



Forum 1

Display replies in nested form

Move this discussion to ...

Move



Exceptionalism

by Joe Escobar - Saturday, April 11, 2015, 12:04 PM

This forum thread is for Exceptionalism Topic posts and replies.

After studying the required materials, address the various questions. For purposes of encouraging discussion, you should group your responses into SEPARATE posts. To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post. To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post. Do NOT simply leave it RE: Exceptionalism

Sum of ratings: -

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



American Exceptionalism: Conservatives vs. Democrats

by Delaney Crook - Sunday, April 12, 2015, 5:44 PM

After reading the conservative article that criticized Obama's comment about American not being "exceptional", then watching Obama's speech and reading the liberal article about American exceptionalism, it is clear that as with nearly all other issues in American politics, Conservatives and Democrats seem to stand on two very different sides of the spectrum with this issue. At first, after reading the conservative article, it made sense to me that it is interesting that anyone would claim that our country is not exceptional and unique in our freedom, abilities and rights as a country. People from all over the world dream and desire of coming the America for a new life of hope and freedom. However, after listening to Obama's speech and reading the liberal article there is one very important fact that struck my attention and really made me lean towards the side of the liberals on this specific issue. Serwer states:

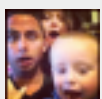
"Conservatives seem to believe that American Exceptionalism justifies America doing whatever it wants in the world. By contrast, Obama — at least rhetorically — emphasizes that being exceptional is a standard to meet, not a license for America to capriciously enforce its will upon others. Where conservatives sometimes refuse to acknowledge that there are limits to American power, Obama acknowledged: “The United States will not be able to dictate the pace and scope of this change. Only the people of the region can do that.”

I have to agree with this statement, because from the conservative article I got the impression that they believe that we are exceptional as a country because of our abilities and rights, and therefore we can use our power to our advantage to essentially do whatever we want in the world. However, Obama states that we are exceptional, not because of what we have as a nation, but more because of how we can help everyone else around us. We are a nation that will not turn its back to anyone or anything, and that is what defines American Exceptionalism.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: American Exceptionalism: Conservatives vs. Democrats

by Adam Graves - Wednesday, April 15, 2015, 9:44 PM

You made some good points and I do sometimes think that conservatives use Exceptionalism as a means to help their agenda, but not as a means to do whatever they want. They still have to operate in the scope of the American people. That's not to say america always makes the most exceptional choice, like in the case of Cuba where we help the

Cubans obtain their independence, but then make it so that we still control their affairs with the use of the Platt amendment in their constitution as described on pages 754-755 in the text. Although I feel like America is exceptional myself and we by far have more liberties and rights then other countries, we also have our faults. I like the idea of America helping people in need when we can and is in the best interest for the people. Your points were good and agree with a lot your interpretations, nicely written.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: American Exceptionalism: Conservatives vs. Democrats

by [Stanley Cates](#) - Friday, April 17, 2015, 3:17 PM

But are we a nation that will not turn its back to anyone or anything? Ever heard of a place called Rwanda? In 1994 (fairly recent) a genocide led by Hutu militants against the Tutsi population ensued from April to July. The United States; among others; did absolutely nothing about it. A similar genocide started in 2003 in the Darfur region of Sudan. That situation is still ongoing and involving several belligerents yet we've done nothing to stop it with exception of the condemnation of actions taken by the Sudanese government by former secretary of state Colin Powell; which did little to curb the violence. Have we done exceptional things? Absolutely. Are we exceptional? I don't always think so. Ironically some might argue that the very fact that I can say that we're not exceptional without fear of being imprisoned makes us exceptional, and there is certainly a valid argument there but that's a far cry from the secular god figure of a nation that both Herman Cain and Barack Obama were attempting to illustrate.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



American Exceptionalism. The Good and Bad.

by [Tristan Ivie](#) - Monday, April 13, 2015, 4:06 PM

After listening to all the opinions of right and left wing politicians on Obama's comments about American Exceptionalism, I have found that there is a problem on both sides.(like usual)

Liberals tend to look down upon American influence on other countries and the thought that our ideas and way of life is better. Because Liberals think like this, they often look at the bad things America has done throughout history and forget about the MORE good America has done. Liberals need to understand that America IS great, and they should not be afraid to admit it.

Conservatives like Ted Cruz and Herman Cain argue for American Exceptionalism in the wrong way. Yes, the Declaration of Independence, The Constitution, and "God given rights" are fine things about America, but why do almost all conservative arguments come down to these three things. Why can't they mention things like American hand outs when a natural disaster occur or American technology advances that help people in all sorts of ways. Conservatives are right about American Exceptionalism but do not explain it the best.

Obama's comments are incomplete. I would of liked to hear a follow up question asking:"Ignore the other countries. Is America exceptional to you?" A question like that would be better to get a better idea of Obama's actual feelings on American Exceptionalism.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: American Exceptionalism. The Good and Bad.

by [Yiqing Xiao](#) - Saturday, April 18, 2015, 10:27 PM

Its really a strange thing that there are some people thinking America is different by "god given rights". They simply put their status under the god. So in fact they are thinking that god are exceptional and we got some light from the exceptional god so we are also kind of exceptional.However, they think they are the same with other human expect they got some present from the god, but how do they configure that other people didn't get any gift from the god and the things they got really is a gift since they think they are norm and norm can't do too much things. And how do they think those people do not believe god in America.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

American Dream tied to American Exceptionalism?

by [Gordon Collver](#) - Monday, April 13, 2015, 5:36 PM



I thought it was interesting how Charles Murray believes that American exceptionalism is less clear now than it was in the 19th century due to the fact that America now has a lot less unique settings and that American culture is on a downhill spiral. I tend to agree that while America is exceptional it isn't as exceptional as it used to be. I think this is due to the American dream sort of dying off or just being a lot harder to maintain. For instance the job market is becoming so much more competitive that if you want a high paying job you are more than likely going to need to go to college for some sort of degree and even then a good job isn't guaranteed. While in the 18th-19th century there was endless opportunities whether or not you had schooling and it's no surprise to me that America was viewed as the place to go to make a new life but nowadays that isn't the case. With companies being allowed to outsource to other countries for cheaper labor it's taking away more and more jobs from Americans which is weakening our economy and essentially destroying the American dream with it. It makes me wonder is a country only exceptional if it has an exceptional economy?

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: American Dream tied to American Exceptionalism?

by [Delaney Crook](#) - Thursday, April 16, 2015, 12:32 PM

You make a very good point about the fact that the "American Dream" is becoming harder and harder to maintain with our economy. I agree that the difficulty have achieving and maintaining a job that will serve you and your family's financial needs is contributing the the dying off of the American Dream. Also, the fact that there was endless opportunity in the past to achieve this created a large sense of American exceptionalism. I find your connection between American Excpetionalism and American Dream a very logical connection.

Your question posed about a country only being exceptional if it has an exceptional economy has got me thinking, and while I believe having a quality economy is a great contributor to exceptionalism, I do not believe this is the only factor in American Exceptionalism. I think America's abilities and resources to help and serve not only our country, but other countries as well is what makes us exceptional, even if our economy has decreased, and the American Dream is much harder to maintain in today's society.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



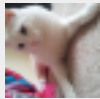
Re: American Dream tied to American Exceptionalism?

by [Gordon Collver](#) - Friday, April 17, 2015, 10:05 PM

The more I think about it the more I can see that it's just one of many factors. After reading what you think makes America special I would have to agree with you. I have a friend who lives in Spain and he tells me how he wishes Spain could help other countries like the U.S. does. I just thought that was kind of interesting because someone from the outside looking in thinks the same way.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: American Dream tied to American Exceptionalism?

by [Yiqing Xiao](#) - Saturday, April 18, 2015, 11:24 PM

Who can present America? What can present America? The cultural, the people,the land or the spirit? Dream is a dream, if you don't take effort on it, it would never come to true. And if the dream comes to true, it is more like the destiny helped you but not the America. There still a lot of people in America who are poor. So if America is exceptional, are those poor are exceptional too? I don't think they are chosen to be a wretched guy.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



American Exceptionalism: Opposing Views

by [Cody Souza](#) - Monday, April 13, 2015, 5:52 PM

In viewing the video I wanted to talk about the first two video excerpts. The one with Obama speaking about American Exceptionalism being like British or Greek Exceptionalism, and Evan Sayet stating that America is exceptional because "we are the most successful nation is all of human history".

I think that it is interesting that Obama, a Democrat, gives the view that America is exceptional simply because he lives here or that anyone that lives in America believes America is exceptional because it is simply where they live. Alternatively, he is talking about Patriotism within America, because those living in Britain or Greece believe their country is exceptional as well.

Evan Sayet, a leading Conservative according to Wikipedia, states in the second video excerpt that America is exceptional because we are just that, an exceptional nation that has been very successful. Sayet takes the stance that American Exceptionalism is a true description because America has been so successful in comparison to other countries in the world. He further goes on to say that the Liberals must remain "neutral" about where America stands on the figurative Exceptionalism scale.

In closing, these opposing views are interesting to me because of both where they stand on the political spectrum as well as their views on American Exceptionalism, and I am curious if that is a stance the majority of Liberals or Conservatives have on American Exceptionalism.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: American Exceptionalism: Opposing Views

by [Haley Anderson](#) - Thursday, April 16, 2015, 11:03 PM

I think that what was stated in the above post is very interesting. Obama, being a democrat and believing in this American Exceptionalism. I stated before in a post how I believe that the ideal of American Exceptionalism is related to a belief in our country and how we have been successful, as stated before, more successful than any other country in our history or patriotism. I think the be President of the United States you have to be proud of your country, proud of what we have accomplished and believe that we have duty to be the best we can be as a country. In believing that, we tend to lean toward the ideal of America being not superior but successful.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Exceptionalism Vs. Mediocrity

by [Emily Johnson](#) - Monday, April 13, 2015, 7:10 PM

I think it’s interesting how the author of the Salon.com article, Glenn Greenwald, is concerned with the actuality of Obama’s belief in American exceptionalism, and what that really means. The article said that 80% of American’s believe the U.S. is the greatest country in the world. I think Greenwald does a good job of breaking it down in this way: “It means that you’re entitled (or obligated) to do things that no one else is entitled or obligated to do.”

I think the repeats that we see in American history support this notion that we are in fact, exceptional. However, from what we see in the Spanish-American war when Roosevelt felt it was our “duty” to civilize, and again in the effort to include ourselves in other wars, many would argue have actually weakened us (our society, morals, etc.).

We see how much we can profit from wars, and how when we phrase it, such as- “It is our duty to civilize”, then what we are really saying is that someone must play "parent" to these other countries, and of course it should be us. Paraphrasing from the article, "justifications for new conflicts will inevitably find ourselves in a posture of endless wars."

I believe this is what Obama was trying to say in his speech in April 2009 when he mentioned Greeks and Brit’s are probably feeling the same way as we do. It is human nature to believe we are better. As Greenwald's article suggests, no one is fighting for mediocrity.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



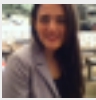
Re: Exceptionalism Vs. Mediocrity

by [Yiqing Xiao](#) - Saturday, April 18, 2015, 10:15 PM

Yes,there are lots of American think America is exceptional from the beginning of the country foundation to nowadays. However, there do some reason that let them think in that way.Firstly, the first group coming to America are Puritan and they believe they are building a paradise in earth on that land. The strong sense of mission made them feel they are different from other people, and this kind of feeling pass through century to nowadays. Secondly, America are the strongest country nowadays, its rank on the world always is the first from WW2, the dream of America affects all the people on the world. People believe America is the best since all animal would follow the strongest.Finally, the young age of America also let people feel they are exceptional.However, nowadays there is a word very popular to describe

such things-Chuunibyouto, which means the Adolescent Delusions in fourteen. Teenager always like to think they are different and lots part of America are affected by teenager from long long ago. In fact,it not only let American think they are exceptional, but also gives America unlimited power to create the future, and if we can control the degree of how exceptional America are, maybe this kind of feeling would be the best things god gave to America.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Not a fan of "American Exceptionalism"
by [Kai Seltman](#) - Monday, April 13, 2015, 10:53 PM

I think the notion of 'exceptionalism' is self-serving and dangerous, whether held by America or any other country. I feel that the politicians Herman Caim and Tred Cuz are taking advantage of a human need to feel 'special' and 'important' by touting 'American Exceptionalism' and soothing the collective ego of the public, thus furthering their cause. There is no denying that America is 'exceptional' in certain aspects, such as their ethnic diversity, the possibility of social mobilization, and the advancements made in many fields such as medicine and technology. However, we also have to put into consideration how the society has advanced to such a degree. Isn't it in no small part due to the blatant abuse of human rights such as the slavery issue we looked into last term and the issue of Imperialism we studied for the last few classes? On a similar note, the United States 'having a finger in every pie' international policy seems to me resonant of the reasoning behind 'Manifest Destiny'. "We are God's chosen creatures so we have a responsibility over (and a right to trod upon) those who are not." Also, does the common citizen know enough about the history and culture of other countries as to have the right to brand their own country 'superior' to others? Does the common citizen know enough about their OWN history and culture to make this brazen claim? What constitutes 'superiority' anyway? Although I thoroughly enjoyed authors Charles Murray and Andrew Bacevich's perspective on the subject, I feel, for the most part, that "American Exceptionalism" is rooted in blind patriotism.

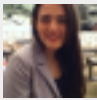
Sum of ratings:2 (1) [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Not a fan of "American Exceptionalism"
by [Delaney Crook](#) - Thursday, April 16, 2015, 12:58 PM

I definitely agree with your ideas that there are certain aspects of America that make us unique. and exceptional like our diversity, advancements in medicine and social mobilization. But, I also find your consideration that our exceptionalism has its limits, just like any other country. To answer, your questions posed about the common citizen being able to make a claim that our country is superior to other, I think that we as common citizens do not know enough about our own country as well as other countries to make such a strong claim. I agree with you that both the liberal and conservative side of this argument has its positives and negative, but overall this idea that America is exceptional could be one just to make us feel more important, and could lead to dangerous results.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Not a fan of "American Exceptionalism"
by [Kai Seltman](#) - Saturday, April 18, 2015, 11:09 PM

Thank you for your reply, Delaney.

Upon re-reading my post, I felt it was rather harsh, one-sided, and ignorant. I believe that America is exceptional in more ways than the examples I gave, and I understand that it is due to many more factors than imperialism and slavery.

But as you say, I do agree that "exceptionalism" is potentially dangerous.

Sum of ratings: (1) [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

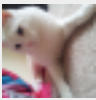


Re: Not a fan of "American Exceptionalism"
by [Yiqing Xiao](#) - Saturday, April 18, 2015, 11:38 PM

However,It is helpful to those politicians making people believe America is exceptional. Since they can explain everything into the exceptional America. We must keep the world safe because we are exceptional. We need to spread our theory because we are exceptional.However, this kind of lazy explanation just a cover of the cruel truth that we need

some profit and we use this way to get it. Patriotism is just a plain explanation of protection of our own profit. The profit exchanging cannot just explained by those theories.

Sum of ratings: [\(1\)](#) [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Exceptionalism
by [Yiqing Xiao](#) - Monday, April 13, 2015, 11:50 PM

After watching the video and reading the article, I found that it is really interesting that there would so many people believe the exceptionalism of their country. This theory is somehow ridiculous for me because I think I am the only exceptional one and I don't think others would be equal to me. And if those people accept the theory of exceptional America, It means they think there are billions of lives have the same weight of themselves. For me, that is insane. I always believe that I am the most important person in the world, and other people like me, so they are better than those things have more different from me. However, that not means we are more similar to each other only because we live in the same place. Especially in America, the land which is fulfilled with immigrants. In the other hand, the president could treat their country as exceptionalism because these country are indicated by their willing. They are the most important part of their country. The nation support them to live in big house, eat delicious food and entertainment even sex problem,but I am just a student which the only big thing related to the nation is paying money to the government let them to control my world. The theory of exceptionalism looks like a joke for me. Who would care about any accident happened on an ant under your feet? It is none of my buisness either the nation went to heaven or hell. I am anarchists and I love myself more than my country because I have enough Intellect?lol

Sum of ratings: [1](#) [\(1\)](#) [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

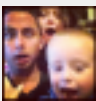


Closet Exceptionalism
by [Adam Graves](#) - Tuesday, April 14, 2015, 8:31 PM

The Salon article seems to imply that Obama at some point didn't believe that America was exceptional. In the video where Obama is asked if he believed in American Exceptionalism and he craftily answered the question indirectly, by saying he believed in it the same way that the British and Greek's believed in their Exceptionalism. I feel like this answer was because he didn't want to sound like America was better then any other country. I'm sure all of our Presidents believed in American Exceptionalism, and some were more vocal about it then others. I'm pretty sure that it's not good for America's foreign policy to boasting about how much better America is. I don't think that Evan Sayet had it right by saying that Obama doesn't believe in it, just that he wanted to be neutral about the question as to not sound too cocky. I believe that Mr. Sayet would say anything to make Obama sound bad. Below is a link to a video of Sayet talking about how stupid Liberals are. Think he's got his own agenda to push.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=peRUTroluNs>

Sum of ratings: [1](#) [\(1\)](#) [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Presidential Exceptionalism
by [Adam Graves](#) - Wednesday, April 15, 2015, 7:13 PM

I think there are some similarities when it comes to how presidents look at American Exceptionalism. In the case of Theodore Roosevelt he felt that America was superior and were destine to economic and political greatness as described on pg. 757 of our textbook. I think that Roosevelt felt that America was far better then some countries, and he knew that they all play a role in foreign policy. His goals in sending the great white fleet around on a tour is an example of Roosevelt showing how exceptional of a country we are. This is something that a modern day president wouldn't do, and wouldn't have to because i believe that most countries understand that America has one of the strongest military. As well most modern presidents not having to come out and say they think that America is exceptional, they all seem to make references about how great of a nation this is while out on the campaign trail.

Another example of America wanting to help a society become a sovereign nation is somewhat similar. Like Roosevelt helping Panamanians gain their independence from Columbia, even if he had alternative motives to secure the Panama Canal it was the right thing to give them their freedom. Just as Obama now is trying to help the the people of Lybia and how George W Bush felt he was doing good by ridding Iraq of Saddam Hussein. Like Obama said in the video "Where ever people long to be free, they'll find a friend in the United States." This statement seems to show American Exceptionalism by

showing that the U.S. knows what's right and will help struggling society obtain what America feels all are entitled to equality and freedom.

Sum of ratings:3 (1) 3 Show parent | Edit | Split | Delete | Reply



Re: Presidential Exceptionalism

by Delaney Crook - Thursday, April 16, 2015, 1:35 PM

I find your analysis that today's Presidents don't have to come out and say that they believe America is exceptional very interesting. I think this was part of the confusion and misunderstanding that Obama did not believe that America is exceptional. The fact that they make references to this idea is enough rather than coming out and saying iras Roosevelt did. I very much agree with the fact that Obama's statement shows how exceptional America is, without having to say it as a blank fact. We, as a nation, our exceptional because of our abilities and willingness to help all who want and be free. We are unique in the fact that we have our freedom and equality, but we are exceptional because of what we do for others to obtain the same freedom and equality.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1 Show parent | Edit | Split | Delete | Reply



Right Wing vs. Left Wing American Exceptionalism

by Haley Anderson - Thursday, April 16, 2015, 10:56 PM

When reading the Salon article a certain quote really stuck out to me the difference between the ideals of American Exceptionalism from the view point of the right wing conservatives compared to the left wing liberals. The quote states;"Conservatives seem to believe that American Exceptionalism justifies whatever it wants in the world...while Obama emphasizes that being exceptional is a standard to meet, not a license for America to capriciously enforce it's will upon others." The article then goes on to say that the quote just stated oversteps the ideals of American Exceptionalism from both parties. For example; it states the Bush did not pursue the war on terror alone and did not assume that it was his duty, but went along with a common interest. While coming to the conclusion that Obama has used drones as well as other means of creating havoc in the east without the "okay" from the U.N. or really anyone else. Which totally negates the quote that was stated, when taking into consideration the beliefs of right wing or left wing American Exceptionalism you would tend to believe the quote that was stated due to the fact that it is a judgement upon the characteristics and beliefs of liberals vs conservatives. Liberals tend to be more for Government change while Conservatives are more okay with the government how it is.

I believe that American Exceptionalism is a very very small sliver of patriotism, the article states "*The fact remains that declaring yourself special, superior and/or exceptional — and believing that to be true, and, especially, acting on that belief — has serious consequences. It can (and usually does) mean that the same standards of judgment aren't applied to your acts as are applied to everyone else's.*" and that form of Exceptionalism is not what is related to this patriotism. The definition of Patriotism *is, generally speaking, cultural attachment to one's homeland or devotion to one's country, although interpretations of the term vary with context, geography and political ideology.* This cultural attachment, or pride in one's country can be linked to exceptionalism with the idea that people who believe in American Exceptionalism believe that it is our duty as a country to help other countries who would not be helped otherwise. Whether that is the case for all American Exceptionalist thinkers cannot be completely decided, but when thinking about exceptionalism integrated into American society, that is the most common and least superior way of thinking about it.

Sum of ratings:3 (1) 3 Show parent | Edit | Split | Delete | Reply



Re: Right Wing vs. Left Wing American Exceptionalism

by Chaofan Huang - Saturday, April 18, 2015, 10:59 PM

I agree with that "American Exceptionalism is a very very small sliver of patriotism", Mature American ruling system , even in the implementation of the wrong policy, but also be able to keep domestic tranquility , maintain state unanimously in . Especially after 911 , the United States appeared on the history of rare patriotic upsurge, Patriotic education and administrative power operation , maintaining an appropriate distance relationship interaction, care is the power of political domination maturity. At this point , the United States has accumulated a wealth of experience.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1 Show parent | Edit | Split | Delete | Reply

