Top Story:
Why Paid Family Leave and $15 Minimum Wage Failed

The 2019 legislative session is done with the number one priority of each chamber (passing a $15 minimum wage for the Senate and a Paid Family Leave program for the House) dead, at least for now. The spin in the press, which was and is sympathetic to these causes, is that egos and incompetence in the legislative leadership led to the demise of these bills. This really isn’t the case.
While both sides were certainly blind to the ugly aspects of their own babies, and rankled when this was pointed out, enough on each side was able to see the inconvenient truths about the other’s. Economic realities killed these policies, nothing else. And thank goodness!

Regarding the $15 minimum wage, when the House began to look at the Senate’s proposal it became apparent that the increased costs resulting for government programs and public/private partnerships would be devastating. Rep. Matt Birong (D-Vergennes), for example, started to get antsy when his progressive friends who owned businesses were apprehensive about what the impact would be on them. ‘‘These are people and businesses that supported concepts like paid sick days and paid family leave,’ Birong said. ‘And when that demographic, that crowd, is raising concerns, I felt like I had to listen to them.’” (VPR, 5/7/19) Apparently when conservatives pointed all these things out months ago there was no need to listen, but we’ll let that go and just be happy for the teachable moment!

Similarly, when the Paid Family Leave bill moved from the House to the Senate, Senators were able to see the fiscal insanity of starting a near-$100 million new entitlement program funded by a new payroll tax at a time when the state can’t even afford the programs it has (see unfunded pension liabilities and roads out of 1945 Dresden, Germany). Additoinally, the funding mechanism was terribly regressive, and tens of thousands of the lowest income Vermonters would be forced to pay into a program while never earning enough to qualify to participate. And these were just the most egregious flaws in the legislation.

These were and are bad ideas. That’s why they failed.

This is not to say bad bills with dire, easily foreseeable unintended consequences don’t get passed into law all the time. They do (see the plastic bag ban). But these two bills failed not because our legislature and the system was ultimately incompetent. This is a case where the system of checks, balances, and oversight actually worked! We should celebrate. And, hope this minor miracle holds through the second half of the biennium in 2020.

- Rob Roper

Please Support EAI in 2019!

Freedom isn’t free, and neither is fighting for it! We could not do what we do without the generous support of hundreds of people like you. If you have already made a contribution to our 2019 campaign, thank you! If you haven’t yet, please do so today.

The Ethan Allen Institute is a 501c3 educational organization. All donations are tax deductible and anonymous.

Ethan Allen Institute
P.O. Box 543
Montpelier, VT 05601
Commentary: A Legislative Wrap-Up for 2019

By John McClaughry

The 2019 legislative session is now history, and it’s worth taking stock of its accomplishments, both positive and negative.

On the plus side, the FY2020 general fund budget is balanced (up 3.1%), that is, it’s balanced if the $55 million FY2019 surplus projected last January actually shows up. The main reason for the surplus is the economic boom produced by the 2017 tax bill enacted by a Republican President and Congress. Naturally, the Democrats in Montpelier aren’t eager to make that point, but they’re very happy to spend the money.

The new money allowed the legislature to dedicate 6% of the 9% rooms and meals tax to fund the EPA-required Lake Champlain cleanup. That leaves a $9 million hole in the General Fund next year, to be filled by the newfound surplus money without raising any tax rates. Whether this scheme will reliably fill $12 million holes in following years may prove to be a troublesome question.

Another $27.5 million of the new money will go to funding post-retirement health care benefits for state employees. The legislative leadership, pressed by the state employees’ and teachers’ unions, is commendably trying to catch up, although the $4.5 billion total liability won’t be funded in anyone’s lifetime.

Remarkably, House and Senate Democrats failed to pass their two highest priority measures, the minimum wage increase and a payroll tax-financed family leave program. Gov. Scott is likely to again veto a minimum wage increase, and probably a payroll tax leave bill. Some House Democrats are starting to listen to small business concerns, and some are worrying about the increased costs to the Medicaid home care budget. There may well be enough of them to join with Republicans to sustain a veto. We’ll find out next year.

The “yield” bill that determines local school property tax rates contained a one cent increase in residential and nonresidential yields. As Rob Roper has pointed out, “this is necessary to fund an additional $70.5 million in new spending this year — an increase of 4.5% — for a system that continues to lose student population. K-12 enrollment dropped from 76,220 to 75,510 between the 2016-17 school year and the 2017-18 school year, continuing a 20-year trend that shows no signs of slowing.” No matter how many students disappear, public school spending will never turn downwards so long as the public sector enjoys its unionized monopoly.

The battle against the Menace of Climate Change proceeded apace, although without the revenues from the failed carbon tax there isn’t much money available. The legislature voted more subsidies for plug-in electric vehicles “to help Vermonters benefit from electric driving, including Vermont’s most vulnerable.” The transportation bill found $1.8 million to pay for two electric city buses for Burlington. That bill also diverted $5.2 million from fixing deteriorating highways to subsidizing passenger rail from Rutland to Burlington, certainly one of the state’s least pressing needs.

The proposed doubling of the heating oil tax to fund more home weatherization failed, but the legislators did find $1.7 million to expand this giveaway program, instead of asking the beneficiaries to pay for the weatherization from their energy savings.

Another last minute provision mandated a study of launching passenger rail
between Barre and Montpelier - all of seven miles. That would give wind tower and solar panel mogul David Blittersdorf a chance to turn his five diesel-powered Budd cars into moneymakers instead of museum pieces.

On the plus side, the legislature gave up trying to impose a tax penalty on Vermonters who haven’t bought state-approved health insurance. All those people have to do is tell the State that they aren’t complying, and the State will assign an outreach person to try to change their minds. On the down side, the legislature prohibited any new association health plans, because they were letting people escape the clutches of Obamacare.

Thanks to Democratic Senators Kitchel, Mazza and Ashe, the Senate again refused to accept Rep. George Till’s primary seat belt law, which would allow the cops to stop and ticket any adult driver for not having his or her seat belt buckled.

On the down side, the legislators approved a 24-hour waiting period for a lawful handgun purchase. It’s supposed to reduce suicides, but more likely it will leave a helpless woman defenseless when her angry ex comes by with revenge in mind.

A notably nutty bill is the plastic bag ban. Next year your grocer can’t put your purchases into a one-use plastic bag. Why? Because those bags are made out of natural gas, and we need to burn that natural gas to provide grid backup power to all those wind towers and solar panels that only produce a third of the time. (Actually no one made that argument, but you’d think the climate warriors would rather turn natural gas into plastic bags than burn it and release carbon dioxide.)

Instead of the plastic bag, the store can sell you, for ten cents, a nice paper bag made by slashing and chipping the forests that the budget bill declares “are important for carbon absorption”.

Bills not acted upon this session are alive for 2019 so we’ll probably see more silly and potentially economy-wrecking climate change brainstorms, at least until the needs of dependent families, Medicaid recipients, deteriorating highways, lake cleanup, retirement funds and other really important causes gain the upper hand in the competition for available funding.

- John McClaughry is vice president of the Ethan Allen Institute

Commentary: Politicizing Our Kids and Rising Suicide Rates
By Rob Roper

A month or so ago several national media outlets covered a study about spiking teen suicide rates. And not just suicide:

"We found significant increases in major depression, serious psychological distress which includes anxiety and hopelessness and suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts among teens and young adults with smaller, more inconsistent increases among adults age 26 and older," study author Jean Twenge told CBS News." (CBS, 3/14/2019)
The problem is particularly acute in Vermont where our young people die by suicide at one of the highest rates in the country. So, here is a question: is politicizing (politically weaponizing) our kids causing them serious psychological damage?

We are taking these immature, trusting, malleable young people and bombarding them every day with messages like, if we don’t pass a carbon tax and all start driving electric cars within the next decade it will lead to, in the words of one Vermont Representative, “planetary collapse.” Grab a poster, skip school, and we’ll put your picture on the front page of the paper.

Of course, death by climate change is really a moot point because well before those ten years pass you’ll probably be shot in your school cafeteria by a lunatic with an AR-15, so you better skip class again, grab a sign and start calling for the repeal of the Second Amendment. Do that and we’ll put you on the cover of Time Magazine!

If you do somehow manage to survive, remember that everything in your life, macro or micro, is driven by racism, homophobia, xenophobia, white privilege, toxic masculinity, patriarchy, cultural appropriation, and who knows what other insidious forces of social injustice lurking behind that stranger’s smiling wave and wish for a Merry Christmas.

You are either an irredeemable, deplorable oppressor or the helpless victim of such oppressors, neither of which is a particularly appealing or self-affirming position to be in.

The kids aren’t coming up with stuff on their own. They are being manipulated by teachers, special interest groups, politicians, and often encouraged by their parents. Honestly, do you really think the middle and high school students marching on the State House for climate change came up with their list of demands on their own? “Double the number of low and moderate income homes weatherized annually.” “Expand local renewable power and electrification of heating and transportation sectors.” “Prohibit the expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure.” “Act on the Joint Fiscal Office’s carbon pricing study.”

With that last one, all plausible deniability went out the window. Do any of these kids know what the Joint Fiscal Office is, let alone did they read that study? Yet we are supposed to believe this is what they came up with while hanging out on the bleachers during recess? No, this is a list of special interest group priorities, and the kids are being exploited as a prop. That’s not healthy.

The social contract the adults are writing for young people today is one in which to receive positive recognition and social advancement you must continuously digest and regurgitate the most dystopian possibilities for your future on a planet populated by vile people embroiled in insurmountable, cataclysmic, environmental and moral crises. That’s awful enough. But, if you dare deny this bleak view and believe in a world where things are pretty good and getting better you risk being ridiculed, ostracized, and exiled. Can you imagine a more cruel emotional bind or a more potent recipe for creating anxiety, stress, and depression in a young, developing human being?

Let’s be honest with our kids. The world we live in is not the apocalyptic nightmare some would have you believe. The truth is we/you are lucky to be living in the least violent, most abundant, healthy, wealthy, peaceful time in human history. There are plenty of reasons to be optimistic. One of the safest places you will ever be is in your school, and, to quote Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, “Like the ‘world ending in 12
years’ thing, you’d have to have the social intelligence of a sea sponge to think it’s literal.”

Is our world perfect? No. Is there work to do to make things even better than they are today? Of course. But, as the adults here it’s our responsibility to fix these problems, not yours. Not yet. Our other job is to prepare you be well equipped, well adjusted, productive citizens for when you do become adults and assume the responsibilities of running the world. Poisoning your adolescent years with perpetual fear, anger, paranoia, and hopelessness while using you as front line cannon fodder in our petty political fights is not the way to achieve those goals.

- Rob Roper is president of the Ethan Allen Institute.

**Commentary: Helping Science Triumph Over Politics**

*By David Flemming*

Last fall, the Vermont Department of Health announced that it was considering adding new chemicals to Vermont’s Safe Product Act, giving Vermont the chance to make its list of banned chemicals more scientific. Unfortunately, activists continue to demand blanket chemical bans, essentially stigmatizing chemicals before their effects can be truly known.

Some Vermonters might not see the harm in being a bit overzealous regarding which chemicals are banned and which are legalized, for health and environmental reasons. After all, isn’t it better to be safe than sorry?

What follows is a cautionary tale regarding how the scientific method can be crushed by political power. In 1971, the Environmental Protection Agency spent seven months interviewing 125 expert witnesses regarding DDT’s toxicity. The National Academy of Sciences testified that spraying “DDT has prevented 500 million deaths due to malaria (from infected mosquitos) that would otherwise have been inevitable.” Judge Edmund Sweeney pooled the testimonies to determine that “the uses of DDT under the registration involved here do not have a deleterious effect on freshwater fish, estuarine organisms, wild birds, or other wildlife. ... DDT is not a carcinogenic hazard to man.” Judge Sweeney fairly ruled that DDT should remain a legal pesticide.

Unfortunately, head of the EPA William Ruckelshaus overrode Sweeney in 1972, despite not attending any of the investigative hearings or reading Sweeney’s report. Ruckelshaus was acting on orders from President Richard Nixon, who had already demanded that America should “phase out the use of DDT” back in 1970, a year before DDT’s guiltlessness was shown. The 1971 investigation was a just a front to satisfy a court requirement.

While malaria infection rates in the U.S. grew after the DDT ban, they exploded in Third World countries. In Ceylon/Sri Lanka, DDT spraying had sliced malaria cases from millions annually in the 1940s, down to just 17 by 1963. DDT was banned in 1964. Soon, those 17 infections climbed to half a million victims per year by 1969. Though malaria is not always fatal, pregnant women can have a mortality rate of 50%.
Thankfully in 2006, the World Health Organization reversed its three decade long warning against DDT, and approved it for indoor spraying.

Still, it is better to not to supplant science with politics in the first place. Vermont should emulate the scientific decision-making process mandated by Congress’ 2016 Toxic Substances Act. That bill passed 398-1 and received our own Rep. Peter Welch’s vote and President Obama’s signature of approval. Vermonter can create this separation of science and politics by requiring that a public health authority review all risks of a chemical before banning it.

If such a system was adopted, chemicals like D4 that are being considered for a ban by the Vermont Department of Health would likely pass with flying colors. D4 can be found in items like sportswear, sealants and spatulas. It has recently undergone lab tests in Washington state, Canada and Australia. Each government concluded that D4 is not entering the environment at high levels and does not pose a risk to human health. Of course, banning chemicals in Vermont will not have the same catastrophic consequence as banning DDT. From the perspective of the scientific search for truth however, the consequences would be just as dire. While some Vermonter are less susceptible than most Americans in believing the decidedly unscientific views that vaccines cause autism or that climate change isn’t happening, we can all too easily fall under the sway of ideas that don’t pass scientific muster.

The only way we can ensure a truly scientific process for identifying toxic chemicals is to pass off such decisions to actual scientists who don’t have to look over their shoulder at politicians who are ill-equipped to make such decisions.

The chemical formulation of DDT was one of the greatest scientific and public health breakthroughs of the 19th century. The subsequent banning of DDT was one of the worst instances of politics triumphing over science in the 20th. While it may not be in Vermonters’ power to change the sad history of DDT, we can demand that all future chemicals be given a fair chance to prove their value to humankind.

Treating chemicals with respect instead of fear will encourage future chemists and biologists to develop health policy and environmental solutions that will give us a cleaner and safer world.

- David Flemming is a policy analyst for the Ethan Allen Institute.

Events

July 13. The first annual "Liberty Fest" will take place from 10a - 4p, at Giorgetti Park in Rutland. Free and open to the public. There will be guest speakers from across the state and space for different organizations and groups to have a table and share their efforts and info. Plenty of food and beverage will be available as well. EAI president Rob Roper will be a featured speaker.

Liberty Camp, 2019. We are getting an early start recruiting 6th to 8th graders for summer Liberty Camp this year. Our tentative places and dates so far are St. Albans, July 23-25. If you are interested, please email lkirkner@myfairpoint.net for more information.
Currently Full! Contact Linda if you would like to be put on the waiting list..

To Schedule an EAI presentation in your community, please email rob@ethanallen.org.

---

Roll Calls

- Senate Adopts Resolution Condemning F-35 Jets in VT (22-7)
- Senate Passes Payroll Tax to Fund Paid Family Leave (19-10)
- House Increases State Minimum Wage (90-53)
- House Bans “Single Use” Plastic Bags, Etc. (120-24)
- House Approves 24/hr Waiting Period for Handgun Purchase (82-58)
- House Advances Constitutional Amendment Guaranteeing Abortion from Conception to Birth (106-38)

---

News & Views

**Best Moment of the 2019 Legislative Session.** During the debate over the plastic bag ban, Rep. Jim McCullough (D-Williston) explained the need for the legislation because, among other things, “the pounds of plastic in the oceans will soon outweigh the pounds of fish in the oceans.” Wow! Serious stuff. But then Rep. Bob Helm (R-Castleton) confronted McCullough about this “fact,” asking how many pounds of fish there actually are in the ocean. McCullough had to admit he didn’t know. Then Helm asked how many pounds of plastic there were in the oceans and where that number could be verified. Again, McCullough had to admit he had no idea. Helm then reminded his colleagues of how often the supposed need for legislation is based of false, faulty, or just made up nonsense such as this. A good lesson for us all.

**American Chemistry Council Weighs in on [Stupid!!!] Plastic Bag Ban.** “A ban on single-use packaging and foodservice containers, including polystyrene foam containers, may lead to increased solid waste, energy use, water use, and greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, banning plastic bags may negatively impact programs that recycle plastic films, such as dry-cleaning bags and bread bags.” *(VBM, 5/30/19)*

**Most of Vermont Shrinking.** “From 2010 to 2018 the state’s population grew by only 0.1%, just a fraction of the national rate of 5.8%... More than half of all cities and towns in Vermont had fewer residents in 2018 than in 2010. Chittenden County was the only county in the state where every town gained population. Lamoille was close, with only one town losing population. Only two localities in Franklin County shrank. But even in those towns that grew, population increase was small. Only 11 towns in the entire state, out of 252, grew faster than the national average.” – Art Woolf *(VtDigger 5/31/19)*

**Sounds Like Vermont.** “We are not dealing with public servants here—not if the title is anything more than a euphemism. Instead, we have politicians supported by advocacy
groups and moneyed interests whose goal is to attain whatever level of power is necessary to act unilaterally. This is what a representative democracy looks like when stripped of trust, respect, virtue, and sense of community.” - Michael Wear writing in The Atlantic.

**What Vermont’s Left Wants:** “Bernie Sanders, David Moats, and their considerable ilk want the authority to tell us that we must buy health insurance and what kind of insurance it must be. They want to tell us what kind of electricity to buy and what kind of car to drive — or no car at all. Take mass transit. They want to tell us where our kids must go to school and what they must learn while they’re in there. They want to tell us where to live (in urban centers) and where not to live (out in the country). They want to tell us what we can and cannot do with our property no matter where we live. They want to control every aspect of our lives down to the minutia of refusing to let us use a plastic straw. And, of course, they want us to obey when they tell us all this stuff, or else…”. - Rob Roper (EAI Blog 5/23/19)

**Vermont Birth Dearth.** “The number of births in the nation may be at a 32-year low, but Vermont’s 5,431 births [in 2018] was at a 161-year low…. Births here fell 4% — twice as much as the nation — and have only risen in seven of the past 27 years… Another record was set last year for the nation. The general fertility rate — the number of births per 1,000 women age 15 to 44 — fell to a record low of 59.0. Vermont again has the nation beat. Our general fertility rate was well below that at 47.7 births.” (Art Woolf, VTDigger 052019)

**Vermont Housing Costs:** “In Vermont, the median priced house costs 3.8 times median household income, which ranks Vermont 12th highest in the nation — and that’s a high ranking we don’t want to have.” – Art Woolf (VTDigger 5/9/19)

**The Accountable Care Organization (ACO) Dirty Secret.** “10.4 million people [including those in One Care Vermont] think they are in a fee-for-service system, when in reality their doctors have economic incentives to reduce care that are similar to the hated HMOs of the 1980s. And (get this) it has been illegal for doctors to inform their patients of this fact. (John Goodman blog 5/7/19)

**Primary Seat Belt Enforcement Fails.** The Senate struck out the House-passed language to S.149 giving police the power to stop and ticket an adult driver solely for failing to buckle his or her seat belt. The House accepted the Senate amendments over frantic objections by Rep. George Till (D-Jericho). The Vermont ACLU opposed the bill because of its likely effect on minorities (“driving while black”), and EAI opposed it as yet another invasion of personal liberties. (Over 86% of Vermont drivers already drive with seatbelts buckled.)

**Bernie’s Idea of “Rights”.** “‘America being the only major country on earth that doesn't guarantee health care to all people as a right and not a privilege,’” Sanders pontificated. That, of course, hearkens back to the Left’s incredibly twisted interpretation of "rights," which largely consist of services that have to be provided by someone else.” (PP 4/11/19)
What’s the Sea Sponge Population in Vermont? “Like the ‘world ending in 12 years’ thing, you’d have to have the social intelligence of a sea sponge to think it’s literal.” - Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-NY.

Irony Department. Efficiency Vermont, supported by taxes on your electric bill, is advertising on the web site of the libertarian magazine and news service Reason.com

A Half Century of “Great Society” And… “What do we have to show for all this federal largesse? The poverty rate hasn’t budged. Instead, we’ve seen the rise of multigenerational welfare dependency. For the $2 trillion the federal government has spent on education since 1965, test scores have plummeted and the achievement gap between minority students and their peers has barely budged. Families, the bedrock of an authentically great society, have suffered most in LBJ’s great social experiment. The overall out-of-wedlock birth rate has ballooned from 8 percent in the mid-1960s to more than 40 percent today; from 25 percent to 73 percent among blacks.” Washington Times editorial, 4/21/19

School Choice Advances in Pennsylvania: “The bill would expand the state’s Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC). The program gives tax credits to businesses that donate to nonprofits that provide scholarships for children to attend private schools or support innovative programs in the public schools. A 2017 poll of likely voters showed 71% of Pennsylvanians support expanding the EITC, with overwhelming support from Democrats and Republicans.” (WSJ 5/2/19) EAI advocated this in its 2001 Schoolchildren First report.

Marxism at Big Labor: Since its beginnings the AFL-CIO was staunchly anti-communist, because communist regimes crushed free labor unions. Now we get this tweet: “AFL-CIO We all need to seize the means of production. #1u 8:05 AM - May 14, 2019”

From John’s Senate Archives: “I voted no on the heating oil tax of 1990. This tax was levied on everyone’s fuel oil to hire people to go out and weatherstrip a relatively small number of homes – for free, even though the conservation measures paid for themselves in save energy costs over a few years. I can find no reason to levy a new tax on all fuel oil users simply to hire people to provide services to some people which could and should be provided by private contractors at the homeowner’s expense.” (9/28/1992)

Tocqueville on Property: “In America, the most democratic of nations, those complaints against property in general, which are so frequent in Europe, are never heard… As everyone has property of his own to defend, everyone recognizes the principle upon which he holds it”. (Democracy in America, 1840)

Book of the Month

Social Darwinism in American Thought
By Richard Hofstadter
Justice Clarence Thomas compared abortion to eugenics in a recent Supreme Court case. Thomas claimed that “eugenics is rooted in Social Darwinism.” This makes a re-examination of the roots of what exactly Social Darwinism is very timely. Richard Hofstadter, winner of two Pulitzer Prize awards, first published Social Darwinism in American Thought in 1944. For such an influential movement in American life, I found it surprising that few widely-read authors in recent decades have bothered to tackle the roots of Social Darwinism.

In Darwinism, Hofstadter examines how Herbert Spencer, William Graham Sumner and Charles Darwin himself (who waffled between collectivism and individualism) among dozens of others, contributed their views to the broader idea of “Social Darwinism.”

What does Social Darwinism actually mean? To put it succinctly, we can define it as “applying the evolutionary concept of natural selection to human society.” The textbook definition of natural selection is “the tendency of organisms better adapted to their environment to produce more offspring because they live longer.” Applying natural selection to human society means vastly different things to its faithful disciples.

Socialists at the turn of the 20th century were decidedly uninterested in “the evolution of life (on Earth) and its adaption to the natural environment” but exclusively with “the evolution of man, and the adaption of life to his (the socialist’s) purposes” (p.118). Furthermore, “as Marx had found in the struggle for existence a “basis” for the class struggle, American socialists found even in (Social Darwinism) aid and comfort for their cause,” such as the idea of mankind as a “social organism” (p.116). Socialists used Social Darwinism to present mankind with an imagined utopia, which inevitability failed because of its reliance on authoritarian action.

On the right side of the political spectrum, Social Darwinism was a double sword. Some “used (Social Darwinism) to relieve the rich of responsibility for the poor” (p.88), while others bemoaned the idea of poor children being born in the first place, giving many conservatives common ground with progressives to promote abortion and eugenics.

Still other individualists like Kropotkin believed removing philanthropy from society would be morally disastrous, and would have the effect of destroying communities, and so make mankind regress. These individualists recognized the importance of private property, but implored readers to not compete since “competition is always injurious to the species… that is the tendency of nature…therefore combine-practice mutual aid! That is the surest means for giving to each and to all the greatest safety, the best guarantor of (Darwinian) existence and progress, bodily, intellectual, moral” (p.98). A healthy mix of cooperation of competition is needed for any society to advance.

It is easy to forget that mutual aid societies and churches provided more personalized care for the elderly and poor than the state through the 1950’s. Academic history aside, Social Darwinism can become quite monstrous.

Just a few weeks ago, State Rep. John Rogers (D-Alabama) used Social Darwinism in all but name to make a point: "Some kids are unwanted, so you kill them now or you kill them later. You bring them in the world unwanted, unloved, you send them to the electric chair. So, you kill them now or you kill them later." Eliminating the
unwanted is eliminates the unnecessary struggles of those least likely to survive natural selection. Whoever heard of unwanted American children raising themselves up from poverty?

*Social Darwinism in American Thought* is sobering reading for anyone of the conservative, libertarian or progressive persuasions. Nearly all modern public figures from those traditions refuse to use the term Social Darwinism in any positive light. That said, you could conceivably trace any public policy viewpoint nowadays back to Darwinian roots. Sometimes the most ingrained cultural ideas are the ones no one wants to discuss.

- *Reviewed by David Flemming, Policy Analyst for the Ethan Allen Institute.*

---

**The Final Word**

**June Survey: 24 hour Waiting Period for Handgun Purchase**

Should Gov. Scott veto the bill requiring a 24 hour waiting period to purchase a handgun in Vermont?

- Yes.
- No.

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QZFRM3N](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QZFRM3N)

**May Survey Results: Non-Citizen Voting**

Should the legislature allow non-citizens to vote in local Montpelier elections, setting a precedent for the rest of the state?

- Yes. 0% (0)
- No. 100% (78)