

Things to Think About & Mull Over....

1. What is a nation? Is it different than a “people”?

2. What does it mean to be an American? It seems clear that “American” is a nationality; is “American” also a people?

3. Prior to 9/11/01 did you think of yourself as having a homeland? What does it mean to have a “homeland?”

4. Nations claim to have sovereignty... What is sovereignty (i.e., what does it consist of)? Where does it come from?

5. Various peoples in the past (e.g., the Cherokee) and various peoples today (e.g., the Navajo, the Kurds) claim the right of sovereignty. What made/makes those claims legitimate, valid, worthy of recognition?

From Article II, Section 1, of the U.S. Constitution:

No person except a natural born citizen, or a citizen of the United States, at the time of the adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that office who shall not have attained to the age of thirty five years, and been fourteen Years a resident within the United States.

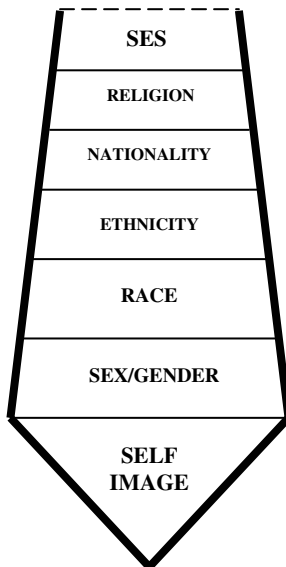
From an interview posted on Beliefnet.com, September 29, 2007

Has the candidates' personal faith become too big an issue in the presidential race?

Questions about that are very legitimate.... And it's also appropriate for me at certain points in the conversation to say, look, that's sort of a private matter between me and my Creator.... But I think the number one issue people should make [in the] selection of the President of the United States is, 'Will this person carry on in the Judeo Christian principled tradition that has made this nation the greatest experiment in the history of mankind?'"

It doesn't seem like a Muslim candidate would do very well, according to that standard.

I admire the Islam. There's a lot of good principles in it. I think one of the great tragedies of the 21st century is that these forces of evil have perverted what's basically an honorable religion. But, no, I just have to say in all candor that since this nation was founded primarily on Christian principles.... personally, I prefer someone who I know who has a solid grounding in my faith. But that doesn't mean that I'm sure that someone who is Muslim would not make a good president. I don't say that we would rule out under any circumstances someone of a different faith. I just would--I just feel that that's an important part of our qualifications to lead.*



You all remember the status-set you have filled out for yourselves (and will hopefully work with on your auto-biographical book).... Let's now use this device to explore our beliefs about the presidency, a discussion that is especially relevant to the up-coming 2008 election in which for the first time in U.S. history there are prospective major party presidential candidates who are neither male nor white (the first two statuses in the diagram opposite). While the ethnicity of a prospective candidate does not seem to be a potential issue, religion – and religious beliefs – apparently are (as an example, see Senator John McCain's comments above). Of the six basic statuses of the status-set, only Nationality remains unchallenged. While the Constitution requires that the president be a natural born American citizen, the question is, why should the president *have* to be an American? In other words, what would be your arguments (other than law) against having a president who was a German or a Swede or a Russian or a Ghanaian citizen?