

American freedom

[Philosophy](#), [Freedom](#)



The establishment of American society traces its roots back to the fifteenth century when Columbus discovered the existence of unknown land on this way to India. Since that time many people from all over the world have been taking refuge in the USA escaping from political or religious persecution. It has led to outstanding ethnic diversity where human skin color varies from black, brown, and black to red and yellow. Depending on their background former "newcomers" who have become ancestors of new American generations are called "African Americans", "Asian Americans", "Russian Americans", etc.

Obviously, highly mentioned representatives of world's cultures have their own political and religious preferences that have resulted in an increasing number of different confessions (Buddhists, Catholics, Muslims, etc.) and parties (Democrats, Communists, Republicans, Socialists, etc.). However, American nation is characterized by the following distinct features common to overwhelming majority of people: • Privacy and Individualism are the most important aspects of social independence all Americans value the most.

Since their childhood Americans have been taught to consider themselves as independent part of a nation, social group, family, etc. They are used to make their own decisions but at the same time may seldom admit that there exist a number of external factors that greatly influence their decision making skills: stereotypes, mass media, social institutions, etc. They reject the idea of being similar to anybody else as they always strive to be different and unique.

Newly arrived immigrants or those who accept Americans as guests from abroad may get a better picture of American culture and deeper insight into

their beliefs and values only recognizing their true belief in freedom and self-reliance. The majority of Americans believe that in order to survive in modern world of commercialization and skim the cream off one should be free, independent, and self-reliant in terms of thoughts and decisions. This notion is also closely associated with how Americans treat their parents.

More often than not, they show less intimate relationships with family members than other representatives of any other culture. They believe that biological/historical circumstances that brought together the parents and the child reach their purpose during child's upbringing and adolescence after which the parent/child relationships decline and grow weaker. In some cases the connection may be totally lost especially taking into consideration the fact of vast territory of the country.

Privacy is another part of American identity which is of great value when people want to psychologically "replenish" themselves or take their time to think about life situation, etc. • How Americans perceive themselves? Typically, living in the USA its citizens never see themselves as representatives of their own country. Instead, they would rather compare themselves to people who are different from others regardless of the fact whether their "competitors" are of American or foreign origin.

Many Americans make statements saying that their culture is not distinct enough to describe as they frequently visualize culture as a number of random traditions on the surface of society which can be distinct and common only in other cultures. Separate Americans sometimes believe that they established their priorities by themselves, rather than having had their thoughts and the considerations on which they are founded obtruded on

them by their own culture. When asked to describe common features of American culture the majority of Americans fail to give a descent answer in some cases even rejecting the idea of “ American culture” as a notion.

Meanwhile, some Americans may gladly express their generalized their opinions about different groups and subcommunities within their own culture. Southerners have stereotypical views (generalized, simplified notions) about Northerners, and the other way round. There exists a wide range of traditionally set views about people from the country, from big cities, from inland, from the coasts, from the Southeast, religious and ethnic groups and those who live in Oregon, Texas, Big Apple, California, Arizona, Florida, Hawaii, etc.

- Materialism and Achievement. “ She is a hard-working person,” one American may express his/her opinion towards another person, or “ he does his job well. ” These phrases denote the usual American’s respect for people who approaches a task thoroughly and persistently, brining it to a victorious finale. In addition, these phrases also denote respect for achievers, those people who do their best and put much effort to achieve their goals. Foreigners frequently have a feeling that American people work harder than people from abroad expect them to work.

(More likely these visitors have been extremely subjective to American mass media production such as movies and TV programs which would typically show audience less working people but more of those who hang out and chill out driving cars and having dates). Regardless of the fact that some of the “ Protestant” professional ethic may have lost some of its influence on Americans, there is still a strong faith that the perfect person must be a “

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hard worker. " A hard worker " gets everything right" in terms of his/her deadline, organizational skills, high standards of quality.

Typically, Americans are keen on action. They really believe it is vital to devote much energy to their work or to other daily routine responsibilities. Moreover, they do believe they should be occupied most of the time. They are typically not satisfied, as representatives from many other cultures are, only to sit and have a talk with other people. They get bored and lose patience. They think they should be occupied with something, or at least make plans and arrangements for future. • Directness and Assertiveness.

Americans, as has been indicated above, normally take themselves as sincere, open-minded, and straight in their relationships with other people. Americans will often talk openly and straightly to others about things they do not like. They will make attempts to do so in a style they call " constructive," which means a style which the other person will not accept as offensive or improper. If they do not talk sincerely about what is on their thoughts, they will frequently communicate their reaction in nonverbal way (no words, only facial expressions, body positions, and gestures).

They are not aware, unlike people from many Asian countries are, that they are supposed to mask or sometimes hide their emotional reaction. Their phrases, the tone of their voice, or their facial expressions will more often than not show when their feelings of anger, unhappiness, confusion, or happiness. They think it is okay to show these feelings at least within limits. The majority of Asians feel embarrassed around Americans who are showing a strong emotional response to something.

On the other hand, Latinos and Arabs are usually inclined to exhibit their emotions more candidly than Americans do, and to consider Americans as unemotional and cold. However, Americans are frequently less straight and open than they recognize it. There exist in fact many restrictions on their desire to discuss things honestly. Regardless of these limitations, Americans are usually more direct and sincere than people from many other cultures. They normally do not try to hide their emotions and are much less worried with “ face” - avoiding awkwardness to themselves or others.

To them, being “ open” is typically more important than preserving harmony in interpersonal relationships. Americans use the words “ assertive” or “ hostile” to illustrate a person who is overly assertive in expressing thoughts or making requests. The line between acceptable assertiveness and unacceptable aggressiveness is difficult to draw. • For American culture, time is a “ resource,” like water or coal, which can be used properly or poorly. “ Time is money. ” “ You only get so much time in life, so use it wisely.

” The future will not be improved comparing to the past or the present, as Americans are used to take things, unless people use their time for constructive and promising activities. Therefore, Americans admire a “ hard-working organized” people who write down things to be done and a schedule for doing them. The ideal person must be punctual (i. e. arrive at the scheduled time for event) and is considerate of other people’s time (that is, does not “ waste people’s time” with conversation or other activity with no visible, beneficial outcome). References Brown, J. (2006). Americans. New York: Pocket Books.