

Gavin Seim on Anarchy: A Rebuttal

By: Shane Radliff

June 23rd, 2016

[Liberty Under Attack](#)



A short while ago, I came across a blog post by Gavin Seim titled [*The Lack of Order in Anarchy*](#). I read through it, and realized it was worthy of a rebuttal. Granted, there wasn't much to rebut, but there was an awful lot to correct and elaborate upon.

Seim is a Constitutional. It's all over his website, and he openly states that he "has an unwavering dedication to life, liberty and the Constitution" but apparently not to the Oxford comma.

Although, the [first sentence of his About Gav page](#), claims that he "is a liberty speaker, **abolitionist** and activist with a message of liberty and principled defiance of tyranny." [Emphasis added]

That's quite strange, because as far as I am aware, there are only two types of abolitionists—those who wish to abolish slavery, and those who wish to abolish government. In regards to the former, race slavery has ended, and therefore, the label of "abolitionist" in that context is a moot point. Subsequently, most (if not all) anarchists recognize taxation as slavery, and therefore, both of those types fit right in with the anarchist position.

To reiterate, it's apparent that Seim is a strict adherent to the "paper cage" and the "rule of law." The next question to ask is this: what is he trying to abolish, if not government? I'm afraid I am unable to answer this with any certainty, but I would posit that there may have been a semantical or logical miscalculation when that page was being put together.

Now that I've provided a bit of background, as well as an initial concern, here's his blog post.

[1] As a lover of liberty, the liberals accuse me of being [an] anarchist – This is ironic since the tyranny I stand against is actually a government, who is itself creating chaos and violating the highest laws of our land.

[2] Those far on the other side advocate anarchy, saying that it's the only way we can have freedom. But in truth liberty is the opposite of anarchy, for in liberty is peace and in anarchy is chaos. I think most who advocate anarchy would detest the result of their wish.

[3] One can be both against anarchy and against tyranny. The liberals call me [an] anarchist for adhering to the very foundations this nation was framed on. The anarchists call me delusional for not wanting to tear down any frame at all. Can I win?

Yes – Lets consider the reality.

[4] **There is really no such thing as an anarchist society.** You see, as soon as you get that chaos, those with the most muscle and biggest guns emerge and make a government anew, forcing all to follow.

[5] Governments are instituted among men and this cannot be abolished – It therefore falls to us to restrict such governments. To bind them fast with the laws of freedom, with godly moral codes and true liberty.

[6] There are two choices: Live under tyranny or stand up for morality and justice!

Gavin

Even though it was extremely short, I'm sure that was difficult for my anarchist readers to get through, and I feel your pain.

For the remainder of the article, I will address the bracketed portions.

[1] Considering how studied Seim is on the Constitution and the founding fathers, it's disconcerting that he uses the political label of "liberal" here to describe progressives. As I'm sure he's aware, the founding fathers were classical liberals, and with his rigid position, I would have expected him to be clearer with his language; although, that is only a minor point.

The portion after the hyphen is what is most confusing to me. Is he saying that anarchists can't "stand against" governments? If that is the claim, then his credibility on anarchism can be discounted immediately.

Or maybe, he was alluding to the fact that anarchism etymologically means “no rulers,” which must imply that “we” don’t recognize the existence of government—and you can’t fight against something you don’t believe in, right? ([Insert slight against the Christian Conservative endless tirade against a God they don’t believe in—Allah](#)).

Speaking for myself, this entity known as “government” is simply a group of people that have claimed the right to rule, although, I am aware of people’s belief in their authority. To live as if this entity didn’t exist would surely lead to kidnapping and/or an early death, and is not advised. The anarchists I associate with are some of the most rational and logical folks I have ever had the pleasure of speaking to—the implied naiveté of anarchists on Seim’s part is almost offensive.

[2] The evidence of his complete misunderstanding of anarchy is only further demonstrated in this paragraph. He seems to think that anarchism exists on the same paradigm as the progressive statists.

If you look at [most mainstream charts of the left-right paradigm](#), you will see communism on the left and fascism on the right, and near the center you will see Constitutionalism. He didn’t make a single economic argument, so he surely didn’t imply that anarchism was fascist.

That said, this is something I’ve seen come up over and over again. Consistent libertarianism and anarchism (whatever label you prefer) do not exist on the left-right spectrum—that spectrum is authoritarian, whereas consistent libertarianism and anarchism are (anti)political philosophies that explicitly reject Leviathan, whether it appears in blue (democrat), red (republican), or gold and blue (the [anti-libertarian “Libertarian” party](#)).

Seim regurgitates the “anarchy is chaos” nonsense, without even attempting to support his argument. It’s also worth noting that in [1], he explicitly acknowledged that the government he’s standing against “is itself creating chaos,” yet he insists the only way to restore liberty is “to restrict such governments,” and “[t]o bind them fast with the laws of freedom.” Going off his flawed, incomplete logic, the same argument could be made against his own political ideology; that is, constitutional republicanism is ultimately responsible for all of this tyrannical chaos because [the smallest governments always become the largest](#), so “restoring” the “paper cage” does not solve the problem of tyranny, but in fact, simply resetting the clock back to 1787 would not prevent events from rolling forward the exact same way they already have.

It appears that there is an attempt at emotional manipulation in the last sentence: “I think most who advocate anarchy would detest the result of their wish.” Just as the burden of proof isn’t on atheists with regards to religion, the burden of proof is NOT on anarchists, with regards to politics. Rather, believers in the religion of statism have to provide sufficient evidence to convince “us” to believe in their violent, coercive “god,” called government.

In closing, there *is* sufficient evidence to prove that the chaos he fears with anarchy, is a requirement when it comes to any government, in any country, with whatever constitution, no matter how limited and small it may begin at first; it’s almost as if Seim is being willfully ignorant of the [Cycle of the State](#).

[3] “One can be both against anarchy and against tyranny.”

In other words, one can be against an ideology that etymologically means “without rulers”, while simultaneously recognizing the tyranny and actively fighting back against those who falsely imagine themselves to be “our” rulers. Hm. Put that way, there is definitely something wrong with that sentence.

“The liberals call me [an] anarchist for adhering to the very foundations this nation was framed [upon.]”

As Mr. Seim is probably aware, progressives have a tenuous grasp of logic, rationality, and reality. Going off their logic, I should have white guilt for the legally sanctioned race slavery of blacks, even though (1) I was not alive at the time, and (2) I judge people based off their actions, not off of biological attributes; put more simply, their lives are not my fault, and my life is none of their business.

That said, I’m not surprised that they accused him of being an anarchist. Anyone that is not for the rapid expansion of government is one to them, it seems like—that, or a [racist, bigoted, transphobic, misogynistic, minority hating asshole](#). Although, Constitutionalists do advocate for government, just one that has a “paper cage” around it—to call them “anarchists” is a misnomer, just as the term “anti-government” would be for those who explicitly advocate for a hypothetically limited ruling class.

That transitions nicely into the last portion that I will address in section [3].

I wouldn’t be surprised if anarchists have called him delusional for working towards and wanting to see the [restoration of constitutional government](#)—they’re not necessarily wrong, although, that’s not the word I would have used. I prefer “[economically illiterate](#).”

[Minarchists](#) more generally advocate for three government monopolies, two of which are specifically enumerated in the 1787 federal Constitution: military, police, and courts.

From what I’ve been able to gather, the main reason they advocate for these monopolies, is due to their lack faith in those services being supplied, fairly, justly, and spontaneously through the Market in response to customer demand. They view that any services involving the use of force to be ultimately socialized via taxation as in the “public” interest, much like “public” health or “public” land. If there were “public” food production, then I guess American citizens would be currently standing in bread lines much like how the Soviet citizenry used to do; watch out for those “public” utilities, kids!

On *Liberty Under Attack Radio*, we’ve covered the [privatization of security](#) with [Commander Dale Brown of the Threat Management Center](#) and [law in an anarchist society](#), so there’s no reason to re-invent the wheel here. Rather, I’ll link those two broadcasts and point you in the direction of Gustave de Molinari’s [The Production of Security](#) and Roger Roots’ academic whitepaper [Are Cops Constitutional?](#)

To briefly summarize, the functions of the monopolized police and courts could be replaced by the Market, and there are examples that exist today. Sure, it is possible that there could be some bad results, but as [Gustave de Molinari](#) said:

“Anarchy is no guarantee that some people won’t kill, injure, kidnap, defraud, or steal from others. Government is a guarantee that some will.”

In closing, no Mr. Seim can’t win with his advocacy of a hypothetically “limited” government. The definition of insanity is trying the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. “The People” have always tried to restrain the power of government, but time and time and time again (without exception), government always becomes an impediment to the freedoms of its citizenry—it even happened with his [“sacred Constitution.”](#)

[Lysander Spooner](#) explained that quite succinctly:

*“But whether the Constitution really be one thing, or another, this much is certain—that it has either **authorized such a government** as we have had, or has been **powerless to prevent it**. It either case, it is unfit to exist.”* [Emphasis added]

[4] “There is really no such thing as an anarchist society.”

There is no such thing as a “limited government.” I can make statements too, although, empirical evidence throughout history proves mine, such as [Ireland’s tuath legal system](#), as opposed to glib catchphrases that in reality, contradict documented history.

He continues: “You see, as soon as you get that chaos, those with the most muscle and biggest guns emerge and make a government anew, forcing all to follow.”

Anarchy is not a [“utopia”](#) and anyone who makes that claim is not living in reality. Although, not everyone is a violent psychopath. In their day-to-day lives (excluding infrequent trips to the voting booth), most people respect property rights and uphold their contracts; [those that don’t are, for the most part, governments.](#)

There’s this notion propagated by statists that, if the government disappeared tomorrow, all morals and ethics would go out the window. It would literally turn into [The Purge](#). I honestly don’t think that would be the case because morality is popularly enforced through social custom despite the State, not because of it.

As an atheist, I don’t care much for biblical morals and codes, but take this for example: more than 75% of Americans identify as Christians. Do you remember the [“rule” that most all of “us” were taught as children?](#) It was the Golden Rule: “Do to others as you would have them do to you.”

I find it hard to believe that even more than a fraction of a percent of those folks would decide to reject their religion altogether and begin raping and pillaging simply due to the fact that “their” government had just collapsed or was otherwise abolished; I just can’t find a better example of unjustified, bald-faced fear-mongering.

In summation, I find the “anarchy will lead to chaos” claim to be a misplaced and irrational fear. Statism only profits vertically because its sycophants will berate, ridicule, and shun those for pointing out the truth of “our” lives together under Leviathan. Ask yourselves how many times have you been directly attacked by the State (arrested, prosecuted, taxed, etc.) and then ask yourselves how many times you have been humiliated, rejected, and lied about by your fellow citizens? It is simply a numbers game; [the State is horizontal](#), and Gavin Seim is just further reinforcing that fact with this disingenuous hit piece.

[5] There are only two points I wish to make in this section.

First off, “governments are instituted among men,” but they certainly can be abolished. Government indoctrination (public schooling) has done a number to the critical thinking skills of the majority of population (though, [Seim was homeschooled](#), so this doesn’t apply to him; therefore, he has even less of an excuse to be ignorant of the truth than others of his generation). It has also instilled in them the belief that governments are not necessary evils, but rather that they are necessary gods to be worshipped and obeyed without question.

Larken Rose has discussed this extensively, but the [belief in authority is what needs to be banished from the minds of men](#): this is the idea that a group of men can get together and claim the right to rule over an entire population.

Secondly, he injects “godly moral codes,” into his rhetoric. Religion is open to interpretation, and I prefer my own moral and ethical codes to be on much sturdier ground; namely, [non-aggression](#) and [self-ownership](#)—there’s no reason for it to be any more complicated than that, and, at least with the “moral codes” of Christianity, they seem to be better in-line with human nature as it currently stands.

[6] “There are two choices: Live under tyranny or stand up for morality and justice!”

First off, notice that he’s imposing a dichotomy upon his readers. “Do this, or that will happen!” His George W. Bush impression of unilaterally issuing ultimatums harms his credibility here, I think.

Secondly, is this supposed to be an [argument against anarchism](#)? If so, it completely and utterly fails. Anarchists have a lot of internal debates about [morality](#) and [ethics](#), and they also read a lot of books on the subject. At the very least, [argumentation ethics](#) is an end, a means, and an insight.

That said, this is ridiculously vague and without any elaboration, so I have to assume he’s claiming that “[living under tyranny](#)” is anarchism, and “[stand\[ing\] up for morality and justice](#)” is Constitutionalism.

This is so nonsensical, I'm not quite sure how to respond to it; it's almost as bad as saying that Alexander Hamilton was in favor of free markets, when in fact, he [originally proposed the hated whiskey tax](#) in order to pay down the interest accrued on the socialized war debt.

Every day, "we" all experience anarchy, the spontaneity within "our" own lives. Whether that is a random walk around the neighborhood, a snap decision to [buy a fifth of Jameson](#), or reaching out to an old friend, it doesn't matter. There is no central planner; we are left to "our" own devices—"our" mind, "our" impulses, "our" needs, "our" desires.

No coercion exists there, no justice is to be served, and there are no moral judgements to be made, insofar as no other individual's person or property is damaged; in other words, [vices are not crimes](#).

In summation, comparing "anarchy" to "tyranny" is much like comparing "love-making" to "rape." It is a contradiction worthy of dialogical estoppel.

Conclusion

Seim has done his fair share of [direct action](#), namely [civil defiance](#), so I don't want to completely discount his efforts. [He has the courage to do things a lot of others don't](#), and for that I have at least a little respect for him. Although, he and I clearly have major ideological differences, as has been represented.

That said, any respect disappears when examining his short, non-argument against anarchism. Not only did he fail to understand what anarchism entails, but he had the audacity to speak out against it using strawman fallacies; it's much like what the progressives do when it comes to [gun control](#), ironically enough.

The title of his article is also peculiar, and again, demonstrates his lack of knowledge regarding both anarchism and the free market. There is no "[lack of order](#)." When no central planner exists, the demand for goods and services still do, which are subsequently provided by the suppliers—it's called the [spontaneous order](#) of the market. Seim, particularly, should have opposed central planning on principle, because gun control itself, which Seim presumably opposes, is itself a form of central planning.

I would recommend that he read Henry Hazlitt's [Economics in One Lesson](#) and also Leonard Read's [I, Pencil](#). In regards to the former, he could better understand the detrimental effects caused by government intervention in the Market (an inevitable consequence of the existence of the State). In regards to the latter, if the government can't even centrally plan a pencil, then how could they ever centrally plan "justice?" I'll leave him to also contemplate what [Frédéric Bastiat has written as well](#):

"Now, after having vainly inflicted upon the social body so many systems, let them end where they ought to have begun – reject all systems, and try liberty – liberty, which is an act of faith in God and in His work."

If you enjoyed this article and appreciate the work put into it, please consider financially supporting Liberty Under Attack. Make a one-time donation through PayPal or make a monthly contribution through Patreon. Click the images below to do either.

