

Congratulations, You Might Be a Voluntaryist

A brief quiz:

1. Can putting 100 pounds of rock on one end of a seesaw lift a full can on the other end weighing 150 pounds?
2. What if what the can contains is 150 pounds of sand?
3. What if the can contains 150 pounds of guacamole instead?
4. What if the can contains 150 pounds of cheeseburgers?
5. What if it contains 150 pounds of pangolins?

Have you started to notice a pattern? Are you tempted to end this line of questioning by saying this?: “The answer is the same, as long as the can contains 150 pounds of *anything*; it doesn’t matter *what* it is 150 pounds of!” If so, good for you. You are capable of grasping a simple principle (in this case, what an irrelevant variable is).

Now let’s try something else:

1. Is it morally justified to initiate violence against an individual who has not defrauded, attacked, or threatened to attack someone else’s person or property?
2. What if the person is someone you don’t know?
3. What if the person has dark skin?
4. What if the person is gay?
5. What if the person doesn’t speak your language?
6. What if the person was born in Syria?
7. What if the person doesn’t have a piece of paper saying that they have the politicians’ permission to step over a national border?

Are you tempted to say this?: “The details don’t matter; it’s not okay to initiate violence against *any* individual who hasn’t committed or threatened harm against another.” If so, congratulations. You’re a voluntaryist. If not, then there’s a high likelihood that you are a hypocritical, unprincipled statist control freak (who may or may not be masquerading as a voluntaryist).