



STUDY GUIDE

GRADUATION 2020: THE COVID CLASS

KEY TERMS:

unique
liberty

gratitude
acquiesce

rights
police-state

NOTE-TAKING COLUMN: Complete this section during the video. Include definitions and key terms.

What is one of the most important traits you can have?

Why did France give the Statue of Liberty to the United States?

What did the Mayor of New York City ask citizens to do?

CUE COLUMN: Complete this section after the video.

What specific conditions of the pandemic have been sources for each of the three lessons?

How can each of the lessons benefit you going forward?

DISCUSSION & REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- Towards the beginning of the video, Mr. Prager contends: “We are living in a unique time. You are therefore a unique graduating class. You may well be known forever as the Covid Class. For the first time in history, billions of people, including healthy people and people living in free societies, have been confined to their homes.” What is so important and meaningful about our current circumstances being unique- i.e. why is this pandemic such a big deal? Do you think that the graduating class of 2020 should be forever associated with the Covid 19 pandemic? Why or why not?
- Mr. Prager goes on to offer some important life lessons, and begins with the fact that, “Life is hard. It’s unfair. It’s unpredictable. Until now, most young people, at least in the West, did not appreciate how true this is.” What do you think makes life so hard and so unfair? Why do you think that so many young people in Western nations did not more fully appreciate this fact until the pandemic? Explain.
- For the second lesson, Mr. Prager points out: “Gratitude is probably the most important trait you can have- because it is the source of both happiness and goodness. In other words, you cannot be either a happy person or a good person unless you are a grateful person. Unfortunately, most people don’t learn how important gratitude is until it’s too late.” Do you agree with Mr. Prager’s assertion? Why or why not? Why do you think that most people learn the importance of gratitude too late? Explain.
- Later in the video, Mr. Prager explains: “Freedom is fragile. Very fragile. The ease with which most Americans acquiesced to the removal of many of their most basic rights, even if you agree with that removal, should take your breath away. At the very least, it should make you realize how easily any government can take away people’s most elementary freedoms... The issue is how easily modern governments can become police states,” and then asks, “...what is to stop governments from doing such things when you don’t think it’s reasonable?” What is it that makes freedom so fragile? Why do you think that so many people gave up such a large amount of freedom so easily? Explain. How would you answer Mr. Prager’s question? Explain.
- Towards the end of the video, Mr. Prager concludes: “If there are any silver linings to the coronavirus shutdown of the world’s economic and social life, one would be the opportunity to learn life-enriching lessons.” Do you agree with Mr. Prager that the quarantine during the Covid 19 pandemic is an opportune time to learn important life lessons? Why or why not? What are some other lessons people could learn from this extremely rare event? Explain. In what ways could the lessons learned during the pandemic become truly meaningful for people, individually and as a whole, in the future?

EXTEND THE LEARNING:

CASE STUDY: Covid Tyranny

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the article “Pushing back against the little tyrants of the coronavirus,” then answer the questions that follow.

- What have certain politicians have mistaken our willingness to adhere to social distancing and stay-at-home guidelines as a signal to do? What are various mayors and governors doing, supposedly in the name of public health? What should good citizens recognize? What happened to churchgoers sitting in their cars in Greenville, Mississippi? What did the U.S. Justice Department say in a court filing in the Mississippi church lawsuit? What happened to a lone paddle-boarder in Malibu, and what consequences does he face? What is ‘a perfect illustration of just how absurd government at every level can become?’ Why did ten Philadelphia police officers drag a passenger off of a bus? What appalling and outrageous act of abuse of power did the Brighton, Colorado police engage in at a park? Who is Gretchen Whitmer, and what is she doubling down on? What did she ban? What is our responsibility as citizens?
- Why do you think that some people in positions of authority, like Governor Whitmer, value attempts to exceed their power over reasonably respecting the rights of the citizens that they work for? Explain. What factors do you think have contributed to so many government executives and law enforcement officials being so unreasonable and too heavy-handed in responding to the pandemic? Of course not all politicians and law enforcement officers have gone too far in their response, but what do you think the short and long-term consequences to those reasonable officials might be considering the actions of the ones who have gone too far? Explain.
- Do you think that people should just give up their freedom so easily? Why or why not? In what ways can ordinary people reasonably and peacefully ‘push back,’ and attempt to mitigate tyranny? Do you think that people should push back against tyranny? Why or why not?



QUIZ

GRADUATION 2020: THE COVID CLASS

1. Since the current conditions are so unique, what might this year's graduating class be known forever as?
 - a. The Online Class
 - b. The Covid Class
 - c. The Silent Class
 - d. The Viral Class

2. In the first lesson, Mr. Prager characterizes life as _____.
 - a. hard
 - b. unfair
 - c. unpredictable
 - d. all of the above

3. You cannot be either a happy person or a good person unless you are a grateful person.
 - a. True
 - b. False

4. What did the Mayor of New York City ask citizens to do?
 - a. flee to other states until the pandemic is over
 - b. visit the elderly each day
 - c. protest in large groups in Central Park
 - d. send police photos of others not wearing face masks

5. A silver lining to the coronavirus shutdown of the world's economic and social life is _____.
 - a. so many restaurants we don't like going out of business
 - b. the chance for so many convicts to get out early
 - c. the opportunity to learn life-enriching lessons
 - d. some of nature reclaiming its habitat in urban areas



QUIZ - ANSWER KEY

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<https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/apr/15/pushing-back-against-the-little-tyrants-of-the-cor/>

Pushing back against the little tyrants of the coronavirus

Recognizing the difference between reasonable guidance and unconstitutional restrictions



In this image provided by the Michigan Office of the Governor, Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer addresses the state during a speech in Lansing, Mich., Monday, April 13, 2020. The governor said the state has tough days ahead in its fight against the coronavirus pandemic, but a return to normalcy is "on the horizon." (Michigan Office of the Governor via AP, Pool)

By Tammy Bruce - - Wednesday, April 15, 2020

ANALYSIS/OPINION:

Americans have been doing a fantastic job following the coronavirus guidance of the president, their governors and perhaps also their local leaders when it comes to social distancing and taking precautions not just for ourselves and our own health, but for those around us.

Yet, lo and behold, certain politicians have mistaken our willingness to adhere to social distancing and stay-at-home guidelines as a signal that they can do whatever they please.

We now see various mayors and governors using this time of crisis to issue extraordinary, and as many see it, unconstitutional orders in the name of public health and safety during this time of pandemic.

The unleashing of little tyrants in a time of crisis is not unusual. But now is the time for good citizens to make a point of recognizing the difference between reasonable guidance on issues such as social distancing, not going to work if you're sick, proper hygiene like the regular washing of our hands and avoiding large gatherings versus unconstitutional restrictions on our freedom.

We are adults, we understand the suggestions we've been given, proven by the overwhelming adherence to the federal guidelines in the midst of this crisis. We also know when orders are inappropriate at the very least, and unconstitutional abuses of power at the worst.

Consider the church in Greenville, Mississippi, whose members were, as the Washington Examiner reported, "given \$500 tickets by local authorities for sitting in their cars in the church parking lot listening to a sermon from their pastor on the radio during the coronavirus pandemic. ... Police officers arrived and started handing out \$500 tickets to people who didn't disperse in adherence to social distancing guidelines."

The pastor of that church is now suing the city of Greenville, telling Fox News that he hopes the mayor takes action to lift the penalties. Moreover, in the midst of other reports of governors attempting to ban even drive-in church services, Attorney General William P. Barr noted last week the Department of Justice would be "taking action," and it has.

Fox News reported, "The Justice Department intervened in a Mississippi church's lawsuit by saying in a court filing that it 'strongly suggests that the city's actions target religious conduct. ... This case raises issues of national public importance regarding the interplay between the government's compelling interest in protecting public health and safety from COVID-19 and citizens' fundamental right to free exercise of religion,' the filing states."

Indeed.

It makes sense for Americans to avoid large gatherings, but the effort to punish people who are alone in their cars with the windows rolled up, as though that is somehow a threat to other people's health, is absurd.

But the apparent abuse of power isn't limited to church parking lots. People reacted with some shock when video from Italy revealed a lone jogger along an empty beach being chased by a police officer. But it would be wrong to dismiss that as unique European totalitarianism.

Recently, a lone paddle boarder in Malibu was pursued while he paddle-boarded on an abandoned ocean at an empty beach. The Los Angeles Times reported, "The man, who is not identified by authorities, eventually made his way to the beach where he was arrested on suspicion of disobeying a lifeguard and violating Governor Gavin Newsom's stay at home order, a misdemeanor. Photographs from the same show the man in handcuffs being led down the beach by two deputies. He faces a fine of \$1,000 or six months in jail."

The threat to put people in jail for violating an order to stay away from other people is an irony not lost on any of us. It is also a perfect illustration of just how absurd government at every level can become.

Other shocking video has alarmed the public, including the scene of 10 Philadelphia police officers dragging a passenger off a bus for not wearing a face mask, as noted by the National Review which also tells us of a scene in Brighton, Colorado, with "cops handcuffing a father in front of his family for playing T-ball with his daughter in an empty park."

Getting a great deal of attention, appropriately, in the follies of Governors As Little Tyrants, Michigan's Gretchen Whitmer has been getting a lot of attention. Tucker Carlson at Fox News said many hospitals in Michigan are "now discharging more coronavirus patients than they're admitting. In fact, an emergency hospital under construction outside Detroit has slashed its bed count from 1,000 to 250. Why? The expected number of patients failed to arrive."

He then noted that Ms. Whitmer has not only not acknowledged this, but she is doubling down on her efforts to control the movement and freedom of the people of Michigan.

"Last week, Witmer banned all gatherings anywhere for any reason of any size including in people's private homes, as if she is allowed to do that," Mr. Carlson said. She has also banned people from traveling between their own homes.

Part of her announcement of the increasing crackdown included, "Big box stores will also have to close areas of the store that are dedicated to things like carpet or flooring, furniture, garden centers, plant nurseries, or paint. If you're not buying food, or medicine, or other essential items you shouldn't be going to the store."

How is purchasing paint, or gardening tools, or seeds to plant your own food during a pandemic "unessential?" Who gets to decide that becomes a question all of us should ask. Few of us believe politicians know best in that case.

It is our responsibility as responsible citizens to implement sensible and productive efforts, such as the federal coronavirus guidelines, to slow and eventually stop this pandemic. And we are doing exactly that. But what we will not agree to is the torching of the U.S. Constitution or the destruction of the country by people who seem drunk on unconstitutional power they imagine is afforded to them in a crisis.

• *Tammy Bruce, president of Independent Women's Voice, author and Fox News contributor, is a radio talk-show host.*