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Final Comments, by Stephen Simon, on the dissertation by Peter Wedekind, “Justification and Limits of State Coercion in Liberal Democracies: Reconciling Binding Welfare State Policies and a Reformed Classical Liberalism”

On April 26 of this year, I submitted my “Reader’s Opinion” on the first draft of Peter Wedekind’s dissertation, “Justification and Limits of State Coercion in Liberal Democracies: Reconciling Binding Welfare State Policies and a Reformed Classical Liberalism,” and on May 10, I participated in the “small defense” discussing Peter’s draft dissertation. There, I noted what I considered some of the substantial and meaningful strengths and contributions made by Peter’s work. I also made some suggestions regarding ways in which I thought the dissertation might be improved or enhanced through a number of relatively minor revisions.

In response, Peter has done an admirable job of making clarifications and additions that I believe clearly address those suggestions. For example, he has further clarified his understanding of the relation between neoliberalism and classical liberalism, and has elaborated on implications of his views for the analysis of particular policy controversies.

In light of the strengths, contributions, and quality of Peter’s dissertation, which are only enhanced by the revisions, I am satisfied with the final result, and have no reservations in recommending that the candidate be awarded his Ph.D.

Sincerely,

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