
Why is patriotism in decline? - update from your favorite think tank

1 message

Douglas Carswell <mail@mspolicy.org>
Reply-To: Douglas Carswell <mail@mspolicy.org>
To: Michael <directorfs@gmail.com>

Sat, Apr 1, 2023 at 7:44 AM

[View this email in your browser](#)

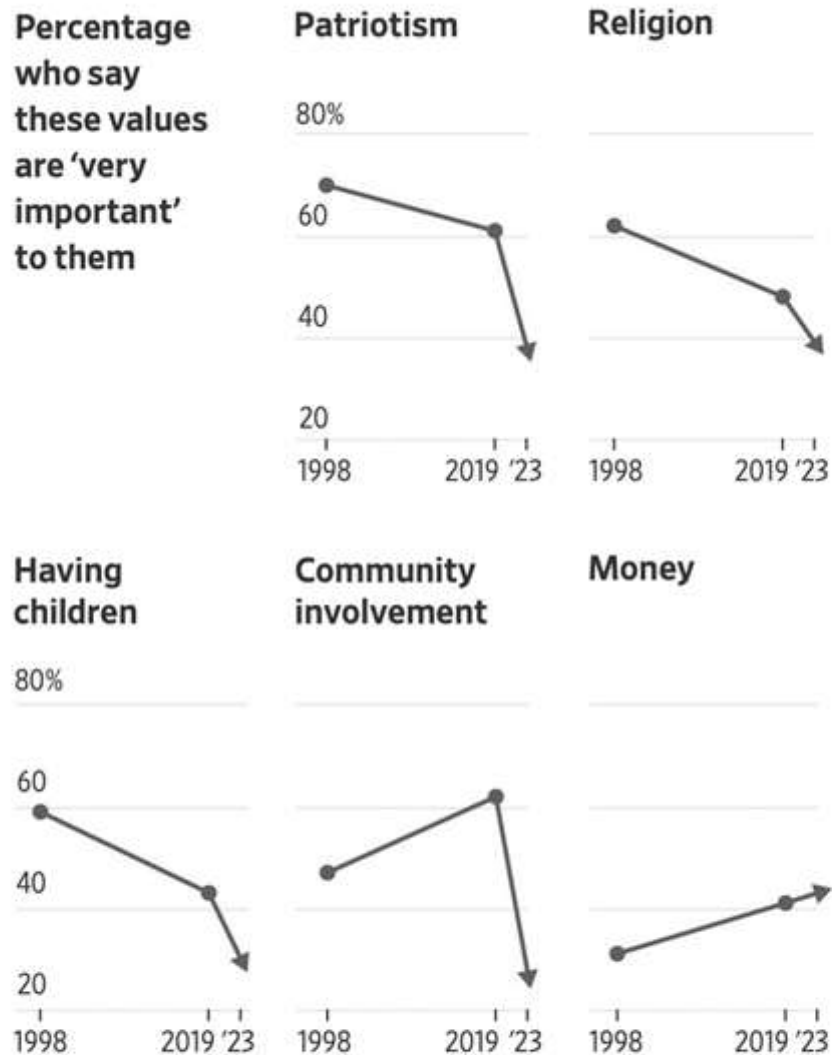
**MISSISSIPPI CENTER FOR
PUBLIC POLICY**

Dear Michael,

American patriotism is in decline, according to a recent poll published by the Wall Street Journal. The WSJ-NORC poll makes grim reading. It shows a steep decline in the number of Americans who say that patriotism is very important to them, down from 70 percent in 1998 to 38 percent today.

There has also been a similar slide in the percentage of Americans who say that religion is very important to them. **Perhaps most disturbing of all, only 23 percent of American adults under the age of 30 regard having children as very important.**

These poll findings suggest the sort of collapse in self confidence that you might expect to find in a country that had suffered defeat in war, or after a cataclysmic economic crisis. **Why this loss of self-belief?**



Source: WSJ/NORC poll of 1,019 adults conducted March 1-13, 2023; margin of error ± 4.1 pct. pts. Prior data from WSJ/NBC News telephone polls, most recently of 1,000 adults conducted Aug. 10-14, 2019; margin of error ± 3.1 pct. pts.

What explains this massive change in American attitudes towards their own country in the past twenty five years? And what can we do about it?

America was founded on the principle that every American is created equal, and that each individual is in possession of inalienable rights. Of course, there were times when America failed to live up to those lofty ideals, but for the first two centuries of the Republic's existence, these principles were the essential ingredient of American cohesion.

Thanks to these Founding principles, folk from different ancestral backgrounds in England, Poland or Italy, eastern Europe, west Africa or south Asia, could all

come together and see one another as fellow citizens of the same Republic.

About thirty years ago, things started to change.

Rather than being taught to see themselves as individual citizens, young Americans were increasingly encouraged by left wing educators to define themselves in terms of their racial background, or gender or various other immutable characteristics. Many young Americans are invited to see their primary loyalty not to fellow citizens of the Republic, but to whichever oppressed group it is that they supposedly belong to, in a hierarchy of victimhood.

The consequences of seeing the world this way can be murderous, literally.

For much of the twentieth century, Americans were taught to believe that through hard work and perseverance they could achieve anything. Today, many young Americans are invited to believe that nothing they do matters much, since it is 'the system' that either privileges them or stacks the odds hopelessly against them. Is it any wonder that the same poll showed a sharp decline in the percentage of young Americans who believe in the importance of hard work?

Unequal outcomes between Americans are increasingly attributed to 'systemic' discrimination, rather than being seen as reflective of differences in individual behavior. As a result, in the name of 'equity', we have started to see a return of government-sponsored discrimination, further undermining America's Founding ideals.

If you spend three decades trying to make Americans believe that their country is, as CNN might put it, a Republic founded by slave-owners on stolen land, it is hardly surprising that patriotism then declines.

If you tell a generation of young Americans that human civilization has messed up the planet and that looming eco-catastrophe means we are all doomed, you should not be surprised that they are less keen on having kids than their grandparents.

This new poll shows that bad ideas have bad consequences. Combating bad ideas, and countering them with good ideas is what we at the Mississippi

Center for Public Policy do. **Here is how we are helping lead the fight back.**

Last year we led the campaign for a law to combat Critical Race theory in our state. It was a good start, but it is not enough. Legislation alone will not stop 'woke' ideologues pushing their views on kids. We need to inspire the next generation of American leaders to fight back.

This is why we launched the Mississippi Leadership Academy last year.

Two dozen future Mississippi leaders took part in the six month program, one day a month. They heard from leading conservative historians, academics and authors. They were given an introduction to the morality of the free market and America's Founding ideals. They listened to talks by some of our state leaders, including Attorney General Lynn Fitch and State Auditor, Shad White.

The program was so successful in energizing a cohort of young Mississippians, we will be expanding the program next year.

If we are going to root out left-wing ideology from the classroom,

American needs an education revolution. In half a dozen states, including Texas, Florida and Arkansas, moms and dads now have control over their child's share to education tax dollars. They can allocate their child's portion of the budget (often around \$10,000-15,000 a year) to a school of their choice – public, private or home-school.

The moment mom and dad have more control, guess what happens?

Money gets spent in the classroom, not on an army of 'woke' education administrators. Schools stop promoting left-wing ideology, and start teaching kids the way they should.

Sadly, in Mississippi too many self-styled 'conservative' lawmakers

continue have intentionally done everything they can to prevent

education freedom. Every time a supposedly 'conservative' lawmaker thwarts school choice, they are helping sustain radical leftist ideas in the classroom.

This needs to change.

Two years ago, shortly after I had arrived in America, I went to watch my

first ever game of football. It was at a local high school on a Friday night, and I did not even know the rules of the game.

Just before the start, the crowd rose to their feet to sing the Star Spangled

Banner and declare the Pledge of Allegiance. So new was I to your country, I did not know the words back then.

But I did know I was witnessing something special; a display of authentic, uncomplicated patriotism. I was so moved that the hairs on the back of my neck stood on end. Please don't ever abandon that belief in your own country, as other less happy lands have done. American exceptionalism is worth fighting for.

Have a wonderful weekend!

Forward this email to a friend!



Warm regards,



Douglas Carswell
President & CEO

Ps. Please come and have lunch with Alex Epstein and me on April 18th. Book your place [here](#).



You are receiving this email because you opted in via our website.

Our mailing address is:

Mississippi Center for Public Policy
520 George St
Jackson, MS 39202-3013

Add us to your address book

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

Copyright © 2023 Mississippi Center for Public Policy, All rights reserved.