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## mid-course thank you for learning about the Constitution freely online

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This morning I was reminded of why I take the time to learn freely online things like this course which I consider a humanity in the world in which I often work, the high tech world. My husband is British and I am American and he can occasionally be critical in comparing things he grew up with with what he sees our kids growing up with, in terms of education, the gun laws, the health care payments we have to make here, things he did not deal with growing up in his economy which works slightly differently, as many do, and sometimes there are things we can learn from those economies which came before us in these aspects, I don't know (not going into that here!)

I've always been a software engineer and most of my education has been in electrical engineering and computer science, except for a few humanities that were required for my BS degree in this area. When I wrote my essay this past weekend, I thought to myself, I have not written an essay since 1983-1987 during my BS degree humanity requirements, since my MS degree was not until the mid 1990's in EE/CS, and I took no humanities for that!

So I thought, why am I doing this, when most of my time I spend skill building to get a job in the technical world where I lost my job a few years ago, and I know my essay will never be as good as most people who write them in this class! It was a huge effort after extracting the notes from web searches and the professor's book to condense it to 750 words as well. My technical documentation for anything I've ever designed or tested never had this requirement! But I did complete it, and I saw the messages going around saying that people had done bibliographies, references, people were worrying about whether they had plagiarized in the manner in which they presented the answer to the question, and when I saw those, I thought, wow--even worse, since I just reworded the answer to the question based on the resources I had, the professor's book and the web, to answer the question, and I only mentioned in a fragment at the top (to save on word number) that I had taken many of the quotes in my essay from the web and the professor's book.

Then I thought - I don't really care if these things are important, since my goal is to learn in this class--I have no plans at age 49 to go to law school or compete as a writer or anything like that--but I do care to know how my country's laws and systems work, since it is very important to be aware of the world in

which you live and how it works, as I vote for things, sign petitions for my representatives, etc. I also like to compare it to other worlds and how they work. My priority is to find employment in my high tech world, but understanding how our country works is not a bad thing to make time to do too.

However, a random conversation came up this morning that reminded me why I also make time for a humanity class such as learning about the US Constitution during this period of skill building and job search. My British husband had brought up something in regard to being critical about how something works here, and I might even agree with him on that topic. However, what I was able to do, based on the essay I had written this past weekend, was to say this. Our country in 1776 and when the US Constitution was written in 1787 had stood up to his country --which although today I admire many things about it--they were a big bully to us in the period of the Revolution--and we stood up to them and won, and I quoted the professor in what he reminded me having learned way back when when I was young--since it was all about "no taxation without representation".

And as proud as he is of his home country today, I could tell when he went quiet that he agreed with me. When I wrote it, I saw the things they provided in the US Constitution was to stand up in some ways for people on their merits rather than their birth status, etc, and I won't go into all that. And although my husband might think there are things we can learn from aspects of their much older economy, and I might even agree with him, our country was founded on really good values in life. And it's something to be proud of, not to mention a small country standing up to what was considered a country much bigger than ourselves at the time, to stand up for what we believed was right and wrong when many might have thought we could not win.

So I thank you for the free learning, and who knows where it will come up in my high tech life, but to be able to learn about these things freely online and later be able to randomly discuss things as they come up is a good thing, and I wanted to take a moment as I see the emails go by about the essay, peer reviews, grading, etc, to thank you for the free learning, since it did happen to come today randomly in conversation for me, even if much of my day I may be working on high tech stuff!

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Sylvia Theall · 31 minutes ago 🔒

Karen,

What a thoughtful appreciative post from you. We Americans don't often take time to reflect on how fortunate we are to live in this country (with all it's faults). Although I think I am a bit older than you, your post gave me pause. There are so many who find fault with the course, but like yo, I am thrilled with learning from this prestigious university and engaging professor. Thanks for sharing

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