

# libertarian + voluntaryist + individualist ...

Nobody asked but ...

I was asked in my writing group last Monday, “what is a libertarian?”

- First of all, notice the lowercase “L” in “libertarian.” I cannot speak for other libertarians, but the lower case, in my case, means I am not a member of the national Libertarian Party (LP), nor of any of its regional, state, or local affiliates — they are a political party, not a philosophy. I am apolitical, and I am registered to vote as an independent, but I have no expectations of politicians, in general. The libertarian philosophy is based on the non-aggression principle (NAP) which holds that one may not *initiate* violence against any person, place, or thing. Please appreciate that this does not bar self-defense or defense of any person, place, or thing.
- By virtue of what do I also call myself a voluntaryist? A voluntaryist believes that all transactions between or among individuals should be voluntary for all individuals. This includes all individuals in a specific agreement, and excludes any who are not bound by that voluntary agreement.
- And how would I describe an individualist? An individualist believes that all individuals are created equal. Further, an individualist believes that all relationships should be on a 1-to-1 basis among individuals. No two individuals are alike in all respects, therefore dealing with others always involves unique needs and characteristics. I cannot be pegged by the 3 labels above, however, because, to paraphrase Walt Whitman, I contain multitudes. Each individual is the only one of her kind in all the universes.

I am convinced that there is no discord among these three tracks of philosophy.

— Kilgore Forelle