

Anarchism, not Anomism



Send him mail. [f](#) [t](#)

“One Voluntarist’s Perspective” is an original column appearing most Mondays at Everything-Voluntary.com, by the founder and editor Skyler J. Collins. Archived columns can be found here. OVP-only RSS feed available here.

“If the government becomes the lawbreaker, it breeds contempt for law; it invites every man to become a law unto himself; it invites anarchy.” “I don’t believe in anarchy, because it will ultimately amount to the power of the bully, with weapons.” “There is no greater evil than anarchy.” “We have only one alternative: either to build a functioning industrial society or see freedom itself disappear in anarchy and tyranny.” Such are the kinds of confused things people say about anarchy. Let me explain.

Anarchy

Every quote above is equating anarchy with lawlessness. Is it? No. Anarchy is from the Greek *anarkhos*, which means “without a ruler”. *An* = without, *arkhos* = ruler. What is a ruler? A ruler is one who dominates and coerces others until submission and subjugation. Rulers are slave masters, bullies, thieves, rapists, and murderers. Who isn’t anti-ruler? Other than rulers, of course. To be an anarchist is to be anti-ruler, to oppose the slave master, bully, thief, rapist, and murderer. Any decent person who believes in being moral, fair, and just should be an anarchist. I am proud to claim the title of anarchist and promoter of anarchism and anarchy!

Anomy

There is a word for lawlessness, however, and it’s not anarchy. I present: anomy. Anomy is from the Greek *anomos*, which means “without law”. *An* = without, *nomos* = law. Every quote above makes sense, and I agree with them, if we replace their use of *anarchy* with *anomy*. Here’s one: “I don’t believe in anomy, because it will ultimately amount to the power of the bully, with weapons.” Yes, anomy, would result in the chaos of strong over weak, of tyranny. It would result in rampant *archy*. Which means that anomy is antithetical to anarchy. Rulers are anomistic *vis a vis* others because the only law they recognize is their own. Contrary to popular opinion, rulers are anomists, anarchists are anti-ruler, and so it follows, anarchists are anti-lawlessness.

Final Thoughts

There it is. I am an anarchist and an anti-anomist. This is a logically consistent self-identification. One cannot be pro-ruler or pro-state without also being pro-anomy. Anomy is chaos and tyranny. "There is no greater evil than anomy." It's because anomy is wrong that I've found myself identifying as an anarchist. I consider myself a decent person who believes in being moral, fair, and just with others, so I've embraced anarchism. If you consider yourself likewise, then you should, too.

Read more from "One Voluntaryist's Perspective":