



# **Becoming Jefferson's People: Re-Inventing the American Republic in the Twenty-First Century**

*Clay S. Jenkinson*

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Thomas Jefferson was the principal dreamer of the Founding Fathers. Pragmatic utopian and practical visionary, Jefferson was one of the most creative men who ever lived. He penned the thirty-five most revolutionary words in the history of the English language: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."

Humanities scholar Clay Jenkinson has written a bold call for a Jeffersonian renewal in America. "We need the Sage of Monticello's vision as we begin what is the most difficult periods of American history."

The Jeffersonian consists of self-reliance, an uncompromising dedication to liberty (over security, profit, comfort, and tradition), an unambiguous wall of separation between church and state, first-rate public education, thoughtfulness and diffidence about America's place in the world, and a commitment to civility.

Jefferson brought genius (not to mention reason, good sense, and idealism) to whatever he undertook, and he believed that the purpose of America was not to seek glory and profit in the world's arena, but to build a nation of equality, justice, and cultural achievement.

Becoming Jefferson's People is part manifesto, part call for a new political persuasion in the United States, part self-help book, and part critique of the consumerist world empire that the United States has become at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

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