



Independent

NEWSLETTER OF THE INDEPENDENT INSTITUTE

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Time for U.S. Jews to Rethink Their Political Loyalties

By Benjamin Ginsberg

Several years ago, I was a guest on a Dallas radio call-in program. One caller told me that after having given the matter considerable thought, he finally understood why most Jews were Democrats. “You vote for the Democrats,” he declared, “to show the rest of us that you’re not as smart as we think you are.”

Perhaps I should have been offended. But as he spoke, I was reminded of a not dissimilar observation set in a different time and place: when the late Hannah Arendt, the noted Jewish political theorist, wrote in the early twentieth century that the Jews of Europe, in particular German Jews, were politically naive and confused, desperately clinging to the *Staatspartei*, even as political circumstances deteriorated and their partisan “loyalty at any price” became irrelevant at best, dangerous at worst.

Most American Jews today are liberal Democrats clinging to a partisan affiliation dating back to the 1930s New Deal and a political perspective whose roots can be traced to the mid-nineteenth century, when “liberalism” promised social emancipation and political freedom.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when Jews’ most dangerous enemies were concentrated on the political right, it was reasonable and prudent for Jews to seek allies on the left. What once was prudent, however, may have become a matter of “loyalty at any price,” preventing Jews from properly assessing current political realities and, perhaps, discovering that the old political paradigm they’ve internalized is no longer helpful.

Most U.S. Jews tend to view the world through liberal Democratic lenses, a type of eyewear that allows them to see enemies only on the right and friends only on the left.

Even the most partisan Democrats in the Jewish community must have noticed by now that nearly all of the voices raised in defense of Hamas and against Israel in the wake of Hamas’s savage murder of 1,200 Israelis last October emanated from the left, often from within the Democratic party.

The attacks are not just from Hamas apologists and fellow travelers in the congressional “Squad.” Ten of the eleven senators who signed



(continued on page 6)

Benjamin Ginsberg, research fellow at the Independent Institute, Oakland, California, is a political science professor at Johns Hopkins University and author of the new book *The New American Anti-Semitism: The Left, the Right, and the Jews* (Independent Institute, 2024).

LETTER FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Reasons for Optimism



MARY L. G. THEROUX
Chief Executive Officer

Our headquarters is located in the San Francisco Bay Area, probably the most “progressive” area in the country. And these progressive policies notoriously have resulted in rampant crime, homelessness, and what Dr. Drew Pinsky terms in our film *Beyond Homeless: Finding Hope* “open-air asylums” of mentally ill and drug-addicted individuals suffering in our streets.

But the good news is—just as Margaret Thatcher famously declared the trouble with socialism to be that sooner or later you run out of other people’s money—sooner or later regular folks get fed up with progressivism’s ills.

And it seems now to be sooner! In conversations with audiences across the political spectrum here, private-sector solutions are being met with new respect, most notably around our broad coalition working on a bold new approach to homelessness (see independent.org/bhsolutions).

Our podcast, *The Independent with Scott Atlas* (see p. 3), is now a year old! With nearly 600,000 views, the podcast has additionally gained tremendous followings across social media. Each episode features Scott in conversation with an authoritative guest, dispelling fictions and advancing truth on subjects ranging from COVID, climate, and woke propaganda to academic integrity, trans athletes’ impact on women in sports, and the undermining of our culture. Scott speaks for all of us when he says, “It is a requirement to speak up for freedom, because if you don’t, those freedoms disappear.”

We’ve been delighted to learn from a research survey of young adults that watching our satirical YouTube series *Love Gov* has a significant, measurable impact on their perception of government! Specifically, among young adults identifying as Democratic, trust

expressed in the federal government to do what’s right dropped by 15% after watching just one episode. With an aim to reach young people with the principles of liberty at the time of life they’re most open to change, we are also using this research to more accurately target those audiences. Now with more than 50 million views, *Love Gov* is having a real, positive impact on younger generations!

Media interest in Independent’s messages has also been growing, and in this election-year season of hyperbole and lies, we’re excited to be able to offer strong voices on inflation, including our highly anticipated new book from Senior Fellow Judy Shelton, *Good as Gold*; anti-Semitism, with Benjamin Ginsberg’s incredibly timely *The New American Anti-Semitism* (see p. 7); court-packing, government surveillance, and censorship with David Beito’s masterful take-down of FDR’s dangerous legacy, *The New Deal’s War on the Bill of Rights*; foreign policy with our satirical forthcoming *How to Run Wars*; plus topical commentary and policy reports across critical issues both domestic and foreign.

Thanks to your partnership, which makes all this and more possible, there are great changes ahead!

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VIDEO PODCAST

Dr. Naomi Wolf on *The Independent with Scott Atlas*

Dr. Scott Atlas is a world-renowned expert in health care policy, frequent policy advisor to policymakers and government officials, and author of *A Plague Upon Our House: My Fight at the Trump White House to Stop COVID from Destroying America*. He investigates the role of government and the private sector in health care quality and access, global trends in health care innovation, and the key economic and civil liberty issues related to health policy. *The Independent* features Dr. Atlas in conversation with high-profile, news-making guests around public health policy, science, civil liberties, censorship and free speech, higher education, the media, and more.

Each episode addresses urgent public questions of our time with unflinching logic and moral courage. Today, when most public-policy debate is merely a narrow reconsideration of existing policies, *The Independent* offers refreshing, bold, scholarly takes from the most original thinkers of public discourse.

In a recent episode, Dr. Atlas interviewed **Naomi Wolf, PhD**, bestselling author, columnist, professor, graduate of Yale University, and doctorate recipient from Oxford University. She is cofounder and CEO of the company Daily Clout, whose mission is to empower people with information and facts from all viewpoints. She is also the author of seven bestsellers, including *The Beauty Myth*.



Atlas and Wolf had a wide-ranging discussion about the corporate media's abandonment of journalistic ethics, the public's loss of faith in the media, the danger of ideological echo chambers, and experiences they've had with social media deplatforming.

We invite you to listen to this conversation and more from Dr. Atlas on YouTube, Spotify, Apple, or wherever you listen to your podcasts. You won't regret tuning in and joining the conversation on *The Independent with Scott Atlas* for an enlightening journey into the heart of independent thinking!

Start listening at: independent.org/scottatlas

"A lot of people have learned how to do primary research and how to check sources, which is beautiful; it's exciting. The task ... is to make sure the next generation inherits those skills."

—Dr. Naomi Wolf



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The Independent Institute in the News

Center on Entrepreneurial Innovation

“All the talk and scribbling about the infeasibility of dollarization in Argentina because of a lack of international foreign-exchange reserves is simply wrong. Official dollarization in Argentina is both desirable and feasible.”

— **Steve Hanke** in *National Review*, 1/11/24

“Why not let the demand and supply for loanable capital determine interest rates? Then we’d have a natural rate of interest. ... The Fed should not be such a prominent presence in financial markets. And I hope that’s the lesson that’s been learned.”

— **Judy Shelton** on *CNBC*, 1/26/24



JUDY SHELTON ON CNBC, 1/26/24

Beyond Homeless

“When we recognize the relationship between addiction and homelessness, it is easier to understand why the unsheltered population continues to grow.”

— **Christopher Calton** in the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, 2/3/24

Center on Health Choices

“One reason the United States spends more on health care than other countries is that we are obsessive about health insurance instead of health care.”

— **John C. Goodman** in *Forbes*, 1/18/24

Center on Educational Excellence

“What can we do about the corruption of American higher education? Milton Friedman had an idea 20 years ago: Tax the schools rather than subsidize them.”

— **Richard Vedder** in *The Wall Street Journal*, 12/23/23

Center on Global Prosperity

“Trying to turn Latin America’s most populist country into a libertarian model for the world entails an audacity of surreal proportions. If [Milei] succeeds, he will go down as one of the most transformative presidents. If he fails, then Peronism, the movement responsible for Argentina’s demise, will be back in power for many years, and it will take decades for free-market reform to regain prestige.”

— **Alvaro Vargas Llosa** in the *Orange County Register*, 1/22/24

Center on Peace and Liberty

“Section 702 has always been unconstitutional; Congress should let it lapse, restoring the requirement to seek court-approved warrants before the government searches Americans’ data.”

— **Ivan Eland** in *The National Interest*, 2/5/24

Center on Culture and Civil Society

“What people are not talking about is the fact that the most virulent form of anti-Semitism today is the result of toxic identity politics and anti-Israeli sentiment coming from today’s political Left, which is what we are seeing on college campuses across the country.”

— **Benjamin Ginsberg** in the *Washington Examiner*, 3/1/24



PHILLIP W. MAGNESS ON
FOX NEWS CHANNEL, 1/4/24

“Harvard University regularly brings up charges against students that violate its honor code. Plagiarism, in the last year they’ve released data, was the second most violated honor code violation. And they’ll expel students or suspend them for several semesters for doing lesser offenses than Claudine Gay has done over the course of her career.”

— **Phillip W. Magness** on *Fox News Channel*, 1/4/24

THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW

Winter 2023/24

In an age of stultifying academic orthodoxy that values conformity over truth, we are committed to analyzing the most pressing intellectual, political, and controversial issues of the day with an eye to *facts*—not ideology.

In this issue, our authors go where most academics fear to tread. Is it right for public employee pension funds to pressure corporate boards to adopt climate change policies? What *is* an economic recession, exactly? Was dropping nuclear weapons on Japan really necessary to win World War II or was Japan on the verge of surrendering? Can we understand markets

without understanding cultures? How do we think about the economies of East Asia? Does the good of man’s soul fit with the logic of capitalism? In this broad array of subjects, our mission as scholars remains consistent: to pursue the truth, regardless of where it may lead.

This issue’s cover article by **Raymond Venner (Portfolio Manager, California State Teachers’ Retirement System)** shows why shareholder environmental activism by government pensions is a dangerous form of central planning. In this form of so-called activism, government agents arrogate to themselves the discernment of the public interest, skirting the usual democratic processes, despite their lack of knowledge, incentive, or legitimate claim to do so. This practice not only erodes the separation of business and state but infringes on the right of individuals to own companies unencumbered by arbitrary government interference. It impedes the vital role of market prices in motivating beneficial supply responses to evolving resource scarcity. It distorts public discourse. It harms retirees. *And* it plausibly worsens climate change! Thankfully, Venner describes potential reforms that would solve this problem, presenting a hopeful vision of a fairer, more transparent relationship between the government and the taxpayer.

This issue also features the winners of our **2023 Student Essay Contest!** First Place winner **Phoebe Johnston**, a student-athlete at Hillsdale College, authored, “**Smith and Cicero on Philosophy in Action.**” In it, she shows that Adam Smith drew



Explore thoughtful alternative solutions to issues of current and perennial concern in this issue!

heavily from Greco-Roman tradition, especially the Stoic Cicero, in his emphasis on the practical application of philosophy. She also shows how a comparative analysis of Smith’s *Theory of Moral Sentiments* and Cicero’s *De Officiis* reveals that Smith’s moral philosophy follows Cicero’s emphasis on the importance of practical application over contemplation for the harmony of society and the bettering of men’s souls. Be sure to give it a read!

The **second-** and **third-**place winning essays are available online as web-exclusive features. **Samuel D. Peterson**, economics major

at Grove City College, won second place with his essay, “Pumping Gas and Siphoning Rents: The Political Economy of Self-Service Laws.” **Meredith Kottom**, a political economy student at Hillsdale College, came in third with “Landlords, Banking, Merchants, and European Financial Systems: An Intellectual History of Richard Cantillon’s Innovative Entrepreneurial Theory.” Our Independent Review Student Essay Contest offers a total of \$10,000 in prizes to students and faculty, including \$1,000 for each professor sponsoring the winners.

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INDEPENDENT EVENTS

Antigua Forum

January 18–21, 2024

The Independent Institute's senior leadership team was delighted to participate in this year's Antigua Forum in Antigua, Guatemala, an invitation-only gathering of individuals from around the world who believe in the power of human ingenuity and free enterprise to dramatically improve the well-being of people everywhere.

The Antigua Forum uses a unique conference format—a process that applies the principles of markets and self-organization—to discover better ways to advance liberty, increase individual choice, and liberate people from government coercion.

Using the mindset of an entrepreneur, the Antigua Forum's innovative process quickly harnesses people's knowledge to accelerate on-the-ground projects, coming up with action plans that can start tomorrow.

Working with the Antigua Forum's facilitators, Independent applied this energizing and highly productive format to a 2-day brainstorming and planning session with our Senior and Research Fellows and Advisors at the Asilomar conference center. We also utilized the stimulating process in



Antigua Forum
The Accelerator for Freedom
a project by **UFM**



MARY L. G. THEROUX, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER;
BRAD DEVOS, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER; AND
PHILLIP W. MAGNESS, DAVID J. THEROUX CHAIR IN
POLITICAL ECONOMY AND SENIOR FELLOW

a Bay Area convening among 50 leaders of 30 civic organizations building solutions to homelessness. (see <https://bit.ly/48U2TsH>)

TIME FOR U.S. JEWS TO RETHINK THEIR POLITICAL LOYALTIES

(continued from page 1)

a Bernie Sanders–sponsored resolution in January questioning Israel's human rights record in the Hamas-initiated war were Democrats.

This new anti-Zionism no longer even pretends to distinguish itself from anti-Semitism.

In polite American society, vehement criticism of Israel is often little more than a veiled form of anti-Semitism.

Hamas's charter actually offers some intellectual clarity on this point. The charter seems to call for the destruction of all Jews, not just Zionists.

Jewish Democrats need to stop pretending that Hamas and its ilk don't mean what they say. And the self-proclaimed Jewish anti-Zionists represented by groups like Jewish Voice for Peace and If Not Now—which hold noisy demonstrations supporting Hamas and demanding that Israel end its “apartheid system” and “genocide” in Gaza—might profit from reading and thinking about what their “friends” actually have to say about them. It even might be relevant to recall that the Soviet butcher, Joseph Stalin, used to call his foreign supporters “useful idiots” and sometimes had

them liquidated when they were no longer useful.

Membership in the Democratic coalition has, until now, allowed Jews to exercise considerable political influence in America. For many Jews, Democratic Party membership is almost a religious affiliation—and Jews are notoriously averse to conversion.

I recently attended religious services at a large Washington, DC, congregation where the rabbi said with a condescending tone that he knew a few of his congregants supported the Republicans. He urged members of the congregation to be tolerant and to try to understand why some Jews might stray into the GOP camp. His comments were met with smiles and nods.

Three-quarters of a century ago, during the Great Depression, Franklin D. Roosevelt (no friend of Jewry) gave America's Jews what seemed like a political home. Most are reluctant to leave. Perhaps the growth of anti-Semitism on the left and within the Democratic Party will cause them to think deeply about the costs of loyalty at any price.

INDEPENDENT BOOKS

The New American Anti-Semitism: The Left, the Right, and the Jews

Featured on *National Review's The Bookmonger* podcast, WWTC radio, WSFX radio, and *The Kate Wand Podcast*, and in the *Washington Times*, *Inside Sources*, and the *Washington Examiner*, Dr. Benjamin Ginsberg—political scientist, professor, and bestselling author—has written a prophetic book that couldn't be more timely.

The New American Anti-Semitism: The Left, the Right, and the Jews is a clarion call—not only to Jews, but to all Americans. Anti-Semitism is alive and well in America today, **but the threat is not coming from its usual source.** The most virulent form of anti-Semitism today, Ginsberg warns, is the result of toxic identity politics and anti-Israeli sentiment coming from today's political *Left*.

Perhaps the most persecuted people in all of history, Jews have stood tall in the face of unprecedented persecution in all places, at all times. Their culture's rigorous emphasis on education and accomplishment catapults them, Ginsberg argues, to success in the societies in which they live. But their achievements too often breed resentment and jealousy, leading to an ugly anti-Semitism that has led, historically, to unspeakable violence.

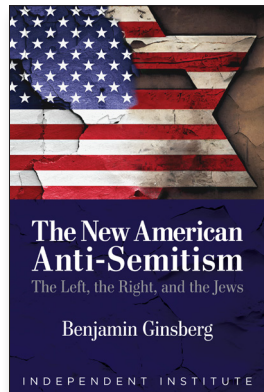
But if you read this book, you'll learn why

Jews have always persisted in the face of persecution. You'll learn the high and horrible costs of anti-Semitism, as well as the profound benefits of philo-Semitism. These lessons have never been more important than they are today.

In this urgent new work, **Dr. Benjamin Ginsberg** exposes the ugly face of this new, progressive anti-Semitism (which is also thriving in Europe). To combat it, he urges American Jews to form new political alliances, particularly with evangelical Christians.

The stakes of not doing so, says Ginsberg, are horrifically high—not only for the survival of the Jewish people, but for America's survival. After all, the Jews have contributed immeasurably to America's scientific, cultural, and economic achievements. Jews have been good for America, and America has been good to the Jews. But what once was so can change ... and Jews can never afford to forget their history.

Buy your copy today!: independent.org/antisemitism



California Golden Fleece Awards

The California Golden Fleece® Awards are a series of in-depth reports from the Independent Institute that expose waste, fraud, and abuse in California on the state or local level. To receive this ignoble designation, a program, agency, policy, tax, or regulation must violate common-sense principles of responsible government, be considered wasteful by people of varying political philosophies, and be well documented. This year, our team explored the issue of gas prices in California.

We all know that gasoline prices in California are consistently higher than the national average. But why?

Higher taxes? Yes.

More regulations? Yes.

Oil company greed?

No, say the authors of a new report detailing why Golden State drivers shell out more when filling up their tanks.

Federal, state, and local agencies are strictly to blame for persistently higher prices at the pump

for California drivers and for price volatility. For this, they have earned the dishonor of the Independent Institute's 14th **California Golden Fleece® Award.**

Their practices have broken the public trust by undermining competition and increasing consumer prices—all the while blaming and shaming oil and gasoline producers and marketers for problems that politicians and regulators have created through poor policy.

“Over the past 20 years, gas prices for Californians have surged to at, or near, the top of all US states. This is a consequence not of market fundamentals, but conscious public policy choices by government officials at all levels,” said Robert J. Michaels, coauthor of the report **“Pain at the Pump: Blame Politicians, Not Producers, for High California Gasoline Prices.”**

To find out more about the **California Golden Fleece® Awards** and how you can be a part of real solutions, [visit us online](http://visitusonline) or follow us on X [@CAGoldenFleece](https://twitter.com/CAGoldenFleece).

Host a Speaker, Lead for Liberty

The Independent Institute hosts numerous events to encourage discussion and understanding of key issues in current affairs, public policy, and political economy. At each event, distinguished and well-known scholars, policy experts, and others speak at length about important issues and answer questions from the audience. It's a great time to learn about public-policy issues as well as the timeless principles of history, economics, and philosophy.

This is your invitation to delve deeper—by partnering with the Independent Institute to provide a speaker or discussion facilitator for your campus, club, association, or in-home salon!

Interested in the history of privacy, surveillance, censorship, World War II, or the problematic legacy of Franklin D. Roosevelt? **David T. Beito**, Senior Fellow and Professor Emeritus at the University of Alabama, is the recent author of *The New Deal's War on the Bill of Rights: The Untold Story of FDR's Concentration Camps, Censorship, and Mass Surveillance*. The book is an all too rare portrait of a man who changed the course of American history ... not for the better. This book is a must-read for any liberty-minded individual.



Passionate about higher education, quality scholarship, and the morality of markets? **Phillip W. Magness**, Senior Fellow and David J. Theroux Chair in Political Economy, can speak on these topics at length. An economic historian, Dr. Magness speaks passionately about plagiarism, the hostile ideological takeover of American scholarship, and political privilege in academia.

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