

What is a Libertarian?

A person on a forum I frequently visit asked the group about what a libertarian truly is, since he didn't believe in natural rights or the non-aggression principle.

For the record, he was opposed to tyranny and the government through Biblical support and his spiritual/religious beliefs. The anti-government attitude was there, but the motivation is completely different.

This question really got me thinking about the various divisions there are in libertarianism and how it would be very hard for an outsider to understand what one truly is.

I am a self-confessed minarchist (or a "Limited Exortionist", as some may say). This is much more of a mainstream brand and I've met several others who are 100% anarchist in their beliefs. I really have nothing against them either. In my view, we all follow the same moral principle of letting others live their lives without interference.

The question still remains though... what is a libertarian?

My answer, in a nutshell, is: someone who believes in the concept of liberty and individualism above everything else.

I used to be a very Sarah Palin-esque conservative five years ago. I believed everything that the Republican Party said and what various talk-radio hosts blurted out over the air.

My parting with conservatives was when I took a step back and realized that they were just as bad as statist when it came to issues of personal morality.

After doing a lot of research and coming across a novella by Ayn Rand called *Anthem*, I suddenly realized that people had different paths and destinies. Who are we to interfere in someone's life because we see them as a part of a group?

Everyone is an individual. No government should have the power to come into someone's life and punish him or her for the crimes that others have committed.

The way I see it is this: libertarianism is more than a political philosophy, it's a way of viewing things. When I was a conservative, I used to look at someone who the conservative community looked down on and see someone horrible.

Now, when I look at someone who is in a lifestyle I just so happen to disagree with, I put myself in their shoes and I don't judge. I let him or her live the life they want to.

This is due to my very strong beliefs that I've adopted through this philosophy. I don't

think every lifestyle is right, but I do believe that people should pursue their own destinies without my forced interference.

I don't think you can be a leftist and a libertarian due to support of massive government intervention and the belittling of true individualism. However, if your beliefs all come to the conclusion that liberty and freedom are a necessity in society, then I say that you're a libertarian.

-ZA

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