



## Dismantling America, Part 4

Something of this magnitude does not happen all at once or in just one administration in Washington. What we are seeing is the culmination of many trends in many aspects of American life that go back for years.

Neither the Constitution of the United States nor the institutions set up by that Constitution are enough to ensure the continuance of a free, self-governing nation. When Benjamin Franklin was asked what members of the Constitution Convention were creating, he replied, "A republic, madam, if you can keep it."



In other words, a Constitutional government does not depend on the Constitution but on us. To the extent that we allow clever people to circumvent the Constitution, while dazzling us with rhetoric, the Constitution will become just a meaningless piece of paper, as our freedoms are stolen from us, much as a pick-pocket would steal our wallet while we are distracted by other things.

It is not just evil people who would dismantle America. Many people who have no desire to destroy our freedoms simply have their own agendas that are singly or collectively incompatible with the survival of freedom.

Someone once said that a democratic society cannot survive for long after 51 percent of the people decide that they want to live off the other 49 percent. Yet that is the direction in which we are being pushed by those who are promoting envy under its more high-toned alias of "social justice."

Those who construct moral melodramas- starring themselves on the side of the angels against the forces of evil- are ready to disregard the Constitution rights of those they demonize, and to overstep the limits put on the powers of the federal government set by the Constitution.

The outcries of protest in the media, in academia and in politics, when the Supreme Court ruled this year that people in corporations have the same free speech rights as other Americans, are a painful reminder of how vulnerable even the most basic rights are to the attacks of ideological zealots. President Barack Obama said that the Court's decision "will open the floodgates for special interests"- as if all you have to do to take away people's free speech rights is call them a special interest.

It is not just particular segments of the population who are under attack. What is more fundamentally under attack are the very principles and values of American society as a whole. The history of this country is taught in many schools and colleges as the history of grievances and victimhood, often with the mantra of "race, class and gender." Television and the movies often do the same.

When there are not enough current grievances for them, they mine the past for grievances and call it history. Sins and shortcomings common to the human race around the world are spoken of as failures of "our society." But American achievements get far less attention- and sometimes none at all.

Our "educators," who cannot educate our children to the level of math or science achieved in most



Written by [Dennis Behreandt](#) on August 21, 2010

---

other comparable countries, have time to poison their minds against America.

Why? Partly, if not mostly, it is because that is the vogue. It shows you are “with it” when you reject your own country and exalt other countries.

Abraham Lincoln warned of people whose ambitions can only be fulfilled by dismantling the institutions of this country, because no comparable renown is available to them by supporting those institutions. He said this 25 years before the Gettysburg Address, and he was speaking of political leaders with hubris, whom he regarded as a greater danger than enemy nations. But such hubris is far more widespread today than just among political leaders.

Those with such hubris- in the media and in education, as well as in politics- have for years eroded both respect for the country and the social cohesion of its people. This erosion is what has set the stage for today’s dismantling of America that is now approaching the point of no return.

*This is part three of a four part series.*

[Part One](#)

[Part Two](#)

[Part Three](#)

**Thomas Sowell** graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University (1958) and went on to receive his master’s in economics from Columbia University (1959) and a doctorate in economics from the University of Chicago (1968). He is the author of 28 books including his most recent, *Intellectuals and Society*. Currently he is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University. His Web site is [www.tsowell.com](http://www.tsowell.com).

COPYRIGHT 20010 CREATORS.COM

Please contact your local newspaper editor if you want to see the Thomas Sowell column in your hometown paper



## Subscribe to the New American

Get exclusive digital access to the most informative,  
non-partisan truthful news source for patriotic Americans!

Discover a refreshing blend of time-honored values, principles and insightful perspectives within the pages of "The New American" magazine. Delve into a world where tradition is the foundation, and exploration knows no bounds.

From politics and finance to foreign affairs, environment, culture, and technology, we bring you an unparalleled array of topics that matter most.



**Subscribe**

### What's Included?

- 24 Issues Per Year
- Optional Print Edition
- Digital Edition Access
- Exclusive Subscriber Content
- Audio provided for all articles
- Unlimited access to past issues
- Coming Soon! Ad FREE
- 60-Day money back guarantee!
- Cancel anytime.