

# The State is Not the Way

I wrote the below as a reply to a blog post by Daniel Mackler, who is exploring voluntarism in relation to his beliefs that humans aggress both against nature, for obvious reasons, and against the unborn by not working through their own childhood traumas before having kids. The latter of these ideas is very intriguing to me as an adult who experienced childhood trauma, and a current peaceful parenting. His post is [here](#). My reply (hyperlinks added):

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Daniel, I discovered you recently through Amy Child's podcast, who I discovered through her unschooling podcast, which I discovered from an unschooling group on Facebook, which I joined a ways back after discovering unschooling, which I found when researching homeschooling, which I discovered after committing to not using force or threats with my children (to go to school, or punishments), which I decided was more in line with my socio-political beliefs, which are voluntarism and anarchism (no rulers). (I run [www.everything-voluntary.com](http://www.everything-voluntary.com), where I write a weekly column, blog, and podcast.) One conclusion that voluntarism (the voluntary principle, the non-aggression or zero-aggression principle) will lead you to, is the competitive provision of law and order, or in other words, the competitive provision of governmental services. Voluntarism, then, is necessarily anti-state, the state being the institution in a given territorial boundary that illegitimately monopolizes (historically and morally) the provision of law and order, or put another way, the legal use of force.

Without the state, without a central authority to decide what is and what is not law, law then must be discovered and developed through a market-based process. When two or more people have a dispute, they either resolve it themselves (peacefully, or with violence, which is much more costly in many different ways, from direct harm to market reputation) or take it before an impartial third party. As disputes are resolved, norms, conventions, customs, *et cetera*, develop and propagate outward in a given society. I recommend Bruce Benson's *The Enterprise of Law* for both an historical and a theoretical look at this process. <http://amzn.to/1uoHlam>

What this amounts to, is that if you believe that aggression is occurring, say against nature, it's up to you to convince others to the point that such aggression will become a violation of the norms, convention, and customs, of a given society. This can be accomplished through either force or persuasion. Wisdom will dictate which is more likely to change hearts and minds, therefore furthering your cause. Same goes for things like drug abuse and abortion.

In any event, what voluntarism absolutely opposes for many different reasons is the centralization, or concentration, of government power into the hands of a few, which

process is likely to attract and benefit the most sociopathic among us, and lead to much greater horrors than what you (and I) currently lament (think Stalin, Hitler, Mao, you get the picture). See Murray Rothbard's essay in my book primer on voluntaryism:  
<http://everything-voluntary.com/2012/05/everything-voluntary-chapter-4.html>

Expecting the state (a panoply of individuals with their own special interests) to have not only genuine concern for what you consider to be aggressive acts, but also the ability and power to combat them without thereby unleashing a host of new horrors among society, is to expect what never was and, in my opinion, what never will be. The state is simply not the way to go about aligning society to your ideals. You will have much more success, a higher return on investment, doing what you're currently doing. My website, [www.everything-voluntary.com](http://www.everything-voluntary.com), has more on voluntaryism. I invite you to explore it.

Skyler.