

# The Zeroth Law of Power

January 28, 2019 | 222 upvotes | by [Whisper](#)

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Ultimately, the Red Pill is about winning. Certainly, it was invented to be nothing but a pool of observations and speculations about what really is, but the reason we care about this shit is so we can get what we want.

Knowledge is important because knowledge is power.

And we can read the 48 Laws of Power for some valuable suggestions on how to attain and wield power. But what about knowledge about power? Surely that is the most powerful of all. What are the underlying principles upon which power is based, and with which it can be analyzed and understood?

Examine this possibility:

**The Zeroth Law of Power: In any interaction, power is held in inverse proportion to need. He who needs the least from an interaction has the most power within it.**

When we try thinking this way, we can see arguments, negotiations, and power struggles in a whole new light.

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## Comments

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kalashnick • 56 points • 28 January, 2019 08:38 AM

This is so true. When I find myself wanting something to the point where my sovereignty hangs in the balance, I feel my power draining away. But when I take a step back and remind myself to think abundantly, my control is restored. And nothing I could possibly want is worth that.

TitusDorsus85 points 28 January, 2019 10:04 AM **[recovered]**

Avoid as much as possible being in a position of inferiority. You will always be the fool. Be as much independent as possible.

But if you are in a position of superiority, don't abuse of your power by exploiting others otherwise you will create resentment and they will go on war against you when they will be more powerful.

Use your power to help them grow and you will create allies.

oooKenshiooo • 49 points • 28 January, 2019 02:51 PM

This is absolutely true.

ALSO: PEOPLE WILL ABSOLUTELY FUCK WITH YOU, JUST BECAUSE THEY CAN.

They can't help it. Weakness disgusts them. It is a reflex. Never assume anyone is as kind as you are.

Let me tell you a story:

My car broke down at a gas station a few weeks ago. It was in the evening, in the depth of winter. Because there was so much chaos on the roads and I was in a remote area by European standards, there were no towing vehicles available. Pushing it even for a few yards was impossible because of the snow.

After about an hour and two cups of gas station coffee, I managed to find a mechanic who was willing to tow me first thing in the morning (and he also promised fast service to my car).

But when I went to the lady working the gas station, very politely telling her about my predicament and the need to park my car there overnight, she and her supervisor went hostile almost immediately. I was so surprised.

"You have to get the car away NOW, you are costing us customers."

"If you don't, get rid of the car, we will have someone tow you!" (haha, good luck with that!)

"We will call the police!"

Fortunately, my state of shock turned into amusement pretty quickly. I saw what went on. So I smiled, shrugged, and I told them they were free to try. As I was about to leave, the manager suddenly had a change of heart and helped me push my car through the deep snow towards a less obstructing area of the compound.

I was then later picked up by my very loyal LTR, who did not hesitate a second to drive an hour through a snow storm.

Bottomline:

A gas station lost a regular customer.

A car mechanic gained a regular customer.

My LTR proved her worth.

empatheticapathetic • 20 points • 28 January, 2019 09:50 PM

Call me stupid but I really didn't understand the point of the story.

[deleted] • 7 points • 28 January, 2019 11:44 PM

The gas station lady was a super cunt for no reason; because of that, her odious lack of cooperation, she lost a customer.

oooKenshiooo • 15 points • 29 January, 2019 01:32 AM

Okay, I'll call you stupid. But I'll explain it.

The gas station employees instantly turned hostile once it became clear that I needed a favor from them.

Whilst still a customer, they were super nice to me, because they were in a position of need. (needing my money)

Once I was in a position of need, they turned super mean within seconds, their faces displaying disgust. They resorted to threatening me, instead of helping.

Once I realized they were being mean because they perceived me as a weak, needy beta, I resorted to displaying aloofness and a zero fucks attitude towards their (empty) threats, they became nice and helpful again.

My mechanic on the other hand did not hesitate to go the extra mile. And neither did my LTR. Which is why I will keep them in my life.

Law zero in action.

HitMan8811 • 26 points • 28 January, 2019 01:11 PM

However, never isolate yourself by being independent, interdependence is key.

Dash\_of\_islam • 11 points • 28 January, 2019 02:39 PM

Yeah civilization is predicated on cooperation. Lone wolves don't invent or innovate much

wanderer779 • 4 points • 29 January, 2019 01:23 AM

> Lone wolves don't invent or innovate much

Depends on the field. I took a lot of science classes and I'd posit that most of my textbooks were based off lone wolf discoveries. The lone wolf is a necessary part of the system.

Dash\_of\_islam • 9 points • 29 January, 2019 02:35 AM

What I meant was society creates a safe enough situation where a lone wolf has the time and safety to innovate.

Once agriculture became a thing, we had the ability to specialize in different fields because we were no longer spending the majority of our day looking for food.

But the foundation is a society of some kind that works on interdependence.

[deleted] • 1 point • 28 January, 2019 11:41 PM

Yes, but, it's important to cooperate with the right people.

Look at how the Republicans always 'cooperate' with the Dems, and always get butt fucked. The Dems never cooperate with the Pubs, and always seem to come out on top, Hillary's present circumstances notwithstanding.

IOW, you may be the sheep cooperating with the wolf.

Dash\_of\_islam • 7 points • 28 January, 2019 11:55 PM

The illusion of cooperation is useful strategically.

[deleted] • 3 points • 29 January, 2019 01:12 AM

The illusion of cooperation is useful strategically.

Sometimes. Sometimes, it's not: witness Nancy Pelosi saying "We're not giving a fucking inch, and there's nothing you can do about it." And, there was nothing we could do about it. Sometimes, it's Joe Biden, at Bill Clinton's impeachment trial, telling everybody in advance that Clinton wouldn't be found guilty, and the exact members that would vote exactly how...and be 100% correct.

The Pubs are using 'cooperation' as their 'only' strategy. Look where that ends up.

wanderer779 • 5 points • 29 January, 2019 01:16 AM

Alternative theory, they never had any intention of fighting for your interests and were just paying lip service to it to get you to vote for them.

\_do\_not\_read\_this\_ • 29 points • 28 January, 2019 01:10 PM

In my business - lawyer - it's often not so clear cut, but it's good to keep this definition in mind, and exploit the *balance* in your favor.

Example: last year a client was fretting about selling a business, the buyer had some demands that didn't benefit my client in any way, but would cost them another \$xxk (to hire and train a replacement) and put them at risk of having to spend another \$xxk on top if another condition came true, all for the benefit of the buyer, no benefit for the seller. Fretting over lunch, fretting ... fretting ... (all the while I was thinking how to game the cute waitress ... ha ha).

And my client is sort of desperate to sell, but hadn't sought out other buyers (lack of abundance!).

As the client kept talking, it became clear that the \*buyer\* had invested lots of money into reviewing the business, and I found out that my client's business - an exclusive franchise covering a really good territory - was crucial to the buyer's expansion plans to become a regional franchise player.

The buyer needed to buy, but my client didn't \*need\* to sell, they just wanted a quick and easy sale, but weren't desperate.

Balance shifted in my client's favor. Told the seller to stuff their conditions, they did, sale went through.

five-acorn • 2 points • 28 January, 2019 11:41 PM

This sounds like information asymmetry. Neither needs/ desperation shifted for either party. Not in reality. They could have been bluffing, but again, that's pure information asymmetry.

OP's original point is unclear. Is he talking about information gathering, or "reducing" your own neediness somehow? That is unclear here. Yes, you want an abundance mentality. Actually -- you want an honest assessment of the market. Abundance and scarcity both really do exist in nature. The problem is when you have a false belief (hot women are extremely abundant in reality ---- Betas think they are very scarce).

If silver "becomes scarce" -- then positive affirmations about how it's really abundant so you're not going to negotiate/ play hardball are just idiotic.

I do see this in friends though. The real issue is that many Betas have this "gloom and doom" and weakness mentality. Where everything will fail, paranoia is extremely high, risk aversion is super high. Don't take

chances, don't stand out, don't take risks, don't make waves, etc ... or Tommy the high school QB who shoved you into a locker 12 years ago will come around and punch you in the face.

[deleted] • 12 points • 28 January, 2019 09:37 PM

The power to walk away, to be willing to lose it all...

[deleted] • 8 points • 28 January, 2019 11:13 AM

A worthy addition to Robert Greene's book.

briand932 • 4 points • 28 January, 2019 04:56 PM

You are doing something, saying something, living some way, and they want you to stop. Urgently... because if they did not want it urgently, they would simply have avoided you, and the unpleasantness you represent.

Essentially the character portrayal of Howard Roark in *The Fountainhead*. The whole world is out to get him because he lives life his own way and doesn't seek any sort of validation from others. If you haven't read this book yet, it should be at the top of your reading list.

adonis\_syche • 1 point • 28 January, 2019 05:30 PM

Every conversation in Fountainhead is like an invitation to give a speech or something. Good book, no hate, but JESUS McPhesus, who talks for so long uninterruptedly?

briand932 • 3 points • 28 January, 2019 05:58 PM

Yeah, it's definitely less of a story and more of a conduit for Ayn Rand to convey her philosophy to readers.

SelfTaughtPiano • 3 points • 29 January, 2019 12:32 PM

Have you read Lord of the Rings?

[deleted] • 2 points • 28 January, 2019 11:46 PM

Every conversation in Fountainhead is like an invitation to give a speech or something. Good book, no hate, but JESUS McPhesus, who talks for so long uninterruptedly?

Come work with me, you'll find a whole gaggle of these people!

[deleted] • 4 points • 28 January, 2019 08:48 PM

Knowledge is power but not in the sense you present it.

If you take the antithesis of 'power lies in ideas' then this relativism is the thesis that 'power lies in people.' The synthesis can only be achieved by a discourse and if you were to *choose* to "be less needy" and not participate in a discussion then you only hold power relative to other people which is to say you would be holding power and leading them nowhere.

Accordingly this method is materialistic and doesn't give men a higher principle to orient themselves upon both as individual leaders, and behind you as their ideology dealer.

privili • 2 points • 30 January, 2019 12:20 AM

No.

Power is mostly dependent on what you are willing (and able) to DO or not do.

Certainly in sexual relationships it can be detrimental if you need your partner to feel good. Also if you openly communicate desperation you will have a hard time making good business deals.

But this does not mean that needing/wanting is making you powerless per se.

First of all, it is mostly not about how much you need something, but more about how much the other party THINKS you need something, and second, this mechanic usually only comes into play when there are extremes involved, like apathy or desperation, both of which are detrimental to your success.

five-acorn • 2 points • 28 January, 2019 11:23 PM\*

I wouldn't say that's true.

Obviously, in a sexual relationship, the person that cares the least has the power. Sure. For various reasons. That's where you got this from.

Not true in other relationships. If you're in a landlord's market, for instance, where renters outstrip landlords, then the landlord's have all the power. It doesn't matter if you're a renter and "don't give a shit, I'm Mr. Cool". Literally no one cares. Start dancing for dollars, or get the fuck out. Does that have more to do with need, or the balance of the market place?

Now if you're pointing out that you "absolutely" need something from a specific person, then they have leverage over you. Why yes, yes they do. Not sure the practical advice offered here, however.

The source of all power is physical violence. I'm not a violent man. It's just the way it is. In nature, most interactions go like this: I eat you now. Bye bye.

Same with most of human history.

Now, all legitimate physical violence is sanctioned by the state. Local law enforcement and military. Of course our laws are enforced by violence but that also includes your own rights like the right to self defense.

In practice, most legitimate physical violence or threat of physical violence is propped up by political power. That power is often propped up by economic powers (the Koch bros or whatever Tech asswipe and other capitalists). And the reality is, even in day to day life, social power outstrips any actual "fight skills" you may have. A dime bag women with a nice snatch can command a lot of monkey males to fight for her honor. And 5 males > 1 black belt male most of the time, especially if weapons are involved.

So yeah most power these days are derived in combination of social and economic value. I guess it was always like that. Maybe in tribal days, before guns even, physical stature and aggression held some more real tangible benefit. That's why girls like alphas. But social savvy was never discounted.

So yeah. Most of life operates like the ocean. Cartilidge sacks quickly, violently, snatching other cartilidge sacks for food. Your life was suddenly, violently, meaninglessly ended by a boxing shrimp or evil worm that broke your body in half, snorted up your insides, and is now turning you into poo. Welcome to Earth and the uncaring universe.

Obviously Greene talks at length about power but I think more thought can be considered. He's absolutely right that a fluid structure like water is harder to attack than a solid castle. That's one of his best laws. Not only is it true in many facets of life, but even in Boxing/ BJJ itself this is true.

[deleted] 28 January, 2019 10:00 AM

[permanently deleted]

rhys5584 • 1 point • 28 January, 2019 09:03 PM

A power law competition sounds good.

mental\_models • 1 point • 28 January, 2019 11:07 PM

Be aware of your value and your market position.

[deleted] • 1 point • 29 January, 2019 03:43 AM

And I click the link to go read the full text because you hold the power. I "need" to read the rest of your thoughts, more than you need me to. So you exercise your power in the situation to get me to visit the site I keep neglecting to visit.

whatdidshewrite • 1 point • 12 February, 2019 02:55 PM

This is a bit tautological considering power is a lack of necessity