

# On Individualism

I'm reading a terrific anthology of individualist thought edited by George H. Smith and Marilyn Moore. One essay was excerpted from Oscar Wilde and focuses on individualism being the least selfish among alternatives. Let me put it this way: I am an individualist first, voluntaryist second. I would prefer that everyone else be a voluntaryist as far as their politics are concerned, but I wouldn't coerce them to it. If they want to be socialist, that's fine, be socialist and enjoy your socialist utopia. I will respect your individuality by respecting your individual values and preferences. All I ask in return is that you respect my individuality as well. Can you do that? Can you also be an individualist first, and socialist, or communist, or fascist, or Republican, or Democrat second? Or must you disrespect my individuality by coercing me to accept *your* values and preferences? Are you truly so selfish (and greedy!) that you insist on coercing others to adopt your ideology? For shame! And that's today's two cents.