

Classical and Reform Liberalism: Immigration and Education

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Introduction

The debate between classical and reform liberalism has been around for decades. This essay will compare and contrast these two distinct political schools of thoughts for the purposes of framing two important issues: education and immigration. In doing so, this essay will show how these of classical and reform liberalism differ with respect to the framing of these two issues, delving into the ways in which theorists such as John Locke and Adam Smith differ from those such as John Stuart Mill and John-Maynard Keynes. As such, this essay will endeavour to explore how immigration and education can be framed in light of these two unique schools of liberal thought, arguing the thesis that the reform school presents a much more holistic and pragmatic approach to solving many of the complex issues facing society from both the perspective of politics and economics.

Classical Liberalism

Classical liberalism is a school of thought largely predicated on the ideas of John Locke, Adam Smith and Immanuel Kant. Among the most important tenets of classical liberalism is the fundamental believe that, in contrast to the absolute rule imposed by monarchs or religion over individuals, freedom and the public sphere should be attached to the pursuit of individual liberty and rationality. The main ideas that came from this school of thought held that reason, above all else, lead one to conclude that individual liberty and the pursuit of individual freedoms was the most oblivious way in which to become politically emancipated. In contrast to the ecclesial authority of the Catholic Church, in addition to the sovereign monarchs ruling much of Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries, theorists such as Immanuel Kant sought to dis-entangle the concept of

reason with that of religion and absolute monarchy. According to Kant, “all our knowledge begins with the sense, proceeds then to understanding, and ends with reasons. There is nothing higher than reason” (Kant, 1998).

Works Cited

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