



Independent

NEWSLETTER OF THE INDEPENDENT INSTITUTE

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Saving Our Schools from Anti-Capitalist Propaganda

By Williamson M. Evers



All across America, proponents of “transformative” ethnic studies are seeking to create model curricula, train teachers, and make their kind of classes mandatory for graduation.

You might think ethnic studies would offer an objective account of different ancestry groups in America – Greeks, Italians, Irish, as well as African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, Asians, and so on. But you would be wrong. People of European descent are largely excluded from study because they aren’t seen as a revolutionary constituency to be trained and mobilized for activism.

Rather than educating about the full range of ethnic diversity in America, “transformative” ethnic studies is reserved for blacks, Latinos, Native Americans, and Asians (a group that includes insurgent Arabs but excludes Jews). Jews are an ethnic-studies punching bag, not who they are in truth: a group that faced attempted extermination in Europe and still faces anti-Semitic assaults and threats.

One of the leaders in this movement says its purpose is to “challenge imperialist and colonial hegemonic beliefs and practices.” Ethnic studies is, she maintains, a “critique of empire, white supremacy, racism, and cis-heteropatriarchy.”

“Transformative” ethnic studies is not just radical propaganda for identity politics. It is also an explicit attack on capitalism.

It views capitalism not as a system in which entrepreneurs risk hard-earned private capital to provide goods and services that consumers can freely choose. Rather, like Karl Marx, it describes capitalism as a “form of power and oppression.”

Using actual Communist terminology, California’s proposed Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum describes capitalism as exploitation in which surplus labor is stolen from the proletariat. Teachers are encouraged to cite the biographies of left-wing icons such as Angela Davis, Frantz Fanon, and Bobby Seale. Convicted cop-killers Mumia Abu-Jamal and Assata Shakur are honored as well.

California’s Model Curriculum lauds bilingual education, but it omits that this program—in which teachers conducted class mostly in Spanish until seventh grade—failed in California and was disliked by much of the Latino community.

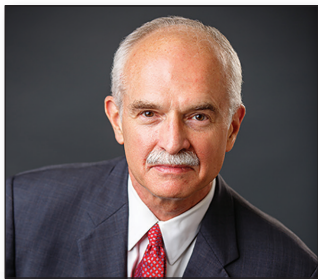
Such a curriculum presents a serious problem of fairness to students. In a course titled “Math and Social Justice,” will you be graded on having correct answers on the math or politically correct answers on social justice?

(continued on page 7)

Williamson M. Evers is a Senior Fellow and Director of the Center on Educational Excellence at the Independent Institute. This article draws on his op-ed, “California Wants to Teach Your Kids that Capitalism Is Racist” (*The Wall Street Journal*, 7/29/19).

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Can We Entrust the Future of Liberty to America's Kids?



DAVID J. THEROUX
Founder and President

Much to the delight of socialists like Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, at least one-third of 18- to 29-year-olds say they support socialism, according to the Harvard Institute of Politics. Other studies say that 58 percent of young people have a favorable view of socialism.

So, why do I believe we can entrust the future of freedom in America to the nation's younger generations? If we dig deeper into surveys, we find that they don't really understand socialism. When asked for definitions, only 16 percent of Millennials can define socialism as government ownership and control.

They are, in fact, more favorable to the word "socialism" than to an *actual* government-managed

economy. Millennials don't understand that socialism means the government owns and operates by force: farms and grocery stores, banks, car companies, Uber, Apple, Facebook, Amazon, etc. And what they consider to be "capitalism" is the same sort of cronyism and government favoritism that defenders of free markets oppose!

Of course, their misunderstanding is itself dangerous. Today's socialist politicians would like nothing more than to convince young people that their hardships are the result of "capitalism" and that the solution is far more government power.

The Independent Institute has a path-breaking solution to this danger: our far-reaching project, *Engaging and Inspiring Millennials for Liberty*. This innovative and *already-proven* program is providing young Americans with the hard truth about the failures of Big Government, the promise of freedom, and the market-based solutions they need to live fulfilling, prosperous lives. It addresses the concerns that Millennials face: worries about student-loan debt, uncertainties about landing good jobs, and hopelessness about ever buying a house. They are alarmed by the high cost of health care, and they

don't like the idea of government spying on them.

Key to addressing their concerns is *Love Gov*—our award-winning, satirical YouTube video series. To date, *Love Gov* has achieved over 20.6 million combined views. After viewing *Love Gov*, younger audiences discover our related *Catalyst* website, which engages them with accessible, liberty-based analysis of issues they care about.

The Independent Institute is helping younger generations understand and appreciate individual liberty, personal responsibility, limited government, and free markets (see p. 6). With our programs and your help, younger Americans can become the stewards of a free and prosperous future for everyone.

We invite you to join with us to advance liberty-based emancipations from government folly, and build a better future, by becoming an Independent Member. With your tax-deductible membership, you can receive a FREE copy of *Failure: The Federal 'Misedukaction' of America's Children* (see enclosed envelope), *Restoring the Promise: Higher Education in America* (p. 4), *The Independent Review*, and other publications, plus additional benefits. Thank you!

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THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW

Insights on Freedom and Wealth Creation

Few periodicals have attempted what *The Independent Review* has done every quarter since its Spring 1996 debut: offer readers deep insights from leading pro-market scholars about the causes of wealth and poverty. For evidence, consider the contents of our Winter 2019/20 issue.

Economists agree that their field is essential for grasping the social consequences of individual choices. Why, then, do they disagree so much about particular changes in markets and legislation? Canadian economist **A.M.C. Waterman** (St. John's College) examines the root causes of such disagreements in "The Evolution of 'Orthodoxy' in Economics: From Adam Smith to Paul Samuelson." His analysis offers a powerful lens for viewing news about government and the economy.

Surprisingly, certain fans of free-market scholar F. A. Hayek believe he advocated "universal basic income," a trendy proposal for government to guarantee everyone a minimum income. They are barking up the wrong tree, according to Guatemalan economist **Juan Ramón Rallo** (Universidad Francisco Marroquín). Their error, he argues, is to mistake Hayek's proposal, a *means-tested* benefit, for a *universal* entitlement ("Hayek Did Not Embrace a Universal Basic Income").

Historians still disagree on



THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW
WINTER 2019/20

causes of the 1929 stock market crash and the Great Depression. Some cast blame on President Coolidge. Coolidge, however, actively sought measures to curb speculation according to **Thomas Tacoma** (Blue Mountain College) in "Calvin Coolidge and the Great Depression: A New Assessment."

Some intellectuals leave a legacy that merits reappraisal. Known mostly for work in the philosophy of science, Sir Karl Popper also wrote on social philosophy. A man of contradictions, he criticized market freedoms even though his work on the evolution of knowledge offers a strong basis for criticizing government restrictions on freedom, according to independent scholar **Brian J. Gladish** ("The Society Most Conducive to Problem Solving: Karl Popper

and Piecemeal Social Engineering").

The late economist and Independent Institute senior fellow Robert Nelson excelled in expunging the dismal from the "dismal science" of economics and did so in ways both stimulating and entertaining, explains **Andrew P. Morriss** (Texas A&M University) in "Robert Nelson: Taking Economics Seriously, but Still Having Fun."

Is labor an "exploited" party in the employer-employee relationship? Many people mistakenly believe so, although it's hardly their only misconceptions related to workers and labor unions, according to legal scholar **Mark S. Pulliam** ("The Exploitation of Labor and Other Union Myths").

Will advocates of trade protectionism reverse the tide of globalization they say has lifted corporations and shareholders while drowning the working class? According to **Roy C. Smith** (New York University), today's populism can't stop worldwide economic integration, though the trade wars it provokes can slow growth, stifle wages, and create political risks for the White House ("Will Populism Kill Globalization?").

For selected articles and all book reviews, visit www.independentreview.org. Purchase a 1-year subscription and select a free book. (First-time subscribers only.)

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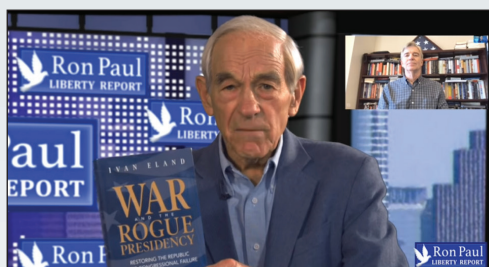
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Independent Institute in the News

Center on Law and Justice

“Perhaps the public’s newly gained understanding of impeachment proceedings will be put to wider use. For too long, the federal judiciary has usurped the policymaking role of the people’s state and federal representatives. Do you suppose there’s any way to punish and deter such abuses of power?”

—**William J. Watkins Jr.** in *The Washington Examiner*, 1/17/20



SR. FELLOW IVAN ELAND ON
RON PAUL'S LIBERTY REPORT 12/24/19

Center on Peace and Liberty

“The Trump administration’s national security strategy was supposed to refocus the U.S. military’s efforts on great power threats from China and Russia. However, like the prior Obama administration’s ‘pivot to Asia,’ the Trump policy has been shipwrecked on the ever-demanding shoals of the Middle East.”

—**Ivan Eland** in *The American Conservative*, 12/18/19

Center on Entrepreneurial Innovation

“...while many focus on the next government program that they are sure will be the silver bullet to alleviate poverty, the best solution is to simply create the conditions that allow people to thrive by eliminating government laws and regulations that exacerbate poverty by restricting economic and personal liberties.”

—**Adam Summers** in *The Orange County Register*, 1/1/20

Center on Global Prosperity

“Under (Mexican President) AMLO’s direction, Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard has strengthened ties with Cuba and Venezuela, staunchly defended disgraced former Bolivian President

Evo Morales’s electoral fraud, and is ignoring the Pacific Alliance, the most significant economic integration effort in Latin America in many years. The radical left-wing foreign policy has a notable exception: AMLO has become President Trump’s immigration police chief, more or less sealing Mexico’s border with Guatemala using extreme measures after Washington threatened him with reprisals if he did not. AMLO shows that two seemingly contradictory things are not incompatible: Leading a left-wing populist administration and groveling like the gringos’ poodle.”

—**Alvaro Vargas Llosa** in *The Wall Street Journal*, 1/22/20

Center on Healthcare Choices

“For the most part, the left doesn’t think that any price in any market plays a useful social function. Whenever they decide a price is too high, they call for government intervention to push the price down. If they decide a price is too low, they call for government intervention to push the price up. Because they don’t think prices serve any positive function, they often ignore the unintended and undesirable consequences of intervention.”

—**John C. Goodman** in *Forbes*, 1/17/20

Center on Educational Excellence

“Rather than take school wish-lists at face value, parents, teachers, principals, and private donors should insist that officials open their districts’ books before opening up their own wallets. When it comes to providing school supplies, Santa Claus shouldn’t be necessary.”

—**Vicki Alger** in *The Washington Examiner*, 12/26/19



RESEARCH FELLOW ADAM B. SUMMERS ON
EPOCH TIMES' CALIFORNIA INSIDER 12/19/19

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EVENTS

War on Poverty or War on the Poor?



Keep an old piece of clothing long enough and you'll see it come back in style.

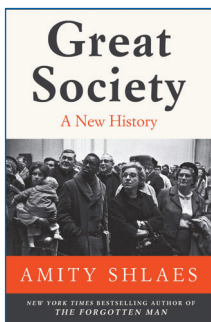
If the adage is true in politics, some of this year's campaign rhetoric may sound increasingly like a rehash of wishful thinking from the 1960s. But even if we hear a medley of misguided clichés, this does not mean America is condemned to repeat the mistakes of the past.

When it comes to poverty reduction, for example, we can take active measures to avoid a replay of the kind of federal interventions that have failed to lift up struggling families, according to economics journalist and bestselling author **Amity Shlaes** (*The Forgotten Man: A New History of the Great Depression; The Greedy Hand: How Taxes Drive Americans Crazy and What to Do About It*).

On January 14, Shlaes shared her analysis of 1960s-era liberalism—and her message of hope—at the Independent Institute's public event, "**War on Poverty or War on the Poor?**"

Drawing on her latest book, *Great Society: A New History*, Shlaes began by telling the story of corporate executive Lemuel Boulware, a forgotten visionary who foresaw the coming onslaught of welfare legislation and regulations and took corrective measures to uphold individual initiative, free markets, and economic opportunity.

A vice president for General Electric, Boulware launched a preemptive strike against the budding



welfare state by creating, in the early 1950s, a public-relations campaign for the principles of liberty, most notably via GE Theater, a television series hosted by Ronald Reagan.

Reagan, head of the Screen Actors Guild, was a committed New Dealer who found himself becoming persuaded by the principles he was paid to communicate. Although Boulware failed to prevent the emergence of President Johnson's "Great Society" programs in the mid-1960s, he succeeded in fostering the political career of the person most associated with countering the welfare/regulatory state.

While governor of California, Reagan found himself skirmishing with the Nixon administration over its intrusive expansion of Big Government. The juggernaut continued. By 1980, federal spending on health and medicine had grown six-fold since the 1960s. Spending on social insurance had increased by a factor of 27. Public housing expenditures had grown by a factor of 29. The national poverty rate didn't fall, however. Rather, it stopped falling with the onset of the Great Society.

The huge gap between rhetoric and results helped launch a counter-revolution—as did the ideological seeds that Boulware planted decades earlier. By the mid-1990s, even liberals such as Bill Clinton and Al Gore championed downsizing the welfare state and Big Government.

Such long-term cultural change is what we should aim for, especially by equipping youth with good information, Shlaes argued.

"I think young people have a lot of common sense," she said. "They have a lot of hope and a lot of ideas and are very energetic." The key, she added, is to enable their better ideas to take root and flourish.

To see a video of this event, visit www.independent.org/multimedia/.

ON THE ROAD

Independent Institute delivers its message of liberty and opportunity at numerous events across the United States each year. Here is a sampling of where our speakers have made presentations since the previous issue of *The Independent*:

- **Stephen P. Halbrook**, spoke on protecting the second Amendment at CPAC 2020 (Fort Washington, MD), Feb. 27.
- **Williamson M. Evers**, discussed problems in California's public education system at West Valley Republican Women Federated (Santa Clara, CA), Feb. 20.
- **Mary L. G. Theroux** presented solutions for

homelessness at the Republican Club of Rossmoor (Contra Costa County, CA), Feb. 18.

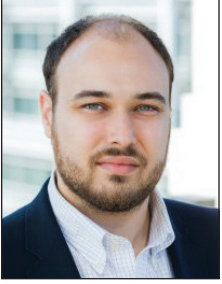
- **Richard K. Vedder** discussed the "triple crisis" afflicting colleges and universities at Turning Point USA (West Palm Beach, FL), Dec. 20.

To learn about upcoming events, please enter your email address at Independent.org.

CHANGING MINDS

Engaging Millennials on Free Enterprise

By Ben Wilterdink



Polls have consistently found that American Millennials (those currently 23 to 38 years old) are increasingly skeptical of capitalism and more open to trying socialism. Those findings should spur those of us who value free enterprise

to be ready to defend our principles in the public square. Keeping the following points in mind may improve our chances of success.

Most Millennials grew up after the Cold War had ended and missed the Reagan era. They came of age during the economic downturn of 2008 and witnessed the corporate bailouts that followed. Consequently, many Millennials are confused about what capitalism and socialism actually are.

Fortunately, there is reason for optimism. A 2016 Gallup survey found that 98 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds view small business favorably and 90 percent view entrepreneurs favorably. Also, young people are excited by the potential of technology and innovation to improve people's lives. These points of agreement can serve as helpful starting points in conversations about free enterprise.

And it's paramount to make the case *for* free enterprise rather than merely *against* socialism or a tightly regulated economy. It can be eye-opening to compare nations ranked in the top quarter of all countries on global measures of economic liberty with nations in the bottom quarter. I recommend starting with a few basic metrics:

- Life expectancy in the freest nations is 80.7 years, compared to just 64.4 years in the least free nations.
- Average income in the freest nations is seven times as large as average income in the least free nations (\$42,463 versus \$6,036).
- The poorest 10 percent of people in the freest nations make almost double the average income in the least free nations.

Statistics are helpful, but *everyday life under true socialism is where the ideological rubber meets the road*. Two of the most notable modern socialist countries today—North Korea and Venezuela—are

economic basket cases and bastions of oppression.

An estimated 40 percent of North Korea's population is malnourished, and almost everyone lives in abject poverty. The Kim regime's failures are intertwined with its prohibitions on foreign travel, endless propaganda, recurring famines, demands for expressions of loyalty, and state-perpetrated brutality.

Venezuela's slide into socialist disaster has occurred almost before our eyes. Venezuela has followed the pattern that socialist nations have repeated for a century: surges in government spending, nationalization of key industries, the printing of money to cover ballooning deficits, price controls precipitating chronic shortages, civil unrest, and political repression.

Aware of these problems, many Millennials point to Scandinavian countries as the correct model for socialism.

It's true that Sweden, Norway, Finland, Iceland, and Denmark rank high on global measures of well-being despite their relatively high levels of taxation and government social spending. But it's also true they rest on a bedrock of free markets: Most of them rank in the top quartile on economic freedom; all rank in the top quartile on the ease of doing business; and all have flexible labor markets. (This isn't to suggest that the United States would do well to adopt similar policies.)

Here are a few more tips for engaging Millennials on the merits of free enterprise and economic liberty:

- Build credibility by helping the poor and disadvantaged. While free enterprise is an engine for improving people's lives, charity plays a vital role.
- Emphasize the value of economic growth for the average family.
- Express appreciation and gratitude for the choices and comforts we often take for granted. These make a powerful case for free markets.

Finally, keep in mind that people often become more receptive to freedom as they gain responsibilities and life experiences. With a concerted and good-faith effort, Millennials may yet become a generation that understands the value and importance of freedom.

GLOBAL OUTREACH

Independent Delivers Ideas and Hope for Latin America



GABRIEL GASAVE

Did you know that the Independent Institute is an important voice for peace, enterprise, and opportunity in the Spanish-speaking world?

Our website *El Instituto Independiente* (www.independent.org) and multi-author blog *Voces de Libertad* (www.independent.typepad.com) offer a treasure trove of material that reaches and engages large Latin American audiences.

- *Voces de Libertad* has nearly 50,000 posts. Since its inception in November 2005, it has drawn more than 7 million viewers. Along with promoting works by our Independent Institute fellows, it posts insights by other scholars on issues affecting Latin America.
- Founded in January 2003, *El Instituto Independiente* now has almost 1,700 Spanish translations of articles from our main website.
- As of early January, the website and blog have 27,687 followers on Facebook and 5,221 followers on Twitter (with 33,537 Tweets since we began on Aug. 20, 2009).

Our message reaches people in *urgent* need of liberty and hope. The top 10 countries for our Spanish-language materials are (in descending order) Venezuela, Colombia, Argentina, Peru, Ecuador, Mexico, Chile, Spain, USA, and Brazil.

In Venezuela, Independent's work is especially welcome due to the Maduro regime's censorship of news about government corruption, political repression, chronic shortages and severe inflation (prices

are rising 3,700 percent annually, according to the Troubled Currencies Project). Our Spanish-language website and blog also post commentaries from Venezuela's two libertarian think tanks, CEDICE and Econintech.

In Colombia, left-wing radicals encouraged by Cuba and Venezuela have been protesting the government of President Ivan Duque and causing worries about the return of violent demonstrations. Our works urge not only free-market reforms, but also non-violence and cooperation.

In Argentina, Peronist populism returned last December after four years of normality under President Mauricio Macri. With the third highest inflation in the world (58 percent by one estimate) and one-third of the population living in poverty, the country's only hope is a far-reaching reform program of policies advocated on *Voces de Libertad*.

In Bolivia, elections will be held this year following the forced resignation of socialist ruler Evo Morales, currently living in Argentina. In 2019, the free-market Bolivian organization RedLectura began sending our latest Spanish blog posts to their 5,000 subscribers via WhatsApp. Subscribers reside throughout Latin America.

Our Independent Institute Research Fellow **Gabriel Gasave**, who runs our Spanish website and blog—and has translated our articles since 2003—also delivers our message on radio and TV shows in Argentina, Bolivia, and Guatemala. With each new posting, media appearance or lecture, he lights up more beacons of peace, prosperity, and liberty across Latin America.

SAVING OUR SCHOOLS

(continued from page 1)

In “transformative” ethnic studies, students aren't just politically indoctrinated; they are to become primed for mobilization and activism. California's Model Curriculum explicitly aims at encouraging students to become “agents of change, social justice organizers and advocates.” Teachers have students plan “a direct action (e.g., a sit-in, die-in, march, boycott, strike).” Teaching objective history isn't the goal. Rather, it's training students to become advocates for identity politics and anti-capitalism.

State officials have apparently sent California's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum back to the

blackboard after critics, such as myself, exposed its biases. But I expect they will reintroduce it with tweaks—and with its anti-capitalist biases and activist orientation still intact.

Parents should make every effort to make ethnic studies fair and objective. If they can't, they should look into an “opt-out” provision for their children. At minimum they can supplement their children's education with books like *Ethnic America* by Thomas Sowell and *America in Black and White* by Stephan and Abigail Thernstrom.

Students need and deserve a real education, not anti-capitalist indoctrination.

Sponsor Spotlight: Todd and Blair Maus



Married for nearly twenty years, Independent Institute sponsors **Todd and Blair Maus** live in Santa Rosa, Calif., and have two teenagers, Chauncey and Peter. They own Deering Wine and Vineyards, an award-winning

winery in Glen Ellen. They are very involved in their community and have served for years on the Salvation Army's Emergency Disaster Services Committee.

Todd and Blair are particularly excited about Independent's homelessness and housing initiative, which involves not only some of our *California Golden Fleece® Award* reports, but also our work as the Policy Partner to the Urban Vision Alliance, a coalition to end unsheltered homelessness in San Francisco. They have generously agreed to share thoughts about their support for the Independent Institute.

What interests you most about our initiative?

That you are partnering with the Salvation Army (and other coalition members) to advance public policies to redevelop existing properties that would provide long-term housing for homeless people, along with wrap-around services to help them become self-sufficient. We feel that so many non-profit groups are putting a band-aid on homelessness instead of addressing and healing its root causes.

What do you hope Independent can achieve by focusing on this initiative?

Breaking the cycle of homelessness here in California—with so much success that your program expands to other places around the country with a homeless crisis.

Why do you think others should care about homelessness?

Homelessness affects all of us and seems to be a worsening problem in California. Here in Santa Rosa we are dealing with a two-mile-long homeless encampment on a popular walking/biking trail.

The community is divided about how to solve the problem. It is so complicated, and there are no quick or easy fixes.

We cannot stand by idly while homeless people are living outside in the elements, without consistent shelter and food. We believe in the well-known quote, "The true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members." Ignoring homelessness is not an option, nor is saying it's a lifestyle choice that society should enable.

Independent Institute relies on generous donors committed to our mission. To learn about how you can get involved in our housing and homelessness projects, please phone our Development Team at 510-632-1366.

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