**America**

**The American Dream is not over. America is an adventure. *(Theodore White, on "Merv Griffin Show," Metromedia Television)***

**I love America more than any other country in this world, and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her perpetually. *(James Baldwin)***

**Whoever wants to know the heart and mind of America had better learn baseball. *(Jacques Barzun, in God's Country and Mine)***

****A friend**’s grandfather came to America from Europe and after being processed at Ellis Island, he went into a cafeteria in New York City to get something to eat. He sat down at an empty table and waited for someone to take his order. Of course, nobody ever did. Finally, a man with a tray full of food sat down opposite him and told him how things worked. “Start at that end,” he said, “and just go along and pick out what you want. At the other end they’ll all tell you how much you have to pay for it.” “I soon learned that’s how everything works in America,” Grandpa told our friend. “Life is a cafeteria here. You can get anything you want as long as you’re willing to pay the price. You can even get success. But you’ll never get it if you wait for someone to bring it to you. You have to get up and get it yourself.” *(Bits & Pieces)***

**America did not invent human rights. In a very real sense, it is the other way around. Human rights invented America. *(Jimmy Carter)***

**The United States is like a giant boiler. Once the fire is lighted under it, there is no limit to the power it can generate. (*Sir Winston Churchill)***

**A citizen of America will cross the ocean to fight for democracy, but won't cross the street to vote in a national election. (Bill Vaughan)**

**America is a country founded by people from someplace else on ideas borrowed from someplace else, ultimately to try to distinguish itself from everyplace else. It is a fraught balance of identity. *(Jeb Lund, writer)***

**Eleven countries around the globe take credit for discovering America. *(Susan Jimison)***

**That which is to be most desired in America is oneness and not sameness. *(Stephen S. Wise)***

**Americans are best defined by diversity: The August 7 letter, “Christian Founders gave us our country,” is based upon a false assertion: America was not founded as a Christian nation. Nowhere in the Constitution is the word “Christian” used. If anything, the Founders bent over backward trying to make sure that the people could worship however they chose: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof . . . (First Amendment). It seems clear to me that the Continental Congress did not wish to favor any one religion over others or, equally bad, have the government interfering with a person’s right to worship as they choose. Our Founding Fathers – Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Hamilton, etc. – were not evangelical Christians. Jefferson, for example, was a deist, believing in a God of nature, but not a God who was personally involved in men’s lives. They were careful not to put us all under one tent. Diversity best defines us. Let’s not forget it. *(Mel Singer, in Rocky Mountain News, August 19, 2004)***

**Whatever America hopes to bring to pass in the world must first come to pass in the heart of America. More than escape from death, it is a way of life. More than a haven for the weary, it is a hope for the brave. This is the hope that beckons us onward in this century of trial. *(Dwight D. Eisenhower, in Catholic Quote)***

**It has been our fate as a nation not to have ideologies, but to be one. *(Richard Hofstadter, historian)***

**America wasn't founded so that we could all be better: America was founded so we could all be anything we damn well pleased. *(P. J. O'Rourke, in Rolling Stone)***

**Americans are like a rich father who wishes he knew how to give his son the hardships that made him rich. *(Robert Frost)***

**America is great because America is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great. *(Alexis de Tocqueville)***

**The greatness of America lies not in being more enlightened than any other nation, but rather in her ability to repair her faults. *(Alexis de Tocqueville)***

**America is in an identity crisis: We are trying to find out who we are, where we’re coming from, where we’re going, what we’re made of, and how to lose 10 to 20 pounds of it. *(S.C.U.C.A. Regional Reporter)***

**America is still the land of opportunity. An immigrant came here broke eleven years ago. Today he owes $181,000. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**When asked by an anthropologist what the Indians called America before the white man came, an Indian said simply, "Ours." *(Vine Deloria, Jr., in Custer Died for Your Sins)***

**America is not like a blanket -- one piece of unbroken cloth. America is more like a quilt -- many patches, many pieces, many colors, many sizes, all woven together by a common thread. *(Rev. Jesse L. Jackson)***

**I think that the most un-American thing you can say is “You can’t say that.” *(Garrison Keillor)***

**If you stop thinking of America as highways and start thinking of it as rivers, you get c loser to the country. Everything I love about America is a gift of the rivers: steamboats, blue herons, the Grand Canyon, jazz, catfish and ferry boats. *(Charles Kuralt)***

**To say America can have strong leadership without strong character is to say we can get water without the wet. *(J. C. Watts)***

**This is a strange country we live in. When it comes to electing a President, we get two choices. But when we have to select a Miss America, we get 50! *(Jay Leno, “Tonight Show,” NBC)***

**America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves. *(Abraham Lincoln)***

**There are those who will say that the liberation of humanity, the freedom of man and mind, is nothing but a dream. They are right. It is the American dream. *(Archibald MacLeish, in A Continuing Journey)***

**It wasn't until I had lost America for a time that I realized how much I loved her. *(John McCain)***

**My children had a pet goldfish that was a favorite of many of the kids in the diverse Washington, D.C., neighborhood where we lived. Of the children playing in our house the day the goldfish died, two were Hindu, one an Orthodox Jew, one a Catholic and three were Protestants. We decided to have a burial ceremony for the fish. As we walked together down the woodland path in our back yard, with flowers and a carefully prepared coffin, I wasn’t sure what to say over the grave that wouldn’t conflict with the children’s varying religious beliefs. One girl sensed my uncertainty. “I know,” she said. “Let’s sing ‘My Country ‘Tis of Thee.’” We did, and I smiled to think that it took the funeral of a goldfish to teach me what the great melting pot of America is all about. (Martha W. Helgerson, in Reader’s Digest)**

**America is the only country in the world where men get together to talk about hard times over a $10 steak. *(Earl Wilson, Publishers-Hall Syndicate)***

**America has become so tense and nervous it has been years since I’ve seen anyone asleep in church – and that is a sad condition*. (Norman Vincent Peale)***

**What the people want is very simple -- they want an America as good as its promise. *(Barbara Jordan)***

**America is a place where Jewish merchants sell Zen love beads to agnostics for Christmas. (John Burton Brimer)**

**No nation in history occupies the position that we do today; no state has our global influence. If America gets it right, the rest of the world has a chance to get it right. But we won’t get it right until we understand that our power does not come from capabilities of our military or our government. Our ultimate power comes from the vitality of people free to pursue the American Dream. *(Steve Forbes, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Some of our country’s problems are imported – some are homegrown. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**Americans will put up with anything, provided it doesn’t block traffic. *(Dan Rather)***

**The true religion of America has always been America. *(Norman Mailer)***

**One of the greatest necessities in America is to discover creative solitude. (Carl Sandburg)**

**What is the essence of America? Finding and maintaining that perfect, delicate balance between freedom "to" and freedom "from." *(Marilyn vos Savant, in Parade magazine)***

**Where we come from in America no longer signifies. It's where we go, and what we do when we get there, that tells us who we are. *(Joyce Carol Oates, in American Gothic)cU+0020***

**Half our population – about 60 percent – are squares. That’s the first good thing about America. Squares make great taxpayers. They make great soldiers and great citizens. They believe in religion. They know that people die, they know that people get sick. They know you can’t defend frontiers just by being nice. They are realistic. They know you’ve got to earn a living – earning a living involves some serious compromise in the real world. *(Herman Kahn)***

**It made me feel more American because I understood why the Statue of Liberty is here. She lights the way for America. *(Eddie Nataska, 12, of Waldorf, Maryland, after touring the newly reopened Statue of Liberty)***

**One of America’s great strengths has been its record of imagination and innovation in all walks of life. August is National Inventors Month, a good time to focus on our ingenuity. One of the world’s most beloved – and creative – writers and illustrators, the late Theodore Seuss Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, defined invention and innovation thus in Scrambled Eggs Super!: “The places I hiked to! /The roads that I rambled to find the best eggs / that have ever been scrambled! If you want to get eggs you can’t buy at a store, you have to do things never thought of before.” *(Harvey Mackay, in Outswimming the Sharks)***

**The things that have made America great are being subverted for the things that make Americans rich. *(Lou Erickson, in Atlanta Journal)***

**America is a tune. It must be sung together. *(Gerald Stanley Lee, in Crowds)***

**There really was an Uncle Sam. He was born in 1766 and his name was Samuel Wilson. He became a meat packer and smalltime politician in Troy, New York. He had a good sense of humor and folks liked him, so they started calling him “Uncle Sam.” During the War of 1812 he became a government inspector of military supplies. When he ok’d something, he stamped the initials “U.S.” on them. When curious clerks asked what they stood for, he laughed and answered they stood for “Uncle Sam.” (He really meant them to stand for “United States,” of course.) To the end of his days he was known far and wide as “that fellow from the government, Uncle Sam.” Eight years after Wilson died, the great cartoonist Thomas Nast drew a figure that became a permanent symbol of the paternal government, which he called “Uncle Sam.” Nast could make or break a politician with his incisive cartoons. The publisher of Harper’s Weekly often said Nast was good for 200,000 additional circulation. *(Bernie Smith, in The Joy of Trivia, p. 251)***

**Half of the American people never read a newspaper. Half never voted for president. One hopes it is the same half. (Gore Vidal)**

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**Of course, America had often been discovered before Columbus, but it had always been hushed up. *(Oscar Wilde)***

**The crude commercialism of America, its materializing spirit are entirely due to the country having adopted for its natural hero a man who could not tell a lie. *(Oscar Wilde, Irish born dramatist)***

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**Like it or not, said James Kitfield in National Journal, America’s half century of world dominance is now over. With China and India ascendant, wealth and power are passing “from the developed West to the developing East.” The Romans once thought they were “exceptional” too, and Christopher Hitchens in Slate.com, as did the British at the height of their own empire. Such pride invariably presages a fall. You’d think that American conservatives, mindful of what the Bible teaches about “the sin of pride,” would be particularly wary of “self-proclaimed historical uniqueness.” *(The Week magazine, December 2, 2011)***

**The reason so many people around the world yearn for America is that they see something here which we Americans often lose sight of -- because it surrounds us and pervades our society. What they see, that we miss, is our freedom. *(Jeane Kirkpatrick, from a speech)***

**America is not perfect, but it’s much better than anywhere else in the world. *(Catherine Zeta-Jones, in In Style magazine)***

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