

The Question of Masks By Doctor David Williams

Sometime in late April, the CDC first recommended the general public wear masks to help prevent the spread of coronavirus. Following this, municipalities and states passed ordinances requiring the wearing of masks. It should be noted initial recommendations came with the recognition there were no studies to validate the proposal. In years past, masks outside the medical setting had only been suggested for those who were sick. The sick exhibit symptoms. They cough and sneeze and expel a large viral (or potentially bacterial) load into the air. It makes sense to try and block that expulsion. However, those who are not sick do none of those things. Hence the medical community has long rejected the idea of masks for the general public. In April, it was acknowledged this new step was not done with conclusive data. However, a large percentage of those who had tested positive for coronavirus were not exhibiting symptoms. All human beings express some droplets as we breathe and talk. Therefore, the CDC decided masks may help prevent the spread of this new strain of respiratory disease.

Requiring masks made little sense to me. The CDC defined a close contact, or at risk event, as remaining within six feet of a COVID positive individual for 15 minutes. If simply going out in public placed one at risk for that, they shopped a whole lot differently than I did. I can't remember staying within six feet of anyone in the grocery store for more than 30 seconds in my entire life. In addition, if someone was considered a close contact, the presence of a mask made absolutely no difference to the CDC regarding the necessary quarantine. I will acknowledge they admitted masks were not foolproof, but the idea you still had to quarantine despite having to wear a mask failed to inspire confidence.

Within a few weeks of the CDC issuing their guidelines, the narrative changed. Although there were still no conclusive studies supporting their claims, public health officials and physicians asked to support the mandates started using phrases like "we know masks work." By the summer, those in favor of masks were emboldened by a study from Wei Lyu and George Wehby. It examined the COVID-19 growth rate before and after mask mandates in 15 states and the District of Columbia between the end of March and late May. They concluded these mandates led to a marked slowdown in the daily growth rate. Their results were cited extensively in articles supporting masks thereafter. However, if daily growth rate of coronavirus before and after masks is the measure used to determine the effectiveness of masks, it would be difficult for anyone to argue for their continued use.

Continued on page 2



Eagle Forum of Alabama wishes you and your family a very Merry Christmas as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We also wish for you a very Happy New Year 2021 as we celebrate the end of this most troubling year 2020.

Mask mandates are currently far more widespread in the US than the original 15 states and the District of Columbia. Yet, the headline of every major news organization on Sunday, October 25 related to record numbers of Americans being infected with COVID-19. The numbers have been quoted and rising every day since. According to Our World in Data, cases in California went up by over 300% after their mask order in June. Hawaii, which mandated masks both indoors and outdoors, saw their cases go up by almost 1000%. That trend is not limited to the United States. France has 10 times the daily rate since implementing mask requirements, and both Spain and the UK have 15 times the level of cases. Mask ordinances have also failed to stem a rapid rise in number of cases in Ireland, Belgium, Germany, and Austria. Meanwhile, the Scandinavian countries of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark have no mask mandates and are not currently experiencing the explosive case rates illustrated above.

If masks are ineffective, the fact it is unnatural to have our mouths and noses covered should be enough for these mandates to be lifted. The reality is that almost everyone finds them uncomfortable. It has been stunning to me in 2020 to hear proponents of masks deny this discomfort. I have heard them discuss how freely they breathe with their face covered. However, any study on masks conducted before 2020 will cite high rates of discomfort with the use of masks. A study from 2019 in BMC Infectious Diseases regarding contamination by respiratory viruses on the outer surface of medical masks found 84% reported problems. Complaints included facial pressure, breathing difficulty, pain, trouble communicating, and headache. I was not researching this article to find evidence of mask discomfort, however. I was researching this article because there are several ways in which masks could be making things worse.

In all of my public pieces and appearances regarding coronavirus, I have attempted to allow people the opportunity to acknowledge what they are able to see with their own eyes. I have certainly never minimized the loss of those who have succumbed to this very real disease. The potential risk to the elderly and those with comorbidities has been acknowledged. Unfortunately, many of our interventions have not protected that population but have harmed others. In the case of masks, we have seen, conservatively, hundreds of thousands (likely millions) of cases of “maskne.” This is acne either exacerbated by or completely secondary to wearing a mask. Acne is caused by (in addition to blocked pores) an overgrowth of Cutibacterium acnes. In my clinic, I have also seen patients who have suffered from nasal sores, pleurisy, and stridor. Are these things not evidence that perhaps it is not a good idea to concentrate bacteria and viruses around our mouth and nose for hours at a time? There is no disputing the role of the immune system when it comes to coronavirus. Inflammation certainly appears to be a factor as well. The presence of acne and nasal sores in many would argue for a taxing of the immune system and increased inflammation.

When widespread mask use was first recommended, opponents argued oxygen saturation would be affected by prolonged use and some exhaled CO₂ would be trapped behind the masks. A 2008 study entitled “Preliminary report on surgical mask induced deoxygenation during major surgery” describes those concerns. After the first hour, pulse rates of surgeons increased and saturation of arterial pulsations (SpO₂) decreased. We hear many assertions in 2020 along the lines of, “the data speaks for itself” without any actual presentation of that data. This article did not do that. It considered other possible explanations for these findings. Operational stress was recognized as a possible contributor. Physiologic changes of nurses in my office can not be attributed to surgical stress. The physical workload of those nurses is considered “light” by occupational standards. Although they walk frequently, they rarely carry objects weighing more than a few ounces. When mask mandates in Alabama were first announced, our office purchased surgical masks. According to their Apple watches, every nurse experienced a significant increase in heart rate. Doing the exact same job under the exact same conditions otherwise, heart rates ranged from 12 to 22 beats per minute higher with masks. Although their stress is considerably higher, surgeons stand in one place in an air conditioned, usually cool, environment. Even minimal physical exercise seems to exacerbate the effects of masks. If oxygen saturation is not affected and CO₂ does not accumulate behind masks, I am at a loss for other explanations of this tachycardia. A transition to cloth masks has alleviated some of those effects. I have discussed it with other health professionals, some of whom wear masks throughout the day, and admit some report they notice no difference wearing a mask. However, I think many of you could replicate the experiment described in my office using your own Apple watch and see similar results.

There was a surge of pro-life women elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in the Nov. 3 election. A total of 13 new Republican pro-life members will be sworn in January. Seven of these women flipped pro-abortion Democrat held seats. As of this writing, there are another 8 races with pro-life women yet to be called.

Pro-life Senators Joni Ernst (R-IA) and Cindy-Hyde Smith (R-MS) were re-elected and it is likely that pro-life Senator Kelly Loeffler will be re-elected in her Georgia runoff. All this shows that life is a winning issue.

*Source: Susan B. Anthony List
November 4, 2020*

The San Diego Unified School District is changing their grading system by no longer letting late assignments and bad behavior in the class room affect grades. They concluded that the disparity in grades between minorities and whites was due to racism. Such anti-racism policies are based upon Critical Race Theory once consigned to the radical fringe of college campuses. Such policies, however, look more like plain old racism as they are trying to promote racial discrimination as a means of creating more equity.

Proponents of such policies seem to be saying that bad behavior is not seen as leading to unequal outcomes, but that it's the punishment for bad behaviors that are the problem. Where this has been tried, it has led to more bad behaviors due to having no consequences to the actions. Such policies lead to a breakdown in classroom discipline and create a terrible classroom environment for children who want to learn.

*Source: The Daily Signal,
11/02/2020*

Numbers USA reported on October 22, 2020 that while Google, Amazon, Facebook, and Microsoft all condemned President Trump's moratorium on H-1B visas, these companies use them to hire foreign workers. They complain that there is a shortage of workers with training in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fields. But, Rutgers Professor Hal Salzman has testified to Congress that there is no shortage of such workers. He testified that "we graduate about twice as many STEM students as there are STEM jobs for them each year." Numbers USA concludes that the only reason such companies favor H1B visa holders over Americans is simple. Money!

Many of us have become totally disillusioned about the censoring and liberal bias of Facebook and Tweeter. But in looking for alternatives, we have correctly questioned the alternatives. Many have moved their social media accounts to Parler, which is much like Twitter. Others have questioned if such new platforms are any more trustworthy than Twitter since major investors of Parler had not been revealed. But, the Epoch Times published on November 15, 2020 that the major backer of Parler is Conservative billionaire Rebekah Mercer who said that she helped start Parler "to provide a neutral platform for free speech, as our founders intended, and also to create a social media environment that would protect data privacy." Another investor in Parler is well known conservative commentator Dan Bongino. We are not recommending Parler, but we want to inform you of this alternative.

Source: The Epoch Times, 11/15,2020

"Unless bureaucracy is constantly resisted it breaks down representative government... having authority over everybody and being responsible to nobody."

Calvin Coolidge

"There is no difference between communism and socialism, except in the means of achieving the same ultimate end: communism proposes to enslave men by force, socialism by vote. It is merely the difference between murder and suicide."

Ayn Rand

"One major difference between socialism and capitalism is that socialism is a system and capitalism is an environment. A system has the power to oppress. An environment is dictated by actions." Make no mistake. Capitalism doesn't create wealth. Individuals do. Capitalism is merely the environment needed for those individuals to partake in voluntary transactions to generate said wealth.

Ayn Rand

"The world is a dangerous place to live; not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don't do anything about it."

Albert Einstein

"One cannot and must not try to erase the past merely because it does not fit the present."

Golda Meir

"Men fight for liberty and win it with hard knocks. Their children, brought up easy, let it slip away, poor fools. And their grandchildren are once more slaves." —D.H. Lawrence

"The difference between genius and stupidity is that genius has its limits." —Albert Einstein

Certain public health officials and politicians emphasize the word “respiratory” when it comes to describing COVID-19 as a respiratory virus. However, the word respiratory refers in large degree to the part of the body most affected. Although we undoubtedly shed the virus in respiratory secretions, we don’t necessarily contract respiratory viruses simply by breathing shared air. It is, of course, a possible source of transmission, and there could be a virus in the future that has me donning all kinds of PPE, but it has not been my experience so far. For fifteen years I entered dozens of patient rooms daily treating individuals with respiratory viruses such as influenza, parainfluenza, rhinoviruses, coronaviruses, RSV, and respiratory adenoviruses. I never wore a mask and I never got sick. I put my children in daycare and I got sick. Why? Because they were too little to know better than to put contaminated foreign objects in their mouth and they were the only human beings I ate and drank after. We generally get sick when we put a virus directly into our mouths and noses. This experience can be confirmed by essentially every doctor in America. Undoubtedly in 2020 there will be those who would argue otherwise. But, again, trust what you have seen with your own eyes. When you went to a doctor’s office, urgent care center, or emergency room in 2017, 2018, 2019, January, or February, were the doctors and nurses who attended to you wearing a mask? If we are that vulnerable to simply breathing respiratory viruses, wouldn’t they have worn them every flu season?

So if we are more likely to contract a disease from putting it in our mouths and noses, masks could well contribute to rising rates of infection. From the acne observation, it seems likely potential pathogens accumulate on the surface of masks. From the 2019 BMC Infectious Diseases study referenced above, we know they can be on the outside of those masks. Among those pathogens is COVID-19. People adjust, touch, lower, and replace their masks frequently. Once an individual’s hands are contaminated with the concentrated pathogens, they deposit them on surfaces. If that surface is Chips Ahoy at the grocery store, and they decide not to purchase the item, the next customer is vulnerable. They open the package, reach inside with a contaminated hand, and insert the virus along with the cookie. Interestingly, even Good Morning America cautioned against just such contamination prior to the CDC reversing its stance.

The psychological damage of masks is difficult to argue. Joy, anger, fear, surprise, sadness, contempt, disgust. These basic building blocks of communication are written all over our faces. With physical distancing, increased anxiety, and disrupted routines due to coronavirus, we are primed to seek emotional connection simply by seeing each other’s facial expressions. Children are especially affected. Many young children burst into tears when someone wearing a mask approaches. Before COVID, some elementary schools prohibited masks at school Halloween parades for exactly that reason. One reason is the development of facial recognition is relatively weak in young children. This is especially true of those on the autism spectrum. The incidence of anxiety disorders has risen considerably among children, and there are now reports of problems with speech development.

I do not purport to have all the answers when it comes to masks. I do feel the evidence against them outweighs the evidence for their use. And I find it concerning that we are bombarded with ads over a practice that was universally rejected by the medical community prior to 2020. Even Dr. Fauci, when asked about masks in March, dismissed the idea. Later, it would be suggested he was simply worried about having enough masks for health care providers. However, that contrasts sharply with his emphasis and demeanor in the original video. I also know that a large proportion of the funding for advertisements encouraging people to wear masks comes directly from governmental health departments. It has made them major advertisers which discourages radio or TV stations from investigating or reporting their actual effectiveness. It is this absence of reflection and discussion about our approach to the coronavirus that most concerns me.

Revision: Although my original paper ended with the above paragraph, I have found an article that does present definitive answers when it comes to masks. “An Evidence Based Scientific Analysis of Why Masks are Ineffective, Unnecessary,, and Harmful” by Dr. Jim Meehan. His work details decades of the highest level scientific evidence which overwhelmingly conclude medical masks are ineffective for preventing the transmissions of respiratory viruses.

Dr. David Williams, MD is a family medicine specialist in Bessemer, AL. Dr. Williams completed a residency at University AL College Comm Health Scis. He currently practices at Mueller Occupational Medicine Inc and is affiliated with DCH Regional Medical Center. Dr. Williams is board certified in Family Practice.

What's Good About America

Free Enterprise

By Rev. John Killian, Special Contributor to Eagle Forum

The free enterprise system is so identified with the heritage of our country that economic success is spoken of as “living the American dream.” The description is not without merit, as the founding of civilized life and the establishment of American independence on this Continent was certainly the catalyst for innovation and invention, not just in the Western Hemisphere but across the globe. We have no need to wonder why the entire world looks at our country as the economic engine that scatters wealth across the globe.

Why is the economic system of the United States so powerful? Why does the world see our country as the source of so much wealth and promise? Other continents certainly compare with sheer workforce and natural resources. What distinguishes American prosperity from that of other countries?

Our country was founded upon principles of liberty and property. The right of the individual to private property was respected. On what grounds did the American colonies declare independence? Thomas Jefferson, the primary author of the *Declaration of Independence*, wrote in the *Declaration* concerning King George, “He has erected a Multitude of new Offices, and sent hither Swarms of Officers to harass our People, and eat out their Substance”. Our Founders resisted the idea of a large, controlling bureaucracy that hindered commerce.

As mentioned, Jefferson was the *Declaration of Independence*. economy is stated, “Agriculture, gation, the four pillars of our pro- sleft most free to individual enter-



the primary author of Jefferson’s dream for an American manufactures, commerce, and navi- perity, are the most thriving when prise.”

James Madison was the lead- ing influence in the crafting of the United States Constitution. Madison expressed his views on private enterprise, “The enviable condition of the people of the United States is often too much ascribed to the physical advantages of their soil & climate But a just estimate of the happiness of our country will never overlook what belongs to the fertile activity of a free people and the benign influence of a responsible government.

At the zenith of US-Soviet relations in 1942, a Gallup Poll showed that twenty-five percent of Americans favored a socialistic economy. In 2019, Gallup found forty-two percent of Americans now prefer a socialistic economy. Obviously, the barrage of advocacy for socialism in our educational institutions, among the media, and in the arts has filtered down to the average citizenry. As Constitutionals, we must seize the day to inform a new generation of the superiority of the free enterprise system and the benefits of free enterprise to our land.

Election 2020

We, along with the rest of the citizens of the United States and others from around the world, are still unsure at the time of this writing of the ultimate outcome of the Presidential Election. We pray that the alleged fraud is fully uncovered and that justice will prevail.

We are monitoring this situation fully and will report on the outcome in the future. We continue to pray for America.

Battle Over Conversion Therapy May Go To Supreme Court

On November 22, 2020 *The Epoch Times* reported that the legal battle over juvenile gay conversion therapy in Florida may be heading to the Supreme Court after the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals broke with two other appeals courts, ruling last week that therapists' free speech rights prevail over the medical establishment's opposition to the practice. The case in Florida involved laws enacted in Boca Raton and Palm Beach County in 2017 that banned therapists from counseling youths of the need to reject their perceived idea that they were homosexual or transgender and helping them to work through their sexual identity problems. These laws did not give any allowance for the rights of religious freedom and speech of the counselors.

According to the *Epoch Times* article, the laws forbid therapists from "engaging in counseling or any therapy with a goal of changing a minor's sexual orientation, reducing a minor's sexual or romantic attractions (at least to others of the same gender or sex), or changing a minor's gender identity or expression." The laws permitted support and assistance to a person undergoing gender transition.

A three-member panel of the Atlanta-based 11th Circuit ruled 2–1 on Nov. 20 that the controversial practice of conversion therapy counts as protected speech under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

The 3rd Circuit and 9th Circuit have ruled the other way, creating what lawyers call a "circuit split." Often, the Supreme Court agrees to review lower court rulings in order to resolve circuit splits and promote uniformity in the application of laws.

Critics, including various medical organizations, claim conversion therapy, which purports to convert homosexuals and bisexuals into heterosexuals, is harmful to the patient. They say it can lead to depression or suicide and doesn't work because people are born with their own particular sexual orientation, which can't be changed. The two therapists, who are licensed marriage and family counselors, argued that the laws interfere with their constitutionally protected right to speak freely with their patients. They say that they use "talk therapy" with their patients who often present with depression and anxiety due to internal conflicts over their sexuality or gender identity. Of course, from both a religious and true scientific point of view, there is no built-in disposition to either homosexual or transgender ideology.

As you may recall, in the last Alabama legislative session, Eagle Forum of Alabama helped draft and worked for the passage of a bill that would prohibit giving puberty blocking drugs, hormone therapy or sex change surgeries to minors in Alabama. This bill passed the Senate with a very wide majority and was on the calendar for passage in the House when the legislature closed the session due to the coronavirus pandemic. We will be back at the next session to complete this important work to protect vulnerable children from the ravages of such treatments. The bill has already been prefiled in the House as HB 1 by Representative Wesley Allen.

Equality

No doubt all the trees in the forest fundamentally have equal rights and privileges. But they don't all grow to the same height, and it would seem rather foolish to cut the tall trees down to the level of the lesser ones to satisfy the theoretical demands of an unnatural formula. And it would seem just as preposterous ruthlessly to pull the short trees up to the height of the tall ones. If we did, it would mean their uprooting—they would wither and die, as all things do unless they grow by themselves from their own roots. And so, to those who would like to eliminate differences among men, it should be said that if it were possible to do so, progress would cease. It must mean opportunity for each man to rise to those heights to which his energies and abilities will take him—and allow all men the same privilege—to the end that progress may continue, and that thereby all will find benefit. Equality which means less than this is not equality at all—it is slavery.

Richard L Evans

People's Republic of China in U. S. School Systems

The following Letter to the Editor was published in the *Alabama Daily News* on October 22, 2020:

Most Americans have never heard of Confucius Institutes: most Americans do not know what Confucius Institutes are. They sound innocent enough. At first glance, one might think Confucius Institutes promote the education of ancient Chinese philosophy or Chinese culture. However, Confucius Institutes have a much more sinister purpose. Found in college campuses all across our country, Confucius Institutes are funded largely by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. They are part of the propaganda arm of the Chinese Communist Party and seek to influence young Americans by normalizing the policies of the Chinese Communist Party. [In Alabama, both Troy State University and Alabama A & M have Confucius Institutes.]

Now we have learned the K-12 students may also be subjected to Confucius Classrooms. We are proud to see that our State Superintendent of Education, Dr. Eric Mackey, authored a letter to the City and County Superintendents all across Alabama, encouraging the end of these classes at the end of the current semester. It is a necessary first step in protecting Alabama's students from undue foreign influence in our academic arena.

Dr. Mackey conveyed letters from Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Education Secretary Betsy DeVos explaining the threat these programs pose to our Republic. Not surprisingly, they have a socialist/communist slant which denies unspeakable human rights abuses in the mass internment camps of the Xinjiang region and the indentured servitude of its population shipped all over China. We also commend other leaders in Alabama such as Congressman Mo Brooks and Representative Tommy Hanes for taking a stand to protect Alabama students from government interference in academia.

Signed,

Derek Chen, President, Eagle Forum of Alabama Young Professionals

Eunie Smith, President, Eagle Forum of Alabama

College Students Don't have a Clue What Socialism Really Means

In an article posted in the *Intellectual Takeout* on July 17, 2017 by Annie Holmquist, after lamenting of the lack of actual knowledge on the part of college students of what socialism really is, she suggests that they read Alexis de Tocqueville's *Critique on Socialism*. In a nutshell, Tocqueville suggests that socialism denies the individual the right to think and to act for himself. She quotes Tocqueville as saying:

"Now, a third and final trait, one which, in my eyes, best describes socialists of all schools and shades, is a profound opposition to personal liberty and scorn for individual reason, a complete contempt for the individual. They unceasingly attempt to mutilate, to curtail, to obstruct personal freedom in any and all ways. They hold that the State must not only act as the director of society, but must further be master of each man, and not only master, but keeper and trainer. ... For fear of allowing him to err, the State must place itself forever by his side, above him, around him, better to guide him, to maintain him, in a word, to confine him. They call, in fact, for the forfeiture, to a greater or less degree, of human liberty, ... to the point where, **were I to attempt to sum up what socialism is, I would say that it was simply a new system of serfdom.**"

Tocqueville concludes by saying:

"Democracy and socialism have but one thing in common—equality. But note well the difference. Democracy aims at equality in liberty. Socialism desires equality in constraint and in servitude."

Although Tocqueville's words are strong, they happen to resonate with the definition which Vladimir Lenin advanced for socialism. According to him, socialism brings everything in society under the control of the government and runs it for the "interests of the whole people."



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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Fourth Quarter, 2020

- **The Question of Masks**
- **What’s Good About America—Free Enterprise**
- **People’s Republic of China in U. S. School Systems**
- **Battle Over Conversion Therapy May Go To Supreme Court**