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Much of the violence in the streets of Seattle during meetings of the World Trade Organization has allegedly been perpetrated by self-proclaimed anarchists. But there never have been, are, and never will be anarchists.

Anarchists advocate the absence of any form of political authority. Yet forms of political authority are inherent to human functioning. Human psychology operates in a socially constructed space of infinite needs and finite resources to satisfy those needs. The quest to manage the disparity between needs and resources is the essence of politics and de facto political authority between, among, and even within humans characterizes this quest. To become an anarchist, one must deny that which is human. Such attempts at denial are also very human and doomed to failure.

Anarchists advocate political disorder and confusion. Self-proclaimed anarchists most often attempt to effect disorder and confusion through violence, sabotage, and related threats. Yet violence, sabotage, and related threats almost always are the surest ways to effect order and clarity through significant--sometimes, massive--counter-response of various political authorities and their representatives. The "an" of the anarchist is immediately doomed.

Anarchists advocate absence of any coherent principle--e.g., a common purpose or standard--as a foundation of meaning and a guide to behavior. Yet the very advocacy of anarchy is that very coherent principle. Here the anarchist is hoisted by the proverbial petard.