



# STUDY GUIDE

## LEFT AND RIGHT DIFFERENCES: HOW DO YOU JUDGE AMERICA?

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**KEY TERMS:** affluence      xenophobic      morally-inferior  
abolish              tyranny              imperialism

<b>NOTE-TAKING COLUMN:</b> Complete this section <i>during</i> the video. Include definitions and key terms.	<b>CUE COLUMN:</b> Complete this section <i>after</i> the video.
<p>What is the Left's view on how America was founded?</p>          <p>What is a more important question to ask than 'Who had slaves?' in terms of making a moral judgment about America?</p>          <p>Without America, how would the conditions for people around the world be different?</p>	<p>In terms of history, how does the Left view America versus how the Right views America?</p>          <p>What are the significant differences in how the Left and Right view the character and composition of America?</p>

## DISCUSSION & REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- We learn in the video that, “Conservatives view America as President Abraham Lincoln viewed it – as the ‘Last Best Hope of Earth.’” What did President Lincoln mean by this – hope for what? Then we learn that, opposite of Conservatives – who view America positively, that the Left, “...sees America as... a very flawed country... and morally inferior to many.” What do you think contributes to people developing such diametrically opposing viewpoints of the same country with the same history?
- Mr. Prager explains that, “For the Left, the moral flaws in American history are enormous, but all the unique good America has done both in America and abroad is minimized or ignored.” Why do you think that this is the case? What do you think contributes to the Left defaulting to such a myopic approach to examining and analyzing America? Do you think that America should only be judged on the bad things it has done and never the good things? Why or why not?
- Mr. Prager further explains the Left’s view that, “America was and remains sexist, intolerant, xenophobic, and bigoted; a country of unacceptable material inequality, where the superrich and big corporations have far too much power and influence.” What is wrong with taking a ‘blanket’ approach to judging America this way? Are ALL Americans sexist, etc... and ALL big corporations too powerful, etc...? Even if some are, should the country as a whole be characterized as evil? Do you think that the good people and good corporations balance out or completely outnumber the bad? Why or why not? Why do you think that the Left view big corporations as having too much power and influence as bad, but view the ever-growing government having so much power and influence as good?
- Mr. Prager points out that in terms of conflict, “...37,000 Americans died in Korea, a country that offered America no economic gain,” and that, “Without America, people around the world would suffer from far more tyranny, enslavement, and genocide. The countries where American troops have remained long after combat ceased – Germany, Japan, and South Korea – have prospered economically and morally. Countries that America abandoned – such as Vietnam and Iraq – experienced mass murder and other horrors.” Yet, despite this reality, “The Left, however, views nearly all of America’s wars since 1945 as expressions of superpower imperialism.” Why do you think that this is the case, when the evidence is so clearly on the side of the Right? How could it be imperialism since America doesn’t plunder resources and doesn’t interfere with governance? How could it be imperialism since America protects and trades with those countries? Why do you think that the Left automatically equates America having a military presence, in a country with which it had previously had a conflict, with imperialism?
- At the end of the video Mr. Prager warns, “The Left wants to fundamentally transform America; the Right doesn’t. Conservatives want to conserve America’s unique greatness and improve it where necessary, but not transform it. If America is fundamentally transformed, it will not become better than other nations. It will become like other nations.” Why do you think that people on the Left would rather change America than move to another country that more suits their ideals? If America is so bad, why do you think that they stay and enjoy the freedoms and protections they receive here? Do you think that the Right being able to stipulate America’s flaws whilst revering and embracing the ‘unique greatness’ of the U.S. is a more mature and well-reasoned approach to judging America? Why or why not?

## EXTEND THE LEARNING:

### CASE STUDY: Iraqi Oil

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the article, “The War For Oil Myth,” then answer the questions that follow.

- What did the U.N. Security Council vote to do by June 30, 2010? As of 2012, what percentage of America’s oil was being imported from Iraq? Which country gets most of Iraq’s oil? What do you think prompted the Left to believe that America went to war with Iraq for oil? Why do you think that they still believe that, even though the preponderance of evidence clearly and unequivocally proves that this was not the case?
- If America invaded Iraq for oil, how come it later supported the U.N. oil embargo imposed on Iraq? Considering that America gets so little oil from Iraq, considering that America has so few troops in the country, and considering that Iraq has what Vice President Biden characterized as being, “...on the cusp of... a stable, self-reliant nation,” do you think that America is an imperial power in that country? Why or why not?
- Currently, the Islamo-fascist group ISIS holds territory in Iraq and is attempting to assimilate it into a caliphate through military force. The United States is leading a coalition to defend Iraq and its assets, especially its oil. Do you think that the Left’s view that America is an imperial power has any merit? Why or why not? What do you think would happen to the people of Iraq if America didn’t defend it?



# QUIZ

## LEFT AND RIGHT DIFFERENCES: HOW DO YOU JUDGE AMERICA?

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- 1. America was founded by rich white males who were intent on protecting their race, their wealth, and in many cases, their slaves.**
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
- 2. What is the most widely cited “proof” of American evil?**
  - a. The War of 1812
  - b. Slavery
  - c. Affirmative action
  - d. The 2nd Amendment
  
- 3. Without America, people around the world would \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - a. suffer from far more tyranny, enslavement, and genocide.
  - b. be largely unaffected.
  - c. be more prosperous and free.
  - d. have larger families.
  
- 4. How does the Right view America and its history?**
  - a. a country whose flaws eclipse the good it has done
  - b. a country that has done nothing particularly notable.
  - c. a country who once was great, but whose time has passed.
  - d. the “Last Best Hope of Earth.”
  
- 5. The further left one goes, the more \_\_\_\_\_ the assessment of America.**
  - a. positive
  - b. negative
  - c. neutral
  - d. scientific



# QUIZ - ANSWER KEY

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# The War For Oil Myth

**America won the war in Iraq, but China got the oil.**

March 21, 2013

[Arnold Ahlert](#)



Now that the tenth anniversary of Operation Iraqi Freedom has arrived, the American left has taken another opportunity to revive the trope that going to war in that nation "was all about oil." *The Guardian's* Glenn Greenwald is one such revivalist. In a [column](#) on Monday he's magnanimous enough to concede that saying the war in Iraq was fought strictly for oil is an "oversimplification." Yet just as quickly, he can't contain himself. "But the fact that oil is a major factor in every Western military action in the Middle East is so self-evident that it's astonishing that it's even considered debatable, let alone some fringe and edgy idea," he contends. The war for oil mantra may be self-evident to Greenwald and his fellow travelers, but the facts say otherwise.

If oil were a major factor for prosecuting war in Iraq, it stands to reason the United States would be getting substantial amounts of it. It may come as a shock to Greenwald as well as a number of other Americans, but with regard to importing oil, the overwhelming percentage of our imported oil does not come from the Middle East. Canada and Latin America [provide](#) the United States with 34.7 percent of our imported oil. Africa provides another 10.3 percent. The *entire* Persian Gulf, led by Saudi Arabia at 8.1 percent, provides us with a total of 12.9 percent of our imported oil.

As recently as December 2012, Iraq [provided](#) the United States with approximately 14.3 million barrels of oil out of a total of about 298 million barrels imported, or 4.8 percent of our total imports. And as this [chart](#) indicates, we were importing the highest amount of oil from Iraq *before* we went to war to oust Saddam Hussein.

Furthermore, the United States fully supported the United Nations' [oil embargo](#) against Iraq, imposed when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990, despite the reality that we were far more dependent on imported oil then than we are now. We continued to support it even when it was revealed that the eventual softening of those sanctions, known as the oil for food program, [revealed](#) that Russia, France and a number of other nations were collaborating with Saddam Hussein to violate sanctions in return for billions of dollars of ill-gotten gains. Of the 52 countries named in a report compiled by former Federal Reserve chairman Paul Volcker detailing the scandal, only 28 even wanted the evidence, and the United States led the way in prosecuting those implicated.

In 2010, the UN Security Council [lifted](#) most of the remaining sanctions. The Security Council said it "recognizes that the situation now existing in Iraq is significantly different from that which existed at the time of the adoption of resolution 661" in 1990. In other words, they recognized that Butcher of Baghdad and his brutal dictatorship had been tossed on the ash heap of history, and a relatively stable government had taken its place. The Council also voted to return control of Iraq's oil and natural gas revenue to the government by June 30 of that year. "Iraq is on the cusp of something remarkable--a stable, self-reliant nation," said Vice President Joe Biden, who chaired the meeting.

It is precisely that self-reliant nation--not an oil-rich client state of America--that Iraq is becoming.

If America went to war in Iraq mostly for oil, it would stand to reason that we would maintain a stranglehold on both their supply and production. Ten years after the war began, China has [emerged](#) as one of the main beneficiaries of a relatively stable Iraqi government and a country that, after two decades, is poised to become the world's [third largest](#) oil exporter. Trade between Iraq and China has doubled almost 34 times, soaring from \$517 million in 2002, to \$17.5 billion by the end of last year. If current trends continue, it will replace the U.S. as Iraq's largest trading partner.

Furthermore, the first postwar oil license awarded by the Iraqi government in 2008 was to the state-run China National Petroleum Corp. (CNPC), in the form of a \$3.5 billion development contract for Iraqi oil field Al-Ahdab. In December 2009, in the second round of bids to develop Iraq's vast untapped oil reserves (following a June auction allowing foreign companies the chance to increase production at existing fields), China and Russia [emerged](#) with the lion's share of the contracts. At the time, Iraqi Oil Minister Hussain al-Shahristani envisioned a bright future. "Our principal objective is to increase our oil production from 2.4 million barrels per day to more than four million in the next five years," he said.

The country is well on its way. Last December, Iraq reached a milestone, [breaking](#) the 3 million barrel threshold for the first time since 1990, reaching 3.4 million barrels a day. Moreover, unlike Western oil reserves that require sophisticated technology or deep-sea drilling to acquire, Iraq is awash in untapped reserves that can still be reached using conventional, and far cheaper methods of extraction. As a result, the International Energy Agency (IEA) projects that Iraq will double its current production to 6.1 million barrels a day by 2020, and 8.3 million by 2030, surpassing Russia as the world's second largest oil exporter, with the capability of supplying 45 percent of the increase in global demands for oil by 2035.

And once again, emphasizing the reality of where Iraqi oil will be headed, the IEA projects that *most* of the nation's oil will be exported to China and other Asian markets.

So why does the war for oil meme remain so popular with the Left? The Bush Derangement Syndrome, which also includes an almost pathological hatred for former Vice President Dick Cheney, remains alive and well. So does the Left's irrational antipathy for "Big Oil," a term that represents the archetypical symbol of corporate greed and evil. Throw in the fact that both Bush and Cheney were oilmen, and the trifecta hate-inducing symbolism is almost too much to resist.

Yet for the sake of argument, let's assume every accusation made by the Left regarding a war for oil is true. At the same time, let's introduce one inarguable reality into the mix: right now, fossil fuels such as oil remain the only viable source of energy that will allow Americans to maintain their current standard of living. Maybe someday we'll have the technology to radically alter that reality, but not now.

Let's also introduce another unarguably reality into the mix: the American Left, and its alliance with radical environmentalism, has made it almost impossible for this nation to become energy-independent. In other words, if we did go to war for oil in Iraq, the American Left is as complicit as anyone in engendering that reality--unless there has been some mass movement on their part to completely abandon petroleum-dependent technology, such as cars, computers, or (heaven forbid) iPhones, that has remained under the national radar.

Leftists, despite all their noble intentions, still want to enjoy the highest standard of living in the world, even as they bite the hand of those who endeavor to provide it -- and even as they fight tooth and nail to keep this nation at least partially the mercy of people who hate us.

As for the war in Iraq in general, people can disagree about whether removing Saddam Hussein was the right thing to do. And they can certainly question the necessity of nation-building, "winning hearts and minds," and all the other politically correct nonsense. But it is simply revisionist history to suggest that anti-oil Democratic politicians, many of whom are quoted [here](#), weren't every bit as concerned with the danger the Saddam Hussein regime posed as Republicans were. Authorizing the use of force was a [bipartisan](#) effort based on a shared interpretation of the same security intelligence. To assert that Democrats were hoping for a Big Oil payday is simply absurd.

As for oil, if getting it was one of the primary reasons we liberated Iraq, subsequent developments have demonstrated that effort was a colossal failure. What we *did* get is something too many Americans conveniently forget: in the twelve years we've aggressively pursued terror, nothing remotely approaching a repeat of 9/11 has happened here. That so many Americans have forgotten the genuine context that precipitated war in both Afghanistan *and* Iraq is staggering.