BEST QUOTES ON CIVICS

It's so deeply disturbing to me that half of the eligible voters don't vote in this country. We talk about how divided the country is. The truth is, we don't even know. We just know what the half that voted thought. I'm a big fan of the Australian approach—there it's required by law that you vote.

—Christie Hefner

The biggest need in politics and government today is for people of integrity and courage, who will do what they believe is right and not worry about the political consequences to themselves.

--Neva Beck Bosone

It's not the hand that signs the laws that holds the destiny of America. It's the hand that casts the ballot.

—Harry S. Truman

Someone struggled for your right to vote. Use it.

—Susan B. Anthony

My kind of loyalty was loyalty to one's country, not to its institutions or its office-holders. The country is the real thing, the substantial thing, the eternal thing; it is the thing to watch over, and care for, and be loyal to; institutions are extraneous, they are its mere clothing, and clothing can wear out, become ragged, cease to be comfortable, cease to protect the body from winter, disease, and death.

--Mark Twain

People often say that, in a democracy, decisions are made by a majority of the people. Of course, that is not true. Decisions are made by a majority of those who make themselves heard and who vote—a very different thing.

--Walter H. Judd

There is no liberal America, no conservative America, no black America, no white America, no Latino America, no Asian America, only 'the United States of America.'

—Barack Obama

The penalty good men pay for indifference to public affairs is to be ruled by evil men.

--Plato

'Our country right or wrong.' When right to be kept right. When wrong to be put right.

--Carl Schurz

Today the world is the victim of propaganda because people are not intellectually competent. More than anything the United States needs effective citizens competent to do their own thinking.

--William Mather Lewis

The ignorance of one voter in a democracy impairs the security of all.

--John F. Kennedy

Those of us who shout the loudest about Americanism in making character assassinations are all too frequently those who, by our own words and acts, ignore some of the basic principles of Americanism—

The right to criticize.
The right to hold unpopular beliefs.
The right to protest.
The right of independent thought.

--Margaret Chase Smith

The biggest argument against Democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter.

--Winston Churchill

The very essence of a free government consists in considering offices as public trusts, bestowed for the good of the country, and not for the benefit of an individual or a party.

--John C. Calhoun

There is no group in America that can withstand the force of an aroused public opinion.

--Franklin D. Roosevelt

The idea that you can merchandise candidates for high office like breakfast cereal—that you can gather votes like box tops—is, I think, the ultimate indignity to the democratic process.

--Adlai Stevenson

The voters don't determine elections. Contributors do!

--Congressman Wilson in *Charlie Wilson's War*

Good citizens can be counted on to consistently demonstrate honesty, respect, courage, and other core citizenship values in everyday life. Children who grow up to be productive and contributing citizens are much more than academically successful. The world of work requires individuals who are capable of managing their own health and well being, and who have the skills necessary for problem-solving, self-direction, self-motivation, self-reflection, and life-long learning.

—*Wisconsin Department of Public Education*

On any complex issue, poorly informed voters will usually outnumber the well informed. This means that the result of a popular vote is more likely to represent the views of the uninformed than the views of the informed. It also means that complex questions must be simplified to be voted on.

—Jonathan Rauch

To sin by silence when they should protest makes cowards of men.

--Abraham Lincoln

So why vote? Because it is your voice. It is essential that all citizens register and vote because:

- When voters refuse to cast ballots in an election, fewer votes are required for a majority. So our future is decided by the smaller number of people—those feeling most strongly about the issues.
- Currently, less than 15% of Americans approve of the job that Congress is doing. Voting is our best chance to express our dissatisfaction. Many members of Congress are running in contested elections.
- Voting is our best way of affecting the quality of our future. Decisions made by those who are elected will affect our: National security; Appointments to the Supreme Court; Environment; Gun legislation; Social safety nets for senior as well as medium and lower age earners; Voting rights; Healthcare availability; Reproductive rights; Marriage equality; Campaign finance; Education; The arts; Immigration.

—Mary Kubasak, *League of Women Voters*

We do not consider patriotism desirable if it contradicts civilized behavior.

—Friedrich Durrenmatt

The Holocaust illustrates the consequences of prejudice, racism and stereotyping on a society. It forces us to examine the responsibilities of citizenship and confront the powerful ramifications of indifference and inaction.

—Tim Holden

I look upon the whole world as my fatherland. I look upon true patriotism as the brotherhood of man and the service of all to all.

--Helen Keller

Laws can embody standards; governments can enforce laws—but the final task is not a task for government. It is a task for each and every one of us. Every time we turn our heads the other way when we see the law flouted—when we tolerate what we know to be wrong—when we close our eyes and ears to the corrupt because we are too busy, or too frightened—when we fail to speak up and speak out—we strike a blow against freedom and decency and justice.

--Robert F. Kennedy

The citizen who doesn't vote because he wants nothing to do with crooked politics, does have something to do with it.

--Evan Esar

America is a land where a citizen will cross the ocean to fight for democracy, but won't cross the street to vote in a national election.

--Bill Vaughan

A lot of voters always cast their ballot for the candidate who seems to them to be one of the people. That means he must have the same superstitions, the same unbalanced prejudices, and the same lack of understanding of public finances that are characteristic of the majority. A better choice would be a candidate who has a closer understanding and a better education than the majority. Too much voting is based on affability rather than on ability.

--William Feather

The voice of protest, of warning, of appeal is never more needed than when the clamor of fife and drum, echoed by the press and too often by the pulpit, is bidding all men fall in and keep step and obey in silence the tyrannous word of command. Then, more than ever, it is the duty of the good citizen not to be silent.

--Charles Eliot Norton

The world is a dangerous place to live—not because of the people who are evil but because of the people who don't do anything about it.

--Albert Einstein

At the bottom of all the tributes paid to democracy is the little man, walking into the little booth, with a little pencil, making a little cross on a little bit of paper—no amount of rhetoric or voluminous discussion can possibly diminish the overwhelming importance of the point.

--Winston Churchill

Though the 'informed citizen' is often claimed to be a necessary ingredient of democratic government, most citizens in our society are not very well-informed.

--Stuart Oskamp

To make us love our country, our country ought to be lovely.

--Edmund Burke

We should behave toward our country as women behave toward the men they love. A loving wife will do anything for her husband except stop criticizing and trying to improve him.

--J. B. Priestley

Inside the polling booth every American man and woman stands as the equal of every other American man and woman. There they have no superiors. There they have no masters save their own minds and consciences.

--Franklin D. Roosevelt

The vote is the most powerful instrument ever devised by man for breaking down injustice and destroying the terrible walls which imprison men because they are different from other men.

--Lyndon B. Johnson

If men and women of capacity refuse to take part in politics and government, they condemn themselves, as well as the people, to the punishment of living under bad government.

--Senator Sam J. Ervin

Bad officials are elected by good citizens who do not vote.

--George Jean Nathan

The health of a democratic society may be measured by the quality of functions performed by private citizens.

--Alexis de Tocqueville

The worth of a state, in the long run, is the worth of the individuals composing it.

--John Stuart Mill

There can be no daily democracy without daily citizenship.

--Ralph Nader

Each man must for himself alone decide what is right and what is wrong, which course is patriotic and which isn't. You cannot shirk this and be a man. To decide against your conviction is to be an unqualified and inexcusable traitor, both to yourself and to your country, let men label you as they may.

--Mark Twain

Pessimism in a citizen is like cowardice in a soldier.

--Adlai Stevenson

As soon as any man says of the affairs of state, 'What does it matter to me?' the state may be given up as lost.

--Jean Jacques Rousseau

Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations may she always be in the right; but our country, right or wrong.

--Stephen Decatur

My country right or wrong, is a thing no patriot would think of saying except in a desperate case. It is like saying, 'My mother, drunk or sober!'

--G. K. Chesterton

We are citizens of the world; and the tragedy of our times is that we do not know this.

--Woodrow Wilson

People who develop the habit of thinking of themselves as world citizens are fulfilling the first requirement of sanity in our time.

--Norman Cousins

A community is like a ship; every one ought to be prepared to take the helm.

--Henrik Ibsen

When boys and girls salute the flag, they do not merely express their pride that it is a flag honored over the world. They ought to remember that the flag represents the country to which they owe duties in every hour of their lives. All the time they are receiving blessings from that country, and all the time they have duties to that country.

--Edward Everett Hale

If our country is worth dying for in time of war let us resolve that it is truly worth living for in time of peace.

--Hamilton Fish

A nation is great not through dams in its rivers or its ships on the sea or the deposits in its banks. It is great by the moral fiber and character of its citizens. Nations die when these weaken.

--Herbert Hoover

A private man, however successful in his own dealing, if his country perish is involved in her destruction; but if he be an unprosperous citizen of a prosperous city, he is much more likely to recover. Seeing, then, that States can bear the misfortunes of individuals, but individuals cannot bear the misfortunes of States, let us all stand by our country.

--Thucydides

Patriotism is your conviction that this country is superior to all other countries because you were born in it.

--George Bernard Shaw

The Old Stone Cross

A statesman is an easy man,
He tells his lies by rote;
A journalist makes up his lies
And takes you by the throat;
So stay at home and drink your beer
And let the neighbors vote.

--William Butler Yeats

American youth attributes much more importance to arriving at driver's license age than at voting age.

--Marshall McLuhan

It is not always the same thing to be a good man and a good citizen.

--Aristotle

Those self-important fathers of their country
Think they're above the people. Why they're nothing!
The citizen is infinitely wiser.

--Euripides

To educate the masses politically is to make the totality of the nation a reality to each citizen. It is to make the history of the nation part of the personal experience of each of its citizens.

--Frantz Fanon

Citizenship is man's basic right for it is nothing less than the right to have rights. Remove this priceless possession and there remains a stateless person, disgraced and degraded in the eyes of his countrymen.

--Justice Earl Warren

Whatever makes men good Christians, makes them good citizens.

--Daniel Webster

The true test of civilization is, not the census, nor the size of cities, not the crops—no, but the kind of man the country turns out.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson

Each citizen should play his part in the community according to his individual gifts.

--Plato

Each citizen in a well-ordered community has his own task which it is his duty to carry out.

--Plato

Born a citizen and member of a free sovereign state, and with whatever feeble influence my voice can have in public affairs, my right to vote compels me to accept the duty of informing myself of these things.

--J. J. Rousseau

Political action is the highest responsibility of a citizen.

--John F. Kennedy

He who loves not his home and country which he has seen, how shall he love humanity in general which he has not seen?

--William Ralph Inge

Not for the flag
Of any land because myself was born there
Will I give up my life.
But I will love that land where man is free,
And that will I defend.

--Edna St. Vincent Millay

Patriotism is not a short and frenzied outburst of emotion but the tranquil and steady dedication of a lifetime.

--Adlai Stevenson

Patriotism is a lively sense of responsibility. Nationalism is a silly cock crowing on its own dunghill.

--Richard Aldington

I am a citizen of the world.

--Diogenes the Cynic

Those who stay away from the election think that one vote will do no good: 'Tis but one step more to think one vote will do no harm.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson

Nobody will ever deprive the American people of the right to vote except the American people themselves--and the only way they could do that is by not voting.

--Franklin D. Roosevelt

You're not to be so blind with patriotism that you can't face reality. Wrong is wrong, no matter who does it or says it.

--Malcolm X

Nothing should be more dear or more sacred than the love and respect I owe to my country.

--François Auguste
de Thou

He who loves not his country can love nothing.

—Lord Byron

Love of country is like the love of a woman—he loves her best who seeks to bestow on her the highest good.

--Felix Adler

Patriotism is a kind of religion; it is the egg from which wars are hatched.

--Guy de Maupassant

Men love their country, not because it is great, but because it is their own.

--Seneca

People vote their resentment, not their appreciation. The average man does not vote for anything, but against something.

--William Bennett Munro

Politicians are as good as you are, for the way you vote creates politicians.

—Unknown

The test of what is right in politics is not the will of the people, but the good of the people.

—John Stuart Mill

Ants are good citizens—they place group interests first.

--Clarence Day

Every citizen should support the government when final action is taken, whether he approves of the action or not.

--W. J. Bryan

A man's country is not just a certain area of land. It is a principle, and patriotism is loyalty to that principle.

--George William Curtis

The guy who never votes is the first to tell you what's wrong with the government.

--Unknown

The things that the flag stands for were created by the experiences of a great people. Everything that it stands for was written by their lives. The flag is the embodiment, not of sentiment, but of history. It represents the experiences made by men and women, the experiences of those who do and live under that flag.

--Woodrow Wilson

The first requisite of a good citizen in this Republic of ours is that he shall be able and willing to pull his weight.

--Theodore Roosevelt

You can't appreciate ...Old Glory till you see it hanging on a broomstick on the shanty of a consul in a foreign town.

--O. Henry

I believe in the United States of America as a Government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a republic, a sovereign Nation of many sovereign States; a perfect Union one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes. I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it, to support its *Constitution*, to obey its laws, to respect its flag, and to defend it against all enemies.

--William Tyler Page

One of the great attractions of patriotism—it fulfills our worst wishes. In the person of our nation we are able, vicariously, to bully and cheat. Bully and cheat, what's more, with a feeling that we are profoundly virtuous.

--Aldous Huxley

The noblest motive is the public good.

--Virgil

Patriotism is the willingness to kill and be killed for trivial reasons.

--Bertrand Russell

You can give a voter information, but you can't make them think.

—Malka Ann Older

One way for voters to get better government is to vote for the charisma of principle instead of the charisma of personality.

--Ivan Hill

Love for one's country which is not part of one's love for humanity is not love, but idolatrous worship.

--Erich Fromm

The worth of the state, in the long run, is the worth of the individuals composing it.

--John Stuart Mill

You have the God-given right to kick the government around—don't hesitate to do so.

--Edmund Muske

No man is entitled to the blessings of freedom unless he be vigilant in its preservation.

--Douglas MacArthur

A man who neglects his duty as a citizen is not entitled to his rights as a citizen.

--Tiorio

In a democracy, the individual enjoys not only the ultimate power but carries the ultimate responsibility.

--Norman Cousins

I have no country to fight for: my country is the earth, and I am a citizen of the world.

--Eugene V. Debs

Now the trumpet summons us again—not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need—not as a call to battle, though embattled we are—but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle year in and year out, 'rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation'—a struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty and war itself.

--John Fitzgerald Kennedy

Citizenship consists in the service of the country.

--Jawaharlal Nehru

Voting is the least arduous of a citizen's duties. He has the prior and harder duty of making up his mind.

--Ralph Barton Perry

Every good citizen makes his country's honor his own, and cherishes it not only as precious but as sacred. He is willing to risk his life in its defense and is conscious that he gains protection while he gives it.

--Andrew Jackson

Citizenship comes first today in our crowded world … No man can enjoy the privileges of education and thereafter with a clear conscience break his contract with society. To respect that contract is to be mature, to strengthen it is to be a good citizen, to do more than your share under it is noble.

--Isaiah Bowman

[The founders] knew that democracies were inherently fragile and that the only way you could sustain a democracy was by having an educated populace.

—Michael J. Barsanti

Let us at all times remember that all American citizens are brothers of a common country, and should dwell together in bonds of fraternal feeling.

--Abraham Lincoln

The tyranny of a prince in an oligarchy is not so dangerous to the public welfare as the apathy of a citizen in a democracy.

—Charles de Montesquieu

The state is the servant of the citizen, and not his master.

--John F. Kennedy

Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must, like men, undergo the fatigue of supporting it.

--Thomas Paine

Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country. ...ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.

--John F. Kennedy

Who is the forgotten man? He is the clean, quiet, virtuous domestic citizen who pays his debts and his taxes and is never heard of outside his little circle....He works, he votes, generally he prays, but his chief business in life is to pay.

--William Graham Sumner

The job of a citizen is to keep his mouth open.

--Gunter Grass

How little do my countrymen know what precious blessings they are in possession of and which no other people on earth enjoy.

--Thomas Jefferson

Every private citizen has a public responsibility.

--Myra Janco Daniels

The man who has not raised himself to be a soldier, and the woman who has not raised her boy to be a soldier for the right, neither one of them is entitled to citizenship in the Republic.

--Theodore Roosevelt

Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel.

--Samuel Johnson

Patriotism is often an arbitrary veneration of real estate above principles.

--G. J. Nathan

You'll never have a quiet world till you knock the patriotism out of the human race.

—George Bernard Shaw

It would therefore seem obvious that patriotism as a feeling is a bad and harmful feeling, and as a doctrine is a stupid doctrine. For it is clear that if each people and each State considers itself the best of peoples and States, they all dwell in a gross and harmful delusion.

—Leo Tolstoy

Patriotism has become a mere national self assertion, a sentimentality of flag-cheering with no constructive duties.

--H. G. Wells

I never was a good son or a good brother or a good patriot in the sense of thinking that my mother and my sister and my native country were better than other people's, because I happened to belong to them.

—George Bernard Shaw

All the citizens of a state cannot be equally powerful, but they may be equally free.

--Voltaire

One of the best ways to get yourself a reputation as a dangerous citizen these days is to go about repeating the very phrases which our founding fathers used in the great struggle for independence.

--Charles A. Beard

The wise and clever politician makes the passions and prejudices of his constituents one of his principle assets. Nearly all people vote not according to the best interests of the community, or even according to their own best interest as decided by calm and logical reasoning, but according to their passions and prejudices.

--J. H. Wallis

Every miserable fool who has nothing at all of which he can be proud, adopts, as a last resource, pride in the nation to which he belongs; he is ready and glad to defend all its faults and follies tooth and nail, thus reimbursing himself for his own inferiority.

--Arthur Schopenhauer

Citizen participation is a device whereby public officials induce nonpublic individuals to act in a way the officials desire.

--Daniel Patrick Moynihan

There shall be no differences, save by merit of character, by merit of ability, by merit of service to country. Those are the true tests of value of any man or woman.

--Annie Wood Besant

Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

--Margaret Mead

The most important office is that of private citizen.

--Louis D. Brandeis

What makes a nation great is not primarily its great men, but the stature of its innumerable mediocre ones.

--José Ortega y Gasset

Voting is the first duty of democracy.

--Lyndon B. Johnson

If a man be gracious, and courteous to strangers, it shows he is a citizen of the world.

--Sir Francis Bacon

Enlightened loyalty requires that each citizen take the trouble to learn about, to discuss, to think through, the crucial issues of our time.

--Lyndon B. Johnson

Anyone who takes it on himself, on his own authority to break a bad law, thereby authorizes everybody else to break the good news.

--Denis Diderot

A strict observance of the written laws is doubtless one of the high duties of a good citizen, but it is not the highest. The laws of necessity, of self-preservation, of saving our country when in danger, are of higher obligation.

--Thomas Jefferson

Presidents learn—perhaps sooner than others—that our destiny is fashioned by what all of us do, by the deeds and desires of each citizen, as one tiny drop of water after another ultimately makes a big river.

--Lyndon B. Johnson

Political activity is the highest responsibility of a citizen.

--John F. Kennedy

No man can be a good citizen unless he has a wage more than sufficient to cover the bare cost of living, and hours of labor short enough so that after his day's work is done he will have time and energy to bear his share in the management of the community, to help in carrying the general load. We keep countless men from being good citizens by the conditions of life with which we surround them.

--Theodore Roosevelt

A good citizen doesn't rely on government. Government relies on him.

--Unknown

The more you take part in government, the less government will take part of you.

--Unknown

I myself am a part of democracy—I myself must accept responsibilities. Democracy is not merely a privilege to be enjoyed—it is a trust to keep and maintain.

--Stephen Vincent Benet

The fate of the country...does not depend on what kind of paper you drop into the ballot box once a year, but on what kind of man you drop from your chamber into the street every morning.

--Henry David Thoreau

I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country.

--Nathan Hale

The purpose of freedom is to create it for others.

--Bernard Malamud

A thoughtful mind, when it sees a nation's flag, sees not the flag only, but the Nation itself; and whatever may be its symbols, its insignia, he reads chiefly in the flag of the Government, the principles, the truths, the history which belongs to the Nation that sets it forth.

--Henry Ward Beecher

The greatest glory of a free-born people is to transmit that freedom to their children.

--William Havard

He loves his country best who strives to make it best.

--Robert G. Ingersoll

A vote is a kind of prayer about the kind of world you want to live in.

—Rev. Raphael Warnock

The privilege and the penalty of your education and position is that over the coming decades, as in the past, you will be pacesetters for political and social thought in your community.

You may not accept this responsibility, but it makes no difference. It is inescapable.

If you decide to set no pace, to forward no ideas, to dream no dreams, and to have no vision, you will still be the pacesetters. You will have simply decided that there is no pace.

--Adlai Stevenson

There is no greater sign of a general decay of virtue in a nation, than a want of zeal in its inhabitants for the good of their country.

--Joseph Addison

In times of stress and strain, people will vote.

--Unknown

The future of this republic is in the hands of the American voter.

--Dwight D. Eisenhower

Every citizen should be a soldier. This was the case with the Greeks and Romans, and must be that of every free state.

--Thomas Jefferson

There is a higher form of patriotism than nationalism, and that higher form is not limited by the boundaries of one's country; but by a duty to mankind to safeguard the trust of civilization.

--Oscar S. Strauss

Nothing is more shameful than ignorance of one's Fatherland.

--Gabriel Harvey

Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
  This is my own, my native land?
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd
As home his footsteps he hath turn'd
  From wandering on a foreign strand?

--Sir Walter Scott

Every election is determined by the people who show up.

—Larry J. Sabato

People never lie so much as after a hunt, during a war, or before an election.

—Otto von Bismarck

If you will help run our government in the American way, then there will never be any danger of our government running America in the wrong way.

--Gen. Omar N. Bradley

The citizen has no more right to question the state than the soldier to question the officer.

--Adolf Hitler

I am still baffled by those who feel that criticizing America is unpatriotic, a view increasingly being adopted in the United States since 9/11 as an excuse to render suspect what has always been an American right. An active, brave, outspoken (and heard) citizenry is essential to a healthy democracy.

—Jane Fonda

No citizen of this nation is worthy of the name unless he bears unswerving loyalty to the system under which he lives, the system that gives him more benefits than any other system yet devised by man. Loyalty leaves room to change the system when need be, but only under the ground rules by which we Americans live.

--John A. Hannah

To be a good American means to understand the simple principles on which our nation was founded, to observe them in our daily life and to fight for them.

--Newbold Morris

Every man, at the bottom of his heart, wants to do right. But only he can do right who knows right; only he knows right who thinks right; only he thinks right who believes right. It takes an army of patriotic and order-obeying soldiers to win a war. But only by an army of public-spirited and law-abiding citizens can we hope to win the peace and maintain and remain a great nation.

--Tiorio

The world is my country, all mankind are my brethren, and to do good is my religion.

--Thomas Paine

It is the individual citizen's understanding of facts that counts in a democracy. In totalitarian states, only a few people have to know the significance of facts. Here in America everyone has to know what facts mean.

--Paul A. Wagner

The best kind of citizen and the solidest kind of enterprise is one that can look the whole world in the face.

--M. E. Tracy

Some men go in for big game hunting or Old Masters or postage stamps, but my hobby happens to be my country.

--Samuel B. Pettengill

The two most difficult careers are entrusted to amateurs—citizenship and parenthood.

--Evan Esar

Let a man beware of loving his country too much; let him be sure that his devotion to his native land does not imply hatred of every other.

--Ilka Chase

Mountains culminates in peaks, and nations in men.

--Jose Marti

Freedom rings where opinions clash.

--Adlai Stevenson

I never felt the call to be an expatriate, but I hold it to be the inalienable right of anybody to go to hell in his own way.

--Robert Frost

America is a great country, but you can't live in it for nothing.

--Will Rogers

A good citizen is one who continues to vote for new schools even after his children have grown up.

--Evan Esar

I do not choose to be a common man. It is my right to be uncommon—if I can. I seek opportunity—not security. I do not wish to be a kept citizen, humbled and dulled by having the state look after me. I want to take the calculated risk; to dream and to build, to fail and to succeed. I refuse to barter incentive for a dole. I prefer the challenges of life to the guaranteed existence; the thrill of fulfillment to the stale calm of utopia. I will not trade freedom for beneficence nor my dignity for a handout. I will never cower before any master nor bend to any threat. It is my heritage to stand erect, proud and unafraid; to think and act for myself, enjoy the benefit of my creations, and to face the world boldly and say, this I have done. All this is what it means to be an American.

--Dean Alfange

Americans never quit.

--Douglas MacArthur

Good roads, good schools and good churches are a sure sign of the best citizenship produced by a free republic.

--*Good Roads* (1906)

Happily for us, students have not tried to overthrow the Government of the United States, but they certainly are making their views felt in public affairs. I think especially of the participation of American students in the great struggle to advance civil and human rights in America. Indeed, even a jail sentence is no longer a dishonor but a proud achievement.

--Adlai E. Stevenson

It has always been by ambition since childhood to live such a life that one day my fellow citizens would call me to membership in this popular branch of the greatest lawmaking body in the world. Out of their confidence and partiality they have done this. It is now my sole purpose here to help enact such wise and just laws that our common country will by virtue of these laws be a happier and a more prosperous country. I have always dreamed of a country which I believe this should be and will be, and that is one in which the citizenship is an educated and patriotic people, not swayed by passion and prejudice, and a country that shall know no East, no West, no North, no South, but inhabited by a people liberty loving, patriotic, happy, and prosperous, with its lawmakers having no other purpose than to write such just laws as shall in the years to come be of service to human kind yet unborn.

--Representative Sam Rayburn

To live under the American *Constitution* is the greatest political privilege that was ever accorded to the human race.

--Calvin Coolidge

You convey too great a compliment when you say that I have earned the right to the presidential nomination. No man can establish such an obligation upon any part of the American people. My country owes me no debt. It gave me, as it gives every boy and girl, a chance. It gave me schooling, independence of action, opportunity for service and honor. In no other land could a boy from a country village, without inheritance or influential friends, look forward with unbounded hope. My whole life has taught me what America means. I am indebted to my country beyond any human power to repay.

--Herbert Hoover

Every man among us is more fit to meet the duties and responsibilities of citizenship because of the perils over which, in the past, the nation has triumphed; because of the blood and sweat and tears, the labor and the anguish, through which, in the days that have gone, our forefathers moved on to triumph.

--Theodore Roosevelt

When an American says that he loves his country, he means not only that he loves the New England hills, the prairies glistening in the sun, the wide and rising plains, the great mountains, and the sea. He means that he loves an inner air, an inner light in which freedom lives and in which a man can draw the breath of self-respect.

--Adlai E. Stevenson

Dear Madam,—I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant General of Massachusetts, that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle.

I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save.

I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours, to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of Freedom. Yours, very sincerely and respectfully.

--President Abraham Lincoln

Democracy will prevail when men believe the vote of Judas as good as that of Jesus Christ.

--Thomas Carlyle

I have come to a resolution myself as I hope every good citizen will, never again to purchase any article of foreign manufacture which can be had of American make be the difference of price what it may.

--Thomas Jefferson

Promises matter…they can be polarizing, and…voters evaluate elected officials based on promises and follow through.

—Tabatha Bonilla

I like people in the cities, in the States and in the Nation to ask themselves now and then: 'What can I do for my city?' not 'How much can I get out of my city?' I like people to speak now and then in the same devotion to State and Nation, because, after all, my countrymen, whenever a man contributes to the betterment of his community, whenever he contributes to the enlarged influence of his State, whenever he contributes to the greater glory of the Republic and makes it a better place in which to live and in which to invite men to participate and aspire, he contributes to himself as he contributes to the welfare of his fellow men.

--Warren G. Harding

I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her commodious harbors and her ample rivers—and it was not there...in her fertile fields and boundless forests—and it was not there...in her rich mines and her vast world commerce—and it was not there...in her democratic Congress and her matchless *Constitution*—and it was not there. Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits flame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because she is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.

--Alexis De Tocqueville

Sometimes people call me an idealist. Well, that is the way I know I am an American. America, my fellow citizens—I do not say it in disparagement of any other great people—America is the only idealistic nation in the world.

--Woodrow Wilson

Every man has a right to one country. He has a right to love and serve that country and to feel that it is absolutely his country and that he has in it every right possessed by anyone else. It is our duty to require the man of German blood who is an American citizen to give up all allegiance to Germany wholeheartedly and without on his part any mental reservation whatever. If he does this it becomes no less our duty to give him the full rights of an American, including our loyal respect and friendship without on our part any mental reservation whatever. The duties are reciprocal, and from the standpoint of American patriotism one is as important as the other.

--Theodore Roosevelt

The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is it's natural manure.

--Thomas Jefferson

Liberty means responsibility. That is why most men dread it.

--George Bernard Shaw

Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can save it; no constitution, no law, no court can even do much to help it....The spirit of liberty is the spirit which is not too sure that it is right; the spirit of liberty is the spirit which seeks to understand the minds of other men and women; the spirit of liberty is the spirit which weighs their interests alongside its own without bias; the spirit of liberty remembers that not even a sparrow falls to earth unheeded; the spirit of liberty is the spirit of Him who, near two thousand years ago, taught mankind that lesson it has never learned, but has never quite forgotten; that there may be a kingdom where the least shall be heard and considered side by side with the greatest.

--Learned Hand

No man who is not willing to bear arms and to fight for his rights can give a good reason why he should be entitled to the privilege of living in a free community.

--Theodore Roosevelt

Not gold but only men can make
A people great and strong;
Men who for truth and honor's sake
Stand fast and suffer long.

Brave men who work while others sleep,
Who dare while others fly—
They build a nation's pillars deep
And lift them to the sky.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson

Intellectually I know America is no better than any other country; emotionally I know she is better than every other country.

--Sinclair Lewis

In the last analysis, my fellow countrymen, as we in America would be the first to claim, a people are responsible for the acts of their government.

--Woodrow Wilson

Double—no triple—our troubles and we'd still be better off than any other people on earth.

--Ronald Reagan

If I may I would like to recite the *Pledge of Allegiance* and give you a definition for each word.
I—me, an individual, a committee of one.
Pledge—dedicate all of my worldly goods to give without self-pity.
Allegiance—my love and my devotion.
To the Flag—our standard, Old glory, a symbol of freedom. Wherever she waves, there is respect because your loyalty has given her a dignity that shouts freedom is everybody's job.
Of the United—that means that we have all come together.
States—individual communities that have united into 48 great states, 48 individual communities with pride and dignity and purpose, all divided with imaginary boundaries, yet united to a common purpose, and that's love for country.
Of America.
And to the Republic—a state in which sovereign power is invested in representatives chosen by the people to govern. And government is the people and it's from the people to the leaders, not from the leaders to the people.
For which it stands.
One nation—meaning, so blessed by God.
Indivisible—incapable of being divided.
With liberty—which is freedom and the right of power to live one's own life without threats or fear or some sort of retaliation.
And Justice—The principle or quality of dealing fairly with others.
For all—which means 'it's as much your country as it is mine.'

--Red Skelton

Politics ought to be the part-time profession of every citizen who would protect the rights and privileges of free people and who would preserve what is good and fruitful in our national heritage.

--Dwight D. Eisenhower

When Hitler attacked the Jews...I was not a Jew, therefore, I was not concerned. And when Hitler attacked the Catholics, I was not a Catholic, and therefore, I was not concerned. And when Hitler attacked the unions and the industrialists, I was not a member of the unions and I was not concerned. Then, Hitler attacked me and the Protestant church—and there was nobody left to be concerned.

--Martin Niemöller

Laws are written at the ballot box.

--Unknown, *Public Relations Journal*, May, 1965

Voters do not decide issues, they decide who will decide the issues.

--George F. Will

The only position in America more important than president is citizen.

--Jimmy Carter

America is the only country without a line of people waiting—wanting to get out.

--Michael Greene

America is the only nation that proclaims the 'pursuit of happiness' as a national goal.

--Walter Mondale

Democracy is measured not by its leaders doing things extraordinarily well, but by its citizens doing ordinary things extraordinarily well.

--John Gardner

We will never have true civilization until we have learned to recognize the rights of others.

--Will Rogers

A nation is formed by the willingness of each of us to share in the responsibility for upholding the common good.

--Barbara Jordan

This will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave.

--Elmer Davis

The life of the nation is secure only while the nation is honest, truthful, and virtuous.

—Frederick Douglass

It is the duty of every citizen according to his best capacities to give validity to his convictions in political affairs.

--Albert Einstein

We must not confuse dissent with disloyalty.

--Edward R. Murrow

I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.

--Voltaire

The citizen who criticizes his country is paying it an implied tribute.

--J. William Fulbright

Loyalty to the family must be merged into loyalty to the community, loyalty to the community into loyalty to the nation, and loyalty to the nation into loyalty to mankind. The citizen of the future must be a citizen of the world.

--Thomas Cochrane

The tyranny of a prince in an oligarchy is not so dangerous to the public welfare as the apathy of a citizen in a democracy.

—Charles de Montesquieu

It is a paradox that far too few Americans participate in the wonderful ritual of democracy that we call Election Day.

—Brad Henry

In most places in the country, voting is looked upon as a right and a duty, but in Chicago it's a sport.

—Dick Gregory

We increasingly treat education as if its primary goal were to teach students to be economically productive rather than to think critically and become knowledgeable and empathetic citizens. This shortsighted focus on profitable skills has eroded our ability to criticize authority, reduced our sympathy with the marginalized and different, and damaged our competence to deal with complex global problems. The loss of these basic capacities jeopardizes the health of democracies and the hope of a decent world.

—Martha Nussbaum

You must resist efforts to reduce education to a tool of the gross national product. Rather, work to reconnect education to the humanities in order to give students the capacity to be true democratic citizens of their countries and the world.

—Martha Nussbaum

Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in.

—Marjorie Moore

Men who have offered their lives for their country know that patriotism is not the fear of something; it is the love of something.

—Adlai Stevenson

Democracy may have arisen in the West as the way of striving for the universal aspiration to dignity and freedom, but it isn't alien to the underlying concepts that infuse religion and moral philosophy everywhere.

—Flora Lewis

The proper means of increasing the love we bear to our native country is to reside some time in a foreign one.

—William Shenstone

Let each citizen remember at the moment he is offering his vote that he is not making a present or a compliment to please an individual—or at least that he ought not so to do; but that he is executing one of the most solemn trusts in human society for which he is accountable to God and his country.

—Sam Adams

A simple way to take the measure of a country is to look at how many want in…and how many want out.

—Tony Blair

I honestly do not know if civil disobedience has any effect on the government. I can promise you it has a great effect on the person who chooses to do it.

—Martin Sheen

What do I owe to my times, to my country, to my neighbors, to my friends? Such are the questions which a virtuous man ought often to ask himself.

—Lavater

A nation, as a society, forms a moral person, and every member of it is personally responsible for his society.

—Thomas Jefferson

Americanism is a question of principles, of idealism, of character: it is not a matter of birthplace or creed or line of descent.

—Theodore Roosevelt

Like the body that is made up of different limbs and organs, all moral creatures must depend on each other to exist.

—Hindu Proverb

The maxim that people should not have a right till they are ready to exercise it properly, is worthy of the fool in the old story who resolved not to go into the water till he had learned to swim.

—Thomas B. Macaulay

To me a real patriot is like a real friend. Who's your real friend? It's the person who tells you the truth. That's who my real friends are. So, you know, I think as far as our country goes, we need more people who will do that.

—Bill Maher

The worst things that happen in this country don't happen because of hate or rage or fear. They happen because of apathy, so I encourage you to be people of action, while remembering the least you can do is vote.

—Seth Meyers

The role of the teacher remains the highest calling of a free people. To the teacher our country entrusts her most precious resource, her children, and asks that they be prepared, in all their glorious diversity, to face the rigors of individual participation in a democratic society.

--Shirley Hufstedler

If 16-year-olds are old enough to drink the water polluted by the industries that you regulate, if 16-year-olds are old enough to breathe the air ruined by garbage burners that government built, if 16-year-olds are old enough to walk on the streets made unsafe by terrible drugs and crime policies, if 16-year-olds are old enough to live in poverty in the richest country in the world, if 16-year-olds are old enough to get sick in a country with the worst public health-care programs in the world, and if 16-year-olds are old enough to attend school districts that you underfund, than 16-year-olds are old enough to play a part in making them better.

[*Given as testimony to the Minnesota House Subcommittee in 1991 regarding lowering the voting age.*]

—Rebecca Tilsen,
(14-Years-Old)

The duty of our generation of Americans is to renew our nation's faith—not focused just against foreign threats, but against the threat of selfishness, cynicism and apathy.

—Jimmy Carter

The Constitution does not just protect those whose views we share; it also protects those with whose views we disagree.

—Edward Kennedy

Passive citizenship is a contradiction in terms. We need to rethink the design of citizenship courses. Students should look at such issues as defining active patriotism and examining viable dissent. The U.S. *Constitution* is a remarkable document that keeps growing, responding to each chapter in our national story. Students should study it in depth as a commanding political and literary work. Why not have a course in high school called Becoming an Active Voter? We have an extraordinarily low vote turnout in the United States. Kids say, 'What difference does it make? Adults aren't voting.' We create that passivity by teaching citizenship and government at kids as opposed to engaging them in issues-based, activity-based, voter-oriented, and yes, community service-oriented curriculum. Students should have opportunities to become politically active in their communities throughout middle and high school.

--Heidi Hayes Jacobs

Every citizen of this country should be guaranteed that their vote matters, that their vote is counted, and that in the voting booth, their vote has a much weight as that of any CEO, any member of Congress, or any President.

—Barbara Boxer

If our education system embraces 'no common faith, no common body of principle, no common body of knowledge, no common moral and intellectual discipline …' how are we, to create a civil nation? How are we to nurture democratic citizenship?

—William J. Bennett

By the end of eighth grade, we should certainly expect that our children will know the basic saga of American history and the stories of its great men and women; the sources of our form of government in the Greek, Judeo-Christian, Roman, and Enlightenment traditions; the contours and locations of the physical world, and the major features of international landscapes; essential facts of the world's major nations; and their rights and obligations as American citizens.

—William J. Bennett

Civics: American civics, like American history, should be presented without sugar-coating but also without apology. This is not chauvinism. The proper first focus of study by American boys and girls, regardless of ancestry or ethnicity, is on the essential facts, the central institutions, and the fundamental principles of the United States and the western civilization whose traditions and culture are our shared inheritance. Harry Truman said it well: 'You see the future of this great country depends entirely on the coming generations and their understanding of what they have and what was done to create it, and what they must do to keep it.'

—William J. Bennett

Contemporary educators would do well to look at a 1941 publication of the National Education Association entitled *The American Citizens Handbook*. Not only does it provide the texts of such significant documents as the *Magna Carta*, the *Mayflower Compact*, and *Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address*; it also states plainly and forthrightly that American children ought to know and understand their civic heritage. About our *Constitution*, for example, it says: 'Every American should know its content. It is the greatest single document in the entire struggle of mankind for orderly self-government.'

—William J. Bennett

The plain fact is that education is itself a form of propaganda— deliberate scheme to outfit the pupil, not with the capacity to weigh ideas, but with a simple appetite for gulping ideas ready-made. The aim is to make 'good' citizens, which is to say, docile and uninquisitive citizens.

—H. L. Mencken

Elections belong to the people. It's their decision. If they decide to turn their back on the fire and burn their behinds, then they will just have to sit on their blisters.

—Abraham Lincoln

Republics, one after another...have perished from a want of intelligence and virtue in the masses of the people....If we do not prepare children to become good citizens; if we do not develop their capacities, if we do not enrich their minds with knowledge, imbue their hearts with love of truth and duty, and a reverence for all things sacred and holy, then our republic must go down to destruction, as others have gone before it; and mankind must sweep through another vast cycle of sin and suffering, before the dawn of a better era can arise upon the world.

--Horace Mann

I'm afraid I can't encourage millions of people whom I've never met to just run out and cast a ballot, simply because they have the right to vote. That would be like encouraging everyone to buy an AR-15, simply because they have the right to bear arms. I would need to know a few things about them before offering that kind of encouragement. For instance, do they know how to care for a weapon? Can they afford the cost of the weapon? Do they have a history of violence? Are they mentally stable? In short, are they responsible citizens? Casting a ballot is not so different. It's an important right that we all share, and one that impacts our society in dramatic fashion. But it's one thing to respect and acknowledge our collective rights, and quite another thing to affirmatively encourage people I've never met to exercise them….

Voting is a right, not a duty, and not a moral obligation. Like all rights, the right to vote comes with some responsibilities, but let's face it—the bar is not set very high. If you believe aliens from another planet walk among us, you are welcome at the polls. If you believe the world is flat, and the moon landing was completely staged, you are invited to cast a ballot. Astrologists, racists, ghost-hunters, sexists, and people who rely upon a Magic 8 Ball to determine their daily wardrobe are all allowed to participate. In fact…they're encouraged. The undeniable reality is this: our right to vote does not require any understanding of current events, or any awareness of how our government works….

I can't personally encourage everyone in the country to run out and vote. I wouldn't do it, even if I thought it would benefit my personal choice. Because the truth is, the country doesn't need voters who have to be cajoled, enticed, or persuaded to cast a ballot. We need voters who wish to participate in the process….Spend a few hours every week studying American history, human nature, and economic theory. Start with *Economics in One Lesson*. Then try Keynes. Then Hayek. Then Marx. Then Hegel. Develop a worldview that you can articulate as well as defend. Test your theory with people who disagree with you. Debate. Argue. Adjust your philosophy as necessary. Then, when the next election comes around, cast a vote for the candidate whose worldview seems most in line with your own. Or, don't. None of the freedoms spelled out in our *Constitution* were put there so people could cast uninformed ballots out of some misplaced sense of civic duty….The right to assemble, to protest, to speak freely—these rights were included to help assure that the best ideas and the best candidates would emerge from the most transparent process possible.

Remember—there's nothing virtuous or patriotic about voting just for the sake of voting, and the next time someone tells you otherwise, do me a favor – ask them who they're voting for. Then tell them you're voting for their opponent. Then, see if they'll give you a ride to the polls. In the meantime, dig into *Economics in One Lesson*, by Henry Hazlitt. It sounds like a snooze but it really is a page turner.

—Mike Rowe

Thinking isn't to agree or disagree—that's voting.

--Robert Frost

It is fast approaching the point where I don't want to elect anyone stupid enough to want the job.

—Erma Bombeck

A public-opinion poll is no substitute for thought.

—Warren Buffett

Any man who is a bear on the future of this country will go broke.

—J. Pierpont Morgan

You learn about equality in history and civics, but you find out life is not really like that.

—Arthur Ashe

Pesky parents are often effective, especially in public schools, at securing better textbooks, new playgrounds, and all the 'extras' that make an educational community come to life, like art, music, theater, and after-school clubs. This kind of parental engagement may not directly affect test scores, but it can make school a more positive place for all kids, regardless of what their parents do or don't do at home. Getting involved in your children's schools is not just a way to give them a leg up—it could also be good citizenship.

--Dana Goldstein

If voting made any difference, they wouldn't let us do it.

—Mark Twain

Public opinion is no more innately wise than humans are innately kind. People can behave foolishly, recklessly, self-destructively in the aggregate just as they can individually.

—George Orwell

The relative freedom which we enjoy depends on public opinion. The law is no protection. Governments make laws, but whether they are carried out, and how the police behave, depends on the general temper in the country. If large numbers of people are interested in freedom of speech, there will be freedom of speech, even if the law forbids it; if public opinion is sluggish, inconvenient minorities will be persecuted, even if laws exist to protect them.

—George Orwell

Let us neither express, nor cherish, any harsh feeling towards any citizen who, by his vote, has differed with us. Let us at all times remember that all American citizens are brothers of a common country, and should dwell together in the bonds of fraternal feeling.

—Abraham Lincoln

Love of country, like all other forms of love, requires that you tell those you care about not simply what they want to hear but what they need to hear.

--Barack Obama

A NATION'S GREATNESS DEPENDS ON ITS LEADER

To vastly improve your country and truly make it great again, start by choosing a better leader. Do not let the media or the establishment make you pick from the people they choose, but instead choose from those they do not pick. Pick a leader from among the people who is heart-driven, one who identifies with the common man on the street and understands what the country needs on every level. Do not pick a leader who is only money-driven and does not understand or identify with the common man, but only what corporations need on every level.

Pick a peacemaker. One who unites, not divides. A cultured leader who supports the arts and true freedom of speech, not censorship. Pick a leader who will not only bail out banks and airlines, but also families from losing their homes—or jobs due to their companies moving to other countries. Pick a leader who will fund schools, not limit spending on education and allow libraries to close. Pick a leader who chooses diplomacy over war. An honest broker in foreign relations. A leader with integrity, one who says what they mean, keeps their word and does not lie to their people. Pick a leader who is strong and confident, yet humble. Intelligent, but not sly. A leader who encourages diversity, not racism. One who understands the needs of the farmer, the teacher, the doctor, and the environmentalist—not only the banker, the oil tycoon, the weapons developer, or the insurance and pharmaceutical lobbyist.

Pick a leader who will keep jobs in your country by offering companies incentives to hire only within their borders, not one who allows corporations to outsource jobs for cheaper labor when there is a national employment crisis. Choose a leader who will invest in building bridges, not walls. Books, not weapons. Morality, not corruption. Intellectualism and wisdom, not ignorance. Stability, not fear and terror. Peace, not chaos. Love, not hate. Convergence, not segregation. Tolerance, not discrimination. Fairness, not hypocrisy. Substance, not superficiality. Character, not immaturity. Transparency, not secrecy. Justice, not lawlessness. Environmental improvement and preservation, not destruction. Truth, not lies.

Most importantly, a great leader must serve the best interests of the people first, not those of multinational corporations. Human life should never be sacrificed for monetary profit. There are no exceptions. In addition, a leader should always be open to criticism, not silencing dissent. Any leader who does not tolerate criticism from the public is afraid of their dirty hands to be revealed under heavy light. And such a leader is dangerous, because they only feel secure in the darkness. Only a leader who is free from corruption welcomes scrutiny; for scrutiny allows a good leader to be an even greater leader.

And lastly, pick a leader who will make their citizens proud. One who will stir the hearts of the people, so that the sons and daughters of a given nation strive to emulate their leader's greatness. Only then will a nation be truly great, when a leader inspires and produces citizens worthy of becoming future leaders, honorable decision makers and peacemakers. And in these times, a great leader must be extremely brave. Their leadership must be steered only by their conscience, not a bribe.

—Suzy Kassem

I always tell my students: I don't care which side you're on. I respect you too much to try to persuade you in 120 minutes a week, much less lure you into pretending that you agree with me. All I want is for you to own this democracy, to see yours, to have a stake in it.

—Susan Estrich

In the 1870s and 1880s, a parade of financial crises called panics—we'd term them depressions these days—continued to plague the nation. A general public that was becoming more educated, thanks to the nation's public schools, and more disenchanted with being told what to do by politicians who were little more than lapdogs of big business, clamored for change.
After some study, it was decided the Australian Ballot system, in which ballots are marked and then cast in secret, was by far the most fair. Under the new system, ballots were to be printed at public expense and would be distributed only at official polling places. When ballots were marked, voters would place them in locked ballot boxes to secure them until they were counted.

—Roger Matile

Susan B. Anthony, the great feminist and suffragist of the 19th century, was fined $100 in 1872 for attempting to vote in the presidential election.

—Roger Matile

The right to vote comes with a responsibility to vote.

—Canada's Immigration Website

The older you are, the more likely you are to vote. In the 2012 presidential election, only 38 percent of people 18 to 24 voted, but 70 percent of people over 65 did. If you are over 65, you are part of the most powerful voting bloc in America.

—Robert Love

In a society like ours, where every man may transmute his private thought into history and destiny by dropping it into the ballot-box, a peculiar responsibility rests upon the individual…For, though during its term of office the government be practically as independent of the popular will as that of Russia, yet every fourth year the people are called upon to pronounce upon the conduct of their affairs. Theoretically, at least, to give democracy any standing-ground for an argument with despotism or oligarchy, a majority of the men composing it should be statesmen and thinkers.

—James Russell Lowell (1860)

Deep patriots don't just sing the song, 'America the Beautiful' and then go home. We actually stick around to defend America's beauty—from the oil spillers, the clear-cutters and the mountaintop removers. Deep patriots don't just visit the Statue of Liberty and send a postcard home to grandma. We defend the principles upon which that great monument was founded—'give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.'

—Van Jones

AFTER SCHOOL SPECIAL

Dear Mr. Schneider,
I attended your elementary
School almost thirty years ago
And I'm very sure that
You will remember
Me.

My name is Suzy.
I'm that hyperactive girl
From the Egyptian family
Who used to always play dead

On the playground during
Recess.

You used to keep me
After school a lot,
And then my father would
Force me to make the long
Walk home in the cold or rain.
Sometimes I would arrive
After dark.

I'm writing to tell you
That I was bored as a kid.
I was bored by your curriculum
And the way I was always taught a
Bunch of useless
Junk.

I did not like being locked up
In a prison of scheduled time
Learning about irrelevant material,
And watching belittling cartoons and
Shows approved by academia that
Made me even more
Bored.

As a kid
Who was constantly
Growing, evolving, and
Being shaped by all around me,
I wanted to travel,
See other kids
In the world like me,
To understand what was going
On amongst us and around us,
To know what we were here for
And what was our real purpose
For existence.

I have some questions
I would like to ask you, Mr. Schneider,
Now that I know that you are no
Longer a school principal,
But the new superintendent
Of the entire school
District.

I want to know
Why racism today
Was not clearly explained to me
Even though we covered events
That happened long ago.
I want to know why you
Never shared with us
Why other countries
Never liked us,
Why we are taught to compete,
To be divided in teams,
And why conformity is associated
With popularity, while
Eccentricity is considered
Undesirable?

I want to know
Why my cafeteria lunches
Were slammed packed
With bottom-tier
Processed junk food
Only suitable
For pigs?
And why is it
That whenever a bully
Slammed a kid into a locker for
His lunch money,
Nobody explained to us
That egotism, selfishness and greed

Were the seeds of
War?

I want to know
Why we were never taught
To stick up for each other,
To love one another, and that
Segregation sorted by the
Occupations of our fathers,
The neighborhoods we lived in, our houses,
Choices of sport, wealth, clothing,
Color of our skin
And the texture of our hair
Should never, ever
Divide us?

And lastly,
I want to know why
Is it that whenever I pledged
Allegiance to the flag,
I was never told that I was
Actually hailing to the
Chief?

You used to say that
I was a troubled child,
A misfit, and that I needed
Obedience training,
But you never acknowledged that
I was the fastest runner in the district
And that I took the school
To State and Nationals to compete
In the Spelling Bee among kids
Grades higher than me.
And that it was me,
Who won that big trophy
That sat in your office when you
Used to detain me for hours
And tell me I was no
Good.

Mr. Schneider,
If we are not taught truths as kids,
Then how do you expect us to
Grow up to be truthful citizens?
If we are only being taught the written way,
And it has not shown positive effects
In societies of yesterday or today,
Then how can we progress as a
United and compassionate
Nation?
What good is it,
To memorize the histories
Of our forefathers,
Without learning what could be
Gained from their lessons and mistakes
To improve our future
Tomorrows?

And finally,
I want to thank you;
For I know you have a tough job
Dealing with rebellious children like me.
Your job of mass processing and boxing
The young minds of America has not been an easy one,
And I congratulate you
On your recent promotion.
But I sincerely want to thank you,
Thank you,
And thank you,
For always pointing out
That I was
Different.

—Suzy Kassem

Not only all of our emails and Google searches, but also the sensors in the water system, in medical implants, in stoplight cameras and sound-activated street gunshot detectors—there's so much of it...that the Internet is a surveillance state.

--Bruce Schneier

If God had wanted us to vote, he would have given us candidates.

—Jay Leno

People died for these words [the *Constitution*], so we should have the words literally close to our hearts. You should have more than one copy because if someone asks you a question about the *Constitution*, I think it's wonderful and democratic if you can give them a copy and you can read it together.

—Akhil Reed Amar

You measure a democracy by the freedom it gives its dissidents, not the freedom it gives its assimilated conformists.

—Abbie Hoffman

The city that makes it easy for its people to obtain books will develop a citizenship that will be worth all the money it costs.

--Sam Walter Foss

Half of the American people have never read a newspaper. Half never voted for President. One hopes it is the same half.

—Gore Vidal

A vote is like a rifle: its usefulness depends up on the character of the user.

—Theodore Roosevelt

The man who disparages music as a luxury and non-essential is doing the nation an injury. Music now, more than ever before, is a national need. There is no better way to express patriotism than through music.

--Woodrow Wilson

Statistical thinking will one day be as necessary for efficient citizenship as the ability to read and write.

--Herbert George Wells

There is nothing that solidifies and strengthens a nation like reading the nation's history, whether that history is recorded in books, or embodied in customs, institutions, and monuments.

--Joseph Anderson

The traditions of a nation are very important and the anthem written by Francis Scott Key in the early days of our nation should always be revered.

—Lee Greenwood

The big companies and their short-term bottom line rule this country.

—Alexandra Paul

The short memories of American voters is what keeps our politicians in office.

--Will Rogers

Politics is the gentle art of getting votes from the poor and campaign funds from the rich, by promising to protect each from the other.

--Oscar Ameringer

Voters quickly forget what a man says.

--Richard M. Nixon

The majority is the best way, because it is visible, and has strength to make itself obeyed. Yet it is the opinion of the least able.

--Blaise Pascal

Power is a drug on which the politicians are hooked. They buy it from the voters, using the voters' own money.

--Richard J. Needham

Do the People, directly or indirectly, participate in directing the policies of their government? If they do, however wrongheaded their policies, they have a democracy; if not, however wise the policies chosen for them, they have none.

--Carl Cohen

A democrat need not believe that the majority will always decide wisely; what he must believe is that the decision of the majority, whether wise or unwise, must be accepted until such time as the majority decides otherwise.

--Bertrand Russell

Politically, what we need is government in which a man offers himself as a candidate because he has a new program that he wants to effectuate, and we choose him because we want that good, and judge that he is the best man to effectuate it.

--Paul Goodman

Even though counting heads is not an ideal way to govern, at least it is better than breaking them.

--Learned Hand

The *Constitution* of the United States is a law for rulers and people, equally in war and peace, and covers with the shield of its protection all classes of men, at all times, and under all circumstances.

--Justice David Davis

Elections are won by men and women chiefly because most people vote against somebody rather than for somebody.

—Franklin Pierce Adams

Let us never forget that government is ourselves and not an alien power over us. The ultimate rulers of our democracy are not the President and senators and congressmen and government officials, but the voters of this country.

--Franklin D. Roosevelt

No amount of charters, direct primaries, or short ballots will make a democracy out of an illiterate people.

--Walter Lippmann

The art of governing consists in not letting men grow old in their jobs.

--Napoleon I

The amount of effort put into a campaign by a worker expands in proportion to the personal benefits that he will derive from his party's victory.

--Milton Rakove

When we get sick, we want an uncommon doctor. If we have a construction job, we want an uncommon engineer. When we get into a war, we dreadfully want an uncommon admiral and an uncommon general. Only when we get into politics are we content with the common man.

--Herbert Hoover

All politics are based on the indifference of the majority.

--James Reston

Public instruction should be the first object of government.

—Napoleon

To let politics become a cesspool, and then avoid it because it is a cesspool, is a double crime.

--Howard Crosby

In government offices which are sensitive to the vehemence and passion of mass sentiment public men have no sure tenure. They are in effect perpetual office seekers, always on trial for their political lives, always required to court their restless constituents.

--Walter Lippmann

Many politicians refuse to answer all your questions on the grounds that it might eliminate them.

—George F. Will

Political campaigns are designedly made into emotional orgies which endeavor to distract attention from the real issues involved, and they actually paralyze what slight powers of cerebration man can normally muster.

--James Harvey Robinson

Democracy substitutes election by the incompetent many for appointment by the corrupt few.

--George Bernard Shaw

Ninety-eight percent of the adults in this country are decent, hardworking, honest Americans. It's the other lousy two percent that get all the publicity. But then—we elected them.

--Lily Tomlin

In my own experience, I have been amazed to see how unrealistic are the bases for political opinion in general. Only rarely have I found a person who has chosen any particular political party—democratic or totalitarian—through study and comparison of principles.

--Joost A. Merloo

One of the most curious things about politics in America is the extraordinary lack of knowledge concerning its practice and principles, not only on the part of the people as a whole but of the practitioners themselves.

--Frank R. Kent

I just received the following wire from my generous Daddy 'Dear Jack: Don't buy a single vote more than necessary. I'll be damned if I am going to pay for a landslide.'

--John F. Kennedy

Government is only as good as the men in it.

--Drew Pearson

Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgement; and he betrays instead of serving you if he sacrifices it to your opinion.

--Edmund Burke

The men who study groups of white rats in cages might do better to study what happens when groups of bright, egocentric and ambitious—oh, ambitious—people come together to grab for public power in a short scramble to the tape marked Election Day.

--Richard Reeves

Men are too emotional to vote. Their conduct at baseball games and political conventions shows this, while their innate tendency to appeal to force renders them particularly unfit for the task of government....Man's place is the armory.

--Alice Duer Miller

All progressive legislation has always had its genesis in the mind of one person....One can do much. And one and one and one can move mountains.

--Joan Ward-Harris

Don't confuse flags for patriots.

—Mario Escobar

The ballot is stronger than the bullet.

--Abraham Lincoln

Those who cast the votes decide nothing. Those who count the votes decide everything.

--Joseph Stalin

The only way to combat criminals is by not voting for them.

--Dayton Allen

Democracy is being allowed to vote for the candidate you dislike least.

--Robert Byrne

It's not the voting that's democracy; it's the counting.

--Tom Stoppard

Being a better-informed voter only helps you better know who not to vote for.

--John Lenza III

It is an axiom in political science that unless a people are educated and enlightened, it is idle to expect the continuance of civil liberty to the capacity for self-government.

--*Texas Declaration of Independence*

Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I give my heart and my hand to this vote.

--Daniel Webster

To announce that there must be no criticism of the President, or that we are to stand by the President, right or wrong, is not only unpatriotic and servile, but is morally treasonable to the American public.

--Theodore Roosevelt

The great majority of the Negroes of the South who do not vote do not care to vote and would not know for what to vote if they could.

--William F. Buckley, Jr., (1957)

When our laws, our leaders, or our government are out of alignment with our ideals, then the dissent of ordinary Americans may prove to be one of the truest expressions of patriotism.

--Barack Obama

Never underestimate the power of human stupidity.

--Robert A. Heinlein

Voting for a party is a habit, ...and the habit tends to stick. The Americans who came of age under FDR leaned more Democratic than the electorate as a whole for the rest of their voting lives.

--Molly Ball

To vote is like the payment of a debt, a duty never to be neglected, if its performance is possible.

—Rutherford B. Hayes

Every person has only so much attention to give, and politics and government takes up only a fraction of what it did 25 years ago.

--Robert Teeter

Party loyalty is a tribe-like social identification. Despite parties' shifting stances on issues, and despite changes in personal beliefs over time, voters tend to continue to affiliate with the same political party.

--Donald Green, Bradley Palmquist, and Eric Schickler

As societies grow decadent, the language grows decadent, too. Words are used to disguise, not to illuminate, action: you liberate a city by destroying it. Words are to confuse, so that at election time people will solemnly vote against their own interests.

—Gore Vidal

Bad politicians are sent to Washington by good people who don't vote.

--William E. Simon

Laws made by common consent must not be trampled on by individuals.

--George Washington

First practiced by the ancient Greeks, democracy came from their word *demokratos* meaning 'a short break from ped**asty to deal with this zoning issue.' The major strength of democracy is that every citizen has a voice in government. The major weakness of democracy is that every citizen has a voice in government. The risks are high for short-sighted rule by mob whim, inaction caused by deadlocked interest groups, or your favorite TV shows being pre-empted by some boring debate. In exchange for control over their own destinies, democracy demands one great sacrifice from its practitioners: a lunch-break trip to an elementary school gym once every two to four years. Generally, this is too much to ask. Citizens find the energy to vote only when they believe their wealth, guns or vaguely defined concept of 'freedom' is threatened. In fact, a democracy's health can best be measured by the number of people who didn't vote, thus signaling they are completely satisfied. Democracy proves to be surprisingly resilient in times of chaos or social change. This helps mask the fact that it doesn't really work that well.

--*Earth (The Book) A Visitor's Guide to the Human Race*

This is a strange country we live in. When it comes to electing a President, we get two choices. But when we have to select a Miss America, we get 50.

—Jay Leno

What is the best system of government? While it has its flaws, democracy is the finest and most just system of government, provided that the party one supports is in power. (If the party one opposes is in power, however, democracy is a horrible mistake, forcing citizens to live by the hideous whims of the tyrannical, brainwashed, sub-moronic majority.

--*Earth (The Book) A Visitor's Guide to the Human Race*

The people that have had the most profound effect on the world are not elected officials, not people who have held vast kingdoms, but are basically people who walked out their front door and acted right.

--Matthew Dowd

Let us not seek the Republican answer or the Democratic answer, but the right answer. Let us not seek to fix the blame for the past. Let us accept our own responsibility for the future.

--John Fitzgerald Kennedy

There are whole precincts of voters in this country whose united intelligence does not equal that of one representative American woman.

--Carrie Chapman Catt (1910)

Our ideals of freedom, set forth and realized in our *Constitution*, are our greatest export to the world.

--Robert Byrd

As the population ages, so do the political powers that be—and they're aging in place. Computerized block-by-block voting analysis and shameless gerrymandering—Maryland's new sixth congressional district is such a strange shape, it would have embarrassed Elbridge Gerry—lock incumbents into power as never before. Campaign-finance laws appear to promote reform, but in fact have been rigged to discourage challengers. Between rising life expectancy and the mounting power of incumbency, both houses of Congress are the oldest they've ever been: the average senator is 62 years old; the average representative, 57.

—Gregg Easterbrook

All tyranny needs to gain a foothold is for people of good conscience to remain silent.

—Edmund Burke

A relentless focus on scandal, spectacle, and the 'game' of politics was driving citizens away from public affairs, making it harder for even the least cynical politicians to do an effective job, and at the same time steadily eroding our public ability to assess what is happening and decide how to respond.

--James Fallows

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

—James A. Baldwin

Now more than ever before, the people are responsible for the character of their Congress. If that body be ignorant, reckless and corrupt, it is because the people tolerate ignorance, recklessness and corruption.

—James Garfield

The ear of the leader must ring with the voices of the people.

—Woodrow Wilson

The tyranny of a prince in an oligarchy is not so dangerous to the public welfare as the apathy of a citizen in a democracy.

—Charles de Montesquieu

What people fail to appreciate is that the currency of corruption in elective office is, not money, but votes.

—James L. Buckley

Neither current events nor history show that the majority rule, or ever did rule.

—Jefferson Davis

The first thing I'll do if elected is demand a recount.

—Kinky Friedman

Our elections are free. It's in the results where eventually we pay.

—Bill Stern

Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

The amazing thing is that voters keep electing candidates who promise them that they can have hot fudge sundaes and still trim their waistlines. Those are the same voters who get mad as hell when the people they elect go on with business as usual.

—Carol Cox

But say some, would you expose woman to the contact of rough, rude, drinking, swearing, fighting men at the ballot box? What a humiliating confession lies in this plea for keeping woman in the background!

—Ernestine Rose (1890)

By empowering half the population with the responsibilities of citizenship, August 26, 1920—the day women gained the right to vote—allowed the U.S. to live up to its fundamental values of opportunity and equality.

--Neera Tanden

I believe that the rights of women and girls is the unfinished business of the 21st century. We see women and girls across the world who are oppressed and violated and demeaned and degraded and denied so much of what they are entitled to as our fellow human beings.

--Hillary Clinton

Nothing is more unreliable than the populace, nothing more deceptive than the whole electoral system.

—Cicero

In politics women...type the letters, lick the stamps, distribute the pamphlets and get out the vote. Men get elected.

--Clare Boothe Luce

I don't consider the *Equal Rights Amendment* a political issue. It is a moral issue as far as I am concerned. Where are women mentioned in the *Constitution* except in the *Nineteenth Amendment*, giving us the right to vote? When they said all men were created equal, they really meant it—otherwise, why did we have to fight for the *Nineteenth Amendment*?

--Carol Burnett

It is not lack of polling data or campaign contributions which keeps many women from ascending higher on the political ladder. It is fear and loathing for the political system itself.

--Madeleine Kunin

We are not educated well enough to perform the necessary act of intelligently selecting our leaders.

—Walter Cronkite

Sensible and responsible women do not want to vote. The relative positions to be assumed by man and woman in the working out of our civilization were assigned long ago by a higher intelligence than ours.

—Grover Cleveland
(1905)

A city of many people can rarely, if ever, be well-governed.

—Aristotle

About three-quarters of nonviolent movements get some or all of what they want, compared with only about a third of the violent ones.

--Erica Chenoweth and
Maria Stephan

Will dissent be permitted? The answer to that question will determine whether the society is a free society or a fear society.

—Natan Sharansky

Patriotism means to stand by the country. It does not mean to stand by the president.

—Theodore Roosevelt

I will feel equality has arrived when we can elect to office women who are as incompetent as some of the men who are already there.

—Maureen Reagan

I do not believe that Washington should do for the people what they can do for themselves through local and private effort.

--John F. Kennedy

I am not an Athenian nor a Greek, but a citizen of the world.

—Socrates

We'll try to cooperate fully with the IRS, because, as citizens, we feel a strong patriotic duty to not go to jail.

--Dave Barry

Government does many things, most of them badly and none of them free. To pay for its works, virtually all governments collect money from their citizens in the form of taxes. Typically, people will surrender a percentage of their income or produce and in return will be granted the right to complain about having to surrender a percentage of their income of produce.

--*Earth (The Book) A Visitor's Guide to the Human Race*

The U.S. tax code was written by A students. Every April 15, we have to pay somebody who got an A in accounting to keep ourselves from being sent to jail.

—P. J. O'Rourke

The apathy of the people is enough to make every statue leap from its pedestal and hasten the resurrection of the dead.

—William Lloyd Garrison

The law creates citizens.

--Voltaire

The rights of the individual are greatly prized in the developed world, but in many other regions they are considered a luxury reserved for the impossibly wealthy.

—Silvia Cartwright

Social science studies have shown persuasively that people connect to candidates on a gut level and then rationalize that connection by agreeing with their policy proposals. There was little difference between the ideology of Bill and Hillary Clinton. But voters in Middle America felt, at an emotional level , that Bill 'got them,' and never felt that way about Hillary.

—Fareed Zakaria

Honest information has always been the lifeblood of democracy.

—Thomas Kunkel

The future does not belong to those who are content with today, apathetic toward common problems and their fellow man alike, timid and fearful in the face of bold projects and new ideas. Rather, it will belong to those who can blend passion, reason and courage in a personal commitment to the ideals of American society.

—Robert F. Kennedy

Truth is not determined by majority vote.

—Doug Gwyn

A DEFINITION OF CITIZENSHIP

Developing citizenship means becoming a productive, responsible, caring, and contributing member of society. It includes:

1. Being successful in school.
2. Making responsible decisions.
3. Caring about others.
4. Contributing to society.
5. Developing social and personal skills, such as problem solving, accepting a variety of perspectives, and setting and attain goals.
6. Developing a core set of common values.

Schools are places where these qualities, ideally first taught in the home, can and should be promoted with the support and involvement of the family and community.

From civic education to teen pregnancy reduction, there are common beliefs that we as a society want our children to know and be able to do. It is common ground that defines citizens as productive, responsible, caring, and contributing individuals. The call to citizenship is not solely identifying what we don't want young people to do but clearly understudying the kind of people we would like them to become. It is a mission of youth development that engages them in meeting their basic personal and social needs to be safe, feel cared for, be valued, be useful, and be spiritually grounded. Through positive experiences, youth build assets and competencies that allow them to function and contribute in their daily lives. There must be clear and consistent expectations that youth will set goals, devise strategies to meet goals, and follow social rules. Time will pass, and youth will grow into adults regardless of the support they receive. The question is what kind of adults they will become. Positive youth development occurs when adults deliberately create conditions and opportunities for youth to become caring, contributing, productive, and responsible citizens.

This country is based on some basic beliefs of democracy that include a society where its member care about one another, contribute toward the common good, and participate in sustaining a democratic way of life. To be productive citizens in America, students need to recognize individual differences; acknowledge common bonds; and demonstrate skills related to diversity, inclusiveness, and fairness. Diversity exists in various forms including but not limited to race/ethnicity, culture, talent, ability and disability, sex/gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, language,

socio-economic status, and learning styles. Inclusiveness involves proving social and economic access to everyone, understanding and appreciating all individuals and groups, learning about the contributions of diverse cultures and times, and developing skills that foster communication. Fairness requires actively challenging prejudice, stereotyping, bias, hatred, and discrimination to ensure a social climate free of favoritism or bias and impartiality and equity to all parties.

—*Wisconsin Department of Public Education*

To help students become caring, contributing, productive, and responsible citizens, the entire school program must reflect a clear commitment to helping students acquire the skills, attitudes, values, and knowledge to achieve the ideal. Citizenship development includes in-class instructional opportunities woven through the curriculum. For example, social studies classes may concentrate on the development of knowledge about the history of our democratic institutions and principles and on the critical thinking skills necessary for competent participation in the democratic process. In family and consumer education, health education, and developmental guidance, a focus on individual and family health helps students develop the skills they need to enhance interpersonal relationships and social/emotional development. A renewed emphasis on the attitudes and commitments required to practice and live the core citizenship values is needed in all of our school curriculum and programs. The basis for all of these forms of citizenship education is the *Declaration of Independence* and the *United States Constitution*. These documents guide our constitutional democracy and will be realized if we take seriously our obligation to be good citizens.

—*Wisconsin Department of Public Education*

THE FOUNDATION OF SUCCESSFUL CITIZENSHIP

Seven characteristics of successful schools in developing caring, contributing, productive and responsible citizens:

1. Core Values: School and community members identify citizenship qualities such as honesty and responsibility that all agree to foster in children . These qualities are modeled by staff and students alike and set the standard for acceptable behavior.
2. Safe and Orderly Places: Students and staff feel respected, and the climate and culture of the school is drug free and safe from any form of violence.

Children and adults learn constructive ways to settle differences, and peaceful conflict resolution is the norm.

3. Family and Community Involvement: The contributions of all who make up the school community are honored and celebrated. Parents, caregivers, and community members have a variety of opportunities to make meaningful contributions to school programming and student citizenship development.
4. Address Societal Issues: Prevention or risk behaviors such as violence, alcohol and other drug abuse. AIDS/HIV and teen pregnancy are a valued part of the school's programs. Services are available to students and staff who may be facing such issues in their own lives.
5. Positive Relationships: Students feel personally known and cared for by at least one adult in the school. Students and community members are viewed as resources for supporting one another.
6. Engage Students' Minds: Schools use many strategies and approaches to make learning relevant for students. Classrooms are interactive places that often take learning beyond the schoolhouse door.
7. High Expectations: Students are expected to do their best and experience success. All students and staff are expected to model positive behaviors that embody good citizenship.

—*Wisconsin Department of Public Education*

The notion of a small but clamorous section of Americans, who blazon forth their fancied claim to superiority over the rest of their countrymen by calling themselves the 'Anglo-Saxon race,' is as absurd as it is unsound. Yet we often hear that the Anglo-Saxon race should dominate our country. There is no Anglo-Saxon race....An overwhelming majority of our white population is a mix of all white races of Europe—Teutonic, Latin, Slav. And where would you place the ten million colored people who live among us?

It is important to prepare against a possible foe abroad, but more against the domestic foe who may, unrecognized for years, appeal to our prejudice, our love of riches, our political ambitions and our vanity….Let us, therefore, abolish all distinctions that may lead to ill feeling and let us call ourselves, before the whole world, Americans, first, last and all the time.

—Philadelphia Mayor Rudolph Blankenburg (1915)

The vote is the emblem of your equality, women of America, the guarantee of your liberty. That vote of yours has cost millions of dollars and the lives of thousands of women. Money to carry on this work has been given usually as a sacrifice, and thousands of women have gone without things they wanted and could have had in order that they might help get the vote for you. Women have suffered agony of soul which you can never comprehend, that you and your daughters might inherit political freedom. That vote has been costly. Prize it!
The vote is a power, a weapon of offense and defense, a prayer. Understand what it means and what it can do for your country. Use it intelligently, conscientiously, prayerfully. No soldier in the great suffrage army has labored and suffered to get a 'place' for you. Their motive has been the hope that women would aim higher than their own selfish ambitions, that they would serve the common good.

The vote is won. Seventy-two years the battle for this privilege has been waged, but human affairs with their eternal change move on without pause. Progress is calling to you to make no pause. Act!

—Carrie Chapman Catt
(1920)

To become an American citizen, we require people to read, write and speak in English. That is to help them to assimilate in our melting pot, truly to become Americans. We mock that when the cherished right to vote does not involve English any more.

—Ernest Istook

Democracy is only an experiment in government, and it has the obvious disadvantage of merely counting votes instead of weighing them.

—Dean Inge

If we want our children to hold well the office of citizen, to care deeply about the common good, and to exercise good judgment on its behalf, then we are wise to begin their training early and continue it systematically over many years.

—Walter Parker

If you will think about what you ought to do for other people, your character will take care of itself.

--Woodrow Wilson

It is our character that supports the promise of our future—far more than particular government programs or policies.

--William J. Bennett

If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear.

—George Orwell

Civilization ceases when we no longer respect and no longer put into their correct places the fundamental values, such as work, family and country; such as the individual, honor and religion.

--R. P. Lebret

This country wasn't built on cynicism.
It was built on a can-do attitude.

One shouldn't complain about
the way things are
unless one is willing to try
to make a difference.

--Frankie Sue del Papa

It is probable that democracy owes more to nonconformity than to any other single movement.

--R. H. Tawney

The aim of public education is not to spread enlightenment at all; it is simply to reduce as many individuals as possible to the same safe level, to breed a standard citizenry, to put down dissent and originality.

—H. L. Mencken

The strength and power of a country depends absolutely on the quantity of good men and women in it.

—John Ruskin

Apathy is the single biggest reason why an estimated 100 million Americans will not vote on Tuesday.

—*Washington Post*

According to the *Shorenstein Center*'s comparison of polling conducted just before the election and that conducted in its immediate aftermath, the number of Americans who answered 'None' to the question 'how much influence do you think people like you have on what the government does?' had increased from one in ten to one in four.

—Joan Didion

Only 35% of nonvoters, or about 17% of all adult Americans, fell into the 'apathetic' category, which, according to a director of the *Shorentein Study*, included those who 'have no sense of civic duty,' and 'have no commitment in keeping up with public affairs.' Another 14% of nonvoters were classified as 'disconnected,'a group including both those 'who can't get to the polls because of advanced age or disability' and those 'who recently changed addresses and are not yet registered'—in other words, people functionally unable to vote. The remaining 51% of these nonvoters, meaning roughly a quarter of all adult Americans, were classified as either 'alienated' ('The angry men and women of U.S. politics…so disgusted with the politicians in the political process that they've opted out' or 'disenchanted' ('these nonvoters aren't so much repelled by politics as they are by the way politics is practiced'), in either case pretty much the polar opposite of 'apathetic.'…more than 70% of all nonvoters were in fact registered, a figure that cast some ambiguity on the degree of 'apathy' even among the 35% categorized as 'Apathetic.'

— Joan Didion

89% of nonvoters and 76% of voters agreed with the statement 'Most political candidates will say almost anything in order to get themselves elected.' 78% of nonvoters and 70% of voters agreed with this statement 'candidates are more concerned with fighting each other than was solving the nations problems.' Almost 70% of nonvoters and voters alike agreed with the statement 'campaigns seem more like theater or entertainment than something to be taken seriously.' The interesting point at which the attitudes of voters and nonvoters did diverge was that revealed by questioning about specific policies. Voters, for example, tended to believe that the federal budget surplus should go to a tax cut. Nonvoters, who on the whole had less education and lower income, more often said that the surplus should be spent on health, welfare, and education. 'Nonvoters have different needs,… but why should politicians listen?'

—Joan Didion

I've been around this process a while and one thing I've noticed, it's the people who write the checks who get treated as if they have a certain amount of power.

—Nadine Hack

There are pacifists in pleasure as well as pacifists in war. The latter are called cowards. The former are called leading moral citizens.

--G. J. Nathan

Many studies have discovered a close link between prejudice and 'patriotism'...Extreme bigots are almost always super-patriots.

--Gordon W. Allport

Once the campaign explodes to 18 states, as it will the day after New Hampshire, when the focus shifts to a super primary across the nation, the existing communications system simply will not accommodate more than two or three candidates in each party. Neither the television networks, nor the newspapers nor magazines, have the resources of people, space and time to describe and analyze the dynamics of two simultaneous half-national elections among Republicans and Democrats. That task is simply beyond us. Since we cannot reduce the number of states voting on Super Tuesday, we have to reduce the number of candidates treated as serious contenders. These news judgments will be arbitrary—but not subject to appeal. Those who finished first or second in Iowa and New Hampshire will get tickets from the mass media to play in the next big round. Those who don't, won't.

—David S. Broder

I am convinced that people cast their vote mostly based on an emotional bond with a candidate, a sense that they get each other.

—Fareed Zakaria

If we are to perpetuate the state, we must not only produce citizens, but good citizens—men and women of sound bodies, clear minds and clean souls.

—Arthur Capper

The absolute pacifist is a bad citizen; times come when force must be used to uphold right, justice and ideals.

--Alfred North Whitehead

It is the duty of every patriot to protect his country from its government.

—Thomas Paine

Whatever career you may choose for yourself (also) become a dedicated fighter for civil rights....It will make you a better doctor, a better lawyer, a better teacher....Make a career of humanity....You will make a greater person of yourself, a greater nation of your country, and a finer world to live in.

--Martin Luther King, Jr.

Resolved, that the women of this nation in 1876, have greater cause for discontent, rebellion and revolution than the men of 1776.

--Susan B. Anthony

The only way to deal with an unfree world is to become so absolutely free that your very existence is an act of rebellion.

—Albert Camus

They were learning the reality of war, these youngsters, getting face to face with the sickening realization that men get killed uselessly because their generals are stupid, so that desperate encounters where the last drop of courage has been given serve the country not at all and make a patriot look a fool.

--Bruce Catton

It's become too easy to go to war. Citizens notice when crime is going up, or school quality is going down, or the water is unsafe to drink, or when other public functions are not working as they should. Not enough citizens are made to notice when things go wrong, or right, with the military. The country thinks too rarely, and too highly, of the 1 percent under fire in our name.

—James Fallows

The taste of democracy becomes a bitter taste when the fullness of democracy is denied.

--Max Lerner

What does the Negro want? His answer is very simple. He wants only what all other Americans want. He wants opportunity to make real what the *Declaration of Independence* and the *Constitution* and the *Bill of Rights* say, what the Four Freedoms establish. While he knows these ideals are open to no man completely, he wants only his equal chance to obtain them.

--Mary McLeod Bethune
(1875-1955)

The most certain test by which we judge whether a country is really free is the amount of security enjoyed by minorities.

--Lord Acton

We are a nation of many nationalities, many races, many religions—bound together by a single unity, the unity of freedom and equality. Whoever seeks to set one nationality against another, seeks to degrade all nationalities.

--Franklin Delano
Roosevelt

They act like they don't love their country.
No,
What it is
Is they found out
Their country don't love them.

--Lucille Clifton

The central question that emerges—and it is not a parliamentary question or a question that is answered by merely consulting a catalog of the rights of American citizens, born Equal—is whether the White community in the South is entitled to take such measures as are necessary to prevail, politically and culturally, in areas in which it does not predominate numerically? The sobering answer is Yes—the White community is so entitled because, for the time being, it is the advanced race.

--William F. Buckley, Jr.,
[1957]

No other factor, in fact, came close to dividing the Democratic primary electorate as powerfully as their feelings about African Americans. The impact of racial attitudes on individual vote decisions...was so strong that it appears to have even outstripped the substantive impact of racial attitudes on Jesse Jackson's more racially charged campaign for the nomination in 1988.

--Michael Tesler and
David Sears on the
2008 Democratic
Primary

Written laws are like spider's webs; they will catch, it is true, the weak and the poor, but would be torn in pieces by the rich and powerful.

—Anacharsis
(6th Century B.C.)

Trite as it may seem, the signing of the *Declaration of Independence* on July 4, 1776, was the first public assertion of human equality as a legitimate rationale for political action. The Declaration would eventually eat away at the formal barriers of gender, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and any other differences that human beings have created to hold some down and raise others up.

--Anne-Marie Slaughter

There are more African-Americans in the corrections system today—in prison or on probation or parole—than there were enslaved in 1850. As of 2004, more black men were denied the right to vote because of a criminal record than in 1870, when the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified, giving blacks the right to vote. In the three decades since the war on drugs began, the U.S. prison population has exploded from 300,000 to more than 2 million people, giving our country the highest incarceration rate in the world—higher than Russia, China, and other regimes we consider repressive.

--Joshua DuBois

We're like a Third World country when it comes to some of our election practices.

—Donna Brazile

Riot is the language of the unheard.

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

We must scrupulously guard the civil rights and civil liberties of all our citizens, whatever their background. We must remember that any oppression, any injustice, any hatred, is a wedge designed to attack our civilization.

—Franklin D. Roosevelt

The defining experience of African-American life has been the necessity of making a way out of no way, of mustering the nimbleness, ingenuity and perseverance to establish a place in this society. That effort, over the centuries, has shaped this nation's history so profoundly that, in many ways, African-American history is the quintessential American history. Most of the moments where American liberty has been expanded have been tied to the African-American experience. If you're interested in American notions of freedom, if you're interested in the broadening of fairness, opportunity and citizenship, then regardless of who you are, this is your story, too.

—Lonnie G. Bunch III

No other nation has so successfully combined people of different races and nations within a single culture.

—Margaret Thatcher

It is now no more that toleration is spoken of as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people, that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. For happily the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens.

—George Washington

A nation, like a tree, does not thrive well till it is engraffed with a foreign stock.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

It is not for him to pride himself who loveth his own country, but rather for him who loveth the whole world. The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens.

—Baha'u'llah

The *U.S. Supreme Court* ruled in 1969 against a Des Moines, Iowa, school district, finding that students had a right to protest peacefully on school grounds. In this case, the Court said, the teenage plaintiffs could wear black armbands in protest of the Vietnam War, as long as they did so without 'materially and substantially' disturbing class. Justice Hugo Black issued an ominous dissent. 'It is the beginning of a new revolutionary era of permissiveness in this country,' he wrote. 'Groups of students all over the land are already running loose, conducting break-ins, sit-ins, lie-ins, and smash-ins.' Following the federal ruling, state and local officials passed a flurry of laws that would punish students who were disturbing class, anywhere from universities to elementary schools. At the time, it's worth remembering, black students weren't just protesting; they were also integrating white classrooms, backed by the federal government. 'As soon as we started introducing black bodies into white schools, we got these laws,' says Jenny Egan, a public defender for juveniles in Maryland who regularly represents clients charged with disturbing school. 'That's not a coincidence.'

—Amanda Ripley

The white, the Hispanic, the black, the Arab, the Jew, the woman, the Native American, the small farmer, the businessperson, the environmentalist, the peace activist, the young, the old, the lesbian, the gay and the disabled make up the American quilt.

—Jesse Louis Jackson

Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home—so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any map of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person: the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.

--Eleanor Roosevelt

We are all citizens of one world, we are all of one blood. To hate a man because he was born in another country, because he speaks a different language, or because he takes a different view on this subject or that, is a great folly. Desist, I implore you, for we are all equally human....Let us have but one end in view, the welfare of humanity.

--Johann Amos Comenius

It is easy to take liberty for granted, when you have never had it taken from you.

—Unknown

I swear to the Lord
I still can't see
Why Democracy means
Everybody but me.

—Langston Hughes

It is persons least like ourselves who often teach us most about ourselves. They challenge us to examine what we have uncritically assumed to be true and raise our eyes to wider horizons. When people who are very different from one another must live and work together, tolerance and civility are the only hopes for peace. How we deal with our differences, how we nurture our shared bonds, will in large part determine the future...of our society and of our country.

--James O. Freedman,
President,
Dartmouth College

Have you ever stopped to ponder the amount of blood spilt, the volume of tears shed, the degree of pain and anguish endured, the number of noble men and women lost in battle so that we as individuals might have a say in governing our country? Honor the lives sacrificed for your freedoms. Vote.

--Richelle E. Goodrich

There is one higher office than president, and I would call that patriot.

—Gary Hart

Only a knowledgeable, empowered and vocal citizenry can perform well in democracy.

—David Brin

Justice in the life and conduct of the State is possible only as first it resides in the hearts and souls of the citizens.

—Plato

The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish Government, presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established Government.

—George Washington

Many a revolution started with the actions of a few. Only 56 men signed the *Declaration of Independence*. A few hanging together can lead a nation to change.

—Wynton Marsalis

Our kind of nation thrives not only on Gross National Product but on Gross National Happiness. We are the only nation, so far as I know, that has included among its declared purposes, 'the pursuit of happiness.'

--Daniel Boorstin

The *Constitution* guarantees you the pursuit of happiness, but doesn't guarantee that you will catch up with it.

—Benjamin Franklin

We are the only country in the world that has written 'the pursuit of happiness' into its founding document, thus guaranteeing that we'll never be satisfied.

--Andrei Codrescu

Our object in the construction of the state is the greatest happiness of the whole, and not that of any one class.

—Plato

It is better that some should be unhappy, than that none should be happy, which would be the case in a general state of equality.

—Samuel Johnson

The *Constitution* does not provide for first and second class citizens.

—Wendell Willkie

The strength of a nation, especially of a republican nation, is in the intelligent and well-ordered homes of the people.

--Lydia H. Sigourney

As are families, so is society. If well ordered, well instructed, and well governed, they are the springs from which go forth the streams of national greatness and prosperity—of civil order and public happiness.

—Frank Thayer

The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased, and not impaired, in value.

--Theodore Roosevelt

We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong we may begin to use it with love and respect.

--Aldo Leopold

Each second we live is a new and unique moment of the universe, a moment that never was before and will never be again. And what do we teach our children in school? We teach them that two and two make four and that Paris is the capital of France. When will we also teach them what they are? We should say to each of them….'Do you know what you are?' You are a marvel. You are unique. In all of the world there is no other child exactly like you. In the millions of years that have passed there has never been another child like you. And look at your body....what a wonder it is! You may become a Shakespeare, a Michelangelo, a Beethoven. You have the capacity for anything. Yes, you are a marvel. And when you grow up, can you then harm another who is, like you, a marvel? You must cherish one another. You must work; we all must work to make this world worthy of its children. The love of one's country is a natural thing. But why should love stop at the border? We are all leaves of a tree and the tree is humanity.

--Pablo Casals

The best weapon of a dictatorship is secrecy, but the best weapon of a democracy should be the weapon of openness.

—Niels Bohr

The long fight to save wild beauty represents democracy at its best. It requires citizens to practice the hardest of virtues—self-restraint.

--Edwin Way Teale

We have a moral responsibility to protect the earth and ensure that our children and grandchildren have a healthy and sustainable environment in which to live.

—Jim Clyburn

The *Constitution* is the guide which I never will abandon.

—George Washington

A primary object should be the education of our youth in the science of government. In a republic, what species of knowledge can be equally important? And what duty more pressing than communicating it to those who are to be the future guardians of the liberties of the country?

—George Washington

Patriotism is supporting your country all the time, and your government when it deserves it.

—Mark Twain

No one flower can ever symbolize this nation. America is a bouquet.

—William Safire

Forty summers have passed since the battle that you fought here. You were young the day you took these cliffs; some of you were hardly more than boys, with the deepest joys of life before you. Yet, you risked everything here. Why? Why did you do it? What impelled you to put aside the instinct for self-preservation and risk your lives to take these cliffs? What inspired all the men of the armies that met here? We look at you, and somehow we know the answer. It was faith and belief; it was loyalty and love.

The men of Normandy had faith that what they were doing was right, faith that they fought for all humanity, faith that a just God would grant them mercy on this beachhead or on the next. It was the deep knowledge -- and pray God we have not lost it -- that there is a profound, moral difference between the use of force for liberation and the use of force for conquest. You were here to liberate, not to conquer, and so you and those others did not doubt your cause. And you were right not to doubt.

You all knew that some things are worth dying for. One's country is worth dying for, and democracy is worth dying for, because it's the most deeply honorable form of government ever devised by man. All of you loved liberty. All of you were willing to fight tyranny, and you knew the people of your countries were behind you.

—Ronald Reagan (D-Day Anniversary, 1984)

There is nothing wrong with America that the faith, love of freedom, intelligence, and energy of her citizens can not cure.

—Dwight David Eisenhower

The United States is the only country with a known birthday. All the rest began, they know not when, and grew into power, they know not how.... There is no 'Republican,' no 'Democrat,' on the Fourth of July,—all are Americans.

—James Gillespie Blaine

You have to love a nation that celebrates its independence every July 4, not with a parade of guns, tanks, and soldiers who file by the White House in a show of strength and muscle, but with family picnics where kids throw Frisbees, the potato salad gets iffy, and the flies die from happiness. You may think you have overeaten, but it is patriotism.

—Erma Bombeck

THE FLAG

Hello. Remember me? Some people call me *Old Glory*, others call me the *Star Spangled Banner*, but whatever they call me, I am your flag, the flag of the United States of America.

Something has been bothering me, so I thought I might talk it over with you—because it is about you and me.

I remember some time ago, people would line up on both side of the street to watch the parade, and naturally I was leading every one, proudly waving in the breeze. When your Daddy saw me coming, he immediately removed his hat and placed it against his left shoulder so that his hand was directly over his heart—remember? And you, I remember, were standing there, straight as a soldier. You didn't have a hat, but you were giving the right salute. Remember your little sister? Not to be outdone, she was saluting the same as you with her right hand over her heart—remember?

What happened? I'm still the same old flag. Oh, I've added a few more stars since you were a boy, and a lot more blood has been shed since those parades of long ago. But now, somehow I don't feel as proud as I used to feel. When I come down the street, you just stand there with your hands in your pockets. You may give me a small glance, and then you look away. I see children running around you shouting; they don't seem to know who I am.

I saw one man take his hat off, then he looked around, and when he didn't see anybody else take off his hat, he quickly put his on again.

Is it a sin to be patriotic today? Have you forgotten what I stand for, and where I have been? Anzio, Guadalcanal, Korea and Vietnam!

Take a look at the memorial honor rolls, and see the names of those patriotic Americans who gave their lives to keep this republic free. When you salute me, you are actually saluting them!

So when you see me, please stand straight and place your hand over your heart, and I'll know that you remembered. I'll salute you by waving back!

—Paul C. Graham

No town can fail of beauty, though its walks were gutters and its houses hovels, if venerable trees make magnificent colonnades along its streets.

--Henry Ward Beecher

We identify the flag with almost everything we hold dear on earth, peace, security, liberty, our family, our friends, our home… But when we look at our flag and behold it emblazoned with all our rights we must remember that it is equally a symbol of our duties. Every glory that we associate with it is the result of duty done.

—Calvin Coolidge

Have you ever read the *Declaration of Independence*...? If you have, you will know that it is not a Fourth of July oration. The *Declaration of Independence* was a document preliminary to war. It was a vital piece of practical business, not a piece of rhetoric; and if you will pass beyond those preliminary passages which we are accustomed to quote about the rights of men and read into the heart of the document you will see that it is very express and detailed, that it consists of a series of definite specifications concerning actual public business of the day. Not the business of our day, for the matter with which it deals is past, but the business of that first revolution by which the Nation was set up, the business of 1776. Its general statements, its general declarations can not mean anything to us unless we append to it a similar specific body of particulars as to what we consider the essential business of our own day.

Liberty does not consist, my fellow citizens, in mere general declarations of the rights of man. It consists in the translation of those declarations into definite action. Therefore... reading its business-like sentences, we ought to ask ourselves what there is in it for us. There is nothing in it for us unless we can translate it into the terms of our own conditions and of our own lives....

The task to which we have constantly to readdress ourselves is the task of proving that we are worthy of the men who drew this great declaration and know what they would have done in our circumstances. Patriotism consists in some very practical things—practical in that they belong to the life of every day, that they wear no extraordinary distinction about them, that they are connected with commonplace duty.

—Woodrow Wilson

The greatness of a nation can be judged by the way its animals are treated.

--Gandhi

We on this continent should never forget that men first crossed the Atlantic not to find soil for their ploughs but to secure liberty for their souls.

—Robert J. McCracken

America is much more than a geographical fact. It is a political and moral fact—the first community in which men set out in principle to institutionalize freedom, responsible government, and human equality.

—Adlai Stevenson

In the truest sense, freedom cannot be bestowed; it must be achieved.

—Franklin D. Roosevelt

I am a Veteran, as are most of my personal friends. A Veteran is someone, who at one point in their life, wrote a blank check payable to the United States of America for an amount up to, and including, their life. Regardless of personal or political views, there are way too many people in this country who no longer remember that fact.

—José N. Harris

As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.

—John Fitzgerald Kennedy

If you want to thank a soldier, be the kind of American worth fighting for.

—Internet Meme

America's veterans embody the ideals upon which America was founded more than 229 years ago.

—Steve Buyer

In the face of impossible odds, people who love this country, can change it

—Barack Obama

Honor to the soldier and sailor everywhere, who bravely bears his country's cause. Honor, also, to the citizen who cares for his brother in the field and serves, as he best can, the same cause.

—Abraham Lincoln

The world is a harrowing place and sometimes you just don't know what to say about it. You want to do something, but nothing gets done. No one does anything. And that seems insane. And it can make you feel hopeless. Now, I don't know what to do, but I know that hopelessness is not the answer. You cannot give up in the face of evil.

Now, this hopelessness, this powerlessness you feel when nothing gets done is something, as I said, we can't give into 'cause I actually think that there are some people out there—some truly evil people out there—who want you to feel powerless, just for a buck. Because if you feel powerless enough, you know what might make you feel more powerful? Going to buy a gun.

It's a vicious cycle. Violence happens, nothing gets done to get rid of the guns, and people buy more guns to protect themselves and now there are just more guns out on the street.

Get the power back. You can go vote. Vote for someone who will do something.

—Stephan Colbert

I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I live.

—George Bernard Shaw

It is not enough for ninety-five out of every hundred Negroes to be lawful. The ninety-five must band themselves together to restrain or suppress the vicious five.

—Kelly Miller [1899]

To be an American is to be accosted by bigotry and enmity for the rights that you were told to appreciate.

--Tennessee West

America: Land of the free and home of the gun.
We are not brave, we are cowards, or we would have done something, anything after Newtown. Instead we did Nothing.

--Jonathan Heatt

Citizenship means standing up for the lives that gun violence steals from us each day. I have seen the courage of parents, students, pastors, and police officers all over this country who say 'we are not afraid,' and I intend to keep trying, with or without Congress, to help stop more tragedies from visiting innocent Americans in our movie theaters, shopping malls, or schools like Sandy Hook.

--Barack Obama

The safety of the people shall be the highest law.

—Marcus Tullius Cicero

The first order of government is to preserve the public order and safety.

—Bob Wise

The main vehicle for nineteenth-century socialization was the leading textbook used in elementary school. They were so widely used that sections in them became part of the national language. Theodore Roosevelt, scion of an elite New York family, schooled by private tutors, had been raised on the same textbooks as the children of Ohio farmers, Chicago tradesman, and New England fishermen. If you want to know what constituted being a good American from the mid-nineteenth century to World War I, spend a few hours browsing through the sections in the *McGuffey Readers*.

--Charles Murray

Our constitution is color-blind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens.

—John Marshall Harlan

Thomas Jefferson, among other historical titans, understood that a functioning democracy required an educated citizenry, and crucially, he saw a education as a public good to be included in the 'articles of public care,' despite his preference for the private sector in most matters. John Adams, another proponent of public schooling, urged, 'There should not be a district of one mile square, without a school in it, not founded by a charitable individual, but maintained at the expense of the people themselves.'

In the centuries since, the courts have regularly affirmed the special status of public schools as a cornerstone of the American democratic project. In his vigorous defense of students' civil liberties—to protest the Vietnam War, for example, or not to salute the flag—the Supreme Court has repeatedly held public schools to an especially high standard precisely because they play a unique role in fostering citizens.

—Erika Christakis

We have neglected instruction on democracy. Until the 1960s, U.S. high schools commonly offered three classes to prepare students for their roles as citizens: *Government*, *Civics* (which concerned the rights and responsibilities of citizens), and *Problems of Democracy* (which included discussions of policy issues and current events). Today, schools are more likely to offer a single course. Civics education is falling out of favor partly as a result of changing political sentiment. Some liberals have come to see instruction in American values—such as freedom of speech and religion, and the idea of a 'melting pot'—as reactionary. Some conservatives, meanwhile, have complained of a progressive bias in civics education.

—Erika Christakis

Some experts have noted a conspicuous link between the decline of civics education and young adults' dismal voting rates. Civics knowledge is in an alarming state: Three quarters of Americans can't identify the three branches of government. Public-opinion polls, meanwhile, show a new tolerance for authoritarianism, and rising levels of anti-Democratic and illiberal thinking. These views are found all over the ideological map.

—Erika Christakis

Recent reports rank the U.S. 28th out of 35 developed countries in the percentage of adults who vote in national elections.

—Yoni Appelbaum

The *Declaration of Independence* was an open letter to King George III in which the ragtag American colonists enunciated the basis of human rights—that all people are created equal and deserving of unalienable rights—and created a model for untold rebellions.

—David DeMarkey

Politicians in the early American Republic were novices in the democratic arts, but it didn't take them long to recognize that the shortest route to a man's vote was through a shot glass. The founding fathers were the first to treat their constituents to hard cider or whiskey. The advent of universal white-male suffrage propelled election-related drinking to new heights. 'In many counties the candidates would hire all the groceries in the county seats and other considerable villages, where the people could get liquor without cost for several weeks before election,' a former governor of Illinois recalled. 'Long before night a large portion of the voters would be drunk and staggering about town, cursing, swearing, halloing, yelling, huzzaing for their favorite candidates.' The importance of alcohol was clear on the day Andrew Jackson was inaugurated in 1829. The rowdiness of his supporters at a reception threatened serious damage to the White House until the punch bowl that was carried out to the lawn, drawing the crowd with it.

—Christopher M. Finan

The duty of citizens in a democracy is to be skeptical—not to worship our leaders, who have always been fallible, but to question their decisions, challenge their policies, and hold them accountable for their failures.

—Ken Burns and Lynn Novick

We need to become world citizens, and such a trend is already under way. Economics and emigration move people around the globe at a rate history has never before witnessed. Social media have their downside, but they also put the entire world in the palm of your hand. Diversity is becoming the new normal. Although adults today may look askance at those Somali neighbors, their children will not wonder about their clothing, language, or religion—only about whether they listen to Beyoncé and play soccer.

—Robert L Kelly

The progenitors of public education, like Thomas Jefferson…saw public education, or 'common schools,' as a way to unify the new nation, and to bridge the gaps between rich and poor, immigrant and non-immigrant, Catholic and Protestant. They also saw it as a way to help people become citizens who participate fully in democracy.

—Johann Neem

'The American Idea' had been popularized by Theodore Parker, the radical preacher and abolitionist. The American idea, Parker declared in an 1850 speech, comprised three elements: that all people are created equal, that all possess unalienable rights, and that all should have the opportunity to develop and enjoy those rights. Securing them required 'a government of all the people, by all the people, for all the people,' Parker said.

—Yoni Appelbaum

No matter how much 'citizenship' young people may study, or how much they may learn about democratic processes, the fundamentally antidemocratic attitude of protection which surrounds them from infancy nullifies all this, and throws them on the world expecting more protection. This issue, which has always been serious, has reached a crisis with the coming of television. In an age of electronic media it is no use going on with the pretense that young people in their teens can be kept in the world by themselves. As we have already seen…people who have no social function quickly get bored, and boredom leads to smashing things.

—Northrop Frye

The *Declaration of Independence* is such an extraordinary statement—it was designed by people skeptical of government, local or national, but in particular national.

—Malcolm Wallop

Conservatives wishing to disprove charges of racial bad faith have an obvious place to begin: GOP efforts to make voting harder for minorities, under the guise of preventing voter fraud. In theory, voter fraud is a legitimate, non-bigoted concern. The problem is, a mountains of evidence suggests that in the United States in 2017, it barely exists. Moreover, throughout U.S. history, white politicians have tried to prevent African-Americans from voting. And that's exactly what some Republicans are trying to do today.

—Peter Beinart

The *Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals* found last year and that North Carolina's Republican-dominated legislature had restricted voting and registration in ways that targeted African-Americans with almost surgical precision. In 2016, a former GOP staffer in the *Wisconsin State Legislature* reported, 'I was in the closed *Senate Republican Caucus* when the final round of multiple voter ID bills were being discussed. A handful of the GOP senators were giddy about the ramifications and literally singled out the prospects of suppressing minority and college voters.' Too often, that's what conservative 'color blindness' looks like when the cameras are off.

—Peter Beinart

America isn't easy. American is advanced citizenship. You've gotta want it bad, 'cause it's gonna put up a fight. It's gonna to say 'You want free speech? Let's see you acknowledge a man whose words make your blood boil, and who's standing center stage and advocating at the top of his lungs that which you would spend a lifetime opposing at the top of yours.'

—Aaron Sorkin from *The American President*

Presidential elections are defining moments that go way beyond legislative programs or the role of the government. They are measuring points for the country that call forth the range of questions which every candidate must try to address. Who are we? What matters? Where are we going? In the private and public actions of the candidates are embedded their best answers. Action is character, I believe, and when all is said and sifted, character is what matters most.

—Bob Woodward

Voter turnout for school-board elections—the main mechanism for holding schools accountable to local communities—averages between 5 and 10 percent.

—Elizabeth Green

The single-most powerful word in our democracy is the word 'We.' 'We the People.' 'We shall overcome.' 'Yes we can.' That word is owned by no one. It belongs to everyone. Oh, what a glorious task we are given, to continually try to improve this great nation of ours.

—Barack Obama

Acceptance of dissent is the fundamental requirement of a free society.

—Richard Royster

Democracy is the only system capable of reflecting the humanist premise of equilibrium or balance. The key to its secret is the involvement of the citizen.

—John Ralston Saul

When widely followed public figures feel free to say anything, without any fact-checking, it becomes impossible for a democracy to think intelligently about big issues.

--Thomas L. Friedman

Our major obligation is not to mistake slogans for solutions.

--Edward R. Murrow

The COUNTRY is controlled by LAWS>
LAWS are controlled by POLITICIANS>
POLITICIANS are controlled by VOTERS>
VOTERS are controlled by PUBLIC OPINION>
PUBLIC OPINION is controlled by the MEDIA (News, Hollywood, Internet...)
& EDUCATION

SO—whoever controls MEDIA & EDUCATION, controls the COUNTRY.

--William J. Federer

It is not enough to limit your love to your own nation, to your own group. You must respond with love even to those outside of it. . . . This concept enables people to live together not as nations, but as the human race.

—Clarence Jordan

Countries are well cultivated, not as they are fertile, but as they are free.

—Charles de Montesquieu

NINE THEMES OF DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

Digital citizenship can be defined as the norms of appropriate, responsible behavior with regard to technology use.

1. Digital Access: full electronic participation in society.
   Technology users need to be aware that not everyone has the same opportunities when it comes to technology. Working toward equal digital rights and supporting electronic access is the starting point of Digital Citizenship. Digital exclusion makes it difficult to grow as a society increasingly using these tools. Helping to provide and expand Access To Technology should be the goal of all digital citizens. Users need to keep in mind that there are some that may have limited access, so other resources may need to be provided. To become productive citizens, we need to be committed to make sure that no one is denied digital access.

2. Digital Commerce: electronic buying and selling of goods.
   Technology users need to understand that a large share of market economy is being done electronically. Legitimate and legal exchanges are occurring, but the buyer or seller needs to be aware of the issues associated with it. The mainstream availability of Internet purchases of toys, clothing, cars, food, etc. has become commonplace to many users. At the same time, an equal amount of goods and services which are in conflict with the laws or morals of some

countries are surfacing (which might include activities such as illegal down loading, pornography, and gambling). Users need to learn about how to be effective consumers in a new digital economy.

3. Digital Communication: electronic exchange of information.
   One of the significant changes within the digital revolution is a person's ability to communicate with other people. In the 19th century, forms of communication were limited. In the 21st century, communication options have exploded to offer a wide variety of choices (e.g., e-mail, cellular phones, instant messaging). The expanding digital communication options have changed everything because people are able to keep in constant communication with anyone else. Now everyone has the opportunity to communicate and collaborate with anyone from anywhere and anytime. Unfortunately, many users have not been taught how to make appropriate decisions when faced with so many different digital communication options.

4. Digital Literacy: process of teaching and learning about technology and the use of technology.
   While schools have made great progress in the area of technology infusion, much remains to be done. A renewed focus must be made on what technologies must be taught as well as how it should be used. New technologies are finding their way into the work place that are not being used in schools (e.g., Videoconferencing, online sharing spaces such as wikis). In addition, workers in many different occupations need immediate information (just-in-time information). This process requires sophisticated searching and processing skills (i.e., information literacy). Learners must be taught how to learn in a digital society. In other words, learners must be taught to learn anything, anytime, anywhere. Business, military, and medicine are excellent examples of how technology is being used differently in the 21st century. As new technologies emerge, learners need to learn how to use that technology quickly and appropriately. Digital Citizenship involves educating people in a new way— these individuals need a high degree of information literacy skills.

5. Digital Etiquette: electronic standards of conduct or procedure.
   Technology users often see this area as one of the most pressing problems when dealing with Digital Citizenship. We recognize inappropriate behavior when we see it, but before people use technology they do not learn digital etiquette (i.e., appropriate conduct). Many people feel uncomfortable talking to others about their digital etiquette. Often rules and regulations are created or the technology is simply banned to stop inappropriate use. It is not enough to create rules and policy, we must teach everyone to become responsible digital citizens in this new society.

6. Digital Law: electronic responsibility for actions and deeds
   Digital law deals with the ethics of technology within a society. Unethical use manifests itself in form of theft and/or crime. Ethical use manifests itself in the form of abiding by the laws of society. Users need to understand that stealing or causing damage to other people's work, identity, or property on line is a crime. There are certain rules of society that users need to be aware in a ethical society. These laws apply to anyone who works or plays online. Hacking into others information, downloading illegal music, plagiarizing, creating destructive worms, viruses or creating Trojan Horses, sending spam, or stealing anyone's identify or property is unethical.

7. Digital Rights & Responsibilities: those freedoms extended to everyone in a digital world.
   Just as in the *American Constitution* where there is a *Bill of Rights*, there is a basic set of rights extended to every digital citizen. Digital citizens have the right to privacy, free speech, etc. Basic digital rights must be addressed, discussed, and understood in the digital world. With these rights also come responsibilities as well. Users must help define how the technology is to be used in an appropriate manner. In a digital society these two areas must work together for everyone to be productive.

8. Digital Health & Wellness: physical and psychological well-being in a digital technology world.
   Eye safety, repetitive stress syndrome, and sound ergonomic practices are issues that need to be addressed in a new technological world. Beyond the physical issues are those of the psychological issues that are becoming more prevalent such as Internet addiction. Users need to be taught that there are inherent dangers of technology. Digital Citizenship includes a culture where technology users are taught how to protect themselves through education and training.

9. Digital Security (self-protection): electronic precautions to guarantee safety.
   In any society, there are individuals who steal, deface, or disrupt other people. The same is true for the digital community. It is not enough to trust other members in the community for our own safety. In our own homes, we put locks on our doors and fire alarms in our houses to provide some level of protection. The same must be true for the digital security. We need to have virus protection, backups of data, and surge control of our equipment. As responsible citizens, we must protect our information from outside forces that might cause disruption or harm.

—Mike Ribble

Schools can teach basic principles of good citizenship to help shape students' behavior in the virtual world. It's nothing anyone would have thought necessary to do only a decade ago, but the concept of citizenship no longer exists only within the realm of the physical world. With K-12 students seeming to at all times have one foot in the real world and one in the virtual, school districts are starting to acknowledge a new collective responsibility call to teach kids what it means to be a good digital citizen and how to go about being one. The answer follows the same rules entrenched in the prescription for being a good citizen on the ground: Obey the law, have respect for others, act civilly and sensibly….if educators can help young people see online environments as communities they're helping to shape, they'll act more responsibly.

—Matt Villano

Citizenship isn't just about recognizing and dealing with online hazards. It's about building safe spaces and communities, having the students understand how to manage personal information, and about being Internet savvy—using your online presence to grow and shape your world in a safe, creative way, and inspiring others to do the same.

—*digizen.org*

When the preferences of economic elites and the stands of organized interest groups are controlled for, the preferences of the average American appear to have only a minuscule, near-zero, statistically non-significant impact upon public policy.

—Martin Gilens and
Benjamin I. Page

In 1913, the *Seventeenth Amendment* stipulated that senators had to be elected directly by the people, not by state legislatures. In 1920, the *Nineteenth Amendment* gave women the vote. In 1965, the *Voting Rights Act*, drawing on the *Fifteenth Amendment*, set out to protect the vote of black Americans. The once-peculiar claim that the United States was a democracy slowly came to have some basis in reality.

—Yascha Mounk

We live in a democracy, and the people can't govern themselves well if they don't know the truth about the world we live in. What if our rich citizens never hear of the poverty and suffering of the rest of the city? Why should they ever give to charity or vote for reform?

--Rosslyn Elliott

The figures for those who vote in primary elections, where the terms on which the campaign will be waged are determined, drop…, in some cases into the single digits.

—Joan Didion

The demands put on schools are not restricted to preparing students for the increasing demands of the labor market. A child needs to grow to be an informed member of the society in which they live and to have the knowledge and capabilities to participate. In addition to acquiring basic cognitive and social and emotional skills, a solid curriculum should be introduced in the school system even in the developing world. Understanding how his or her own country is organized, and how it connects to a globalized world, will be of great value for the student.

—Claudia Costin

Given their obstinate lack of interest in the subject, asking a group of average Americans about politics is like asking a group of stevedores to solve a problem in astrophysics.

—Andrew Ferguson

Separation between church and state never meant that religion had no place in American life. Remember, this is a nation that still stamps 'In God We Trust' on its currency.

—E. J. Dionne Jr.

Clever and attractive women do not want to vote; they are willing to let men govern as long as they govern men.

—George Bernard Shaw

Keep in mind our *Constitution* predates the *Industrial Revolution*. Our founders did not know about electricity, the train, telephones, radio, television, automobiles, airplanes, rockets, nuclear weapons, satellites, or space exploration. There's a lot they didn't know about. It would be interesting to see what kind of document they'd draft today. Just keeping it frozen in time won't hack it.

--Ross Perot

The great thing about democracy is that it gives every voter a chance to do something stupid.

—Art Spander

In the internment camps, we were forced to face the U.S. flag each morning and recite the *Pledge of Allegiance* from behind barbed wire fences. Patriotism is earned by a nation that lives up to its promises. It is our sacred duty always to speak out when it does not.

—George Takei

Patriotism isn't about making everyone stand and salute the flag. Patriotism is about making this a country where everyone wants to.

—Jason Kander

Indifference, to me, is the epitome of evil.

—Elie Wiesel

We must vote for hope, vote for life, vote for a brighter future for all of our loved ones.

—Ed Markey

'Don't cross the border illegally.'
The only reason you are not in their shoes, seeking asylum, is because you had the sheer dumb luck to be born here. You have done nothing to deserve the privilege you have. You did not earn your citizenship. You. Were. Lucky.

—Internet Meme

Ignorance, apathy, and lethargy cause the most problems in our world. People don't know what's going on, they don't care, and they're too lazy to find out.

—Michael Masukawa

America was not built on fear. America was built on courage, on imagination and an unbeatable determination to do the job at hand.

—Harry S. Truman

What greater grief than the loss of one's native land.

—Euripides

The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government.

—Eleanor Roosevelt

The vote is the beating heart of democracy.

—Thomas Paine

Democracy means that people can say what they want to. All the people. It means that they can vote as they wish. All the people. It means that they can worship God in any way they feel right, and that includes Christians and Jews and voodoo doctors as well.

—Dalton Trumbo

United States! Go put your creed into your deed.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

It is better to vote for what you want and not get it than to vote for what you don't want and get it.

—Eugene V. Debs

Davis announced that his Policy will be Honesty. Neither is that an issue in Politics. It's a Miracle, and can he get enough people that believe in Miracles to elect him?

—Will Rogers

The principal thing is of course, 'what will this do for me personally back home?' If it is something that he thinks the folks back home may never read, or hear of, why then he can vote any way he wants to, but Politics and Self-Preservation must come first, never mind the majority of the people of the U.S. If Lawmakers were elected for Life I believe they would do better. A man's thoughts are naturally on his next term, more than on his Country.

—Will Rogers

The Nineteenth Amendment—I think that's the one that made Women humans by Act of Congress.

—Will Rogers

The essence of government is control, or the attempt to control.

—Benjamin Tucker

No other country on earth could have provided such tremendous opportunities and we should never take the privilege of our citizenship for granted.

—Jane D. Hull

The day my wife and I became citizens, in 2013, the officiant told us that America expected us to bring the best of ourselves to our new home and to weave that into the American DNA. We were becoming not just citizens but active citizens, responsible for improving America—speaking up, getting involved.

—José Andrés

The system of government delineated in the *Constitution* is a concession to the idea that humans are deficient in the science of rational self-governance.

—Jeffrey Goldberg

Americans once learned self-governance by practicing it constantly—in lodge halls, neighborhood associations, and labor unions. As participation in these institutions has dwindled, so has public faith in democracy. To restore it, we must return democratic practices to everyday life.

—Yoni Appelbaum

Voluntary associations have provided the people with their greatest school of self-government. Rubbing minds as well as elbows, they have been trained from youth to take common counsel, choose leaders, harmonize differences, and obey the expressed will of the majority. In mastering the associative way they have mastered the democratic way.

—Arthur Schlesinger Sr.

Democratic government, being government by discussion and majority vote, works best when there is nothing of profound importance to discuss.

—Carl Becker

One recent study found that, holding all else equal, greater knowledge of civics among high-school seniors correlated with a 2 percent greater likelihood of voting in a presidential election eight years later. Active participation in extracurricular activities, however, correlated with a 141 percent increase.

—Yoni Appelbaum

Young Americans of all backgrounds deserve the chance to write charters, elect officers, and work through the messy and frustrating process of self-governance. They need the opportunity to make mistakes, and resolve them, without advisers intervening. Such activities shouldn't be seen as extracurricular, but as the basic curriculum of democracy. In that respect, what students are doing—club sports, student council, the robotics team—matters less than how they're doing it and what they're gaining in the process: an appreciation for the role of rules and procedures in managing disputes.

—Yoni Appelbaum

'A vast body of evidence now suggests that habits form when people vote,' a review of the research concluded in 2016. Persuading potential voters to cast a ballot in one election raises the odds of their voting in the next one.

—Yoni Appelbaum

When Americans turn 18, they should be automatically registered to vote.

—Yoni Appelbaum

Whatever may be tolerated in monarchical and despotic governments, no republic is safe that tolerates a privileged class, or denies to any of its citizens equal rights and equal means to maintain them.

—Frederick Douglass

The *U.S. Constitution* was and is imperfect. It took a civil war to establish that the principles enumerated in its *Bill of Right*s extended to all Americans, and the struggle to live up to those principles continues today. But focusing on the *Constitution's* flaws can overshadow what it did achieve. Its revolutionary ambition was to forge, out of a diverse population, a new national identity, uniting Americans under a banner of ideas. To a remarkable extent, it succeeded.

—Amy Chua and Jed Rubenfeld

The significance of birthright citizenship cannot be overstated. We forget how rare it is: No European or Asian country grants this right. It means that being American is not the preserve of any particular racial, ethnic, or religious subgroup.

—Amy Chua and Jed Rubenfeld

For all its flaws, the United States is uniquely equipped to unite a diverse and divided society. Alone among the world powers, America has succeeded in forging a strong group-transcending national identity without requiring its citizens to shed or suppress their subgroup identities. In the United States, you can be Irish American, Syrian American, or Japanese American, and be intensely patriotic at the same time. We take this for granted, but consider how strange it would be to call someone 'Irish French' or 'Japanese Chinese.'

Most European and all East Asian countries originated as, and continue to be, ethnic nations, whose citizens are overwhelmingly composed of a particular ethnic group supplying the country's name as wells its national language and dominant culture. Strongly ethnic nations, such as China and Hungary, tend to be less embracing of minority cultures.

—Amy Chua and Jed Rubenfeld

In urging Congress to create a national university in 1796, George Washington said: 'A primary object of such a national institution should be the education of our youth in the science of government.

—Jeffrey Rosen

Democracy belongs to those who exercise it.

—Bill Moyers

Our country has changed—but only in the way votes are suppressed. In the old days, before the *Voting Right Act*, states and counties suppressed voting by men and eventually women of color through property requirements, literacy tests, and poll taxes—while tacitly condoning employer intimidation and Ku Klux Klan violence. Now statutes and counties suppress votes through early-voting restrictions, limits on absentee and mail-in ballots, poll closures, felon disenfranchisement, and laws requiring voters to have a photo ID.

—Ibram X. Kendi

The Framers themselves believed that the fate of the republic depended on an educated citizenry. Drawing again on his studies of ancient republics, which taught that broad education of citizens was the best security against 'crafty and dangerous encroachments on the public liberty,' [James] Madison insisted that the rich should subsidize the education of the poor. To combat the power of factions, the Founders believed the people had to be educated about the structures of government in particular.

—Jeffrey Rosen

A popular Government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a Prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy; or, perhaps both.

—James Madison

If there is no discipline, there is anarchy. Good citizenship demands attention to responsibilities as well as rights.

—Joe Clark

It is the inextricable masculinity in our idea of government which so revolts at the idea of women as voters. 'To govern:' that means to boss, to control, to have authority; and that only, to most minds. They cannot bear to think of the woman as having control over even their own affairs; to control is masculine, they assume. Seeing only self-interest as a natural impulse, and the ruling powers of the state as a sort of umpire, an authority to preserve the rules of the game while men fight it out forever; they see in a democracy merely a wider range of self interest, a wider, freer field to fight in.

—Charlotte Perkins Gilman

The average citizen knows nothing of the law, and cares only to evade it when he can, obey it when he must.

—Charlotte Perkins Gilman

No real social change has ever come about without a revolution.

—Emma Goldman (1910)

It is better to die on your feet than to live on your knees!

--Emiliano Zapata

There is but one honest limit to the rights of a sentient being; it is where they touch the rights of another sentient being.

—Francis Wright (1829)

Native Americans are the original inhabitants of the land that now constitutes the United States. They have helped develop the fundamental principles of freedom of speech and separation of powers that form the foundation of the United States Government.

—Joe Baca

A lot of times I hear people talk about coming to the United States in pursuit of economic opportunities. It's funny for me to hear that because, for my family, it was never about money or economics. It was about the United states being a beacon of freedom. When I think about the Declaration of Independence, it's not just a piece of paper to me. It has a lot of meaning—probably more meaning than for some people who grew up here, because they have not experienced any other way of life. Thanksgiving dinner for me is not just Thanksgiving dinner. It's celebrating the United States and freedom. When I stand for the national anthem, I think of my grandparents and great-grandparents getting arrested by the communist government for no crimes other than 'thought crimes.' After you have lived in a country with no free press and no elections, it makes you appreciate democracy so much more.

—Vadim Backman

Married women predominantly voted Republican….Even once-married women—widows and women who are separated—were more likely to vote Republican…. proximity to white men incentivizes white women to shore up white male power wherever possible, and endorse policies and parties that protect the economic and political status of the men on whom they depend.

—Laura Kipnis

In 1872, Anthony voted illegally in the presidential election to protest women being unable to cast ballots. A leading voice in the suffragette movement, she was charged and fined for her attempt to vote.

—Amber Jamieson

The gift of a common tongue is a priceless inheritance and it may well someday become the foundation of a common citizenship. I like to think of British and Americans moving about freely over each other's wide estates with hardly a sense of being foreigners to one another.

—Winston Churchill

The goal should't be to eradicate anger. We couldn't if we tried, and…we need our anger. We need it to air our grievances with our friends, family, and colleagues. We also need the moral outrage that motivates citizens to push for a more just society Neither the left nor the right has a monopoly on justice; likewise, injustice can come from either side. But, in particular, people who have historically been denied the right to express their anger—the women of the #MeToo movement, the activists of Black Lives Matter—shouldn't be expected to give up the fight now.

—Charles Duhigg

It is not enough for people to be angry….The supreme task is to organize and unite people so that their anger becomes a transforming force.

—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Founders believed not just in individual rights but in the common good. They were not small-d democrats but rather small-r republicans. They embraced the notion of interdependence—that human beings have shared interests and need institutions to pursue those interests, and that liberty can be preserved only through such institutions. They believed that a good society is the product of active citizenship combined with responsible and virtuous leadership. And they viewed these truths as universal—the United States was not coming into existence to rise and fall as other powers had, but rather to transform the world.

—Jake Sullivan

... [woman suffrage] has made little difference beyond doubling the number of voters. There is no woman's vote as such. They divide up just about as men do.

—Alice Roosevelt Longworth

I just voted, and I don't want to brag, but I'm pretty sure I got all the questions right.

—Aaron Fredericks

When Americans first voted in 1788, only property holders had the right to cast ballots. The rationale was that only white male landowners could be completely independent. But by 1968, when Shirley Chisholm first ran for Congress, many Americans were looking for an alternative to 'The Man'—the white male leader who drew much of his support from special interest groups. Although Chisholm was initially shunned by the Democratic establishment, she became the first black woman elected to Congress, where she represented New York's 12th District for seven terms. She ran for president in 1972 under the slogan 'Unbought and Unbossed'—a compelling statement of independence from a woman whose ancestors had existed outside American power structures for hundreds of years.

—*smithsonian.com*

We are sometimes asked in the name of patriotism to forget the merits of [the Civil War], and to remember with equal admiration those who struck at the nation's life, and those who struck to save it—those who fought for slavery and those who fought for liberty…May my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I forget the difference between the parties to that…bloody conflict.

—Frederick Douglass

If there is no struggle there is no progress…Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.

—Frederick Douglass

Dictatorship is the greatest form of Government there is, provided you have a good dictator.

—Will Rogers

The suffrage movement began in the 1840s, when married women still had no right to property or ownership of their wages; women were shut out of most professions, and the domestic sphere was considered their rightful place. The idea of women casting ballots was so alien that even those who attended the landmark 1848 *Seneca Falls Convention* on women's rights found it hard to get their heads around it. The delegates unanimously passed resolutions favoring a woman's right to her own wages, to divorce an abusive husband and to be represented in government. A resolution on suffrage passed, but with dissenters.

—Liza Mundy

Straight white males in America have never had to fight of their civil liberties; they have been endowed with such rights since the conception of the country. The entire pursuit of civil rights in this country has been a game of catch-up; women and racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities aren't pursuing 'special rights'—the pursuit has always been one for equal rights.

—Phoebe Solomon

When I see Mexican flags waved at pro-immigration demonstrations, I sometimes feel a flush of patriotic resentment. When I'm forced to use a translator to communicate with the guy fixing my car, I feel a certain frustration.

—Barack Obama

The children and children's children of all of us have to live here in this land together. Our children's children will intermarry, one with another, your children's children, friends, and mine. They will be the citizens of one country.

—Theodore Roosevelt

Middle school students learn a whole lot better when they are not being lectured to, being directed, forced, or ordered, but when choice is given and learning is interactive. Traditional classrooms in our society today define teacher and the classroom in general as a straight-answer, fact-feeding, dictatorship that cares little for the opinions and interests of the pupils, and that teaches little about the reasons behind the facts. Schools are meant to prepare kids for life and make them more apt to be successful in their life. One would suppose that the government having authority over public schooling would want the generations of the future to be more successful in life, thus feeding the needs of the economy and the requirements of democracy, the spread of freedom, the reduction of discrimination in all forms, and exercising the rights and morality of citizens. One would assume that the government—wanting such a society–would encourage the development of these attributes through schooling. However as we look at the teaching of present schools, we see suspension of constitutional rights, undemocratic classrooms, and the implementation the fact-feeding teaching methods and passive roles for students. Now maybe it's just me, but I would have to think that we should be promoting the opposite of these things. Am I wrong?

—Anonymous 8th Grader
quoted by Nancy
Doda & Trudy
Knowles

America is not yet Dubai or Qatar or ancient Athens, where citizenship is almost an aristocratic status rather than the shared birthright of all residents. But more and more of the people who live among Americans are not on equal legal footing with Americans. They cannot vote. They cannot qualify as jurors. If they commit a crime, they are subject not only to prison but to deportation. And because these noncitizen are keenly aware of those things, they adjust their behavior. They keep a low profile. They do not complain to the authorities if, say, their boss cheats them out of some of their pay, or if they've been attacked on the street, or if they are abused by a parent or partner at home.

—David From

Twelve of the original 13 states (all but Rhode Island) sent delegates to the 1787 convention in Philadelphia to fix the *Articles of Confederation*, which was then deemed unfixable. The sequel [*The U.S. Constitution*], ratified in 1788, has stood the test of time.

—Dennis P. Affholter

Look at yourselves. Some of you teenagers, students. How do you think I feel and I belong to a generation ahead of you—how do you think I feel to have to tell you, 'We, my generation, sat around like a knot on a wall while the whole world was fighting for its human rights—and you've got to be born into a society where you still have that same fight.' What did we do, who preceded you? I'll tell you what we did. Nothing. And don't you make the same mistake we made.

—Malcolm X

Young people today seem to be coming around to the idea it really doesn't matter which politician or political party you vote for; and they're catching on that it doesn't even matter if you don't vote because they have realized modern elections are just a way for the 1% to appease the 99%—a way to keep the masses in line by making them believe they've had their say, thereby perpetuating the lie that democracy continues.

—James Morcan

Politicians would be well advised not to hold their breath for youth to engage in politics any time soon. Today's youth are the first generation to have realized for real change to occur, it must happen on an individual level rather than at an administrative level.

—James Morcan

The three most important documents a free society gives are a birth certificate, a passport, and a library card.

—E. L. Doctorow

Something must be radically wrong with a culture and a civilization when its youth begins to desert it. Youth is the natural time for revolt, for experiment, for a generous idealism that is eager for action. Any civilization which has the wisdom of self-preservation will allow a certain margin of freedom for the expression of this youthful mood. But the plain, unpalatable fact is that in America today that margin of freedom has been reduced to the vanishing point. Rebellious youth is not wanted here. In our environment there is nothing to challenge our young men; there is no flexibility, no color, no possibility for adventure, no chance to shape events more generously than is permitted under the rules of highly organized looting. All our institutional life combines for the common purpose of blackjacking our youth into the acceptance of the status quo; and not acceptance of it merely, but rather its glorification.

—Harold Edmund Stearns

Libraries are a cornerstone of democracy—where information is free and equally available to everyone. People tend to take that for granted, and they don't realize what is at stake when that is put at risk.

—Carla Hayden

In several educational institutions during the last few years manifestation of student activity in riots has been exciting the country. To the conservative mind, these riots bode no good. As a matter of fact student riots of one sort or another, protests against the order that is, kicks against college and university management indicate a healthy growth and a normal functioning of the academic mind. Youth should be radical. Youth should demand change in the world. Youth should not accept the old order if the world is to move on. But the old orders should not be moved easily certainly not at the mere whim or behest of youth. There must be clash and if youth hasn't enough force or fervor to produce the clash the world grows stale and stagnant and sour in decay. If our colleges and universities do not breed men who riot, who rebel, who attack life with all the youthful vim and vigor, then there is something wrong with our colleges. The more riots that come on college campuses, the better world for tomorrow.

--William Allen White

It's funny that we think of libraries as quiet demure places where we are shushed by dusty, bun-balancing, bespectacled women. The truth is libraries are raucous clubhouses for free speech, controversy and community. Librarians have stood up to the *Patriot Act*, sat down with noisy toddlers and reached out to illiterate adults. Libraries can never be shushed.

—Paula Poundstone

Non-cooperation with evil is as much a duty as is cooperation with good.

—Mohandas Gandhi

It is dangerous to be right when the government is wrong.

—Voltaire

The news of the day as it reaches the newspaper office is an incredible medley of fact, propaganda, rumor, suspicion, clues, hopes and fears, and the task of selecting and ordering that news is one of the truly sacred and priestly offices in a democracy. For the newspaper is in all literalness the bible of democracy, the book out of which a people determines its conduct.

—Walter Lippmann

How can we love our country and not love our countrymen?

—Ronald Reagan

Smokey [The Bear] ties fire suppression to good citizenship. With him, there is no question that fires are bad, and that individual citizens are responsible.

—Catriona Sandilands

Not voting is not a statement. It's rendering yourself invisible. It is silencing your own voice. It is self-marginalization. It's allowing your future to be determined by other people and pretending that's a victory. Register. Vote. Make a statement.

—Internet Meme

The Washington Post: Democracy Dies in Darkness

—Newspaper Motto

Think what they [the suffragists] were up against. Men controlled everything—the press, the church, every local and national political office. They had all the power, everywhere.

—Margaret Rossiter

The teaching of civics has dwindled since the 1960s—a casualty of political polarization, as the left and the right each accuse the other of using the subject for indoctrination—and with it the public's basic knowledge about American government.

—George Packer

America is by its nature, both imperfect and ultimately perfectible. The untiring pursuit of a more perfect union is at the core of the American idea.

—Jeffrey Goldberg

The most important invention of the 18th century that allowed us to run a democracy at scale was representative government—the election of representatives to a legislature empowered by the people.

—Jeffrey Goldberg

The most catastrophic collapse of a democracy in the 19th century took place right here in the United States, sparked by the anxieties of white voters who feared the decline of their own power within a diversifying nation.
The slaveholding South exercised disproportionate political power in the early republic. America's first dozen presidents—excepting only those named Adams—were slaveholders. Twelve of the first 16 secretaries of state came from slave states. The South initially dominated Congress as well, buoyed by its ability to count three-fifths of the enslaved persons held as property for the purposes of apportionment.

—Yoni Appelbaum

The United States possesses a strong radical tradition, but its most successful social movements have generally adopted the language of conservatism, framing their calls for change as an expression of America's founding ideals rather than as a rejection of them.

—Yoni Appelbaum

Americans rarely pause to consider just how bizarre the presidential nominating process has become. No other major democracy routinely uses primaries to choose its political candidates, nor did the Founders of this country intend for primaries to play a role in the republican system they devised. Abraham Lincoln did not win his party's nomination because he ran a good ground game in New Hampshire; rather, Republican elders saw in him a candidate who could unite rival factions within the party and defeat the Democratic nominee in the general election. Today's system amounts to a radical experiment in direct democracy, one without precedent even in America's own political history.

—Jonathan Rauch and
Ray La Raja

American is not some finished work or failed project but an ongoing experiment. And it is an experiment that, by design, will never end. If parts of the machine are broken, then the responsibility of citizens is to fix the machine—not throw it away. The Founders, with their unsentimental assessment of human nature, brought forth a constitutional system robust enough to withstand great stress and yet capable of profound correction to address injustice. (The Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery. The Nineteenth Amendment, which gave women the right to vote.) The scale of the Founders' achievement was unprecedented.

—James Mattis

Restoring the old era of smoke-filled rooms is neither possible nor desirable. Primaries bring important information to the nominating process. They test candidates' ability to excite voters and campaign effectively; they provide points of entry for up-and-comers and neglected constituencies; they force candidates to refine their messages and prove their stamina. But as 2016 made clear, primaries are only half of a functional nominating system. The other half is input from political insiders and professionals who can vet candidates, steer them to appropriate races, and, as a last resort, block them if they are unacceptable to the party or unfit to govern.

—Jonathan Rauch and
Ray La Raja

Turnout in primaries is notoriously paltry, and those who do show up are more partisan, more ideological, and more polarized than general-election voters or the general population. They are also wealthier, better educated, and older. When party insiders evaluate candidates, they think about appealing to overworked laborers, harried parents, struggling students, less politicized moderates, and others who do not show up on primary day—but whose support the party will need to win the general election and then to govern. Reducing the influence of party professionals has…amplified the voices of ideological activists at the expense of rank-and-file voters. Political theorists sometimes refer to the gap between primary voters and the larger electorate as the problem of 'unrepresentative participation.' Whatever you call it, it has a perverse consequence:…rather than disenfranchising political elites, primaries shift power from one set of elites (insiders who serve the party organizations) to another set (ideologues and interest groups with their own agendas).

—Jonathan Rauch and
Ray La Raja

Thanks to court decisions such as *SpeechNow.org* v. *Federal Election Commission*, political fundraising and spending by independent groups effectively have no limit. Formerly compelled to seek funds from many establishment donors, candidates can now be bankrolled by quirky billionaires with pet agendas….Billionaires can also bankroll themselves, buying their way around accountability to any party or constituency.

—Jonathan Rauch and
Ray La Raja

What you discover in a democracy is that it is difficult to build a house when each nail has an opinion.

—Robert Brault

We have lost the shared vocabulary that should bind us all as Americans. We fight over words like patriotism, solidarity, loyalty. Yet there is a word that defines our relationship. Lincoln knew what it was. The word is union. In a political sense, the word points to something concrete. It means talking honestly, fighting fairly, and planning together. It means 'Choose unity.'

—Danielle Allen

I have visited schools and spoken with students. I worry not only about budget cutbacks and funding inequities but also about classroom content. A proper understanding or our national story is absent. Students come away well versed in our flaws and shortcomings. They do not come away with an understanding of our higher ideals, our manifest contributions, our revolutionary aspirations. They do not come away with an understanding of the basic principles…or with an appreciation of how a thoughtful and clear-eyed person can also be—and indeed must be—a patriot.

—James Mattis

The failure to exercise one's right to vote is as great a crime as an open violation of the law itself.

—Frederick Douglass
(1871)

When power is conditioned upon ability to finance costly electioneering campaigns, plutocratic rule is established.

—Henry Jones Ford
(1909)

One recent examination of nearly five dozen countries over a span of three decades corroborated that women's electoral success in politics goes down in times of economic crisis.

—Galen Bodenhausen

The primary goal of the public library must be to teach good citizenship. Libraries recognized that such 'Americanization' could be achieved through literacy. Thus, teaching immigrants to read was not just a benefit in and of itself; literacy would also serve the interests of democracy.

—Kevin Mattson

Whoever would overthrow the liberty of a nation must begin by subduing the freeness of speech.

—Benjamin Franklin

The Supreme Court is more than a legal tribunal, ruling on disputes between parties—it is also an architect. The Court's interpretations of the *Constitution* and other laws become blueprints for the nation, helping to determine what form it will take and how it will continue to rise. For the past half-century, the Court has been drawing up plans for a more economically unequal nation, and that is the American that is now being built….[in the 50 years since Warren Burger replaced Earl Warren] the Court has, with striking regularity, sided with the rich and powerful against the poor and weak, in virtually every area of the law.

—Adam Cohen (2020)

Teachers are the soldiers of democracy. Others can defend democracy, but teachers create it.

—General Omar Bradley

It is the duty of youth to bring its fresh powers to bear on social progress. Each generation of young people should be to the world like a vast reserve force to a tired army. They should lift the world forward. That is what they are for.

—Charlotte P. Gilman

Teachers are more than any other class the guardians of civilization.

--Bertrand Russell

Alexander [the Great] wanted to expand the world and prove what a mixture of people can do and be. He wanted citizenship to mean the same thing for his subjects in Afghanistan and Persia as in Macedonia. This was anathema to Aristotle, who advised Alexander to treat people from other nations as you treat plants and animals.

—Ioannes Graekos

You cannot take your freedoms for granted. Just like generations who have come before you, you have to do your part to preserve and protect those freedoms... you need to be preparing yourself to add your voice to our national conversation.

—Michelle Obama

Our liberty cannot be guarded but by the freedom of the press, nor that be limited without danger of losing it.

—Thomas Jefferson

Our flag is red, white and blue, but our nation is a rainbow—red, yellow, brown, black and white—and we're all precious in God's sight.

—Jesse Jackson

As citizens, we knew we had ceded some of our individual rights to society in order to live together as a community. But we did not believe this social contract included support for an immoral system. Since the people invested government with its authority, we understood that we had to obey the law. But when law became suppressive and tyrannical, when human law violated divine principles, we felt it was not only our right, but our duty to disobey. As Henry Thoreau strongly believed, to comply with an unjust system is to accept abuse. It is not the role of the citizen to follow the government down a path that violates his or her own conscience.

—John Lewis

The vote is the most powerful nonviolent tool we have.

—John Lewis

I've spoken of the shining city all my political life, but I don't know if I ever quite communicated what I saw when I said it. But in my mind it was a tall, proud city built on rocks stronger than oceans, wind-swept, God-blessed, and teeming with people of all kinds living in harmony and peace; a city with free ports that hummed with commerce and creativity. And if there had to be city walls, the walls had doors and the doors were open to anyone with the will and the heart to get here. That's how I saw it, and see it still.

—Ronald Reagan

The American dream is one big tent….And on that big tent you have four basic promises: equal protection under the law, equal opportunity, equal access, and fair share.

—Jesse Jackson

When they wrote the *Constitution*, only white male landowners and the right to vote.

—Jesse Jackson

Many have fought for and even lost their lives to end segregation, to win the right to vote. It disappoints me to now have to cajole people to register and to vote.

—Jesse Jackson

Voting and participating in the democratic process are key. The vote is the most powerful nonviolent change agent you have in a democratic society. You must use it because it is not guaranteed. You can lose it.

—John Lewis

Around 100 years ago, women won the right to vote. They did this by blocking roads, chaining themselves to railings, getting arrested, causing disruption, and being a bloody nuisance.

—*ifunny.com*

Any significant advance toward racial justice will be met with a backlash. The passage of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments was followed by the rise of the Ku Klux Klan, lynchings, and a new era of racial subjugation in the form of Jim Crow. The landmark legislation of the civil-rights era was followed by Richard Nixon's 'southern strategy' and the ascendance of racial dog whistles as a central tactic of American politics.

—Carol Anderson

When protest occurs, we can expect that change is coming—change that reflects the evolving will of the people.

—Daniel Q. Gillion

The United States has often been called a land of contradictions, and to be sure, its failings sit alongside some notable achievements—a New Deal for many Americans in the 1930s, the defeat of fascism abroad in the 1940s. But on racial matters, the U.S. could just as accurately be described as a land in denial. It has been a massacring nation that said it cherished life, a slaveholding nation that claimed it valued liberty, a hierarchal nation that declared it valued equality, a disenfranchising nation that branded itself a democracy, a segregated nation that styled itself separate but equal, an excluding nation that boasted of opportunity for all. A nation is what it does, not what it originally claimed it would be. Often, a nation is precisely what it denies itself to be.

—Ibram X. Kendi

The abolition of slavery seemed as impossible in the 1850s as equality seems today. But just as the abolitionists of the 1850s demanded the immediate eradication of slavery, immediate equality must be the demand today. Abolish police violence. Abolish mass incarceration. Abolish the racial wealth gap and the gap in school funding. Abolish barriers to citizenship. Abolish voter suppression. Abolish health disparities. Not in 20 years. Not in 10 years. Now.

—Ibram X. Kendi (2020)

Voting isn't marriage—it's public transport. You are not waiting for 'the one' who is absolutely perfect. You are getting the bus. And if there isn't one going exactly to your destination, you don't stay at home and sulk—you take the one going closest to where you want to be.

—*pbs.twimg.com*

The right to vote must be open to our citizens irrespective of race, color, or creed—without tax or artificial restriction of any kind. The sooner we get to that basis of political equality, the better it will be for the country as a whole.

—Franklin Delano Roosevelt

A vote is not a valentine. You aren't confessing your love for the candidate. It's a chess move for the world you want to live in.

—Internet Meme

Voted.
For my sons, daughters & their friends—for their future.
For myself. For my parents.
For all my beloved people and for all those people I don't know, but want everything for.
For children separated from their parents.
For black mothers who worry every day that their son or daughter might not return home.
For equality, health, safety, justice, science and reform.
Because I am privileged to be able to.

—Allecia G. Freels

Nobody will ever deprive the American people of the right to vote except the American people themselves and the only way they could do this is by not voting.

—Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Foreign languages can play an important role in preparing students for local global citizenship. Discussions of educational reform have ignored the critical need for proficiency in other languages and knowledge of other cultures. Languages are inextricably bound to culture and thought. When we require that all our contact with other countries be conducted in our language, English, we force others to share our culture, world view, and way of looking at the world. Too often, students learn only about other cultures without learning to communicate directly with them. This may be an inadvertent form of cultural, ethnocentric arrogance, looking upon other cultures from arm's length. If we really want students to participate as global citizens, they need to be able to speak and understand those with whom we share this planet.

—Myriam Met and Eileen Lorenz

Bitch became part of the American vernacular to describe unruly women during the campaign for female suffrage. The use of the term more than doubled from 1915 to 1930…even as some suffragists strove to cast their quest of the vote not as a righteous crusade for equal political empowerment but as the logical extension of their social partnership with men. 'You ask us to walk with you, dance with you, marry you,' one poster put it. 'Why don't you ask us to vote with you?'

—Megan Garber

You can't expect civic virtue from a disfranchised class.

—Walter Lippmann

Free and secret ballot is the real keystone of our American Constitutional system.

—Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Students need to be prepared to be the best global citizens possible. Clearly, global citizenry requires the language and cultural skills to interact effectively across language and cultural borders.

—Thomas Friedman

If you want to thank a veteran, be an American that was worth defending.

—Internet Meme

Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free.

—Ronald Reagan

What the people want is simple. They want an America as good as its promise.

—Barbara C.Jordan

The struggle continues. After the 15th Amendment recognized the African American right to vote in 1870, some states responded by using violent intimidation, poll taxes and literacy tests as barriers to voting. Today those laws have mutated into voter-suppression efforts that target low-income and minority communities with disheartening effectiveness. I fight for the real enfranchisement of black people.

—Eric Holder Jr. (2020)

Democracy depends on the consent of the losers.

—Yoni Appelbaum

For all their talk about wanting politicians to get along, American voters rarely reward the opposition for cooperating with the governing party.

—Barack Obama

Americans expect a degree of fabrication from their leaders. After Jimmy Carter, in his 1976 campaign, promised, 'I'll never lie to you,' and then pretty much kept his word, voters sent him back to Georgia. Ronald Reagan's gauzy fictions were far more popular.

—George Packer

Nationalism does nothing but teach you to hate people you never met, and to take pride in accomplishments you had no part in.

—Doug Stanhope

Because we've been lied to and lied to, and it hurts to be lied to. It's ultimately just about that complicated: it hurts. It denies you respect for yourself, for the liar, for the world. Especially if the lies are chronic, systemic, if hard experience seems to teach that everything you're supposed to believe in's really a game based on lies. Young Voters have been taught well and thoroughly. You may not personally remember Vietnam or Watergate, but it's a good bet you remember 'No new taxes' and 'Out of the loop' and 'No direct knowledge of any impropriety at this time' and Did not inhale' and 'Did not have sex with that woman' and etc. etc. It's depressing and painful to believe that the would-be 'public servants' you're forced to choose between are all phonies whose only real concern is their own care and feeding and who will lie so outrageously with such a straight face that you just know they have to believe you're an idiot. So who wouldn't fall all over themselves for a top politician who actually seemed to talk to you like you were a person, an intelligent adult worthy of respect?

—David Foster Wallace

If we would learn what the human race really is at bottom, we need only observe it in election times.

—Mark Twain

Democracy doesn't happen by accident. We have to defend it. Strengthen it. Renew it.

—Joe Biden

Paine wrote 'Common Sense,' an anonymous tract which immediately stirred the fires of liberty. It flashed from hand to hand throughout the Colonies. One copy reached the New York Assembly, in session at Albany, and a night meeting was voted to answer this unknown writer with his clarion call to liberty. The Assembly met, but could find no suitable answer. Tom Paine had inscribed a document which never has been answered adversely, and never can be, so long as man esteems his priceless possession.
In 'Common Sense' Paine flared forth with a document so powerful that the Revolution became inevitable. Washington recognized the difference, and in his calm way said that matters never could be the same again. It must be remembered that 'Common Sense' preceded the declaration and affirmed the very principles that went into the national doctrine of liberty. But that affirmation was made with more vigor, more of the fire of the patriot and was exactly suited to the hour... Certainly [the Revolution] could not be forestalled, once he had spoken.

—Thomas Edison

There is nothing wrong with America that can't be cured by what is right with America.

—Bill Clinton

Teach a man to be a good citizen and you have solved the problem of life.

—Andrew Carnegie

A government that breaks its own laws can also easily break you.

—V. S. Naipaul

Relationship status: Is anybody looking for citizenship?

—Internet Meme

Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are prepared to choose wisely. The real safeguard of democracy, therefore, is education.

—Franklin D. Roosevelt

What struck me as I began to study history was how nationalist fervor-inculcated from childhood on by pledges of allegiance, national anthems, flags waving and rhetoric blowing--permeated the educational systems of all countries, including our own.

—Howard Zinn

The advancement and diffusion of knowledge is the only guardian of true liberty.

—James Madison

'Did you teach the War of 1812? Did you teach Teapot Dome? Can your students memorize the capitals of all 50 states and spout them in alphabetical order?' It was all a list of items that you could recite on a multiple-choice test and treating it as though that was meaningful learning in history and social studies. What students need is an awareness of how to get involved in the issues of their communities and a much better understanding of how systems work and how individuals can participate in the processes of electing, debating, governing and consensus-reaching….Classes can build critical thinking skills that teach students how to raise your voice in your community and advocate for your needs. They're learning to collaborate to solve problems and challenge the way things are so that the country continues to become that more perfect union that we envision.

—Shannon Salter, Social Studies Teacher

At the core of what self-government requires is for you to understand the history, to understand it from multiple perspectives to know more history, but also to be able to talk and discuss with others who disagree with you and to form a path forward.

—Louise Dubé

Civics and history education has eroded in the U.S. over the past fifty years, and opportunities to learn these subjects are inequitably distributed. Dangerously low proportions of the public understand and trust our democratic institutions. Majorities are functionally illiterate on our constitutional principles and forms. The relative neglect of civic education in the part half-century—a period of wrenching change—in one important cause of our civic and political dysfunction.

—E*ducating for American Democracy* (2021)

It's not an endlessly expanding list of rights—the 'right' to education, the 'right' to health care, the 'right' to food and housing. That's not freedom, that's dependency. Those aren't rights, those are the rations of slavery—hay and a barn for human cattle.

—Alexis de Tocqueville

Children should be educated and instructed in the principles of freedom. Aristotle speaks plainly to this purpose, saying, 'that the institution of youth should be accommodated to that form of government under which they live; forasmuch as it makes exceedingly for the preservation of the present government, whatsoever it be.'

— John Adams

Education for informed and engaged citizens is fundamental to national security and as important to the country as economic preparedness and competitiveness.

—Paul Carrese

Books are better than television, the internet, or the computer for educating and maintaining freedom. Books matter because they state ideas and then attempt to thoroughly prove them. They have an advantage precisely because they slow down the process, allowing the reader to internalize, respond, react and transform. The ideas in books matter because time is taken to establish truth, and because the reader must take the time to consider each idea and either accept it or, if he rejects it, to think through sound reasons for doing so. A nation of people who write and read is a nation with the attention span to earn an education and free society if they choose.

—Oliver DeMille

All who have meditated on the art of governing mankind have been convinced that the fate of empires depends on the education of youth.

—Aristotle

Whatever is my right as a man is also the right of another; and it becomes my duty to guarantee as well as to possess.

—Thomas Paine

In absolute governments the King is law, so in free countries the law ought to be king; and there ought to be no other.

—Thomas Paine

Feminism has fought no wars. It has killed no opponents. It has set up no concentration camps, starved no enemies, practiced no cruelties. Its battles have been for education, for the vote, for better working conditions, for safety in the streets, for child care, for social welfare, for rape crisis centres, women's refuges, reforms in the law. If someone says, 'Oh, I'm not a feminist', I ask, 'Why? What's your problem?'

—Dale Spender

Someday, I hope that we will all be patriots of our planet and not just of our respective nations.

—Zoe Weil

He who wishes to serve his country must have not only the power to think, but the will to act.

—Plato

Jefferson worried that the people—and the argument goes back to Thucydides and Aristotle—are easily misled. He also stressed, passionately and repeatedly, that it was essential for the people to understand the risks and benefits of government, to educate themselves, and to involve themselves in the political process. Without that, he said, the wolves will take over.

—Carl Sagan

It's rare to hear someone accused of being un-Swedish or un-British—but un-American is a common slur, slung by both left and right against the other. Being called un-American is like being called 'un-Christian' or 'un-Islamic,' a charge akin to heresy.

—Shadi Hamid

All democracies demand common public education because nothing makes people so much alike as the same education.

—Karl Jaspers

The great bulk of the legal voters of the South were men who owned no slaves; their homes were generally in the hills and poor country; their facilities for educating their children, even up to the point of reading and writing, were very limited; their interest in the contest was very meagre--what there was, if they had been capable of seeing it, was with the North; they too needed emancipation. Under the old regime they were looked down upon by those who controlled all the affairs in the interest of slave-owners, as poor white trash who were allowed the ballot so long as they cast it according to direction.

—Ulysses S. Grant

A majority of Americans cannot name a single branch of government, or explain what the *Bill of Rights* is. Twenty-four percent could not name the country America fought in the Revolutionary War. More than two-thirds of Americans don't know what's in Roe v. Wade. Two-thirds don't know what the *Food and Drug Administration* does. Some of this stuff you should be able to pick up simply by being alive.

—Bill Maher

Unless education promotes character making, unless it helps men to be more moral, more just to their fellows, more law abiding, more discriminatingly patriotic and public spirited, it is not worth the trouble taken to furnish it.

—William Howard Taft

Every child must be encouraged to get as much education as he has the ability to take. We want this not only for his sake but for the nation's sake. Nothing matters more to the future of our country: not military preparedness, for armed might is worthless if we lack the brain power to build a world of peace; not our productive economy, for we cannot sustain growth without trained manpower; not our democratic system of government, for freedom is fragile if citizens are ignorant.

—Lyndon B. Johnson

There are fifty American states, but they add up to one nation in a way the twenty-eight sovereign states of the European Union never can. Most of the EU states have a national identity far stronger, more defined, than any American state. It is easy to find a French person who is French first, European second, or one who pays little allegiance to the idea of Europe, but an American identifies with their Union in a way few Europeans do theirs. This is explained by the geography, and the history of the unification of the United States.

—Tim Marshall

Aristotle tells me the Athenians had a word for those who refused to participate in public affairs: *idiotes*. It is where we get our word idiot.

—Eric Weiner

Rome is not merely a matter of geography...Rome is not defined by rivers, or mountains, or even seas; Rome is not a question of blood or race, or religion; Rome is an ideal. Rome is the highest embodiment of liberty and law that mankind has yet achieved since our ancestors came down from those mountains and learned to live as communities under the rule of law.

—Robert Harris

Civil rights activists quoted heavily from biblical texts, as did the Christian segregationists who opposed them. The *Bible's* ancient refrains have given voice to the laments of millions of oppressed people and, too often, provided justification to their oppressors. Wars still rage over its disputed geographies.

—Rachel Held Evans

Schools must remember that they are not primarily for helping children acquire jobs, get into college, or develop a better self-concept. As worthy as these goals may be, they are less important than the schools' distinctly civic mission: to educate students to be capable of—and passionately committed to—meeting the challenges of the democratic way of life.

—Walter Parker

In a world where rapid change is the only constant, the nature for citizenship is beginning to transcend traditional allegiances defined by national boundaries. The 'new' citizens must have more than a knowledge of their own national history and the commonly agree upon cultural and political values of their society. They must also clearly understand the meaning of global interdependence. Commitment to become involved in the social and economic interactions that more and more characterize the emerging world system is central to such an understanding. Building a broadly integrated sense of the world imposes a new set of expectations on the schools….continued ignorance about other places, other cultures, and other economic and political systems will produce a generation of citizens poorly prepared to understand, let alone compete in, the complicated and interdependent world marketplace.

—James F. Marran

The great moral attribute of self-government cannot be born and matured in a day; and if children are not trained to it, we only prepare ourselves for disappointment if we expect it from grown men….As the fitting apprenticeship for despotism consists in being trained to despotism, so the fitting apprenticeship for self-government consists in being trained to self-government.

—Horace Mann (1846)

Geographic education makes an important contribution to citizenship. In a democratic society, responsible citizens must be aware of issues, problems, and conditions. Geography provides essential information, concepts, and skills for making informed judgments and choices. Citizens must be aware of and participate in a host of decisions, including those that affect our country's foreign policies. Geographic education is important in developing citizenship competencies for dealing with those issues.

—Joseph P. Stoltman

I can't imagine trying to grasp the meaning of current events—events that involve people and cultures, environmental problems, political drama, natural disasters—without reference to location, distinctive characteristics of the places involved, and their relationships to other places. Without a spatial reference—a geographic perspective—current events, or historical events, for that matter, are just a confused jumble of unrelated pieces. I would let students see where things are located, where events took place, so that they can better understand how things fit together, how things work.

—Gilbert M. Grosvenor

In 1790, the first American Congress made citizenship available only to any 'free white person' who had been in the country for at least two years. In 1882, the *Chinese Exclusion Act* blocked Chinese immigrants—and in 1917, it was expanded to block most Asians living between Afghanistan and the Pacific. These laws were upheld numerous times by federal courts, including in a seminal Supreme Court case from 1922, in which the government prevailed by arguing that citizenship should be granted as the Founders intended: 'only to those whom they knew and regarded as worthy to share it with them, men of their own type, white men.'

—Caitlin Dickerson

Upon the education of the people of this country the fate of this country depends.

—Benjamin Disraeli

As much as the modern Court clings to its image as an apolitical institution—enlightened, black-robed figures dispensing wisdom form on high, guided by love of country and *Constitution*—the truth is that its members have always been swayed by politics, ego, and grievance.

—McKay Coppins

Passively to accept an unjust system is to cooperate with that system, and thereby to become a participant in its evil.

—Martin Luther King Jr.

I am an activist, an environmentalist, a teacher, professor, and a mentor…but first, I am a listener. I listened to my parents, my soul, the earth, and the people of my community. Real activism starts with listening.

—Catherine Coleman Flowers

Smart Americans are uneasy with patriotism. It's an unpleasant relic of a more primitive time, like cigarette smoke or dog racing. It stirs emotions that can have ugly consequences. The winners in Smart America—connected by airplane, internet, and investments to the rest of the globe—have lost the capacity and the need for national identity, which is why they can't grasp its importance for others. Their passionate loyalty, the one that gives them a particular identity, goes to their family. The rest is diversity and efficiency, heirloom tomatoes and self-driving cars. They don't see the point of patriotism.

—George Packer

It is impossible for us to break the law. We can only break ourselves against the law.

—Cecil B. deMille

'You can't make me,' they say.
Do you smoke inside buildings? No. Do you wear a seat belt? Yes. Do you stop at red lights and stop signs? Yes.
Why? Because the government makes laws for public safety and because decent people in civilized societies show respect and care for fellow human beings even is it is not the law.
'You can't make me' is the response a young child having a tantrum makes to their parents who are trying to teach them to be responsible, good, caring people.
Citizenship carries both rights and responsibilities.

—Susan Richards

The core function of the social studies classroom is to explain what actually happened in history and how that has an impact on society today, to make children better future participants in our democracy.

—Stefan Lallinger

A democratic society depends upon an informed and educated citizenry.

—Thomas Jefferson

Information is the currency of democracy.

—Thomas Jefferson

Each time a man stands up for an ideal or acts to improve the lot of others or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope and, crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

—Robert F. Kennedy

If you don't like the way the world is, you change it. You have an obligation to change it. You just do it one step at a time.

—Marian Wright Edelman

Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible, but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary.

—Reinhold Weber

What do we need to talk about openly in debates about schooling is not whether a traditional school is better or worse than a progressive school but whether each cultivates civic virtue.

—Larry Cuban

We must realize that the basic goal of our schools is to prepare students to engage productively in a democracy. We must organize and operate our own schools in accord with the democratic principles of our society. Teaching and learning between students and teachers must demonstrate, in actions, the relationship between education and democracy—the power of learning for engagement in real issues.

—Carl D. Glickman

Illiteracy…is a handicap the becomes an obstacle to achieving full citizenship.

—Paulo Freire

If you asked me should people be studying physics, or chemistry or biology or geology in high school, I would say it doesn't make the slightest bit of difference. They should study some topics, of course, but the choice is wide-open—I'm interested in depth, not breadth. I'm not talking about college education; I'm just taking on K to 12. What I want when kids get through a K to 12 education is for them to have a sense of what their society thinks is true, beautiful and good; false, ugly and evil; how to think about it and how to act on the basis of your thoughts.

—Howard Gardner

If our schools were to focus on the main goal of citizenship and democracy and show students how to connect learning with the real issues of their surroundings, then more students would learn how to write cogent compositions, would learn basic skills, would use higher-order thinking, would learn aesthetic appreciation, would excel in academics, and would graduate.

—Carl D. Glickman

Liberty has never come from the government. Liberty has always come from the subjects of it. The history of liberty is a history of resistance. The history of liberty is a history of limitations of governmental power, not the increase of it.

—Nadia Boulanger

What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, that must the community want for all of its children. Any other ideal for our schools is narrow and unlovely; acted upon, it destroys our democracy.

--John Dewey

Democracy is the art of thinking independently together.

—Alexander Meiklejohn

Beware of false knowledge; it is more dangerous than ignorance.

—George Bernard Shaw

The idea of a world government is thousands of years old. It's been considered by Ancient Egyptians, Chinese, and Greeks and has been batted around by many a conqueror and idealist. The best efforts towards an international government that we have currently are the United Nations and the European Union….[Albert Einstein] regarded nationalism as a 'disease' and wanted to see a world without borders, with one international government having power over individual states.

—Paul Ratner

When a local newspaper vanishes, research shows, it tends to correspond with lower voter turnout, increased polarization, and the general erosion of civic engagement. Misinformation proliferates. City budgets balloon, along with corruption and dysfunction. The consequences can influence national politics as well; an analysis by *Politico* found that Donald Trump performed best during the 2016 election in places with limited access to local news.

—McKay Coppins

There's no industry that I can think of more integral to a working democracy than the local news business.

—Stewart Bainum

Taxes are what we pay for a civilized society.

--Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

Our votes can be our superpower in democracy. We need to ask candidates the hard questions: how will you deal with the crises of equity: affordable housing, tax fairness, hunger, childcare, climate change and more? Let's set the example for others by using our voices.

—Willie Dickerson

Every public school student [in France] is taught the same curriculum from first grade through high school. Schools are seen as a crucible where citizens are forged, a place that instills values—…Freedom of expression, the equality between men and women— along with reading, writing, and math. The watch word is universalism, referring to an abstract notion of citizenship to which all must subscribe….Catholic and other parochial schools still exist, of course—and many of them receive public funds. But they must teach the same national curriculum as any public school.

—Rachel Donadio

Ballots are the rightful and peaceful successors to bullets.

—Abraham Lincoln

Given the multiplication of misinformation outside social media, challenges of effective regulation and proliferation of new technologies, it will be difficult to restrict false and damaging material from the supply side.
When the flow of misinformation is hard to stop, it is the filter that matters most—young minds with critical skills to determine truth from falsehood. Our nation is failing to foster critical thinking, media literacy and an ability to understand other perspectives. Just as young people should be taught coding, they must be taught the decoding of news and information as a prerequisite of informed citizenship.

—Margaret Spellings and
John Bridgeland

We need to upgrade our expectations for civic education. Students should be exposed to America's core values, the difficult history of implementing those ideals, and the shared language and culture that enable us to communicate and find common ground. And they need skills to navigate the era of alternative facts and false narratives in this misinformation age.

—Margaret Spellings and
John Bridgeland

American civic education hasn't emphasized the vital role of journalism as the fourth estate, as important to the good society as the separation of powers or checks and balances in the federal government.

—Anthony Hennen

By definition, democracy implies collectivity; it depends on an inclusive and vibrant public sphere in which we can all listen to one another. We ignore that listening at our peril.

—Astra Taylor

Education stands firmly as the cornerstone of our great nation. A commitment to education is a commitment to our children and their future. Our children are our most precious resource and we, as citizens and communities, must never forget that the skills and knowledge we provide our children with today will become the foundation of tomorrow. We must make certain that the opportunity for a quality education is available for all children. The dedication and tireless efforts put forth by our educators to enhance the learning process is essential to the growth and prosperity of our communities and our nation.

—Gov. Tom Ridge

Whoever wants to know the heart and mind of America had better learn baseball.

—Jacques Barzun

Sure. I'm proud to be an American.

—Steve Foster, (When asked by a Canadian customs officer if he had anything to declare.)

Since the common school movement in the early 19th century, the public school has had an exalted purpose in this country. It's our core civic institution—not just because, ideally it brings children of all backgrounds together in a classroom, but because it prepares them for the demands and privileges of democratic citizenship…. One reason we have a stake in the education of other people's children is that they will grow up to be citizens. Education is a public interest.

—George Packer

The original thinkers about public education were concerned almost to a point of paranoia about creating self-governing citizens. Horace Mann went to his grave having never once uttered the phrase college-and career-ready. We've become more accustomed to thinking about the private ends of education. We've completely lost the habit of thinking about education as citizen-making.

—Robert Pondiscio

A functioning democracy needs citizens who know how to make decisions together.

—George Packer

In a 2019 survey, only 40 percent of Americans were able to pass the test that all applicants for U.S. citizenship must take, which asks questions like 'Who did the United States fight in World War II?' and 'We elect a president for how many years?' The only state in which a majority passed was Vermont.

—George Packer

Americans with college degrees are likelier to vote and otherwise participate in civic life than those without.

—George Packer

No calling in our society is more demanding than teaching; no calling in our society is more selfless than teaching; and no calling in is more central to the vitality of a democracy than teaching.

--Roger Mudd

Nationalism is an infantile disease. It is the measles of mankind.

—Albert Einstein

We must not confuse dissent with disloyalty. We must remember always that accusation is not proof and that conviction depends upon evidence and due process of law. We will not walk in fear, one of another. We will not be driven by fear into an age of unreason, if we dig deep in our history and our doctrine, and remember that we are not descended from fearful men not from men who feared to write, to speak, to associate and to defend causes that were, for the moment, unpopular….We can deny our heritage and our history, but we cannot escape responsibility for the result. There is no way for a citizen of a republic to abdicate his responsibilities. As a nation we have come into our full inheritance at a tender age. We proclaim ourselves, as indeed we are, the defenders of freedom, wherever it continues to exist in the world, but we cannot defend freedom abroad by deserting it at home.

—Edward R. Murrow

Amongst democratic nations, each new generation is a new people.

—Alexis de Tocqueville

Education is a better safeguard of liberty than a standing army.

--Edward Everett

The *Bible* and the Church have been the greatest stumbling blocks in the way of women's emancipation.

—Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1896)

You who have read the history of nations, from Moses down to our last election, where have you ever seen one class looking after the interests of another?

—Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1860)

Democracy is not an easy form of government, because it is never final; it is a living, changing organism, with a continuous shifting and adjusting of balance between individual freedom and general order.

—Ilka Chase

The test of a civilization is in the way that it cares for its helpless members.

—Pearl S. Buck

Democracy must be conceived as a process, not a goal.

—M. P. Follett

In an autocracy, one person has his way; in an aristocracy, a few people have their way; in a democracy, no one has his way.

—Celia Green

Democracy is not a spectator sport.

—Marian Wright Edelman

It is an illusion to suppose that a Dictator makes himself; at most he sees an opportunity made for him by passive, stupid, incompetent, and above all, unsatisfied and fearful men.

—L. Susan Stebbing

We need to restore the full meaning of that old word, duty. It is the other side of rights.

--Pearl Buck

Whoever walked behind anyone to freedom? If we can't go hand in hand, I don't want to go.

—Hazel Scott

In all men is evil sleeping; the good man is he who will not awaken it, in himself or in other men.

—Mary Renault

The evil of the world is made possible by nothing but the sanction you give it.

—Ayn Rand

A lie doesn't become truth,
Wrong doesn't become right,
And evil doesn't become good
Just because it's accepted by a majority.

—Booker T. Washington

My desire to be well-informed is currently at odds with my desire to remain sane.

—David Sipress

The seat of the greatest patriotic loyalties is in the stomach. Long after giving up all attachment to the land of his birth, the naturalized American citizen holds fast to the food of his parents.

—Vicki Baum

Voters vote on what affects them, not what offends them.

—Kellyanne Conway

Government is like a tool, like a hammer. You can use a hammer to build with or you can use a hammer to destroy with.

—Molly Ivins

There is no such thing as a good government.

—Emma Goldman

Every government whatever its form, character or color—be it absolute or constitutional, monarchy or republic, Fascist, Nazi or bolshevik—is by its very nature conservative, static, intolerant of change and opposed to it.

—Emma Goldman

A phenomenon noticeable throughout history regardless of place or period is the pursuit by governments of policies contrary to their own interests.

—Barbara W. Tuchman

Generosity is a virtue for individuals, not governments. When governments are generous it is with other people's money, other people's safety, other people's future.

—P. D. James

Government remains the paramount area of folly because it is there that men seek power over others—only to lose it over themselves.

—Barbara W. Tuchman

It's all very well to run around saying regulation is bad, get the government off our backs, etc. Of course our lives are regulated. When you come to a stop sign, you stop; if you want to go fishing, you get a license; if you want to shoot ducks, you can shoot only three ducks. The alternative is dead bodies at the intersections, no fish and no ducks. OK?

—Molly Ivins

There is hardly a facet of life that is now free of some sort of federal action.

—Millicent Fenwick

In a democracy such as ours the leading minds seldom achieve a place of permanent influence. And the men who sit in Congress or even in the White House are usually not our leading minds. They are not the thinkers. Still less have they time for reflection.

—Pearl S. Buck

Whatever is fine and beautiful in the human expresses and asserts itself in spite of government, and not because of it.

—Emma Goldman

The only people who should be in government are those who care more about people than they do about power.

--Millicent Fenwick

For a considerable price, it relieves us of responsibilities, performing acts that would be as unsavory for most of us as butchering our own beef. As our agent, the government can bomb and tax. As our agent, it can relieve us of the responsibilities once born face-to-face by the community: caring for the young, the war-wounded, the aged, the handicapped. It extends our impersonal benevolence to the world's needy, relieving our collective conscience without uncomfortable first-hand involvement. It takes our power, our responsibility, our consciousness.

—Marilyn Ferguson

Every program develops a constituency. That's why it's such perfect hell trying to cut anything, not just good programs, but also dopey ones, spectacularly cost-ineffective ones and some that are, by any known measure, at least three quarters of a century out of date.

—Meg Greenfield

Everyone else is represented in Washington by a rich and powerful lobby, it seems. But there is no lobby for the people.

—Shirley Chisholm

Hatred is a passion requiring one hundred times the energy of love. Keep it for a cause, not an individual. Keep it for intolerance, injustice, stupidity. For hatred is the strength of the sensitive. Its power and its greatness depend on the selflessness of its use.

—Olive Moore

The stakes…are too high for government to be a spectator sport.

—Barbara Jordan

France, like every other Western country except the United States, as long accepted the principal that comprehensive healthcare is the right of every citizen. No Frenchman need ever fear that catastrophic illness will wipe him out financially. How long, do you suppose, will it take us, in the United States, to catch up?

—Suzanne Massie

A democratic home is the foundation of a democratic state.

—Agnes E. Benedict and
Adele Franklin

When real Democrats and Republicans were running our country; we didn't hate each other. We didn't vote for parties. We voted for ideas that came from both parties that made us better as a country. We didn't label ideas or parties as racist, sexist or un-American. We did what we thought was best for 'WE THE PEOPLE' and accepted the winner as a united country!

—Internet Meme

I am an uncompromising pacifist...I have no sense of nationalism, only a cosmic consciousness of belonging to the human family.

--Rosika Schwimmer

When you make a world tolerable for yourself you make a world tolerable for others.

—Anaïs Nin

Take democracy seriously. Teach it, debate it, improve it, defend it.

—Anne Applebaum

The Framers of the *Constitution* were excellent social psychologist. They knew that democracy had an Achilles' heel because it depended on the collective judgment of the people, and democratic communities are subject to 'the turbulency and weakness of unruly passions.' The key to designing a sustainable republic, therefore, was to build in mechanisms to slow things down, cool passions, require compromise, and give leaders some insulation from the mania of the moment while still holding them accountable to the people periodically, on Election Day.

—Jonathan Haidt

It takes six simpletons and one zealot to start a movement.

—Anzia Yezierska

The public isn't one thing; it's highly fragmented, and it's basically mutually hostile. It's mostly people yelling at each other and living in bubbles of one sort or another.

—Martin Gurri (2014)

An autocracy can deploy propaganda or use fear to motivate the behaviors it desires, but a democracy depends on widely internalized acceptance of the legitimacy of rules, norms, and institutions. Blind and irrevocable trust in any particular individual or organization is never warranted. But when citizens lose trust in elected leaders, health authorities, the courts, the police, universities, and the integrity of elections, then every decision becomes contested; every election becomes a life and death struggle to save the country from the other side.

—Jonathan Haidt

Recent academic studies suggest that social media is indeed corrosive to trust in government, news media, and people and institutions in general….Social media amplifies political polarization; foments 6, especially right wing populism; and is associated with the spread of misinformation.

—Jonathan Haidt (2022)

To prepare the members of the next generation for…democracy, perhaps the most important thing we can do is let them out to play. Stop starving children of the experiences they most need to become good citizens: free play in mixed-age groups of children with minimal adult supervision.

—Jonathan Haidt

A politician thinks of the next election; a statesman of the next generation. A politician looks for the success of his party; a statesman for that of his country. The statesman wishes to steer, while the politician is satisfied to drift.

--James F. Clarke

There is only one opinion poll that I am interested in and that is the one that will take place on election day.

—Michael Howard

The decision to speak out is the vocation and lifelong peril by which the intellectual must live.

—Kay Boyle

Every effort for progress, for enlightenment, for science, for religious, political, and economic liberty, emanates from the minority, and not from the mass.

—Emma Goldman

The world is not run by thought, nor by imagination, but by opinion.

—Elizabeth Drew

American patriotism is generally something that amuses Europeans, I suppose because children look idiotic saluting the flag and because the *Constitution* contains so many cracks through which the lawyers make creep.

—Katherine Whitehorn

You can't prove you're an American by waving Old Glory.

—Helen Gahagan Douglas

Question everyone in authority, and see that you get sensible answers to your questions….Questioning does not mean the end of loving, and loving does not mean abnegation of intelligence. Vow as much love to your country as you like… but, I implore you, do not forget to question.

—Winifred Holtby

The apathy and inattention of the average citizen is beyond comprehension.

—Abigail McCarthy

People often say, with pride, 'I'm not interested in politics.' They might as well say, 'I'm not interested in my standard of living, my health, my job, my rights, my freedoms, my future or any future.'…If we mean to keep any control over our world and lives, we must be interested in politics.

—Martha Gellhorn

Prejudices such as sexism and the deeply related homophobia, racism, and classism are not just personal problem, sets of peculiar and troubling beliefs. Exclusions and devaluations of whole groups of people on the scale and of the range, tenacity, and depth of racism and sexism and classism are systemic and shape the world within which we all struggle to live and find meaning.

—Elizabeth Kamarck Minnick

Responsible dissent is the essence of democracy.

—Abigail McCarthy

No one sex can govern alone. I believe that one of the reasons why civilization has failed so lamentably is that it has had one-sided government.

—Nancy Astor (1923)

People on the whole are very simple-minded, in whatever country one finds them. They are so simple as to take literally, more often than not, the things their leaders tell them.

—Pearl S. Buck

The public is more easily swayed by persons than by principles.

—Rachel Field

Race prejudice is not only a shadow over the colored—it is a shadow over all of us, and the shadow is darkest over those who feel it least and allow it's evil effects to go on.

—Pearl S. Buck (1943)

As surely as night follows a day our country will fail in its democracy because of race prejudice unless we root it out. We cannot grow in strength and leadership for democracy so long as we carry deep in our being that fatal fault.

—Pearl S. Buck (1943)

The polemics of right-wing radio are putting nothing less than hate onto the airwaves, into the marketplace, electing it to office, teaching it in schools, and exulting it as freedom.

—Patricia J. Williams

People tend to forget their duties but remember their rights.

—Indira Gandhi

I recognize no rights but human rights—I know nothing of men's rights and women's rights.

—Angelina E. Grimké
(1837)

My greatest disappointment in all of the projects I worked on during the White House years was the failure of the *Equal Rights Amendment* to be ratified….Why all the controversy and why such difficulty in giving women the protection of the *Constitution* that should have been theirs long ago?

—Rosalynn Carter

Men alone are not capable of making laws for men and women.

—Nellie McClung (1915)

Leaders are indispensable, but to produce a major social change many ordinary people must also be involved.

—Anne Firor Scott

It is our duty to create a social milieu in which the young and the socially weak feel that the present and future belong to them.

—Indira Gandhi

For two generations groups of women have given their lives and their fortunes to secure the vote for the sex and hundreds of thousands of other women are now giving all the time their command. No class of men in our own or any other country has made one-tenth the effort nor sacrificed one-tenth as much for the vote.

—Carrie Chapman Catt
(1859-1947)

The single most impressive fact about the attempt by American women to obtain the right to vote is how long it took.

—Alice S. Rossi

Sundays are terrible because it is clear that there is no one in charge of the world.

—Sheila Ballantyne

I fell in love with my country—its rivers, prairies, forests, mountains, cities and people. No one can take my love of country away from me! I felt then, as I do know, it's a rich, fertile, beautiful land, capable of satisfying all the needs of its people. It could be a paradise on earth if it belonged to the people, not to a small owning class.

—Elisabeth Gurley Flynn

The melting pot's… purpose is to produce that 'All-American' product. And that product is certainly not dark-skinned, does not speak American Sign Language or with an 'ethnic accent,' is not not poor, is not lesbian or gay, and is not old.

—Paula Ross

The 'American dream'…means an economy in which people who work hard can get ahead and each new generation lives better than the last one. The 'American dream' also means a democratic political system in which most people feel they can affect public decisions and elect officials who will speak for them. In recent years, the dream has been feeding.

—Alice M. Rivlin (1992)

I distrust the rash optimism in this country that cries, 'Hurrah, we are all right! This is the greatest nation on earth,' when there are grievances that call loudly for redress.

—Helen Keller (1903)

Democracy cannot sustain itself amid a high degree of violence.

—Mary Ritter Beard

The history of men's opposition to women's emancipation is more interesting perhaps than the story of that emancipation itself.

—Virginia Woolf

Just as there can be no monarchy without obsequious flattery, so there could be no democracy without lies. As a result the modern world, which is more or less entirely democratic, has become one gigantic lie factory. The lying of the men in power and their underlings verges on metaphysics.

—Jean Dutourd

A functioning, robust democracy requires a healthy educated, participatory followership, and an educated, morally grounded leadership.

—Chinua Achebe

We have to see an end to the attacks on our bodies. You can expect for women to be completely ungovernable until this government starts to work for us.

—Rachel Carmona,
Executive Director
of the Women's
March, (2022)

[Response to mass school shooting] 'This is the price we pay for our S*econd Amendment* freedoms.'
Why have many in this country decided that owning weapons outweighs the safety and lives of our children and teachers? How many dead students and dead teachers is your 'freedom' worth to you? How high are you willing to set the price to defend an amendment that has been outpaced by technology? How is worrying about being shot at school or a movie theater or a grocery store freedom? Your paranoia and misguided belief that 'courage is a man with a gun in his hand' has corrupted the original intent of an antiquated amendment.
We accept reasonable limitations to our other rights. Why is this such a struggle with the right to bear arms?

—Amanda Mayes

No self-respecting woman should wish or work for the success of a party that ignores her sex.

—Susan B. Anthony
(1872)

Women are half the people; women should be half the Congress.

--Jeannette Rankin

Educate and inform the mass of the people. Enable them to see that it is their interest to preserve peace and order, and they will preserve them.

—Thomas Jefferson

We should measure the prosperity of a nation not by the number of millionaires but by the absence of poverty, the prevalence of health, the efficiency of public schools, and the number of people who can and do read worthwhile books.

—W. E. B. DuBois

[Benjamin] Franklin helped pen the second greatest sentence in the English language. But the quote stops at a comma instead of including the entire sentence: '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.'

—Kurt Karbusicky

Our democracy is not something that just shows up; it's something you have to work at, like a marriage.

—Ronnie Dunn

Freedom lies in being bold.

—Robert Frost

We must show courage in a time of blessing by confronting problems instead of passing them on to future generations.

—George W. Bush

Standing for right when it is unpopular is a true test of moral character.

--Margaret Chase Smith

Honesty in States, as well as Individuals, will ever be found the soundest policy.

—George Washington

I would give no thought of what the world might say of me; I could only transmit to posterity the reputation of an honest man.

—Sam Houston

May none but honest and wise men ever rule beneath this roof.

—John Adams, Writing about the White House

You have to be honest with people. You have to have great respect for yourself. If you see something that is not right, you must do something about it.

—Annie Dodge Wauneka, Navajo Health Educator

Treat all men alike. Give them all the same laws. Give them all an even chance to live and grow.

--Chief Joseph

Because you live in a democracy, you also take on responsibility for your society and your community.

—Ann Richards

So women, 18 to 118, when it is time to vote, please do so in your own self interest. It's what men have been doing for years, which is why the world looks so much like them. Don't forget we are the largest voting body in this country. Let's make it look more like us.

—Michelle Williams (2020)

From the earliest history of our country, woman has shone equal devotion with man to the cause of freedom. . . .We ask justice, we ask equality, we ask that all the civil and political rights that belong to citizens of the United States be guaranteed to us and our daughters forever.

—Elizabeth Cady Stanton

SIX PILLARS OF CHARACTER

Trustworthiness, respect for others, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizen- ship.

—*Character Counts*!

THE FOUR FREEDOMS

In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms.

The first is freedom of speech, and expression—everywhere in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want—which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants—everywhere in the world.

The fourth is freedom from fear—which, translated into world terms, means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor—anywhere in the world.

That is no vision of a distant millennium.

It is a definite basis for a kind of world attainable in our own time and generation.

That kind of world is the very antithesis of the so-called new order of tyranny which the dictators seek to create with the crash of a bomb.

—Franklin D. Roosevelt,
(1941)

Civility is an attitude that reflects respect and courtesy among citizens; thus a civilized person….Civility is often defined as social etiquette, manners, customs, traditions, or polite rules of behavior. It covers a range of experiences from listening until another finishes speaking to knowledge of which eating utensils to use at a formal banquet. Some rules, obviously, are more important than others. But every society has a concept of civility, a code of behavior for its members. Are these superficial? They shouldn't be; they should help society to operate more smoothly.

—*The Family Learning Association*

Even though Americans are sometimes viewed as rough-hewn and impolite, our government was founded on a set of principles that implies civility. Those principles are stated clearly in the oft-quoted passage from the *American Declaration of Independenc*e:

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.

We are born with those rights. Then we the people create a government to insure those rights for all of us. In building that government, we need to treat each other as equals and expect others to do the same.

That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the Consent of the Governed.

Therefore, American Civility is required by the moral principles on which we formed the United States of America.

—*The Family Learning Association*

Citizenship education examines the conduct of the individual as part of a democratic society. External behaviors of 'good citizenship' are identified through participation in the larger society with those behaviors contributing to the 'common good.' Citizenship education begins at an early age as we emphasize the rules of good social behavior as well as benefits to be gained from those actions. In school, citizenship education is developed through classroom participation, elections, decision-making opportunities, social action to benefit the community and similar opportunities for students to feel a part of the larger community and that their contributions are valued. Good citizenship opportunities in the school can translate into greater community involvement as an adult with greater voter turnout, service on juries, and involvement in community endeavors for improvement.

—*Indiana Clearinghouse for Citizenship and Character Education*

CHECKLIST FOR POSITIVE MORAL CULTURE

- ➢ Moral and academic leadership from the principal.
- ➢ Schoolwide discipline that models, promotes, and upholds the school's values in all school environments.
- ➢ A schoolwide sense of community.
- ➢ Student government that involves students in democratic self-government and fosters the feeling, 'This is our school, and we're responsible for making it the best school it can be.'
- ➢ A moral atmosphere of mutual respect, fairness, and cooperation that pervades all relationships—those among the adults in the school as well as those between adults and students.
- ➢ Elevating the importance of morality by spending school time on moral concerns.

—Thomas Lickona

The prime goal of public education is to prepare students to achieve in the world. In order for American democracy to continue to thrive, our children must be educated in 'the basics' and, at the same time, be good citizens. Being a good citizen not only requires giving attention to personal behavior and conduct, but assumes that one gives back to the community….Serving others and caring about others demonstrate strength of character. It is, therefore, the responsibility of a good citizen to give back either as an individual or in conjunction with social groups.

—*The Family Learning Association*

More than ever before, man is confronted with confusion regarding the nature of man; conflicting value systems; ambiguous ethical, moral, and spiritual beliefs; and questions about his own role in society. To counteract man's ability to destroy himself and his tendency to destroy his environment requires citizen involvement in the political and social life of this country. A democracy can survive only by the participation of its members.

—John I. Goodlad

Freedom is not the right to do what we want; it is the power to do what we ought!

—Bill Gothard

It is the Soldier, not the minister
Who has given us freedom of religion.
It is the Soldier, not the reporter
Who has given us freedom of the press.
It is the Soldier, not the poet
Who has given us freedom of speech.
It is the Soldier, not the campus organizer
Who has given us freedom to protest.
It is the Soldier, not the lawyer
Who has given us the right to a fair trial.
It is the Soldier, not the politician
Who has given us the right to vote.
It is the Soldier who salutes the flag,
Who serves beneath the flag,
And whose coffin is draped by the flag,
Who allows the protester to burn the flag.

--Charles M. Province

'tis not too late to build a better world.

—Tommy Douglas

Through a series of quotations the author or teacher can distill virtually all aspects of a particular issue or concept. And by presenting quotations chronologically, one can show the changing views on a particular subject from age to age. It may be worthwhile to focus discussion on the following chronology of quotations demonstrating the shifting views of duty over the centuries:

> 413 B.C.—We should not argue when duty calls—we should act. (Sophocles)
>
> 400 A.D.—In doing what we ought we deserve no praise, because it is our duty. (St. Augustine)
>
> 1823—The last pleasure in life is the sense of discharging our duty. (William Hazlitt)
>
> 1927—What is the use of such terrible diligence as many tire themselves out with, if they always postpone their exchange of smiles with Beauty and Joy to cling to irksome duties and relations? (Helen Keller)
>
> 1953—Nobody is bound by any obligation unless it has first been freely accepted. (Ugo Betti)
>
> 1961—People are complaining almost everywhere that the sense of duty is disappearing. How could it be otherwise since no one cares anymore about his rights? (Albert Camus)
>
> —Dan L. Miller

Students might easily find Fill-in-the-Quote to be one of their favorite activities. Particularly appropriate for journaling, group discussion, or paired assignments, teachers should base Fill-in-the-Quote on a well-known quotation but omit critical parts so students can complete the quote with their own ideas. Discussion can focus on comparing the newly created quotes with the originals. Imaginations can easily catch fire with this activity.

> The only valid censorship of ideas is <u>the right of people not to listen</u>. (Tom Smothers)
>
> It's not the hand that signs the laws that holds the destiny of America. It's <u>the hand that casts the ballot</u>. (Harry S. Truman)
>
> —Dan L. Miller

Despite America's reputation for optimism, nearly three-quarters of U.S. adults are pessimistic about the country's future.

—Sarah Elizabeth Adler
(2018)

A bad precedent in one government is soon set up for an authority in another. And therefore I cannot but think it my, and every honest man's, duty that (while we pay all due obedience two men in authority) we ought at the same time to be upon our guard against power wherever we apprehend that it may affect ourselves or our fellow subjects.

—John Peter Zenger
(1697-1746)

He who is not angry when there is just cause for anger is immoral. Why? Because anger looks to the good of justice. And if you can live amid injustice without anger, you are immoral as well as unjust.

—Thomas Aquinas

If this nation is to be wise as well as strong, if we are to achieve our destiny, then we need more new ideas for more wise men reading more good books in more public libraries. These libraries should be open to all—except the censor. We must know all the facts and hear all the alternatives and listen to all the criticisms. Let us welcome controversial books and controversial authors. For the Bill of Rights is the guardian of our security as well as our liberty.

—John F. Kennedy

All government…is a conspiracy against the superior man….The most dangerous man to any government is the man who is able to think things out for himself, without regard to the prevailing superstitions and taboos. Almost inevitably he comes to the conclusion that the government he lives under is dishonest, insane and intolerable, and so, if he is romantic, he tries to change it. And even if he is not romantic personally he is very apt to spread discontent among those who are.

—H. L. Mencken

The citizens of ancient Greece were quite empowered in a civic sense. They had a system that allowed them to rally together to form a cohort and exile a politician for a decade. The practice was called ostrakismos and was designed to safeguard the fabric of democracy. Ostrakismos was a punitive measure against all the politicians who were thought to be a real and potential danger against the Grecian democracy at that time.

—Michael Bullier

~~scream~~ Vote
so that one day
a hundred years from now
another sister will not have to
dry her tears wondering
where in history
she lost her voice.

—jasmin kaur

Before women gained the right to vote in America, many 'had never before considered their degraded status as anything but natural,' historian Jean Baker observes. As the suffrage movement gained momentum, 'a growing number of women were beginning to see that custom, religious precept, and law were in fact man-made and therefore reversible.'

—Adam Grant

Efforts to ban reading materials have nothing to do with books, they are about restricting freedom of ideas that certain individuals disagree with. That is very dangerous for a democracy. And that's inherently against freedom of thought.

—Alexi Giannoulias

Trump established that while journalists care about the truth, voters can be more forgiving. If voters cared that much about campaign lies, the Democrats would have made the 2020 election an exercise in public shaming about Trump's lies. But they didn't. The only lies politicians must avoid are the ones that might trigger legal proceedings against them….Garden variety lies that aren't prosecutable are regularly forgotten by voters by the time their speakers run for reelection.

—Jack Shafer

Politicians lie, lie and lie some more because they've learned voters seem not to care much about it when the lies are uncovered. (In a perfect world, the press would fully vet every politician's every statement, but even before the industry's decline it didn't have the resources to perform mass lie detection.) In the long run, voters seem not to care whether a candidate's credentials are legitimate or if they really climbed Mt. Everest in their stocking feet as they attest on the husting.

—Jack Shafer

The degraded, vicious man, who scarcely knows his right hand from his left, is permitted to vote, while females of the most elevated intelligence are entirely excluded.

—Emily Rakestraw Robinson (1830s)

Individuals have the right to be the architect of their own life, to choose whom to marry, where to live, what to believe, what to say. The state has no right to impose on a citizen's individual freedom of choice, provided that the person isn't harming anyone else. A society organized along these lines would produce a rich variety of creative and daring individuals. You wouldn't have to agree with any mode of life, and I wouldn't have to agree with yours, but we would give each other the space to live our fullest life. Individual autonomy and freedom of choice would be the rocks upon which we built flourishing nations.

—David Brooks based on
John Stewart
Mills' *On Liberty*

We have a legal system. We don't have a justice system.

—Theodore S. Tapper

The most important story about why Americans have become sad and alienated and rude, I believe, is also the simplest: we inhabit a society in which people are no longer trained in how to treat others with kindness and consideration. Our society has become one in which people feel licensed to give their selfishness free rein.…In a healthy society, a web of institutions—families, schools, religious groups, community organizations, and workplaces—helps form people into kind and responsible citizens, the sort of people who show up for one another. We live in a society that's terrible at moral formation.

—David Brooks (2023)

The motto of the United States Army for over 200 years…has been 'This we will defend,' and the 'this' refers to the *Constitution* and to protect the liberty of the American people. You see, we are unique among armies. We are unique among militaries. We do not take an oath to a king or a queen, a tyrant or a dictator. We do not take an oath to an individual. No, we did not take an oath to a country, a tribe, or religion. We take an oath to the *Constitution*….We will never turn our back on our duty to protect and defend the idea that is America, the *Constitution* of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

—General Mark Milley

If we allow sectional jealousies to eclipse national interests, the republic will be in peril.

—George Washington

Democracies die behind closed doors.

—Judge Damon J. Keith

When one with honeyed words but evil mind
Persuades the mob, great woes befall the state.

—Euripides

Politics: the art of using euphemisms, lies, emotionalism and fear-mongering to dupe average people into accepting—or even demanding—their own enslavement.

—Larken Rose

That's why people are disenchanted with politics. They expect whoever they elect to change their lives.

—Sylvain Neuvel

To know the good from the bad, study a man or woman's history of actions, not their record of intentions.

—Suzy Kassem

A democracy depends on the individual voter making an intelligent and rational choice for what he regards as his enlightened self-interest, in any given circumstance.

—Aldous Huxley

Athenian democracy was such a powerful idea. But few realized that women could not vote. They couldn't hold office or even go to the theater. The only public role was for priestesses. Slaves and foreigners, who were dismissed by Athenians as 'barbarians', were also unable to vote. In fact, only 40,000 male citizens participated in the first democracy—out of a population of 300,000.

—Anna Karapanagiotou

The command of the *Constitution* is plain. There is no moral issue. It is wrong—deadly wrong—to deny any of your fellow Americans the right to vote in this country. There is no issue of states' rights or national rights. There is only the struggle for human rights.…It is the effort of American Negroes to secure for themselves the full blessings of American life. Their cause must be our cause too. Because it is not just Negroes, but really it is all of us, who must overcome the crippling legacy of bigotry and injustice. And—we—shall—overcome.

—Lyndon Johnson's
March 15, 1965 address to congress written by Richard Goodwin

Finland is teaching children how to recognize fake news as part of critical thinking and civic responsibility. We ban books.

—Internet Meme

Government is instituted for the common good: for the protection, safety, prosperity and happiness of the people; and not for the profit, honor, or private interest of any one man, family, or class of men.

—John Adams

One of the most cowardly things ordinary people do is to shut their eyes to facts.

—C. S. Lewis

Contrary to popular belief the best way to prevent a tyrannical government in America is not an AR-15. It's an educated public that votes not for Democrats or Republicans but for morally just leaders that care about the American people.

— David Hogg

If your vote didn't matter so much, they wouldn't try so hard to take it away.

—Common

Like many other historians, I cringe when I hear people saying, 'This is not who we are.' Because historically, it is who we are. Again and again. I think it's better to say, 'This is not who I want us to be.' And then ask yourself what you can do to change that.

— Dr. Jacqueline Antonovich

Remote learning during the pandemic is considered a major factor in declining test scores. Eighth-grade history and civics test scores in the US fell to the lowest level on record last year, in line with broad post-pandemic declines in math scores and reading comprehension. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)—commonly known as 'The Nation's Report Card'—only 13% of eighth graders were at a proficient level for US history, a benchmark meaning they are able to describe the country's major themes, events, people, and ideas. Roughly a quarter of students were considered proficient in civics.

— Diego Lasarte (2023)

The American way could be exampled when you respect the law and the rights of all. Because if you don't, who will? When your food is brought to you, will you thank the server? Because if you don't, who will? Would you pick up the litter that has missed the recycling bin? Because if you don't, who will? When you vote your conscience and make sure your neighbor has the opportunity to do the same with theirs, because if you don't, who will? When you make good on your victories and learn from your losses because both are the results of proud and noble efforts, if you don't, who will?

—Karine Jean-Pierre

I got confused by all the yard signs, and I think I may have voted for a realtor! Thanks to Olympia Andrews!

—Internet Meme

We must make our choice. We may have a democracy, or we may have wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, but we cannot have both.

—Louis D. Brandeis

Piles of research across 60 years have suggested that neighborhoods, peers, and family background may have a greater influence on a person's educational success than the quality of their school. Let's invest more in local civic groups, so a greater number of kids can grow up in neighborhoods with community organizations where they can succeed at non-academic endeavors—serving others, leading meetings, rallying neighbors for a cause.

—David Brooks

There are only three things that America will be known for 2,000 years from now when they study this civilization. The *Constitution*, jazz music, and baseball. They are the three most beautifully designed things this culture has ever produced.

—Gerald Early

Why pay money to have your family tree traced; just go into politics and your opponents will do it for you.

--Mark Twain

If women ruled the world, there would be no wars...just a bunch of countries not talking to each other.

--Chris Rock

Obama said…he needs us to e-mail our congressmen and representatives….I'm gonna need you to e-mail me who they are. Because unless they're hosting 'Shark Week,' I'm probably not familiar with their work.

—Kathleen Madigan

What costs millions of dollars but is worthless?
Second place in the election.

—*AARP Bulletin*

Politicians should wear sponsor jackets like Nascar drivers—then we know who owns them.

—Robin Williams

The longer I live, the more convinced I am that this planet is used by other planets as a lunatic asylum.

—George Bernard Shaw

Too bad that all the people who know how to run the country are busy driving taxi cabs and cutting hair.

--George Burns

The most valuable function performed by the federal government is entertainment.

--Dave Barry

An honest politician is one who, when he is bought, will stay bought.

--Simon Cameron

A hypocrite is the kind of politician who would cut down a redwood tree, then mount the stump and make a speech for conservation.

--Adlai E. Stevenson

[One dog to another while watching TV] After watching the news, I'm curious as to why humans are higher up on the food chain than us.

—Internet Meme

If men were angels, no government would be necessary.

--James Madison

Everybody in government is like a bunch of ants on a log floating down a river. Each one thinks he is guiding the log, but it's really just going with the flow.

--Robert Strauss

There isn't much credit to being a comedian when you got the whole government working for you. All you have to do is report the facts, and I don't even have to exaggerate.

—Will Rogers

The key to successful leadership is knowing how to make people follow you. Leave a trail of doughnuts.

—J. A. (Jim) McCarthy

The difference between humans and animals?
Animals would never allow the dumbest ones to lead the pack.

—Internet Meme

The fish rots from the head.

—Chinese Proverb

Candidates for school board should be hooked up to a lie detector and asked if he's read a book from start to finish since graduating from high school.

—Kurt Vonnegut

Only dead fish swim with the stream.

—Malcolm Muggeridge

We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office.

—Aesop

Those who are too smart to engage in politics are punished by being governed by those who are dumber.

—Plato

Did you hear that we're writing Iraq's new Constitution? Why not just give them ours? We're not using it anymore.

—Jay Leno

If pigs could vote, the man with the slop bucket would be elected swineherd every time, no matter how much slaughtering he did on the side.

—Orson Scott Card

If the right to vote were expanded to seven year olds … its policies would most definitely reflect the 'legitimate concerns' of children to have 'adequate' and 'equal' access to 'free' french fries, lemonade and videos.

—Hans-Hermann Hoppe

We stand today at a crossroads: One path leads to despair and utter hopelessness. The other leads to total extinction. Let us hope we have the wisdom to make the right choice.

—Woody Allen

All these people talk so eloquently about getting back to good old-fashioned values. Well, as an old poop I can remember back to when we had those old-fashioned values, and I say let's get back to the good old-fashioned First Amendment of the good old-fashioned *Constitution* of the United States—and to hell with the censors! Give me knowledge, or give me death!

—Kurt Vonnegut

The president's most important job, as the sole steward of America's nuclear arsenal, is to prevent nuclear war. And a voter's most important job is to choose the right person for that responsibility.

—Tom Nichols

A strong nation, like a strong person, can afford to be gentle, firm, thoughtful, and restrained. It can afford to extend a helping hand to others. It's a weak nation, like a weak person, that must behave with blister and boasting and rashness and other signs of insecurity.

—Jimmy Carter

America and democracy are inextricable; and… democracy makes us agents who can always act to better our country and affirm our self respect.

—George Packer

'We the People'… Three simple words, words we've come to recognize mean all the people, not just saw some.

—Barack Obama

'Who are you voting for, Grandma?'
'You.'

—-Joyce Arnett Richards

Our collective futures depend on your willingness to uphold your duties as a citizen.

—Barack Obama

Service before politics. Country before self.

—Associated with the *Central Intelligence Agency* (CIA)



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