

The Taylor Series

Nobody asked but ...

Today, we are going to relate some higher mathematics to the real world. There is a fairly human discussion of the Taylor Series at [this web site](#). But even it is a bit math geekish. Never fear, because I am going to try to reduce the confusion, so we might apply the principle in living a real voluntaryist life.

The concept of a Taylor Series is the idea that no matter how chaotic something, taken as a whole, might be, there are parts of it that are well behaved. Then taken as a whole again, a collection of well behaved parts, the whole something is well behaved. A baby can be expected to soil his diapers, but as a thirty year old, he has outgrown the problem, in most cases. This man's life then may be described as a series of patterns that fit different stages of his life. Any passage of events can be described in vivid detail by describing its parts — the only trick is identifying where one smooth pattern ends and another starts. In effect, describing the past requires an appropriate identification of its parts, their length, and their significance. This further requires understanding that the future is TBD (to be determined).

The beauty of the Taylor Series is that no part predetermines the shape (character) of the next part, other than its starting point. As voluntaryists, we might consider shedding the human propensity to predict the future, while misconstruing the past. We must take the time to examine the present, and the present only, for a proper understanding of that which probably was and that which probably will be. Accuracy in the present is the only key.

— Kilgore Forelle