

# Can't Join Libertarian Party, Either

I'm libertarian, uncapitalized, to separate the ethical philosophy I follow from the political party I can't.

A Libertarian, capitalized, is a member of the Libertarian Party.

Ethical libertarianism is based on the recognition that no one has the right to use — or threaten — violence, personally or politically, against anyone who isn't currently violating the life, liberty, or property of another. This is the guiding principle that distinguishes a libertarian from anyone else. Follow it and you're libertarian; don't and you're not.

"Classical liberals," who believe in the legitimacy of a "night watchman" state, sometimes refer to themselves as libertarians. They want a government to claim a monopoly of force and run institutions and services too important for government to be running.

This is closer to what the Libertarian Party appears to stand for, but it isn't for me.

The Libertarian Party seems to value "smaller government" over liberty or any guiding principle.

Many Libertarian Party members are confused about why more libertarians won't support their party.

Maybe I would if they were more libertarian. I was once, for a year or so, a member of the Libertarian Party. I couldn't stay with the party because they didn't seem very libertarian and were too political.

The politics seemed more important to them than being libertarian; so important they kept nominating candidates with completely anti-liberty positions.

They probably did this because those candidates seemed more electable. I felt they ignored libertarianism for a chance to sit at the government table with Democrats and Republicans. If that's what matters to them, they can do it without me.

A half-joking description of political Libertarians goes, "Libertarians: plotting to take over the world and leave you alone." Yet some people are scared to be left alone, wanting to be told how to live, and they are going to see this as a threat. A more libertarian approach might say "Plotting to keep anyone from taking over the world so you can live life as you see fit." As long as you don't violate others.

I don't support politics of any sort. I understand the appeal of winning political office, if only to keep someone worse from getting the power. I don't see any benefit in gaining the office

if you betrayed your principles to win. If you're going to act like the people you replaced, why bother? Unless it's only about the power.