent, the first concession to this later tyranny was made. It was made when the Constitution was made; and the Constitution was made chiefly because of the demands of Commerce. Thus it was at the outset a merchant's machine, which the other interests of the country, the land and labor interests, even then foreboded would destroy their liberties. In vain their jealousy of its central power made enact the first twelve amendments. In vain they endeavored to set bounds over which the federal power dare not trench. In vain they enacted into general law the freedom of speech, of the press, of assemblage and petition. All of these things we see ridden roughshod upon every day, and have so seen with more or less intermission since the beginning of the nineteenth century. At this day, every police lieutenant considers himself, and rightly so, as more powerful than the General Law of the Union.

- Voltairine de Cleyre, [Anarchism & American Traditions](#)

She, along with other American anarchists, and contrary to most European-influenced anarchists who tended to be anti-propertarian, saw that a free market and propertarianism were profoundly anarchist.

Anarchism declares that private enterprise, whether individual or cooperative, is equal to all the undertakings of society. And it quotes the particular two instances, Education and Commerce, which the governments of the States and of the United States have undertaken to manage and regulate, as the very two which in operation have done more to destroy American freedom and equality, to warp and distort American tradition, to make of government a mighty engine of tyranny, than any other cause, save the unforeseen developments of Manufacture. - Voltairine de Cleyre, [Anarchism & American Traditions](#)

The main problem with the economy according to de Cleyre was size - things were too big, centralized, and bloated. In a free market, i.e. without government monopolies and intervention, she saw economies of scale largely disappearing. There would be more goods produced on a small scale and distributed locally. She anticipated the "small is beautiful" ideas of Leopold Kohr.

If, on the other hand, the tendency of invention to simplify, enabling the advantages of machinery to be combined with smaller aggregations of workers, shall also follow its own logic, the great manufacturing plants will break up, population will go after the fragments, and there will be seen not indeed the hard, self-sustaining, isolated pioneer communities of early America, but thousands of small communities stretching along the lines of transportation, each producing very largely for its own needs, able to rely upon itself, and therefore able to be independent. For the same rule holds good for societies as for individuals - those may be free who are able to make their own living. - Voltairine de Cleyre, [Anarchism & American Traditions](#)

Voltairine de Cleyre considered the main problems with America to be:

- state intervention in commerce
 - state-controlled education
 - military interventionism
 - growth of state debt and government offices
 - a failed judiciary
 - overly centralized and interdependent communities
- About the growing statism of the United States, her conclusion was devastating, and her explanation for the slide into authoritarianism incontrovertible.

And now, what has Anarchism to say to all this, this bankruptcy of republicanism, this modern empire that has grown up on the ruins of our early freedom? We say this, that the sin our fathers sinned was that they did not trust liberty wholly. They thought it possible to compromise between liberty and government, believing the latter to be "a necessary evil," and the moment the compromise was made, the whole misbegotten monster of our present tyranny began to grow. Instruments which are set up to safeguard rights become the very whip with which the free are struck. - Voltairine de Cleyre, [Anarchism & American Traditions](#)

De Cleyre was perhaps the first anarcha-feminist, intensely concerned with asserting full individual rights for woman. This was no doubt shocking at a time when women could not own property, and were legally chattel of their husbands. She wrote and lectured in support of Moses Harman, a hero of individualist feminism. Harman was imprisoned under the Comstock laws for publishing birth control information and discussing sexual issues in his anarchist periodical "Lucifer, the Light Bearer." Here is Voltairine's cutting commentary of the obscenity charges and Harman's tormentors.

He looked, this obscenist looked with clear eyes into this ill-got thing you call morality, sealed with the seal of marriage, and saw in it the consummation of immorality, impurity, and injustice. He beheld every married woman what she is, a bonded slave, who takes her master's name, her master's bread, her master's commands, and serves her master's passion; who passes through the ordeal of pregnancy and the throes of travail at his dictation, not at her desire; who can control no property, not even her own body, without his consent, and from whose straining arms the children she bears may be torn at his pleasure, or willed away while they are yet unborn. It is said the English language has a sweeter word than any other - home. But Moses Harman looked beneath the word and saw the fact - a prison more horrible than that where he is sitting now, whose corridors radiate over all the earth, and with so many cells, that none may count them.

Yes, our masters! The earth is a prison, the marriage-bed is a cell, women are the prisoners, and you are the keepers!

He saw, this corruptionist, how in those cells are perpetrated such outrages as are enough to make the cold sweat stand upon the forehead, and the nails clench, and the teeth set, and the lips grow white in agony and hatred. And he saw too how from those cells might none come forth to break her fetters, how no slave dare cry out, how all these murders are done quietly, beneath the shelter-shadow of home, and sanctified by the angelic benediction of a piece of paper, within the silence-shade of a marriage certificate, Adultery and Rape stalk freely and at ease. - Voltairine de Cleyre, [Sex Slavery](#)



Moses Harman - feminist hero

Initially de Cleyre sided with Tucker's individualists against the anti-propertarian anarchists. Contrasting herself with Emma Goldman, a communist anarchist who looked to Bakunin and Kropotkin as adepts, she wrote:

Miss Goldman is a communist; I am an individualist. She wishes to destroy the right of property, I wish to assert it. I make my war upon privilege and authority, whereby the right of property, the true right in that which is proper to the individual, is annihilated. She believes that co-operation would entirely supplant competition; I hold that competition in one form or another will always exist, and that it is highly desirable it should. But whether she or I be right, or both of us be wrong, of one thing I am sure; the spirit which animates Emma Goldman is the only one which will emancipate the slave from his slavery, the tyrant from his tyranny - the spirit which is willing to dare and suffer. - Voltairine de Cleyre, [In Defense Of Emma Goldman](#) (1894)

Note Voltairine's tolerance, even while she disagrees. Later in life, de Cleyre would become an "anarchist without adjectives," hoping to focus all anarchists on the core anti-statism, rather than getting caught up in the schisms of economic sectarianism.

Socialism and Communism both demand a degree of joint effort and administration which would beget more regulation than is wholly consistent with ideal Anarchism; Individualism and Mutualism, resting upon property, involve a development of the private policeman not at all compatible with my notion of freedom. ... I no longer label myself otherwise than as 'Anarchist' simply. - Voltairine de Cleyre, [The Making of an Anarchist](#)



Movements and Class Warfare

The terrorism of "propaganda of the deed" had a terrible backlash that almost obliterated anarchism for nearly half a century. In the United States, the assassination of McKinley and subsequent anarchist deportation laws, the popular hatred for "bomb-throwing anarchists," and antipathy for immigrants (who filled the ranks of violent socialist anarchist groups) led to Tucker's immigration to France and Emma Goldman's deportation to Russia. The anarchists, both individualist and socialist, had been effectively dispersed by 1920, and thoughtful proponents of anarchism became almost extinct.

There did remain some labor movements which called themselves anarchist. In Spain, there was the *Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo* (CNT); in the US there were the "Wobblies" - the International Workers of the World. But these were not authentic anarchist groups in the strict sense - they were socialist pro-labor groups with some anti-statist proclivities. They had Bakunite revolutionary anti-capitalist sentiment and stressed the class-war paradigm, but were weak on the fundamental principle of anarchism - opposition to the state. Indeed, these groups were not above using state power to achieve their ends, endorsing political candidates, and using Marxian means that Bakunin would have abhorred.

On the other hand, internally these organizations tended to favor "rank and file" bottom-up organization, and they were relatively less politically oriented than the more mainstream unions of the time. They were much more likely to engage in direct action rather than petition rulers. Thus, while these movements and groups could not be called anarchist, failing to satisfy the third anti-statist criteria in our definition, they could reasonably be considered quasi-anarchist.

The most prominent and popular movement was anarcho-syndicalism. Ardently anti-capitalist, they espoused the divisive collectivist class-war mythology, wherein individuals, by virtue of simply falling into a conceptual class, are deemed to have certain fixed interests. Such stereotyping is certainly not conducive to critical thinking, and it is questionable whether it is even good propaganda.



Anarcha-feminist Wendy McElroy analyzed the weakness class warfare analysis (in the context of gender feminism) as follows.

Class warfare: what is a class? A class is nothing more than an arbitrary grouping of people or things that share common characteristics that is useful to whoever is defining the category. For example, a researcher studying drug addiction might break his research subjects into classes of heroine-users and cocaine-users. A class can be defined by almost any shared characteristic: hair color, sexual orientation, deodorant use...

By contrast, radical feminism doesn't say that there are some issues on which men and women differ or should be approached differently. It says there is a fundamental class conflict based on gender. It says that men and women do not share the same basic human needs politically such as freedom of speech or the protection of private property. The two genders do not have the same political interests. This is like the doctor saying that the two sexes do not have the same biological needs. Thus, what many of us would consider to be a basic human right - such as freedom of speech - becomes a tool by which men oppress women. ...

The idea of class conflict is widely associated with Karl Marx, who popularized it. He said that people were either workers or capitalists. In short, he divided up humanity by looking at their relationship to the means of production and said that the two classes that resulted were inevitably and irresolvably at war. He made a further claim. The political interests of every worker were the same, just as the political interests of every capitalist were the same. And this was true whether or not any particular person or capitalist knew it to be the case.

Radical feminism consciously adapted this theory to produce "post-Marxist feminism." Gender - not your relationship to the means of production - became the sorting point by which humanity is divided into two classes with antagonistic political interests. The political interests of every woman are the same, just as the political interests of every man are the same. And this was true whether or not the individuals involved know it to be the case. Thus, radical feminists can level accusations of "rapist" at a man who has never harmed a woman - at a man who has protected a woman from attack - simply because he is male. As a male, he benefits from the "rape culture" - also known as patriarchy - because he shares the same political interest as all other men.

If this class analysis makes no sense to you - welcome to my world.

- Wendy McElroy, [Liberty for Women](#)



Wendy McElroy, a theorist and activist concerned with individualist feminism as opposed to classist "gender feminism," cites the great Austrian economist Ludwig von Mises in making a distinction between caste and class. A class is an arbitrary conceptual grouping, while a caste is a set of people enjoying special legal privileges, and often legal barriers to entry into the group. If there are legal statutes or policemen preventing the exercise of rights for some group, such as the right to contract, hold property, or engage in certain activities or occupations, then one may properly speak of a caste. If there are no such legal barriers, then speaking of "class interests" generally has little or no basis or coherent meaning.

In *The Free and Prosperous Commonwealth*, Mises defined a status society as one "constituted not of citizens with equal rights, but divided into ranks vest with different duties and prerogatives..."

It was under a caste system, not a class one, that necessary conflicts arose between legal categories of people who were accorded different privileges and disabilities. Thus, the phrase 'class warfare' is a mistaken one: it should be 'caste warfare'. Moreover, so-called 'class warfare' contains further confusion. For example, the phrase usually assumes that there is an "identity of interests among the members of the separate classes." Yet, as Mises explained in *The Free and Prosperous Commonwealth*, a common identity does not necessarily mean a common interests since individual members of a class will tend to give their own individual interests priority. Ironically, this may well lead to competition among 'class' members, rather than commonality. - Wendy McElroy, [Mises' Legacy to Feminism](#)

The Rebirth of Anarchism

From 1920 through the 50s anarchist philosophy was sparse. There were a few notable minarchists and quasi-anarchists, such as H. L. Menchen, Franz Oppenheimer, and Leopold Kohr. Albert Jay Nock was an "Old Right" anarchist, as was Frank Chodorov. And there was Robert LeFevre. The year 1943 heralded things to come. Three radical libertarian books, all by women, broke the fascist ice of the New Deal. These were [The God of the Machine](#) by Isabelle Patterson, [The Discovery of Freedom](#) by Rose Wilder Lane, and [The Fountainhead](#) by Ayn Rand. Suddenly libertarianism was no longer warmed over 19th century class struggle bromides. It was now, finally, expressed clearly as a free market, radical capitalist libertarianism. Americans rediscovered what Voltairine de Cleyre had told them half a century earlier - that libertarian capitalism and individual rights were an American tradition.

Does man have a right to exist for his own sake - or is he born in bondage, as an indentured servant who must keep buying his life by serving the tribe but can never acquire it free and clear?

This is the first question to answer. The rest is consequences and practical implementations. The basic issue is only: Is man free?

In mankind's history, capitalism is the only system that answers: Yes.

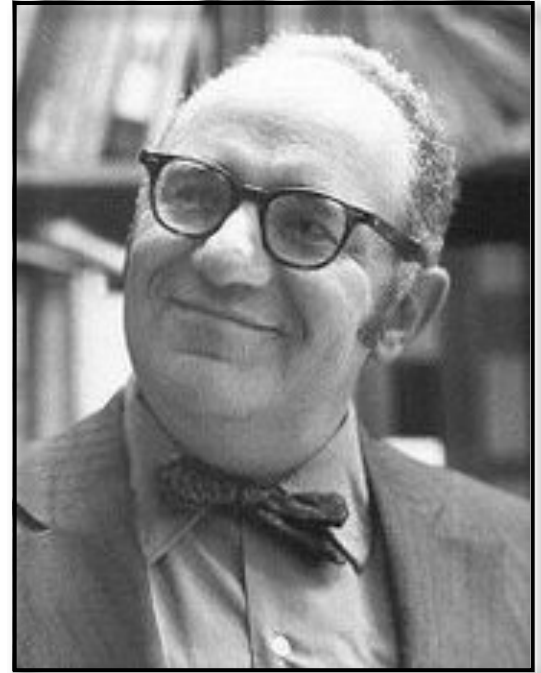
Capitalism is a social system based on the recognition of individual rights, including property rights, in which all property is privately owned.

The recognition of individual rights entails the banishment of physical force from human relationships: basically, rights can be violated only by means of force. In a capitalist society, no man or group may initiate the use of physical force against others. - Ayn Rand, [What is Capitalism?](#) Published 1965

Now capitalism was out in the sunshine - never again could reasonable people claim that liberty and capitalism were incompatible. On the contrary, "capitalism is the fullest expression of anarchism, and anarchism is the fullest expression of capitalism." (Rothbard)

Murray Rothbard

"Mr. Libertarian" Murray Rothbard (1926 - 1995) was trained in mathematics and economics at Columbia University in New York. Through the Foundation for Economic Education, he met Austrian economist Ludwig von Mises, and was particularly influenced by Mises book *Human Action*, published in 1949. Rothbard, immersed in laissez faire economics, soon came to realize that the logic led inevitably to anarchism. Like Molinari, he reasoned that, if monopoly was bad for every other good or service, then it was bad for the provision of protection services, i.e. government. Rothbard published his comprehensive economic tome, [Man, Economy, and State](#), in 1962.



Rothbard's anarchism, which he dubbed "anarcho-capitalism," took the anti-statism of the earlier American Individualist anarchists, but buttressed it with modern economics, thus eliminating its Achilles heel. No longer was scarcity wished away; no longer was money crankism to be part of anarchism. Austrian economic theory saw to that. No longer was the demagogic class warfare of *greedy capitalists versus exploited poor* used to bamboozle ignorant masses; if the notion of class was used at all, it was to denote *producers versus parasites*, with laborers and entrepreneurs and capitalists all part of the producing class. The parasites were the rulers, their flatterer and agent, and the corporations and special interests who bought favors.

On the free market, everyone earns according to his productive value in satisfying consumer desires. Under statist distribution, everyone earns in proportion to the amount he can plunder from the producers. - Murray N. Rothbard, [Man, Economy, and State](#)

Rothbard's definition of state was a combination of Weber's and Oppenheimer's. The state was a geographic monopoly of force, but also the organization of legalized plunder.

Briefly, the State is that organization in society which attempts to maintain a monopoly of the use of force and violence in a given territorial area; in particular, it is the only organization in society that obtains its revenue not by voluntary contribution or payment for services rendered but by coercion. - Murray N. Rothbard, [The Anatomy of the State](#)

Elaborating, he underlines the parasitic nature of the state. Like Bastiat, he notes that production was a prerequisite for statist spoliation.

The State, in the words of Oppenheimer, is the "organization of the political means"; it is the systematization of the predatory process over a given territory. For crime, at best, is sporadic and uncertain; the parasitism is ephemeral, and the coercive, parasitic lifeline may be cut off at any time by the resistance of the victims. The State provides a legal, orderly, systematic channel for the predation of private property; it renders certain, secure, and relatively "peaceful" the lifeline of the parasitic caste in society. Since production must always precede predation, the free market is anterior to the State. - Murray N. Rothbard, [The Anatomy of the State](#)

Rothbard ridiculed the notion that "we are the state." This was like saying the Jews in Nazi Germany who were murdered in concentration camps had *actually* committed suicide. Like anarchists before him, he rejected the contract theory of state in favor of the conquest theory. Rothbard's explanation of how states came to be is more general and plausible than Spooner's, but says basically the same thing.

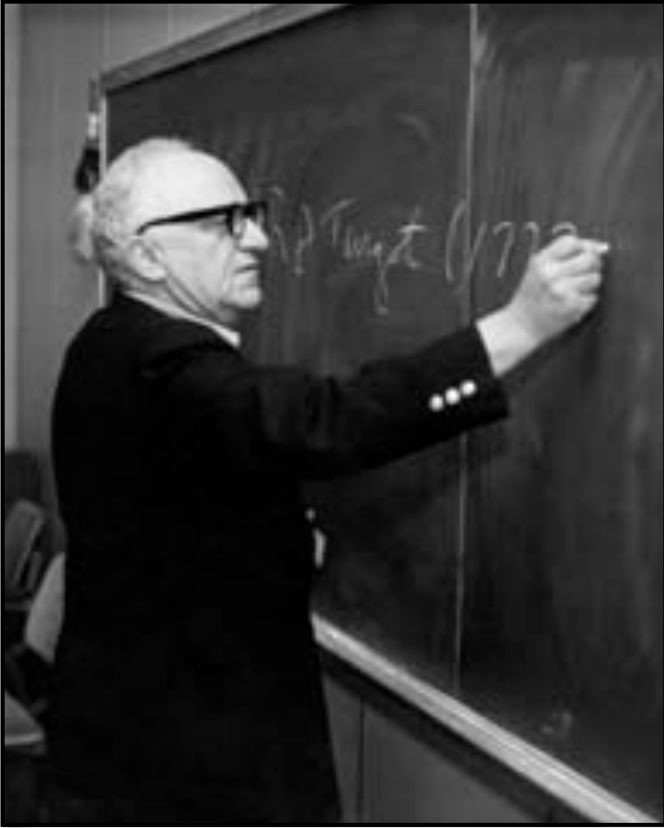


The State has never been created by a "social contract"; it has always been born in conquest and exploitation. The classic paradigm was a conquering tribe pausing in its time-honored method of looting and murdering a conquered tribe, to realize that the time-span of plunder would be longer and more secure, and the situation more pleasant, if the conquered tribe were allowed to live and produce, with the conquerors settling among them as rulers exacting a steady annual tribute. - Murray N. Rothbard, [The Anatomy of the State](#)

Like Spooner, Rothbard based his anarchism on natural rights - but not in any mystical or religious sense. Like the French economists had done a century earlier, and Ayn Rand had done in her novel *Atlas Shrugged*, Rothbard saw rights as coming from observable characteristics of homo sapiens and the nature of human action. This praxeological analysis of man argued that liberty was a necessary condition for his living and flourishing.

Man is born naked into the world, and needing to use his mind to learn how to take the resources given him by nature, and to transform them (for example, by investment in "capital") into shapes and forms and places where the resources can be used for the satisfaction of his wants and the advancement of his standard of living. The only way by which man can do this is by the use of his mind and energy to transform resources ("production") and to exchange these products for products created by others. Man has found that, through the process of voluntary, mutual exchange, the productivity and hence, the living standards of all participants in exchange may increase enormously. The only "natural" course for man to survive and to attain wealth, therefore, is by using his mind and energy to engage in the production-and-exchange process. He does this, first, by finding natural resources,

and then by transforming them (by "mixing his labor" with them, as Locke puts it), to make them his individual property, and then by exchanging this property for the similarly obtained property of others. The social path dictated by the requirements of man's nature, therefore, is the path of "property rights" and the "free market" of gift or exchange of such rights. - Murray N. Rothbard, [The Anatomy of the State](#)



Following la Boétie, Rothbard knew that, after the initial force establishing rule, states rely on the support of the majority of its subjects. He pointed out that this support "need not be active enthusiasm; it may well be passive resignation." This support was secured by vested economic interests. This included not only government functionaries, but in favored economic entities, such as the military industrial complex and various favored interests and corporations. The mystique of legitimacy was also maintained by ideology. While in the distant past this ideological indoctrination had been done by a cozy alliance of church and state, Rothbard saw that in modern times that function was served by "intellectual" opinion molders, doing what Noam Chomsky famously called "[Manufacturing Consent](#)."

Since it is precisely a molding of opinion that the State most desperately needs, the basis for age-old alliance between the State and the intellectuals becomes clear. It is evident that the State needs the intellectuals; it is not so evident why intellectuals need the State. Put simply, we may state that the intellectual's livelihood in the free market is never too secure; for the intellectual must depend on the values and choices of the masses of his fellow men, and it is precisely characteristic of the masses that they are generally uninterested in intellectual matters. The State, on the other hand, is willing to offer the intellectuals a secure and permanent berth in the State apparatus; and thus a secure income and the panoply of prestige. For the intellectuals will be handsomely rewarded for the important function they perform for the State rulers, of which group they now become a part. - Murray N. Rothbard, [The Anatomy of the State](#)

Arguments used by state intellectuals:

1. **The state rulers are great and wise** - divine right, scientific experts
2. **Rule by the extent government is inevitable, absolutely necessary**
3. **Instill fear** - criminality, terrorists, immorality, foreign invasion
4. **Identify the state with the territory it rules** - exploit natural love of community and homeland
5. **Tradition** - use longevity of rule to justify more rule, inevitable "social forces"
6. **Deprecate the individual and exalt the collectivity of society**
7. **Induce guilt** - service to state rather than "selfish greed"

Rothbard was particularly concerned with the state's use of war to increase its power. He saw that taxes, conscription, regulation, and the ranks of people employed by, or otherwise dependent on the state increased during wartime (and other crises), and once the crisis was over, rarely if ever diminished to pre-crisis levels. This is what Robert Higgs called "the ratchet effect" in his masterful book *Crisis and Leviathan*.

War and revolution, as the two basic threats, invariably arouse in the State rulers their maximum efforts and maximum propaganda among the people. As stated above, any way must always be used to mobilize the people to come to the State's defense in the belief that they are defending themselves. The fallacy of the idea becomes evident when conscription is wielded against those who refuse to "defend" themselves and are, therefore, forced into joining the State's military band: needless to add, no "defense" is permitted them against this act of "their own" State.

In war, State power is pushed to its ultimate, and, under the slogans of "defense" and "emergency," it can impose a tyranny upon the public such as might be openly resisted in time of peace. War thus provides many benefits to a State, and indeed every modern war has brought to the warring peoples a permanent legacy of increased State burdens upon society. War, moreover, provides to a State tempting opportunities for conquest of land areas over which it may exercise its monopoly of force. Randolph Bourne was certainly correct when he wrote that "war is the health of the State," but to any particular State a war may spell either health or grave injury. - Murray N. Rothbard, [The Anatomy of the State](#)

The fallacy of notions like "collective security" and "police actions" were ruthlessly exposed by Rothbard. His anti-war activism brought together "left" and "right" in opposition to US military intervention in Vietnam.

The rhetoric came out of the Wilsonian collective security ideology, which was: if you see armies crossing frontiers somewhere, this constitutes aggression. It means that in the same sense as if he sees Jones beating up Smith on the street, the policeman on the block rushes to his defense, and so therefore the United States and the United Nations become the policemen rushing to defend the victim. ...

In the case of States, you have a completely different situation because this ideology assumes that the Waldavian State and Ruritanian State are somehow the rightful

owners of all their territory, just as Jones owns his watch and Smith does, too, and then Smith beats Jones up or takes his watch away from him, this is aggression. The analogy then becomes, if Ruritania invades Waldavia, this means that Waldavian territory, Waldavian property, rightful property, has been taken away from them by the Ruritanian aggressor.

Now the point is for the libertarian that none of these States have *any* rightful property, that the Ruritanian government does not properly and justly own the entire land area of the country - the property should be owned by individual citizens, the State apparatus has then no title, no just claim. - Murray Rothbard, interview by "Reason" magazine

In addition to his economic and political writings, Rothbard also wrote about history. He looked beneath the "victor's history" of government schools and court intellectuals, usually finding the true story to be quite different from the conventional "wisdom." His view of history was that of an eternal struggle between liberty and authority, a "race between state power and social power." His "revisionist" history of colonial and revolutionary USAmerica was presented in a four volume set *Conceived in Liberty*. His books on the history of economic thought are also notable.

If we look at the black record of mass murder, exploitation, and tyranny levied on society by governments over the ages, we need not be loath to abandon the Leviathan State and ... try freedom. - Murray Rothbard, [For a New Liberty](#)

Rothbard has two excellent introductory books to libertarianism. [For a New Liberty: The Libertarian Manifesto](#) is the more accessible and popular book with an outline of theory and applications to modern day issues. For those with a more academic bent, [The Ethics of Liberty](#) gives a more detailed explanation and justification of the philosophy of Liberty. Both are available online.



David Friedman

Another great modern luminary of anarcho-capitalism is David D. Friedman. Also an economist by training, Friedman takes a value-free consequentialist approach to the subject rather than Rothbard's natural rights approach. Not that Friedman is amoral by any means - he certainly has libertarian values - but feels that insofar as convincing others that a free society is better, a descriptive explanation is more efficacious. People that don't consider natural rights to exist, or are skeptical of any consensus about morality, may be convinced by practical economic results. Rothbard and Friedman could be considered the modern analogy to Spooner and Tucker.



Friedman points out that a free society may not be libertarian, but he believes that it would have a bias for libertarianism. For example, while people will vote for various restrictions of the liberty of others when the cost is borne to the general public, they are less likely to do so when they bear due share of the costs. He gives marijuana prohibition as an example: Given a costless choice "should we allow people to smoke pot," they may say "yes," but putting the question as "would you pay an extra \$200 a year to prevent others from smoking pot" the answer may well be "no."

The economic aspects of law is of particular interest to Friedman. He has written much on market-generated law, the efficiency of law, and historical examples of non-statist law such as the "Thing" system of classical Iceland.

Friedman's book [The Machinery of Freedom: Guide to a Radical Capitalism](#) (1971) is a classic of libertarian literature. It is both an immanently entertaining economics book and a mind-opening view of the anarchist idea.

The purpose of this book is to persuade you that a libertarian society would be both free and attractive, that the institutions of private property are the machinery of freedom, making it possible, in a complicated and interdependent world, for each person to pursue his life as he sees fit." - David Friedman, introduction to [Machinery of Freedom](#)

In an earlier chapter ("[The Anarchist Alternative](#)") we gave an extensive Friedman quote from this book about how PDAs (private defense associations) might work in a stateless society. The book also covers many other aspects of the "machinery" of a free society, and even meta-economic points concerning the applicability of economic analysis. For example, he aptly points out the economic utopianism of socialism.

Most varieties of socialism implicitly assume unanimous agreement on goals. Everyone works for the glory of the nation, the common good, or whatever, and everyone agrees, at least in some general sense, on what that goal means. The economic problem, traditionally defined as the problem of allocating limited resources to diverse ends, does not exist; economics is reduced to the "engineering" problem of how best to use the available resources to achieve the common end.

The organization of a capitalist society implicitly assumes that different people have different ends and that the institutions of the society must allow for that difference.

This is one of the things behind the socialist claim that capitalism emphasizes competition whereas socialism emphasizes cooperation; it is one of the reasons why socialism seems, in the abstract, to be such an attractive system. If we all have different ends, we are, in a certain sense, in conflict with each other; each of us wishes to have the limited resources available used for his ends. The institution of private property allows for cooperation within that competition; we trade with each other in order that each may best use his resources to his ends, but the fundamental conflict of ends remains. Does this mean that socialism is better? No more than the desirability of sunny weather means that women should always wear bikinis or that men should never carry umbrellas.

There is a difference between what institutions allow and what they require. If in a capitalist society everyone is convinced of the desirability of one common goal, there is nothing in the structure of capitalist institutions to prevent them from cooperating to attain it. Capitalism allows for a conflict of ends; it does not require it.

Socialism does not allow for it. This does not mean that if we set up socialist institutions everyone will instantly have the same ends. The experiment has been tried; they do not. It means rather that a socialist society will work only if people do have the same ends. If they do not it will collapse or, worse, develop, as did the Soviet Union, into a monstrous parody of socialist ideals. - David Friedman, [Machinery of Freedom](#)

Friedman always seems to have a brilliantly clever spin on any given topic. For example, take the question of immigration: consistent libertarians have to oppose any state restrictions on freedom of travel. So long as you are not trespassing, no one should forcibly make you leave. Some minarchist libertarians, however, have argued that given the existing welfare system, restricting immigration is permissible. Friedman, in his value-free economic manner, answers this.

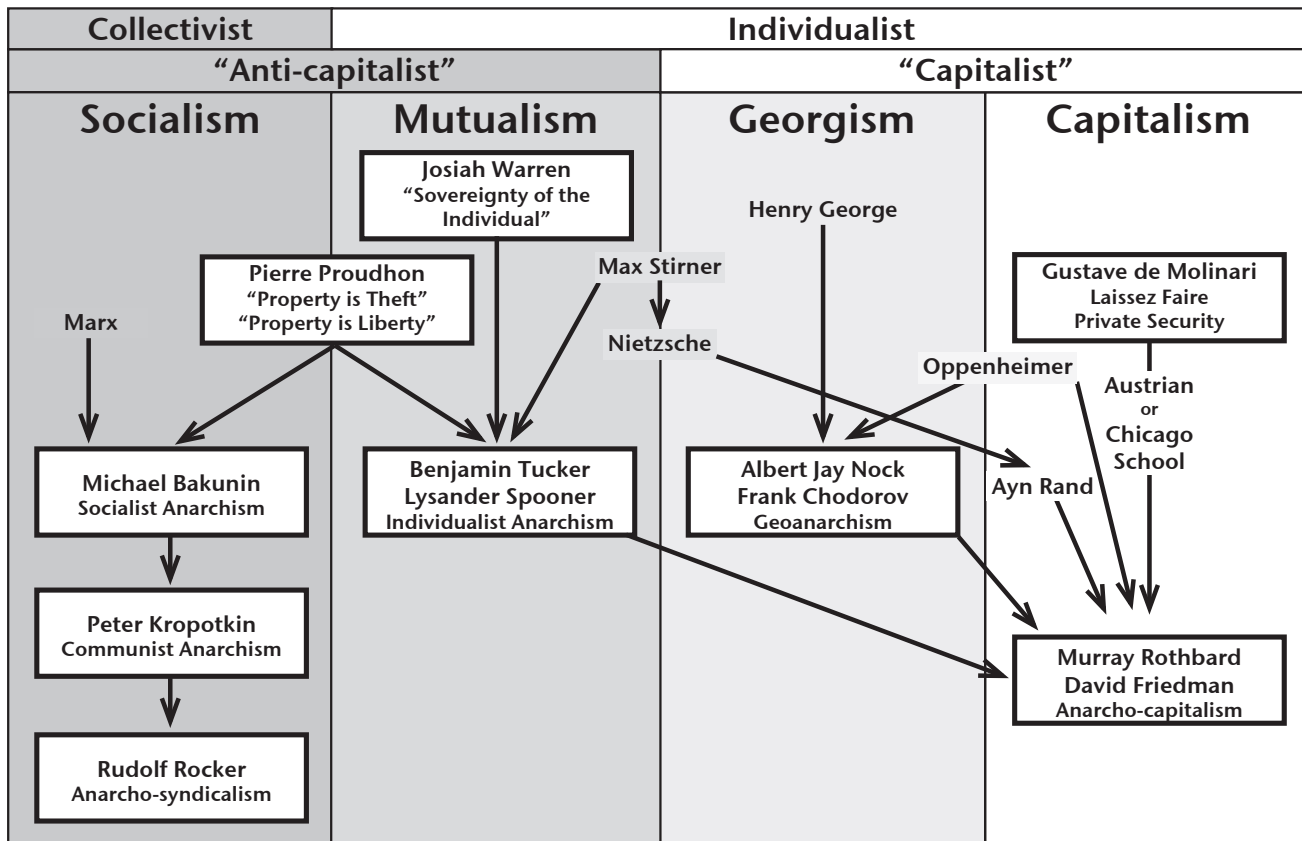
The redistributionist tendencies of modern states are an argument against free immigration, but also an argument for it. The argument against takes the level of redistribution as given and points out its effect on who migrates where and why. The other half of the argument reverses the causation by considering the effect of migration on levels of redistribution. The harder it is for people to move from one country to another, the more attractive redistributive policies are. The possibility of redistribution tends to increase inefficient migration, but the possibility of migration tends to decrease inefficient redistribution. Consider a government in a world of free migration, trying to decide whether to increase or decrease the level of welfare. Giving people money may be politically attractive, but collecting the taxes to pay for it is not. A ten percent increase in levels will attract indigents from abroad, swell the welfare rolls, and increase costs by much more than ten percent. A ten percent decrease will cause some indigents presently on welfare to migrate to countries with more generous policies, reducing costs by much more than ten percent. The existence of easy migration makes welfare state policies less attractive, with the result that levels of redistribution are likely to be lower. - David Friedman, [Welfare and Immigration - the Other Half of the Argument](#)

Since moral arguments are so often unconvincing to others, Friedman's utilitarian approach is attractive even to died-in-the-wool natural lawyers. Suppose someone is totally unfazed by an appeal to the Law of Equal Freedom or the Non-Aggression Principle. Perhaps this aphorism will make an impression.

The direct use of force is such a poor solution to any problem, it is generally employed only by small children and large nations. - David Friedman, [Machinery of Freedom](#)

Summary of Influences

Here is a chart showing influences, explicit and implicit, in anarchist thought:



Various categorizations of types of anarchism are shown at the top of the chart. The individualist-collectivist distinction refers to economics and social organization, in particular whether some sort of private property (sticky or possession) is favored, or collective/corporate ownership is preferred. Most "movement" anarchism has been collectivist, as appeals to rip-off wealthier people are always popular. In terms of political philosophy, however, collectivism is rather rigid and reactionary. The decline of statist socialism in the late 20th century symbolized by the devolution of the USSR reflected poorly on the anti-statist varieties also. Both command economies and gift economies suffer from the same practical flaws - no one knows what people want. The information function of pricing, from the highest level of capital goods to end-user consumer goods, needs a market to function, and private property to make markets.

The "anti-capitalist" and "capitalist" division should be taken with a grain of salt, since these are loaded terms. As we saw, the mutualists have elements of both socialism and capitalism. With our more exact terminology and analysis, we rated possession property as more propertarian than anti-propertarian. Nevertheless, mutualists generally self-label as "anti-capitalist," since they do oppose usury (interest, rent, and profit) in a weak sense; they'd allow it as a right but disapprove of it and hope it "goes away."

Of course, in this short survey we cannot do justice to all the people who have contributed to anarchist thought. And by favoring those theorists who have relevance today, and whose shoulders we stand upon, we have ignored many notable figures in the collectivist camp. By concentrating on ideas instead of movements, we have ignored many significant anarchist events, parties, and organization which played a part in history, such as the Spanish Civil War, the "Internationals," and so on. These are amply covered elsewhere.

The four main economic schools have been already discussed, with the exception of geoism. Geoism used to be called "Georgism" after it's founder and proselytizer, Henry George. It was originally, and still is, mainly a minarchist rather than anarchist philosophy. It's adherents are sometimes called "single-taxers," since they believe that the only morally justifiable tax is a tax on land (interpreted as all natural resources.)

Geoists believe that, since natural resources were not created by man, they cannot be rightfully owned. Thus, land is to be held "in common" or by the world forever. This does not include, however, crops grown on land or structures built on land. Since "everyone," even the yet to be born, owns the land, then individual users of land should pay rent to "everyone." Most geoists, being minarchist, say the land-rent should go to the state. Geoanarchists say it should go to the community, not a state, apparently meaning groups and associations having some objective relationship with the natural resource in question. E.g. the streams and aquifers should belong to the people living in the watershed; so they should receive the rent.

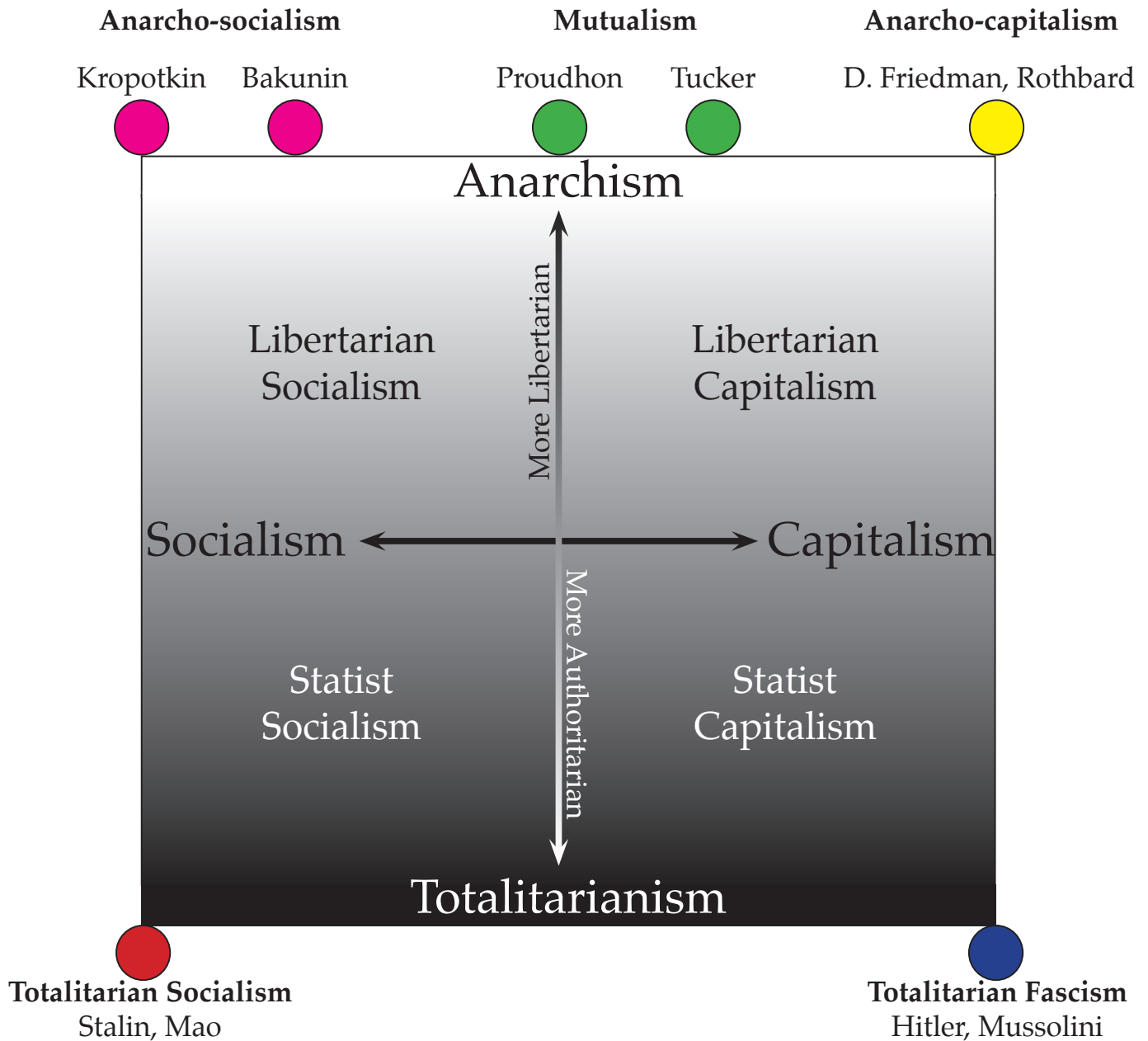


The most significant geoanarchist theorists were probably Albert Jay Nock and Frank Chodorov. While geoism may not be a major school of anarchism, it has had significant influence on other schools. Both mutualists and anarcho-capitalists (e.g. agorists) often appeal to geoist theory, especially with respect to environmental concerns such as the watershed example above. Green and eco-anarchists do so extensively.

Timeline of Modern Anarchism

1756	First anarchist essay. General critique of statism.	Edmund Burke	A Vindication of Natural Society
1793	First anarchist treatise. First positive theory.	William Godwin	An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice
1833	First anarchist.	Josiah Warren	The Peaceful Revolutionist (1833) True Civilization (1863)
1840	First self-described anarchist.	Pierre Proudhon	What is Property?
1844	Egoist quasi-anarchist.	Max Stirner	The Ego and Its Own
1849	First anarcho-capitalist.	Gustave de Molinari	The Production of Security
1866	First anarcho-socialist.	Michael Bakunin	Revolutionary Catechism
1867	Individualist anarchist. Natural law theorist.	Lysander Spooner	No Treason (1867) Natural Law (1882)
1886	Individualist anarchist publisher.	Benjamin Tucker	State Socialism and Anarchism
1902	First anarcho-communist.	Peter Kropotkin	Mutual Aid
1973	First modern anarcho-capitalist.	Murray Rothbard	For a New Liberty (1973) The Ethics of Liberty (1982)

Political Ideology Map



Anarcho-socialism is in the upper left and anarcho-capitalism the upper right. The vertical dimension represents the extent of government; the horizontal dimension represents legal fiction of property ownership - more precisely, the degree of propertarianism. Both "socialism" and "capitalism" have statist and anti-statist variants. The placement of persons and parties on this graph are approximate, and open to debate.

The Future of Anarchism

As history is a struggle between liberty and authority, my prognosis is based on how current technological and political factors favor one or the other.

I think that technology, on the whole, favors liberty. This is based on the expectation that computers, the internet, and strong cryptography are strongly favorable to individualism, due to the enhancement of privacy (in the form of anonymity and pseudonymity) in productive and financial life.

For the past half millennium or so, the state has had the technological advantage. Inventions created at mid-millennium - the press and the perfection of gunpowder weapons - caused the rise of centralized states. The nature of gunpowder weapons is that violence can be mass-produced. Whoever can produce the most firepower wins, largely regardless of expense or efficiency. The Gutenberg press and later improvement in printing augmented and accelerated this effect. In earlier times, there were dialects for each local region, and motivating large masses of people was extremely difficult. For example, France had dozens of dialects in the middle ages. After printing became cheap, Parisian French became standard.

The synergy between cheap guns and standard language allowed rulers to raise large armies and train them to kill on a level never before seen. Brute force changed from a few rich guys who could afford war horses and armor, to hoards of cheaply trained and armed soldiers. In economic terms, the return on force increased tremendously. As a result, the world saw the rise of nation-states, with the bigger ones, or at least the ones who could throw more wealth into munitions and muster more troops, winning out. Centralized power had its day.

Industrialization also favored centralization. Factories and roads and mass-production required more centralization than pre-industrial agriculture and crafts. Central governments built roads to every household's door, all the better to control, tax, and conscript. Orwell's 1984 became fact.

But with the invention and subsequent availability of computer technology and the internet, combined with public key cryptography, the tide shifted. At the very least, it allows knowledge workers unbind themselves from the land. Programmers, web designers, architects, and engineers can work from anywhere in the world, using a laptop computer as an office. Communications can be conducted over the internet, with encryption making it truly private. Digital currency is pseudonymous and secure. Suddenly one can converse and trade, while avoiding government agents who would control or rob you. The beauty of strong crypto is this: all the tanks in the world cannot bust PGP. Even if states find a way to break any given crypto system, it's too expensive to try. Besides, you can simply switch to the next great system. Finally, the return on force is sinking like a stone.

The new revolution of power ... is liberating individuals at the expense of the twentieth-century nation-state. Innovations that alter the logic of violence in unprecedented ways are transforming the boundaries within which the future must lie. ... You stand at the threshold of the most sweeping revolution in history. Faster than all but a few now imagine, microprocessing will subvert and destroy the nation-state, creating new forms of social organization in the process. - James Davidson and Lord William Rees-Mogg, [The Sovereign Individual](#)

The political manifestation of this is devolution - the decentralization of power from the few centralized entities to the many dispersed entities and individuals. We see the trend already in the increasing number of political entities. The Soviet Union devolved in 1991, resulting in a dozen new protection providers. Yugoslavia also devolved into Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Montenegro. The number of entities continues to increase. This is a wonderful trend for anarchists! Obviously, the more political entities there are, the smaller they are.

But they are still states, you say. This is where we utilize our knowledge of panarchy. There is a continuum from immigration and migration to voting with your feet to shopping for the best PDA. As more and more entities compete for citizen-taxpayers, these formerly ruled people become customers. In short, political entities can be expected to evolve, through competition, into PDAs, and citizens evolve into customers. This is not the evolutionary anarchism that Godwin or Thoreau predicted, but it will do nicely!

One major benchmark will be the breakup of the USEmpire. Already its bloated *theft and redistribution* system, and more importantly, its imperial overstretch, is obvious. Its trillion dollar deficit, financed by monetary inflation, is not sustainable. Hyperinflation of the dollar is foreseeable, perhaps imminent. The devolution of the US will be every bit as good for freedom as the devolution of the USSR was.

What Can I Do?

The inevitable question in response to advocacy for political change is: What can I do? Our analysis of the institution of state gives some hints about what may or may not work. In particular, our elitist model of political power - that the ruling elite make the decisions within the state apparatus - indicates that working "within the system" will not work. We recommend not voting at all. Similarly, begging the politicians through signing petitions is futile. We should be trying to destroy the state's mystique of legitimacy, not enhance it.

As I see it, there are two major ways an individual can strive for change: 1) delegitimize the state, and 2) build alternative institutions.

Delegitimize the State

Do all you can to destroy the state's aura of legitimacy. This mainly involves education, since the "aura" is in people's minds. So long as most people see the state as the solution rather than the problem, freedom cannot generally reign. It will no doubt exist covertly, in Galt's Gulches, Costa Rican hideaways, and other isolated locales, but it will not gain broad enjoyment until most people desire to be free and have overcome their psychological dependency on the state. And as we know from history, revolution will help (and may well hurt) if people's minds are not already "right" for liberty. Here are some things you can do to crush sheeple's mental dependence on the state:

Delegitimizing the State

- Promote liberty in your conversations
- Promote liberty in public writings (letters-to-editors, web pages, articles, etc.)
- Correct others when they fall for statist bromides and myths
- Correct others when they fall for the stateholm syndrome
- Avoid statist puffery in language
- Challenge the statist paradigm

We have discussed several statist bromides and myths. These include the pluralist model of political power (the mistaken notion that the masses have significant input in the state's decision-making), and the knee-jerk statist attitude that social problems can be solved by simply passing a law. Another myth, or more exactly, anti-concept, is the notion of "the public good" or "the common good." Since there is no interpersonal comparison of utility, the "common good" does not exist, except in the Pareto-optimal sense of *everyone* being no worse off. But of course, this is not the way statisticians mean it - they mean some people are better off at the cost of other people. Thus, in practice, the common good is whatever the ruling elites say is good for the dumb masses. Another common myth is that law (or legal systems, or courts) are the same as

states. This can be proven incorrect by simply looking at history; states co-opted preexisting "natural" legal systems of society.

The stateholm syndrome is the use of an ambiguous collective ("we," "us," "them," "our") to hide and evade the difference between ruler and ruled. It is a coinage based on the well-known Stockholm syndrome suffered by prisoners and kidnap victims. When someone says, "We bombed Baghdad," they are revealing their mental victimhood to rulers. After all, the speaker (unless he's part of the ruling junto) did not bomb anyone, or order flunkies to bomb anyone - the ruling elite of the US state did. By identifying with mass-murderers, those who use this slave "we" are trivializing moral culpability and accepting undue blame. By such identification with the rulers, they unduly accept responsibility for the act, and make it psychologically harder to condemn it or correct it.

Another example is the slogan "Support Our Troops." First of all, they are the rulers' troops, not "ours." Secondly, such troops are almost always engaging in the killing of hapless foreigners, most of whom are non-combatants. Thus, they deserve *condemnation*, not support. Finally, "troops" is a sugar-coated word for what these people are - "hired thugs" is more apt. Thus, the libertarian translation of "support our troops" is "condemn the rulers' hired murderers."

One rough way to measure the libertarianism of a speaker is simply to count the number of times he uses "we" or "our" when he really means "the rulers." At best, this is catering to the statism of the audience, at worst it is mental surrender to the dark side. Either way, it does not help our case.

If there is one single thing that can free our minds, and the minds of others, it is the ruthless elimination of the slave "we" from our thoughts and speech. This is easier said than done - even the most libertarian people sometimes slip up. This shows how ubiquitous the statist programming of our lives has been, and how habituated we are to the statist paradigm.

Statist euphemisms abound. People say "public schools" when they mean "government schools." They refer to soldiers and freedom-fighters when it's their state's guys, but insurgents and terrorists when it's their state's enemies guys. They call their fuhrers and oppressors "leaders" rather than "rulers." Even technical terms are sugar-coated. Laws outlawing employment for people unable to produce above an arbitrary level are called "minimum wage laws" rather than "minimum productivity laws." Plunder and forced redistribution is called "leveling the playing field" or "fairness." We need to avoid such drivel, and not be afraid to call a spade a spade. We cannot effectively argue against "fairness," but we can certainly argue against robbing productive people.

The statist paradigm is the world-view that the earth consists of competing "teams" called states, that everybody is on a team, and that one should support one's team. It is obvious how such a world-view favors statism, and why states promote such a view. As anarchists, we want

subjected people to realize that they are not the rulers, nor are they the state or the government.

With the rise of democracy, the identification of the State with society has been redoubled, until it is common to hear sentiments expressed which violate virtually every tenet of reason and common sense such as, "we are the government." The useful collective term "we" has enabled an ideological camouflage to be thrown over the reality of political life. If "we are the government," then anything a government does to an individual is not only just and untyrannical but also "voluntary" on the part of the individual concerned. If the government has incurred a huge public debt which must be paid by taxing one group for the benefit of another, this reality of burden is obscured by saying that "we owe it to ourselves"; if the government conscripts a man, or throws him into jail for dissident opinion, then he is "doing it to himself" and, therefore, nothing untoward has occurred. Under this reasoning, any Jews murdered by the Nazi government were not murdered; instead, they must have "committed suicide," since they were the government... - Murray N. Rothbard, [The Anatomy of the State](#)

We need to help people realize that the people and the rulers are *not* on the same team, on the contrary they are implacable enemies. We need for people to realize that the statist wars are not "us" against "them," but are the rulers who claim us as subjects versus the rulers that claim some other people as subjects. The respective peoples have no real stake in the quibbles of rulers, but so long as the people buy into the statist paradigm, they will be cannon-fodder for their rulers. The very existence of interstate war depends on the rulers being able to shove the costs of war onto their gullible subjects. As soon as enough people realize that *they are not their rulers*, the jig is up. The proper attitude to statist war would be to let the belligerent rulers have at each other in a wire cage with butcher knives, but leave the people out of it.

Build Alternatives to Currently Statist Services

Organize neighborhood and community arbitration systems as an alternative to state monopoly law and courts. Promote the use of alternate currencies, such as silver rounds, e-gold, or Liberty Dollars, as an alternative to statist fiat money. Help voluntary community-betterment efforts like Habitat for Humanity, as an alternative to taxation and the state's Department of Housing and Urban Development. There is a long list of possible "counter-institutions" in the next section.

There are two very common related fallacies that state-indoctrinated people tend to fall into. The first is the fallacy of government solipotence. This is the notion that good or service X cannot be provided in any other way except by a state. Most commonly, the X is arbitration (courts), police, and military (defense against foreign invaders), but some will hold the fallacy for road-building, education, and other things. Fortunately, a little study of history reveals that every morally permissible service ever offered by state has been done by voluntary means somewhere, at some time or another. Furthermore, when done voluntarily, the service is generally done better, and always done more morally (since aggression and plunder are not used.) If someone claims that service X can only be supplied by state, all a libertarian needs to

do (if not already familiar with examples) is to look up that service in the ample libertarian literature and see how it was done privately. It used to be that this required a good library; now anyone can easily find such things on the internet.

The second fallacy is "the barefoot fallacy." *If government didn't provide shoes, all but the wealthy would go barefoot.* This is a weaker formulation of the fallacy above. It doesn't say that provision of service X *cannot* be done voluntarily, it simply says that voluntary provision would result in limiting the service to only the wealthy. The same remedy applies - just look up historical examples and note that they benefitted more than just the wealthy. This fallacy is popular among those who favor state-run education systems. When you look up literacy rates or other measures of educational quality and look at the "Prussian school" movement, it becomes obvious that the motivation for government takeover and centralization of education was to indoctrinate the children (especially of immigrants) into "proper" subservience to state, and resulted in a reduction of educational quality. Voltairine was right.

These two broad areas, destroying the legitimacy of state and building parallel structures, are particularly important for USAmericans in the 21st century. The US is the last remaining empire ("superpower"), and, as all empires eventually do, is well on its way to disintegration. Empires hang themselves on their own rope - the rope of imperial overstretch, massive spending, and hyperinflation. The US will very likely devolve in the first half of the 21st century, much as the USSR did at the end of the 20th century. The breakup will be a crisis and an opportunity. The critical importance of the two strategies is this: When the US breaks up, it will go one of two ways. Either people will call for a new tyrant, or people will opt for new, smaller political entities. Revolutionary France had its crisis and got Napoleon; Germany had its hyperinflation crisis and got Hitler. On the other hand, the USSR had its crisis and devolved into many entities, with most of them a lot better off than under the Soviet yoke. Even the countries that were immediately worse off, had better long-term prospects than before.

Whether the US people will demand a Hitler or peacefully devolve into 50 or 60 smaller entities is an open question. But if we anarchist are successful in delegitimizing the state in enough people's minds, we may tip the balance to devolution. And if we have constructed enough parallel structures, money to use when the state's fiat money becomes worthless, rights protection systems, and mutual aid organizations, the transition from overarching state to panarchy need not be too wrenching. May USAmericans adjust as well and as peacefully as most former Soviet subjects did!

Lists of Specific Actions

There are two excellent lists of methods or techniques for direct action. One is from [101 Things To Do 'Til The Revolution](#) (1999) by Claire Wolfe. The other is from [The Methods of Nonviolent Action](#) by Gene Sharp (Boston 1973.) Finally, there is a list of opportunities for counter-institutions compiled by Rev. Johnny Lemuria.

Claire Wolfe's 101 Things To Do 'Til The Revolution

"America is at that awkward stage. It's too late to work within the system, but too early to shoot the bastards." - Claire Wolfe.

1. Don't write to your congresscritter
2. Govern yourself
3. Love the ones you're with
4. Don't vote; it only encourages them
5. Do write letters to newspapers and magazines.
6. Write poetry
7. Question authority
8. Kill your TV
9. Get rid of your dependencies
10. Be ready to profit from others' dependencies
11. Just say NO
12. Know the difference between mala in se and mala prohibita.
13. Use pre-paid phone cards for privacy
14. Join a gun-rights group
15. Be a Simon Jester
16. Don't be a terrorist
17. Oppose property seizure with all your might
18. Celebrate the Fourth of July
19. Celebrate April 19
20. Cultivate some Mormon friends
21. Don't give your social security number
22. Visualize Vermont Carry
23. Don't talk to strangers
24. Don't talk to people you know, either
25. DO write to your congresscritter
26. Visualize no government
27. Fly the Gadsden flag
28. Dare to keep DARE out of your local schools
29. Identify the informant in your midst
30. Remember Mother Batherick
31. Take your kids out of government school
32. Keep your sense of humor
33. Assume all telephones are tapped
34. Don't debate
35. Cover your assets
36. Expect to lose everything, anyway
37. Respect individuals, not groups
38. Fun and Freedom on the Internet
39. Don't say anything you don't want the world to remember
40. Throw key words into your e-mail
41. Use PGP intelligently
42. Challenge all assumptions
43. Move to a small town
44. Read: fiction
45. Read: history
46. Read: founding fathers & philosophers of freedom
47. Read: monkey wrenching & getting around the system
48. Read: self reliance
49. Read: strategic thinking and fighting
50. Read: political periodicals
51. You can't kill the beast while sucking at its teat
52. On the other hand...
53. Bust anti-freedom organizations by driving them broke
54. Another charming use for 1-800 numbers
55. Respect the individual, not the office
56. Don't blame anybody else for your troubles
57. Stand up for people who stand up for their rights
58. Don't cooperate with the friendly census taker
59. Know where your line in the sand is drawn
60. Buy and carry the Citizens' Rule Book
61. Join FIJA
62. Keep a record of your dreams
63. Consider Sovereign Citizenship
64. Get your records to safety
65. Watch your local government
66. Don't let your possessions imprison you
67. Cultivate cheap tastes
68. Close your bank accounts
69. Create a fake plot or organization
70. Create a real organization
71. Join the tax protesters on April 15
72. Learn dumpster diving
73. Get healthy!
74. Learn to disappear in a crowd
75. Find a balance point in dealing with people
76. Follow your bliss
77. Your three-day grab & go kit
78. Building your emergency water supply
79. Building your emergency food supply
80. Building your medical kit
81. Your survival weapons supply
82. Start thinking about tools & equipment
83. Some places to find all of the above
84. Building your skills
85. Prepare your children, pets and aging relatives
86. Avoid "bear bait" cars and other attention-getting vehicles.
87. Find a non-government occupation
88. Never beg for your rights
89. Make "them" fill out your paperwork
90. If you must vote (part I)...
91. Get to know your neighbors
92. Network-but wisely and discreetly
93. Intimidate back
94. Know when - and whether - you could kill
95. If you must vote (part II)...
96. Learn your privacy rights and protect them
97. Bury gold, guns and goodies
98. Maybe you're already a "terrorist"
99. Put a warning sign on your property
100. If you can risk it, don't pay your income taxes
101. Don't fire until you see the whites of their eyes

Gene Sharp's Methods of Nonviolent Action

Most of these methods are appropriate for anti-statist action. The few statist items have been stricken through.

Methods of Nonviolent Protest and Persuasion

Formal Statements

1. Public speeches
2. Letters of opposition or support
3. Declarations by organizations and institutions
4. Signed public declarations
5. Declarations of indictment and intention
6. Group or mass petitions

Communications With A Wider Audience

7. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
8. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
9. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
10. Newspapers and journals
11. Records, radio, and television
12. Skywriting and earthwriting

Group Representations

13. Deputations
14. Mock awards
15. Group lobbying
16. Picketing
17. Mock elections

Symbolic Public Acts

18. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
19. Wearing of symbols
20. Prayer and worship
21. Delivering symbolic objects
22. Protest disrobings
23. Destruction of own property
24. Symbolic lights
25. Displays of portraits
26. Paint as protest
27. New signs and names
28. Symbolic sounds
29. Symbolic reclamations
30. Rude gestures

Pressures On Individuals

31. "Haunting" officials
32. Taunting officials
33. Fraternalization
34. Vigils

Drama And Music

35. Humorous skits and pranks
36. Performances of plays and music
37. Singing

Processions

38. Marches
39. Parades
40. Religious processions
41. Pilgrimages
42. Motorcades

Honoring The Dead

43. Political mourning
44. Mock funerals
45. Demonstrative funerals
46. Homage at burial places

Public Assemblies

47. Assemblies of protest or support
48. Protest meetings
49. Camouflaged meetings of protest
50. Teach-ins

Withdrawal And Renunciation

51. Walk-outs
52. Silence
53. Renouncing honours
54. Turning one's back

The Methods Of Social Noncooperation

Ostracism Of Persons

55. Social boycott
56. Selective social boycott
57. Lysistratic nonaction
58. Excommunication
59. Interdict

Noncooperation With Social Events, Customs, And Institutions

60. Suspension of social and sports activities
61. Boycott of social affairs
62. Student strike
63. Social disobedience
64. Withdrawal from social institutions

Withdrawal From The Social System

65. Stay-at-home
66. Total personal noncooperation
67. "Flight" of workers
68. Sanctuary
69. Collective disappearance
70. Protest emigration (hijrat)

The Methods Of Economic Noncooperation: Economic Boycotts

Action By Consumers

71. Consumers' boycott
72. Nonconsumption of boycotted goods
73. Policy of austerity
74. Rent withholding
75. Refusal to rent
76. National consumers' boycott
77. International consumers' boycott

Action By Workers And Producers

- 78. Workers' boycott
- 79. Producers' boycott

Action By Middlemen

- 80. Suppliers' and handlers' boycott

Action By Owners And Management

- 81. Traders' boycott
- 82. Refusal to let or sell property
- 83. Lockout
- 84. Refusal of industrial assistance
- 85. Merchants' "general strike"

Action By Holders Of Financial Resources

- 86. Withdrawal of bank deposits
- 87. Refusal to pay fees, dues, and assessments
- 88. Refusal to pay debts or interest
- 89. Severance of funds and credit
- 90. Revenue refusal
- 91. Refusal of a government's money

Action By Governments

- ~~92. Domestic embargo~~
- ~~93. Blacklisting of traders~~
- ~~94. International sellers' embargo~~
- ~~95. International buyers' embargo~~
- ~~96. International trade embargo~~

**The Methods Of Economic Noncooperation:
The Strike****Symbolic Strikes**

- 97. Protest strike
- 98. Quickie walkout (lightning strike)

Agricultural Strikes

- 99. Peasant strike
- 100. Farm workers' strike

Strikes By Special Groups

- 101. Refusal of impressed labour
- 102. Prisoners' strike
- 103. Craft strike
- 104. Professional strike

Ordinary Industrial Strikes

- 105. Establishment strike
- 106. Industry strike
- 107. Sympathy strike

Restricted Strikes

- 108. Detailed strike
- 109. Bumper strike
- 110. Slowdown strike
- 111. Working-to-rule strike
- 112. Reporting "sick" (sick-in)
- 113. Strike by resignation
- 114. Limited strike
- 115. Selective strike

Multi-Industry Strikes

- 116. Generalised strike
- 117. General strike

Combination Of Strikes And Economic Closures

- 118. Hartal
- 119. Economic shutdown

The Methods Of Political Noncooperation**Rejection Of Authority**

- 120. Withholding or withdrawal of allegiance
- 121. Refusal of public support
- 122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance

Citizens' Noncooperation With Government

- 123. Boycott of legislative bodies
- 124. Boycott of elections
- 125. Boycott of government employment and positions
- 126. Boycott of government departments, agencies, and other bodies

- 127. Withdrawal from governmental educational institutions

- 128. Boycott of government-supported institutions

- 129. Refusal of assistance to enforcement agents

- 130. Removal of own signs and placemarks

- 131. Refusal to accept appointed officials

- 132. Refusal to dissolve existing institutions

Citizens' Alternatives To Obedience

- 133. Reluctant and slow compliance

- 134. Nonobedience in absence of direct supervision

- 135. Popular nonobedience

- 136. Disguised disobedience

- 137. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse

- 138. Sitdown

- 139. Noncooperation with conscription and deportation

- 140. Hiding, escape, and false identities

- 141. Civil disobedience of "illegitimate" laws

Action By Government Personnel

- 142. Selective refusal of assistance by government aides

- 143. Blocking of lines of command and information

- 144. Stalling and obstruction

- 145. General administrative noncooperation

- 146. Judicial noncooperation

- 147. Deliberate inefficiency and selective noncooperation by enforcement agents

- 148. Mutiny

Domestic Governmental Action

- ~~149. Quasi-legal evasions and delays~~

- ~~150. Noncooperation by constituent governmental units~~

International Governmental Action

- ~~151. Changes in diplomatic and other representation~~

- ~~152. Delay and cancellation of diplomatic events~~

- ~~153. Withholding of diplomatic recognition~~

- ~~154. Severance of diplomatic relations~~

- ~~155. Withdrawal from international organisations~~

- ~~156. Refusal of membership in international bodies~~

- ~~157. Expulsion from international organisations~~

The Methods Of Nonviolent Intervention**Psychological Intervention**

- 158. Self-exposure to the elements
- 159. The fast
 - a) Fast of moral pressure
 - b) Hunger strike
 - c) Satyagrahic fast
- 160. Reverse trial
- 161. Nonviolent harassment

Physical Intervention

- 162. Sit-in
- 163. Stand-in
- 164. Ride-in
- 165. Wade-in
- 166. Mill-in
- 167. Pray-in
- 168. Nonviolent raids
- 169. Nonviolent air raids
- 170. Nonviolent invasion
- 171. Nonviolent interjection
- 172. Nonviolent obstruction
- 173. Nonviolent occupation

Social Intervention

- 174. Establishing new social patterns
- 175. Overloading of facilities
- 176. Stall-in
- 177. Speak-in
- 178. Guerrilla theatre
- 179. Alternative social institutions
- 180. Alternative communication system

Economic Intervention

- 181. Reverse strike
- 182. Stay-in strike
- 183. Nonviolent land seizure
- 184. Defiance of blockades
- 185. Politically motivated counterfeiting
- 186. Preclusive purchasing
- 187. Seizure of assets
- 188. Dumping
- 189. Selective patronage
- 190. Alternative markets
- 191. Alternative transportation systems
- 192. Alternative economic institutions

Political Intervention

- 193. Overloading of administrative systems
- 194. Disclosing identities of secret agents
- 195. Seeking imprisonment
- 196. Civil disobedience of "neutral" laws
- 197. Work-on without collaboration
- 198. Dual sovereignty and parallel government

Opportunities for Counter-institutions**Utilities**

- water
- sewer
- telecommunications/internet hardware
- recycling/waste
- electricity/power

Protection/Defense

- commonwealth/national defense
- environmental defense

Trade

- currency
- savings/investment
- brokering

Means of Production

- resources/land
- fabrication
- management

Social Services

- child-care
- child welfare
- foster care

Safety Net

- health insurance
- unemployment insurance

Security

- security services
- adjudication

Education

- primary
- vocational

Health-care

- Housing/Land
- housing loans

Food

- farming
- food security

Infrastructure

- roads
- public transportation
- public spaces
- emergency services