

HST 203: U.S. History Sp18 (Escobar Meta 41002 43590)

[Home](#) / [My courses](#) / [HST 203 Sp18 \(Escobar Meta 41002 43590\)](#) / [Week 9](#) / [Forum 4](#)
/ [Rights, Rights, Rights](#)



Forum 4 Rights, Rights, Rights

[Subscribe](#)[◀ The Military-Industrial Complex](#)[Environmentalism as Religion ▶](#)

Rights, Rights, Rights

by [Joe Escobar](#) - Friday, May 25, 2018, 7:11 AM

This thread is for discussions on the Rights, Rights, Rights topic.

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post. To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post, something that describes which one of the questions you are addressing. Do NOT simply leave it RE: Rights, Rights, Rights

Sum of ratings: -

[Permalink](#) | [Edit](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Yep, Definitions of Words Still Matter.



by [William Perdomo](#) - Friday, May 25, 2018, 11:11 AM

Walter Williams clarifies something that is being thrown around lately and too casually. Just like the word “Nazi” is used to denote anyone who disagrees with a popular “moral” position; the word “Rights” is almost exclusively used in the context of equality of outcome rather than equality of opportunity- i.e, equality under the law. Both words, Nazi and Rights, are used so much, and in so many wildly varying and inappropriate contexts, that they have lost all meaning to the point where invoking “the Nazi fallacy” has come to mean a person employing said fallacy has lost an argument and a person using the term “rights” is merely dog whistling for the subsidization by others of a preferred lifestyle. Walter Williams is essentially saying that rights, or Natural Rights, are actions or modes of being that do not visit an obligation on another human being. In short, my existence and actions do not aggress on the sovereignty of another person by “obligating” them to acquisition of whatever privilege or property I happen to be seeking for myself. His example of Universal Health Care is a prime case because Bernie Sander’s declaration of “health care is a human right” is a very easy, demagogic spear to pierce through people’s critical thinking and appeal right to their sense of humanity because, as Williams stated, of course we wish all people would have free access to health care, just like we all wish for peace on earth. However, wishing is far different than how such a policy would play out in the world of matter where cause and effect of one’s attempts at virtue have profound ramifications on other individuals we cannot see, nor are ever likely to meet. So, for example, the Constitution of the United States, makes the direct assertion that each human being is endowed with certain “unalienable rights” which signifies they are “negative liberties,” the implication being they are there at birth, and by simply existing they cannot be given nor taken away. The only way to do so would be for a third party to “positively” suppress them, which means actually taking action against my person to stop the automatic manifestation my negative liberties, i.e., passive, self-evident rights that everyone else has but which requires nothing of no one for them to operate. Me breathing, walking, talking are not “privileges” that accrued to me by taking from someone else in order that I may ambulate and emit sounds from my voice box. In short, someone didn’t have to lose something for me to gain the above rights. Me existing, of my own accord, at no one’s expense (in the material sense; not in the mercantile economic sense) does not require everyone around me to give up their negative liberty for me to accomplish. Words and their meanings matter because they have consequences on the real world which is why definitions like the one Walter Williams offered are so important to understand.

Sum of ratings: [3 \(1\)](#)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Just because it's simple; Doesn't mean it's wrong!

by [William Perdomo](#) - Friday, May 25, 2018, 12:06 PM

The political cartoon between the Republican and Democrat mascots is pretty funny because I have engaged in the same dialog over and over again over the issue of illegal immigration. It's as though people ignore the word "illegal" and simply think you're anti-immigration. Furthermore, they assign motive by attaching another meaning to the term "illegal" preceding immigrant to mean that the independent moral agent in question is somehow illegal in the sense they lack personhood. I think that pretty much says it all in the terse response of, "illegal." Legality is based on the agreement that these "negative liberties," or "Natural Rights" are indeed a phenomenon recognized by the citizens of this country. That recognition serves as the basis of our society, civil and interpersonal, and, subsequently, our laws, which assign punishment for transgression against another person's liberty while serving to protect their freedom to life and property from illegal seizure and termination in the case of the former. In essence, being a citizen is not only having access to a bundle of political and civil rights; but also being aware that there is a requisite responsibility to society in order to maintain a level of civility for those rights to operate so we don't resort to smashing each other over the head with bricks to resolve disputes as we do whenever the local Antifa shows up to burn trash cans or smash people over the head with bike locks because they don't agree on trans-gender restrooms or complete open borders. When immigrants come into the country by legal means then they are taking the first steps into being assimilated not only into American culture; but American jurisprudence. They are given an introduction to the way we do things and how the prospective immigrant is expected to act as a responsible moral and ethical agent. Cultural relativism does not, for example, allow someone from another country to brutalize their wife because it was acceptable "back home." In this country, we (used to) operate by the non aggression principle which means one individual does not have the right to initiate force on another. Put another way, each person draws around them a sphere of liberty that is checked by another person's sphere of liberty. You can do whatever you want until it overlaps another persons liberty and draws them into your orbit so to speak against their will. If a person breaks the most fundamental law an immigrant is expected to follow, such as the law of a good guest, then how do we expect they're suddenly going to shape up to a be a law abiding citizen in the future when they were not only not censured for their first transgression, but were actually awarded with the vast benefits of citizenship and voting rights?

Sum of ratings: 3 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



My thoughts on Rights

by [Scott Carpenter](#) - Saturday, May 26, 2018, 3:50 PM

Does any human actually possess any of these things called "rights"? Human

rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world, from birth until death but there are countries that this is not true. In the United States, citizens have the *positive right* to vote and they have the *negative right* to not vote; people can choose not to vote in a given election without punishment. But in other countries, citizens have a positive right to vote but they don't have a negative right to not vote, since voting is compulsory.

Amendment I. Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

The First Amendment, even if applied broadly, only protects us against the government, but not our fellow citizen, who may have less respect for our rights even than politicians do.

There are limits to your free speech:

Freedom of Speech means that someone's right to say something is protected within certain limits. A person may have to suffer consequences for saying some things, but they still have the right to say them. For example, it is against the law to yell, "BOMB," in a crowded place because someone may get injured. You have no right to force others to provide you a forum, to make them listen, or to take away something they've paid for, or to endanger them by causing a panic.

Lastly it seems that there are many people in this world that are just so opinionated about what they hear. For ex. If I express my Christian beliefs on let say Facebook I am mostly talking to other people that are Christian's, but there are always people out there that say their remarks in some fashion or other. Usually remarks trying to down play what is was that I said. Isn't there something else that they could be doing to motivate their own lives to make it better.

Other categories that will get you in trouble:

- Obscenity
- Fighting words
- Defamation (including libel and slander)
- Child pornography
- Perjury
- Blackmail
- Incitement to imminent lawless action
- True threats
- Solicitations to commit crimes

How do rights apply to citizens of the United States? These basic rights are based on a shared value like dignity, fairness, equality, respect and independence. These values are defined and protected by law. They can never be taken away, although they can sometimes be restricted- for example if a person breaks the law, or in the interest on national security. Human rights are relevant to us all, not just those who face repression or mistreatment, they protect you in many areas of your day-to-day life including:

- Your right to have and express your own opinions
- Your right to an education
- Your right to a private and family life
- Your right not to be mistreated or wrongly punished by the state

What about to those who are not legally citizens?

The Bill of Rights applies to everyone, even *illegal* immigrants. So, let's say if an immigrant, legal or illegal, was prosecuted under some criminal code. He or she has the right to due process, a speedy and public trial, and other rights protected by the Fifth and Sixth Amendments.

Sum of ratings: 3 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Semantics and the use of rights

by [Vanessa Heilmann](#) - Saturday, May 26, 2018, 11:21 PM

This is a really interesting to topic to me. At first hearing Walter Edward Williams speak I started feeling all this charge, that yes of course everyone should have healthcare. His comment "were you stepping over dead bodies all over New York, just cause people were starving" (Walter Edward Williams video clip) in comparison to the 1840's, upset me because without some sort of supplemental food program we could have starving people all over. Times are way different now then they were back then, so I don't think that is a valid comparison. However, when I think about the underlying message, it comes down to definitions and yes those aren't rights they are privileges but also necessity for people to live. If he had instead said, any person has the right to obtain healthcare if they choose, then that would be an accurate use of someone's rights in my eyes. I'm not sure if the intention of his message was that we shouldn't have these systems in place, and if so I don't agree with him there, but I do agree those don't fit the definition of rights.

The right "Freedom to pursue life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" from the US Citizenship and Immigration Services chart, absolutely shows in all of these examples that these are rights any American should be able to possess. "In 1947, Jackie

Robinson finally cracked Major League Baseball's policy of racial segregation.” (Textbook page 907) As Walter Williams says, a right “is something that exists simultaneously among people.” Therefore all people should have the freedom to play baseball. Just as in “1954, Chief Justice Warren wrote an unanimous opinion declaring that states could not segregate their public schools on the basis of race without violating the constitutional right of African American students to equal protection law.” (Textbook page 939) Any person should have the freedom to attend school if they choose to. The right is in the freedom to do so if they choose. As the USCIS site says, “Citizenship is the common thread that connects all Americans. We are a nation bound not by race or religion, but by the shared values of freedom, liberty, and equality.”

Sum of ratings: 3 (1) 3

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



How do we view rights

by [Mirissa Hicks](#) - Sunday, May 27, 2018, 8:26 PM

After listening to Walter Williams explanation of what a right actually means it seems as many of the “rights” we think we are entitled to are not actually our rights. Williams defines a right as “something that exists simultaneously among people, a right does not confer obligation on another” (0:38) It seems to me that us as Americans are viewing our rights as more of wish full thinking. I like the example Williams uses about health care and how it isn’t a right because it “imposes an obligation on someone else” (1:16) It seems that a right is toward more of a moral stand point as well as a personal duty. On the list of the U.S citizenship and Immigration services you can clearly see that the list they have is geared toward your personal self rather than what most American’s think of a right being of that something is owed or granted toward them.

Rights
• Freedom to express yourself. • Freedom to worship as you wish. • Right to a prompt, fair trial by jury. • Right to vote in elections for public officials. • Right to apply for federal employment requiring U.S. citizenship. • Right to run for elected office. • Freedom to pursue “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

Sum of ratings: 3 (4) 3

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Sum of ratings: 2 (1) 2

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Rights have never been real.**by [Marissa Luther](#) - Sunday, May 27, 2018, 9:43 PM

The rights and responsibilities list today is very interesting after looking back into the events we've learned about in this class. For one, the "freedom to express yourself," right is untrue today, and even more so in the past. Emma Goldman was deported to Russia for expressing her disdain for the draft, clearly showing that "expressing yourself," wasn't a true right. "Freedom to worship how you wish," has always been a "right" of people in the past, yet we actively passed ethnocentric laws prohibiting or limiting Catholic/immigrants way of life; for example the prohibition banned drinking alcohol, and Catholics tend to have wine every Sunday in church.

All of these rights have historic contradictions, but the most relevant one to me is the "right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Women, in order to pursue liberty, would in theory, need to vote. An example for the "pursuit of happiness" that interests me is the restriction of child labor. To most people, the happiness we are pursuing doesn't include being poor. Therefore, by limiting child labor, you are forcing people farther into poverty, and halting a person's pursuit of happiness.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1) 2

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Re: Rights have never been real.**by [Hayley Allen](#) - Wednesday, May 30, 2018, 9:57 AM

I found your analysis of the topic really interesting. I definitely agree that historically, Americans' rights have not been honored. This can be seen over and over again when one is criticizing the government like the workers strikes and their right to free speech when they wanted to have better protections. I also thought your point about child labor laws restricting someone's right to the pursuit of happiness was different. The way I saw the issue of child labor was the parents were making their kids work because they didn't have enough money so yes that would be the parent's pursuit of happiness but what about the kids? The way they eliminated child labor was by enforcing all school-aged children to attend school which can prepare and advance those kids beyond what they would have become if they had remained in factories/mills for their whole lives. It is a complicated subject but I don't think they had to have child labor to keep people from being poor, I think they should have improved workers wages and conditions to help people pursue happiness. It really comes down to the owners and bosses of these factories and

mills that were taking such an outrageous percentage of the profit while paying the laborers close to nothing which kept them poor. There are always many sides and outcomes to every decision but child labor was meant to protect young kids and to give them education in hopes they will succeed more than their parents.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

1

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Rights vs Reality

by [Jordan Lopez](#) - Sunday, May 27, 2018, 11:53 PM

I love the viewpoint Walter Williams has on the interpretation of the word "rights". We can see that throughout history the rights and freedoms of individuals isn't equally distributed based off the time period and the region within the United States. During war times you can see that the first amendment isn't granted when speaking against the war. To bring us back a bit we can see acts being passed to fight this freedom of speech in a way. For example, the Alien and Sedition act of 1798 which is discussed in chapter 7 and the Espionage, Sabotage, and Sedition Acts passed in 1917 and 1918 during World War 1. The same concept of suppressing one's rights given to citizens happens throughout the Amendments. The Brown vs the Board of Education is just the result of the 14th amendment being ignored for so long and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is just a stepping stone after the fact. In class I texted my mother about that time period. She was born in Pasadena, California and had to move schools due to integration. This happened a couple years after the Civil Rights Act which shows you how things have taken time to be implemented. In some cases things needed to be forced as what happened in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

2

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Undocumented immigrants, not illegal aliens

by [Hayley Allen](#) - Monday, May 28, 2018, 12:12 PM

The topic of rights is difficult because the lines are so blurred between what is a right and is that right being violated or protected at all times. In regards to American citizens and their rights compared to undocumented immigrants who live in the U.S. and their rights; this is when interpretation becomes relevant. As stated by the Declaration of Independence, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" (Dec. of Independence). From this statement this includes all humans or 'men' not exclusively American citizens. Therefore, undocumented immigrants who have come into the nation illegally still possess these rights and still have the right to the pursuit of Happiness which in many

instances, these people are fleeing economic/political crises in their countries of origin.

Historically, “in 1942 and continuing until 1967, the U.S. government sponsored the bracero (or farmland) program which brought nearly 5 million Mexicans northward to fill agricultural jobs. Many braceros and their families remained in the United States after their work contracts expired” (Murrin 944). Although, these people were not supposed to stay in the country, the U.S. did initiate the immigration and dependence on Mexican people for our agricultural economy. Today as well, this dependence on low-wage, undocumented workers is relevant as many struggle to define what rights these people have or should have. The way I see it is, American’s don’t want to share their rights or privilege with these people purely because they did not enter through legal means of immigration. This argument excuses discrimination and unethical treatment of immigrants as well as blaming them for unemployment/economic struggles. Our economy needs them whether all Americans agree on this or not, therefore granting them the right to acquire documentation or citizenship would be the best and simplest solution to this ‘immigration issue’. They are people with families, with dreams, and with needs that should not be ignored based on where they were born. If they are willing to work hard for very little compensation that no other 'citizens' would do then I think they deserve some kind of support from the government.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Rights, Rights, Rights

by [Cameron Noriega](#) - Wednesday, May 30, 2018, 10:08 AM

I believe the Walter Williams video made a deeper understanding of "what's a right?" And seeing cartoon #1 gives a perfect example. It shows that the person is abusing their rights or just doesn't what their rights is. The person doesn't have a problem showing their identification at stores and hotels etc.. But if an officer of the law comes in, now he doesn't want to show his identification. The officer is just the same as the store clerk or the airline worker or the hotel worker. So what's the big deal if an officer asked him for his identification?

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Rights, Rights, Rights

by [Mirissa Hicks](#) - Wednesday, May 30, 2018, 7:05 PM

I see the cartoon with the identification way to true these days. I have seen so many videos lately that it seems that citizens are almost terrorizing police officers when they come into contact with them. After watching this video as well it really seems

like Americans are confused about what their rights actually are. It seems like society today only wants to play the rights card when they see it in their favor. If you think about it are you going to tell the person at the liquor store that they are violating your rights when they ask you to see your id. The answer is no because you want the liquor you're purchasing, but then many people see a violation of your rights when a police officer asks for id when you get pulled over main reason being you don't want the ticket or whatever the outcome may be. It really makes me wonder if a simple id check can even in anyway be considered as a "right"?

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

1

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



privilege vs rights

by [Cam Burnett](#) - Wednesday, May 30, 2018, 8:46 PM

The rights we have as humans i do think are defined pretty well by Walter Edward Williams pretty well as we see the civil rights fight so hard for and this quote really speaks to me when thinking about it "Rights serve as rules of interaction between people, and, as such, they place constraints and obligations upon the actions of individuals or groups (for example, if one has a right to life, this means that others do not have the liberty to kill him). A right is the legal or moral entitlement to do or refrain from doing something. It is not a duty, referring to behavior that is expected or required of the person, or a privilege, referring to something that can be conferred and revoked." but I don't agree with it fully, I believe if one person has the right to something than all people should be able to have that right too, but has Mr Williams put it a right should be something that another person can't interfere or put a strain on someone else and i don't think much other than the ability to live and in America we have a lot of privileges we see as right but these privileges should be available to everyone and become basic right and this usually means leaving out those who aren't legal citizens.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

1

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Freedom from Consequence?

by [Sam Reposa](#) - Friday, June 1, 2018, 12:13 PM

What exactly do "rights" guarantee and where are they guaranteed? In class on 5/30/18, it was discussed that when you're in a public institution or facility like a school, you aren't necessarily guaranteed your 1st Amendment rights—for example, you can't say whatever your please and not expect consequence. I think it's important to realize that "rights" really only protect you from the government, not necessarily from other citizens. "freedom of speech" doesn't necessarily mean "freedom from

other citizens, freedom of speech doesn't necessarily mean freedom from consequences". One has the right to publicly express their opinions and views, but simultaneously, people have the right to disagree with those opinions and views. This makes me think of the case where the KKK won the ruling to "Adopt-A-Highway" in Georgia, that was discussed in an earlier lecture. While by law, they may have the right to participate in the Adopt-A-Highway program, people also have the right to disagree with this ruling.

Professor Walter Williams attempted to clarify the definition of a "right" by saying it is something "that exists simultaneously among people and it does not confer any obligation on another". While what he is saying does make sense to a degree, he does not clarify whether or not this applies to human beings, or American citizens specifically. This is a tricky subject but I believe that the rights guaranteed by the Constitution only apply to American citizens. Illegal Immigrants aren't following the responsibilities listed on the USCIS website, like serving jury duty, paying taxes, let alone following the laws (hence, illegal immigrants); therefore, I don't believe illegal immigrants deserve the rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Did Professor Walter Williams short talk clarify the differences between rights and other things that people often mistakenly call "rights".

by [Chris Castro](#) - Friday, June 1, 2018, 5:32 PM

Did Professor Walter Williams short talk clarify the differences between rights and other things that people often mistakenly call "rights".

The short that Walter did was very well done and it really did make me think about the difference between rights and privileges. The point that really made it "click" for me was when he said a right does not impose any sort of obligation on another person. It clearly illustrates the concept and it made it easier for me to see when "rights" are being used unfairly or incorrectly. It also made sense with the comic below in which the man was asked for his ID by many store retailers, but when a cop asked him he said "your violation my rights". To me the comic also demonstrates how people always try to use the constitution and bill of rights in their favor when they're in trouble. Both sides of the political spectrum do this, and now thanks to this short video I'll be able to see when either side is using an argument about rights unfairly.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Kent State

by [Alexander Thompson](#) - Friday, June 1, 2018, 11:13 PM

 by [Alexander Thompson](#) - Friday, June 1, 2018, 11:10 PM

I'm going to use Kent State as my example for what "rights" we have. First, right to free speech, the protesters had the right to oppose the war in vietnam, but they could not force someone to do anything about it. Second, Right to Assembly, the protesters had the right to assemble a protest, the problem occurred when it got so large that it affected others not involved in the protest and worried officials. Third, the protesters DID NOT have the right to assault the national guard. And while the whole group was punished for the acts of a small portion of protesters, it would have been impossible for the national guard to discern the good from the bad, so the whole group was punished. So I do believe that people have actual rights, to an extent. There is a very blurry line as to how far these rights will extend.

Sum of ratings: [2 \(1\)](#)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Kent State

by [Sam Reposa](#) - Friday, June 1, 2018, 11:28 PM

The line between rights and wishes certainly is blurred. Your second point where you talked about the right to assembly was interesting to me because you talked about how the assembly got so large that it affected those not involved. At the 0:31 second mark of the first video clip, Professor Walter Williams defines a right as something that "does not confer any obligation on another". My question to you is that in this situation where a group of people's "rights" is affecting another group of people, do they really have the right? A peaceful assembly isn't peaceful, when it affects the peace of others.

It's important to note that when a whole group is being punished for the actions of few, the majority who were innocent's rights aren't being protected.

If this were a public facility like a high school, it would perhaps be easier to say that their rights aren't guaranteed due to it being a public place; however, like Joe was saying during the 5/30/18 lecture, the lines get blurrier on a college campus because students are paying tuition to be there, rather than being legally obligated to be there.

Sum of ratings: [2 \(1\)](#)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

◀ [The Military-Industrial Complex](#)

[Environmentalism as Religion](#) ▶

 [Moodle Docs for this page](#)

You are logged in as [Joe Escobar](#) ([Log out](#))

[HST 203 Sp18 \(Escobar Meta 41002 43590\)](#)