

Voluntaryism vs. Anarcho-Capitalism

A friend on Facebook asked, “Can someone give me an example of a situation in which a voluntaryist and an ancap could reach different conclusions about something? I’ve been trying to use more precise language and I’d like to have a better understanding of any differences in the meanings of the two terms.”

Ancaps don’t really have much on parenting because they can’t decide what rights children have. Voluntaryists say that all human relations should be voluntary, not just adult relations, which puts a bigger emphasis on parenting than does ancap philosophy.

Also, I don’t think there’s much if anything on social coercion for the ancap, while “all human relations should be voluntary” is as concerned with non-physical forms of coercion (shame, blackmail, initiatory ostracism) as it is with physical coercion (aggression, force, violence).

And, “all human relations should be voluntary” suggests we give a strong consideration to nonviolent forms of resistance to both petty crime and state aggression. It’s a strong suggestion when it makes sense. Ancap philosophy seems more concerned with justifying force than in trying to avoid force altogether. Which also leads to the abstention from electoral politics, as political solutions are necessarily violent solutions.

Oh and, Ancap philosophy has a specific theory of property rights (original appropriation of land and resources), and what constitutes aggression depends on who owns what. But I think that non-ancaps can be voluntaryists so long as they favor nonviolence and persuasion over brute force for the protection of whatever constitutes property for them. Ancoms, for example, as ancoms would justify the use of force to take over a factory, whereas ancoms as voluntaryists would negotiate or separate and start their own factories. In other words, I think the voluntary principle strongly advises refraining from the use of coercion, even when you believe its justified (retaliatory), because others might disagree and conflict will only increase rather than decrease through its use.

Oh and (hah!), Ancap philosophy doesn’t say anything on being voluntary with yourself and self-talk and self-knowledge. I see voluntaryism as more of a whole life, whole family philosophy, while ancap is just concerned about politics and markets. I personally favor ancap philosophy (capitalism as defined by Rothbard, Hoppe, and the like) for political and economic issues, but I don’t think that’s required to be a voluntaryist.

Skyler.