

Giving Thanks

“One Voluntarist’s Perspective” is an original column appearing sporadically, by the founder and editor Skyler J. Collins.

As a voluntarist, there’s much about our world to make me feel angry and bitter. The state is continually at war with its enemies, and its enemies include both other states *and* the voluntarist ideals of freedom and free enterprise. Its wars are mostly directed toward peaceful people, camouflaged with seemingly innocent names like the “war on drugs” and the “war on poverty”. But wars they are, and fought just as violently as wars against a foreign enemy. War is everywhere and all around us, though at any given moment it’s virtually invisible. Make a wrong move, and the state’s war will reveal itself in all its blood and horror. So just what is there for the voluntarist to be grateful for? What is there to keep up our spirits and embolden us to continue our fight for freedom?

The Freedoms We Still Have

It’s difficult to express gratitude for the ways in which we are still free, or even mostly free. Expressing gratitude implies someone or something that you are grateful toward. The state is completely undeserving of any of our gratitude, and especially not for the freedoms it still permits us to enjoy. Should we thank our masters for whipping us once instead of twice? Utter nonsense! The state is our primary enemy. Showing it gratitude in any degree would be an act of treason against society. This we should never do if we are to uphold our principles as voluntarists and libertarians. Let those who worship the state give it thanks.

The Ones Deserving of My Gratitude

As for me, I will give thanks to those who make my life *better*. Every person I’ve ever traded with is deserving of my gratitude. I have incredible power over my life and it’s all thanks to the self-interest of other individuals. The computer this is being written on was made via the labor and ingenuity of a countless number of people, and benefiting themselves by benefiting me. Leonard Read’s classic story of the pencil, comprising Chapter 11 of my book, *Everything Voluntary*, can be explored using the millions of various goods and services that make up our modern economy. Billions of people contribute to my well-being by contributing to their own. Though the state has an ever-strengthening grip on the market, society continues to make great advancements in technology and production. And my gratitude toward my fellow human beings is overflowing. If I’ve ever traded with you, I hope I took the opportunity to say “thank you!” before departing. You have blessed me in more ways than I can count!

To see the progress of mankind over the centuries, thanks to the liberties that society has

managed to maintain, gives me great hope for the future. Though the state will continue waging its disastrous wars, I can be embolden by the fact that society will ultimately triumph. The state violates too many laws of nature, of economics, to continue in perpetuity. States come, and states go, and all the while society will continue advancing in unthinkable ways until the state is obsolete. As grateful as I am for my fellow human beings, most of which I have never met, I would be remiss if I did not express my gratitude for the most important people in my life.

Saving The Best For Last

My children have given me untold amounts of joy and happiness. They have also given me countless opportunities to improve and become a better person. Through their learning how to grow up, I am learning what it means to love unconditionally and have true compassion for other human beings. In a way, I am learning how to grow up as well. The challenge has been great, but it has also payed great dividends.

And finally, I am exceedingly grateful for my wife. She's my lover *and* my best friend. She has been the best wife a man could dream of. She takes care of me in every way a "help-meet" can. She keeps my house and bears my children. She puts up with my weaknesses and has graciously partnered with me in our journey of raising our children free from violence and school. I simply can't think of anything that she leaves me wanting. She's my *causa sagrada* and I am truly grateful for her.

Final Thoughts

Considering all of my lamentations, I can say with complete honesty and sincerity that I am happy. I love myself, my wife, my children, my neighbors, and everyone I've ever traded with. My life is better now than it's ever been. I am grateful for my past, my present, and for the future. Happy Thanksgiving!