

# Fighting for Freedom in a Pandemic

*“Every normal man must be tempted, at times, to spit on his hands, hoist the black flag, and begin slitting throats.”  
~H.L. Mencken*

My friend John and I spend a great deal of time discussing politics, calling each other's attention to articles we've read online, and shaking our heads over various political shenanigans and a culture gone wrong. If my children and their spouses are present, some of our remarks amuse them.

John and I have regretfully concluded that many Americans are sheep easily shepherded by our mainstream media, our politicians, our judges, progressives, and the politically correct crowd. These are the people who advocate for such causes as gender-neutral language and the seizure of firearms; who virtue-signal at every turn; who tell us that men can become women, and women men; who demand our daughters and granddaughters share locker rooms and playing fields with a member of the heterogametic sex claiming to be female.

To certain rabid souls everything we do is political, up for praise or condemnation and judged by a standard that sometimes changes faster than you can say “cancel culture.”

All too often our reaction to these folks is summed up in a single word: “Baaaaaa.”

John believes Americans have lost the courage and conviction to defend our liberties and kick back against the system; I accept his proposal that we have often failed to defend commonsense and liberty, but also hold that most of us just want to work our jobs, raise our kids, love our friends and family, and get on with life. Most normal Americans – and by normal, I mean those whose entire philosophy and way of living

is not completely tainted by politics – really just want to be left alone.

So the possibility of hoisting Menken's metaphorical black flag seemed dim.

Until now.

Across our country, particularly in Blue states, Americans are protesting the decrees of their state and local governments, demanding that the ubiquitous stay-at-home orders be rescinded so that they might earn a living, visit with friends, or spend a day at the beach. These people have had a bellyful of government edicts, many of which seem nonsensical to those forced to obey them. The grocery stores swarm with customers while the frame shop next door remains closed; the liquor stores are deemed essential, but not the churches; parks and beaches whose open air and sunshine are natural vitamins are now verboten.

Those who favor continuing the lockdown despise these protesters, believing them ignorant and blind to the possible spread of the virus. One suspects these critics are chiefly men and woman who still have incomes and a jobs, who are in no danger of losing their homes, who don't wake in the morning and wonder how they'll put food on the table for supper.

Shelley Luther, owner of a Dallas hair salon, received a citation and a restraining order for operating her business in [defiance](#) of the quarantine order. She ignored these orders and refused to pay the fines, and as a result the court jailed Luther for contempt – Judge Eric Moyé denigrated her actions as selfish, to which she replied “Feeding my kids isn't selfish” – Luther gained the status of folk hero for taking on the state and its dictatorial ways.

One major difference between Luther and the judge in this courtroom conflict? Moyé had an income. Luther was forced to close her business and had children to feed.

Perhaps this dark time of pandemic and turmoil has a silver lining. Maybe we will see a greater willingness on the part of ordinary citizens like Shelley Luther and others to speak out when government seems deaf, blind, or boneheaded. Maybe we Americans will remember that our Founders designed our government to be a servant, not a master. Maybe we will recollect that we have both the right and the obligation to protest when that government tramples on the First Amendment with little explanation or apology.

At the end of his Gettysburg Address, Abraham Lincoln fervently hoped “that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

During this historic time, are we seeing a new birth of freedom, a new appreciation that certain rights are granted to us not by the government, but derive from natural law, a Creator, and our very humanity? Perhaps we will see a revived interest among the population in protecting those rights, and a renewed love of liberty, proving that John and I were wrong in our conclusions about the docility of the American people.

I certainly hope so.

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