

# How Socialism Would Abolish Holidays

If you enjoyed a hearty Thanksgiving meal last week with your family, you have a personal incentive to oppose socialism. Extreme egalitarians would like to ban these kinds of family celebrations – by abolishing the family.

The purveyors of woke ideology have long asserted that only collectivizing the family can bring true social equality. However, they are now casting the blame on the free market.

As if suffering from a guilty conscience, the *New York Times* published an article the day before Thanksgiving titled, "[Liberals Do Not Want to Destroy the Family](#)." Not to be outdone, the UK *Guardian* ran an article the same day insisting that capitalism will soon outsource all aspects of family life. Branko Milanovic wrote:

*This expansion of capitalism potentially opens up questions about the role, and even survival, of the family. Other than the raising of children, it was the mutual help and – indeed gender-skewed – sharing of non-commercialised activities that was the key economic rationale for the family.*

So much for love, romance, or divine [institution](#).

*As this erodes we can expect, in the long term, an increase in single-member households, and in numbers of people who have never partnered or married. Already in Nordic countries between 30% and 40% of households are one person only.*

Curiously, interventionists call the Nordic countries “socialist” when discussing their national healthcare and universal pre-K policies, but they suddenly become “capitalist” when they bear the fruits of crossbreeding social

welfare programs with secularism and the sexual revolution.

The fact that the functions of marriage can be commodified, far from being the newest frontier of capitalism, is the world's oldest profession. Markets reflect the values of their consumers. This is an argument for a free and virtuous society, not for socialism. This is particularly true, since a closer examination proves socialism has long sought to abolish the family.

To be certain, not every economic interventionist wants to abolish the family. However, their single-minded focus on eradicating "privilege" and "inequality" inescapably leads there. The Gray Lady doth protest too much.

The co-author of *The Communist Manifesto*, Friedrich Engels, [noted](#), "It is a peculiar fact that with every great revolutionary movement the question of 'free love' comes to the foreground." From [Charles Fourier](#) and [Robert Owen](#) to Engels himself, the socialist tradition sees the family unit as the incubator of inequality. The advocates of unattainable equality recognize that, even after the state nationalizes all the factors of production and redistributes all wealth, one institution cannot be leveled: the family. Some parents will invest in their children more than others, leading to unequal social capital and, thus, unequal outcomes.

Perhaps the most influential political philosopher in academia, John Rawls, wrote in *A Theory of Justice*: "Even when fair opportunity is satisfied, the family will lead to unequal chances between individuals. Is the family to be abolished then?"

Rawls insisted that his brand of radical wealth redistribution would create "much less urgency to take this course," rather than incentivize its abolition in the quest to equalize every social institution. His disciples feel otherwise. One took up the question, [asserting](#):

*The family is one of the main causes of morally arbitrary inequality. Moreover, it is not an inequality which makes everyone better off. ... [T]he effects of the family are so profound that its mere existence may severely impede the access of individuals to equal life chances.*

Those obsessed with wealth equalization must also seek to quantify the love of a family and dole it out in identically impersonal doses. In *The Communist Manifesto*, Karl Marx and Engels [proposed](#) the “abolition of the family,” and replacing it with “an openly legalized community of women.” The Israeli kibbutz system attempted to have children raised by the collective, leading to its failure, as Acton intern Stephanie Klaves described [here](#).

Marxists still see dismantling the family as the most effective weapon to destroy both capitalism and Christianity. [A 2012 editorial](#), the Communist Party of Australia encouraged its members to “[strike blows](#)” against marriage, because the “church sees marriage – as it defines it – as an institution vital to its continued power, indeed to capitalism itself.”

This year, *The Nation* published an article titled “[Want to Dismantle Capitalism? Abolish the Family](#).” Feminist theorist Sophie Lewis contends that the natural family impedes a more egalitarian state. “It’s so valuable to denaturalize the mother-child bond,” she says. “That’s the horizon that I think opens up the space for a revolutionary politics.”

As the academic Gabriel Andrade recently [recounted](#) in *Merion West*:

*Communists who wish to abolish the family ... in fact, are more consistent and analytical than those Communists who somehow want to do away with unfairness yet want to preserve the one institution that is the source of much of the unfairness in the world. ... They are only taking their premises to their*

*logical extremes.*

To his credit, he concludes that “[t]he abolition of the family would be an insane project because ... the family is still a greater good.” Yet even those who stop short of that demand want to interfere with something that two writers in *Salon* [denounced](#) as “nuclear family privilege.”

British philosopher Adam Swift and his partner Harry Brighthouse explored the inequality of human emotions and decided to explore “what it was we wanted to allow parents to do for their children.” They found that children whose parents [read them bedtime stories](#) had an even greater advantage in life than those educated in private schools. While they graciously decided to “allow parents” to read stories to their children, private education was out.

And they wanted parents to feel guilty as they crouched by their children’s nightlight. “I don’t think parents reading their children bedtime stories should constantly have in their minds the way that they are unfairly disadvantaging other people’s children, but I think they should have that thought occasionally,” Swift said.

And noted philosopher Melissa Harris-Perry, formerly of MSNBC, insisted in an alarming [promo](#) that “we have to break through our kind of private idea that kids belong to their parents or kids belong to their families, and recognize that kids belong to their communities.”

Christianity recognizes the natural family as the fundamental unit of society, its primary educator, and its greatest source of true philanthropy. Complete strangers – whether disinterested or overly interested – cannot raise “our” children with the love and attention of their parents. Natural law insists that they should not try.

Capitalism can facilitate this understanding by creating sufficient prosperity to allow families leisure. Before the advent of the free market, most people spent every waking hour in a life-and-death struggle for subsistence. As wealth multiplied, working hours decreased. The free market channels our innate desire to provide for our family – whether bestowed by God or evolution –into productivity and mutually beneficial exchanges that increase wealth.

A concrete side benefit of this process is that trade reduces the price of staple commodities. Thanks to the wonder of the market, a full Thanksgiving meal costs [26 percent](#) less today than it did in 1986. And the market allows you the freedom to invite your family to that dinner, rather than shaming you that [natural affection](#) and the most intimate ties of love and kinship somehow oppress the poor.

That is truly a cause for thanksgiving.

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