

On Labels

I find labels useful. It's a quick way to classify the basic intellectual positions of people. I've given myself many labels: libertarian, voluntaryist, anarchist, agorist, legal polycentrist, decentralist, abolitionist, apatheist, nihilist, radical unschooler, peaceful parent, non-punitive parent, liberty-lover, peacemonger, and on and on. I've given myself these labels according to *my* understanding of them. What if you understand them differently? How many of these are defined disparately, even antithetically, by different people? The antithetical definitions of "anarchist" and "peaceful parent" come to mind. What if instead of labeling ourselves, we let the labels fall where they may? I describe my values, and you fit it into your labeling scheme. You then compare it to your own values, and view me as either friend or foe. We figure out our common ground, and debate the rest. This is what happens to people of history, after all. They aren't around to label themselves consistent with new ideas. We look at what their values were, and let the labels fall where they may. What do you think? And that's today's two cents.

Skyler.