

# Am I a Radical Extremist?

*“One Improved Unit” is an original column appearing sporadically, by the founder and editor Skyler J. Collins.*

I’ve had to get used to a few words during my journey through voluntaryism. “Libertarian” was initially very strange to me. Then came “anarchist,” even more strange, and quite a bit controversial. Now I use both unabashedly. Likewise, I am quite alright calling myself or being called a “radical extremist.” Why? Because it’s absolutely true. Relatively speaking, I believe I am as radical and as extreme as they come, in many different ways.

## **Radical and Extreme**

Both of these concepts are relative to the context of a given state of affairs. Radical, from the Latin *radix* meant “of or having roots.” This was how it was used up until the 19th century, at which time it was (like most things political) turned on its head to mean “change from the roots.” Those who ran contrary to the *status quo*, the new root, were labeled as “radical” with an agenda of “radical reform.”

Extreme is from the Latin *extremus*, meaning, “outermost, utmost, farthest, last.” When one takes a position (philosophical, ethical, economic, what have you) that is as far away from general opinion that it could be, one is rightly considered an “extremist.” A “radical extremist,” then, is someone who advocates a position far outside the *status quo* of general opinion, considered the root of rational argument or “allowable opinion,” as Tom Woods puts it. Let’s see if I qualify.

## **The Politics of Society**

The *status quo* of general opinion advocates for: monopoly dispute adjudication, justice, law, order, and security, ie. the state; taxation; monopoly standing military armed with weapons of mass destruction; plutocratic central banking; monopoly economic and environmental regulation; monopoly road and utility provision; tax-funded and compulsorily-attended primary and secondary schooling. I’m sure I’ve missed something, but each and every one of those things are considered good and necessary by the public-at-large in most of the developed world.

What I advocate for: competitive private dispute adjudication, justice, law, order, and security; voluntary funding for any and all goods and services one wishes to receive; competitive private military armed only with weapons that can pinpoint a target without any collateral damage to person or property; competitive banking institutions, competitive economic and environmental regulation; competitive road and utility provision; voluntarily-funded (by parents or students) and -attended (by the students themselves) educational

institutions.

## **The Politics of the Family**

The *status quo* of general opinion advocates for: parental supremacy and control of children; infant and toddler detachment and “cry-it-out”; forced feeding and bedtimes; regulated use of available media; compulsory education, either at home or in a school; parental direction of the activities and interests of children; coercive behavior control; physical (spanking, time-outs) or non-physical (loss of privileges) punishment for undesirable behavior; rewards (attention, praise, gifts) for desirable behavior. Again, I’m sure I’ve missed something, but at least a few and often all of these things are considered good and necessary by the myriad societies and cultures of the developed world.

What I advocate for: parent-child equality and self-control; infant and toddler attachment, breastfeeding, baby-wearing, and co-sleeping; food and bedtime freedom; unlimited use of available media; child-directed, interest-based education, at home or out in the world; self-directed activities and interests, parent or child; love-based influence of behavior; the absence of physical punishment or rewards for undesirable behavior; unconditional love.

## **Final Thoughts**

I don’t think you can be any further away from a position than by advocating for it’s opposite. The *status quo* of general opinion and the positions I take are, plainly put, *antithetical*. Yes, I think I do qualify for the label of “radical extremist.” I wear it proudly, but look forward to the time when my radical extremism *is* the *status quo* of general opinion, when everyone, adult and child alike, has the liberty to do as they please with themselves and their property. To that end, do I labor.