



# HOW AMERICANS VIEW THE AMERICAN FOUNDING

JOHN G. WEST

*How Americans View  
the American Founding*

BY JOHN G. WEST, PHD

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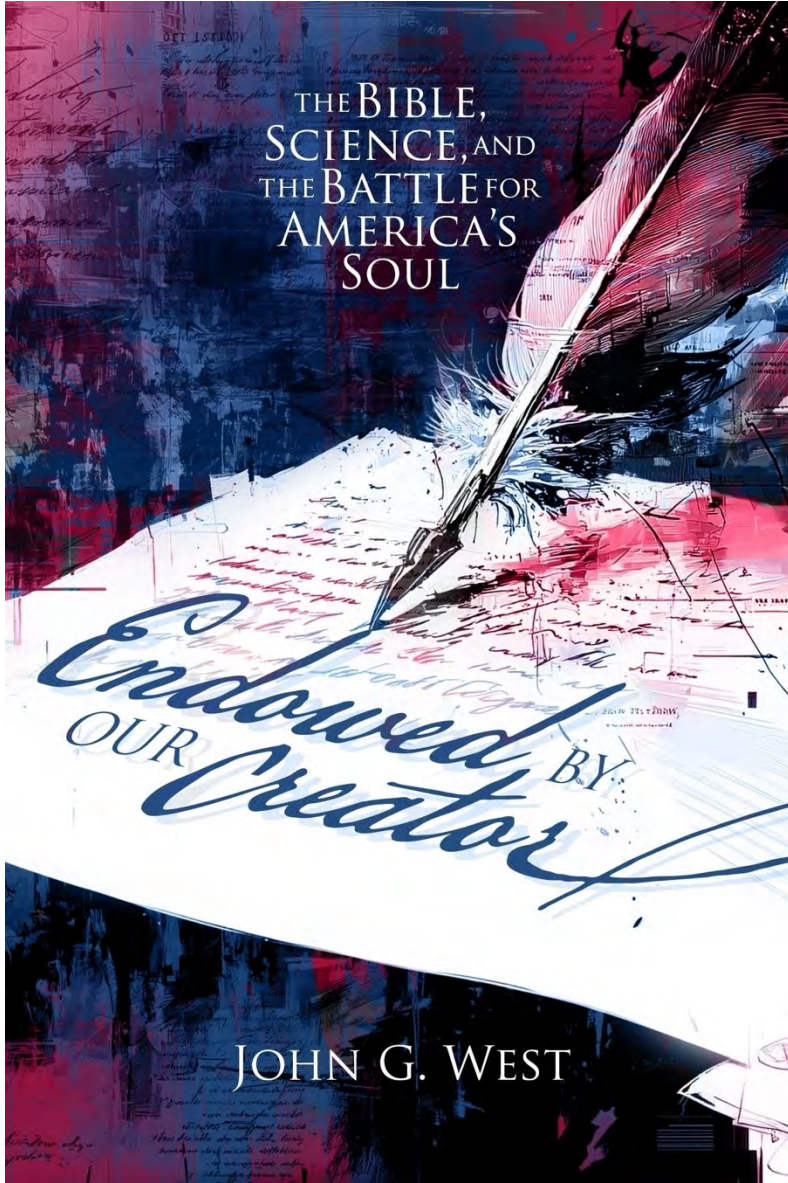
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# ENDOWED BY OUR CREATOR

by John G. West

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*“John West has performed an important role for our 250th birthday as a country. He reminds us that the Founding Fathers meant that our rights come from our Creator. They understood the radicalism of rights coming from God and not secular authority. Our current crisis of culture and spirit will only be healed by the return to those Creator endowed rights.”*

—NEWT GINGRICH, SPEAKER, US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (1995-1999)

In 2026, the United States celebrates the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, which proclaims that “all men are created equal” and “are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights.” These words have inspired not only generations of Americans, but millions of people around the globe.

Yet many Americans today are skeptical of some of the Declaration’s key principles, including the idea that our rights come from God, not man. In this important book, political scientist John West explains the original meaning of the Declaration and shows how its propositions drew support from both the Bible and the science of its day. He then uncovers how various ideologies tried to undermine the Declaration in the name of science, overturning its teaching on equality, subverting its understanding of liberty, and justifying the creation of a technocratic state that regulates us from cradle to grave. Finally, West looks at how new discoveries in science are actually pointing us back to the hallowed truths expressed by the Declaration some 250 years ago—and why that matters.

## INTRODUCTION



As the United States approaches its 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary, how do Americans view the American Founding? After the past several years, the answer is far from self-evident. The legitimacy of America is under assault as influencers on both left and right have unleashed a torrent of negativity about America’s Founders and the system they set up.

On the left, journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones of *The New York Times*’ “1619 Project” has branded the ideals of the Declaration of Independence a “lie” because America’s Founders didn’t apply them to enslaved blacks.<sup>1</sup> The left-of-center journal *Salon* published an article exposing the “ugly truth” that “the Declaration of Independence is sexist, racist, prejudiced.”<sup>2</sup> Progressive activist Raquel Willis denounced July 4 as “a glaring reminder that the ‘founding fathers’... continued to pledge allegiance to white supremacy, patriarchy, classism, and more.”<sup>3</sup> In 2024, Boston College legal scholar Aziz Rana published a book attacking the Constitution that carried the biting subtitle: “How Americans Came to Idolize a Document That Fails Them.”<sup>4</sup> According to Rana, “the U.S. Constitution is profoundly undemocratic” and “created an infrastructure for... a specific and very American brand of white authoritarianism.”<sup>5</sup>

On the right, meanwhile, atheist political writer Curtis Yarvin has proclaimed that the American Revolution is a story “in which evil triumphed over good,”<sup>6</sup> while Catholic thinker Patrick Deneen has written dismissively of “calls to devotion to the abstractions of the Declaration and the Constitution.”<sup>7</sup>

Deneen argues that both documents were informed by “Enlightenment and liberal philosophies that... posited the existence of radically autonomous human beings in the ‘state of nature.’”<sup>8</sup> Evangelical Christian thinker Vishal Mangalwadi says that the Declaration of Independence embodied a “fundamental mistake” that led to the French Revolution’s “reign of terror.”<sup>9</sup>

These attacks on America’s Founding have been amplified by social media. On the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the battles of Lexington and Concord, one conservative influencer posted to his half-a-million followers on X: “Now is not the time for constitutional idolatry—our priority must be to defend the country by any means necessary.”<sup>10</sup> The day before July 4, 2025, another conservative influencer with over 100,000 followers posted: “People who are reciting the Constitu[t]ion as a basis for solving modern problems at this point can only be viewed as either outrageously dishonest or legit retarded.”<sup>11</sup>

How have these unrelenting attacks on America’s Founding been received by the majority of Americans? Have Americans been persuaded to turn their backs on the American Founding and the Founding Fathers?

Using the Pollfish platform, Discovery Institute commissioned two nationwide polls of 2,500 American adults to find out. The margin of error for both polls was +/- 2%. The full polling methodology is described at the end of this report.

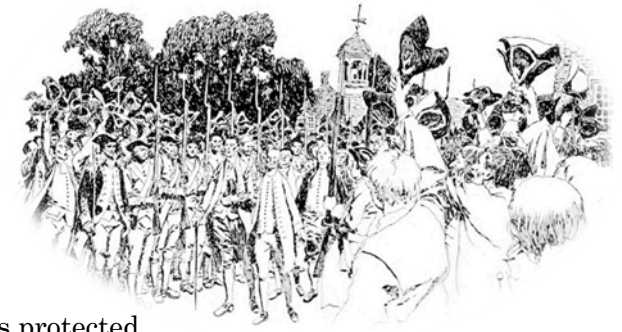
For those who love America, the survey results include much that is heartening. But they also carry some sobering warnings about the future.

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- <sup>1</sup> Nikole Hannah-Jones, “Our democracy’s founding ideals were false when they were written. Black Americans have fought to make them true,” *The New York Times Magazine*, August 14, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/black-history-american-democracy.html>.
- <sup>2</sup> Matthew Rozsa, “Fourth of July’s ugly truth exposed: The Declaration of Independence is sexist, racist, prejudiced,” *Salon*, July 4, 2019, <https://www.salon.com/2019/07/04/fourth-of-julys-ugly-truth-exposed-the-declaration-of-independence-is-sexist-racist-and-prejudice/>.
- <sup>3</sup> Tweet by Raquel Willis, Twitter, July 4, 2021, [https://x.com/Raquel\\_Willis/status/1411754288473325571](https://x.com/Raquel_Willis/status/1411754288473325571).
- <sup>4</sup> Publisher web page for *The Constitutional Bind: How Americans Came to Idolize a Document That Fails Them* by Aziz Rana (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2024), <https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/C/bo208177761.html>.
- <sup>5</sup> Aziz Rana, “The Constitution and the American Left,” *Dissent*, July 19, 2024, [https://dissentmagazine.org/online\\_articles/the-constitution-and-the-american-left/](https://dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/the-constitution-and-the-american-left/).
- <sup>6</sup> Mencius Moldbug [Curtis Yarvin], “A Gentle Introduction to Unqualified Reservations, Chapter 2: The American Rebellion,”

*Unqualified Reservations*, January 15, 2009, [https://www.unqualified-reservations.org/2009/01/gentle-introduction-to-unqualified\\_15/](https://www.unqualified-reservations.org/2009/01/gentle-introduction-to-unqualified_15/).

- <sup>7</sup> Patrick J. Deneen, *Conserving America? Essays on Present Discontents* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine’s Press, 2016), 10. For Deneen’s religious identification, see “Patrick Deneen on the Failure of Liberalism and the Importance of Relational Living,” *Theos*, June 14, 2023, <https://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/comment/2023/06/14/patrick-deneen-on-the-failure-of-liberalism-and-the-importance-of-relational-living>.
- <sup>8</sup> Deneen, *Conserving America?*, 3.
- <sup>9</sup> Vishal Mangalwadi, “The Legacy of William Carey: A Model for the Transformation of a Culture,” November 23, 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-AdfunnJE7Y>. This lecture was taped during the Post Tenebras Lux Conference on November 2, 2024 at Evangelical Reformed Church, Tacoma, WA.
- <sup>10</sup> Post by Andrew Torba, X, April 19, 2025, <https://x.com/BasedTorba/status/1913735342957510926>.
- <sup>11</sup> Post by BowTiedRanger, X, July 3, 2025, <https://x.com/BowTiedRanger/status/1940923037869625828>.

# MOST AMERICANS STILL ADMIRE AMERICA AND THE AMERICAN FOUNDING



**D**ESPITE the criticisms leveled at the American Founding by influencers, most Americans continue to love America and admire its Founding according to these new surveys.

***Most Americans agree that “all things considered, America remains the best nation on earth.”***

This belief holds across gender, age, and ethnicity. For most demographics, at least 7 in 10 Americans agree with the statement. Among Americans ages 18-24, 6 in 10 agree (16% are unsure).

***Most Americans still regard America’s Founding and Founders with admiration.***

- 64% believe that “the original Constitution and Bill of Rights should be admired because they advanced human freedom and equality more than anything before them.”
- 64% believe that “despite their faults, America’s Founders should be admired for how they tried to establish a government that guarantees both liberty and equal rights.”
- 78% agree that “by proclaiming the principles of equality and liberty, America’s Founders set up a good standard for later generations to follow, and that is what Americans did by abolishing slavery and establishing civil rights for all.”
- By contrast, only 22% of Americans think that “because

America’s Founders protected slavery, America is forever tainted by racism.”

- The majority of Americans continue to revere America’s major Founding Fathers: 76% admire George Washington, 78% admire Benjamin Franklin, and 72% admire Thomas Jefferson. Smaller majorities admire Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, John Adams, and Samuel Adams.<sup>1</sup>

The above beliefs are held by a majority of Americans regardless of gender or ideology. For example, even 66% of self-identified liberals/progressives agree that “by proclaiming the principles of equality and liberty, America’s Founders set up a good standard for later generations to follow, and that is what Americans did by abolishing slavery and establishing civil rights for all.” By contrast, only 34% of progressives think that “because America’s Founders protected slavery, America is forever tainted by racism.” The beliefs are also held by a majority or plurality of Whites, Hispanics, Asians, and Americans age 35 or older.

For Americans 18-34, there is a clear drop-off in admiration for the Founding and Founders. But even among this group, majorities or pluralities track with the views of Americans as a whole:

- 65% still believe that “by proclaiming the principles of equality and liberty, America’s Founders set up a good standard for later generations to follow, and that is what

Americans did by abolishing slavery and establishing civil rights for all.”

- Only 35% believe that “because America’s Founders protected slavery, America is forever tainted by racism.”
- A bare majority (50.2%) of younger Americans agree that “the original Constitution and Bill of Rights should be admired because they advanced human freedom and equality more than anything before them,” while 18% say they “do not know whether the original Constitution and Bill of Rights should be admired or not.”
- A plurality (45%) agree that “despite their faults, America’s Founders should be admired for how they tried to establish a government that guarantees both liberty and equal rights,” but a significant minority (39%) say “America’s Founders should not be admired because they protected slavery, did not extend political rights to women, and voted to protect their own economic interests.” The remaining 16% indicate that they “don’t know whether America’s Founders should be admired or not.”

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<sup>1</sup> The smaller majorities expressing admiration for these other Founders are because respondents said they did not know enough to have an opinion about them, not because more people were negative toward them.

Black Americans are more divided than other Americans in their beliefs about the American Founding. Nevertheless:

- 56% of Black Americans agree that “by proclaiming the principles of equality and liberty, America’s Founders set up a good standard for later generations to follow, and that is what Americans did by abolishing slavery and establishing civil rights for all.”
- A plurality (47%) agree that “the original Constitution and Bill of Rights should be admired because they advanced human freedom and equality more than anything before them.”
- However, a plurality (46%) also agree that “America’s Founders should not be admired because they protected slavery, did not extend political rights to women, and voted to protect their own economic interests.”
- At the same time, clear majorities of Black Americans admire individual American Founders: 59% admire George Washington, 66% admire Benjamin Franklin, and 55% admire Thomas Jefferson.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Note that the subsample of Blacks/African Americans for this survey is only 376, so the margin of error for these results will be higher than for the entire sample.

# MOST AMERICANS DON'T KNOW WHAT THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE SAYS, BUT THEY AGREE WITH ITS KEY IDEAS



**T**HE Declaration of Independence is one of the most famous documents in history. Yet only a minority of Americans today can correctly identify it as the source of its most famous passage: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

Less than 5 in 10 Americans (45%) know that these words come from the Declaration. That figure goes down the younger people become. Only 3 in 10 Americans ages 18-24 can correctly identify these words as having come from the Declaration.

## ***Americans Think the Ideas of the Declaration Are True***

Despite this historical ignorance, supermajorities of Americans think key propositions in the Declaration are true:

- 78% of Americans think that “all human beings are created equal” is true.
- 85% of Americans think that “all human beings have an unalienable right to life” is true.
- 85% of Americans think that “all human beings have an unalienable right to liberty” is true.

- 89% of Americans think that “all human beings have an unalienable right to the pursuit of happiness” is true.

Not only do most Americans believe in the truth these key ideas of the Declaration, they also seem to have a reasonable understanding of their meaning.

## ***Human Equality***

Like America’s Founders, most Americans today understand that human equality does not mean all humans are equally fit to play professional sports, or they all have the same aptitude for math or music, or they all are equal in physical strength or wealth or beauty. Instead, they think humans are equal in the following ways:

- 63% of Americans believe that “all humans are created by God.”
- 55% of Americans believe that “all humans have equal rights.”
- 53% of Americans believe that “all normally developed humans have the ability to think.”
- 49% of Americans believe that “all normally developed humans have the ability to communicate through language.”

- 48% of Americans believe that “all humans are fallible or sinful.”
- 48% of Americans believe that “all normally developed humans have the ability to know right from wrong.”
- 41% of Americans believe that “all normally developed humans have the capacity to think about God or spiritual questions.”
- 38% of Americans believe that “all humans have a soul that survives death.”

### ***The Right to Liberty***

The Declaration states that one of our unalienable rights is the right to liberty. When America’s Founders discussed liberty, they distinguished it from licentiousness. In his first inaugural address in 1790, George Washington even stressed the importance of teaching Americans “to discriminate the spirit of Liberty from that of licentiousness, cherishing the first, avoiding the last.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> George Washington, “First Annual Message to Congress,” January 8, 1790, *Famous Presidential Speeches*, The Miller Center—University

Like America’s Founders, most Americans today understand that liberty is not the same as libertinism.

Only 8% of Americans think liberty is best defined as “the right to do whatever you want.”

Around 38% of Americans think liberty is best defined as “the right to do whatever you want if it does not hurt someone else.”

The majority of Americans (54%) believe that liberty is best defined as “the right to do whatever you want within the limits of morality,” which is closest to the view expressed by America’s Founders.

### ***A Universal Moral Law***

Most modern Americans also understand that a universal moral law exists. In the Declaration, the Founders called this moral law “the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God.” Like the Founders, 56% of Americans today think that “what is truly right and wrong stays the same across time and culture.” Only 44% of Americans believe that “what is right and wrong evolves over time based on the survival needs of society.”

of Virginia, <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/january-8-1790-first-annual-message-congress>.

## MOST AMERICANS REJECT THE FOUNDERS' VIEW OF THE SOURCE OF OUR RIGHTS



**A**LTHOUGH Americans embrace the truth of many of the Declaration's propositions, there are notable exceptions.

America's Founders believed—and the Declaration of Independence proclaims—that our fundamental rights are endowed by our Creator (God) rather than other human beings. Indeed, it is because our rights come from God that the Founders believed that other humans (including government officials) have no right to violate them. By contrast, most Americans no longer accept the Founders' view that our rights come from God:

- Only 38% of Americans currently believe our rights come from God. Most now believe our rights come from government (32%), the majority (7%), social traditions (7%), biological evolution (4%), or the elites (1%).

Even many self-identified Christians do not accept the Founders' view of the source of our rights.

- Only 42% of Catholic and Orthodox Christians believe our rights come from God, and only a small majority (52%) of Protestants and other Christians accept the Founders' view.

## MOST AMERICANS REJECT THE FOUNDERS' VIEW OF LIMITED GOVERNMENT



ACCORDING to America's Founders, the purpose of government is limited. It is not to eradicate all pain and suffering, or save us from all of our mistakes, or equalize all of our incomes. Its primary goal is to protect us from each other (and from oppressive government) so we are free to pursue our own happiness within the boundaries of the laws of nature and nature's God. And because government is supposed to be based on our unchanging nature, its goals and limited powers should not evolve over time. They should remain the same.

Most Americans appear to have rejected the Founders' vision of limited government:

- 78% of Americans believe that “the purposes of government should change over time based on the evolving needs of society,” whereas only 22% believe that “the purposes of government are based on human nature [and] should be unchanging.”
- 69% of Americans believe that the purpose of government includes guaranteeing “education, medical care, and an adequate income for everyone,” whereas only 31% believe the purpose of government should be limited to “guarantee[ing] that all persons have basic freedoms.”

At the same time, most Americans still seem attracted to the *idea* of limited government. Respondents were given three quotes about the functions of government without identifying who said them. The first quote, which advocated expansive government, was adapted from New York City's socialist mayor Zohran Mamdani: “There is no problem too large for government to solve, and no concern too small for it to care about.”<sup>1</sup> The second quote came from nineteenth century American writer Henry David Thoreau: “That government is best which governs least.”<sup>2</sup> The third quote came from Thomas Jefferson: “The sum of good government is a wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned.”<sup>3</sup>

When asked to choose “which statement comes closest to your own view,” only 26% of Americans selected the quote from Mamdani. The vast majority of respondents preferred the descriptions of limited government from Thoreau (20%) or Jefferson (54%). Limited government still exerts a powerful appeal to Americans, even if they also approve of expansive government.

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<sup>1</sup> Alex Nitzberg, “Mamdani victory speech draws concern as NYC mayor-elect vows ‘no problem too large for government to solve,’”

FoxNews.com, November 5, 2025,  
<https://www.foxnews.com/politics/mamdani-victory-speech-draws->

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concern-nyc-mayor-elect-vows-no-problem-too-large-government-solve.

<sup>2</sup> Henry David Thoreau, *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience* [1849], *Project Gutenberg*, <https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/71/pg71.txt>.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Jefferson, "First Inaugural Address," March 4, 1801, *National Archives: Founders Online*, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-33-02-0116-0004>.

## MOST AMERICANS REJECT THE FOUNDERS' VIEW OF REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY



**B**ECAUSE human beings are created equal, America's Founders believed that the powers exercised by government to secure our rights require the consent of the governed in order to be just.

"No one has a right to any authority over another without his consent: all lawful government is founded on the consent of those who are subject to it," wrote Founder James Wilson.<sup>1</sup> This idea supplies the foundation America's representative democracy. Those who wield government power must be accountable to the people through elections. No elite is so superior that its members have a right to rule over others unilaterally by virtue of their superiority.

But during the Progressive Era, reformers challenged this view, arguing that government powers should be administered by scientifically-trained bureaucrats who were insulated from popular control.

The idea of rule by technocrats rather than elected officials remains attractive to many Americans. In fact, 75% of Americans think that "in our increasingly scientific and technological society, it is important to rely more on scientists and experts rather [than] elected officials to decide public policy." Although America was founded as a republic based on representative democracy, most Americans seem dismissive of relying on elected officials rather than scientists and experts.<sup>2</sup>

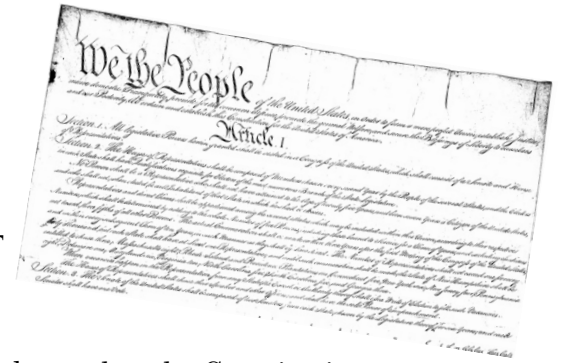
However, when Americans are offered the option of direct democracy as well as representative democracy as an alternative, their enthusiasm for technocracy seems to dissipate. When asked "which kind of government would you prefer," a large majority (58%) prefer "a government where voters make most of the decisions." Only 17% of Americans prefer "a government where neutral experts make most of the decisions," and only 26% favor "a government where elected officials make most of the decisions."

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<sup>1</sup> James Wilson, "Consideration on the Nature and Extent of the Legislative Authority of the British Parliament, 1774," in *Collected Works of James Wilson*, edited by Kermit L. Hall and Mark David Hall (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2007), I:4.

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that the disdain for elected representatives in America goes back a long way. See Bruce Chapman, *Politicians: The Worst Kind of People to Run the Government, Except for All the Others* (Seattle: Discovery Institute Press, 2018).

# MANY AMERICANS UNDERSTAND WHAT RIGHTS THE CONSTITUTION DOES—AND DOESN'T—PROTECT



**P**ROGRESSIVE Era reformers championed the idea of an “evolving” Constitution, inspiring many judges to believe they are entitled to create new rights not actually guaranteed by the original meaning of the constitutional text. Surprisingly, most Americans today can correctly distinguish between rights actually guaranteed by the Constitution and new rights created by judges:

- At least 8 in 10 Americans know that the Constitution protects the freedoms of speech and press, the free exercise of religion, the right to keep and bear arms, and the right to a jury trial.
- Around 7 in 10 Americans know that the Constitution protects a person’s right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures by the government of their home, papers, and belongings. Roughly the same number of Americans know that the Constitution protects their right to have an attorney represent them when charged with a crime.
- Around 6 in 10 Americans know that the Constitution protects their freedom to associate with others who have similar beliefs, their right to petition the government for a redress of grievances, their right to not have to testify against oneself in a criminal trial, and their right to a speedy public trial.

- Around 5 in 10 Americans know that the Constitution protects someone’s right to not have their private property taken for public use without just compensation.

By contrast, the vast majority of Americans understand that various judge-created rights are not actually guaranteed by the Constitution:

- Only 2 in 10 Americans think the Constitution provides the right to a same-sex marriage, the right to an abortion, the right to government-funded health care, or the right to a basic guaranteed income from the government.
- Only 3 in 10 Americans believe the Constitution provides a right to government-funded education.

## CONCLUSION: TRANSMITTING THE FOUNDING'S PRINCIPLES TO THE NEXT GENERATION



**M**ORE than a decade after issuing the Declaration of Independence, America's Founders implemented their vision of good government by drafting the Constitution of 1787. Afterward, Elizabeth Powel of Philadelphia reportedly asked Benjamin Franklin what sort of government had been established. "A republic," he replied, but added a warning: "if you can keep it."<sup>1</sup>

Franklin's warning remains acutely relevant today. The government of the United States is based on a set of propositions about human nature, human society, and the moral government of the universe. If Americans abandon those foundational beliefs, it is hard to see how America continues to survive with its current constitutional system.

The good news is that most Americans still cherish many of the teachings of the American Founding as well as admire America's Founders. This provides common ground to build on.

However, the drop-off in support among younger Americans is alarming.

Comparing the views of Americans 65 and older with those of Americans 18-34, one can readily see America's failure to transmit the truths of the Founding to the next generation:

- Only 35% of younger Americans believe that our rights come from God, compared to 47% of Americans 65 and over.

- A majority of younger Americans reject the idea of universal moral truths, one of the bedrock principles of the American Founding. Around 51% of Americans ages 18-34 believe that "what is right and wrong evolves over time based on the survival needs of a society." Only 32% of Americans age 65 and over embrace that view, whereas 68% of older Americans believe that "what is truly right and wrong stays the same across time and culture."
- Support for the Founders' vision of limited government among young people has collapsed. Whereas 42% of older Americans believe that the limited purpose of government "is to guarantee that all persons have basic freedoms," only 24% younger Americans share that view. Instead, 76% of Americans ages 18-34 believe that the purpose of government includes guaranteeing education, medical care, and an adequate income for everyone.

Support for the Declaration of Independence's ideas about human equality and unalienable rights is also falling. For example, 96% of older Americans think the statement "all human beings have an unalienable right to life" is true, but only 78% of younger Americans think so. Americans' understanding of the ways in which humans beings are equal has likewise eroded between the generations:

*Percent of Americans 65+ vs. Americans 18-34 who agree humans are equal in various ways.*

Way Humans Are Equal	65+ Who Agree	18-34 Who Agree
Created by God.	68%	59%
Have a soul that survives death.	42%	36%
Fallible or sinful.	52%	40%
Ability to think. <sup>2</sup>	66%	49%
Ability to communicate through language.	57%	46%
Ability to know right from wrong.	58%	42%
Have equal rights.	66%	51%
Capacity to think about God or spiritual questions.	50%	35%

Part of the problem is undoubtedly that younger Americans are more ignorant of the history of the American Founding than older Americans. This can be seen in the declining percentages of Americans by age who can identify the Declaration of Independence’s most famous passage as having come from the Declaration:

*Percent of Americans by age who correctly identified passage as coming from Declaration of Independence<sup>3</sup>*

Age	% Identified Source
65+	56%
55-64	50%
45-54	43%
35-44	45%
25-34	39%
18-24	34%

Similarly, when younger Americans are asked whether they admire certain prominent American Founders, significantly higher percentages of the youngest Americans answer that they do not know enough to have an opinion:

*Percent of Americans 65+ vs. Americans 18-24 who do know not enough about key Founders to have an opinion about them.*

Founder	Ages 65+	Ages 18-24
James Madison	18%	39%
John Adams	16%	41%
Alexander Hamilton	18%	37%
Patrick Henry	24%	51%
Samuel Adams	27%	46%
Thomas Paine	37%	45%

Abraham Lincoln spoke of the challenge of perpetuating our political institutions across the generations.<sup>4</sup> As Lincoln realized, it is not enough to found a nation on correct principles. Citizens must continue to cherish and defend those principles. If Americans want to preserve their nation, they need to do a better job of defending and transmitting the principles of the American Founding to the generations that follow. The 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of America would be a good time to start.

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<sup>1</sup> Julie Miller, “A Republic if You Can Keep It: Elizabeth Willing Powel, Benjamin Franklin, and the James McHenry Journal,” *Unfolding History*, Library of Congress, January 6, 2022, <https://blogs.loc.gov/manuscripts/2022/01/a-republic-if-you-can-keep-it-elizabeth-willing-powel-benjamin-franklin-and-the-james-mchenry-journal/>.

<sup>2</sup> The precise question wording asked whether “all normally developed humans have the ability to think.” Similar wording was used for the items about communication through language, the ability to know right from wrong, and the capacity to think about God or spiritual questions.

<sup>3</sup> Respondents were asked to identify the source of the following passage from a predetermined list of sources: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.”

<sup>4</sup> Abraham Lincoln, “The Perpetuation of Our Political Institutions: Address Before the Young Men’s Lyceum of Springfield, Illinois,” January 27, 1838, <https://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/lyceum.htm>.

## POLLING METHODOLOGY

**T**HE data for this study came from two nationwide surveys of American adults commissioned by Discovery Institute using the Pollfish survey platform. The sample size for each survey was 2,500 respondents, and the margin of error was +/- 2 percent (the margin of error on subsamples is higher).

The first survey took place on November 11, 2025 and had a completion rate of 79%. The second survey took place on December 9, 2025 and had a completion rate of 68%.

Post-stratification weighting was used to ensure that the final sample reflected the age and gender composition of the overall U.S. population, although the weighting usually did not materially change the results.

Pollfish uses a methodology called “Random Device Engagement” (RDE) for its surveys: “RDE is the natural successor to Random Digit Dialing [RDD]. By delivering your survey inside popular mobile apps, RDE utilizes the same neutral environment as RDD, and an audience who are not

taking premeditated surveys, by reaching them inside mobile apps they were using anyway. Pollfish uses non-monetary incentives like an extra life in a game or access to premium content. With additional layers of survey fraud prevention including AI and machine learning, Pollfish removes potentially biased responses, improving data quality even further.”<sup>1</sup> Pollfish reports extensive quality checking to prevent bogus or fraudulent responses.<sup>2</sup>

Pollfish has surveyed more than 100 million respondents through its platform, and its users have included Stanford, Harvard, Northwestern University, Walmart, Disney, Macy’s, and Hulu.<sup>3</sup>

A more detailed discussion of Pollfish’s Random Device Engagement methodology can be found in the white paper “Future of Surveys: Random Device Engagement (RDE) with Organic Samples” by researchers David Rothschild and Tobias Konitzer.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “How the Pollfish Methodology Works,” Pollfish, <https://wss.pollfish.com/resources/blog/pollfish-school/how-the-pollfish-methodology-works>.

<sup>2</sup> “How Pollfish Provides Quality Data and Prevents Survey Fraud,” Pollfish, <https://info.prodege.com/pollfish-help-center/how-pollfish-provides-quality-data-and-prevents-survey-fraud>.

<sup>3</sup> See information provided at <https://www.pollfish.com/> and <https://www.pollfish.com/quality/>.

<sup>4</sup> David Rothschild and Tobias Konitzer, “Future of Surveys: Random Device Engagement (RDE) with Organic Samples” Pollfish, August 17, 2018, <https://www.pollfish.com/lp/files/organic-sampling-survey-method.pdf>.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**John G. West** is Vice President of Discovery Institute and Managing Director of the Institute’s Center for Science and Culture. Formerly the Chair of the Department of Political Science and Geography at Seattle Pacific University, he is an award-winning author and documentary filmmaker who has written or edited 14 books.

Dr. West’s books include *Endowed by Our Creator: The Bible, Science, and the Battle for America’s Soul*, *The Politics of Revelation and Reason: Religion and Civic Life in the New Nation*, *Darwin Day in America: How Our Politics and Culture Have Been Dehumanized in the Name of Science*, *The Magician’s Twin: C. S. Lewis on Science, Scientism, and Society*, *Stockholm Syndrome Christianity: Why America’s Christian Leaders are Failing—and What We Can Do About It*, and *Walt Disney and Live Action: The Disney Studio’s Live-Action Features of the 1950s and 60s*. His documentary films include *Fire-Maker*, *Revolutionary*, *The War on Humans*, and *Human Zoos*.

West holds a PhD in Government from Claremont Graduate University, and he has been interviewed by media outlets such as CNN, Fox News, Reuters, *Time* magazine, *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, and *The Washington Post*. You can follow him on X or at his website, [johnwest.com](http://johnwest.com).

## ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

Illustrations used in this report are in the public domain except for the “E Pluribus Unum” graphic on page 4, which is © kaer\_fstock/Adobe Stock; and the report cover, book cover (page 3), and photo of Dr. West (page 17), which are © 2026 by Discovery Institute.

# COMPLETE SURVEY RESULTS

The questions and results from the two surveys used for this report are provided in the following section. Note that both the raw and stratified results are included. The stratified results are the ones cited in this report.

## CROSSTABS

The crosstabs for these surveys will be released later in 2026 through online links that will be posted at [EndowedbyOurCreator.com/Survey](https://EndowedbyOurCreator.com/Survey).

SURVEY NAME

# HOW AMERICANS VIEW THE AMERICAN FOUNDING SURVEY I

DATE

Tuesday, November 11, 2025

POWERED BY

 **Pollfish**

## Q1

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

Please identify the source of the following statement: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	the U.S. Constitution	23.96%	599	24.34%	608.51
A2	the Bill of Rights	16.00%	400	16.74%	418.43
A3	the Bible	4.12%	103	4.07%	101.83
A4	the Declaration of Independence	45.52%	1,138	44.70%	1117.52
A5	not sure	8.84%	221	8.60%	214.89
A6	none of the above	1.56%	39	1.55%	38.81

COMPLETES 2500

## Q2

TYPE: MATRIX, SINGLE SELECTION

Please rate whether you think each statement below is true, false, neither true or false, or you are not sure.

#	ANSWERS	TRUE	FALSE	NEITHER TRUE OR FALSE	NOT SURE
A1	All human beings are created equal.	77.56%	13.36%	7.72%	1.36%
A2	All human beings have an unalienable right to life.	84.60%	5.60%	6.60%	3.20%
A3	All human beings have an unalienable right to liberty.	84.88%	5.56%	6.80%	2.76%
A4	All human beings have an unalienable right to the pursuit of happiness.	89.00%	4.48%	4.64%	1.88%

COMPLETES 2500

### Q3

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

## Liberty is best defined as:

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	the right to do whatever you want	7.96%	199	8.09%	202.37
A2	the right to do whatever you want if it does not hurt someone else	37.40%	935	37.97%	949.17
A3	the right to do whatever you want within the limits of morality	54.64%	1,366	53.94%	1348.45

COMPLETES 2500

Q4

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

## In your view, our rights come from

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	God	37.44%	936	37.98%	949.46
A2	government	31.96%	799	31.53%	788.33
A3	the majority	6.16%	154	6.70%	167.52
A4	the elites	1.40%	35	1.30%	32.41
A5	social traditions	6.84%	171	7.34%	183.48
A6	biological evolution	4.64%	116	4.41%	110.34
A7	not sure	8.80%	220	8.27%	206.81
A8	We don't have rights.	2.76%	69	2.47%	61.65

COMPLETES 2500

## Q5

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### In your view, humans are

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	created equal by God	65.16%	1,629	65.05%	1626.22
A2	created unequal by God	3.52%	88	3.47%	86.86
A3	created equal by evolution	16.52%	413	16.68%	416.99
A4	created unequal by evolution	6.04%	151	6.11%	152.75
A5	not sure	8.76%	219	8.69%	217.18

COMPLETES 2500

## Q6

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Which statement is closer to your own view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	What is right and wrong evolves over time based on the survival needs of a society.	43.92%	1,098	44.01%	1100.31
A2	What is truly right and wrong stays the same across time and culture.	56.08%	1,402	55.99%	1399.69

COMPLETES 2500

Q7

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

## Which statement is closer to your own view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	In our increasingly scientific and technological society, it is important to rely more on scientists and experts rather elected officials to decide public policy.	75.84%	1,896	75.45%	1886.13
A2	In our increasingly scientific and technological society, it is important to rely more on elected officials rather than scientists and experts to decide public policy.	24.16%	604	24.55%	613.87

COMPLETES 2500

Q8

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

## Which statement best describes your view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	The purposes of government are based on human nature should be unchanging.	21.12%	528	21.77%	544.27
A2	The purposes of government should change over time based on the evolving needs of society.	78.88%	1,972	78.23%	1955.73

COMPLETES 2500

Q9

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

## Which statement best describes your view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	The purpose of government is to guarantee that all persons have basic freedoms.	30.72%	768	31.31%	782.65
A2	The purpose of government is to guarantee education, medical care, and an adequate income for everyone.	12.80%	320	13.57%	339.36
A3	The purpose of government is to guarantee that all persons have basic freedoms and to guarantee education, medical care, and an adequate income for everyone.	56.48%	1,412	55.12%	1377.99

COMPLETES 2500

## Q10

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

Do you agree or disagree with this statement: Some human groups are more evolved than others.

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	Strongly agree	16.44%	411	16.07%	401.79
A2	Somewhat agree	38.28%	957	37.82%	945.46
A3	Somewhat disagree	12.72%	318	13.12%	327.97
A4	Strongly disagree	22.20%	555	23.17%	579.29
A5	Not sure	10.36%	259	9.82%	245.5

COMPLETES 2500

## Q11

TYPE: MULTIPLE SELECTION

In which of the following ways do you think human beings are equal? (mark all that apply)

#	ANSWERS	RESPONDENTS(%)	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED RESPONDENTS(%)	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	All humans are equally fit to play professional sports.	11.72%	2.56%	293	12.72%	2.77%	317.95
A2	All humans have the same aptitude for music.	10.60%	2.31%	265	11.21%	2.45%	280.35
A3	All humans are created by God.	64.08%	13.99%	1,602	63.30%	13.81%	1582.39
A4	All humans have a soul that survives death.	38.44%	8.39%	961	38.34%	8.36%	958.57
A5	All humans are fallible or sinful.	48.76%	10.64%	1,219	47.77%	10.42%	1194.18
A6	All humans have the same aptitude for math.	6.80%	1.48%	170	7.45%	1.62%	186.22
A7	All humans are equal in physical strength.	5.84%	1.27%	146	6.11%	1.33%	152.66
A8	All normally developed humans	53.04%	11.58%	1,326	53.45%	11.66%	1336.14

#	ANSWERS	RESPONDENTS(%)	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED RESPONDENTS(%)	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
	have the ability to think.						
A9	All normally developed humans have the ability to communicate through language.	48.92%	10.68%	1,223	49.03%	10.70%	1225.86
A10	All humans are equal in beauty.	21.40%	4.67%	535	21.40%	4.67%	535.01
A11	All humans have the same level of wealth.	3.88%	0.85%	97	4.28%	0.93%	107.03
A12	All normally developed humans have the ability to know right from wrong.	48.28%	10.54%	1,207	47.72%	10.41%	1192.98
A13	All humans have equal rights.	55.28%	12.07%	1,382	54.71%	11.93%	1367.72
A14	All normally developed humans have the capacity to think about God or spiritual questions.	41.12%	8.98%	1,028	40.92%	8.93%	1022.96
							COMPLETES 2500

## Q12

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Which statement is closest to your own view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	I believe that God or a universal spirit exists.	71.72%	1,793	70.66%	1766.39
A2	I am not sure whether God or a universal spirit exists.	18.96%	474	19.23%	480.74
A3	I do not believe that God or a universal spirit exists.	9.32%	233	10.11%	252.87

COMPLETES 2500

## Q14

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Generally speaking, I would describe myself as

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	conservative	27.20%	680	27.20%	679.94
A2	moderate	47.08%	1,177	47.01%	1175.31
A3	liberal or progressive	25.72%	643	25.79%	644.75

COMPLETES 2500

SURVEY NAME

# HOW AMERICANS VIEW THE AMERICAN FOUNDING SURVEY II

DATE

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

POWERED BY

 Pollfish

## Q1

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: All things considered, America remains the best nation on earth.

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	Agree	71.40%	1,785	71.35%	1783.73
A2	Disagree	15.36%	384	15.50%	387.46
A3	Unsure	13.24%	331	13.15%	328.81

COMPLETES 2500

## Q2

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Which statement comes closest to your own view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	There is no problem too large for government to solve, and no concern too small for it to care about.	25.08%	627	25.84%	645.89
A2	That government is best which governs least	20.32%	508	20.15%	503.68
A3	The sum of good government is a wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned.	54.60%	1,365	54.02%	1350.43

COMPLETES 2500

## Q4

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Which statement comes closest to your own view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	The original Constitution and Bill of Rights should be admired because they advanced human freedom and equality more than anything before them.	64.20%	1,605	63.73%	1593.31
A2	The original Constitution and Bill of Rights should not be admired because they did not end slavery or give women the right to vote.	18.88%	472	20.17%	504.3
A3	I do not know whether the original Constitution and Bill of Rights should be admired or not.	16.92%	423	16.10%	402.39

COMPLETES 2500

## Q5

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Which statement comes closest to your own view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	Despite their faults, America's Founders should be admired for how they tried to establish a government that guarantees both liberty and equal rights.	65.60%	1,640	64.03%	1600.76
A2	America's Founders should not be admired because they protected slavery, did not extend political rights to women, and voted to protect their own economic interests.	22.08%	552	23.70%	592.57
A3	I don't know whether America's Founders should be admired or not.	12.32%	308	12.27%	306.67

COMPLETES 2500

Q6

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Which statement comes closest to your own view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	Because America's Founders protected slavery, America is forever tainted by racism.	21.56%	539	22.47%	561.83
A2	By proclaiming the principles of equality and liberty, America's Founders set up a good standard for later generations to follow, and that is what Americans did by abolishing slavery and establishing civil rights for all.	78.44%	1,961	77.53%	1938.17

COMPLETES 2500

## Q7

TYPE: MATRIX, SINGLE SELECTION

## Which of the following rights are guaranteed by the Constitution?

#	ANSWERS	GUARANTEED BY THE CONSTITUTION	NOT GUARANTEED BY THE CONSTITUTION	UNSURE
A1	the freedoms of speech and press	86.36%	7.64%	6.00%
A2	the free exercise of religion	81.76%	10.40%	7.84%
A3	the freedom to associate with others who have similar beliefs	55.32%	25.80%	18.88%
A4	reproductive freedom, including the right to an abortion	22.60%	60.28%	17.12%
A5	the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances	54.48%	18.28%	27.24%
A6	the right to keep and bear arms	84.16%	9.36%	6.48%
A7	the right to government-funded healthcare	20.84%	63.72%	15.44%
A8	the right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures by the government of my home, my papers, and my belongings	66.28%	18.44%	15.28%
A9	the right to a jury trial	76.56%	12.96%	10.48%
A10	the right to government-funded education	26.40%	55.96%	17.64%
A11	the right to not have my private	48.08%	30.04%	21.88%

#	ANSWERS	GUARANTEED BY THE CONSTITUTION	NOT GUARANTEED BY THE CONSTITUTION	UNSURE
	property taken for public use without just compensation			
A12	the right to a same-sex marriage	17.88%	69.00%	13.12%
A13	the right to not have to testify against myself in a criminal trial	58.08%	20.20%	21.72%
A14	the right to have an attorney represent me when charged with a crime	65.88%	20.44%	13.68%
A15	the right to a speedy public trial	62.72%	20.72%	16.56%
A16	the right to a basic guaranteed income from the government	18.48%	66.12%	15.40%
				COMPLETES 2500

Q8

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

## Which kind of government would you prefer:

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	A government where voters make most of the decisions.	59.12%	1,478	57.78%	1444.5
A2	A government where elected officials make most of the decisions.	24.52%	613	25.71%	642.85
A3	A government where neutral experts make most of the decisions.	16.36%	409	16.51%	412.64

COMPLETES 2500

## Q9

TYPE: MATRIX, SINGLE SELECTION

Here is a list of some major figures who contributed to the founding of America as a nation. Of the people on this list, who do you admire, who do you not admire, and who do you not know enough about to have an opinion?

#	ANSWERS	ADMIRE	DO NOT ADMIRE	DO NOT KNOW ENOUGH TO HAVE AN OPINION
A1	George Washington	76.52%	12.84%	10.64%
A2	Benjamin Franklin	78.68%	11.00%	10.32%
A3	Alexander Hamilton	56.68%	14.40%	28.92%
A4	John Witherspoon	16.56%	11.84%	71.60%
A5	James Wilson	14.32%	12.96%	72.72%
A6	Thomas Jefferson	71.92%	15.48%	12.60%
A7	James Madison	52.12%	14.80%	33.08%
A8	John Jay	20.48%	13.08%	66.44%
A9	John Adams	55.48%	13.12%	31.40%
A10	Patrick Henry	38.36%	14.48%	47.16%
A11	Samuel Adams	50.92%	12.36%	36.72%
A12	Thomas Paine	37.68%	11.96%	50.36%

## Q10

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Which statement is closest to your own view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	I believe that God or a universal spirit exists.	72.04%	1,801	72.15%	1803.64
A2	I am not sure whether God or a universal spirit exists.	19.00%	475	18.72%	468.06
A3	I do not believe that God or a universal spirit exists.	8.96%	224	9.13%	228.31

COMPLETES 2500

## Q11

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Generally speaking, I would describe myself as

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	conservative	33.44%	836	33.18%	829.44
A2	moderate	43.60%	1,090	43.71%	1092.82
A3	liberal or progressive	22.96%	574	23.11%	577.73

COMPLETES 2500

SURVEY NAME

# HOW AMERICANS VIEW THE AMERICAN FOUNDING SURVEY I

DATE

Tuesday, November 11, 2025

POWERED BY

 **Pollfish**

## Q1

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

Please identify the source of the following statement: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	the U.S. Constitution	23.96%	599	24.34%	608.51
A2	the Bill of Rights	16.00%	400	16.74%	418.43
A3	the Bible	4.12%	103	4.07%	101.83
A4	the Declaration of Independence	45.52%	1,138	44.70%	1117.52
A5	not sure	8.84%	221	8.60%	214.89
A6	none of the above	1.56%	39	1.55%	38.81

COMPLETES 2500

## Q2

TYPE: MATRIX, SINGLE SELECTION

Please rate whether you think each statement below is true, false, neither true or false, or you are not sure.

#	ANSWERS	TRUE	FALSE	NEITHER TRUE OR FALSE	NOT SURE
A1	All human beings are created equal.	77.56%	13.36%	7.72%	1.36%
A2	All human beings have an unalienable right to life.	84.60%	5.60%	6.60%	3.20%
A3	All human beings have an unalienable right to liberty.	84.88%	5.56%	6.80%	2.76%
A4	All human beings have an unalienable right to the pursuit of happiness.	89.00%	4.48%	4.64%	1.88%

COMPLETES 2500

### Q3

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

## Liberty is best defined as:

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	the right to do whatever you want	7.96%	199	8.09%	202.37
A2	the right to do whatever you want if it does not hurt someone else	37.40%	935	37.97%	949.17
A3	the right to do whatever you want within the limits of morality	54.64%	1,366	53.94%	1348.45

COMPLETES 2500

Q4

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

## In your view, our rights come from

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	God	37.44%	936	37.98%	949.46
A2	government	31.96%	799	31.53%	788.33
A3	the majority	6.16%	154	6.70%	167.52
A4	the elites	1.40%	35	1.30%	32.41
A5	social traditions	6.84%	171	7.34%	183.48
A6	biological evolution	4.64%	116	4.41%	110.34
A7	not sure	8.80%	220	8.27%	206.81
A8	We don't have rights.	2.76%	69	2.47%	61.65

COMPLETES 2500

## Q5

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### In your view, humans are

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	created equal by God	65.16%	1,629	65.05%	1626.22
A2	created unequal by God	3.52%	88	3.47%	86.86
A3	created equal by evolution	16.52%	413	16.68%	416.99
A4	created unequal by evolution	6.04%	151	6.11%	152.75
A5	not sure	8.76%	219	8.69%	217.18

COMPLETES 2500

## Q6

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Which statement is closer to your own view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	What is right and wrong evolves over time based on the survival needs of a society.	43.92%	1,098	44.01%	1100.31
A2	What is truly right and wrong stays the same across time and culture.	56.08%	1,402	55.99%	1399.69

COMPLETES 2500

Q7

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

## Which statement is closer to your own view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	In our increasingly scientific and technological society, it is important to rely more on scientists and experts rather elected officials to decide public policy.	75.84%	1,896	75.45%	1886.13
A2	In our increasingly scientific and technological society, it is important to rely more on elected officials rather than scientists and experts to decide public policy.	24.16%	604	24.55%	613.87

COMPLETES 2500

Q8

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

## Which statement best describes your view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	The purposes of government are based on human nature should be unchanging.	21.12%	528	21.77%	544.27
A2	The purposes of government should change over time based on the evolving needs of society.	78.88%	1,972	78.23%	1955.73

COMPLETES 2500

Q9

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Which statement best describes your view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	The purpose of government is to guarantee that all persons have basic freedoms.	30.72%	768	31.31%	782.65
A2	The purpose of government is to guarantee education, medical care, and an adequate income for everyone.	12.80%	320	13.57%	339.36
A3	The purpose of government is to guarantee that all persons have basic freedoms and to guarantee education, medical care, and an adequate income for everyone.	56.48%	1,412	55.12%	1377.99

COMPLETES 2500

## Q10

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

Do you agree or disagree with this statement: Some human groups are more evolved than others.

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	Strongly agree	16.44%	411	16.07%	401.79
A2	Somewhat agree	38.28%	957	37.82%	945.46
A3	Somewhat disagree	12.72%	318	13.12%	327.97
A4	Strongly disagree	22.20%	555	23.17%	579.29
A5	Not sure	10.36%	259	9.82%	245.5

COMPLETES 2500

## Q11

TYPE: MULTIPLE SELECTION

In which of the following ways do you think human beings are equal? (mark all that apply)

#	ANSWERS	RESPONDENTS(%)	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED RESPONDENTS(%)	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	All humans are equally fit to play professional sports.	11.72%	2.56%	293	12.72%	2.77%	317.95
A2	All humans have the same aptitude for music.	10.60%	2.31%	265	11.21%	2.45%	280.35
A3	All humans are created by God.	64.08%	13.99%	1,602	63.30%	13.81%	1582.39
A4	All humans have a soul that survives death.	38.44%	8.39%	961	38.34%	8.36%	958.57
A5	All humans are fallible or sinful.	48.76%	10.64%	1,219	47.77%	10.42%	1194.18
A6	All humans have the same aptitude for math.	6.80%	1.48%	170	7.45%	1.62%	186.22
A7	All humans are equal in physical strength.	5.84%	1.27%	146	6.11%	1.33%	152.66
A8	All normally developed humans	53.04%	11.58%	1,326	53.45%	11.66%	1336.14

#	ANSWERS	RESPONDENTS(%)	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED RESPONDENTS(%)	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
	have the ability to think.						
A9	All normally developed humans have the ability to communicate through language.	48.92%	10.68%	1,223	49.03%	10.70%	1225.86
A10	All humans are equal in beauty.	21.40%	4.67%	535	21.40%	4.67%	535.01
A11	All humans have the same level of wealth.	3.88%	0.85%	97	4.28%	0.93%	107.03
A12	All normally developed humans have the ability to know right from wrong.	48.28%	10.54%	1,207	47.72%	10.41%	1192.98
A13	All humans have equal rights.	55.28%	12.07%	1,382	54.71%	11.93%	1367.72
A14	All normally developed humans have the capacity to think about God or spiritual questions.	41.12%	8.98%	1,028	40.92%	8.93%	1022.96
							COMPLETES 2500

## Q12

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Which statement is closest to your own view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	I believe that God or a universal spirit exists.	71.72%	1,793	70.66%	1766.39
A2	I am not sure whether God or a universal spirit exists.	18.96%	474	19.23%	480.74
A3	I do not believe that God or a universal spirit exists.	9.32%	233	10.11%	252.87

COMPLETES 2500

## Q14

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Generally speaking, I would describe myself as

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	conservative	27.20%	680	27.20%	679.94
A2	moderate	47.08%	1,177	47.01%	1175.31
A3	liberal or progressive	25.72%	643	25.79%	644.75

COMPLETES 2500

SURVEY NAME

# HOW AMERICANS VIEW THE AMERICAN FOUNDING SURVEY II

DATE

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

POWERED BY

 Pollfish

## Q1

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: All things considered, America remains the best nation on earth.

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	Agree	71.40%	1,785	71.35%	1783.73
A2	Disagree	15.36%	384	15.50%	387.46
A3	Unsure	13.24%	331	13.15%	328.81

COMPLETES 2500

## Q2

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Which statement comes closest to your own view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	There is no problem too large for government to solve, and no concern too small for it to care about.	25.08%	627	25.84%	645.89
A2	That government is best which governs least	20.32%	508	20.15%	503.68
A3	The sum of good government is a wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned.	54.60%	1,365	54.02%	1350.43

COMPLETES 2500

## Q4

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Which statement comes closest to your own view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	The original Constitution and Bill of Rights should be admired because they advanced human freedom and equality more than anything before them.	64.20%	1,605	63.73%	1593.31
A2	The original Constitution and Bill of Rights should not be admired because they did not end slavery or give women the right to vote.	18.88%	472	20.17%	504.3
A3	I do not know whether the original Constitution and Bill of Rights should be admired or not.	16.92%	423	16.10%	402.39

COMPLETES 2500

## Q5

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Which statement comes closest to your own view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	Despite their faults, America's Founders should be admired for how they tried to establish a government that guarantees both liberty and equal rights.	65.60%	1,640	64.03%	1600.76
A2	America's Founders should not be admired because they protected slavery, did not extend political rights to women, and voted to protect their own economic interests.	22.08%	552	23.70%	592.57
A3	I don't know whether America's Founders should be admired or not.	12.32%	308	12.27%	306.67

COMPLETES 2500

## Q6

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Which statement comes closest to your own view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	Because America's Founders protected slavery, America is forever tainted by racism.	21.56%	539	22.47%	561.83
A2	By proclaiming the principles of equality and liberty, America's Founders set up a good standard for later generations to follow, and that is what Americans did by abolishing slavery and establishing civil rights for all.	78.44%	1,961	77.53%	1938.17

COMPLETES 2500

## Q7

TYPE: MATRIX, SINGLE SELECTION

## Which of the following rights are guaranteed by the Constitution?

#	ANSWERS	GUARANTEED BY THE CONSTITUTION	NOT GUARANTEED BY THE CONSTITUTION	UNSURE
A1	the freedoms of speech and press	86.36%	7.64%	6.00%
A2	the free exercise of religion	81.76%	10.40%	7.84%
A3	the freedom to associate with others who have similar beliefs	55.32%	25.80%	18.88%
A4	reproductive freedom, including the right to an abortion	22.60%	60.28%	17.12%
A5	the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances	54.48%	18.28%	27.24%
A6	the right to keep and bear arms	84.16%	9.36%	6.48%
A7	the right to government-funded healthcare	20.84%	63.72%	15.44%
A8	the right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures by the government of my home, my papers, and my belongings	66.28%	18.44%	15.28%
A9	the right to a jury trial	76.56%	12.96%	10.48%
A10	the right to government-funded education	26.40%	55.96%	17.64%
A11	the right to not have my private	48.08%	30.04%	21.88%

#	ANSWERS	GUARANTEED BY THE CONSTITUTION	NOT GUARANTEED BY THE CONSTITUTION	UNSURE
	property taken for public use without just compensation			
A12	the right to a same-sex marriage	17.88%	69.00%	13.12%
A13	the right to not have to testify against myself in a criminal trial	58.08%	20.20%	21.72%
A14	the right to have an attorney represent me when charged with a crime	65.88%	20.44%	13.68%
A15	the right to a speedy public trial	62.72%	20.72%	16.56%
A16	the right to a basic guaranteed income from the government	18.48%	66.12%	15.40%
				COMPLETES 2500

Q8

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

## Which kind of government would you prefer:

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	A government where voters make most of the decisions.	59.12%	1,478	57.78%	1444.5
A2	A government where elected officials make most of the decisions.	24.52%	613	25.71%	642.85
A3	A government where neutral experts make most of the decisions.	16.36%	409	16.51%	412.64

COMPLETES 2500

## Q9

TYPE: MATRIX, SINGLE SELECTION

Here is a list of some major figures who contributed to the founding of America as a nation. Of the people on this list, who do you admire, who do you not admire, and who do you not know enough about to have an opinion?

#	ANSWERS	ADMIRE	DO NOT ADMIRE	DO NOT KNOW ENOUGH TO HAVE AN OPINION
A1	George Washington	76.52%	12.84%	10.64%
A2	Benjamin Franklin	78.68%	11.00%	10.32%
A3	Alexander Hamilton	56.68%	14.40%	28.92%
A4	John Witherspoon	16.56%	11.84%	71.60%
A5	James Wilson	14.32%	12.96%	72.72%
A6	Thomas Jefferson	71.92%	15.48%	12.60%
A7	James Madison	52.12%	14.80%	33.08%
A8	John Jay	20.48%	13.08%	66.44%
A9	John Adams	55.48%	13.12%	31.40%
A10	Patrick Henry	38.36%	14.48%	47.16%
A11	Samuel Adams	50.92%	12.36%	36.72%
A12	Thomas Paine	37.68%	11.96%	50.36%

## Q10

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Which statement is closest to your own view?

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	I believe that God or a universal spirit exists.	72.04%	1,801	72.15%	1803.64
A2	I am not sure whether God or a universal spirit exists.	19.00%	475	18.72%	468.06
A3	I do not believe that God or a universal spirit exists.	8.96%	224	9.13%	228.31

COMPLETES 2500

## Q11

TYPE: SINGLE SELECTION

### Generally speaking, I would describe myself as

#	ANSWERS	ANSWERS(%)	COUNT	STRATIFIED ANSWERS(%)	STRATIFIED COUNT
A1	conservative	33.44%	836	33.18%	829.44
A2	moderate	43.60%	1,090	43.71%	1092.82
A3	liberal or progressive	22.96%	574	23.11%	577.73

COMPLETES 2500