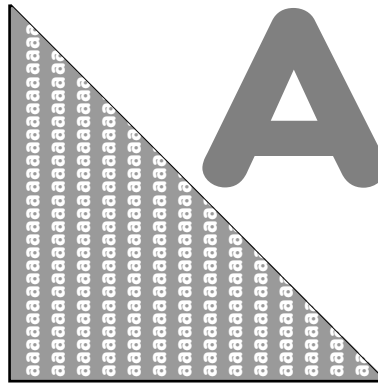


ACLU

[US] Abbreviation for American Civil Liberties Union, a non-governmental, non-profit, non-partisan organisation founded in 1920. It defends individual rights and liberties upheld* by the American Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Whenever the ACLU considers that civil rights have been infringed*, it provides attorneys and legal counselling. In particular the organisation defends freedom of speech, the separation between church and state, affirmative action, due process* for prisoners and suspects, the legality of abortion and gay rights. Several landmark cases* involving the ACLU have led to significant changes in American constitutional law: the so-called 'Monkey trial' (1925); Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (1954); and Roe v. Wade (1973). The ACLU is often criticised by conservatives for its left-wing*, liberal* positions, and being a 'card carrying member of the ACLU' is a disparaging* expression in right-wing* circles. However, the organisation was also involved in a 1977 lawsuit defending Neo-Nazis' right to freedom of speech, a highly controversial case which led about 15% of its members to cancel their membership*. Today, the ACLU has around 400,000 members.

* non-partisan: *impartial* • to uphold: *défendre* • to infringe: *enfreindre* • attorney: *avocat* • due process: *garantie d'une procédure régulière* • landmark case: *une affaire qui fait date* • left-wing: *de gauche* • disparaging: *désobligeant* • right-wing: *de droite* • circle: *milieu*



• liberal: *progressiste* •
membership: *adhésion*.

ACTORS' STUDIO

[US] An acting school founded in New York City in 1947 by Elia Kazan and the Group Theatre. The Actors' Studio developed from 1952 under the leadership of Lee Strasberg who taught method acting—an innovative form of realistic acting based more on the actor's own personality than on that of the character. To this day, it remains an institution and Strasberg's teachings are highly considered by many in the acting community. Many famous and successful directors, actors and playwrights* have come out of the Studio, including Marlon Brando, James Dean, Norman Mailer, Marilyn Monroe, Paul Newman, Sidney Poitier and Tennessee Williams.

* playwright: *dramaturge*.

ADAMS, Gerry

[UK] An Irish politician and the President of Sinn Féin (1948-). He was born in a nationalist Catholic family in West Belfast and joined Sinn Féin in

1964. It is likely that he also joined the Irish Republican Army (IRA) at the time, although he has consistently denied this. After the introduction of the 1971 Special Powers Act by the British government (which enabled police to arrest members of the IRA and intern them without trial), Adams was arrested and interned several times between 1972 and 1978. He became Vice-President of Sinn Féin in 1978 and President of the party in 1983. He has been MP for West Belfast since 1997. He was a key player in the Irish Peace Process and participated actively to the negotiations that led to the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 and the creation of the Northern Ireland Legislative Assembly at Stormont.

AFDC

[US] AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) is a welfare programme funded by both the federal and state governments and managed by the states, which determine recipients. Actually it could be called aid to mothers with dependent children. In the 1990s, about 10% of American mothers received financial help from the government because they were too poor to afford to take care of their children under 18. Nearly half of the women never married. Some were widowed, others separated or divorced, and only about 13% had a husband or partner living in the household. Nearly one in four African-American mothers and one in five Hispanic mothers are recipients of AFDC and statistics show the fertility

rate among these women is higher than it is in the general population.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

[US] The practice of giving preferential treatment to some categories of people, mostly minorities. Until the early sixties, segregation against blacks was very common in the US, especially in Southern states, which had Jim Crow laws. In 1954, a Supreme Court decision, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, ruled segregation in schools unconstitutional. The late fifties and early sixties saw the emergence of the Civil Rights movement. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed* discrimination and segregation, especially in public places. However, it was not enough to claim that blacks should enjoy the same rights as whites. As a matter of fact, this notion was stated by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution that guarantees 'equal protection of the laws'. In 1965, another act was considered necessary to establish the idea that if the situation of blacks was to improve, the law should impose the practice of favouring them, notably in matters of employment and college admissions. The law stated that admissions statistics should reflect the percentage of blacks in the general population. Moreover, whenever a white and a black person applied for a job, preference was to be given to the black candidate. An independent agency, the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission, was created to enforce the law. Affirmative Action (AA) led to a redefinition of the term

'minority', which was no longer confined to a statistical fact. Its meaning was broadened to cover groups that have been or still are victims of segregation and/or discrimination in all areas. The feminist movement in the sixties led to the inclusion in what is called minorities of women, whose numbers are in fact greater than men's. Thus Affirmative Action gradually favoured women, Hispanics and Asians. However, although gays and lesbians were later viewed as minorities, they cannot enjoy the benefits of AA. AA has caused a certain number of problems in the United States. Its most vocal opponents were, of course, white men, because many of them lost employment opportunities. AA allowed women access to jobs they had been shut out* of for centuries, such as physically taxing jobs like fighting fires, enforcing the law, and eventually, especially with the end of the draft in the early seventies, enlisting in the armed forces. Thus AA had a linguistic effect and names of professions ending with 'man' had to be adapted so they would not reflect gender. 'Fireman' became 'firefighter', 'salesman' became 'saleswoman' or 'salesperson', 'chairman' became 'chairwoman' or simply 'chair'. The flood of 'woman' endings led columnist Russell Baker in the seventies to write that now, when we pray, we should no longer say 'A-men' but 'A-women'. Many white men talked of reverse discrimination, and in the nineties, a journalist even called them the last minority. AA has also led to many court challenges; the best known

is *Bakke v. University of California Regents* (1978). Another similar case decided by the Supreme Court in June 2003 (*Grutter v. Bollinger*), upheld Affirmative Action in admission to colleges and graduate schools as long as no quotas were used. Generally speaking, the courts have been reluctant to rescind AA. But it can be said that challenges are legally well grounded since the law itself, although well-meaning, can be viewed as technically unconstitutional. Both the Fourteenth Amendment and the law emphasise equality. Affirmative Action is actually a breach* of equality, although it aims at equality in opportunity. Surprisingly some blacks are also outspoken opponents of Affirmative Action. Their theory is based on the fact that whenever someone from a minority reaches a high position, people tend to think it is not thanks to the individual's ability but to his or her origins. George W. Bush is another foe* of AA; but it is also possible to contend that he took advantage of a special kind of AA which promotes the rich. Despite his poor high school record, Bush was admitted to two of the most prestigious universities because he belongs to a patrician family.

* to outlaw: *proscribe* • to shut out:

exclure, bannir • breach:

une infraction • foe: *adversaire*.

AFL-CIO

[US] The biggest labour organisation in the United States. The American Federation of Labour was created in the 1880s, and had two main charac-

teristics that were emphasised by its leader, Samuel Gompers: first the notion of craft unions*, i.e. the organisation according to the different trades, such as mechanics or salesmen, rather than amalgamating workers in different jobs. The second characteristic involved both ideas and tactics—Gompers believed that unions should not fight capitalism; it was better for them to work within the system and try to get the largest benefits possible. The AFL's fortunes have varied depending on the attitude of presidents and Congress. During World War I the government boosted workers' rights; the 1920s were a dark period when according to Calvin Coolidge's statement 'The business of America is business'. Authorities co-operated with business leaders to weaken* and defeat unions, notably through charging unions and their leaders with being communists. The New Deal gave the AFL more power by allowing collective bargaining. However a rift* occurred in 1935, when some members were expelled; they eventually created a dissident group, the CIO (Congress of Industrial Organisations) which advocated actions such as sit-in strikes. With a return of a Republican majority in Congress in 1946, the Taft-Hartley Act (1947) stripped* labour of many of the New Deal gains. One example was the end to the closed shop system, which linked hiring to union membership. To counter the law's effect, in 1955, the CIO agreed to re-join the AFL, setting up the AFL-CIO. The organisation now includes dozens of autonomous and

independent unions, some being very powerful, such as United Auto Workers, which also covers aerospace and agricultural implement workers. The AFL-CIO boasts more than 13 million members which, although it may seem impressive, represents only about 20% of workers. The drop in membership partly reflects the lesser weight of the manufacturing sector. The slogan of the AFL-CIO is in substance 'We want workers to have a voice on the job'.

* union: *syndicat* • to weaken: *affaiblir*

• rift: *division, désaccord* • to strip: *dépouiller*.

ALAMO

[US] A former mission built by the Spanish in San Antonio, Texas when Texas was still part of Mexico. After Mexico gained independence in 1821, many Americans settled there in order to defend Texas against Indians. By the next decade, the number of Americans had increased and they resented the constraints the Mexicans imposed, especially those on individual freedoms, or more specifically the lack of self-government and sometimes forced conversion to Catholicism if an American married a Mexican girl. In 1836, when Americans demanded independence for Texas, General Santa Anna crushed the group of fewer than two hundred that had taken refuge in the Alamo, which became known as Fort Alamo. Among the fighters killed was Davy Crockett and only three people survived. Later, during the fight for independence, the battle cry was 'Remember the Alamo.'

In April 1836, Sam Houston defeated Santa Anna and gained independence for Texas.

ALLEGIANCE, The oath of

1. [UK] The oath* taken to the British King or Queen. 2. [US] The oath taken by new citizens to the United States of America.

* oath: *serment*.

ALLEN, Woody

[US] Allen Stewart Konigsberg, aka* Woody Allen, American actor, filmmaker and playwright* (1935-). He started as a stand-up comedian*, and entered the film industry when he was hired to write the screenplay* and act in what turned out to be 'What's New Pussycat?' (1966). For Woody Allen, this experience was a failure as his screenplay was altered and he resolved never again to write a screenplay if he was not the film's director. It is often tempting to see Woody Allen's films as mirrors of his life. Indeed, he draws widely from his background to write his screenplays, in particular on the New York milieu and on his long-standing relationship with analysts. Furthermore, in a number of his films, he has cast women he has been involved with as female leads—from Diane Keaton to Mia Farrow—which contributes to blurring the line between his life and his work. More often than not, he acts in his own films and portrays on screen the arch*-Jewish New York intellectual, with his peculiar humour and wit. Overall, his films are not commercial successes in the United States, and he

is more popular in Europe, a fact that he humorously acknowledges in 'Hollywood Ending' (2002). He won the Academy Award for Best Director with 'Annie Hall' (1977), but did not go to the ceremony as he was playing the clarinet in a jazz club. A few other notable films are 'Manhattan' (1979), 'The Purple Rose of Cairo' (1985), 'Hannah and her Sisters' (1986), 'Manhattan Murder Mystery' (1993) and 'Everyone Says I Love You' (1997).

* aka (also known as): *également connu sous le nom de* • playwright: *dramaturge* • stand-up comedian: *comique (qui se produit en solo)* • screenplay: *scénario* • arch: *par excellence*.

AMERICA FIRSTER

[US] The central focus of the America First Party, created on April 15th, 2002, is to place America and all Americans first. Its founding principles are to preserve and protect 'our people and our sovereignty', to promote economic growth and independence, to encourage a buy-American policy, to develop the traditional values of faith, family and responsibility, to ensure equality before the law in protecting those rights granted* by the creator and to clean up a corrupt political system. It wishes to elect candidates who will restore morality, ethics, and common sense to public service and intends to return the Constitution to its proper place in the Republic. Its members commit themselves to* elect honest people to public office provided they adhere to principles based on the

wisdom of the Founding Fathers and expressed in the United States Constitution and the party platform.

* to grant: *accorder* • to commit oneself to: *s'engager à*.

AMERICAN COLLEGE TEST

[US] The American College Test, America's most widely accepted college entrance exam, is designed to assess* high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. It has been a 50-state exam since 1960 and is administered on five national test dates in October, December, February, April, and June, as well as in late September in selected states. The ACT includes 215 multiple-choice questions in English (75), mathematics (60), reading (40) and science (40). They are all curriculum-based* and directly related to what students have learned in high school courses. The test takes approximately 3 hours to complete, broken down as follows: English (45 minutes), maths (60 min), reading (35 min) and science (35 min).

* to assess: *évaluer* • curriculum-based: *fondé sur le programme*.

AMERICAN CONSTITUTION

[US] The American Constitution was drafted by 55 delegates, now known as the Founding Fathers (among them George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and Quincy Adams, all future American Presidents). They represented the original Thirteen Colonies of the Union and met in Philadelphia in 1787 to amend* The Articles of Confe-

deration, which had been ratified six years earlier. The new constitution was declared ratified on July 2nd, 1788, hence it is the oldest legal document of the western world. It was the result of a compromise between those leaning towards a strong centralised state (Hamilton, Adams and Washington) and those in favour of allowing individual states to retain* their own rights. It is a very short text, comprising* a 52 word-long preamble, 7 articles and 26 amendments to date. In Articles 1 to 3, the Constitution provides for* the separation of powers between the executive (the President), the legislative, separated into the two houses forming Congress (the House of Representatives and the Senate), and the judicial, in the hands of the Supreme Court. Article 4 refers to the balance of power between the Federal administration and the power of each individual State. In Articles 5 and 7, the Founding Fathers established the rules for amendments and the ratification of laws. Article 6 is concerned with various points among which debts, treaties and international agreements. Each individual State has its own constitution, but no article thereof can contradict the Federal Constitution. In 1790, Congress passed the Bill of Rights, composed of ten amendments, which was the first modification to the Constitution. Since then, another seventeen amendments have been added, but the basic principles of the original constitution still remain. In each of the 50 states, in addition to the federal constitution, a state constitution adds specific rules.

* to amend: *modifier* • to retain: *conserver* • to comprise: *inclure, comprendre* • to provide for: *prévoir, stipuler*.

AMERICAN DREAM

[US] When English Puritans settled in America in the 17th century, they were pursuing their dream of religious freedom in a promised land, paving the way* for other ambitions. Later, the vision became political, as evinced* in the Declaration of Independence which states that 'all men are created equal, endowed* with certain unalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness'. Abraham Lincoln, with his dream of a unified nation, also exemplified the possibility of personal achievement as he had risen from the log-cabin of his birth to the White House. The American dream was also conveyed by the novels of Horatio Alger (1832-1899) whose characters were often boys who rose from poverty to wealth and fame through hard work, virtuous living and luck. Such works reinforced an image of the US as a land where dreams of material prosperity, high social position and power could come true, and where home-ownership was possible for all. The Statue of Liberty with the famous poem by Emma Lazarus engraved on its pedestal stands as the symbol of the new Eldorado to which many aspire. The dream of having access to education, and thus of enjoying a better life led to upward mobility: Andrew Carnegie stands as the embodiment* of such a dream as, with

little education, he started as a telegraph operator and became the owner of the largest steel company and the richest man in the land. Closer to us, Martin Luther King's passionate dream focused on racial equality after years of civil strife*. At present the fantasy of many American people appears to be overnight fame and fortune, a more materialistic and hence* more contentious* dream: it is the 'get-rich-quick' dream, as shown in some Hollywood movies. However, not all Americans appear to have fulfilled their dream and many minorities feel they have been left by the roadside.

* to pave the way: *ouvrir la voie* •
as evinced: *comme on le voit* •
to endow: *doter* • the embodiment:
la personnification • strife: *lutte* •
hence: *par conséquent* • contentious:
litigieux.

AMERICAN REVOLUTION

[US] The revolt that took place of the North American colonies against their British masters in 1775-1783 would eventually lead to the creation of the United States of America. Its cause was the resentment* brought about by British legislation (Navigation Acts and Stamp Act 1765, Townshend Acts 1767) which imposed restrictions on trade or taxes on various goods such as tea, as well as the billeting* of British troops in various cities. The first casualties* occurred in the Boston Massacre (1770) when British troops fired on demonstrators, killing five. In 1773, a mob* of Bostonians led by Samuel Adams dumped* £18,000 worth of tea into the

harbour, an event known as the Boston Tea Party. The Intolerable Acts of 1774 led other colonies to support Massachusetts and the First Continental Congress convened* in Philadelphia in September 1774. The attempted arrest of two American rebels in 1775 led the local militia at Lexington and Concord to fire the shot 'that was heard around the world'. During the second Continental Congress of 1775 George Washington was appointed Commander-in-chief. The first significant battle took place on Bunker Hill (June 17th, 1775)—a costly British victory. American troops invaded Canada but had to retreat; however the British army was forced to evacuate Boston in March. On July 4th, 1776 the American Declaration of Independence was passed. Washington's troops underwent several ups and downs: the defeat of Long Island (August 27th, 1776), the victory of Trenton (26th December), followed by the retreat of Washington and his men to spend the winter in Valley Forge, famous for the heroic suffering his ill-equipped troops had to endure. Then came the victory of Princeton in January 1777, the defeat of Brandywine (September 11th, 1777) and the victory of Saratoga in September 1777. That same year, the American colonists benefited from the help of European countries: Lafayette sailed from France to help young America. In 1778, the French concluded a treaty, followed by the Netherlands, Spain and even Russia. Peace proposals by the British were rejected in 1778. After three more years of stand-off, the British comman-

der, Lord Cornwallis, besieged in Yorktown, Virginia, by Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette, was compelled to surrender on 19th October. Skirmishes* continued for a while at sea, but the British entered peace preliminaries in November 1782 and hostilities ended in February 1783. On September 3rd, 1783, the Peace of Versailles obliged the British to recognise the independence of the USA.

* resentment: *ressentiment* • to billet: *cantonner (des troupes)* • casualties: *morts, victimes (d'un accident)* • mob: *foule violente* • to dump: *déverser, jeter* • to convene: *se réunir* • skirmish: *escarmouche*.

AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE

[US] This phrase refers to the common cultural traditions progressively acquired and shared by millions of American people from diverse origins. The 'teeming* millions' of immigrants, including the black Africans brought in as slaves, have all added part of their culture to create a new way of life. Built around a common language taught at 'night school' or later at public schools, the children of new immigrants mingled with* those from better assimilated families. They learned the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and were taught the value of the Constitution, they realised that there was no hereditary privileged class and that everyone might hope to rise to the top. The symbol of the massive cultural adaptation of millions of European families was the 'melting-pot'. At the outset*, the dominant group in politics and eco-