

Title:

America the Narcissist

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Summary:

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Keywords:

Article Body:

The majority of worldwide respondents to the last two global Pew enter surveys (in 2002 and 2006) regarded the United States as the greatest menace to world peace - far greater than the likes of Iraq or China. Thinkers and scholars as diverse as Christopher Lasch in "The Cultural Narcissist" and Theodore Millon in "Personality Disorders of Everyday Life" have singled out the United States as the quintessential narcissistic society.

This pathology can be traced back and attributed to a confluence of historical events and processes, the equivalents of trauma and abuse in an individual's early childhood.

The United States of America started out as a series of loosely connected, remote, savage, and negligible colonial outposts. The denizens of these settlements were former victims of religious persecution, indentured servants, lapsed nobility, and other refugees. Their Declaration of Independence reads like a maudlin list of grievances coupled with desperate protestations of love and loyalty to their abuser, the King of Britain.

The inhabitants of the colonies defended against their perceived helplessness and very real inferiority with compensatory, imagined, and feigned superiority and fantasies of omnipotence. Hence the rough, immutable kernel of American narcissism.

The United States was (until the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s) and still is, in some important respects, a pre-Enlightenment, white supremacist society. It is rife with superstition, prejudice, conspicuous religiosity, intolerance,

philistinism, and lack of social solidarity. Its religiosity is overt, aggressive, virulent and ubiquitous. It is replete with an eschatology, which involves a changing cast of demonized "enemies", both political and cultural.

Americans' religion is a manifestation of their "Chosen People Syndrome". They are missionary, messianic, zealous, fanatical, and nauseatingly self-righteous, bigoted, and hypocritical. This is especially discernible in the double-speak and double-standard that underlies American foreign policy.

American altruism is misanthropic and compulsive. They often give merely in order to control, manipulate, and sadistically humiliate the recipients.

Narcissism is frequently comorbid with paranoia. Americans cultivate and nurture a siege mentality which leads to violent acting out and unbridled jingoism. Their persecutory delusions sit well with their adherence to social Darwinism (natural selection of the fittest, let the weaker fall by the wayside, might is right, etc.).

Consequently, the United states always finds itself in company with the least palatable regimes in the world: together with Nazi Germany it had a working eugenics program, together with the likes of Saudi Arabia it executes its prisoners, it was the last developed nation to abolish slavery, alone with South Africa it had instituted official apartheid in a vast swathe of its territory.

Add to this volatile mix an ethos of malignant individualism, racism both latent and overt, a trampling, "no holds barred" ambitiousness, competitiveness, frontier violence-based morality, and proud simple-mindedness - and an ominous portrait of the United States as a deeply disturbed polity emerges.