

Myth and Violence



Send him mail. [f](#) [t](#)

"One Voluntarist's Perspective" is an original column appearing most Mondays at Everything-Voluntary.com, by the founder and editor Skyler J. Collins. Archived columns can be found [here](#). OVP-only RSS feed available [here](#).

Non-libertarians are quick to deride libertarians as blaming all of society's ills on government. Many a libertarian do give knee-jerk reactions blaming the state for problems like terrorism, poverty, sickness, cancer, aliens, *et cetera*. While this can get really annoying, they usually aren't wrong. That they sound like a broken record is unfortunate, but the state, as an institution founded on and held up by violence and the dissemination of myth, really can't do anything good. The ends can't justify the means. While the state *is* to blame for many societal ills, the state is just a tool. The real fault lies at the feet of those who would use lies or violence to satisfy their greed, envy, and bigotry.

When Violence Fails, Use Myth

Violence is costly, even for those who employ violence while shifting the costs to others. If one cares to be accepted by those he's conquered, and thereby ending the need for outward violence, he must create a justification for his actions. For a time, claiming authority from God, a divine right, sufficed. When that failed, claiming a "social contract" took its place. Other justifications have been added, such as "representation," "democracy," and "you won't become a productive member of society without a government education." All of these were pulled out of a hat. They are myths used to create legitimacy for the ruling class, those who benefit at the expense of others.

When Myth Fails, Use Violence

Once society cycles a few generations, these myths become ingrained. History books are only accepted by government schools whose content makes the government look good. When some in the non-ruling class start questioning and speaking out against justifying myths, they are sooner or later on the receiving end of state violence. The state will make further justifications for their violence, such as "national security," or "tax evasion." There are millions of laws on the books and everyone breaks several every day. Any justification for shutting up myth-busters can be made and hold weight among public opinion. The

media values its own safety and learns over time the benefit of not rocking the statist quo.

Institutionalized Vice

There is no shortage of greed, envy, bigotry and other vices in the world. Most satisfy their appetites peacefully, but many resort to violence. The ruling class is no less vicious than anyone else. They are greedy, envious, and bigoted, but the major difference between them and the rest of society is the fact that they have managed to institutionalize their vices in the form of the state. Protected by myth (and power), the ruling class's plundering of the rest of society seems limitless, but as they are no more intelligent or enlightened than anyone else, their schemes eventually have them biting off more than they can chew. Many an unintended consequence of their actions have chipped away at the perception that their actions are for the good of society. Understanding economics helps one to see through the economic claims of the ruling class.

Final Thoughts

The above is mostly assertion. A fellow libertarian will readily accept everything written in this column. Non-libertarians will be challenged to accept the above as it concerns their own government, their ruling class. They should start with a mental exercise: Is the above true for the ruling class of North Korea? of 1770s Great Britain? of 1940s Germany? of 1980s Russia? Most assuredly, it is also true for 1780s, 1860s, and 2010s United States. The ruling class began with violence and continues with myth, whether here, there, now, or then. Every state is a criminal organization, and every member of the ruling class, a criminal.