

We Need To Stop Talking About “Racism” And To Start Talking About...



THE ABCs OF BEING “JUST AN AMERICAN”

The non-race-based antidote to socialism and Black Lives Matter!

America
The Beautiful
Capitalism
Democracy
English



Firearms
Greco-Roman
Intellectual Heritage
Judeo-Christian values



In order that society should exist, and, à fortiori [all the more], that a society should prosper, it is required that all the minds of the citizens should be rallied and held together by certain predominant ideas.

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*



“Much of the social history of the Western world over the past three decades has involved replacing what worked with what sounded good. In area after area - crime, education, housing, race relations - the situation has gotten worse after the bright new theories were put into operation.” Thomas Sowell, black economist and author

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If you would like me to invite me to speak these about ideas, I will do so free of charge if you will pay for my travel expenses.

The ABC's of Being "Just an American"

The Civics Lessons We Should All Know

The Antidote to Socialism and to Black Lives Matter



"If everyone undertook to form his own opinions and to seek for truth by isolated paths struck out by himself alone, it is not to be supposed that any considerable number of men would ever unite in any common belief. But obviously without such common belief no society can prosper; say rather no society can subsist; for without ideas held in common, there is no common action, and without common action, there may still be men, but there is no social body. In order that society should exist, and, à fortiori [all the more], that a society should prosper, it is required that all the minds of the citizens should be rallied and held together by certain predominant ideas; and this cannot be the case, unless each of them sometimes draws his opinions from the common source, and consents to accept certain matters of belief at the hands of the community." Alexis de Tocqueville (picture is of him), *Democracy in America*, Volume II, Book 1, Chapter 2

Friends, Americans, Countrymen – please lend me your ears.

So what is this "common source" of American values. Well, if you will do me the honor of reading this article, I will tell you.

"American values" – we hear all kinds of people, from politicians to entertainers, pontificating on how this policy or that behavior is not "in line with our (presumably American) values."

Problem is, the pontificators never seem to define exactly what those values are. And worse yet, most of them have not taken the time to even attempt to understand the historical, founding values of the good ole USA.

So, as a defender of truth, justice, and the American way, and after about three decades of study on everything from letters between Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, to James Madison's "Notes on the Debates in the Federal Constitution," to Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, to more recent great Americans like John Wayne – I've done my homework, and I offer to you below the "ABC's of Being American."

But first, let's have some fun like we used to do in school with a little matching exercise. On the left are five prominent Americans, past and present. On the right are comments they made about being American. Match them up as best as you can.** (answers will be shown a little later)

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| a. Barack Obama | a. “It’s not wrong to insist that national borders matter, [that] whether you’re a citizen or not is going to matter to a government, that laws need to be followed...newcomers should make an effort to adapt to the language and customs of their new home. Those are legitimate things, and we have to be able to engage people who do feel as if things are not orderly.” |
| b. John Wayne | b. “So it seems to me that when a man calls himself An ‘Afro-American,’ a ‘Mexican-American,’ ‘Italian-American,’ An ‘Irish-American,’ ‘Jewish-American,’ What he’s sayin’ is, ‘I’m a divided American.’ Well, we all came from other places, Different creeds and different races, To form a nation...to become as one. Yet look at the harm a line has done--A simple little line, and yet As divisive as a line can get.” |
| c. George Washington | c. Citizens by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of AMERICAN, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of Patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. |
| d. Theodore Roosevelt | d. Any man who says he is an American but something else also, isn’t an American at all. |
| e. Patrick Henry | e. I am not a Virginian, but an American! |

You see, ladies and gentlemen, America is a very unique country in the world, in many ways. This uniqueness comes from the idea that America is based on a set of values without any kind of racial identity. This concept is rather unique in the world. Historically, most (I hesitate to use “all,” as absolutes are rarely absolute) major countries of the world are formed around a racial identity – Chinese, Indian, French, Russian, even English. But as the eminent historian Victor Davis Hanson noted, “America is a multi-racial society, but not a multi-cultural society.” He means that America is founded on a set of values without an underlying racial identity.

**Answers: each letter in the left column corresponds to the same letter in the right column, e.g. Barack Obama’s quote is letter “a” in the right column.

Along those lines, Theodore Roosevelt preceded Hanson with this wise admonition in a 1916 Memorial Day speech: “I appeal to all our citizens...no matter from what land their forefathers came, to keep this ever in mind, and to shun with scorn and contempt the sinister intriguers and mischief-makers who would seek to divide them along lines of creed, or birthplace or of national origin.”

Roosevelt continues, “The effort to keep our citizenship divided against itself by the use of the hyphen and along the lines of national origin is certain to breed of spirit of bitterness and prejudice and dislike between great bodies of our citizens. If some citizens band together as German-Americans or Irish-Americans, then after a while others are certain to band together as English-Americans or Scandinavian-Americans, and every such banding together, every attempt to make for political purposes a German-American alliance or a Scandinavian-American alliance, means down at the bottom an effort against the interest of straight-out American citizenship, an effort to bring into our nation the bitter Old World rivalries and jealousies and hatreds.” (click [here \(1\)](#) for the origin of these quotes)

America is not about race or gender or sexual orientation or even religious affiliation – it’s about congealing around a shared set of cultural values – the “ABC’s of being American.”

A B C D E F G H I J:

A+B – American the Beautiful: I attended college in Colorado Springs, CO. If you haven’t been there, you are missing out on “America The Beautiful” – literally. On July 22, 1893, Katherine Bates, the poem’s (the song was originally a poem) author ascended Pikes Peak in Colorado Springs. She later exclaimed, “Our sojourn on the peak remains in memory hardly more than one ecstatic gaze...It was then and there, as I was looking out over the sea-like expanse of fertile country spreading away so far under those ample skies, that the opening lines of the hymn floated into my mind.”

You have to get up early, on a cloudless morning, to see those purple mountains. But if you’re up and at’em bright and early, drive about five miles east of town, be there right at sunrise, turn around and look west, and you will be awed by “purple mountains majesty.”

And while America is certainly filled with natural wonders of incredible beauty, what ultimately makes America beautiful is that anyone, from any race or creed, can be an American, as Roosevelt said, “In the first place we should insist that if the immigrant who comes here does in good faith become an American and assimilates himself to us, he shall be treated on an exact equality with everyone else, for it is an outrage to discriminate against any such man because of creed or birthplace or origin. But this is predicated upon the man’s becoming in very fact an American and nothing but an American.” And “becoming...an American and nothing but an American” means buying into American cultural values, like...

C – Charitable Capitalism: In 1783, James Madison, known as the Father of the Constitution, proposed that the book *Wealth of Nations* be put in the Congressional Library. *Wealth of Nations* is the classic book on capitalism and free markets, promoting the idea – which has now brought prosperity to billions and has, and is, lifting hundreds of millions more out of poverty – that individuals operating in their own best interests will produce a market for goods and services where people will regulate the price and quantity of the goods and services needed, and that this system produces the best outcome for the most amount of prosperity for the most amount of people. It is true that at the beginning of the American republic, our first Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton, favored a somewhat government directed economic policy to get the country back on its financial feet after the Revolutionary War. But, the economic history of America, notwithstanding a few misguided exceptions such as the “[New Deal \(2\)](#)” (failed “get-well” plan for the Great Depression) and the Tariff Act of 1930 (1028 economists signed a petition against the act in 1930), is a history of the power of capital investments and free markets to produce a high level of prosperity in a relatively short amount of time, for a great number of people.

Yes, you might say, but what about the prosperity of those who are not among “a great number of people?”

Capitalism may well be the worst of economic systems, except for all the other ones that have been tried. Capitalism is actually the best economic system because it provides, simultaneously, a high degree of freedom and prosperity – two fundamental human needs.

But what about those left behind by capitalism? In his book *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (written before *Wealth of Nations*), Adam Smith makes the following statement:

How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortunes of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it, except the pleasure of seeing it. Of this kind is pity or compassion, the emotion we feel for the misery of others, when we either see it, or are made to conceive it in a very lively manner. That we often derive sorrow from the sorrows of others, is a matter of fact too obvious to require any instances to prove it; for this sentiment, like all the other original passions of human nature, is by no means confined to the virtuous or the humane, though they perhaps may feel it with the most exquisite sensibility. The greatest ruffian, the most hardened violator of the laws of society, is not altogether without it. (3)

Excesses of capitalism must be tempered by our “moral sentiment” that should cause us to be interested in the fortunes of others. And what drives this moral sentiment? Our religious heritage (more on that later), but for now, remember this mantra:

The government IS NOT my brother’s keeper. I am my brother’s keeper. Because large government bureaucracies are very expensive, unaccountable to anyone, and they cannot discern well the needs of the poor because they are encumbered by mounds of regulations and are far away from the people they purport to serve.

The call for a “more equitable distribution of wealth” is THE ONLY redeeming quality of socialism, and that is why socialism has such a strong emotional appeal – because “taking care of the less fortunate” is a great American value – **but “the taking care” is supposed to be done locally in our communities** and not via far off, out-of-touch government agencies.

As an American society, we have off-loaded our delegated our responsibility to look after the poor among us (like where we live) to big government: “I paid my taxes – the poor have food stamps and section 8 housing and Medicare and welfare payments, don’t they? ‘They’ (the government) are taking care of ‘them’ (the poor).”

The problem here is that “they/them” distinction, and it is corrosive to American society because it blinds me to “their” (my brothers’ and sisters’) needs.

Here is the American charity formula: capitalism = maximation of wealth = maximation of resources to assist my less fortunate brothers and sisters.

Prime example:

Problem: Some people can’t afford to go to college.

Government solution: Federal student loan program – with, as of Jun 2018, \$1.52 trillion owed (4). Yikes! Or worse yet, the **socialist plan = mandate** all taxpayers pay for it – even if they don’t go to college

American, capitalistic solution: become a multi-billionaire and then **donate** \$1.8 billion of your wealth to a top-notch university to help students pay for college (5)

Bottom line on capitalism: it has made America, and Western society in general, the economic powerhouse of the world, and it has lifted hundreds of millions out of poverty across the planet. Though perverted by politicians since the establishment of the American republic, it is the foundational system of American economics. But to be truly American, American capitalism must have the “moral

sentiment” to assist the poor locally, via civic organizations, churches, businesses, and...maybe... if very limited in scope and run not just by government agents, *local* government/private partnerships.

D – Democratic Republic: A representative democracy based on a government limited in scope and power as defined in the US Constitution.

First, let’s define these two terms, “democracy” and “republic.”

Democracy: a system of making decisions in a group of people where everyone gets an equal vote in the decision-making process

Republic: “In American English, the definition of a republic refers specifically to a form of government in which elected individuals represent the citizen body and exercise power according to the rule of law under a constitution, including separation of powers with an elected head of state, referred to as a constitutional republic or representative democracy.” (6)

For a good video on the difference between a pure democracy, a republic, and other forms of government, click [here \(7\)](#).

America’s form of government is a Democratic Republic, because it is “a form of government operating on principles adopted from a republic and a democracy. Rather than being a cross between two entirely separate systems, democratic republics may function on principles shared by both republics and democracies.” (8) America is not a pure democracy because everyone does not get a vote on everything. Americans elect representatives to make our laws, and the country is governed by these laws, making it a republic.

I’m not going to spend a lot of time here defending representative democracy. It is, as my high school calculus teacher used to say IOCO (intuitively obvious to the casual observer) that representative democracies have, along with free market capitalist systems, produced an incredibly high level of liberty and prosperity for billions of people.

Don’t like democratic republics? Come up with a better plan – because, as Churchill said, “democracy is the worst form of government - except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time.” (9)

“Other forms” have been tried, repeatedly, and always failed, miserably – actually “fatally” is the better word. Just ask – if we could hear them - the tens of millions of dead from those “other forms of government.” Their souls would cry out to us “learn the lesson! Power corrupts! Do not centralize power! A government big enough to give you everything you want is big enough to take away everything you have!”

Final thought on this topic: The framers of the Constitution set up a system of limited, defined powers for the federal government. There was a strong anti-federalist movement against ratification of the Constitution, and one of its main objections was the fear of an overreaching and overbearing federal government. To assuage those fears, I refer back to the Father of the Constitution, James Madison:

If Congress can employ money indefinitely to the general welfare, and are the sole and supreme judges of the general welfare, they may take the care of religion into their own hands; they may appoint teachers in every State, county and parish and pay them out of their public treasury;

they may take into their own hands the education of children, establishing in like manner schools throughout the Union; they may assume the provision of the poor; they may undertake the regulation of all roads other than post-roads; in short, everything, from the highest object of state legislation down to the most minute object of police, would be thrown under the power of Congress... Were the power of Congress to be established in the latitude contended for, it would subvert the very foundations, and transmute the very nature of the limited Government established by the people of America. (10)

A close examination of the size and scope of the current federal government would make Madison and Jefferson roll over in their graves, no doubt. Take charity for instance. In [The Annals of Congress \(11\)](#), the following text is recorded about a debate to provide federal relief money for Haitian refugees (1794).

Mr. Madison wished to relieve the sufferers, but was afraid of establishing a dangerous precedent, which might hereafter be perverted to the countenance of purposes very different of charity. He acknowledged for his own part, that he could not undertake to lay his finger on that article of the Federal Constitution which granted a right to Congress of expending, on objects of benevolence, the money of their constituents. (12)

Stated more succinctly, here is what Madison is trying to say: A fundamental American value is “*I am my brother’s keeper.*” The problem with big government poverty relief programs is that we send tons of money to the government, transferring to the government our responsibility to look after the less fortunate among us, and our ethic then becomes “The government is my brother’s keeper.”

And that’s a very bad, morally corrosive idea, because it engenders a materialistic ethos in society that says “someone other than me – some agency at the state level or in Washington D.C. that can’t possibly truly know local needs” - is responsible for the poor in our local communities. Thank you FDR and the New Deal for destroying the fundamental American value of “I am my brother’s keeper.”

For a better way of relieving poverty than with government programs, where much of the expenditure goes to pay for the bureaucracy necessary to run the program, take a look at this brilliant, non-governmental, capitalistic entrepreneurial idea that is actually bringing thousands out of poverty without a dime of government money spent!

[The surprising solution to ocean plastic | David Katz \(13\)](#)

This example clearly demonstrates the superiority of free-market solutions to poverty as opposed to governmental welfare programs.

I really like this quote by the TED speaker in regards to his market-based solution for plastic pollution and poverty: “You are directly contributing to the extraction of plastic from the ocean-bound waterways and alleviating poverty at the same time.”

Simply marvelous!

As Reagan famously stated, “In this present crisis, government is not the solution to our problem. Government is the problem.”

Reagan’s words may sound like a trite aphorism, but ask yourself, when you hear the words “government intervention,” do you feel like something positive and helpful is going to happen?

Let’s move on.

E – English as the primary language of business and government: I speak French rather well, took three year of Russian in college, and believe in at least trying to learn the words “hello, goodbye, thank you, and you’re welcome” in as many languages as possible. So, please don’t try to paint me with some “English nativist” label or something like that. An understanding of, and appreciation for, other languages and societies enriches Americans, both individually and on a societal level.

But – think now – how can a group of people coalesce without a common language? They can’t, because language is a primary glue that holds societies together and that allows people to develop trust among themselves by developing personal and business relationships.

Don’t believe that’s true? Please listen to the TED Talk “[4 Reasons to Learn a New Language \(14\)](#)” by John McWhorter. Focus on his words from 4+15 (4 mins and 15 seconds) to 6+00. I have transcribed some of those words here for us:

“If you want to imbibe a culture, if you want to drink it in, if you want to become part of it...if you want to imbibe the culture, you have to control to some degree the language that the culture happens to be conducted in. There's no other way... they [languages] are tickets to being able to participate in the culture of the people who speak them, just by virtue of the fact that it is their code.”

It’s IOCO – if I move to France and if I want to truly “imbibe” French culture, to “participate in the culture of the people,” I will need to learn French to a level that at least allows me to participate in civic life and commerce in France. Same would be true for Japan, China, Russia, India, or anywhere in South America. Some of you are thinking “yea, but just about everyone in countries like Sweden and the Netherlands speak English fluently, don’t they?” Yes, that statement is true. But I challenge any of us to truly “imbibe” Swedish culture without speaking enough Swedish to participate to some degree in the civic and business culture of Sweden. We could live in Sweden and probably feel fine, but we would always be “on the outside” so to speak if we couldn’t communicate with Swedes in Swedish.

Likewise, and even more so in the US because of the multiplicity of races in our nation, Americans must unite around a common language because it is our American “code” that allows us all to “participate in the culture.” I quote Roosevelt again: “We have room for but one language here and that is the English language, for we intend to see that the crucible turns our people out as Americans, and American nationality, and not as dwellers in a polyglot boarding house; and we have room for but one soul [sic] loyalty, and that is loyalty to the American people.” ([15](#))

Couldn’t have said it better myself.

F – Firearms: The Second Amendment to the US Constitution:

“A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.” US Constitution, 2nd Amendment

So much has been debated about these 26 words – whole books in fact, so I certainly don’t have the time or space here to hash out the whole gun control debate. But what I can do is show that the right of all people to keep and bear arms, even those not in a militia per se, is an American cultural value.

First, a quote from James Madison from “Federalist 46” (“[The Federalist Papers \(16\)](#)”) is a collection of essays written from Oct 1787 thru April 1788 in support of ratification of the US Constitution): “the advantage of being armed, which the Americans possess over the people of almost every other nation, the existence of subordinate governments, to which the people are attached, and by which the militia officers are appointed, forms a barrier against the enterprises of ambition, more insurmountable than any which a simple government of any form can admit of.” ([17](#))

Second, words from Noah Webster – yep, the guy who founded the dictionary – and also an editor of the Federalist Party newspapers.

Before a standing army can rule, the people must be disarmed; as they are in almost every kingdom in Europe. The supreme power in America cannot enforce unjust laws by the sword; because the whole body of the people are armed, and constitute a force superior to any band of regular troops that can be, on any pretense, raised in the United States. A military force, at the command of Congress, can execute no laws, but such as the people perceive to be just and constitutional; for they will possess the power, and jealousy will instantly inspire the inclination, to resist the execution of a law which appears to them unjust and oppressive.

An Examination of the Leading Principles of the Federal Constitution (1787). ([18](#))

And finally, George Mason, another well respected American patriot and delegate to the Constitutional Convention, made the following statement: “Forty years ago, when the resolution of enslaving America was formed in Great Britain, the British Parliament was advised by an artful man, who was governor of Pennsylvania, to disarm the people; that it was the best and most effectual way to enslave them.” ([19](#))

The right to keep and bear arms was and is a fundamental American value, and in 2016 the Supreme Court once again affirmed this right, even to arms that “were not in existence at the time of the founding” and that this right is not limited to “only those weapons useful in warfare.” ([20](#))

Last thought on this issue: True or false – the Supreme Court has ruled that when people call law enforcement agencies for help, they must respond?

False – the Supreme Court has ruled, on more than one occasion, that law enforcement agencies have no legal duty to respond to appeals for help. For an analysis of the Supreme Court cases on this issue, see these links: ([21](#), [22](#))

Now that we know that fact, maybe having a firearm around the house, safeguarded from children of course, seems like a better idea.

G/H/I - Greco-Roman intellectual heritage: the political institutions and philosophical/intellectual traditions of Western culture and by extension of the USA, have their historical roots in the philosophy, literature, science, and institutions of classical Greek and Roman culture.

Again – time and space here do not permit a thorough overview of the breadth and depth of the influence of Greek and Roman culture on the political and intellectual foundations of European society that were eventually brought to America and used as the basis for the foundation of the US Constitution. But to give us just a taste of the massive influence of these cultures on American society, I list below a few of their major contributions to the foundations of Western Society and the USA:

Ancient Greece:

- Plato and Aristotle – Greek philosophers whose works on ethics, politics, and metaphysics formed the basis for the intellectual traditions that eventually led to the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and to the ideas of government of the people, by the people, and for the people
- Mathematics – “Ancient Greek mathematics contributed many important developments to the field of mathematics, including the basic rules of geometry, the idea of formal mathematical proof, and discoveries in number theory, mathematical analysis, applied mathematics, and approached close to establishing integral calculus. The discoveries of several Greek mathematicians, including Pythagoras, Euclid, and Archimedes, are still used in mathematical teaching today.” (23)
- Democracy – the Greek city State of Athens founded the first democracy
- Source of English words: thousands of English words, in part or in whole, have Greek roots: “music” comes from the “Muses” of Greek mythology, patrons of the arts; “democracy” comes for *demos* (people) and *kratos* (power) – power of the people; all words that begin with “tele,” because it denotes distance: “telephone, telescope, telegraph,” etc.; all words ending in “logy,” derived from the Greek suffix “*logia* – the study of...”
- The original atomic theory – “The idea that matter is made up of discrete units is a very old idea, appearing in many ancient cultures such as Greece and India. The word “atom” (Greek: ἄτομος; atomos), meaning “uncuttable”, was coined by the Pre-Socratic Greek philosophers Leucippus and his pupil Democritus (c. 460 – c. 370 BC).[2][3][4][5] Democritus taught that atoms were infinite in number, uncreated, and eternal, and that the qualities of an object result from the kind of atoms that compose it.[3][4][5] Democritus’s atomism was refined and elaborated by the later Greek philosopher Epicurus (341 – 270 BC), and by the Roman Epicurean poet Lucretius (c. 99 – c. 55 BC).” (24)

Which is a good segue way to Roman culture:

- In 313, the Roman Emperor Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire, which at the time encompassed most of Western Europe
- Development of the Latin alphabet that is used in English and in most European languages
- According to a study done by the publishers of the Oxford dictionary on the origin of 80,000 English words, 38.34 percent come from Latin, and 28.3% come from French – which is a Latin based language. So, over half of the words in English come directly from Latin or a Latin derived language (25)
- American legal and political system – the Romans were among the first to have a republic and most probably the first to have a senate. The symbol of the US Senate has the Latin words *E pluribus unum* (from many, one) and contains a Roman image of crossed scrolls representing the rule of law on which republics are based

- Our modern calendar, the Gregorian calendar, is derived from the Roman calendar
- Architecture – many American governmental buildings, e.g. the US Capitol, have a Neoclassical (Roman) architectural theme – for instance the original National Archives Building – see an image [here \(26\)](#)

The intellectual and political foundations of Western society, of which the USA is a part, are found in ancient Greece and Rome. There’s really no debating this fact – because the facts are indisputable. It may be true that a few elements of American culture - such as 4th of July fireworks, developed in China - have their roots in places other than ancient Greece and Rome – but the vast majority of political, intellectual, and legal foundations of the West come from ancient Greece and Rome.

And much like that great American Forrest Gump, “that’s all I have to say ‘bout that.”

J – Historically Important Judeo-Christian values: Judeo-Christian values are the moral basis of Western society and form the ethical foundations for the USA’s political, economic, and legal systems.

As I go through my next line of reasoning, *please hold your judgment until you have read this whole section.*

In a civil lawsuit, the winner is the side that has a “preponderance of evidence.”

The preponderance of evidence shows that the US was not conceived as a Christian nation. Take the Treaty of Tripoli for instance. “The Treaty of Tripoli” (Treaty of Peace and Friendship between the United States of America and the Bey [a Ottoman Empire government official] and Subjects of Tripoli of Barbary), signed in 1796, was the first treaty between the United States of America and Tripoli (now Libya) to secure commercial shipping rights and protect American ships in the Mediterranean Sea from local Barbary pirates.” (27) Article 11 of the treaty actually states, “...the government of the United States of America is not in any sense founded on the Christian Religion.”

We can quibble about the word “government” as opposed to “country,” but the historical evidence, by a preponderance of the evidence shows, that the USA was not conceived as a Christian nation. And that’s probably a good thing, because any country founded upon uniquely religious principles and practices tends towards theocracy – a form of government where a deity is the supreme ruler, where religious authorities make laws by interpreting the deity’s will, and those authorities hold the positions of power in government.

How’s that theocracy thing working out around the world, like say, in Iran?

We don’t want a theocracy – even a Christian theocracy - because as Lord Acton said, “power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

And while some prominent members of the Founding generation were what we might call mainstream Christians, some were not, most notably Thomas Jefferson (though he did call Jesus’s moral code “the most sublime and benevolent code of morals which has ever been offered to man”), and Benjamin Franklin who, when asked shortly before he died about Jesus’s divinity, said “I have with most of the present dissenters in England, some doubts as to his [Jesus’s] Divinity.”

John Adams, the second American president, wrote:

It will never be pretended that any persons employed in that service [forming the principles of the US Constitution] had any interviews with the gods, or were in any degree under the inspiration of heaven... it will forever be acknowledged that these governments were contrived merely by the use of reason and the senses... Thirteen governments thus founded on the natural authority of the people alone, without a pretense of miracle or mystery, which are destined to spread over the northern part of that whole quarter of the globe, are a great point gained in favour of the rights of mankind. (28)

But...

There is also no doubt that the USA is a country founded on historical Judeo-Christian principles.

Don't believe that? I'll let the founding generation and other great Americans speak for themselves on this point.

- “The ten commandments [Judeo] and the Sermon on the Mount [Christian] contain my religion.*” John Adams, 2nd US President
(*FYI - nothing in the 10 commandments or the Sermon on the Mount talks about homosexuality – point being that non-heterosexuals can still be great Americans if they buy into the ABC's of being American)
- “We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion . . . Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.” John Adams
- “Government has no right to hurt a hair on the head of an Atheist for his Opinions.”* John Adams
*So a person doesn't have to practice a particular religion to be an American, but people who want to call themselves culturally American do need to buy into the Judeo – Christian value set. This concept is part of the distinction between being “legally American” (you're an American citizen according to the law) and being “culturally American” (you buy into and support the ABCs of being an American)
- “The only foundation for a useful education in a republic is to be laid in religion. Without this there can be no virtue, and without virtue there can be no liberty, and liberty is the object and life of all republican governments. Without religion, I believe that learning does real mischief to the morals and principles of mankind.” Benjamin Rush
- “To educate a man in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society.” Theodore Roosevelt (yes, I know, not a “Founder” – but he's just echoing Rush above)
- “The Christian religion, in its purity, is the basis, or rather the source of all genuine freedom in government. . . . and I am persuaded that no civil government of a republican form can exist and be durable in which the principles of that religion have not a controlling influence.” Noah Webster

- “The moral principles and precepts contained in the scriptures ought to form the basis of all our civil constitutions and laws. . . All the miseries and evils which men suffer from vice, crime, ambition, injustice, oppression, slavery, and war, proceed from their despising or neglecting the precepts contained in the Bible.” Noah Webster
- “Human law must rest its authority ultimately upon the authority of that law which is divine. . . . Far from being rivals or enemies, religion and law are twin sisters, friends, and mutual assistants. Indeed, these two sciences run into each other.” Robert Winthrop (Speaker of the house, 1847-1849)
- “The Bible is the best of all books, for it is the word of God and teaches us the way to be happy in this world and in the next. Continue therefore to read it and to regulate your life by its precepts.” John Jay – author of five of *The Federalist Papers*.
- “Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens.” George Washington
- “Let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.” George Washington.
- “Here is my Creed: I believe in one God, Creator of the Universe. That He governs it by his Providence. That he ought to be worshipped. That the most acceptable service we can render to him, is doing good to his other children.... I think the system of morals [devised by Jesus] and his religion as he left them to us, the best the World ever saw, or is likely to see...” Benjamin Franklin
- “...that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.” Abraham Lincoln

It just “is” folks – that Judeo-Christian values represent the basis of the moral code that inspired the Declaration of Independence, the US Constitution, and the Bill of Rights, and those values undergird the foundation of the American political/legal/financial systems, and the American moral value system.

And what happens if we reject our Judeo-Christian values? Thomas Jefferson warns us:

And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with his wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that his justice cannot sleep forever.

A final comment on our Judeo-Christian values. In an excellent essay from the Heritage Foundation titled [“Tocqueville on Christianity and American Democracy \(29\)”](#), the article’s author makes many pertinent points about the role of Judeo-Christian values in American Society, such as it was “modern figures such as Edmund Burke and John Locke, who emphasized that free government could not be maintained in the absence of religion.”

But the icing on the cake, so to speak, is a quote directly from Tocqueville* concerning the role of the Christian deity in making men understand that “all men are created equal, endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights.”

(*Alexis de Tocqueville was a French aristocrat who toured the USA for about nine months in 1831 and 1832. Allegedly, he was supposed to study the American penitentiary system, but he actually studied the breadth of American society and wrote a monumental work, *Democracy in America* - which should be mandatory reading in all high school and college American history courses).

And here’s that icing from Tocqueville in regards to the role of Judeo-Christian values in Western society: “It was necessary that Jesus Christ come to earth to make it understood that all members of the human species are naturally alike and equal.”

Though “all men are created equal” seems intuitively obvious to our modern ears, in the course of 10,000 years or so of human history, such an assertion and belief is a relatively recent event – only since the 4th of July, 1776. And oh by the way, the French *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* (1789) has many echoes of the American *Declaration of Independence* (1776). And what a coincidence – Thomas Jefferson just happened to be the Chief of the American diplomatic mission in Paris in 1789 – imagine that.

Wrapping It All Up

So there you have “it” – or rather “them” – the ABC’s of being culturally American. These “American ABC’s” should be the foundation of civics courses in every school, college, and university in America, and no student should graduate from high school without showing mastery of these civic concepts.

A+B = America the Beautiful

C = Capitalistic, free market economic system

D = Democratic Republican form of government based on limited government and the rule of law

E = English as the primary language of business and public discourse

F = Firearms – the right to bear them

G/H/I = Greco-Roman intellectual heritage

J = Judeo-Christian moral value system

In closing, let’s review two more comments on this issue of the importance of a unifying culture in any society.

As the quote from de Tocqueville says on the cover page of this article, all citizens of a country have to buy into a core set of beliefs if the country is to prosper. And those beliefs constitute the core of a country’s culture.

From Thomas Sowell, potentially the most well-respected economist in America today:

“Sweeping claims for the benefits of demographic and cultural diversity...have prevailed without a speck of evidence being given.” (click [here \(30\)](#) to see the interview where Sowell makes this claim)

I agree unswervingly with Professor Sowell. History is replete with examples of the failure of societies that tried to exist in a multicultural environment. From the history of Arabs in Spain to more modern examples of the Balkans and India, multiculturalism has never been, nor is it now, a recipe for a thriving society. FYI – Thomas Sowell is an American with black skin, so the “white privilege” argument against his claim falls completely flat.

And...

Yale University Historian and professor emeritus Donald Kagan:

“For Jefferson, though, the most important goals of education were civic and moral...This education was to be a common experience for all citizens, rich and poor, for every one of them had natural rights and powers, and every one had to understand and esteem the institutions, laws, and traditions of his country if it was to succeed.” [\(31\)](#)

Final thought: On the back of my car, I have a magnetic sign that says “how about we all be just Americans.”

On Christmas Eve 2016, I was getting ready to get in my car outside of a shopping center. Just as I was about to get in my car, a man with black skin approached me and said, “that message on the back of your car – that’s a great message man, thank you!”

Yes Sir – you are right – it’s about time we all learn to be “just an American.”

Your humble and faithful servant

Justin American



On the web: justinamerican.com

Web radio Interview: click [here \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A53AjKQV1Jk\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A53AjKQV1Jk)

On Twitter: click [here \(https://twitter.com/IamjustAmerican\)](https://twitter.com/IamjustAmerican)

On Amazon click [here \(https://www.amazon.com/Justin-American/e/B00N81NMS0\)](https://www.amazon.com/Justin-American/e/B00N81NMS0)

NOTE LINKS:

1. <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/sole-loyalty/>
2. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Deal
3. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Theory_of_Moral_Sentiments#Sixth_sense
4. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/zackfriedman/2018/06/13/student-loan-debt-statistics-2018/#27e2c7c17310>
5. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/noahkirsch/2018/11/18/michael-bloomberg-donates-18-billion-to-johns-hopkins-university/#74b07e937238>
6. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republic>
7. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgUs5wtXgL4>
8. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_republic
9. <https://richardlangworth.com/worst-form-of-government>
10. <http://libertytree.ca/quotes/James.Madison.Quote.3254>
11. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwac.html>
12. <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Madison/01-15-02-0117>
13. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mT4Qbp89nIQ>
14. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQRjouwKDIU>
15. http://msgboard.snopes.com/politics/graphics/troosevelt.pdf?_ga=2.111063047.363419607.1546775344-463565410.1546775344
16. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Federalist_Papers
17. http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed46.asp
18. https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Noah_Webster
19. http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/print_documents/a1_8_12s27.html
20. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Amendment_to_the_United_States_Constitution
21. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warren_v._District_of_Columbia
22. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Town_of_Castle_Rock_v._Gonzales
23. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greece#Literature_and_theatre
24. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atomic_theory#Philosophical_atomism
25. <https://www.grammarphobia.com/blog/2010/01/why-is-english-a-germanic-language.html>
26. https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detailV2&ccid=7lbL7az3&id=839ABD29B7F6A209F38ED7FA170FC34959086E0A&thid=OIP.7lbL7az3_I7MIHrI0D5p4gHaEA&mediarurl=http%3a%2f%2fassets.fodors.com%2fdestinations%2f556%2fnational-archives-washington-dc-

usa_main.jpg&exph=350&expw=648&q=national+archives&simid=608028889158781418&selectedIndex=10&ajaxhist=0

27. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Tripoli
28. https://www.constitution.org/jadams/ja1_pre.htm
29. <https://www.heritage.org/civil-society/report/tocqueville-christianity-and-american-democracy>
30. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H6ImP-gJvas>
31. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/donald-kagan-democracy-requires-a-patriotic-education-1411770193>

Resources for further exploration of being “Just An American”:

- The history of the song “America the Beautiful”:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/America_the_Beautiful
- On the superiority of capitalism and the problems that come from too much government intervention – 33 minutes with Thomas Sowell, a black, male former Marxist turned capitalist economist - especially good explanation of how the government’s insistence that banks provide “more affordable housing” (lower lending standards to help “disadvantaged persons” top buy a house) directly led to the housing crisis and the great recession in 2008:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bOMksnSaAJ4>
- A good explanation of how the USA is not a democracy but rather a representative republic, as formulated by the Founding Fathers – they never intended for the USA to be a democracy in the strict sense of the term: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ygEEL57AcZs&list=PL-ppuOnY3K9h6lRgARCOil7LA5crviGGz&t=0s&index=101>
- Think the police have a duty to protect you/your loved ones when you are in danger or call for help? Think again – and maybe think about getting a firearm:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Town_of_Castle_Rock_v._Gonzales and
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warren_v._District_of_Columbia
- For a good overview of Greek and Roman contributions to Western civilization, see here:
 - Greek contributions: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X3hMCWwuCxU>
 - Roman contributions: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3S0EmzEnF0>
- For a solid, five minute overview of the role of Judeo-Christian values in the foundation of the American republic, see here: <https://www.prageru.com/videos/was-america-founded-be-secular> (This video is made by “Prager University – www.prageru.com – a compilation of short videos supporting traditional American and Western values. Those of us who love traditional American values should make watching Prager University videos a daily habit – and we should promote this website to other great Americans, and make a monetary contribution to its operations, as it is a non-profit organization.)
- And if you made it this far, here’s a final patriotic shot-in-the-arm:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MaAF_3WMJGM



Thanks for being a great American!