

It's Weird to Not Want Anarchy

Anarchy is simply the absence of rulers. It is not chaos, or bomb throwing, or communism.

The absence of rulers does not mean the absence of leaders or the absence of governance. It means the absence of a political ruler – a person or institution that claims the moral right to initiate violence.

Violence sucks. Nobody wants to resort to it. But there are times when everyone agrees it's morally acceptable to use violence. These times are all in self-defense against someone who has initiated violence. Initiating violence against peaceful people is wrong.

Yet that is all that government is. I repeat, that is **all** that it is. The single distinguishing feature that makes government different than any other organization is that it claims the moral right to initiate violence. It can enslave or murder anyone it damn well pleases. You will pay its leaders money and obey their rules or they will kill you. Period. There is literally nothing else that defines government as apart from other institutions.

So to want government, or to not oppose government, is to want or not oppose the initiation of violence against peaceful people.

Everyone feels comfortable saying they want a world where nobody dies from cancer. Many people donate to and work towards that world. Nobody wants a world with murder, rape, famine, poverty, or infant death. Everyone openly says as much, and works towards that world.

No one says, "I want some rape in the world", or, "I want a world where some children get murdered sometimes." That would be weird.

It's also weird to not want anarchy.

It's weird to not desire a world where no one initiates violence against peaceful people. It's weird to not want a world where interactions are voluntary, and violence is only used in self-defense.

Whether or not it's achievable, you'd think, just like an end to cancer or poverty, people would at least want to achieve it. Oddly, anarchy is likely far more achievable than most of those other things, as there have been anarchic societies lasting hundreds of years and to my knowledge, no society has been without sickness, premature death, murder, poverty, etc.

Yet hardly anyone wants anarchy.

It's due in part to confusion around definitions and meaning. Those who wield government power rely heavily upon people not realizing the stark reality of what government is – violence. So they create schools and propaganda and egghead ivory tower discussions and metaphors that abstract away from what government is. Words like anarchy are made synonymous with chaos, and words like law synonymous with order. Classic doublespeak.

So if asked whether they'd prefer a world where violence was only used defensively, versus one where one group of people got to use violence any time they wanted to force anyone they chose to do whatever they wanted, most people would probably say they'd prefer the former. Word magic prevents them from seeing that they just said they prefer anarchy, and most would never agree to it. They'd defend government without realizing the contradiction.

But it's not only conceptual and linguistic confusion.

I suspect many people are unwilling to say they want a world without the initiation of violence because they want to reserve the right to have violence initiated on their behalf.

Nobody wants to admit it in those words. But most people get tired of peaceful persuasion, conflict resolution, tolerance, competition, and individual freedom. They say they want peace, but damnit if they get sick of hearing people speak a language they don't, they'll advocate sending men with guns to murder those people if they keep peacefully offering to rent from or work for their neighbors.

People want to protect that little corner of darkness in their hearts. The one that wants to go get the bully with the big stick to beat the shit out of people who won't give money to their favorite cause, or live as they see fit.

That's weird and gross.

We can only control ourselves. We must purge the darkness from our own hearts. The darkness that would use the tools of the state to aid in our personal aims. Those tools are always inferior to peace. Their practical results are always worse, and their spiritual corrosion inescapable.