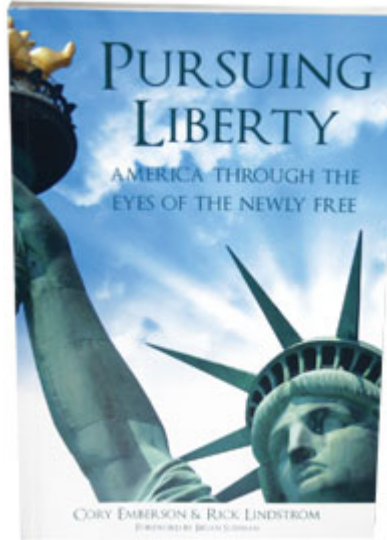




Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on August 18, 2010

Review of “Pursuing Liberty”

Authors Cory Emberson and Rick Lindstrom believe that Americans have taken their freedoms for granted. Because of this, they sought out “Americans by choice,” legal immigrants who came to the United States for all it has to offer, to contribute their insights for a book, *Pursuing Liberty: America Through the Eyes of the Newly Free*. This book will remind Americans what “American exceptionalism” truly means.



Pursuing Liberty is a compilation of stories told from the perspective of American immigrants who fled to the United States to escape tyranny and oppression in their own countries. Each story is prefaced by a small amount of historical background of the birth countries mentioned, in order to “provide some political and social context for each person’s narrative.”

Path of Oppression

The book’s contributors came from a variety of countries with oppressive regimes, including the Soviet Union, Mussolini’s Italy, Iraq, Vietnam, Cuba, and Venezuela. In many cases, the contributors were hesitant to share their stories or provide their true identities “for fear of retaliation against relatives still living under repressive regimes.”

While the settings for the stories differ, much of the content is the same. The oppression they escaped is economic as well as social and personal, and the government regimes utilized propaganda to enforce the idea that the citizens were lucky to live where they were, even when reality told otherwise.

Contributor Agnieszka Bernstein shared what daily life was like in Poland, and how efficiency and excellence are destroyed under communism:

[My grandmother] tried hard to work fast, and to make [needles] well. But if she exceeded the limit after which she would be paid more, they changed the limit. After a few years of this, she just didn’t care anymore. Why should she work hard?

Under a regime that emphasizes conformity and subservience, there is little reward for exceptionalism.

Anna Arcangeli explained that the SS based in Italy viewed any type of gathering as threatening, whether it was social or religious. This explains why Arcangeli’s father was arrested for his service as a minister. After a heart-wrenching description of her father’s arrest, Arcangeli added: “Papa was the sole breadwinner, and that’s when we kids started foraging through the fields, looking for roots and vegetation to take home and eat. We were starving.”

Oppressive regimes make grand promises, but yield very few results, except for mutual suffering.

In addition to similar stories, the concerns expressed by each contributor are comparable. Each of them



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sees parallels between America's government and those that they left behind, as our government grows more and more overbearing each day. From the stifling of economic freedoms through the passage of massive bills like the financial regulatory reform, and the redistribution of wealth through the new healthcare law, to the squashing of simple freedoms, the contributors in *Pursuing Liberty* know where the path of tyranny ultimately leads, to the very places that they worked hard to leave.

For example, when Arcangeli described the religious persecutions that took place under Mussolini, she also warned about the type of religious persecutions seen in the United States today, and how the not-so-subtle removal of God from the daily lives of Americans will prove to be detrimental to our own freedom:

The consequences of walking away from the fundamentals of the laws of faith, morals, and the Ten Commandments, in walking away from the Giver of all good things, the Giver of peace and love. You walk away from that. You get men eating each other, killing each other, allowing the evil things to take over their lives when God has no part in society. The Founding Fathers created the Constitution, the laws, and the freedom of man to express themselves under the freedom of God. That's why we say 'In God We Trust.' If you take that trust in God away, where do you put the trust ... in man? Man is frail, and he fails without the guidance of the Higher Power.

Appeal Against Apathy

Even worse, the writers note, American complacency and apathy are allowing a once-thriving Republic to transform into a potentially Marxist, socialist society. One contributor notes:

Unfortunately, people will willingly give up their independence to a government, which is supposed to be the people's servant — not the other way around. People want somebody to make their life easier. They want somebody to give up their wealth and give it to them, or to somebody else. Okay, you do that. Then what? One person will become a little poorer, and one will become a little richer. And then what? Will he become rich after that? How many people will you find to take from, and then give to somebody? Where will it end? This is not the way for progress. This is not how a better life works, not from envy.

This complacency is increasingly visible day by day in the United States. It is a main reason behind the fact that while congressional approval ratings remain relatively low, an incumbent's chance of reelection is always high.

The contributors also noted that complacency gives rise to loss of freedom. For example, contributor Svetlana Kunin of the Soviet Union warns against the dangers of "government medical services," something that she believes "destroy[s] your dignity." She explains that if the government controls individual medical services, they virtually hold the lives of Americans in their own hands.

Cory Emberson and Rick Lindstrom were inspired to compile *Pursuing Liberty: America Through the Eyes of the Newly Free*, not because they believe that the Republic is over, but because they believe that America is at a pivot point and can still be salvaged. They note:

It ain't gonna be easy. But the work has already started with a flood of fellow Americans getting personally involved and not staying quiet anymore. The success of the many Tea Party movements nationwide underscores just how deep this passion runs, where hard-working, tax-paying, average citizens have finally found their voices again.

The authors conclude their book with four descriptive tips that can help restore the Republic to its Founding principles: faith, knowledge, involvement, and courage. If followed, America can and will be



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saved.

Benjamin Franklin once said, “The U.S. Constitution doesn’t guarantee happiness, only the pursuit of it. You have to catch up with it yourself.” The Left will likely harbor resentment against the contributors to this book, as they have personified those very words. All of them came to the United States with minimal financial stability, and without having knowledge of the English language. They recognized the importance of learning the language of the United States and acquired it relatively quickly. They tried and failed at several business ventures before finally reaching success, and refuse to accept the notion of “too big to fail,” as they recognize that it was their failures that led them to their successes. The contributors of *Pursuing Liberty* are walking contradictions to every leftist rallying cry that exists. For that reason alone, it is worth a read.

Pursuing Liberty: America Through the Eyes of the Newly Free is a must-read for any American who has forgotten the Founding principles that made America so exceptional. For those who take for granted the freedoms offered by our Constitution, *Pursuing Liberty* will serve as a reminder. And for readers who continue to fly the American flag with pride and defend the Constitution on a regular basis, *Pursuing Liberty* should be added to their library as a celebration of the American dream.

Pursuing Liberty: America Through the Eyes of the Newly Free, by Cory Emberson and Rick Lindstrom, Livermore, Calif.: Founders Editions, 2010, 237 pages, paperback. (To order, [click here](#).)



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