

Reading Questions for December 6

These questions cover part of a book chapter by Alan Wertheimer titled “Liberty, Coercion, and the Limits of the State.” The answers do not have to be turned in. You will probably have to read more than once to get the answers.

*Background:*

We spent last class and are spending this one discussing the question: should we have the freedom to do whatever we want, so long as it doesn’t harm anyone? We’re starting today’s class by continuing to look at Wertheimer’s discussion of the issue, then we’ll spend the rest of today’s class looking at some particular cases.

*Questions:*

1. On pages 50-3, Wertheimer discusses whether the state is justified in limiting the liberty of people for their own good. What does he think and why? Is he right and why?
2. On pages 53-6, Wertheimer discusses whether the state is justified in limiting the liberty of people to prevent them from engaging in immoral behavior, even if this behavior is not harmful or offensive. What does he think and why? Is he right and why?