

Peter worst
nightmare or best
dream? the meaning



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Peter Roche Mr. Conklin U. S History II H- Period C22 December 2017

The Pledge of Allegiance: America's Worst Nightmare or Best Dream? The

meaning of the Pledge of Allegiance is easily misinterpreted and

subconsciously manipulated to fit people's ideologies. Created in 1892, the

Pledge commemorated the 400th year of the discovery of America;

reminding citizens that by living there, the freedom they should innately

receive by being born is made into reality.

Today, the original motives of the Pledge get overlooked, as people twist the

words to fit their social and political views. Virtually ever since the Pledge

was incorporated into everyday life, it has been debated whether or not

people should be obliged to participate when it is being said. The First

Amendment enables freedom of speech and religion, putting the fact that

people should not be required to say it in the limelight. Rather than going to

the extremes of forcing everyone to do it or eliminating it completely,

everyone should either willingly say, or respectfully decline saying the

Pledge of Allegiance; nothing more and nothing less. Since its origin in 1892,

people have strongly disagreed with the Pledge. From the moment schools

made the Pledge a daily routine, there has been conflict. The first major

opposition of this were groups of Jehovah's Witnesses. The issue at hand was

the act of pledging to anything.

Members of this religion can not "...

pledge allegiance to anything but Jehovah." (Dudley Gold, 21). What started

in 1943 with two elementary school Jehovah's Witnesses ended in a national

precedent set by the case " West Virginia Board of Education vs Barnette."

The case concluded that “ The Free Speech clause of the First Amendment prohibits public schools from forcing students to salute the American flag and say the Pledge of Allegiance.”(The history of legal.

..) Among the many issues today is the phrase “ under God.” The daunting phrase was justifiably added into the Pledge in 1954, at the end of World War II “ to distinguish us from the godless Soviets.” (Neuhaus, Richard John). In an interview with David Orians, he stated that he does not participate because “ the Pledge should not impose religion on people.” People with the same stances say the solution would be to simply take that phrase out.

In an interview with Mary Roche, she hypothesized that “ If those words were to be removed, principals of God would have to be removed from all aspects of our government.” The effects of this are far more extensive than one expects. The United States government is teeming with elements of Christianity. For instance, in each inauguration, the new president places their hand on a Bible to show their complete loyalty to the country. In court the one and only way to ensure a defendant does not lie is for them to swear on the Bible. On a more personal level, “ trying to be a good person” happens to coincide with what a good person might do in the eyes of God. Surely this does not imply that people must be Christians to do good.

For example, taking the trash out for an elderly neighbor, or holding the door for someone. These have no underlying religious purpose. They do not “ impose” God unto the subject of their act of kindness. This is a prime example that one does not have to be a Christian to do something good;

precisely how one does not have to be a follower of God to say the Pledge of Allegiance.

“ Under God” simply refers to the set of values and moral beliefs that all Americans share. It does not literally mean that God rules the nation. It is a simple appreciation of the type of people Americans should strive to be. Some people still might not want to participate knowing all this, and that is perfectly acceptable and should be respected. For this reason, the Pledge of Allegiance should remain merely as an optional symbol for people to participate in.

When somebody needs surgery, the doctor warns them of possible complications. At the very least, surgery puts that person out of commission for an extended period of time, not to mention the long, painful therapy required to be healthy post-operation. Today, a dense population of Americans would like to see the phrase “ under God” taken out. Analogous to a surgery, removing this part would have a long and doubtful recovery time for the considerable population that participates in it. The “ therapy” for these people would be to come to accept the new Pledge.

If they quit on this ‘ therapy’ they could end up ceasing saying the Pledge of Allegiance; something they once cherished in the past. At least now people have the option. Before people start trying to change the words, they should know that the Pledge does not recognize God as America’s monarch, or that pledging allegiance to America is pledging to Christianity. The Pledge shows how the American government accepts similar values with Christianity, and recognizes that citizens should share similar principles. The removal of the

Pledge itself or even just two words could land a detrimental blow that today's society could not handle. This is why the Pledge is and should remain optional; where the least amount of harm can be done.

Ranging from national incidents to individual interactions, the U. S's social structure is heavily flawed. Racism is very much alive. Politics have flooded into daily social life, causing nobody to be safe when it comes to their views. With all these negative qualities constantly revolving around people, the Pledge can seem insignificant.

However, the Pledge is quite the opposite. It sets a moral goal for all Americans to avoid this. In today's cynical America, humans needs some sort of rock on which they can build and preserve a truly " indivisible" society, with " liberty and justice for all," and the Pledge of Allegiance might just be that rock. Works Cited " Pledge of Allegiance Fast Facts." CNN, Cable News Network, 24 Apr.

2017, [www. cnn. com/2013/09/04/us/pledge-of-allegiance-fast-facts/index. html](http://www.cnn.com/2013/09/04/us/pledge-of-allegiance-fast-facts/index.html) : Neuhaus, Richard John. " The Pledge of Allegiance Should Refer to God." Religion and Education, edited by Tom Head, Greenhaven Press, 2005. At Issue.

Opposing Viewpoints in Context, libraries. state. ma. us/login? gwurl=[http://link. galegroup. com/apps/doc/EJ3010391211/OVIC? u= mlin_m_ahsξd= 1d4b92c0](http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/EJ3010391211/OVIC?u=m1in_m_ahsξd=1d4b92c0).

Accessed 15 Nov. 2017. Originally published as " Political Blasphemy," First Things: A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life, Oct. 2002, pp. 91-92."

<https://assignbuster.com/peter-worst-nightmare-or-best-dream-the-meaning/>

Introduction to Patriotism: Current Controversies." Patriotism, edited by Sylvia Engdahl, Greenhaven Press, 2011.

Current Controversies. Opposing Viewpoints in Context, http://libraries.state.ma.us/login?gwurl=http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/EJ3010752101/OVIC?u=mlin_m_ahs&d=a306b4e0. Accessed 20 Dec.

2017. https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/United_States_of_America_1992Gold, Susan Dudley. Saluting the Flag: West Virginia State Board of Education v.

Barnette. Cavendish Square Publishing, 2014. <https://constitutioncenter.org/blog/the-latest-controversy-about-under-god-in-the-pledge-of-allegiance> Roche, Mary. Personal Interview. 20 November 2017Orians, David. Personal Interview 20 November 2017Roche, Edward. Personal Interview 20 November 2017