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Shadow states of states

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SHADOW STATES OF STATES

by

Kathryn Frances Hargrave

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Art in the Graduate College of The University of Iowa

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This is to certify that the Master’s thesis of

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Figure 21. Shadow States spread
SHADOW STATES OF STATES

Staking a claim with a flag, or perhaps claiming the flag, we hear politicians carve out "real" America. They decide which actions and beliefs are American and which are not. But the "real" America, the subtractive process which politicians are constantly battling, is a process which has been in the works since before this country was a country. There were drafts of the Declaration of Independence, choosing which word was more appropriate. Bigger than word choice, in building a nation, beliefs are molded and formed and philosophy is codified.

What is left? What's left are shadow states of states. There are 43 versions of the American flag. Each version represents a different nation. A state of a state. The 16 star flag, for instance, was flown over a public school house, the first time education and the flag were tied together, a tie that remained well into the 20th century, until the pledge began to be removed from schools. Shadow states of states are the leftovers, the things obscured, the bits of belief that were left out, good or bad, in deciding what America was to become. Versions within versions. Gun control. Women voting. Hawaii's statehood. These change the nation. But there are still things that lurk in the shadows, states of states that will never be seen. States that won't see the light of day. These range from the state of Franklin or the state of Lincoln, proposed secessions of the upper peninsula of Michigan or the panhandle of Idaho, to the political beliefs too far off the map to be understood in terms of blue and red. They're also political states, states of destruction, oppression. States of poverty, class warfare, indigenous land rights, and religious freedom that the United States of America can't seem to get a grip on within the 50 states. These are shadow states of states. And we have to continue to try to shine light on them.
According to US Code, Chapter 1, all flags made for or by the government shall measure 1x1.9 height by width.

When you go to the hardware store to buy a flag to fly on memorial day from your garage, it’ll measure 2x3 or 3x5 or 4x6. And the colors will be brighter. Bigger, bolder, and better.
No disrespect should be shown to the flag of the United States of America; the flag should not be dipped to any person or thing. Regimental colors, State flags, and organization or institutional flags are to be dipped as a mark of honor.

The flag should never be displayed with the union down, except as a signal of dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property.

Figure 2: Shadow States spread
b) The flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, water, or merchandise.

c) The flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, always in folds, or free.

d) The flag should never be used as covering apparel, bedding, or drapery. It should never be festooned, drawn back, nor up, in folds, but always allowed to fall free. Bunting of blue, white, and red, always arranged with the blue above, the white in the middle, and the red below, should be used for covering a speaker’s desk, draping the front of the platform, and for decoration in general.

e) The flag should never be fastened, displayed, used, or stored in such a manner as to permit it to be easily torn, soiled, or damaged in any way.

Figure 3: Shadow States spread
The flag should never be used as a covering for a ceiling.

The flag should never have been placed upon it, nor on any part of it, nor attached to it any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture, or drawing of any nature.

The flag should never be used as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything.

The flag should never be used for advertising purposes in any manner whatsoever. It should not be embroidered on such articles as cushions or handkerchiefs and the like, printed or otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxes or anything that is designed for temporary use and discard. Advertising signs should not be fastened to a staff or halyard from which the flag is flown.
(j) No part of the flag should ever be used as a costume or athletic uniform. However, a flag patch may be affixed to the uniform of military personnel, firemen, policemen, and members of patriotic organizations. The flag represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing. Therefore, the lapel flag pin being a replica, should be worn on the left lapel near the heart.

(k) The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.

Figure 5: Shadow States spread
Figure 6: Shadow States spread
Figure 7: Shadow States spread
The story goes that when Betsy Ross presented her design for the American flag to G. Washington, he said that he liked six-pointed stars better, stating that five-pointed stars are harder to perfect.

Figure 8: Shadow States spread
Figure 9: Shadow States spread

“...one of them...”

Betsy said, and she deftly folded a piece of paper...
and presented a perfect five-pointed star
Figure 11: Shadow States spread
Figure 12: Shadow States spread

Betsy cut her stars, where did the fabric go?

When
Figure 13: Shadow States spread
it takes 1259 stars to make the United States

Figure 14: Shadow States spread
Figure 15: Shadow States spread
Figure 16: Shadow States spread
Figure 17: Shadow States spread
Figure 18: Shadow States spread
The Bikini Atoll residents adopted this flag to represent that a great debt is still owed by the United States due to the 1954 detonation of the H-Bomb on one of the islands, poisoning the islanders. The 23 stars represent the 23 islands that make up the Bikini Atoll. The three black stars represent the islands destroyed by the H-Bomb and the two black stars represent where Bikinians now live, far from where they originally called home. The Marshalisese phrase translates to "everything in the hands of God," a perverse version of "In God we trust."

Figure 19: Shadow States spread
African American artist David Hammons created this flag in 1990. Hammons’ work often has to do with his involvement in the black power movement. This flag is a take on Marcus Garvey’s Pan African Flag, or perhaps a response to the popular 1920’s song, “Every race has a flag but the coon.” Things are more complicated than they seem, and this might somehow be more threatening altering the colors in a way that can be seen as different than solely American.

Figure 20: Shadow States spread
Adbusters and others created another version of the American Flag and a pledge to go with it:

I pledge allegiance to the flag
of the corporate states of America.
And to the conglomeration,
for which it stands,
one nation, under many CEOs,
always divisible,
with liberty and privileges for some.

Figure 21: Shadow States spread