**Think Piece Assignment #3: Academic Articles**

Below you will find excerpts from academic articles that were written from opposing perspectives: Constance Lindsay Skinner, “Feet of Clay: Or Eyes of Envy?” and Edward M. Bennet, “Charles A. Lindbergh and the Battle Against Intervention in World War II.” The first celebrates his 1927 trans-Atlantic flight and reports about a speech given by Lindbergh to the Boy Scouts, and the second addresses how his opposition to American involvement in WWII in the late 1930s made him seem un-American. In your compare and contrast Think Piece, please compare and contrast the different perspectives of the authors on Charles A. Lindbergh and his fame. As you compare these two excerpts, describe how each author sees Lindbergh as a hero or anti-hero and as a symbol of American Patriotism. What did he represent to Americans? How could he be a hero at one point in his life and a villain later on? Did his fame in either timeframe reflect who he truly was as a citizen? Should we listen to celebrities when they make comments on politics and other issues?

1. **Constance Lindsay Skinner, ”Feet of Clay: Or Eyes of Envy?” *The North American Review*, July, 1929.**

Lindbergh is the pattern in the best loved hero of the Boy Scouts. In his outstanding traits he embodies the ideal for which they strive: The concept of manhood strength and loyalty with gentleness, bravery and kindness, honesty and courtesy, modesty and achievement; for the spiritual and moral qualities of the soul behind the tangible actuality, Service. Service loses its efficacy without them, degenerates into prattle.

We should take the Scouts as typical American boyhood. They are American boys, and they like what all our boys like. It is no secret anywhere that America’s boys are strongly for Charles Lindbergh. And, it is of much concern that the ideals of youth be understood and upheld; so that youth shall not be robbed and its joy in a finding clean manhood with her, its vision of its own immediate future. While every boy worshiper of Lindbergh does not expect to be an aviator, he would like to become a sort of young man that Lindbergh is. Every boy, in his own words, endorses the remark of the Latin American for one of the countries visited by Lindbergh on his goodwill flight: “wherever he is, Lindbergh is always what you North American’s call O.K. In the air he is a flyer, on the ground he is a gentleman.” American boys – – and those young men who were boys very recently – – are characteristically courteous, helpful to strangers, chivalrous to women, kindly towards weaker things including sickly people, small children and animals; energetically eager to do something and to do it well; and not much given to bombast – – the latter probably because of their keen sense of the ridiculous; if they don’t laugh at themselves, others will!

The wellspring of [Boy Scout} morale, of course, are the American home, the schoolhouse, which is not failed in ethics, whatever it has lacked in English diction, and the church. The same American idealism in the same American environment which have shaped these native American boys produced Lindbergh. In fact, if there be such a thing as a standardized American hero, Lindbergh is it. He represents to his countrymen the dominant American character – – without its modern defects, superficiality and personal advertising. To Europeans and Latin Americans, he images the best they have heard and read about the United States. By virtue of what he has done, what he *is* has become known – – and, of importance – – to the world. And his young and younger countrymen see him as a banner bearer for the national character. He is what they are trying to develop to perfection: in the air, flyers – – that is to say, in their work efficient, progressive, excellent, successful – – and on the ground, gentlemen. He is a focal point to which young ambition and useful aspiration may look and learn that great achievement, length with cleanness, integrity and modesty, is possible despite all the current shallow patter.

**2. Edward M Bennett, “Charles A. Lindbergh in the Battle against American Intervention in World War II’ *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, January, 1976.**

Lindbergh proved to be the most pivotal figure in the battle against American intervention. A scion of the agrarian Midwest in this nostalgic politics, Lindbergh was also a stepson of the conservative values of Wall Street. When, in 1929, he married the daughter of Dwight Morrow, a former partner with J.P. Morgan and Company, Lindbergh adopted a business philosophy, dominated by distaste for the Soviet Union and suspicion of New Deal liberalism. A man of paradox, the famous flyer was a shy individual who despise publicity and encountered adulation wherever he traveled. At war with America’s press after the hysteria surrounding his son’s kidnap and murder in 1932, he nevertheless championed a free press against the asserted conspiracy to silence him. The man who once considered forsaking American citizenship, he attracted supporters whose basic pride lay in their patriotism. Most ironically, by 1941 the man would flying the Atlantic so invigorated the spirit of internationalism had become America’s leading noninterventionist.

Lindbergh emerge from a personal isolation in 1939 and was swiftly to center-stage of the foreign-policy debate. Since 1936 he had traveled widely throughout Europe, reviewing aviation developments in reporting his findings to Washington. Because of these missions, he concluded that the Luftwaffe stood preeminent throughout Europe, and that German technology and soon surpass American skill. This view was strengthened by the motifs he discerned a national character. In speeches and articles, he argued that the war was not a contest between right and wrong, but between differing concepts of the right. The British, being complacent smugglers, are well suited to the agency power, they were woefully equipped to meet the challenge of the new era of air power. For England possessed organization without spirit, France exhibited spirit without organization, and also suffered from poor morale, a Darth of leadership, and class and political divisions. Germany, meanwhile, had what the democracies lack – – spirit and efficiency.

Given Lindbergh’s premises, negotiated peace remain the only sensible option. United States could not halt the inexorable process which arrayed the forces of the present against those of the past. Like “scum on the wave of the future,” England and France were doomed. Any effort to defeat Germany would result not only in failure, would also imperil Western civilization. The only victors in such a confrontation with the Japan of the Soviet Union, and Asiatic hordes might take advantage of interceding conflict between the “white races” and threaten the heritage of centuries. In his first radio broadcast as an isolationist spokesman, he argued that ‘these wars in Europe are not wars in which our civilization is defending itself against some Asiatic intruder. There is no Genghis Khan or Xerxes marching against our Western nations. This is not a question of banding together to defend the white race against foreign invasions. This is simply one more of those age-old quarrels with our own family of nations – – a quarrel arising from the errors of the last war – – the failure of the victors of that war to follow a consistent policy either of fairness or force.

Interfering with this dialectic would be foolish. Aid short of war could prolong but could not alter the European conflict. Moreover, the cost of constructing planes to help the British was prohibitive, and American military potential was insufficient. Even worse, aid of Britain would weaken American air defenses. As Lindbergh warned a Chicago rally in August 1940, national frontiers did not lie in Europe, and the nation’s destiny would not be decided on foreign soil.

Lindbergh may have been a keen analyst of air technology, but he proved naïve judge of the moral absolutism of liberal interventionists. In their eyes, he had crossed the line separating legitimate dissent from conspiracy. In fact, defenders of administration policy treated their opponents as if they confronted a “fascist” cabal aimed at circumscribing the president’s freedom of action. This polarization was evident when President Franklin Roosevelt himself condemned committee spokesman as “unwitting aids of the agents of Nazi-ism” who “preached the gospel of fear.”