



The Permission Society: How the Ruling Class Turns Our Freedoms into Privileges and What We Can Do About It

By Timothy Sandefur

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Throughout history, kings and emperors have promised “freedoms” to their people. Yet these freedoms were really only permissions handed down from on high. The American Revolution inaugurated a new vision: people have basic rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and *government* must ask permission from *them*. Sadly, today’s increasingly bureaucratic society is beginning to turn back the clock and to transform America into a nation where our freedoms—the right to speak freely, to earn a living, to own a gun, to use private property, even the right to take medicine to save one’s own life—are again treated as privileges the government may grant or withhold at will. Timothy Sandefur examines the history of the distinction between rights and privileges that played such an important role in the American experiment, and how we can fight to retain our freedoms against the growing power of government. Illustrated with dozens of real-life examples—including many cases he litigated himself—Sandefur shows how treating freedoms as government-created privileges undermines our Constitution and betrays the basic principles of human dignity.

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Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

Throughout history, kings and emperors have promised "freedoms" to their people. Yet these freedoms were really only permissions handed down from on high. The American Revolution inaugurated a new vision: people have basic rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and government must ask permission from them. Sadly, today's increasingly bureaucratic society is beginning to turn back the clock and to transform America into a nation where our freedoms--the right to speak freely, to earn a living, to own a gun, to use private property, even the right to take medicine to save one's own life--are again treated as privileges the government may grant or withhold at will. Timothy Sandefur examines the history of the distinction between rights and privileges that played such an important role in the American experiment, and how we can fight to retain our freedoms against the growing power of government. Illustrated with dozens of real-life examples---including many cases he litigated himself--Sandefur shows how treating freedoms as government-created privileges undermines our Constitution and the basic principles of human dignity.

From the Back Cover

"With *The Permission Society*, his fourth magnificent book, plus countless articles, speeches, and legal briefs, Timothy Sandefur has emerged as one of America's most important political and legal theorists. Yet his writing is eminently readable. Here, his focus is on the fundamental shift from liberty to license that began setting in systematically during the Progressive Era, after which Americans increasingly have had to get permission from government officials before they could open a business, build on their property, attend to their health, and even speak in many contexts. Rich in both theory and example, this book puts the modern world of liberty only by government permission in perspective. The Founders' blood would boil, and the reader's will too." -- **Roger Pilon**, B. Kenneth Simon Chair in Constitutional Studies at the Cato Institute and Director of the Cato Institute's Center for Constitutional Studies

"It is remarkable that one man can be both an active constitutional litigator and a genuine constitutional scholar. Timothy Sandefur's latest book brilliantly explains how 'freedom is not permission.' Are we citizens whose liberty is presumed or are we subjects who must seek permission from our rulers? Read this important book and decide." -- **Randy E. Barnett**, Carmack Waterhouse Professor of Legal Theory, Georgetown Law, and author of *Our Republican Constitution: Securing the Liberty and Sovereignty of We the People* and *Restoring the Lost Constitution: The Presumption of Liberty*.

"Timothy Sandefur has always been focused on one thing: freedom. Sadly, licensing laws and permit requirements are taking more and more of our freedoms away, and forcing Americans instead to ask approval from bureaucrats before they can build homes, take jobs, or even express their political opinions. In this book, Sandefur makes a powerful case for why a free society is better than a 'permission society'--and explains how we can act to defend our freedoms in the future." -- **Hugh Hewitt**, radio talk show host and author of *The Brief Against Obama: The Rise, Fall & Epic Fail of the Hope & Change Presidency*

About the Author

Timothy Sandefur is Vice President for Litigation at the Goldwater Institute. Prior to joining the Institute, he worked for 15 years as a litigator for the Pacific Legal Foundation, where he oversaw the Economic Liberty Project, devoted to defending the right to earn a living without unreasonable government interference. He is

the author of *The Right to Earn a Living* (2010), *The Conscience of the Constitution* (2014), and *Cornerstone of Liberty: Property Rights in 21st Century America* (second edition, coauthored with Christina Sandefur, 2016).

Users Review

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Mario Berry:

Now a day people who Living in the era where everything reachable by talk with the internet and the resources in it can be true or not demand people to be aware of each data they get. How people have to be smart in acquiring any information nowadays? Of course the answer is reading a book. Reading through a book can help persons out of this uncertainty Information specially this The Permission Society: How the Ruling Class Turns Our Freedoms into Privileges and What We Can Do About It book because book offers you rich data and knowledge. Of course the information in this book hundred pct guarantees there is no doubt in it you probably know this.

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Bernard Davisson:

Is it anyone who having spare time in that case spend it whole day by means of watching television programs or just resting on the bed? Do you need something new? This The Permission Society: How the Ruling Class Turns Our Freedoms into Privileges and What We Can Do About It can be the reply, oh how comes? The new book you know. You are and so out of date, spending your time by reading in this new era is common not a geek activity. So what these textbooks have than the others?

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