

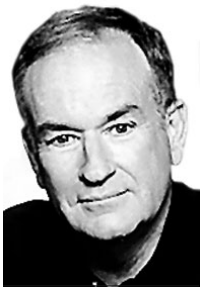


# Are You A Bad Citizen?

BY BILL O'REILLY  
Creators Syndicate

The comedian Jeff Foxworthy has a great routine called “You Might Be a Redneck.” He sets up a series of questions, and if you answer yes, well, you might be a... You get the idea. But during this convention season, perhaps a more penetrating question is: Are you a bad citizen? Let’s be truthful, there are millions of Americans who don’t care about their country at all. How can you tell? Easy. If an American does not pay attention to national events or educate himself enough to know the basics of how the USA works, then he or she is a bad citizen. I do believe the good citizens far outnumber the bad, but those millions of derelict Americans do the country harm. First off, their vote (if they even bother) is most likely uninformed, which gives charlatan politicians an easier time of it. And many bad citizens are simply lazy, meaning they often fail in the competitive marketplace and must rely on those who prosper to support them, at least in part. Simply put, slackers drain strength from any country. So here is a short quiz in case you are in doubt as to what comprises a bad citizen. You are a bad citizen if:

- You can’t explain the three branches of government.
- You can’t name 10 former presidents.



Bill O'REILLY

- You don’t know who the current vice president is.
  - You don’t know who issued the Emancipation Proclamation or what it is.
  - You can’t explain why World War II started.
  - You don’t know where Vietnam is.
  - You can’t name 15 foreign countries.
  - You think Jimmy Carter was a great president.
  - You believe the Founding Fathers would support banning handguns.
  - You think Americans invented pizza.
- There are approximately 320 million Americans, and every one over the age of 12 should be able to answer those questions. There is simply no excuse if you can’t. You are a bad citizen. But if you fall into that category, there is something you can hold onto. In their wisdom, the Founding Fathers designed a Constitution that gives every single citizen the absolute right to be a moron. No one can force you to pay attention to current events, learn history or understand how the USA became the greatest country in the world. And believe me, America’s greatness was achieved despite the presence of bad citizens. They were simply overwhelmed by the good folks: the people who respect their country enough to pay attention to it.

Veteran TV news anchor Bill O'Reilly is host of the Fox News show “The O'Reilly Factor” and author of the book “Pinheads and Patriots: Where You Stand in the Age of Obama.”

# When Politicians Talk About Race

BY LEONARD PITTS JR.  
Tribune Media Services

Lord help us, they’re talking race again. “They” meaning Republicans and Democrats. Race is a critical, sensitive and sometimes painful issue with relevance to everything from environmental policy to education reform to criminal justice to media to health care. For a politician to address it requires political courage. That’s why politicians do not address it. Usually. That changes during political season when a given pol calculates that breaking his customary silence might net some tactical advantage. Which is how we come to find Newt Gingrich last week on MSNBC piously lamenting how “racist” is the network’s Chris Matthews. The former House speaker displayed this previously unknown concern about racial misbehavior while defending himself against charges of same. It seems Matthews had the temerity to suggest that Gingrich, in calling Barack Obama a “food stamp president” during the GOP primary, had engaged in dog whistle politics designed to rouse the racial resentments of white working-class voters. Gingrich was shocked — shocked! — at the notion. “Why do you assume food stamp refers to black?” he asked. “What kind of racist thinking do you have?” It is apparently news to Gingrich that politicians sometimes speak in code, that when, for instance, Ronald Reagan referenced his made-up “welfare queens” he was really promising white voters he’d make those lazy blacks get up off their behinds and work. There was a study in the ‘90s in which people had to envision a drug user, then describe the person they had envisioned. Ninety-five percent envisioned someone black. This, even though only about 15 percent of drug users actually are black. The point being that in the public mind, certain terms — “urban,” “poverty,” “crime” — carry racial weight, often at odds with reality. They are ways of saying “black” without saying “black.” The idea that Gingrich — a 69-year-old career politician — does not know this, or realize that “food



Leonard PITTS

stamp president,” is such a term, strains credulity. If he’s really that much of a naïf, let us hope no one has told him the truth about the Tooth Fairy. It would break the poor man’s heart. Where race is concerned, Newt Gingrich is a disingenuous hypocrite. And Joe Biden is just a fool. Did the vice president really tell a largely black audience two weeks back that if Mitt Romney is elected, the GOP will “put y’all back in chains.” Y’all? Really? A slavery joke? Really? Lord, have mercy. Why didn’t Biden just show up with his pants sagging while gnawing a chicken bone? It couldn’t have been any less subtle. There are — what? — 14, 15 black Republicans in this country? So Gingrich is offending voters his party does not have. But Biden is pandering — clumsily — to voters his party does have and routinely ignores until just before Election Day. Black voters do not need to hear Biden say “y’all” any more than they needed, in 2006, to hear Hillary Clinton accuse the GOP of running a “plantation.” What they — we — need is for the left and right to stop using us like hardware. What we need is for would-be leaders to approach us with agendas tailored to our concerns. Talk about how you’re going to bring investment to the inner city. Talk about ending the mass incarceration of young black men under the failed War on Drugs. Talk about job training. Talk about restoring the voting rights of ex-felons. Talk about fixing schools. Do those things and you won’t have to say y’all. But of course, that’s too much to ask. So instead, we get Gingrich’s dewy-eyed innocent act and Biden’s linguistic blackface, the same old buck and wing of cynicism, opportunism and nonsense. It turns out there’s actually one thing more aggravating than politicians who don’t talk about race. That’s politicians who do.

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## YOUR LETTERS

### A Correctional Alternative

John Magnuson, Yankton

There was an interesting article (*Press & Dakotan*, Aug. 28) about the alarming rise of numbers in the state prison population. It’s forecast that the state will need to construct about two new prisons to accommodate an influx of new inmates who will need three hot beds and a cot. The costs would be significant, but the truth of the matter is, it can be avoided. Imagine a room of blinking LED lights and a huge bank of sophisticated computers. Imagine state-of-the-art software and technicians trained in every facet of their operation. If you visualize a room like this, you can see the future of community correctional management. You can see the future of electronic monitoring and the negation for the need of incarceration for the majority of offenders excepting for the most violent and serious of offenses. Electronic ankle bracelets can send data to the mother board every 15 minutes with chemical analy-

sis of a subject’s perspiration to reflect drug use. Ankle bracelets can be equipped with GPS units so that violators can be picked up in minutes, if needed. A few days in “county” is usually enough to convince most to work within the program. The word is that this program really works and reliably deters using. The potential is amazing as electronic monitoring continues to evolve and improve its capabilities. It will mean that the majority of drug offenders can be sentenced to a term of detox and inpatient treatment followed by a lengthy term of electronic monitoring. The process can be repeated as long as it takes to establish a change in behavior. The amount of money spent on state prisons and across the nation is staggering. This money could be saved in large part and better spent on projects to help re-vitalize our communities and improve our quality of life. We should give strong consideration to reforming state laws to make this happen. We don’t need more prisons. We need effective programs that will manage behavior at the lowest possible cost.

# THE PRESS & DAKOTAN



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## OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

# Teacher Evaluations Shouldn’t Be A Threat

ARGUS LEADER, Sioux Falls (Aug. 13): It’s no secret that it is difficult to measure the success of teachers, because they can inspire and mold students in so many ways. They teach the mysteries of math, the intricacies of science and the complexities of reading and writing. Success or failure in those subject areas traditionally have been measured with standardized testing. But many teachers also instill a love of learning, guide students into future careers, build self-confidence, watch out for their well-being and share the concern that comes from a caring adult. Those things tend to be priceless, immeasurable. In South Dakota, as in the rest of the states, our schools are going to attempt to rate teachers based on test scores and more. The leader of a work group coming up with a system for the state has told education leaders it is going to take time to judge teachers, the time of teachers and their administrators. By the 2014-15 school year, South Dakota teachers will be judged as distinguished, proficient, basic or unsatisfactory. Ironically or not, those categories are similar in nature to how students have been judged under No Child Left Behind.

The group developing criteria is asking schools to provide annual formal and informal observations and a peer observation. The state is working on a way to train every school principal on how to evaluate teachers using the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching. The process will add time to the busy days of school administrators and teachers. Ideally, there will be more feedback between each school’s top academic administrator and those in the classrooms. That sets up a great learning experience and a good way to improve teacher quality in cases where it is needed. Hopefully, it will add to the learning environment and not take precious time away. But it also opens up the possibility that some administrators and teachers will do the minimal amount of work to meet the state requirements. We hope that is not the case. Like it or not, times are changing and have continually changed in education. Looking for ways to improve teacher quality is a great goal. It shouldn’t threaten anyone, and it should be viewed as an opportunity more than a mandate. South Dakota generally has good schools and good teachers, but there always is room for improvement. There are chances to learn and grow, even for teachers. Done well — even though judging teachers is difficult — the feedback given under the upcoming evaluations could inspire an educator to do an even better job of teaching the state’s students and instilling in them the love of learning. That’s the goal and the hope, after all. It’s also what students deserve.

## OUR LETTER POLICY

The **PRESS & DAKOTAN** encourages its readers to write letters to the editor, and it asks that a few simple guidelines be followed. ■ Please limit letters to 300 words or less. (During political campaigns, letters related to the campaign may be limited to 150 words.) Letters should deal with a single subject, be of general interest and state a specific point of view. Letters are edited with brevity, clarity and newspaper style in mind. ■ In the sense of fairness and professionalism, the **PRESS & DAKOTAN** will accept no letters attacking private individuals or businesses. ■ Specific individuals or entities addressed in letters may be given the opportunity to read the letter prior to publication and be allowed to answer the letter in the same issue. ■ Only signed letters with writer’s full name, address and daytime phone number for verification will be accepted. Please mail to: Letters, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078, drop off at 319 Walnut in Yankton, fax to 665-1721 or email to views@yankton.net.

## TODAY IN HISTORY

**By The Associated Press**  
Today is Tuesday, Sept. 4, the 248th day of 2012. There are 118 days left in the year.  
**Today’s Highlight in History:** On Sept. 4, 1962, The Beatles, with their new drummer, Ringo Starr, recorded “Love Me Do” at EMI Studios in London. (The more familiar version with substitute drummer Andy White and Starr playing the tambourine was recorded a week later.)  
**On this date:** In 1781, Los Angeles was founded by Spanish settlers under the leadership of Governor Felipe de Neve. In 1862, during the Civil War, Confederate forces led by Gen. Robert E. Lee began invading Maryland. In 1886, a group of Apache Indians led by Geronimo (also known as Goyathlay, “One Who Yawns”) surrendered to Gen. Nelson Miles at Skeleton Canyon in Arizona. In 1893, English author Beatrix Potter first told the story of Peter Rabbit in the form of a “picture letter” to Noel Moore, the son of Potter’s former governess. In 1917, the American Expeditionary Forces in France suffered their first fatalities during World War I when a German plane attacked a British-run base hospital. In 1948, Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands abdicated after nearly six decades of rule for health reasons. In 1951, President Harry S. Truman addressed the nation from the Japanese peace treaty conference in San Francisco in the first live, coast-to-coast television broadcast. In 1957, Arkansas Gov. Orval Faubus used Arkansas National Guardsmen to prevent nine black students from entering all-white Central High School in Little Rock. Ford Motor Co. began selling its ill-fated Edsel. In 1969, the Food and Drug Administration issued a report calling birth control pills “safe,” despite a slight risk of fatal blood-clotting disorders linked to the pills. In 1971, an Alaska Airlines jet crashed near Juneau, killing all 111 people on board. In 1972, U.S. swimmer Mark Spitz won a seventh gold medal at the Munich Olympics, in the 400-meter medley relay. “The New Price Is Right,” hosted by Bob Barker, premiered on CBS. (The game

show later dropped the “New” from its title and expanded from a half-hour to an hour.) In 1987, a Soviet court convicted West German pilot Mathias Rust of charges stemming from his daring flight to Moscow’s Red Square, and sentenced him to four years in a labor camp. (Rust was released in Aug. 1988.) **Ten years ago:** President George W. Bush promised to seek Congress’ approval for “whatever is necessary” to oust Saddam Hussein, including using military force. Secretary of State Colin Powell was heckled by dozens of activists on the closing day of the World Summit in South Africa. Texas cocktail waitress and aspiring pop star Kelly Clarkson was crowned the first “American Idol” on Fox Television. **Five years ago:** Hurricane Felix slammed into Nicaragua’s coast, the first time on record that two Category 5 Atlantic hurricanes hit land in the same year. Toy maker Mattel Inc. recalled 800,000 lead-tainted, Chinese-made toys worldwide, a third major recall in just over a month. **One year ago:** Jerry Lewis was conspicuously absent from the Muscular Dystrophy Association’s 46th annual Labor Day weekend telethon, having hosted the previous 45 broadcasts. **Today’s Birthdays:** Actress Mitzi Gaynor is 81. Actor Kenneth Kimmins is 71. Singer Merald “Bubba” Knight (Gladys Knight & The Pips) is 70. World Golf Hall of Famer Raymond Floyd is 70. Actress Jennifer Salt is 68. World Golf Hall of Famer Tom Watson is 63. Rhythm-and-blues musician Ronald LaPreard is 62. Actress Judith Ivey is 61. Rock musician Martin Chambers (The Pretenders) is 61. Actress Khandi Alexander is 55. Actor-comedian Damon Wayans is 52. Rock musician Kim Thayil is 52. Actor Richard Speight Jr. is 43. Actor Noah Taylor is 43. Actress Ione Skye is 42. Rhythm-and-blues singer Richard Wingo (Jagged Edge) is 37. Actor Wes Bentley is 34. Actor Max Greenfield is 33. Singer Dan Miller (“Making the Band”) is 32. Singer Beyonce Knowles is 31. Country singer-musician Tom Gossin (Gloriana) is 31. Actor Carter Jenkins is 21. Actor Trevor Gagnon is 17. **Thought for Today:** “Don’t leave inferences to be drawn when evidence can be presented.” — Richard Wright, American author (1908-1960).

## FROM THE BIBLE

*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God. 1 John 4:1.* Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

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