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Why ‘Socialism’ Sounds Like ‘American Values’ to So Many

CATHERINE YANG

Support for socialism in America isn't new, nor is the successful push for socialist policies.

It seems to reemerge every few decades, but what's new this time, according to Iain Murray, is a much poorer understanding of what socialism actually is.

"At the moment, it's hard to pin down what they mean by socialism," said Murray, who directs the Center for Economic Freedom at the Competitive Enterprise Institute in Washington.

If he asks, one might answer "an economy like Sweden's," except that Sweden ranks higher than the United States in free-market trade, has a competitive school-choice model, and taxes corporations at about the same rate as the United States. People are likely referring to Sweden's welfare system, which includes free health care, not considering that such a system creates more demand than supply can meet.

"So you then ask, 'So, what do you really want?' and socialists will say, 'We just want democratic control over all things,'" Murray said. "They tend to mean a massively expanded regulatory state, so they're basically calling for the same sort of thing that was rejected by Western Europe. Rather than calling for direct control of industry and public services, it's a micromanaging, indirect control—which will eventually result in the same thing: the bureaucrats are in charge and not the entrepreneurs."

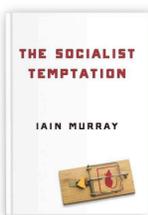
In Murray's new book, "The Socialist Temptation," he pins down why, specifically, socialism is so tempting to Americans—and not just students, but even longtime conservatives.

"It does a very good job of speaking to core American values, and it speaks to them at that value level," he said. "There are three really core American values, and they are fairness, freedom, and community."

Promoters of socialism say the current society isn't fair, and that socialism is the solution that will create fairness. They say people can't be properly free in this society, being oppressed and exploited (see: bank bailouts and eliminating student debt), but a vote for democratic so-



Iain Murray is vice president for strategy and a senior fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute in Washington, which promotes free market and limited government.



Iain Murray's new book "The Socialist Temptation."



According to Murray, socialism does a good job of speaking to core American values, even if in practice it undermines those values.

cialists is a vote for freedom.

Unions and other coalitions are also core to socialism; they speak to good jobs for life, and how good jobs will rebuild American communities, Murray said.

"It speaks directly to these values," he said. "A lot of people say socialism is simplistic, and I don't think that is the case, but it is easy. It does seem to provide intuitive, easy answers to these problems."

Murray mentions "cultural cognition" in his book, which separates Americans into four value groups: traditionalists, egalitarians, individualists, and fatalists. The latter believe everything comes down to luck, and they typically don't vote, so that group isn't the main focus of any political campaigns. Meanwhile, the other three value groups can vote or migrate across party lines, and successful campaigns speak to these groups in their own language, Murray said.

The egalitarians are the ones who have been cheated by socialism time and again, as society has never been fully equal, Murray writes, but you might see an individualist support wealth redistribution in the name of agency; traditionalists buy into socialist policies that penalize businesses, because companies often don't stand up for traditional values.

"It's a very idealistic philosophy, and idealism tends not to worry about the detail, but it's the detail which is very important," Murray said. It might speak to American values, but in practice "they undermine those values."

Democratic Socialism in Britain

Murray grew up in Britain in the 70s, when it was a democratic socialist country.

"All the industries and utilities and so on were nationalized, and to tell you the truth, it was a dreary and depressing place in the 1970s," Murray said. The labor unions were all-powerful, so those who weren't in this class suffered professionally.

His father was an electrician who

couldn't get a job because he wasn't in the union, and couldn't join the union because he didn't have a job. His mother was a schoolteacher and would come back from interviews knowing she had already lost the job to one of the bureaucrats interviewing for the same position.

The unions, exercising all of their collective bargaining rights, also led regular strikes. That meant the loss of public services and utilities were a part of everyday life, and on a bigger scale, there was national inflation and the loss of savings.

"During the strikes, because these were essentially public services, they were being disrupted. So as a child, I had to do my homework by candlelight because the power workers had gone on strike. Then you got to the situation in the late 70s when this all became actually absurd. There was one period called the Winter of Discontent, where every public service went on strike in one way or another, whether it be hospital workers, or even gravediggers," he said.

"You got to the point where there were huge piles of trash in the street because the sanitation workers were on strike and the dead were lying unburied because the gravediggers were on strike. And that's when people said, 'No, we've had enough of this.'"

Britain, like Sweden, later began to privatize industries after socialist experiments drained national wealth and lowered standards of living.

Of course, Murray, as most will when listening to a socialist explain policy, often hears "any attempt to create a socialist state in the past wasn't real socialism."

The same exact cycle plays out, whether it's in South America or Europe.

When socialist policies are passed into law, people celebrate the fact that true socialism is finally happening.

"The first few years, everything seems to be working, then the wheels start to come off. Things start to go wrong because of the inherent con-

traditions of socialism, because you can't have democratic control over every economic decision," Murray said. At that point, socialists start to blame saboteurs, from domestic to foreign agents. Then, when the inevitable crash and burn happens, they can walk away claiming that it wasn't real socialism.

While Britain was referred to as the "sick man of Europe" during Murray's childhood, it is once again in recent years.

"The Labour Party in Britain, it went more extreme socialist in its last election campaign since I have seen since the 1980s; they very much have exactly that rhetoric: 'We know previous socialist administrations failed, but we're going to get it right this time,'" Murray said.

Their downfall was actually in promising too much free stuff.

"Even former Labour Members of Parliament were criticizing this because they knew at some point, people are going to stop believing your promises. And clearly, given the scale of the Labour Party's defeat, they really went over the limit there, and were too easy to reject," Murray said.

Murray primarily hopes Americans will come to understand what socialism is. He adds that those who do may need to speak to American values.

"The important thing is to point out the contradictions of socialism. Ask why, if socialism is about equality, does it always lead to a new ruling class of bureaucrats with their own special privileges?" Murray said. "Why, when socialists say they want to be like Sweden, why don't they want the free and open economy that Sweden has?"

In the book, Murray also notes that UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson won the election by speaking to values at the value level: a fairer society, freedom and entrepreneurship, and strengthening community.

If those who are against socialism want to succeed in their messaging, they will need to do the same, he said.

4 Tricks for Teaching Manners to Young Children

EMMA FREIRE

Most parents would agree that teaching their children to have good manners is an essential part of a good upbringing. As Princess Marie-Chantal of Greece writes in her new book "Manners Begin at Breakfast: Modern Etiquette for Families," "We all want our children to go out into the world being thoughtful toward others—to grow up into respectful individuals."

Parents may differ in their standards. Some parents focus primarily on teaching their children to say "please" and "thank you." Others emphasize politely greeting strangers. Some parents make table manners their top priority. But no matter how parents define "good manners," they are likely to make teaching manners to their children a top priority.

But how do you get young children to act politely? In my ex-

perience, simply correcting my children when they mess up isn't very helpful. Here are four tips that have yielded good results in my family:

1. Prepare Children in Advance

Children are far more likely to practice good manners if you clearly explain in advance what you expect from them. For example, if we are going to see Mrs. Smith, I will sit down with my kids ahead of time and tell them, "We are going to Mrs. Smith's house. When we arrive, you should shake her hand and say, 'Hello Mrs. Smith. My name is David.'" I might even act this out with them.

Otherwise, when we arrive, they are likely to get shy and refuse to introduce themselves.

2. Set a Good Example at All Times

Every parent already knows they



Children love to imitate their parents—all the more reason for adults to exhibit their good manners.

need to be a role model for their child, but it bears repeating in the context of manners. If I have told my children to act a certain way, I had better be sure I act that way myself. Family life can be very casual. I could ask my husband for something without saying "please" and he won't find that rude.

But I still do my best to be po-

lite and use my manners around the house. Children are always watching.

3. Give Positive Feedback

Positive reinforcement is nearly always a great childrearing tactic and particularly so when it comes to teaching manners. I do my best to stay alert to when my kids are being polite and then I praise them for it. That incentivizes them to keep up the good work.

When they mess up, I will usually either briefly point it out to them or just let it slide, depending on the context.

4. Appeal to Their Role Models

Outside authorities are also a

good way to teach manners, as their influence can often make more of an impression than Mom's and Dad's continual reminders. My daughter is 5 years old and loves princesses. If my daughter says "yuck" about the food on the table, I could talk about a beautiful princess who lives in a palace. The princess would never say "yuck" about her dinner.

Teaching manners is a marathon, rather than a sprint, and it continues throughout childhood. Parents shouldn't get upset if they fail to see progress for a while. Keep teaching consistently and eventually, kids will get the hang of it.

Emma Freire is a writer living in Sao Paulo. She has also been published in *The Federalist* and *The American Conservative*. This article was originally published on *Intellectual Takeout*.

Finding Our Way, Making Our Way: Some Tips on Education

JEFF MINICK

It's crunch time.

The fall semester is right around the corner, and those who operate our schools are considering various possibilities. Should brick-and-mortar schools remain closed and distance learning continued in the face of the pandemic? Should schools reopen on a part-time basis? Should students and teachers wear masks and maintain social distance?

Those are some of the options on the table.

But what about your options?

Some Alternatives

More parents than ever are considering homeschooling their children. Compared to the 1980s, when my wife and I first began teaching our little ones at home, parents today are living in a golden age of home education, with an enormous number of programs and curricula available to their students, and with the world at their fingertips through their electronic devices.

In many places, families band together to form homeschooling co-ops. Generally, these co-ops meet once or twice a week with classes taught either by a parent with a particular set of skills, a volunteer, or a paid teacher. Twelve-year-old Jenny goes to a weekly seminar in Latin, returns home with her Henle Latin First Year textbook, completes three hours of homework under the supervision of her mother, and returns the next week for further instruction.

This year, some families are instituting a new system—pod schools—where they join with other families and hire a licensed teacher to give daily instruction to small groups of students. Think one-room schoolhouse, and you'll get the picture. This approach is more expensive than the alternatives listed above, but may be a boon to working parents.

Asheville Latin

For almost 20 years, I operated Asheville Latin Seminars in Asheville, North Carolina. As the sole proprietor, principal, and teacher, I offered classes in Latin, English composition and literature, and history to homeschooling students ages 12–18. Other subjects—math, science, French—they either learned at the dining room table in their homes or from another tutor.

From Monday through Thursday—Fridays I reserved for grading and lesson planning—I taught a total of 12 classes, each of them one hour and 50 minutes long, including a five-minute break. A typical Monday might find me teaching Latin II from 9:00–10:50, United States history and literature from 11:15–1:05, and Latin I from 1:15–3:05. The students then returned home with 2–5 hours of homework, which was due the following week.

The class size ran from one student—that was the year only one young man enrolled in Advanced Placement Latin—to 16 or 17 girls and boys. These numbers allowed me to charge modest fees for each student and still earn a living.

I selected the textbooks we used, the novels and poems we read, and the books for history classes. If you wish to pay a visit to my website to see recommended books, go to AshevilleLatin.com. Below is a typical reading list for my middle school students:



Even at a young age, some children exhibit certain inclinations toward a life's work. We can encourage children to pursue what they love.

- "Writer's Inc."
- "Harp and Laurel Wreath" edited by Laura Berquist
- "Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation" by Jane Straus
- The Bible (King James or RSV recommended)
- "The Essential Calvin and Hobbes"
- "Gift of the Magi"
- "Importance of Being Earnest"
- "The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and A Very Interesting Boy"
- "True Grit" by Charles Portis
- "Animal Farm" by George Orwell
- "Indian Captive: The Story of Mary Jemison" by Lois Lenski
- "Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry"
- "The Hobbit" by J.R.R. Tolkien
- "Cracker: The Best Dog in Vietnam"
- Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream"

Success

Did this system work?

Absolutely.

My students won admission to institutions of higher learning such as Brown, West Point, and the University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill. Others attended the local community college, joined the military, or entered the workforce. At least five of my former students now teach Latin in various parts of the country, one is a 24-year-old now running for Congress, and others have become lawyers, doctors, and nurses, welders and mechanics, or small-business owners.

Best of all from my perspective, many of these kids learned how to write well. Often, they returned from their freshman year in college to thank me for teaching them that skill. I accepted the appreciation with gratitude, but the truth was they became

good writers because I made them write scores of compositions.

Challenging Our Young People

In my years of teaching, I learned some things about our young people.

First, they respond to challenges, particularly when they can see the good in those challenges. Every spring, for example, I required my middle school students to write a 1,500-word essay on "Where I Will Be in 15 Years and What It Cost Me to Be There." These middle school students had to follow their dreams 15 years into the future, until they were 27 or 28 years old, and describe their lives and what sacrifices they'd made to achieve their goals.

Every spring, for example, I required my middle school students to write a 1,500-word essay on "Where I Will Be in 15 Years and What It Cost Me to Be There."

We spent weeks on this project. In addition to the writing, which we broke into parts, this essay required some research. If they planned on attending North Carolina State University to become an engineer, they needed to go to that school's website and figure out what courses and grades the engineering school required for admission as well as its requirements for a degree. If they wanted to enter the trades, as some did, they had to research the skills they needed to master carpentry, plumbing, or

masonry, requirements for certification, and the employment opportunities for their particular trade.

Students also had to envision their lives aside from work. Did they want a spouse and family? Did they wish to live in a big house in the country or an expensive apartment in a large city? If so, how did they intend to pay for these things?

Other Lessons the Teacher Learned

Young people need praise—not the false accolades of the "I Am Special" movement, but praise sincerely rendered for a job well done. A pat on the back or a complimentary comment on an essay keeps them in the race.

We should also encourage our children to pursue what they love. While writing this article, I spoke with a husband and wife who were worried about the lack of academic prowess and advancement in some of their seven home-educated children, six of whom are adopted. Of those six, five were addicted to drugs at birth through their natural mothers. When Mom and Dad asked for my advice, I recommended they stop comparing their children to others and reminded them of the noble work they had undertaken in raising these children.

I also suggested that even at a young age, their kids were exhibiting certain inclinations toward a life's work. One of them, for example, loves saving dead tree limbs, hammering nails into lumber, and hanging around adults performing these tasks. We need people in the trades as much or more than we need them in the professions, so why not encourage that boy, if he retains those interests as he grows older, to follow that route?

As I frequently told my students, all too often we equate high academic achievement with a sure-fire sign of success in life. We make grades and classroom abilities the criterion for a happy and productive life. Nothing could be further from the truth. If we look at the successful people we know, we find factors such as personality, virtue, a servant leader mentality, personal integrity, and even physical appearance can contribute to success as much as straight As on a report card.

Willpower and Love

On my site, you'll notice a Latin tag attributed to Hannibal: "Invenimus viam aut viam faciemus," which translates to "We will find a way or we will make a way." I often wrote those words of grit and wisdom on the whiteboard in my classroom. When we teach willpower to our students by example and by our words, we enhance their ability to tackle difficult problems.

And when we love our young people, and show them that love, we may be giving them the greatest gift of all. To toss off another Latin adage, "Omnia vincit amor," or "Love conquers all."

Love, grit, challenge, virtue, wisdom, vision: these transform our children into responsible and happy adults.

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, N.C. Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. See JeffMinick.com to follow his blog.

NEW COLUMN!



Need Advice?

THE EPOCH TIMES

Dear Readers,

What's been weighing on your mind lately? When difficult situations are personal, it's hard to put things in perspective. If your situation has got you stumped, ask our new advice columnist, June. She's a married mother of two and longtime Epoch Times journalist covering family, relationships, and health topics.

Whether it's a frustrating family matter, a social etiquette issue, a minor annoyance, or a big life question,

email it to DearJune@EpochTimes.com
If you prefer to mail your question, send it to:

Attn: Dear June
The Epoch Times
229 W. 28th St, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10001

Please include your first name, last initial, and the state you are writing from. We may pick your question to be published in our new advice column, Dear June.

SUBMIT YOUR QUESTIONS TO: DearJune@EpochTimes.com

Kicking Stress and Finding Happiness in Hard Times

BARBARA DANZA

We are living through unique times. Stress is plentiful and happiness can sound like a mere pipe dream sometimes. The year 2020 has brought many challenges.

We could all use a little help taming stress and keeping a positive outlook, so I asked for advice from Alyssa Shaffer, the author of “The Happiness Formula: Simple Habits for a More Joyful Life” and “How to Beat Stress: The Scientific Guide to Being Happy.”

THE EPOCH TIMES: There’s a lot of fear and worry out there. What are some key strategies we can use to tamp down that fear and worry?
ALYSSA SHAFFER: These are certainly unprecedented times—for many of us, it’s the first point in our lives we’ve had to face severe physical and emotional turmoil that is shaking up our entire society. That said, we do have some tools at hand to help us get control of our emotions, so we don’t let fear and worry rule our lives.

For starters, while it’s easy to get sucked into the ever-present information cycle, it can be helpful to skip by the news channels or shut the TV off altogether. Constantly hearing negative updates—which, unfortunately, is what drives ratings and therefore the news reports—can take a toll on your mental health. While it is important to stay informed, cut back on that negative news diet, or at least limit your exposure.

Next, do some form of exercise. You don’t have to invest in a home gym or take up a new sport. Just a few minutes of activity, whether that’s taking a walk around the neighborhood, going for a bike ride, or doing some light calisthenics is enough to boost feel-good chemicals in your body. Weather and conditions permitting, take it outside—research shows just five minutes of outdoor exercise is enough to fight anxiety and boost mood.

Finally, in moments where you feel that anxiety building up, do a few minutes of deep breathing. Your breath plays a fundamental role in the relaxation response—which is your body’s ability to fight stress in the moment. Breathing can help to alleviate some of the negative feelings (anxiety, depression, fear) and bring out more positive ones (love, compassion) simply by calming down the flight-or-fight response and helping your body regain a sense of control.

Try this: Focus on breathing in fully for a count of five and exhaling fully for a count of five. As you breathe in, think something soothing like “calm” or “peace.” As you exhale, add another calming thought, like “love.” Repeat for a couple of minutes.

THE EPOCH TIMES: For some people, the measures put in place to impede the spread of the virus, like staying home and increased isolation, have been challenging to deal with. What advice would you give those struggling with loneliness or the overall disruption in their lives?

MS. SHAFFER: We know that COVID-19 is having a big impact on our mental health. According to a poll from the Kaiser Family Foundation, nearly half (45 percent) of adults in the United States reported that their mental health has been negatively



Exercise—whether a bike ride or a walk around the neighborhood—boosts feel-good chemicals in your body.

Alyssa Shaffer, the author of “The Happiness Formula: Simple Habits for a More Joyful Life,”
COURTESY OF ALYSSA SHAFFER



“While it is important to stay informed, cut back on that negative news diet, or at least limit your exposure.”

Alyssa Shaffer

Reaching out to friends and family is crucial to reduce isolation.



impacted due to worry and stress over the virus. And sadly, it doesn’t seem like things are likely to change any time soon.

Reaching out to friends or family is crucial to helping reduce a sense of isolation. Low-tech measures like a simple phone call can have a big impact; if you have access to a video call like Zoom or FaceTime that can add an even greater effect in helping you feel more connected.

If you’re able to go out, getting some fresh air—even just for a short time and at a social distance—will help break up the sense of isolation and remind you that there’s more going on in the world than the pandemic.

If you’re staying inside, establish a routine: Get up every day around the same time, eat a healthy breakfast, give yourself a few tasks to do to help you feel productive. Doing something physical, again, is important, even if it’s stretching for a few minutes. There are many free videos that can offer some instruction; start by looking on YouTube or search for a free app like the 7 Minute Workout app. Or put on some music that makes you feel good and just dance around.

THE EPOCH TIMES: As we face a global health crisis, we all know that stress isn’t the best thing for the immune system. What steps do you recommend people take to get a handle on stress and foster healthy immunity?
MS. SHAFFER: There are four things everyone should do, every day, to help boost immunity and our overall physical and mental health:

Eat healthy. You don’t have to “diet” or even deprive yourself of an occasional treat. But your overall diet is crucial to your health. That means plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains or other complex carbohydrates (like wild rice or oats), some lean protein, and a moderate amount of healthy fats like olive oil, avocado, or even fatty fish like salmon. Limit the amount of added sugars, fat, and processed foods in your diet.

Be active. This is a common message of mine! But it’s an important one because exercise does so much for your body, including boosting your immune response. We know that exercise can increase the activity of immune cells and has even been shown to help flush bacteria out of the lungs and airways. Again, you don’t need a lot of time or intensity—everyone can get some benefit from activity.

Get some sleep. Good sleep habits are crucial to help maintain a healthy immune system. Research has established that too little sleep can adversely impact your immune function, leaving you more vulnerable to illness. According to the National Sleep Foundation, when you get too little sleep (generally defined as fewer than seven hours) your body makes fewer cytokines, a type of protein that targets infection and

inflammation.

Practice mindfulness. Stress itself can negatively affect immune function, but mindful activities (like meditation or deep breathing) can do much to reduce stress and help you feel more centered. Try sitting quietly for a few minutes (even just five can help!), focusing on your breathing; if you start to worry or your mind drifts, just return that focus back to the breath.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Most people want to be happy and they want their loved ones to be happy. Where, in times like these, can people find happiness?

MS. SHAFFER: Happiness isn’t a difficult concept and it doesn’t have to be complicated. We can find things that make us happy all around us, whether it’s getting a big greeting from a dog who is thrilled to see you or observing the delight kids have playing outside. Don’t make it too complicated or think you have to find “your happy place.” You can keep your happy place with you just by remembering a moment or a time that has made you feel joyful.

Another way to think about happiness is to think about paying things forward. Psychologists say there’s a feel-good effect from helping someone else. So whether that’s volunteering in your community or simply paying for the person’s coffee in the drive-through behind you, small acts of kindness and compassion can make us all a little happier.

THE EPOCH TIMES: This too shall pass, as they say. With a longer-term view, in what ways can people take advantage of this unique time to establish a less stressed or happier life in the future?

MS. SHAFFER: I think one of the biggest takeaways for many people, especially for those who have gone through a lockdown or quarantine with others in their house, has been an ability to reconnect with family members. I know for myself, having these extra weeks with my kids and not a lot of other distractions, like team practices, homework, and social events, has really brought us all a lot closer together. And I, for one, am trying to remember this feeling and not overschedule so that our days feel like we are constantly running from one activity to the next.

It’s also been a good time for people to practice self-care, from beginning an exercise program to trying some new healthy recipes.

Finally, I think there is a recognition of the importance of our mental health just as much as our physical well-being. I hope we can continue to remember the importance of a balanced, healthy lifestyle even when things return to “normal.”

We adapt and grow from every conflict we have to face, and my hope is that we can emerge stronger than before.

‘Pandemic Pods’ Make Homeschooling Easier for Parents, Profitable for Teachers

Instead of waiting for instructions from authorities, enterprising parents and entrepreneurial teachers are joining forces and taking initiative

KERRY MCDONALD

This tumultuous back-to-school season has parents and teachers alike scrambling to make sense of the madness: from ever-changing district directives to COVID-19 response protocols. Some school systems have announced that the academic year will start with remote learning only.

Others are pursuing partial reopening options with both online and in-person instruction. Still, others are planning to fully reopen for in-person learning.

Amid this chaos, parents and teachers are increasingly opting out of the conventional classroom entirely to find or create schooling alternatives this fall.

Parents have been vocal about their back-to-school concerns, with growing numbers of them choosing to homeschool this fall rather than contending with remote learning options or confronting viral exposure and dystopian social distancing measures in schools.

But it’s not just parents who have back-to-school worries. Many teachers, too, don’t want to go back and are upset at reopening plans.

Teachers’ unions are now battling districts over these plans. In Florida, where schools are scheduled to fully reopen for in-person learning this month, the state’s largest teachers’ union sued the governor and education commissioner last month. The Florida union is asking for smaller class sizes and more protective gear for teachers.

More parents and teachers are choosing to avoid this bureaucratic mess altogether and are pursuing their own educational solutions.

Entrepreneurial Educators Build a Better Way

Some parents are hiring tutors to augment their homeschooling experience this fall, and entrepreneurial teachers are serving that need and cashing in on the opportunity that need and cashing in on the opportunity. One high school English teacher in Illinois, who asked to remain anonymous, told me that she made \$49,000 a year teaching 9th grade and AP English, but several families have approached her for private tutoring and she realizes she can make more money as a private tutor, with fewer hours and more flexibility.

In addition to homeschooling, some parents are forming pandemic “pods,” or home-based microschools that allow a handful of families to take turns teaching their children or pool resources to hire a



Parents have the opportunity to experiment with new models of teaching and learning.

teacher or college student. The Wall Street Journal reports that these pods are sprouting throughout the country, fueled by parental unrest at school reopening plans and facilitated by informal Facebook groups connecting local families.

Recognizing this mounting demand for schooling alternatives this fall, entrepreneurial educators are helping to create more options for families. In Maryland, longtime educators Steven Eno and Ned Courtemanche created Impact Connections, a microschool enabler connecting educators and parents and providing learning support.

“COVID-19 exposed so many of the shortcomings we already knew about in education but also presented new opportunities to step up and help parents and their kids,” Eno told me in a recent interview. “Microschools offer a powerful, and largely untapped, opportunity to educate our kids in the COVID era and beyond. The best microschools offer highly-personalized instruction that is free of curricular red tape for a fraction of the price...,” he says.

The legality of these pandemic pods and microschools is sometimes unclear. As a new model that blends features of home-school co-ops with small, private schools, regulations in many places haven’t caught up. Additionally, the sheer numbers of parents choosing not to send their kids back to school this fall, and the pandemic’s overall disruption, may make enforcement of any

existing regulations more difficult.

This presents an ideal moment for what Adam Thierer calls “evasive entrepreneurship,” where entrepreneurs push boundaries and challenge existing systems. Thierer writes in his book, “Evasive Entrepreneurs”:

“Microschools offer a powerful, and largely untapped, opportunity to educate our kids in the COVID era and beyond.”

Steven Eno, founder, Impact Connections

“Increasingly today, evasive entrepreneurs—innovators who don’t always conform to social or legal norms—are using new technological capabilities to circumvent traditional regulatory systems, or at least to put pressure on public policymakers to reform or selectively enforce laws and regulations that are outmoded, inefficient, or illogical. Evasive entrepreneurs rely on a strategy of permissionless innovation in both the business world and the political arena. They push back against ‘the Permission Society,’ or the convoluted labyrinth of permits and red tape that often encumber entrepreneurial activities. In essence, evasive entrepreneurs live out the adage that

The 1958 ‘Psychological Warfare’ Plan Playing Out Before Us

ANNIE HOLMQUIST

I recently wrote about an old 1984 interview with former communist Yuri Bezmenov, who described the “ideological subversion” that could eventually take down America. It sounds like the stuff of conspiracy theories—until one realizes that his predictions of “demoralization,” “destabilization,” and “crisis” are all unfolding before our eyes.

Pondering his prophetic words, I hunted up an old book a friend mentioned to me years ago: “The Naked Communist.” The title, I admit, is chuckle-worthy, but the words inside are no laughing matter, particularly when one reads the section titled, “Importance of the Psychological War.”

Written in 1958, some of the “current strategy goals which the Communists and their fellow travelers are seeking to achieve” seem dated and read like a history book from the past. But then one comes to item number 17:

“Get control of the schools. Use them as transmission belts for socialism and current Communist propaganda. Soften the curriculum. Get control of teachers’ associations. Put the party line in

textbooks.” (Emphasis added.)

That part in bold especially caught my attention. Haven’t Americans been suspicious for years that public school curriculum has been dumbed down? Prominent public figures have certainly made this claim, while a comparison of middle-school reading lists from today’s schools and those of 100 years ago provides further evidence.

Things take a step closer to home by encouraging the use of “student riots to foment public protests against programs or organizations which are under Communist attack.” We’ve had not a little experience with riots and protests lately, many of which have been heavily attended by young people. Are they mere tools in the hands of an ideology we don’t realize is pulling the strings?

Even more terrifying, the list progresses from student riots to the cancel culture and statue bashing we are also currently experiencing. “Continue discrediting American culture by degrading all forms of artistic expression,” item number 22 commands, while item number 31 calls for Communists to “[b]litttle all forms of American culture and discourage the teaching of American history...”

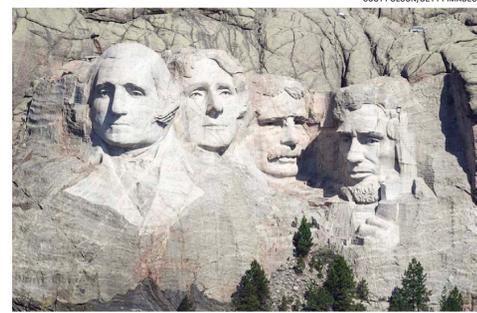
The document also suggests discrediting both the Constitution and the Founding Fathers.

Of the latter, it says, “[p]resent them as selfish aristocrats who had no concern for the ‘common man.’” Sounds similar to the “slave-holding racists” that the Founders are now portrayed as, does it not?

The list is extensive and many of the items listed as eventual goals are now accepted parts of our culture. There is one more, though, that deserves a closer look:

“Create the impression that violence and insurrection are legitimate aspects of the American tradition; that students and special-interest groups should rise up and use ‘united force’ to solve economic, political or social problems.”

Since the death of George Floyd, protests and violence have become commonplace. The large gatherings banned by our governments during the COVID-19 pandemic suddenly became necessary for fighting racism. Indeed, systemic racism is increasingly labeled as a “public health crisis” that Black Lives Matter must wage war against. Furthermore, complete unity is demanded from the public. Those who refuse to go along—or fail to say anything at all—are



The book “The Naked Communist,” written in 1958, lays out communist goals for America. Of the Founding Fathers, it said: “[p]resent them as selfish aristocrats who had no concern for the ‘common man.’”

immediately ostracized.

Where does this leave us? Should we start running around screaming, “The Communists are coming! The Communists are coming!”

No. Now isn’t the time to lose our heads. Rather, we should look at this historical list, recognize the parallels it has with our current culture, and ask ourselves whether there’s an ideology working to undermine the values, history, and ideas upon which America was founded.

If we conclude that there is, we have a decision to make. Do we accept that ideology and allow it to take over America? If so, it’s time to join the throngs of corporations, politicians, and average citizens in agitating for change.

But if we decide that ideology isn’t

“it is easier to ask for forgiveness than it is to get permission” by creating exciting new products and services without necessarily receiving the blessing of public officials before doing so.”

Not Just for the Wealthy

Criticism over these private education options has surged over the past few weeks, as commentators claim that homeschooling and pandemic pods will widen gaps between higher- and lower-income families. An op-ed in The New York Times last month decried these private pods, saying “they will exacerbate inequities, racial segregation and the opportunity gap within schools.” These criticisms ignore the fact that some parents create no-cost pods in which they take turns educating their children in a co-op format, and as an article in the July 23 New York Times points out, “the population of home-schoolers—before the pandemic—was less affluent than average.” Homeschooling, and its current “podding” variation, are not just for the wealthy.

Moreover, if education funding supported students rather than school bureaucracies, more families would get access to an array of education options—including these new models and ones that have yet to be invented. Taxpayers spend about \$700 billion each year on US K-12 education. If that money was redistributed to families in the form of education savings accounts (ESAs), vouchers, tax-credit scholarship programs, and other education choice mechanisms, parents would have many more options beyond an assigned district school.

Corey DeAngelis, director of school choice at the Reason Foundation, has written and spoken much about this, stating: “More families would have access to these alternatives if education funding followed children to wherever they receive their educations. Teachers could also benefit from such a system, which would likely offer them smaller class sizes, more autonomy, and higher salaries.”

The COVID-19 pandemic is disrupting many of the systems and structures that have prevented choice and innovation in the past. Frustrated parents, along with entrepreneurial educators, have the opportunity to experiment with new models of teaching and learning, and education choice policies will make these new models accessible to any family that wants them.

Kerry McDonald is a senior education fellow at FEE and author of “Unschooling: Raising Curious, Well-Educated Children Outside the Conventional Classroom” (Chicago Review Press, 2019). This article was originally published on FEE.org

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Baribeau with students at the University of Minnesota.

'I'm Changing the Narrative' Rachel Baribeau Is Leading a Movement

After 17 years as a sportscaster, Baribeau went from analyzing players to lifting them up through their struggles

CATHERINE YANG

Last year, Rachel Baribeau stood in the TCF Bank Stadium in Minneapolis for a college football game between the University of Minnesota and Maryland, and together with the coaches and players of both teams, shared a message about mental health with the audience of 30,000 people. She knew that somewhere in that audience, at least one person was helped. At least one person saw that if these people could get up there and speak about their mental health, they could talk about it too. At least one person was exposed to resources he or she didn't know to look for, and the information might have saved a life.

For 17 years, Baribeau has been a sportscaster, known for breaking barriers. She was the first female sports reporter to participate in a professional football training camp, the first female host on SiriusXM ESPNU, and a Heisman Trophy voter.

But in the last few years, she has started an impactful movement that reaches far beyond sports, called I'm Changing the Narrative (previously Changing the Narrative). When she embarked on her effort to help athletes turn their stories around for the better, she thought she would be sportscasting forever and do speaking events on the side. But for the last four years, the movement has continued to grow and change and save lives, and Baribeau has seen its tremendous impact. "Never in my wildest dreams would I imagine it would have gotten to where it is today," Baribeau said. "As it grew, I was having a conflict of the soul. I spent 17 years analyzing players, and it was time to motivate and lift up players, and do this a thousand percent—take the leap of faith and go for it."

When she stood with 30,000 people all there to attend a game dedicating to raising mental health awareness, Baribeau felt a part of something so big that she finally took that leap.

"Once that happened, once I helped host that game with those teams, that's when I knew, that's when I wrote my retirement letter," Baribeau said. "It's been a scary, beautiful, wonderful, amazing leap of faith, and I'm so glad I did it."

You Were Not Born for You

In 2016, athletes were making headlines for all the wrong reasons. Baribeau remembers stories about domestic violence, sexual violence, cheating, scandals, and, during one radio show, she broke down and cried during the commercial break.

Baribeau had devoted her career to covering sports because she loves the people; she grew up around sports, with two brothers who were involved in everything from baseball to BMX bike racing.

And now there was something "badly broken" about the culture, and Baribeau cared too much to stay silent. She decided she would create a curriculum for college athletes, and what she came up with is nothing like what you might imagine a standard, surface-level character education program would look like.

"It started with purpose, passion, platform: Who are you away from the field? You were not born just to play football, or to just run track. You were not born to be just a swimmer. If that's all you think you were born for, what a shame, right?" Baribeau said. Then she introduced the idea "that there's a king or queen or royalty inside all of us."

"We say people who are kings and queens, people who are royal, do hard things," she said. "You're the person who runs toward trouble instead of away from trouble. It's going to cost some skin off your back, but we are the people who help people, especially when you're down in a ditch. The world has plenty

of followers. We need leaders, we need kings and queens who are peacemakers and who are full of love and grace and forgiveness."

It began with a way to help male athletes turn their stories into positive ones. These were young men who had reached excellence in athletics but somehow had never heard they could do so in other areas of their life. Coaches would marvel at how the players responded; they would comment on how Baribeau didn't talk down to the players but instead told them they were born for greatness and could be so much more. People were moved to tears in the face of her story, and students would wait an hour after the talk to tell Baribeau how much she had opened their eyes.

She tells them about how a few years ago, she'd met NFL player Kevin Turner, who had been diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), yet had an outlook on life Baribeau could only admire. His life was full of meaning, and he lived intentionally.

"I was very self-centered, fame-driven, I wanted my name in lights, I wanted all the stuff that came with fame," Baribeau said. "Then I met this man, Kevin Turner ... who really taught me this lesson."

In 2014, Baribeau and a group of people summited Mount Kilimanjaro to raise money for ALS cure research. It was one of the most impactful, meaningful things she had ever done, and Baribeau said she realized how wonderful but

Rachel Baribeau, founder of I'm Changing the Narrative. She exhorts young athletes to become "kings" and "queens." She said, "... people who are kings and queens, people who are royal, do hard things ... It's going to cost some skin off your back, but we are the people who help people, especially when you're down in a ditch."

empty fame could be. "And I began to live, to really, really live when I figured out the secret to life, and that is: It's not about you."

She also shares with these students the reason she felt struck in the gut when she heard the stories of abuse: She'd lived it. It was a memory she'd pushed down and hid, but in trying to change the narrative, Baribeau started to share it.

"I talked about the night somebody who claimed to love me dragged me from one end of the house to the other by my hair, and that there were three other men in the house that night and not one person came to help me," she said. "And I ask them, I say, there were no kings in the house that night. If you were in the house that night, would you have helped me?"

Baribeau is wholeheartedly genuine ('I subscribe to the theory of radical vulnerability'), so when she tells her story, people really listen.

Soon Baribeau branched out and did talks for female students, then created an on-demand curriculum for high school that she is working to spread across the country and is now developing content for younger grades. As she spoke, the topics grew, encompassing interpersonal relationships and dating, self-love, and mental health.

"Here's the reality of it," she said. "So many people are walking around, of any age, and they're not in healthy relationships with themselves and with other people; they don't know how to do it. They've never been taught. So many of our kids are not getting healthy relationships at home, so they're getting their cues from social media, music, magazines, media as a whole, or God forbid, the porn culture. So I'm teaching them to have healthy relationships with themselves, then with others."

Mental health has always been a part of Baribeau's talks, because most of these athletes grow up with the message that "masculinity means toughness up, shut up, put some dirt on it, keep moving," and as a result, they never learn how to process their trauma, and the suicide rates are stagger-

ing. But since last year, Baribeau is putting more focus on this topic, determined to make this movement one of "destroying the stigma around mental health."

Dark Night of the Soul

A year ago, Baribeau found herself in a situation where her mental health was so low she contemplated taking her life, an event she calls the "dark night of my soul."

It began with a way to help male athletes turn their stories into positive ones. These were young men who had reached excellence in athletics but somehow had never heard they could do so in other areas of their life.

"In May of last year, I lost my mother to cancer. She died in my arms, after a 10-month cancer battle," Baribeau said. "And my boyfriend and I had broken up just before; we were not healthy. So I was going through a physical heartbreak, grief, loss of my best friend, and then I had helped to take care of my mother and had not worked the 10 months she battled cancer, barely worked, so because of that, I was bankrupt and almost lost my house."

"I was dealing with a lot," she said. "And I did not understand how dangerous isolation was."

People were checking on Baribeau, but she isolated herself instead of reaching out in her time of need. She would tell everyone she was well, that she was holding on, and in the meantime slip into a dangerous place. To compound it, Baribeau, a night owl, was hosting an early morning SiriusXM show at 5 a.m. and getting no sleep.

"So I was tossing and turning at 3 a.m. and I began to hear voices telling me that I was a loser, that I couldn't keep anything, and that I was a failure, and I would be better off if I just killed myself. The voices were getting very strong, and after the voices, there were ideations," Baribeau said.

Somehow, she made it through to do her next show, but when her producer asked if she was OK because Baribeau kept sniffing, she lied.

"I said, 'Oh, yeah, I've just got allergies,'" she said. "And I battled with it for days, whether or not to talk about it. There were two voices in my head, the good voice and the bad voice. The bad voice said, 'You can't talk about this, you'll be seen as defective. No one will ever book you again. You're broken.' Just every nasty thing. But the other voice said, 'My girl, you're a warrior. You survived for a reason. Go tell other people they're not broken, not defective. And warn them of what to do.'"

She didn't know at the time that she was supposed to have a list of people she could call, including a suicide hotline, and that isolation was clinically proven to make things worse. She would pay it forward by raising awareness. Baribeau realized that if she was asking all these athletes she mentored to be true to who they were, she had to be too. She posted a video about her experience, and it went viral—inspiring other athletes to come forward and make videos of their own stories.

"It blew the impact out of the water," Baribeau said. People who had been in a similar place reached out to Baribeau not just to thank her, but to say that she inspired them to seek help. Athletes in the grips of their own "dark nights" reached out instead of acting on their

dark thoughts, and were able to get help and are now thriving. "I am not a mental health professional, I'm the person who normalizes going to get mental health [help] if you need it."

Last year, she was invited to speak to the first responders of the El Paso shooting, and to border patrol officers, and various corporations. Baribeau is now working on another on-demand program called "The Blueprint" for adults from all walks of life.

"Our world is hurting right now; I do feel like there are winds of change that are coming, but I do think most of the things that ail us in the world, most, not all, are heart and soul issues," Baribeau said.

In the movement, Baribeau talks about dropping off something called "funky junk."

"It's all your trauma, your anger, your pain, your grief, all this stuff that weighs you down and so many of us are carrying every day," she said.

"Think about what a law enforcement officer sees on a daily basis; the death, the sadness, the car wrecks, the murders, the abuse, the depravity of life. That is a lot," she said. "We begin like we do with athletes of how to process that, and normalize getting mental help, and talking about those ideas of you've never been seen as so strong as when you seek help."

Baribeau's talks go beyond the setting of being an athlete or a law enforcement officer.

"I call my training soul training," she said. "Every one of us has the opportunity to be better, it's an everyday thing for me. It is my offering to the world to try to get in every possible space we can get in, and really change somebody's life, and it ends up saving somebody's life."

"If we talk about these things, all these different attributes of being a human being, they're going to go home and love their wife better, love their husband better, love their partner better, their children," she said. "Every part of their life will be better."

Legacy

Baribeau is wholeheartedly genuine ("I subscribe to the theory of radical vulnerability"), so when she tells her story, people really listen.

"If you get radically vulnerable with somebody, if you show them, 'Here's my good, my bad, my happy, my sad. I'm a warrior, I'm not weak, not broken, not defective.' It draws people in and it invites people to do the same in their own world," she said.

When she was younger, though, she would be told she was too sensitive, to toughen up, to act a certain way.

"In my early 20s, I didn't love myself. I let people walk in and out of my life, I couldn't look myself in the mirror because I was ashamed—I'm not talking about my face or my eyebrows or my hair, I'm talking about my soul," Baribeau said. "I wasn't proud of the person that was staring back at me ... I was trying to fill holes in my soul with things of the world, with people and substances and all these things that were never going to fix it. And then I had this metamorphosis and realized there is nobody else in the world who can do what I do—there is nobody else in all of the world."

It's something she brings up in the talks, especially with female students: They're not "too" anything—they're a miracle.

"It is this innate belief that when you love yourself, truly see yourself as a queen, you naturally create boundaries and standards with which you'll let peo-

It started with purpose, passion, platform: Who are you away from the field? You were not born just to play football, or to just run track.

Rachel Baribeau



Baribeau at TCF Bank Stadium in Minneapolis, hosting a Mental Health Awareness game between the University of Minnesota and Maryland, on Oct. 26, 2019.

ple treat you," Baribeau said. "Whatever you believe, whatever Creator that you think created the Andes and Kilimanjaro and all the wonders in the world thought the world needs one of this person too, and there's not another person out there who can do what you do ... when you do that, discover how amazing you are and drop off this funky junk, forgive people, forgive yourself, you start to straighten up and walk in all your glory."

Everything Baribeau speaks about is from her own life.

"It's just what I've lived," she said. "It's my life and real stories, and I've applied it and made it something we can all learn from, myself included." Sometimes she'll catch herself saying something to her fiancé and think, would a queen do that? "And it allows me to go back and apologize to him."

"Here's the deal, and I say this in my movement, being a king or queen or being a royal doesn't mean you're perfect. It just means you know better, so you're going to do better," she said. "If you hurt somebody, if you let somebody down, you're going to fix it. Go fix it. Life is short and it's precious."

With Baribeau's mom dying and the recent pandemic, Baribeau says she has been thinking a lot about her own mortality.

"What would happen to the movement if I die?" she said. From the beginning of the movement, Baribeau has been what she calls a "lifer." She tells the schools and the students that if they'll allow it, she'll be in their life for as long as they want, and she always responds to their messages.

"If you need girl talk relationships, guy talk relationships, you need advice, you need somebody just to listen to you, I'm there," she said. "So many people reach out, and I've gotten pictures of a newborn from the delivery room, I've been to one of my kings' weddings, and keep in touch with so many of my kings and queens across the country."

"Last week, one of my kings, he wants to restart his grandmother's orphanage in Zimbabwe, so I'm helping him with that, mentoring him through that and how to raise money, and what do we do," she said.

She added that had she not been able to see and touch people's lives, and see from the beginning that this effort was working, she wouldn't have gone on so long.

"I would have quit this a long time ago if I didn't know that it landed, that it affected other people," she said. "When I do my talks, generally afterwards there's 20, 30, 40 players that stay after to talk, to cry, to hug me, just to say whatever—to tell me their whole life story or just tell me thank you, or how it impacted them or how they're going to go about their day, or what they're going to do or who they're going to forgive."

It's tough, Baribeau admits, because she is sensitive and empathetic by nature and feels "the world's hurt, and I feel it deeply." But she surrounds herself with people who love her and are good to her, goes to therapy, relies on her faith, and is driven by "the desire to spread this message to the ends of the earth."

Baribeau has also made the offer to each school to mentor students in public speaking, and hopes to start up a speakers bureau later this year.

"I will teach them the tangible skill, then I'll help them take their story and blend it with the tenets of I'm Changing the Narrative," Baribeau said. "That way if I die tomorrow, if I die next year, in this way the movement will live on."



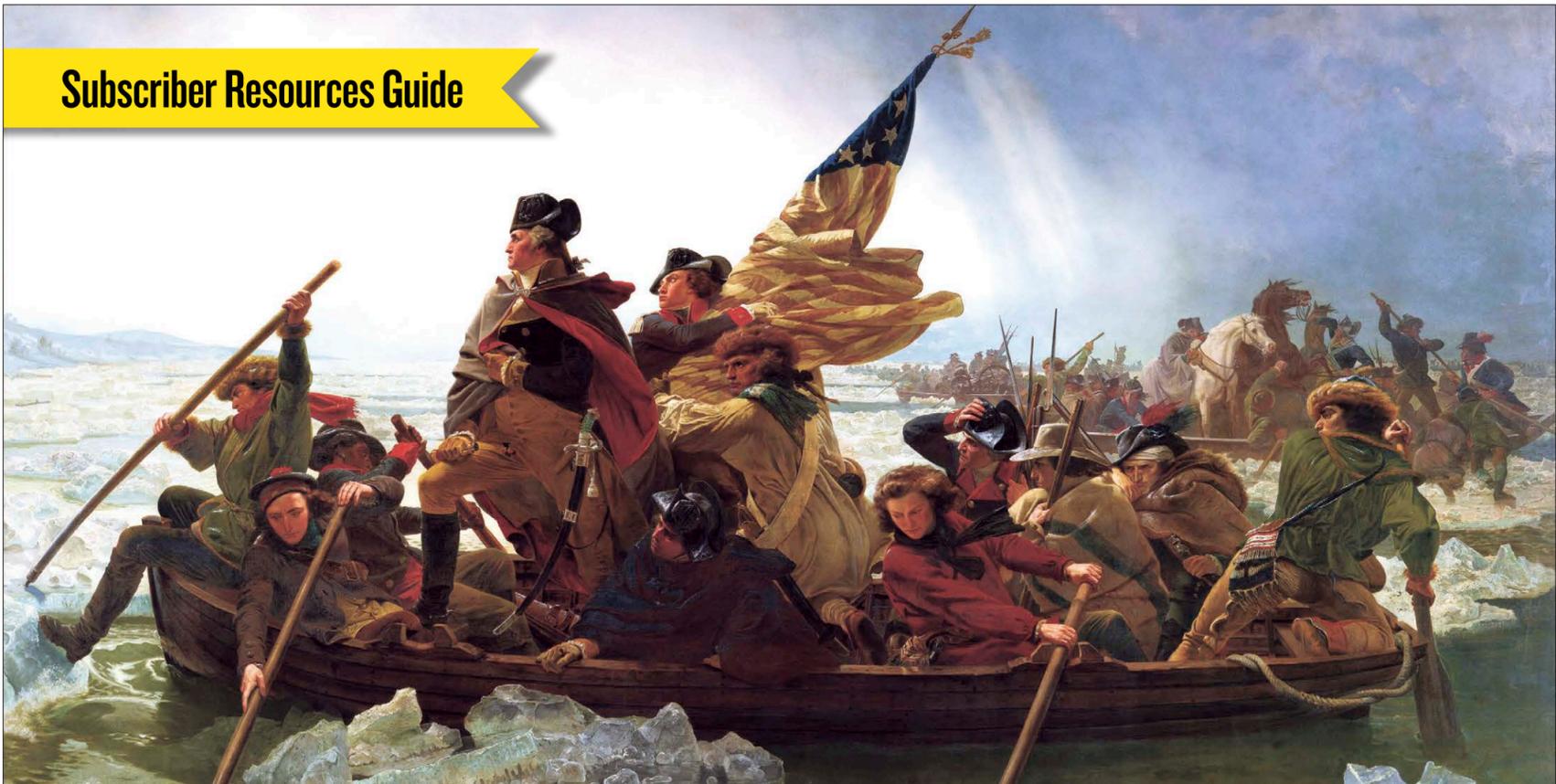
After her talks, students often line up to speak to Baribeau and tell her about their experiences. She keeps in touch with them regularly via tweets, texting, and messages.



(Left) Baribeau speaking to students at Texas Tech.

(Right) When Baribeau speaks with female students, she tries to convey the message that "when you love yourself, truly see yourself as a queen, you naturally create boundaries and standards with which you'll let people treat you."





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