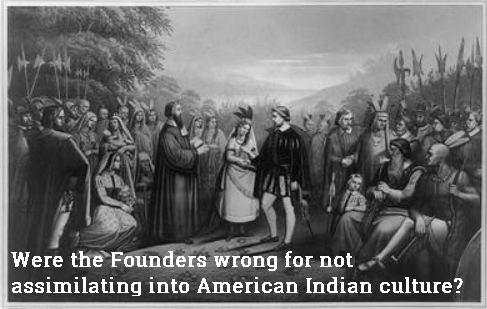
Be Careful What You Ask For: Multiculturalism = Freedom (NEG)

By “Coach Vance” Trefethen

***Resolved: Culture ought to value assimilation over multiculturalism.”***

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**EDITOR'S NOTE: This is a change to how we typically write our Lincoln-Douglas cases. With the new rules passed down from Stoa, our writers were forced to tighten up their citation methods. Rather than resembling a classroom paper with footnotes and extrapolations on research, Stoa cases need to conform to stricter evidence standards reminiscent of policy debate cases. This week we will release value cases written in the same format as Monument's policy cases. This is a higher standard that Monument is embracing, and though it is not required in other leagues, Monument will be enforcing them in Season 21 in all its releases (NSDA and NCFCA included).**

Case Summary: Overvaluing assimilation results in a society that denies the very freedoms that the Founders of our nation lived and died for. Voting for assimilation over multiculturalism also condemns the Founding Fathers, who, after all, refused to assimilate into the dominant culture of North America (the American Indians) and insisted on maintaining their own values and language. It also condemns the Amish, whose freedom to pursue their own language and culture we all celebrate. And it condemns ourselves, given that none of us would abandon our cars, electricity, and cell phones, nor learn to speak 18th century German if we moved to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania – because we would refuse to assimilate to their ways even if we lived near them. If you can’t or won’t practice a value yourself, then you certainly can’t endorse it by signing your name to a ballot that affirms it.

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Be Careful What You Ask For: Multiculturalism = Freedom (NEG)

Momma used to say that God’s greatest curse is to give men exactly what they ask for. Think very carefully before you insist that assimilation should be valued over multiculturalism. When you do, you’ll join me in denying that “Culture ought to value assimilation over multiculturalism.”

OBSERVATION 1. DEFINITIONS

Assimilation

Britannica 2019. “Assimilation” last updated 21 Aug 2019 <https://www.britannica.com/topic/assimilation-society>

**Assimilation**, in [anthropology](https://www.britannica.com/science/anthropology) and [sociology](https://www.britannica.com/topic/sociology), the process whereby individuals or groups of differing ethnic heritage are absorbed into the dominant [culture](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/culture) of a society. The process of [assimilating](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/assimilating) involves taking on the traits of the dominant culture to such a degree that the assimilating group becomes socially indistinguishable from other members of the society.

Multiculturalism

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (a peer-reviewed academic resource) “Multiculturalism” article is undated, but contains dated references from 2007 and older. <https://www.iep.utm.edu/multicul/>

Contemporary political theorists have labeled this phenomenon of the coexistence of different cultures in the same geographical space multiculturalism. That is, one of the meanings of multiculturalism is the coexistence of different cultures. The term ‘multiculturalism’, however, has not been used only to describe a culturally diverse society, but also to refer to a kind of policy that aims at protecting cultural diversity.

OBSERVATION 2. THE VALUE OF FREEDOM

Subpoint A. Freedom, and upholding it equally for all, should be the overriding value

Our Declaration of Independence affirms that liberty and the pursuit of happiness are founding principles that are self-evidently applicable to all people. Not just for folks who look like us, or have no accent, or dress like us, or like the same kind of food. These guiding principles affirm that a culture is obligated to provide freedom to all of its law-abiding citizens equally. Another way to look at it is the ancient moral value fundamental to Judaeo-Christian beliefs: How would you want to be treated if you were on the receiving end of the treatment?

Subpoint B. The Criterion: Never vote for a value unless you would want it applied to you and your family

After I show you the implications of valuing assimilation over multiculturalism, if you could in good conscience accept those implications for yourself and your family, then go ahead and vote Affirmative. But if you wouldn’t want it applied to you that way, then don’t affirm it should be applied to others, and join me on the Negative.

OBSERVATION 3. THE IMPLICATIONS

The resolution doesn’t specify space and time. For example, it doesn’t say “The United States as a whole in 2020 should value assimilation over multiculturalism,” so we have to have a value that applies in general, that we would never be afraid to apply to ourselves. Let’s look at 2 unsettling implications that follow from the resolution.

IMPLICATION 1. The macro level.

The behavior of everyone in this room is inconsistent with this resolution on a national level. We see this in 3 sub-points

Sub-point A. The dominant culture in America. At the founding of our nation, the existing population of North America vastly outnumbered the English settlers

Lewis Lord 1997 (staff writer for US NEWS & WORLD REPORT) How Many People Were Here Before Columbus? <https://www.bxscience.edu/ourpages/auto/2009/4/5/34767803/Pre-Columbian%20population.pdf>

“Some experts believe that perhaps 10 million people lived above the Rio Grande in 1492—twice as many as may have inhabited the British Isles at that time. The population of the Western Hemisphere may have exceeded 15th-century Europe’s 70 million.”

Sub-point B. The Founders did not assimilate because they valued freedom

When a few dozen English settled in Virginia in 1607 and a few dozen more settled in Massachusetts in 1620, did they have an obligation to assimilate? After all, they were a tiny minority with customs, language, religion, dress and diet far different from the established cultures of millions of American Indians. This was, remember, the same English culture that proclaimed liberty and pursuit of happiness were the God-given right of every human. And they viewed not-assimilating into American Indian culture – maintaining their own beliefs and practices – as part of that God-given right. They would have told you that expecting them to assimilate would have destroyed their freedom to live, worship and dress as they saw fit.

Sub-point C. We have not assimilated.

If you, the Judge, are a full-blooded American Indian, I respect and honor your culture. If not, then by speaking English instead of Navajo, Cherokee or other Native languages, you follow in the footsteps of earlier generations who refused to assimilate, and instead you insist on maintaining a culture derived from England that mostly destroyed the majority cultures of this continent.

IMPLICATION 2. The micro level.

The actions of everyone in this room would be inconsistent with assimilation on a local level. We see this in 2 sub-points

Sub-point A. Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

A travel guide published by the Warehouse Hotel in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in 2017 is instructive. It says QUOTE:

Warehouse Hotel 2017. (Hotel in Lancaster County, Penn.) “A GUIDE TO VISITING THE AMISH IN LANCASTER, PA - AMISH COUNTRY” <https://www.warehousehotel.com/blog/guide-to-visiting-the-amish-in-lancaster-pa>

Lancaster, PA, is home of the largest Amish community in the USA. The Amish community here is also the oldest such community in the country. The Amish arrived in Lancaster in the 1720's, escaping persecution in Europe and seeking a better life for themselves and their families. In Europe, they had been persecuted for their conservative Christian faith, but in Pennsylvania, they would thrive. Amish beliefs are notable for a commitment to humility, harmony, and community. To preserve these values the community turns away from individualism and pride as threats to their community. To that end, the Amish do not look at themselves in mirrors or take photos, since these activities can encourage pride. For the same reason, they dress plainly. To protect their community and unique way of life, the Amish isolate from other communities and do not use modern technology such as TVs, cell phones and the internet. Modern technology is seen as the first step out of the community. Even transportation for most Amish is by horse-drawn buggy or by scooter instead of cars. Cars are seen as a way to leave the community. However, this is not the case for all Amish communities. The Amish are made up of the New Order, the Old Order, the Beachy Amish and Amish Mennonites. The Beachy Amish and Amish Mennonites can use some modern technology, including cars.

The Amish govern their lives by order, or by what they know as "Ordnung." To maintain order and their way of life, they stay away from technology and remain close to family geographically. They do not wish to assimilate into the surrounding way of life, but they do interact with outsiders, which they call the “English” for commerce and even sometimes for jobs.

The Amish speak English fluently, but they also speak a German dialect known as Pennsylvania Dutch. The term Dutch is used to describe this dialect because it is derived from the word “Deutsch,” which means “German” in German language.

END QUOTE.

Sub-point B. The implications

So, the Amish in Pennsylvania won’t assimilate. If you vote Affirmative, you’ll have to rebuke them and insist they give up the freedom to pursue their own ways. But it gets worse. If you move to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, will you assimilate and sell your car, get a horse, give up electricity, and throw away your cell phone? Learn to speak 18th century German? I didn’t think so. So before you vote Affirmative, be careful what you ask for. If you will not condemn the Founding Fathers for not assimilating into American Indian culture, and if you will not insist that the Amish must assimilate to us, and if you would not be willing to assimilate to them if you moved to their region, then that leaves a Negative ballot as the only choice that is consistent with your own behavior and beliefs. It’s the only ballot consistent with Freedom. Thank you.