
Frameworks for Understanding American Foreign Policy

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Union, Nation, or Empire

David C. Hendrickson

Union

- Tries to solve the problem of anarchy
 - The goal is a rules based system
 - Not the same as cosmopolitanism
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Nation

- Tries to solve the problem of tyranny
 - Seeks maximum autonomy
 - Not the same thing as isolationism
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Empire

- Tries to solve the problem of ungoverned space
 - “Uncivilized” Societies as an opportunity and a challenge
 - Not the same thing as isolationism
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The United States is/has been

- A union
- A nation
- An empire

Often all at the same time.

Exemplarists vs Vindicationists

Hal Brands



The Spiderman Principal

EXEMPLARISTS

Believe that the United States best further its goals by being an example

VINDICATIONISTS

Being the city on a hill is not enough, the United States must go build other cities on a hill



ALL MEN
ARE CREATED
EQUAL
—JEFFERSON

✝
"LOVE
THY
NEIGHBOR"
—JESUS

RACIAL BIAS
HERE
HELPS
COMMUNISM
EVERYWHERE!

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

If Bosnians Were Dolphins

If the Bosnian Muslims had been bottle-nosed dolphins, would the world have allowed Croats and Serbs to slaughter them by...

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