



STUDENTS

In Defense of Freedom



Edited by Andrew Reder



Foreword

Over the past forty years, Northwood University has produced the iconic volume, *When We Are Free*. Used in class by every Northwood student, it is “an unapologetic endorsement of freedom and all of its corollaries: individualism, moral law, personal responsibility, private property, free markets, limited government, and business enterprise.” In the inaugural edition of *When We Are Free* (1981), Lawrence W. Reed stated, “No social movement in history has ever succeeded without a literature: good books are the fountainhead of good movements; bad books set evil forces in motion”.

More than forty years after the first edition of *When We Are Free* was released, Northwood students have heeded Dr. Reed’s advice, launching this inaugural edition of *Students in Defense of Freedom*. It is an impressive collection of articles committed to liberty.

This inaugural volume reflects how Northwood students think critically, and seriously embrace individual responsibility and self-determination. Each article provides the reader with insights and lessons from the perspective of a current Northwood student. I encourage you to read each article to better understand how our students reflect the values of The Northwood Idea.

In *Students in Defense of Freedom*, you will be introduced to Riley Hayer, a member of Northwood’s nationally ranked Mock Trial team. He makes the case for a third political party to break the oligopoly that exists between the Republicans and Democrats.

Freshman Andrew Willit serves on the Board of Turning Point USA. He argues in favor of undeniable second amendment rights, and how they outweigh possible negatives on American Society.

Alex Lowell is a varsity tennis player at Northwood and is deeply committed to freedom. In *Capitalism: The Bearer of Freedom*, Alex reminds us that capitalism enhances our freedom and provides a better life for all people.



Dr. Kent MacDonald is a highly regarded leader in the North American higher education sector. He has completed graduate degrees in education and business, and his doctoral dissertation explored leadership within high-performing colleges.

With over thirty years experience in higher education and private business, he was named the 6th president of Northwood University in 2019. He is married to Dr. Mary-Ellen MacPhee, also a lifelong educator. They have four children who reside in cities across North America.

Dr. MacDonald is an unabashed champion for The Northwood Idea.

Alissa Butcher is an honors student and Northwood's Turning Point USA Chapter President. Alissa is from Troy, Michigan and provides evidence in support of capitalism, and maintains socialism fails in all cases, destroys countries, and ruins lives.

Alex Marashai is a graduate student at Northwood's DeVos Graduate School of Management. He provides the reader with a case against critical race theory (CRT), suggesting it is simply a left ideology and serves as a tool of cultural Marxism.

Finally, Students in Defense of Freedom Editor Andrew Reder makes the case that home school is a personal right, and the state does not have the constitutional right to regulate education. He believes school choice must be protected if we wish for all children to thrive and meet their full potential.

At Northwood University we have a strong commitment to personal freedom, rule of law, limited government, and free enterprise. Our values reflect a belief that in every human heart is a natural yearning to be free. In this inaugural edition of Students in Defense of Freedom, Northwood students demonstrate their ability to think critically and independently about issues impacting their world. Further, it reflects their commitment to freedom and The Northwood Idea.

I expect this volume will be the first of many. Students in Defense of Freedom should serve as an inspiration for every new student who joins us at this distinctive and important university. I am hopeful it will be read in its entirety by all those who cherish freedom.

I thank each of the student contributors to this volume. I believe Dr. Reed would see this new volume of literature as contributing to the fountainhead of good movements. In a world that is becoming overwhelmed by leftist, socialist ideology, you give us hope.

Kent D. MacDonald
Northwood University
Midland, Michigan
May 2022

Code of Ethics

The community of students, faculty and staff of Northwood University affirms this code of ethics as the behaviors that advance our shared values.

Freedom: We will exercise personal freedom while ensuring others be immune from arbitrary interference on account of condition or circumstance, ensuring that freedom will be constrained only by our responsibility for its consequences.

Respect: We will treat all others with consideration for their circumstances and with thoughtful regard for their value as human beings.

Empathy: We will endeavor to understand the feelings, thoughts and notions of others in order that compassion and fairness of our actions may result.

Spirituality: We will seek the spiritual development necessary for our happiness and growth and encourage an environment that supports this growth for all.

Honesty: We will embrace truthfulness, fairness and probity and demand the absence of fraud or deceit in ourselves and others with whom we act.

Achievement: We will exercise our skills to create high achievement and applaud the high achievement of others.

Integrity: In all our actions, we shall be guided by a code of behavior which reflects our values, unimpeded by circumstance, personal gain, public pressure or private temptation.

Responsibility: We will be accountable for the care and welfare of others and responsible for the intended and unintended consequences of our actions.

Two Isn't Enough: Tearing Down the Political Oligopoly

By: Riley Hayer

For one-hundred and fifty years, Americans have been accustomed to the choice between a Democrat or a Republican. For many, the last few elections have been a vote for the lesser of two evils, but there must be an alternative. The two-party system is nothing less than an oligopoly between the Republicans and Democrats. Both parties restrict competition within their market by keeping the price of entry high and keeping the path to reach it regulated, thereby securing their position at the top. Dropping these restrictions and prerequisites to entering the political industry could allow for more competition within the market and better products (politicians) for the consumer (We the people). Something as simple as allowing third parties into debates could change the way America does politics for the better. Allowing free-market competition into the political industry can revitalize American elections with better politicians, therefore bettering the functionality of the government.

Lobbyists and high-dollar supporters of different political parties can have immense sway and power over elected officials. Some would call this corruption, others call it an average day in politics. In an ideal political industry, several political parties dominate the news, the minds of the average American, and the attention of wealthy benefactors & corporations. All their attention must be split between several different candidates who all have different ideologies and values, instead of just one or the other.

Continuing this ideal industry depiction with so many options, both the voters and politicians would not have to take such a black-and-white perspective on politics. Allowing the meshing of ideas and this competition among a multiplicity of political parties would force both voters and politicians to agree on some aspects with an opponent and disagree on others. It would no longer be a flip of a coin when you ask a politician their views (support or opposition), but it would be more likely for them to have a holistic and multi-faceted approach to their opinion. The focus would no longer be on a simple dichotomy between one party versus another.

Competition within every other industry improves the quality and efficiency of products and services. With increased competition within the political industry, we could see an increase in the quality of politicians and the work they do. We the people have more sway over the way a company produces a product than we do our own bodies of government. Increasing competition within the political industry will incentivize better work and compel politicians to differentiate themselves from the rest of their competing market. It would no longer be a vote for the lesser of two evils, because you would have several people with many different value systems.

Increased competition increases the consumption of a product. Politics – like football – can be interesting at times. If we had only two national football teams, the competition would be far less interesting, and a lot fewer people would care or consume the content. But that's not the case, we have several different football teams, each with their own play styles, coaches, and set of diehard fans. Having several different political parties would generate a greater audience for political debates. For example, the primaries are candidates with all similar ideological values, yet they tear each other apart. The 2020 presidential debate, while interesting, was nothing short of a shouting match between two prospective leaders of America. An increase in political candidates will lead to greater political coverage, a greater pool of quality information, and a greater interest in their content.

Thus, the solution to many of America's problems lies within the greater issue of improving our terrible politicians. Allowing greater ease of access to third parties into the larger political industry could engage the people into greater political interest, increase the efficiency and quality of candidates, distribute corporate power among many different parties, and force voters and politicians to think more holistically about political issues rather than taking just one side or another.



Riley Hayer

Riley Hayer is an undergraduate honors B.B.A./M.B.A. student at Northwood University, majoring in Finance with a minor in Data Analytics. Riley is a member of the nationally-ranked Mock Trial team, the Executive Board of Northwood University International Auto Show, and many other student organizations.

Riley and his family live in Clare, Michigan, and enjoy skiing, backpacking, and exploring the wonders of Michigan. In his free time, he enjoys playing computer games, reading, and getting outdoors.

The Benefits of 2nd Amendment Rights on American Society

By: Andrew Willit

The second amendment has commonly been described as the defender of all other amendments that allow us to live as a free society. Though over the past few decades we have seen more attempts than ever by our own government to strip away our rights by means of censorship, privacy infringements, regulation of the free markets, and possibly the most crucial of all, gun control. Gun control is a dangerous precedent for our nation and the reasons argued for it are not valid.

An armed civilian population is crucial to maintaining a limited government and protecting the lives of the people. The most notable example of this is when you look at Germany under control of the Nazi regime. One of the first things that the Nazi party did when they took power was disarm all opposing groups and most notably the Jewish population. They first started by denying any further issuance and revoking gun permits to and of Jews or other so-called undesirables in 1933. The Nazi party then ordered in 1938 for the Gestapo, which was the name for Nazi law enforcement, to seize all firearms from the Jewish population (Halbrook, 2013). Any Jew found in possession of a firearm would be punished with 20 years in prison, but this almost always ended in death as over 6 million were killed until the Nazis were defeated. This was the final step that made resistance of Nazi tyranny almost zero and allowed the atrocities against German minorities in WWII to occur to their fullest extent. Another more recent example is that of the fall of Venezuela to socialism. Venezuela used to be one of the most prosperous nations in the western hemisphere up until the 1990s. Since then, the country rapidly declined after then-dictator Hugo Chavez took power in 2001 and began implementing socialist policies.

In 2012 Chavez enacted the Control of Arms, Munitions and Disarmament Law that forcefully seized firearms from over 12,500 citizens. Anyone now found in possession of a firearm could face up to 20 years in prison. Since then, homicide rates in the nation have skyrocketed from just under 10,000 deaths in 2012 to over 28,000 in 2018 making it the highest homicide rate worldwide that year (McKay, 2018). The U.N. reported that Venezuelan law enforcement in that

same year killed 5,287 people according to the United Nations most of which were with intent to neutralize political opposition. (Cumming-Bruice, 2019)

An armed civilian population also guarantees that we will never be successfully invaded by foreign adversaries because it is very difficult to identify and destroy your target without collateral damage. As of 2017 according to Pew Research Center, nearly 30% of the adult U.S population owned a firearm and there were estimated to be around 393 million civilian-owned firearms in circulation. From our own history, it can be seen the successes of this with the original 13 colonies of the United States when we successfully seceded away from the Monarchy of Great Britain. At the time of the 1770's, Great Britain had the largest empire on the planet and the most powerful military in the world. The colonies on the other hand were mere farmers who had organized and armed themselves together to fight for their freedom. We utilized Guerilla warfare against the organized and unmistakable red-coated British army to balance the odds though, which in the end won the revolutionary war. Despite winning our freedom this way, we have also been on the other side of the story with our longest ongoing war in the middle east against terrorist organizations. The United States now has the largest and most technologically advanced military on the planet yet has been unable to eradicate the threat even with these groups being armed with cold war era small arms weaponry and improvised explosives. Now imagine a possible foreign adversary attempting to invade our country with an armed population of over 75 million. This combined with our military is the best defense to ensure that the only way will ever fall is from within.

Now a common misconception and reason for why many support further gun control is the fallacy that America has a rampant and out of control gun violence issue. That is far from the truth. According to 2019 studies by the CDC (Center for Disease Control), there were nearly 40,000 deaths due to gun violence in the U.S., but of those deaths 25,000 were suicides which cannot be justified as gun violence as it is self-inflicted. Another 1,000 of those deaths were due to a mix of law enforcement encounters and accidental discharges which brings the number of real gun violence deaths which is that of homicide down to 14,000. That comes out to roughly 4 deaths per 100,000 people. In comparison, heart disease was 200 deaths per 100,000, car accidents were 52 per 100,000, and falling accounted for 11 deaths

per 100,000. Are we going to ban things like junk food, automobiles, and stairs because of these deaths? If not, then why should we do the same for guns? From this, it can clearly be seen that the U.S. does not have a gun violence problem that warrants taking away the rights of the 75 million U.S. adults that lawfully own a firearm.

Another reason why many people advocate for gun control is that they believe it will make our society safer. The truth is the polar opposite. According to the CPRC (Crime Prevention Research Center), around 90% of all mass shootings happen in gun-free zones. This is because criminals won't look at a sign that says gun-free zone and turn around, they see it as an opportunity to kill innocent people with the least resistance possible. It is likely that these mass shootings would not occur or would not be put into the category of mass shootings if law-abiding citizens were allowed to practice their second amendment rights in these areas. In fact, a study ordered by the CDC in 2013 to the National Academics Institute of Medicine found that there is a minimum of 500,000 defensive gun uses in the United States each year and that number could be as high as 3 million. The number is so broad because there is not a definitive database on the matter because most uses of guns defensively go unreported to official databases and often the gun is not even fired as the presence of one is enough to prevent an altercation (Swearer, 2020). An example of the use of a firearm to prevent evil is that of the attempted church shooting that occurred in Fort Worth Texas in December 2019. At the church, a would-be mass shooter pulled a sawed-off shotgun from his jacket. He shot one member of the church and critically injured another who later died, but he was swiftly taken out by another church member named Jack Wilson with a single shot from his concealed handgun. It can be seen from the video that a total of five church members were armed at the scene, one of which was one of the men killed by the criminal shooter. Several more people would have undoubtedly died if it were not for these brave men who armed themselves to protect their church from evil (Madani & Stelloh, 2019).

It can be confidently stated that the pros that second amendment rights have on American society far outweigh the cons. These are the undeniable reasons why we must stop the tyrannical idea of restricting the second amendment rights of American citizens so we may retain our God-given freedom of self-defense for our friends, family, and fellow Americans.



Andrew Willit

Andrew Willit is from Grand Rapids, Michigan, and is currently a freshman at Northwood University majoring in Entrepreneurship and minoring in Finance. He chose Northwood because of his business-centric mindset that aligns with the Northwood Ideas as well as their emphasis on personal freedoms which are lacking today in the field of academia. Andrew is a very patriotic American who serves on the board of Turning Point USA as the event coordinator and believes that knowledge in the power of the people and an armed civilian population is stronger than any global superpower. In his free time, Andrew enjoys being with his family, fishing, shooting/modifying firearms, and growing his knowledge of the world through daily research into topics of his interest.

Capitalism: The Bearer of Freedom

By: Alex Lowell

“Government has no economic responsibility. Only people have responsibility, and the government is not a person” (Friedman, 2014). This idea seems to be slipping away in today’s day and age as it has been taken and twisted by the government to form the ever-growing presence of socialism and communism. In these forms of government, people are simply pawns as they are subject to do what the societal “elites” tell them to do based on their beliefs of what’s important. Take Russia, Germany, or China as an example, people in these countries do not have the ability to do what they are gifted at or what they enjoy. If the government says it doesn’t need any more of your specific skill set in the marketplace, you’re out of the profession to which you were best fit. They do not let the market or invisible hand determine any of these factors. You as an individual are not treated as an individual, you are merely a small part of a melting pot society where everyone is categorized. This makes it nearly impossible for anyone to get ahead, as they are not allowed to work in industries that they would be best suited for.

While capitalism is not the only reason freedom abounds in America, these other economic forms reassure us that it is one of the main reasons. In America, capitalism enhances freedom through promotion of the free market, individuality for everyone, personal choice, and the ability to enjoy private ownership.

The idea of having a free-market society where the economy can run itself is one of the key underlying characteristics of capitalism. The free-market way of running an economy promotes freedom inside and out, where there is as little friction between the producer and the consumer and government as possible. According to Barnier (2020) “A free market is one where voluntary exchange and the laws of supply and demand provide the sole basis for the economic system, without government intervention.” Just based on the fact that this economic system promotes less government involvement means that your average person is going to have more freedom than other economic systems.

Whenever the government decides to step in to “fix” the economic condition, we see freedoms slowly retracted as people become trapped in an impoverished state. This is called the welfare system. The government will come out and talk about how they will save you by sending you

money (welfare) to make your life better. However, the amounts are just enough for people to get by in life, which never really fixes the people's situation who are in poverty. As Elkins (2019) states, "60% believe these programs (welfare) "simply provide for peoples' basic needs while they are poor" rather than help them "climb out of poverty" (para. 3). People who are in this situation are never going to be truly free as long as they depend on the government to help them limp along in life. The free market discourages programs like this and promotes people getting ahead on their own and wanting more than the minimum in life.

If everyone is able to conceive and express their ideas leads to the second pillar of capitalism, individuality. Capitalism promotes and encourages individuals to express their own ideas by creating an economy with as little government intervention as possible. Like I stated earlier, in communism and socialism you as an individual have no say, the government has all the say. Individuality is something that is specific to each and every person on earth. According to Williams (2014) "The importance of this individuality in minds would be hard to exaggerate. Because of it, two or more people agree with each other in spots, never totally". If someone is not able to think for themselves and believe in their own ideas, are they really free? According to the quote, the answer is no. No matter how alike two people are or how many common ideas they share, no two people in this world will ever completely agree on anything. This is why it is so crucial to have individuality in society, you cannot lump people together as one and expect success. Without individuality society would never progress or improve, there would be no new ideas, and people would not be able to act and think like their true selves. With individuality now comes the freedom for people to make their own decisions about how they want to live and the choices that they want to make.

Choice is something that almost all of us take for granted, but when you sit down and think about it, it is a key factor in everything that goes on in not only in our daily lives but also in the markets and business world. Think if you woke up one day and did not have the ability to make choices about how you lived. In China's case for instance, you cannot make the choice to have more than two children if you're a parent, that is the limit set by the government. Capitalism is the ultimate promoter of personal choice. If you want to become an entrepreneur you have the freedom to start a business, in other market forms you would

not have the freedom or encouragement to start a business. In fact, this is what propels the United States economy and promotes growth. According to Longley (2021) "What really drives the U.S. economy? ... firms with fewer than 500 employees -- that drives the U.S. economy by providing jobs for over half of the nation's private workforce". Small businesses driving a nation's economy does not happen to be the case in most other countries because of the economic systems that are in place. When you have laws that redistribute your earnings, set prices for you, and do not let you own anything it makes it much harder for anyone to open a business. However, the producer is not the only person that has freedom of choice, the consumer also plays a large role. They decide how much they want and of what products which creates competition between companies. In the end, this competition is what drives companies to produce a better product or find a way to make that product cheaper for the customer.

Private ownership, something that seems like such a simple concept but very few ever get to experience the benefits of it outside of capitalist societies. Think about a communist or socialist society where everything is everyone's, you as an individual do not have the ability to call anything yours. In this kind of society people quickly lose motivation to work and try to create things. There is really no point to work if once you get your paycheck it gets distributed out to the general public. Why work that much harder than everyone if you're all just going to end up with the same amount at the end of the day? There is no reason to, and this is how lack of ownership promotes a society of laziness. Furthermore, when you are able to call something your own, that gives you a sense of pride and accomplishment. "When the denial of the right of the individual is negated through the denial of ownership, the sense of personal pride, which distinguishes man from beast, must decay from disuse" (Chodorow, 1996). In this quote, we see just how freeing and important it is to have the ability to own private property. In a society where you're stuck in the cycle of earning then those earnings being redistributed, it becomes depressing, and you feel as though you are just a machine in society making money for others to take. However, solely owning the property or whatever it is that you call yours is not the only freeing part. In a free-market society, you have the ability to do whatever you like with your things. If you're a business owner you have the ability to refuse someone service, if you own a bunch of land, you can race dirt bikes or shoot off fireworks. Another benefit of

private ownership and the choice that comes with it, is the contributions that small businesses make to society and charities. “Small businesses donate 250% more than larger businesses to local nonprofits and community causes” (“Infographic: Small Businesses Charitable Giving,” 2019). There is no one that can tell you how to use your property or money, and ultimately this is the freeing part of private ownership.

Overall, I have talked about three different kinds of economies, the main one being capitalism, and how they relate to freedom. In countries that use communism and socialism, we see that there are not really any individual rights, and the entire society is grouped together as one. We also see that in turn these societies tend to do worse, and the people living there are less free. However, when looking at capitalism an entirely different story appears. The capitalist nations tend to perform better and the people living in them are much freer than these other societies. This is because capitalism enhances freedom by promoting everyone to be themselves, allowing people to call things their own, and permitting the idea of a hands-free economy.



Alex Lowell

Alex Lowell is a student athlete at Northwood University, he is a Finance major and is on the tennis team. Alex’s love for freedom and capitalism has been shown through his involvement with Turning Point USA and multiple small businesses.

Alex and his family live in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and in the summer enjoy traveling up to their cottage in Petoskey, Michigan. In his free time, Alex likes going fishing and going for runs.

Why Socialism Fails

By: Alissa Butcher

Socialism fails. Every. Single. Time. There is not one example of true socialism that has been enacted successfully, instead, it is the opposite. Capitalism is proven to be the most successful form of government and when you take that away you take away the foundation of America. Socialism destroys countries and ruins lives, whereas capitalism saves and is the cause of countries prosperity. Increasing government control not only eradicates government control but also crushes economies.

Socialism is defined as the full ownership of the means of production. Capitalism is based on the theory that incentives matter Perry, M. (2019, August 28). Every product or service you buy requires some form of production. Companies will then price these products and services at what they believe will make them the most profit. Under socialism, the government tries to regulate and take over the means of production. This means that the government would be taking over the companies’ job of regulating what the price of the products and services are. The profit incentive is gone, which is what makes a free market work. The government can barely run the DMV, let alone the market of the United States. They would not know how to price anything correctly and they would not care. No motive for the government, the entity that prints the money and determines the interest rates, to price goods in the best interest of the business, because again, there is no profit incentive Perry, M. (2019, August 28).

If you are not convinced yet, let me provide some evidence. Every country socialism has been introduced to has failed. Not a single socialist country has increased the state of well-being of it’s citizens or even helped the economy. When India gained independence in 1947 it quickly became a socialist nation. This lasted for 40 years are resulted in only hunger and poverty spread across the country. Eventually, the country looked for inspiration in economist Adam Smith, also known as the father of capitalism (Kilcoyne, M. 2018, July 26). India now has the largest middle class in the world.

Another example of socialism absolutely demolishing a nation is Spain. Jones, T. (2018, September 10) reports that the country went from a growing middle class with a budget surplus to one with disintegrating wages due to the failure of the Spanish banks. The socialists nearly doubled

the country's debt overnight by launching the most substantial stimulus package in the European Union. Looking at Biden's America we can see first-hand the negative impact of unnecessary spending and excessive stimulus packages. In Spain, taxes were also raised and unemployment reached depression levels. The economy was obliterated. India and Spain are just a couple of the hundreds of examples of socialism ruining a country, which ultimately can be saved by capitalism.

The effects of socialism on a country are nothing short of death. According to Follett, C. (2016, October 19), "Recent reports that infants now die at a higher rate in Venezuela than in war-torn Syria were, sadly, unsurprising – the results of socialist economics are predictable." On top of this startling statistic, infant mortality rates have continued to fall almost everywhere else and declined even faster in countries with more freedom and stability. This can be attributed to the starvation of the citizens under socialism. It is no surprise because the people do not have access to food given the lines they have to wait in for hours just to get a loaf of bread and hopefully some milk. All in all, socialism kills.

Supporters of socialism look to the Scandinavian countries for support, claiming they don't want "repressive socialism" like in Russia or Cuba, but instead "democratic socialism" like in Sweden. However, Sweden is far from being a socialist nation. The nation did have a period where they owned the means of production, were heavily taxed, and had high government spending; causing the economy to decline. Take from Reason TV (2018, October 23), Sweden immediately cut public spending, privatized public transportation, abolished inheritance taxes, and sold state-owned businesses. The results: an impoverished nation was developed into one of the world's richest countries. These countries truly are not socialist at all, instead their successes come from free markets. They do have higher welfare and taxes than the U.S. but when it comes to free-trade and markets, Sweden is even more free-market than the U.S. Although Sweden looks like it taxes the rich, the truth is that the people with below average income pay up to 60% in taxes. Reason TV (2018, October 23)

Critics of capitalism continue to claim that capitalists are greedy people who only care about themselves and money. We have more socialists serving in congress than ever before. Take a look at the car these senators drive, ranging from Cadillacs to Mercedes. It is thanks to capitalism

that anyone has the potential to purchase these vehicles. With socialism, they would be the only ones who could ever have them, Turning Point USA (2020, November 27). No socialist will admit that capitalism has been the most effective way to eliminate poverty. Between 2000 and 2012 the rate of absolute poverty in the world fell by 50% Harsanyi, D (2018, July 27). We must reject any form of socialism because in all cases, with socialism comes the destruction of economies and starvation of citizens.

The direct result of capitalism is a flourishing country as opposed to a world of poverty and debt with socialism. People like Bernie Sanders are the reason that many Americans, especially young ones, are brainwashed with the fantasy of socialism being beneficial. They have the idea that socialism is just another type of government system. The truth must be put forward about capitalism, and the better life it has brought to billions of people, the diversity and freedom of choice it celebrates, and the rejection of big government that always leads to the failure of leadership.



Alissa Butcher

Alissa Butcher is an undergraduate honors student at Northwood University, double majoring in Cybersecurity and Management Information Systems. Alissa's passion for freedom and capitalism is evident in her successful leadership with Turning Point USA as Northwood's chapter president.

Alissa and her family live in Troy, Michigan, and enjoy traveling, especially to Disney parks. In her free time, she enjoys reading and following the news to stay informed on important current issues.

Critical Theories: An Antithesis of the American Idea

By: Alex Marashai

Introduction - Defining the Scope

To introduce a concept such as Critical Theory, a claim that will inevitably be regarded as extreme will have to be made: the Cold War that characterized the second half of the twentieth century never truly ended. It was and still is a conflict of multiple layers—political through Individualism against Collectivism, economic through Capitalism against Communism, cultural through the propagation of the above systems alongside world-altering achievements, and militaristic through proxy wars to duplicate both parties' societal structures, among others. Of course, the proverbial elephant in the room here is the fact that the Soviet Union no longer exists. The largest and most powerful purveyor of far-Left society broke apart before our very eyes.

The USSR was only the captain of the metaphorical ship, however. The “crew”—the governments of China, North Korea, Vietnam, Cuba and Laos, Marxist actors and supporters in nearly every nation, and Marxism itself—still propagate themselves to this day with varying degrees of success. Today, nearly 30 years following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, three of the above entities pose the greatest threat to Western society and its systems rooted in classical liberalism: China, the followers of Marxism that litter the West, and Marxism itself. Indeed, in regards to the Cold War and its aforementioned elements, China has taken up the mantle as America's rival and opposite; the Chinese government has been continuing the campaign for strength abroad, namely in Africa, and total domination within Asia.

Such is the state of the world in the 2020s; the modified continuation of the Cold War as a two-front conflict, already decades-old, with one flank occupied by a power on the opposite side of the globe. However, as Abraham Lincoln once declared in 1838: “At what point then is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer, if it ever reaches us, it must spring up amongst us. It cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher” (Reuters 2021). We may find for ourselves opportunistic, burgeoning adversaries in China and its communist, authoritarian government, but the greatest threat to the West's (and particularly

America's) freedoms and liberties has and always will be its own citizenry. Indeed, on this second front of the neo-Cold War, it is the injection of Marxism into our institutions that is partially responsible for the political and social strife jostling the country. It is Critical Theory, made widespread within academia by the 1990s and set loose over the past decade, that is propagating the means towards their eventual desired end--the overthrowing and replacement of the entire American Idea.

Origins and History of Critical Theory

Despite the apparent recency of Critical Theory within the public sphere, its foundations can be traced all the way back to the 1960s with the initial arrival of Marxism as a serious discipline on American soil. Up until this point, Marxism had operated under its original concept of the working-class revolting against the capitalist class, until the eventual abolition of the class-based system would be brought about. However, it was evident as far back as World War I that this idea would never be feasible; from Lenin to Zedong to Castro, most if not all Communist uprisings were not the result of labor movements, but of groups of professional revolutionaries (Mueller 2018). For a Communist system to be installed, it requires intellectualism and leadership from well-read revolutionaries, and for it to persist, there must be an elite class--the central government, as history has shown--to ensure that the resulting Marxist or semi-Marxist society follows Communist or Socialist doctrine. The reasoning for this is important, and will be touched upon later.

Nevertheless, the Marxist Left (particularly in the United States) understood that their initial idea of bourgeoisie-proletariat conflict was never feasible. Thus, they pivoted; as Christopher Rufo of the Battlefront Research Center reveals, they “simply adapted their revolutionary theory to the social and racial unrest of the 1960s” (2021). Instead of class-based conflict, the locus of their efforts settled upon the racial dynamics within the United States--thus becoming the basis of Critical Race Theory. Their ideology remained confined to the fringe corners of academia and scholarship until the 1990s, some Millennials--born within hard-Left Baby Boomer and Generation X households--pulled it from the classroom and into public institutions. It is only within the past decade that Critical Theory has taken a major position within Leftist disciplines, however; it has transformed from an ideology few understood in 2011 to the go-to method of thought being employed within

all levels of government, most public schools, and even the different branches of our military. Indeed, it is an infiltration running perpendicular to the ideals and societal systems the United States had been founded upon--an infiltration trying to pull at their very seams in this two-front Cold War.

However, at its most absolute core, this is nothing more than a problem--a highly complex and divisive problem, but a problem nonetheless. The first step to solving any problem is identification; identification not only of what could be causing the issue, but also of what makes it an issue in the first place. Thus, the only sensible step from here is to expose the many flaws and falsehoods that pepper Critical Theory. Perhaps then its proponents will be forced to come down from their soapboxes and resolve the inquiries and concerns surrounding their discipline in an honest manner.

Critical Theory - An Overview, & Its Most Important Sects

Critical Theory, in a certain sense, is relatively self-explanatory--it is a theory of thought focused on the criticism of modern society through revealing all the problems within it that a practitioner can and addressing them. On paper, this ideological framework does appear somewhat extreme, but not necessarily malicious; if anything, it is quite healthy for a society to identify problems within itself so that they may be reasonably resolved. However, to end the conversation at this basic definition would ignore the entire umbrella of thought that has developed within its shade. Indeed, it is tied to subjects such as intersectionality, Critical Gender Theory, Queer Theory, Postcolonial Theory, Postmodernism, and--most important of all--Critical Race Theory, all of which having been picked up and taken in by mainstream Leftist leaders across the country.

In the context of the United States, which differs from that of other post-industrial nations of the West, it is a given that different sects of Critical Theory carry different weights and hold differing degrees of prominence in the mainstream. While we all may have heard of any blend of the above branches listed and while each has their respective platforms in academia and in public discourse, none have been able to find purchases as stable and as deeply-rooted in American society as Postmodernism, Postcolonial Theory, and ultimately Critical Race Theory.

Postmodernism can be thought of as the “glue” or “mortar” that runs through all bricks of the Critical Theory estate. While somewhat difficult to define, the idea of Postmodernism propagates four major themes: the blurring of boundaries, whether they be between objective and subjective, truth and belief, science and the arts, man and its environment, or understandings of gender and sexuality; the power within language to control society by always being relational and deferring rather than objective; cultural relativism (the idea that cultural norms, traditions and beliefs are social constructs); and the removal of the individual and the universal, as postmodernists view autonomous individuality as mythical while considering universalities as anything between naiveties at best and attempts at forcing dominant ideas upon everyone at worst (Pluckrose & Lindsay, 2020, pg. 39-42).

Furthermore, its applications to knowledge and to the political sphere follow two basic principles--postmodernists tend to harbor radical skepticism about the obtainability of objective knowledge and truth, and they also argue that society is based upon systems of power and hierarchies which dictate what is known and how. In essence, Postmodernism is powered by the idea that the truth and knowledge that has been widely understood and believed by us citizens are constructed through dominant discourses and “language games” within our societies. While it is commonly believed to have died out before the 21st century, it is not reality; Postmodernism has simply grown up and adopted a goal-oriented mindset that has developed the branches of Critical Theory that have been outlined.

Even though Postmodernism is the “mortar” to all other Critical Theories, it is only the direct progenitor of one Critical sect: Postcolonial Theory. Simply put, this Theory (and Postcolonialism by extension) takes all the elements and principles laid out in Postmodernism and casts them under an exclusively colonialist light. It is concerned with decolonization, particularly as it concerns the European expansionism that took place between the time of Christopher Columbus and the mid-twentieth century. In the context of the United States, Postcolonial Theory concerns itself with the effects that Postmodernist principles of power and knowledge have upon the American Indians and other pre-colonialism inhabitants of North America. Hence, by the 2010s and into the 2020s, Postcolonialist activists are of the position that America’s history and the knowledge

and language its citizens possess are made and constructed explicitly by the colonizing class—the “oppressors”—rather than the spontaneous execution of notable acts by any population or manner of individuals. To solve this perceived issue, Postcolonialism argues, everything about a society that finds any basis or derivation from colonialism must be exterminated before ultimately being revived and rewritten to focus from the point of view of the oppressed. It just so happens that in America’s case, everything from its current geography to its long-standing institutions, traditions, and political frameworks are the direct results of the many European settlers that arrived in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (indeed, Postcolonialism is the fuel behind such ideas as time-keeping, math, scheduling, and linguistic literacy being products of imperialist, appropriationist, and colonialist sins). Postcolonialists seek to revise past colonialism upon their Critical ideology, not to study the realities of European expansion over its multi-century period. However, though present in academic and intellectual discourse, Postcolonialism Theory does not hold much practical weight upon today’s populace; while America’s colonial roots do hold some historical pertinence upon us now, time has dissolved its more egregious moments to the point of being near-nondescript to us in form and in scope.

The same lack of impact cannot be said for Critical Race Theory. This is the very same concept that effectively galvanized businessman Glenn Youngkin into winning the 2021 Virginia governor’s election over his incumbent opponent, Terry McAuliffe, due to a nationally-covered story involving CRT pushed by Democrats in Virginia’s Loudoun County School District. It is by far the most prominent of the Critical Theory sects in America, as it is uniquely our own—no other country possesses a history quite like ours when it concerns race and slavery, particularly where it concerns African Americans. Simply put, Critical Race Theory is our bane; where the Cultural Marxists had argued within the realms of social and economic class in other countries to further their cause, they had turned towards America’s sensitivities towards race as a thread to manipulate. No wonder this most prominent Critical branch is also the one most concisely defined: it argues that “race is a social construct that was created to maintain white privilege and white supremacy” (Pluckrose & Lindsay, 2020, pg. 111). It is fairly straightforward for one to see how this sect lines up with some of Postmodernism’s nuances by virtue of this definition alone, and

especially how it has become a tool for use by the Cultural Marxist through materialist and Postmodern approaches. Both are fierce rivals against American liberalism, but it can be argued that the Postmodern perspective is more radical and harmful; because it is concerned with linguistics, social systems, biases and attitudes, not only is it an opponent of an American’s individuality, but it asserts that the material angle cannot be taken as long as material processes (whether they be legal, economic, cultural, or otherwise) are controlled by the “oppressor”—the white citizen. Perhaps this, then, is the reason behind current activists wielding Critical Race Theory as a Postmodern bludgeon while casting the more subdued materialist stance off into obscurity. UCLA professor and activist Kimberlé Crenshaw even pushes it one step further by devising the concept of intersectionality, a propagation of Postmodern’s advocacy of group identity by claiming that inherent injustices can “stack” and morph in unique ways based on one’s racial, social, cultural, sexual, and gender identities, among many others. Yet, intersectionality (and thus Critical Race Theory, by extension) are by their very natures diminutive. They reduce everything “to one single variable, one single topic of conversation, one single focus and interpretation: prejudice, as understood under the power dynamics asserted by [Critical] Theory” (Pluckrose & Lindsay, 2020, pg. 128). As such, CRT and intersectionality, like their kin under the Critical Theory umbrella, run completely against everything the United States stands for—an acceptable position for Cultural Marxists.

Inherent Flaws and Dangers

The subject of greatest contention within Critical Theory—as well as its most inhibiting flaw—revolves around an age-old concept, at least in the realm of American politics: the concept of liberty. Contrary to what is largely believed, there exists not one form of liberty, but two—the Rational and the Empirical. What most citizens of America and of the West would recognize as that which we have enjoyed and often endorsed is Empirical liberty; it possesses little to no engineering and planning, relying largely on spontaneity and the domestication of humanity’s ever-present self-interest to thrive. The likes of Adam Smith, John Locke, and David Hume can all be called forebearers of this discipline, contending that humans are primarily self-concerned by nature and morally imperfectible. Social reforms and programs, they would assert, could do nothing to lessen the veracity of this fact. Indeed, the

Empiricist perspective argues that societal institutions help to regulate our self-interests—a concept that had been employed and abided by until recently. For these reasons and because of elements already discussed, Critical Theory cannot be a patron of Empirical liberty in the slightest.

Rational liberty, on the other hand, is the complete opposite—it believes that humans are perfectible and that self-interests could be brought to align with societal interests as a result of social engineering. In essence, Rational liberty argues that societal institutions are the problem; its creators and subscribers, such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Karl Marx, and many others, argue that equality between citizens is the only method through which cooperation, community and successful lives can be garnered. Critical Theory, with its eye for viewing most of Western society through the lenses of social constructs and group identitarianism to dig out even the most minute specks of perceived injustices, falls squarely within this Rationalist perspective. Therefore, Critical Theory stands within the same camp as Rational liberty as being (somewhat contradictorily in the latter's case) anti-liberal. Liberalism in the traditional sense, to be well-functioning in a given society, requires individual free will, a consent of the governed to be governed, and equality before the law; it requires systems and institutions to keep citizens' natural self-interests regulated. Rational liberty demands individual free will, consent of the governed and equality without the creation or exercising of these societal institutions; Critical Theory is the blueprint by which Rationalists can meticulously pick apart the West's systems from top to bottom, diminishing them down to their most unsavory components for the unwitting and the equally-unsavory to disembowel.

Critical Theory as a Tool of Cultural Marxism

The fundamentals behind how Cultural Marxism is able to spread using Critical Theory can be summarized aptly with an analogy. Imagine for yourself a children's shape-matching toy where a variety of shapes can be dropped through respective holes from the top of the box and into a receptacle within. They can be any common figure you can think of—circles, squares, triangles, hexagons, or anything else. However, being that as it is, there are only a limited number of holes, thus ensuring that only a limited number of shape holes can be added. Now, imagine that a child is playing with the toy, but having used it for so many years,

the child has started growing disillusioned with it. No longer do they want to follow the rules inherent to the nature of the toy; they want to create new holes, so they create them along the sides; they want to create new shapes, so they bug a parent until they make it for them. From there, they experiment every which way they can—forcing new shapes into old holes, finding ways shapes can squeeze through holes not meant for them, and putting the fault on the container and its holes when it's unable to fit a shape through. All throughout, the child adds new holes and new shapes each time they grow dissatisfied. This continues, over and over, until the container can barely stand properly—and eventually collapses altogether. The container is then blamed for the shortcomings of its parameters before being replaced by a new, supposedly-better toy—that which has been designed and manufactured within the precepts of Critical Theory.

While not wholly perfect, this analogy is nonetheless designed to sum up how Critical Theory is utilized by Progressive and Marxist Left actors, whether they're consciously aware of it or not. In essence, it is a pressure tactic infused with what's known as gaslighting (creating false notions of doubt by acting as though an individual has been in the wrong despite evidence pointing towards an alternate or opposite explanation). Leaders of the Left are the Children who, when looking at a social or economic problem, believe the resolution involves devising improper events, protests and other sociocultural alterers (new Shapes) and pushing the government (the Parent) to create new laws, policies and rulings (new Shapes and Holes). However, as we are beginning to observe, the American Receptacle is gaining new holes at an alarming rate--fueled by the Marxist Left in their quest to develop what some truly believe to be a greater society. As it has been discussed previously, however, this ambitious goal is impossible; their rejection of liberty, individualism and property rights seals their efforts as nothing but destructive.

Yet the Marxist leaders continue, joined by faithful followers, uninformed enablers, and the unfortunate souls who play along with the very systems of thought that set fire to the successes they and their ancestors had previously appreciated. They continue their decentralized yet authoritarian onslaught, fully believing that by carving up the Receptacle enough, they can collapse the entire structure so that they may devise a new toy modeled to their liking.

How to Push Against the Left's Cultural Guerilla Warfare

I am of the firm belief that Critical Theory and the workings of Cultural Marxism are vague and befuddling by design. Indeed, both are operating most prevalently at the local and state levels; combined with an ever-increasing focus upon the national scale of America by its citizens and media outlets, both have gained a level of decentralization that complicates one's ability to identify and nix their occupations within America's conventions and procedures. It is a type of cultural guerilla warfare that they practice, and at first glance, it makes the Leftist activists and radicals within government offices, businesses, and academia difficult to expose for what they are trying to enact. Nevertheless, beyond the likelihood of being replaced by someone of similar composition if removed, it would be just as harmful to expunge Cultural Marxists and Critical Theorists that have not explicitly broken the very laws and customs we defend—we would be betraying ourselves while simultaneously offering free ammunition for the radicals to fire upon the United States with.

Before any sort of resolution can be put into motion, it is pivotal that we first understand ourselves and the nation upon which we stand. We must comprehend and learn our founding documents to the greatest extent possible, for the radical Left will attempt to cherry-pick, gaslight, and mischaracterize these principles and enactments of the Founding Fathers to suit their idea of how the globe has been spinning. We must understand that context is imperative to historical events; that nuance is an inherent quality within all that we read about and see. As most of us know, many Founders did own slaves and did not do much to address the slavery issue within their devising of America's foundation. The ideologies of Critical Theory and Cultural Marxism outright refuse their practitioners the ability to understand that taking action on the slavery issue would have led to the fracturing of the United States before its feet could ever begin to move. To these radicals, the very existence of slavery as an institution, regardless of how self-aware and troubled some of the Founders were about it and the lengths many citizens took to work against it, warrants severe punishment today in the form of reparations from white Americans to the descendants of men and women 160 years removed from the definitive tragedy of slavery. If an individual is

able to recognize the elements of this situation for what they are rather than what they could be or what the person wants them to be, then they have demonstrated the fundamental necessities of impartiality and openness of ideas within Western liberalism.

The solution, however, is more straightforward than it seems; it is the type of answer that can be found through one's intuition zooming in until it comes into view. Marxism and Critical Theory continue to utilize academia as their primary avenue into America's institutions, as its public sectors provide a direct bridge between education and the government. Therefore, it must be possible to perform the inverse through this same education-based avenue. In fact, it is already being performed—establishments such as Northwood University alongside a slew of private and charter schools across the country are providing pupils with quality education with smaller pipelines to the government while also ignoring or outright rejecting Critical Theory. Greater than these efforts is ultimately the rise of homeschooling as a silver lining to the COVID-19 pandemic; from late April to mid-October of 2020 alone, the amount of homeschooled children rose from 5.4 percent to 11.1 percent (Eggleston & Fields, 2021). Regardless of the explicit quality of the education these homeschooled youth are receiving, the fact remains that parents have been made more prominent actors in their children's upbringings. It is through homeschooling and alternative sources of formal education that the American household—one of the smallest and thus most vital units of societal measurement—is empowered and strengthened. If this has been occurring in households that understand our founding doctrines and can see the prosperity and freedom these doctrines have enabled, then American culture at large—the driver of upheavals across all flavors since the Revolutionary War and the basis by which we live our lives today—may still be able to act as our catalyst of rejection for Critical Theory and the Cultural Marxists that propagate it.

On Vaccine Mandates and Liberty

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Bauervic Essay Competition
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Introduction and context

It is one of humanity's universal truths that disease will never be wholly eliminated. Microbial organisms and structures, both bacterial and viral, either naturally proliferating or artificially crafted — all posing threats to an individual's well-being in near-limitless forms. It is upon this basis by which disease has written history on several occasions, its gangrenous hand choreographing its writhing pen to the signatures which slayed tens of millions of people. Many of these moments may spring to mind, including the Black Death of the 14th century, the several Cholera pandemics throughout the 19th century, the Spanish Flu of the early 20th century, and the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak of the early 21st century (Piret & Boivin, 2021). However, these large-scale events were not all that disease could enact; the likes of smallpox, polio, and tetanus rarely experienced mass culminations of infectivity, yet were arguably just as feared as Cholera and influenza for their quiet infectivity and efficient lethality.

Of course, the human mind far supersedes those of all other organisms on Earth, thus effectively guaranteeing the invention and continuous development of the vaccine henceforth. Ultimately, it was upon smallpox which vaccines first established themselves; Buddhist monks of the 17th century applied cowpox to skin tears to protect against smallpox, while Edward Jenner conducted the first modern-form inoculation from smallpox in 1796 (The Immunisation Advisory Centre, 2020). Since these times, humanity had brought about the complete eradication of smallpox by 1979 and has forwarded significant advancements against the likes of polio, Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS), sexually transmitted diseases, and the viruses that cause Hepatitis. Indeed, though it may very well take generations to accomplish, the possibility of mass inoculation toward most of Earth's deadliest contagions is tangible.

The question, then, must be asked: how should this inoculation occur? It is a thought that has already jumped between the minds of countless individuals across many institutions throughout multiple centuries, though its dissection has only

been carried into the public consciousness by the onset of the COVID-19 virus and the associated vaccine mandates implemented around the world. Certain strides have already been made in the discussion regarding compulsory inoculation, and at first glance, the Coronavirus pandemic is a relatively simple and relevant conduit for this discussion to take place. Political and philosophical zeal harbored by most of its participants denies this capacity, however — no measured, inquisitive approach can be taken upon a topic as complex as vaccine mandates with pools of skewed statistics, hidden agendas, and conflicting findings underpinning the conversation. It is for this reason that the disciplines of history, philosophy, economics and sociocultural studies up until COVID-19's emergence are far more dependable. Consistently taking risks with poor information such as that which surrounds the Coronavirus would surely mean an adverse strike against the well-being of humanity.

Historical precedence

As controversial as compulsory vaccination has become, the concept is nothing new — it has prevailed as a subject of debate and implementation for decades prior to Edward Jenner's first modern inoculation. The first major instance of this controversy arose during the American Revolution, whereupon George Washington ordered in early 1777 to variolate the Continental Army against smallpox. This came despite a General Order about half a year previously which stated, in no uncertain terms, that "Any Officer in the Continental Army, who shall suffer himself to be inoculated, will be cashiered and turned out of the army, and have his name published in the News papers throughout the Continent, as an Enemy and Traitor to his country" (Hancock & Trumbull, 1776). Nevertheless, Washington persisted, introducing the variolation mandate for all soldiers passing through Philadelphia and Morristown, New Jersey (American Battlefield Trust, 2017). The desired effect was accomplished; smallpox's grip over many soldiers' minds and bodies waned significantly, allowing for greater ease of enlistment for the young men of the Thirteen Colonies.

Following the American War for Independence and the creation of the modern vaccine, the first country-wide attempt at compulsory vaccination occurred in 1805. Marianne Elisa of Lucca, Napoleon Bonaparte's sister, had attempted to enforce vaccination within France; her efforts

ultimately failed, however, when she could not discern an appropriate method to enforce this rule (College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 2016). Apart from smaller advancements in vaccinology, such as the creation of a U.S. Vaccine Agency in 1813, no pushes were made by any government in the realm of compulsory inoculation until 1853, where the United Kingdom Vaccination Act was passed and implemented. This landmark law mandated that all infants must be vaccinated against smallpox within the first three months of their life, with their parent or parents receiving a fine or imprisonment for failing to do so. Germany followed suit about twenty-one years later, introducing a similar smallpox-inoculation mandate in 1874. Again, the intended effect was captured — between 1875 and 1886, average annual mortality fell in the country to 1.91 deaths per 100,000 citizens, with 1897 observing just five smallpox fatalities among a total population of over 54 million (College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 2016). Nevertheless, objections had been continuous and accumulated throughout the 19th century, leading to the creation of the Anti-Vaccination League of America in 1882. It must be noted, however, that this group attenuated their adversity toward vaccinations to the idea that smallpox was spread by filth rather than contagion — in other words, no liberty-related argument had ever been asserted.

Moving into the contemporary era, in 1893, a smallpox outbreak occurred in the town of Muncie, Indiana due to a neglect of vaccination by many of its residents. Curiously, despite an almost-complete quarantining of the town, the fumigation of all mail, the banning of all public gatherings, and enforcement of compulsory vaccination, 140 residents of the roughly 12,000-large population contracted the disease, with twenty of these citizens perishing (College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 2016). Five years later, Great Britain would provide an avenue for anti-vaccinationists to refuse inoculation by creating a conscience clause within the United Kingdom Vaccination Act, making it possible for individuals to seek exemptions to the mandatory smallpox vaccine. It is the twentieth century, however, which is responsible for most of the vaccine mandate's progression into society. In 1905, the U.S. Supreme Court ascertained the constitutionality of compulsory smallpox vaccines in the case of *Jacobson v. Massachusetts*. In 1922, the Court again upheld the constitutionality of compulsory vaccination by arguing in *Zucht v. King* that the school district of San Antonio, Texas could

keep unvaccinated students from attending any school in said district. From here, anti-vaccination sentiments would only worsen, as an armed mob in 1926 managed to force health officers away from vaccinating the citizens of Georgetown, Delaware (College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 2016). Regardless, the United States government continued to uphold vaccine necessitation into the twenty-first century, particularly through minors. It is through the Center for Disease Control's recommended vaccinations from birth to age 18 that individual states craft their own lists of vaccine mandates for applications to school attendance and childcare services (DeSilver 2021). Indeed, by the 1998-1999 school year, forty-six states mandated some sort of vaccine for all students from kindergarten to twelfth grade, while thirty states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico enforced some sort of mandated vaccine for the collegiate level (Malone & Hinman). Typically, vaccines against the likes of Hepatitis, polio, tetanus, Diphtheria, influenza, chickenpox, and several others are included.

Through the philosophical lens

Contextualization of Liberty

The debate of vaccine mandates extends to the philosophical branch of thought most often, given the arguments between individual liberty and the well-being of society itself. There is no question as to what can, at least partially, explain this: the debate pitting the ideological but ultimately tangible concept of compulsory vaccination against the intangible and sometimes confounding philosophy of liberty. To remedy this and enable a proper discussion, the idea of liberty must be lifted to the same platform as that of vaccine mandates. Merriam-Webster provides an apt starting point through its dictionary definitions of the concept — that is, the “quality or state of being free,” where this freedom concerns “the power to do as one pleases,” “freedom from physical restraint,” “freedom from arbitrary or despotic control,” “the positive enjoyment of various social, political or economic rights and privileges” and “the power of choice” (2022). However, these determinations do not need to be extensively studied to understand how such a definition raises more questions than answers; it is still describing an idea, with only vague descriptors painting a rough picture of what liberty could be fully understood as. Thus, a deeper search is required that surfaces the distinction of negative liberty and positive liberty as described by Ian Carter of Stanford University.

In simple terms, negative liberty is “the absence of obstacles, barriers or constraints,” while positive liberty “is the possibility of acting — or the fact of acting — in such a way as to take control of one’s life and realize one’s fundamental purposes” (Carter, 2003). Both concepts can be easily comprehended through the context of the Cold War, or more specifically, the fundamental philosophy differing the United States and the Soviet Union from each other. America’s liberty follows the negative trail in which there is an absence in government action upon individuals, therefore endorsing an individualistic state of being; the Soviet’s liberty, meanwhile, was positive in that there was a purpose or obligation for individuals to utilize self-determination to better society (the true state of the U.S.S.R. notwithstanding), thus promoting a collectivist state of being. However, both types possess their own flaws. One could assert that an individual could be practicing negative liberty so long as there exists no external force to infringe upon all levels of that liberty, regardless of the context surrounding that individual’s moment-to-moment life. Some could therefore posit that negative liberty is a poor ingredient to be used as the bedrock of a society. Conversely, positive liberty possesses the possibility of devolving into a paradox — one that relies on positive liberty being viewed as the more rational version, which eventually leads at some point to the spawning of authoritarian regimes.

The third version of liberty, then, would be the best option — Republican liberty, the concept underpinning the Western realm today. An offshoot of negative liberty, Republican liberty does not simply advocate for general non-interference by external actors. Rather, it shapes the conditions by which this non-interference should be guaranteed (Carter, 2003). Indeed, this is the genesis of American society and is responsible for components such as a constitution, separation of powers, the negative rights outlined in the Bill of Rights and further Amendments, the Electoral College, and its Federalist structure of government. Given the debate between vaccine mandates and liberty is most frequented in the West, this Republican liberty and the context with which it describes itself is the form of liberty that is most appropriate for the reality of the situation.

Dissemination of Vaccine Mandates and Republican Liberty

When examining vaccine mandates and Republican liberty side-by-side, an interesting quirk arises: the conflict therein is not much

different from the mutual exclusivity of positive and negative liberty, nor of their natures themselves. Positive liberty, as mentioned previously, is that which requires the presence of self-determinative capacities within individuals to fulfill the obligation of procuring a better society. Vaccine mandates are self-explanatory — they are requirements put out by a governing body for citizens to be inoculated against any sort of illness or virus, with penalties of fines or restrictive measures put in place for those who do not comply. In essence, these mandates make obligatory the usage of self-realization and rational reasoning to enact benefits upon collective society; in this case, protecting the populace against the threat of outbreaks and pandemics. This link in turn necessitates that, on principle, vaccine mandates are both diametrically opposed to the Republican liberty underlining the United States and are susceptible to the same Paradox of Authoritarianism inherent in positive liberty.

Yet, this danger of vaccine mandates in a Republican liberty society is remarkably contained in application — American medical institutions, in their creation of many vaccines that are made compulsory, require upwards of a decade to create and thousands of laborers such as virologists, vaccinologists, clinical trial volunteers, and others before they can even hope for approval by the Food and Drug Administration, or FDA. Additionally, until the Coronavirus pandemic, widespread vaccine mandates were adopted almost exclusively for minors; these mandates also provided exemptions in many states, with forty-eight states allowing for exemptions on the basis of religion and fifteen on the basis of philosophy (Malone & Hinman). Therefore, compulsory vaccination as it exists outside of Coronavirus has created an effective compromise between positive and Republican liberty — one that weighs the importance of social welfare with avenues for rejection while confining the years-long process to only those citizens too young to fully comprehend the idea of agency. Such is the structure that COVID-19 compulsory vaccination advocates have tampered with through removal of some or all existing mandate compromises. Indeed, some edicts maintain the student-only form existent in the mandates for traditional vaccines, but in the case of the pending Assembly Bill 1993, led by Buffy Wicks of California’s 15th District, all employees and contractors in the state would be obligated for full vaccination starting January 1, 2023 (Lagasse 2022). The

unequivocal and blatant commitment toward positive liberty in this decision enables the two dangers of vaccine mandates within American society to roam free; California is in essence rejecting the Republican liberty supported by founding doctrines and institutions while embracing the idea of authoritarianism advancing upon its territory. Regardless, the philosophical discussion encompasses only one aspect of the picture-at-large in the end, hence the necessity of the economic and sociocultural angles to fully understand the debate of vaccine mandates and liberty.

Through the economic lens

Beyond the philosophy and theory of compulsory vaccination is the economic impact of such a proposal; in other words, the practical application (or lack therein, for anti-vaccinationists) of such mandates and whether they are feasible against economic liberties. It is an aspect scantily considered within mainstream discourse outside of COVID-19, and even when visiting the Coronavirus topic, relevant conversations surround the impact of the mandates on state and national economies, not the economic feasibility of the mandates themselves. Thus, it is not necessarily incorrect for the mandates' external impacts to be combed over like they have, but without examining their internal machinations, well-informed considerations cannot possibly be centered upon the whole of reality.

Like any economic entity, vaccine mandates carry with them a cost-benefit trade-off. On one hand, these mandates have effectively guaranteed the sustainability of the vaccine production industry while improving the health of societies across the globe. Compulsory vaccination of children, as mentioned previously, is especially responsible for this; each dollar spent on child vaccination in the United States saved each taxpayer \$3, ultimately contributing to a total of 103 million childhood disease cases being prevented between 1924 and 2013 (Rémy et. al., 2015). These cases being resolved thus allowed these 103 million children greater chances to remain healthy and live through adulthood, causing the size and productivity of the American workforce to be considerably larger throughout the decades than if mandates did not exist. Such results can occur despite the relatively miniscule proportion of funds that are sunk into inoculation programs — 80 percent of vaccine production occurs on the European continent, yet within France, programs for these vaccines required only 0.3 percent of

their health expenditure budget (Rémy et. al., 2015). To phrase it differently, these child-focused programs throughout the United States and Europe have become highly efficient through decades of study, application, and continued innovation. Traditional vaccine mandates still proclaim associated costs, however. The most acute of these within the developed world is the stripping-away of some economic liberties enjoyed by citizens. Vaccines and vaccine mandates will always require money to operate, after all, meaning the American taxpayer must still absorb the financial cost of their state's inoculation programs. Indeed, as of 2016, the average cost of vaccine administration per child was roughly \$30 in the United States, though Medicaid could lower the cost to as low as \$3.30 in certain areas (Diasio, 2016). Additionally, the conflict surrounding a child's vaccination status again becomes relevant; unless an exemption is granted to the parent or parents, the vast majority of education systems across the country would prohibit the child from participating in them, effectively removing their liberty to choose the career path that aligns best with their future needs and wants. For a system supported by a bedrock of free enterprise principles which is meant to fuel open-market activities, this economic outcome is perhaps the one schism that the aforementioned philosophical compromise cannot cover.

Coronavirus vaccine mandates, keeping in line with their philosophical faults, vastly overstep or attempted to overstep their boundaries within the context of economic liberty. The most prolific of these cases surrounded the attempt by President Joe Biden to usher the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) into mandating that all private businesses with more than 100 employees would be obligated to create compulsory vaccination policies. It can be easily ascertained that, had this effort been a success, very little of it would see any benefit rise over its costs. Per the Retail Industry Leaders Association, monetary costs could have been in the millions of dollars per week, and even then, OSHA would have been hard-pressed to sufficiently inspect as much as 100,000 employers with its 800-member evaluation force (Leonhardt, 2021). Nevertheless, rules similar to this that have been successfully adopted by some states ultimately undermine the liberty maintained by Americans to be skeptic of what enters their body and to operate in the free market without government interference. Other vaccines and their mandates, unlike those for Coronavirus, have been able to build up

their reputability through their many decades of research and development and have been proven safe in how the vaccines successfully inoculate individuals. Two questions must follow: how can liberty, economic or otherwise, be assured at all through vaccines cultivated in a year's time when they possess seldom any safety record and are fundamentally different from most other modern vaccines? How can these liberties be assured when such an unproven product is being forced upon individuals not only by state governments, but by public and private businesses across the country? Though the answers to these questions are clear, the economic costs of such vaccines and vaccine mandates are not — a grave realization which the United States economy may very well have to endure through.

Through the sociocultural lens

The sociocultural lens, like the economic lens, is a perspective often neglected in favor of aspects considered more pertinent to the idea of vaccine mandates. Yet, it is precisely what is forwarded in the philosophical and economic realms that seep into the hands of a society's culture — for better or for worse. To this end, the schism packed within said sociocultural landscape is not new; opposition to vaccines and mandates has existed since before the contemporary era, though this strife has intensified since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Take, for example, the infamous remarks made by President Joe Biden on December 16, 2021 as a representation of these times. Following a meeting with the COVID-19 Response Team, President Biden relayed a “direct message to the American people,” asserting that “we are looking at a winter of severe illness and death — if you're unvaccinated — for themselves, their families, and the hospitals they'll soon overwhelm. But there's good news: if you're vaccinated and you had your booster shot, you're protected from severe illness and death — period” (The White House). Contrary to what unconstructive and tribalistic discussion participants proclaim on this subject, the issue with President Biden's words lie in how they were received. In other words, it is not about what either side of the aisle believes regarding the remarks, but how the schism between the aisles has grown as a result of the inflammatory and disciplinary connotations inherent in the President's message. It is indicative of the growing strain pulling at the philosophical compromise between vaccine mandates and the Republican liberty professed by America's founding doctrines;

it is a rebuke of the costs to economic liberty that are absorbed when compliance to compulsory vaccination is induced. Furthermore, just as how the philosophical and economic aspects trickle down into the social aspect of politics and governance, so too do they trickle down to the cultural component that is the mortar binding citizens together. Such was the case with the incident surrounding Carmine's, a restaurant on Manhattan Island in New York City. At the time, the city had induced mandatory vaccination for many public activities; Carmine's obliged to this by requiring proof of vaccination before individuals can enter and dine, yet on September 16, 2021, an unprovoked fight broke out over this requirement between three Texan women and one of Carmine's hostesses (Rivoli, 2021). This assault should never have occurred regardless of the blatant affront to the liberties of the three Texans, though it nevertheless brings the expanding sociocultural rift under the proverbial microscope.

Indeed, it matters not whether someone is for or against vaccines and vaccine mandates — only that, through cases such as President Biden's speech and the incident at Carmine's, the present-day debate and execution on these same mandates has produced a level of sociocultural stratification. The most prolific example of this can be seen in Austria, where a measure that induced compulsory vaccination against COVID-19 for all citizens 18 years or older was implemented on February 5, 2022 (Druml & Czech, 2022). Though Austria does not possess quite the same governmental, philosophical, and economic principles seen and practiced in the United States, this is nonetheless a direction America could advance toward. Austrian officials, after all, are democratically elected as representatives of constituents. Even with these same officials announcing the temporary suspension of this edict on March 9, thus stopping it before enforcement began, a similar situation could arise in the United States. Vaccine mandates have been shown as diametrically opposed in principle to that of Republican liberty cherished by the West — it follows, then, that those in America who favor further regulations in favor of compulsory vaccination reject the philosophical compromise, rebuke their belief in Republican liberty as something at least comparable in importance to health security, and forsake traditional sociocultural standards. Such is the sociocultural state of affairs at the ultimate end of the Paradox of Authoritarianism.

Resolution

How should inoculation against disease occur? The answer, writ large, is blunt in its rejection of the simplistic and straightforward — could not be formulated any other way. Compulsory vaccination finds its home in the idea of liberty obligating self-determination to serve towards the betterment of society. Compulsory vaccination, previously contained in ways that minimized economic costs using extensively studied methods, now induces the loss of customers from mandate-abiding businesses, the necessitation of certain market restructuring requirements, and the worsening of labor shortages and unemployment across the country through the onset of the COVID-19 vaccine mandate. Compulsory vaccination in the traditional sense had been an aspect of life considered second-nature by American citizens, something achieved through the careful balancing act performed by the Philosophical Compromise — something under threat by a Coronavirus mandate that ushers in social stratification and tears into the American cultural fabric.

Compulsory inoculation from disease should solely occur, therefore, in the cases where Republican liberty can be preserved and respected as much as possible. It must be remembered, however, that the fundamental contradictions between government mandates and liberty renders it impossible for either to be fully realized, for if this occurs, the other by virtue of their nature must be stamped out of society. Nevertheless, there does exist one glaring flaw in this idea: the fact that setups such as the Compromise, which denotes that public health be advanced through the state-mandated inoculation of children, would make little sense for a vaccine against a Coronavirus that mainly targets the elderly and immunocompromised. While significant, this issue is not unsolvable. An apt workaround would involve recommending the current COVID-19 vaccine rather than requiring it, then when a vaccine can be developed that utilizes tried-and-true procedures to create a preventative formula, it could be phased into the Compromise as another inoculation for children to receive atop the likes of tetanus, polio, and Hepatitis B. The existing vaccine, which minimizes effects but does not fully prevent infection, would be phased out. Perhaps then humanity can begin the dismantling of yet another illness — yet another entry in the perpetual effort to bring Disease's festering pen off the pages of history for good.



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Mandates and Liberty: A Historical Examination of Vaccine Mandates

By: Charlee Simansky
Bauervic Essay Competition
Undergraduate Winner

The Founding Fathers stated in their Preamble to the United States Constitution they hoped to “secure the Blessings of Liberty” for generations to come (U.S. Const. pmb.). As Americans, we have been gifted with numerous liberties, nonexistent in other areas of the world. Most Americans take these freedoms for granted; to speak at their own free will or practice the religion of their choosing. However, as COVID-19 sparked conversations and legislation surrounding a vaccine mandate, this topic of which freedoms Americans possess and how far those freedoms reach has become a popular and highly-politicized discussion. Knowing where to draw the line when it comes to vaccine mandates requires a further examination beyond that simple line from the Preamble to the Constitution to understand if and how vaccine mandates violate personal liberties. Those that argue in favor of vaccine mandates for the COVID-19 vaccination, often point to historical examples where vaccine mandates have been implemented. Despite using vaccine mandates historically, these mandates have been used under circumstances and conditions that differ from the most recent predicament with COVID-19 and cannot be used to justify a mandate for the entire population.

Vaccine mandates have historically been implemented in the military. One controversial vaccine mandate came in 1998, when the Department of Defense launched the Anthrax Vaccine Immunization Program. Ordinarily B. Anthracis is not considered threatening and is only concerning under certain conditions in agricultural and industrial circumstances. However, the program ignited as a result of fear that Iraq would be using weapons that contained anthrax spores, creating the need to protect military personnel if they were exposed, as this weaponized form of exposure was predicted to be very detrimental to one’s health. It can be noted that these biological weapons were never used, although evidence was later found for Iraq possessing an arsenal of these weapons (Jollenbeck et al., 2002). This program was received poorly by members of the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard,

resulting in members transferring to different units or choosing to leave the military altogether in the first two years after the mandate was imposed. The Department of Defense admitted in a report in late October 2002 that the mandate had hindered the ability to retain the appropriate personnel with the knowledge and expertise needed to serve the country. The loss of members of the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve ignited a study to survey the perception of the mandate. The study revealed that 16% of crew members and pilots transferred, moved, or left their duties altogether to avoid taking the vaccine (Roos, 2002). The Department of Defense eventually changed its approach to the mandate. The vaccination is now only required for personnel being deployed in a region that is categorized as high risk for a period lasting greater than 15 days. The anthrax vaccine is encouraged for other members but is not considered mandatory. A Supreme Court case that followed revealed that it was inappropriate for the Department of Defense to mandate a vaccination without informed consent. Additionally, the vaccination which still had not received FDA approval was not viable and could not be mandated until its approval (Howitt, 2011). Depending on the manner in which one is exposed to anthrax, it can be fatal in 90% of cases (Minnesota Department of Health, 2019). In comparison, COVID-19 has a fatality rate of 1.2%. When comparing the severity of exposure to anthrax and COVID-19 with regard to fatality rates and understanding that the anthrax vaccination was adjusted to only be mandated for a small portion of the military population, a mandate for the COVID-19 vaccine seems petty.

Using vaccine mandates in the military has been practiced for hundreds of years, dating back to 1777 when George Washington was leading the Continental Army. On the battlefield, the Continental Army was fighting more than just the British troops. Due to the lack of medical resources and exposure to diseases, many soldiers became ill and lost their lives to the diseases they contracted in their travels. English troops had exposure to more diseases, allowing them to develop immunity and providing them with an upper edge. Their troops did not suffer from disease as severely as the colonists, where less than 25% had exposure to diseases. It is estimated that of the deaths the Continental Army suffered, 90% can be attributed to disease. The most lethal was smallpox. As disease was killing

soldiers in large numbers, Washington realized he could not put up a proper fight. He followed the appropriate procedures for the government in place at that point in time, by informing the Continental Congress of the decision and necessity to enact such a mandate for inoculations for smallpox (Aker, 2021). Inoculations were conducted as a method of developing immunity. This was primitive, much less sophisticated than the injections most are accustomed to in modern society. Skin was sliced and stitched with thread that was contaminated with smallpox. While it may seem gruesome today, for its time, this was a common method of developing immunity without natural exposure to a disease. Inoculations dated back to the 1500s in China. For the time, this technology was accepted and believed to be effective in developing immunity for individuals and communities. Following the mandate, infections did not disassemble any regiments in the army, taking away any advantage the English had previously being immune to diseases such as smallpox (College of Physicians of Philadelphia). Smallpox was highly destructive, causing a significant percentage of deaths, unlike COVID-19 with a low fatality rate. Additionally, the method used to achieve immunity was proven effective and appropriate for the technology and research available at that time. The military naturally has unique considerations, separate from the general population. Soldiers must be healthy to properly defend their country. However, even the military has drawn a line, only implementing a vaccination when risk was high for fatality, and there were still limits to this approach.

Certain groups have been subject to vaccine mandates such as the military, but vaccine mandates have also been used in educational environments including childcare facilities and schools since the early 1900s. Vaccination requirements in schools are a decision that is determined by each state government, not the federal government. All 50 states require students to receive certain vaccines before attending school. Most states design their vaccine requirements to coordinate with the Center for Disease Control recommendations. Exemptions are available in 44 states for religious reasons and there are 15 states that permit exemptions for philosophical reasons. Because these exemptions exist, there is a level of choice. While they are highly recommended and encouraged, students and families may refuse to receive a vaccination if their religious or philosophical beliefs justify their

refusal (Skinner & Garcia, 2022). This is important in understanding that refusing a student's vaccine is not as simple as stating one does not wish to receive the vaccine, but there is a rationale that is approved by the state. This is the state's way of saying that they desire the student to receive the vaccination, but if one can justify their reasoning for choosing to not take the vaccine, and this reasoning is pre-approved by the state, either religious or philosophical, then the student can be exempt. It is not intended for the majority population to seek the exemption, but those that have reservations about a vaccination and are inclined to refuse it have that option. Although exemptions exist, most families still choose to receive vaccinations. For example, Idaho has among the most relaxed vaccine requirements allowing for numerous exemptions, both religious and philosophical (Dutton, 2019). Despite giving ample opportunities for parents and students to decline a vaccine, such as measles, 95% of students statewide have received their vaccines, leaving only 5% with nonmedical exemptions. This indicates that although the opportunity exists to refuse a vaccine, the majority still choose vaccination when given the choice.

When addressing the vaccine mandates for students, it should be acknowledged that the vaccines mandated have been mandated under different circumstances. For example, the chickenpox vaccine began development in the 1950s. It was only released to the market and approved by the Food and Drug Administration in 1995, allowing more than 40 years of research on the vaccine. In 1997, states began to mandate the vaccine in schools to prevent outbreaks. It can be understood, though, that technology was significantly less advanced during the development of the chickenpox vaccine and vaccinations can be developed quicker today, but there was still extensive research and caution when bringing this vaccine to market (Little, 2021). Accepting the chickenpox vaccine, which had decades of research behind it is different from accepting the vaccine for COVID-19 which had less than a year. Even the mumps vaccine, which was the fastest developed vaccine up until COVID-19 took four years to develop (Solis-Moreira, 2021). A more recent example is the Human papillomavirus vaccine, mandated for school in some states, which began development in 1991, experienced seven years of testing before beginning human trials and finally came to market in 2006 (Center for Cancer Research).

Although all these vaccines are backed by research and science before mandating in a school environment, it is understandable and important to have reservations about the COVID-19 vaccine due to the fast rate of development, with a relatively small time frame for extensive studies and research. The vaccines previously mandated in schools were for diseases causing much greater harm than COVID-19 and had more time for research and development.

One historical landmark in vaccine mandates for schools came through with the case *Zucht v. King*. In this particular case, a city ordinance requiring vaccination to attend both public and private schools was questioned. A student, Rosalyn Zucht, was denied attendance in a public school and private school as she did not have the certificate necessary to prove vaccination and refused to receive vaccinations. The debate surrounded whether liberties were violated by denying attendance due to vaccination status. The board of health had the discretion to decide which circumstances to enforce the vaccine, not having any particular rules to guide decisions and reduce bias. The court ultimately upheld the validity of the city ordinance deeming it appropriate to institute this regulation (Legal Information Institute). This was the same ruling made previously in *Jacobson v. Massachusetts*, which will be discussed later. It was decided that the police power of a state provided the authority to implement such an ordinance. Notice, that this falls within the power of the state, and not within the federal government to place a vaccination mandate.

Historically, schools have used vaccine mandates to an extent. Their objective has been to maintain the safety of students and protect public health. In many ways, these mandates have significantly contributed to reducing the spread and severity of infectious diseases. Polio, which was paralyzing up to 35,000 individuals each year leading up to the 1940s, has been eliminated due to polio vaccination efforts (Law, 2021). When examining the vaccinations that are commonly required for students in schools, the diseases being targeted have a much higher rate of mortality and greater long-term effects than COVID-19, which has a less than 1% mortality rate for children (Cull et al., 2022). So, while the supreme court has deemed it acceptable to implement vaccine mandates in schools historically, the context is different due to the nature of the diseases being vaccinated for and the level of research for these vaccines in comparison to COVID-19.

Some form of vaccine mandates have been in effect for members of the general population as well. Immigrants are required to receive a series of vaccinations before being allowed citizenship to the United States. To achieve permanent legal residence in the United States, a medical examination is required by the Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. If proof of vaccination is not present for fourteen vaccines outlined by these organizations, a vaccine is administered during the examination. The first dose of a vaccine may be given in the examination, but the immigrant is not required to receive any follow up vaccines or complete the series. The CDC has criteria for determining the vaccines required to earn citizenship pertaining to age, degree of protection offered by the vaccine, and whether or not the disease being confronted has the potential for an outbreak. There are no exemptions for religious beliefs for immigrants entering the country (Centers for Disease Control). While most states provide this option pertaining to schools, immigrants lack this freedom. Individuals with visa status are also required to receive the vaccinations before becoming permanent residents. Although there are requirements for vaccinations among immigrants to earn citizenship, the population of unauthorized immigrants, which currently stands at approximately 10.5 million, should be considered (Lopez et al., 2021). Unauthorized immigrants and those holding green cards are not required to and may not have vaccinations. This indicates that there are loopholes in these mandates, where one does not necessarily need a vaccination to reside in the United States, allowing the validity of these mandates to be questioned, if they are only applicable to those who use certain pathways for entry to the country. Additionally, there are no exemptions for religious beliefs which seems to contradict the freedom of religion outlined in the Constitution and demonstrated by most states.

Public safety is a valid argument for enforcing a vaccine mandate as demonstrated in *Jacobson v. Massachusetts*. In Massachusetts, 1905, a law required citizens to receive the smallpox vaccine or pay a \$5 fine, the equivalent of approximately \$162 today. The law was instated due to increasing prevalence of smallpox in the region. Similar to *Zucht v. King*, the court ruled that the police power of the state gave the ability to compromise personal liberty to protect public health and safety (Skelton). In examining this case of a

vaccine mandate being applied to a more general population as opposed to students, the military or immigrants, there are a couple of important components. First, smallpox historically presents a higher mortality rate of 30%, being much larger than COVID-19 (Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research). Additionally, an exemption was permitted by implementing a fine, still allowing the individual to have the choice of whether or not to receive the vaccine. The Fourteenth Amendment was upheld as public safety was deemed important and there was the opportunity to deny the vaccination with a small consequence. The final argument with regard to vaccine mandates and specifically the COVID-19 vaccination, involves the recent decision to withdraw the proposal by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to require organizations with greater than 100 employees to vaccinate employees or undergo testing for COVID-19 on a weekly basis. The proposal was alarming to many, sparking significant concern and controversy. OSHA received more comments than any rules previously proposed, reaching 121,000, showing the level of interest and engagement with this proposal. The Supreme Court ruled that this initiative for private businesses could not be enforced. It was stated that this was an overreach by OSHA to force individuals to take a vaccine and dictate personal health decisions. OSHA's governing statute does not provide them with the power to authorize a vaccine mandate, indicating they stepped out of line with their proposal (Stohr, 2022). Although there is currently no mandate for COVID-19 that applies to the general population, it is important to recognize that almost 66% of the United States population has been vaccinated, just shy of the minimum 70% required to achieve herd immunity (Hill, 2020). Numerous Americans have made the decision to receive the vaccine without being forced to by the federal government. This speaks to the power of individual liberty.

Proponents of a vaccine mandate for COVID-19 or any harmful disease, point to these examples of historical vaccine mandates. Certain groups such as the military, students, immigrants, and people living in a geographic region have been subject to vaccine mandates, but these mandates were for diseases whose consequences were and are far worse than COVID-19. COVID-19 has been detrimental to many, but in comparison to the diseases for which vaccine mandates have been used, this disease does not present the same level of harm and justification for a vaccine mandate. As discussed, the military even modified their vaccine

mandate, schools allow for exemptions, and the recent ruling regarding OSHA indicated a mandate crossed some lines. Should a disease pose a level of harm that is extremely detrimental to public health and safety, then a mandate should carefully be considered. However, if a vaccine mandate is implemented for every disease possessing a fatality rate of 1%, where will we start and stop or draw that line in determining vaccine mandates? Never in the course of history has the United States instated an absolute vaccine mandate. Implementing one now would create a dangerous precedent. As society, if we are to foster choice, individual thinking, and basic freedoms, citizens should not be expected to blindly accept a vaccine mandate, should be allowed to consider a vaccine and understand the science before accepting. The context in which vaccine mandates are implemented should cautiously be examined and choice should be permitted whenever possible to "secure the blessing of liberty" for future generations of Americans (U.S. Const. pmb1).



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Charlee is studying Operations and Supply Chain and Business Management at Northwood University, graduating with her B.B.A in 2023 and M.B.A. in 2024. With work experience at a small business and with a Fortune 500 company, she hopes to become well rounded to find success wherever her degree takes her. Although her studies are focused on business, she is enthralled by politics, supporting the values of free enterprise and the Founding Fathers. Throughout her career, Charlee aspires to remain attuned to politics, and contribute to organizations that share her values.

Homeschooling is a Right That Should Not Be Denied Through Over-Regulation

By: Andrew Reder

It is no secret that the K-12 education industry in our country has flaws. More than ever, we have seen evidence of this amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Some schools, both public and private, are still struggling to establish standards to deal with the pandemic in the face of a roller coaster of rapidly changing policies. It should not surprise us to find that the current data shows an increase in homeschooling. In little more than a year, the number of families choosing to homeschool their children jumped from 7 percent pre-pandemic to almost 12 percent today. A 2020 survey by the American Federation for Children found that 40 percent of responding parents are more likely to consider homeschooling now than ever before. In light of this rapid growth in popularity, it is important for people to understand both why parents choose to homeschool and why it is crucial to support their freedom to do so.

The roots of the modern homeschooling movement can be traced to 1977, when former schoolteacher John Holt published the first issue of his newsletter “Growing Without Schooling.” As a teacher, Holt noticed that many of his students were not “on track” with the school system. Whether they were advanced or behind, he knew they needed special, individual attention that public schools could not provide. This is the very essence of school choice: every child is an inimitable individual, and no system that the state designs can possibly accommodate the unique needs and aspirations of each one.

It is also impossible for teachers to truly understand the individual needs and goals of every student they teach, because they cannot establish a personal relationship with each one. Parents, on the other hand, have been able to interact with their children since birth and build intimate relationships. They have watched their children grow, and they understand more than anyone the atmospheres in which their children succeed and learn. Parents are able to relate to their children’s changing needs and goals throughout their childhood and into their young adulthood. The state cannot teach children to grow as individuals. It is the family that instills

values and principles in their children and raises them into unique personalities that add diversity to the world, and it is the family that can be most trusted to identify the best educational options.

Young adults have many options for higher education. Some choose to attend large institutions with large class sizes, while others prefer smaller institutions with smaller classes. Some people choose not to pursue a degree at all and may decide to enter a trade. In all cases, these people are able to learn and succeed in an environment that matches their personality and behavior as only they know it. Should this same freedom to choose not also be afforded to children and their parents in the earliest and most impressionable years of their education?

The bane of homeschooling critics has always been an abundance of evidence in favor of homeschooling in terms of academic merit and life success. Their common allegations of social awkwardness, lack of physical activity, and poor academic success are quickly debunked by data from countless studies and testimonies from numerous successful graduates. For instance, a recent study by Harvard scholars Brandon Chase and Ying Chen found that homeschooled students have a 30 percent advantage over their peers in terms of social and financial success. American football player Tim Tebow has shared his testimony on several major news outlets as well as in his book, “Know Who You Are.” Among other things, Tebow asserts that homeschooling taught him to have a strong work ethic, firm values, and a unique personality. He also insists that his non-traditional education enabled him to better adapt to his dyslexia.

Homeschooling, along with other forms of non-traditional education, even has the potential to benefit children who stay with public and parochial schools by providing competition. The free market concept of competition goes hand-in-hand with choice. As more parents choose to pursue these other methods of education, schools will quickly see the need to improve their programs, instructors, curricula, etc., to become the best version of themselves. This will ensure that students who choose traditional education will enjoy a quality experience as designed by more attentive administrators.

Currently, homeschooling is technically legal in all 50 states. This is to say that no state has come forward with an explicit ban on non-traditional education. However, growing numbers of politicians have taken stances against this educational choice. This has led to many states imposing restrictions of varying magnitudes on non-traditional means of education, some of which make it difficult to pursue these options. Pennsylvania, for example, may currently be the most restrictive state. This state requires that all children be taught from only approved curricula and that a certified tutor must be hired to supply the majority of the instruction. Homeschooling families are also subject to frequent visitations by social workers, who assess the students' recent grades, ensure the atmosphere of the home is "up to standards," and even review immunization records. It is easily seen that these restrictions encroach on personal privacy and disproportionately impact underprivileged families.

Nowhere in the United States Constitution is it even remotely suggested that the state is entitled to regulate education, especially to the exclusion of parents' rights. As has been proven countless times, individual freedom and responsibility are always more productive and inclusive than state mandates. It cannot be denied that school choice must be protected if we wish for all the children in America to thrive in the educational environment that best meets their unique needs and pushes them to their full potential.

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(<https://www.northwood.edu/afeu/when-free-to-choose/a-student-voice-homeschooling-is-a-right-that-shouldnt-be-denied-through-over-regulation>)

About the editor



Andrew Reder graduated from a homeschooled high school education in June 2021 and was enrolled the following August as an honors student at Northwood University where he studies in the Economics program. Andrew's alignment with the Northwood Idea and passion for leading and mentoring fellow students has aided him in leading several student initiatives for free-enterprise policy and in achieving prominent leadership positions in freedom-aligned student organizations at Northwood such as Turning Point USA. In December 2021, Andrew's free enterprise activism was rewarded with an appointment as "Student Director of the Northwood Idea". In this role, Andrew is able to extend the scope of these activities through such projects as this student-driven publication.

Andrew lives in Larkin Township, Michigan, with his parents and five siblings. Besides his campus leadership activities, he is heavily involved in his local township where he serves on the Board of Review. In his personal life, he is an avid numismatist and poultry enthusiast. When he has free time, he enjoys reading, fiction writing, and spending time with his family.

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