

Words Poorly Used #60 — Settled

To a voluntaryist, “settled” means voluntarily agreed upon among individuals. In the running arguments of today, in the vernacular of statist, it means a formal or informal recognition among statist, that an institutional goal is greater than voluntary agreements among individuals. Example, “settled science.” We too frequently hear that there is a consensus among scientists that:

- immunology is good in all individual instances, therefore it becomes a good idea to mandate immunization for all
- The climate is changing, and it is likely that humans are causing it, therefore we need to mandate top-down change
- Peer review is not corruptible, therefore it proves the consensus

These fallacies are based on either false premises (peer review is not corruptible), true premises (often tautologies like “the climate is changing”), or probably true premises stated as absolutes (good results guaranteed for all, pay no attention to the man behind the curtain).

Nothing can be settled by consensus. The determination of truth, of fact, of action is not determinable through consensus (democracy).