

The Four Freedoms

Yme Woensdregt

In his State of the Union address in January 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt articulated four fundamental freedoms that everyone ought to be able to



enjoy: freedom of speech, freedom of belief, freedom from fear and freedom from want. Even before the US entered the war, FDR was responding to some of the brutalities perpetrated by the Third Reich which were already becoming evident. (Other nations have also issued "Four Freedoms" stamps, but space precludes showing them.)

Norman Rockwell

From our doughboys in WWI to our astronauts striding across the moon, Norman Rockwell's artwork has captured America's traditional values along with the characteristic optimism of its people. Rockwell loved people, and people loved him. He was an enormously skilled technician and, according to several new reassessments, a true artist. He had a genius for capturing the emotional content of the commonplace.

1894
1994

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In 1943, artist Norman Rockwell painted four oil paintings illustrating the four freedoms. Reproduced in the Saturday Evening Post on four consecutive weeks, they have become his best known works.

The four freedoms were enshrined in the Preamble of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, drafted by a Commission established in 1946 and chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt.

USA Sc#908 (1943) commemorating the "Four Freedoms Speech"; USA Sc#933 (1946), commemorating FDR; USA Sc#2840a-d (1994) commemorating Norman Rockwell (1894–1978).

UN Sc#1177a–c (2017) shows Eleanor Roosevelt holding the Declaration and commemorates its 70th anniversary. The stamps print the full text of the Preamble and 30 Articles in English (top stamp), French (middle), and German (bottom). The French version holds the Guinness record for "most words on a stamp" (1969); the English text has 1771 words, and the German has 1660.

ymew53@telus.net

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