

This Free E-Book is brought to you by Natural-Aging.com.

100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

The Ugly American Returns

By Virginia Bola, PsyD

The Ugly American Returns by Virginia Bola, PsyD

Originally published in 1958, "The Ugly American" (Lederer & Burdick) documented American blunders abroad and our failure to identify that what we termed communism in undeveloped countries was merely the screams of hunger and hopelessness becoming manifest. 15 years later, we extricated ourselves from Vietnam and licked our wounds for 30 years, finally coming to some sort of accommodation with free fire zones, Agent Orange, and My Lai. Never again, we swore. We would protect our nation's security but only move into war zones when gross injustice or humanitarian concerns demanded a response -- Somalia, Bosnia, the first Gulf War.

We felt relief: a line in the sand had been drawn that we would not cross. The new American protocol called for self-protection but also restraint, a hint of nobility, and the belief that, above all, we were the primary bastion of freedom, diversity, and the rule of law.

September 11 shook that hard-fought-for ideal. No longer must we simply protect our borders but now we had to look around us wherever we were – at the stranger waiting for a train, the sweating, swarthy fellow traveler at the airport, the foreigners in the upstairs apartment.

We felt betrayed. The quid pro quo of "You leave us alone and we'll leave you alone" went awry. Those who hate us were intruding into our private space. We felt violated. In a predictable reaction, we struck out, seeking the enemy in the hills and caves of Afghanistan where our agony had been meticulously planned with premeditation and cold indifference to our pain.

For two years, we slowly revised our goals, our ideals, our national commitments. Our outraged sense of self, revulsion, and anger gradually overcame our democratic belief in the rights of all to national self-determination. To fight the enemy, we became him. We adopted his mindset of the ends justifies the means. Angry and frustrated at his ability to strike at our very heart and make our world fearful and dangerous, we morphed into him, using offense as a means of defense against the terrifying vulnerability we feared to face.

The Ugly American Returns

In 2003, the decision was made to openly attack a sovereign nation state which, although famous for verbal saber rattling, posed no direct threat to us nor had it committed an illegal invasion or recent attack on anyone else since the last Gulf War.

With guns blazing, we marched into the OK Corral. Despite the absolute predictability of enemy combatants fading into the general population rather than standing their ground and being annihilated, we were "surprised" as the ease of entering Baghdad. We had forgotten the lessons of our own Revolutionary War when it became clear that standing face-to-face with well-supplied redcoat squares was a recipe for total destruction.

"Mission Accomplished" trumpeted the President, the Administration, the temporarily impotent and sleeping media. The worst was over. There was now simply "mopping up" operations left in a country which should be overwhelmingly grateful for what we had achieved. Instead, of course, more U.S.

troops would die after our mission was "accomplished" than in the hot war itself.

Why the surprise? Once again, as in the days of Vietnam, the Tet Offensive, the bombing of Cambodia, once again the face of the Ugly American was exposed to the world.

Why are we hated? We are the superpower, the bully in the school yard. Difficult as it is to forge an uneasy truce with us when we act with restraint and decorum, it becomes impossible when we throw our weight around and beat our collective chest with pride, hubris, and the will to move alone without trying to rally allies or international support. The Ugly American is loose in the streets of the Middle East, a target for all, a friend of none: arrogant, defiant, outcast, and alone.

Never again, we said. Oops – the isolation and the hate is back. We can now have the satisfaction of knowing we generated it all by ourselves. Who needs an enemy when we have us?

Virginia Bola is a licensed clinical psychologist with deep interests in Social Psychology and politics. She has performed therapeutic services for more than 20 years and has studied the results of cultural forces and employment on the individual. She is the author of an interactive workbook, *The Wolf at the Door: An Unemployment Survival Manual*, and a monthly ezine, *The worker's Edge*. She can be reached at <http://www.virginiabola.com>

Tax Records – What You Should Keep And For How Long

By Richard A. Chapo

Tax Records – What You Should Keep And For How Long by Richard A. Chapo

Many taxpayers are confused about how long they should keep tax records. The term "tax records" refers to your tax returns and the documents that support the information in the returns. These documents can include receipts, bank

The Ugly American Returns

statements, 1099s, etc. If you are one of the unlucky few to be audited, these records will be vital to fending off the IRS.

Tax Returns

To protect yourself from a nasty audit, you should keep all of your tax returns indefinitely. The IRS has been known to lose or misplace tax returns. While conspiracy advocates argue that this is evidence of a nefarious scheme, the simple fact is that the IRS receives millions of returns over a three-month period and lost returns are inevitable. So how do you protect yourself? You keep copies of every single tax return.

A quick word on the IRS e-file program. If you file your returns electronically, make sure you get copies from the company that filed your return. All such entities are required by law to provide you with paper copies.

Records Supporting Tax Returns

You should keep supporting tax records for a period of six years from the date the returns were actually filed. In general the IRS only has three years to audit you from the filing date. For example, if you filed your 2000 tax return on April 15, 2001, the IRS would have to start an audit by April 15, 2004. Keep in mind that if you filed an extension, the IRS will have three years from the date you submitted the return. As is always case with taxes, there are exceptions to this general time period.

If your tax return looks like the great American novel, the running of the three-year audit period may not save you. Failure to report more than 25% of your gross income gives the IRS an additional three years to pursue you. Using the previous example, the IRS would have until April 15, 2007 to

audit your 2000 tax return.

Property Records – Get A Filing Cabinet

You may need to get a filing cabinet if you hold property for an extended period of time. For example, assume that you purchased a home in 1980 for \$100,000 and made \$50,000 in

The Ugly American Returns

improvements over the years. You need to keep the purchase records, mortgage statements and receipts that relate to the improvements. When you sell the home, you will need the records to determine the tax consequences of the sale, to wit, your basis (original cost plus improvements) and profit. If the IRS decides to take a closer look at the reported profit, you will need to provide your tax records to support your claims. Once you actually sell the property, it is recommended that you keep all of the tax records for an additional six years.

Divorce

Make sure you keep copies of all of your financial documents, tax returns and supporting documents if you get divorced. You should also keep copies of all divorce agreements and court orders that cover property and financial issues. When couples divorce, the tax and credit consequences can be nightmarish. If you don't keep records, you will have to ask your ex-spouse for them. Get the records now to avoid doubling your misery!

Hopefully, you will never need to show your tax records to the IRS. If you are one of the unlucky few that is audited, your tax records should keep your feet out of the fire.

Richard Chapo is CEO of <http://www.businessstaxrecovery.com> – Obtaining tax refunds for businesses by finding overlooked tax deductions and credits through a free tax return review.



This Free E-Book has been brought to you by Natural-Aging.com.

100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!