

No. 331 December 2009

Why Opting Out is no “Third Way”

By Will Wilkinson

21 December 2009

*At first blush, “libertarian paternalism” seems a linguistic miscarriage, a self-crippling idea condemned to limp aimlessly in eternal darkness on the island of misfit creeds alongside “humanitarian sadism” and “color-blind racism.” But that hasn’t stopped Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein, law and economics superstars at the University of Chicago, from pushing the catchphrase and concept as a solution to the nation’s problems for a half-decade now. And this year libertarian paternalism has achieved manifesto status with the new Thaler/Sunstein book, *Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness*.*

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