

The Voluntarist Premise

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Discovering voluntarism usually happens after a long road through other intermediate political philosophies. It's not an ideology on the forefront of political thought, that's for certain. Step by step a person has reached conclusions that aggression and coercion are *bad* in various ways and circumstances. At last they've decided that aggression and coercion should always be avoided, but just as importantly, they've come to the realization that aggression and coercion are not only common place in many different types of relationships, but in some, they are foundational.

Once a person adopts the label of voluntarist (or the like) for their political identity, they assume, with good reason, the following premise: *human suffering is terrible and should be prevented; aggression and coercion necessarily create human suffering*. This premise leads the voluntarist to hold a number of hypotheses with varying degrees of accuracy in some form or fashion within their minds at all times. Here are several of those hypotheses (in *italics* and prefaced).

Political aggression occurs when the production of law and order is coercively monopolized by a single person or single group of people (an institution, corporation, or firm in a given area which adopts the moniker of "government"). *Monopoly incentivizes bad behavior and disincentivizes good behavior, leading ultimately to human suffering.*

Economic aggression occurs when markets, the array of economic exchanges between people, are coercively interfered with by "government". *Political interference (or intervention) in markets skews or disables economic signals (prices, supply and demand), to the benefit of one group at one time, and the detriment of other groups at the same time or other times, leading ultimately to human suffering.*

Parental aggression occurs when parents use the tools of coercion (punishments like spanking and time-outs) to correct what they identify as "misbehavior" on the part of their children. *Punishment used to discipline is both a failure to understand a child's real needs and produces trauma in childhood, leading ultimately to human suffering.*

Educational aggression occurs when parents and teachers use the tools of coercion (punishments, rewards, curriculum) in the attempt to impart knowledge and skills onto children that they, the parents and teachers, deem necessary and important toward becoming an adult in society. *Coercion based learning ignores the interests and passions of students and their evolutionarily programmed needs to inquire, be curious, to move*

constantly, be loud, and to play, leading ultimately to human suffering.

Not every hypothesis described above undergirds the premise that each person who has adopted the label of voluntaryist holds as true. Many voluntaryists haven't even considered the effects of coercion in parenting and education, for example. But the premise as laid out above is typically held by those who identify as a voluntaryist.

The voluntary principle, the foundation of voluntaryism, states that "all human relations should happen voluntarily, or not at all." It's easier to understand the "should" in that sentence once you understand the voluntaryist premise. You may not value or desire the reduction and prevention of human suffering, in which case you are unlikely to identify as a voluntaryist. However if you do, then I recommend taking a hard look at the premises you accept as true, and how realistic are the hypotheses thereon based that you rely on for the attainment of this desire.