



Heritage Academy's

INDEPENDENCE

Fall 2015

EQUATION FOR FREEDOM

OUR MISSION

Thomas Jefferson stated, “If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be.” It is the goal of Independence and Heritage Academy as a whole to keep our nation from a state of ignorance. To accomplish this, Independence will promote learning through the essays of Heritage Academy scholars.

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS:

You are reading something beautiful. Twenty years ago, Mr. Earl Taylor founded Heritage Academy to teach America's youth the principles upon which their country is founded. Now, Heritage has three campuses, and its message of founding principles has reached thousands of scholars. But we, those fortunate who are learning of the genius of the Founders, and of the exceptional nature of America, believe this message must reach farther. The ideas of self-government and independence should be sung from sea to shining sea. Only then can this, the last true bastion of freedom, be preserved.

So as you ponder these words, don't simply agree and move on, don't simply dismiss them as the ramblings of idiot teenagers. Learn, realize, apply, and live these principles, because you are reading something beautiful. Join Heritage Academy in saving America and building her heroes.

Thank you.

OUR ILL AMERICA JENNIFER MOORE

“Should I keep back my opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offense, I should consider myself as guilty of treason towards my country, and of an act of disloyalty toward the Majesty of Heaven, which I revere above all earthly things” (Henry 30).

America was built in an attempt to protect human rights – the very things that make us content with our existence here on Earth: justice, equality, liberty, peace, etc. Our forefathers were pressed, but not crushed, by circumstances that resulted in the forging of a more beautiful, more pure nation than any that had existed before. These men ventured into the lowest of depths to figure out exactly what would be needed to ensure the well-being of a large expanse of people with diverse personalities. What would keep so many people happy, free, protected, and peaceful? What would work? The answer, at least for a while, was the Constitution.

When I ask others what they think of the Constitution, most of them have no clue as to why we have it. The document that serves as a foundation for our functionality as a country holds not much meaning to them. So, when we ask ourselves why our country is slipping on a downhill slope, the answer can be quite clear: those who claim to be knowledgeable and trustworthy in regards to American government, simply are not. When you think about it, this holds to be true nationwide. For one example, the ability to identify the three branches of government and their functions is considered an above-average understanding of American systems in today’s culture. For another, we Americans are digging our own graves by electing government officials without doing any background research, or not participating in elections at all. Benjamin Franklin, in his dying

days, wrote on this issue, and, being that he was too incapacitated to read his speech himself, he insisted on having his words read to the Constitutional Convention delegates. James Wilson read Franklin’s speech right before the Constitution was signed: “Much of the strength and efficiency of any Government in procuring and securing happiness to the people, depends, on opinion, on the general opinion of the goodness of the government, as well as of the wisdom and integrity of its Governors”

(Franklin 72). Simply put, we cannot keep our nation healthy if the majority of people stop expressing their opinions by means of voting, and if the leaders we elect are ill-suited for their position. America is ill, and needs to be fixed.

Today, part of the sickness seems to be also bred in high school. The history courses that were once informative and patriotic have flipped into outright bias and half-truths. It seems that, instead of preparing and encouraging teenagers to heal America, we are creating an atmosphere of disloyalty and even disgust in our flying colors. In public school systems, history

classes teach kids the mindset that our nation was founded on immoral white men who unjustly stole from Indians and whose ideas on government are therefore not credible. Although portions of this may hold true to the opinions of some, this concept shows only the faults of American history and leaves them out of context, eradicating the entire expanse of morality and virtue that America is founded on. On the other hand, some schools teach that America has always been absolutely infallible and our Founding Fathers are the very definition of perfect men. Instead of teaching one or the other, we need to teach the truth – that although America

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has done some questionable things, it is founded on virtue and the grace of God, and the nation's wrongdoings are few in comparison to the innumerable instances of goodness.

America needs a change. It seems that we have forgotten the ground we stand on, and we need to delve into true, unbiased history to remember. Fellow young Americans, do not forget how to think and form your own ideas on liberty, regardless of what respected individuals may tell you. Always take the extra step to seek truth and improvement. Adult patriots, remember that even if

you have absolutely no interest in politics, politics are important and can be sifted through so that you can make the right choices when voting. In time, America can and will be brought back to its foundation.

A government of our own is our natural right: And when a man seriously reflects on the precariousness of human affairs, he will become convinced, that it is infinitely wiser and safer, to form a constitution of our own in a cool deliberate manner, while we have it in our power, than to trust such an interesting event to time and chance (Paine 34).

THE TRUTH BEHIND AMERICA'S DOWNFALL

JONATHAN RODRIGUEZ

Ever since I was a child back in grade school, I've been told the same old message: "The youth are the prime heroes of America's problems." However, today I ask myself: what are these problems? Well, it dates all the way back to the Progressive Movement of 1890-1920 when America had its makeover from a republic to a socialist democracy. Early leaders active and supportive of this movement included Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. As a result, many of the principles of liberty found in the Constitution of the United States were forgotten and replaced with the ideals of socialism and government-provided welfare. Without a doubt, this time in American history propelled the nation into a downward spiral towards the abyss of apathy and dependence on the affairs of the government.

As Thomas Jefferson remarkably puts it, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." If only the American people had a pinch of vigilance, the wrongful leadership of the government over the nation could have been avoided. However, these people were desperate and in dire need of security. So what did they do? They repeated the history of the ancient Romans and sacrificed their freedom for security. Now, there comes a time in everyone's life when a numerous amount of mistakes causes us to give up and hand someone else the wheel; but is this truly the American thing to do? After

all, as Benjamin Franklin suggested, "Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom."

Many Americans throughout history, I believe, were blinded by the disguised entity of socialist democracy because presidents would always enforce it in humanitarian ways. For example, Theodore Roosevelt's presidency – and many successive ones – was mainly concerned with aiding the people. As Roosevelt greatly said, "I was bent upon making the Government the most efficient possible instrument in helping the people of the United States to better themselves in every way, politically, socially, and industrially" (Roosevelt 40). As we know, the powers of the government granted by the Constitution are only mandated to protect the inalienable rights of the people, defend their borders, and maintain order in the courts. Nowhere in the Constitution does it say that the government has the authority to step in and offer the people jobs or medical care, nor give them the "right" to jobs and education. However, several presidents did so by implementing a vast amount of government agencies nationwide. This won presidents much fame because the American people thought they were very interactive and great people-persons, but the truth is, only apathy and utter dependence on the government followed. America accepted socialism, though she didn't accept the label; and where socialism leads, taxation follows immediately

after. I can understand the reason why Americans went along with the government running the nation, but we have to remember Ronald Reagan's wise words: "We are a nation that has a government – not the other way around" (Reagan 151). When the Founding Fathers were deciding on a system of government for the United States, they never intended for something like this. They decided on a republic, not a democracy, because they knew the faults in a democracy. In a republic, the power goes to the people, but most importantly a republic is ruled by law and governmental power is limited. As Alexis de Tocqueville said during his time in America, "When the public is supreme, there is no man who does not feel the value of public goodwill, or who does not endeavor to court it by drawing to himself the esteem and affection of those amongst whom he is to live" (Tocqueville 120). As Americans today, we should be more cautious to what's going on in our nation; we need to realize and understand where we came from and support it all the way.

In my opinion, the most beautiful sight to see is the glorious fruit produced by a group of free people, truly free people - the type of free people who practice self-government in an utmost free-willed manner. The kind of free people who don't need a master commanding them. Without a doubt, this faith in a free people is and has been diminishing in America. It will probably take decades until this faith is renewed, so until then, let's start small. I've learned throughout my years that a person's actions can have the greatest impact on others; let's start there. I encourage all people in America and even the world to use their voice and actions to positively influence others. Speak up in your city council. Volunteer in your city. Make someone's day. Anything that could raise hope in humanity's capability of being a free people. Once this is attained, hopefully we can once and for all solve the problems of America.

ONE MUST PAY THE PRICE

JACOB JOHNSON

Freedom, contrary to the word from which it is derived, is not free. In fact, it is something that many people will give up all their hopes and dreams for, even with the possibility of never feeling the freedom themselves. Why would someone do this? If you don't get to reap the reward of something, then why labor towards it? This is because the person who doesn't get to experience the joys of freedom, hopes that one day his posterity will receive the results of what they worked so diligently for. This is a selfless act. But a common phenomenon that occurs when you just give things to people without making them work for it is that they don't appreciate it as much and will treat it with contempt. The Preamble of the Constitution states, "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union... secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity..." (Madison 64). In my opinion, the words "Secure the Blessings of Liberty"

should be changed to "Secure the opportunity to merit the Blessings of Liberty." This changes the preamble from people just naturally having the blessings of freedom, to people having to earn it. If there can be a way to make people earn their freedom, the people who respect and desire their freedom will be the ones who remain in this country.

The first way to get someone to appreciate something is to show them what it's like without that thing. This follows the principle that if you never feel sad, then you can never feel happy. So if you start a person off with a tyrannical lifestyle, when the day comes that they finally earn their full-fledged freedom, they will do whatever it takes to never return to tyranny. But how can one earn their freedom? The founding fathers and the soldiers that fought in the Revolutionary War earned their freedom by breaking away from Britain to establish a new nation. This isn't a practical method to

use every time one person wants to earn their freedom, but you could do things such as requiring each person to serve time in the military, or require them to do a number of service hours for others. These things could work because it makes the person serve their country, and strive to make it a better place before it is required to serve them. Whatever the trial may be, it would have to be strenuous enough to filter out the dedicated people from the apathetic ones, but it must also be somewhat feasible so that those who really want their freedom can work hard to earn it.

However, once someone has earned their freedom, there must be a punishment for those who disrespect others, so that there will be a continual drive for them to respect other people's freedoms. Your freedoms should not impede upon other people's freedoms. What's the point of earning your freedom if someone can immediately take it away from you? That is what government is for. Government is there to allow people to maintain their freedom without having to fret about what other people could do to them. Simultaneously, the people must keep a sure reign upon the government, so that it doesn't begin abusing its power. But for all of these things to work smoothly, you need good people. Apathetic people will let the government takeover, and will result in tyranny. Controlling people will want to control others. Therefore, this will result in tyranny as well. But like Ida B. Wells-Barnett says, "It is a well-established principle of law that every wrong has a remedy" (Wells-Barnett 14). So if you get people who value their freedom, and are willing to labor to secure it, then they will keep the government in check, so that it can protect their freedoms.

What is the end result of a country that is full of people who value freedom? Prosperity. When people are free to seek out their own endeavors without being burdened with heavy taxing, or having the government tell them what to do, they will do great things. In

America, there was a 5000 year leap supposedly between now and when this country started. This is believed to have happened because of America's free enterprise. You could invent things and reap its rewards, you could work hard and become wealthy, and you could get an education so that you could live a prosperous life. This kind of opportunity was scarcely heard of. So, many people flooded into America to find a better life. They knew what it was like to not be free, and they wanted to be free. As a result, many immigrants came to America and supported it in its attempt to become a great nation. Nowadays, though, many who come to America, don't necessarily have America's success at heart. They come and take advantage of health benefits, welfare, and basically live off of the laborers. People are heavily taxed. Large percentages of their income are taken by the government in order to help it support unnecessary organizations. All of these things are caused because people don't realize what is happening to their precious freedom. But in truth, a lot of them probably don't even care. All that matters to them is that they get their welfare check at the end of the month. All of these issues are caused because freedom was given freely, and not earned.

Freedom must not be free. Like anything else in the world, if there is not a high demand for something, it will have very little value. Free freedom becomes invaluable to people just like everything else. One must pay the price for freedom. However, the changes I have suggested are too much for today's world to accept. Too many apathetic people who don't want to work, reside in America, and have more say in politics than those who want America and its freedom to thrive. As individuals though, we must do what we can to make this world a better place. As Ronald Reagan said, "If we fail, at least let our children and our children's children say of us we justified our brief moment here. We did all that could be done" (Reagan 147).

FREEDOM IS GOLDEN

MORGAN FOLLETT

Freedom is a significant aspect in life. Though freedom is an essential and broad concept, it needs to be earned. Its value is large and is treasured. There are many examples of this specified throughout history. Ultimately, the concept brings learning experiences in which affects how things are improved to keep future generations on track. History paves a path for the future. All choices have a consequence; beneficial or detrimental.

Well-known individuals from history are people that we have learned from. They also learned from themselves. George Washington is one of many figures that played a role in our nation's foundation. He helped establish our nation when he led many other people to fight alongside him for freedom. He dreamt of something new, a new experience, to separate from a controlling power. Later in time, Thomas Jefferson highlights this by saying, "Dependence begets subservience and venality, suffocates the germ of virtue, and prepares fit tools for the design of ambition. . . ." (Jefferson 112). With faith, Jefferson knew he'd be able to get through and accomplish his goals of establishing freedom in our nation. Whenever we have confidence in doing something, in turn we have that experience flow smoother and more effectively.

With freedom, life is unlimited. Unfortunately, freedom is often taken for granted. We should take advantage of our never-ending freedom and use it in the most effective way. We should always have gratitude for this blessing. It seems that with freedom, more blessings are attained gained. Freedom brings consequences due to our own faults, and this allows us to experiment and find the most effective choice in a challenging situation. Opportunities open for exploration exploring and the freedom of allowing this is true happiness as we all find our way to individual joy happiness. Even though the first thought of freedom would create instant excitement, we need to be responsible and try to act upon our mistakes not by ignoring them, letting them slip past our minds, but to allow them to influence us.

With the freedom, we have countless things we can do. We have freedom of speech, religion, and we can state our opinions without restraint. Individuals are recognized more when there's more freedom because there is no controlling power. Ultimately, with the controlling power, they build up their influence in not allowing their people to rule themselves. Every individual has a significant part of building the nation by simple choices. A puzzle is not complete without the individual pieces. Ralph Waldo Emerson stated, "Life is a dictionary...I learn immediately from any speaker how much he has already lived, through the poverty or the splendor of his speech" (Emerson 132). Life has a purpose and it should be fulfilled; in America, it's very simple to do so that. Throughout history, learning about the past is very humbling as well as and meaningful, because our generation is able to learn from it and influence future generations. As citizens of the United States of America, we all have a part in this country. This is because if the freedom isn't preserved, then it will fade away into dust. Everyone is responsible for including themselves in order to contribute to building success.

I have a personal experience leading to an individual freedom to express myself, as in America, we are lucky to have that freedom and I'm particularly thankful. I have major hearing losses in both ears. In fact, I'm near being completely deaf. I'm thankful for the amazing technology that created hearing aids that allow me to listen to others around me. Because I was able to hear in my younger years, I wasn't able to communicate my best when I received my hearing aids. This made me eligible to go to a private school that gave me "a voice"; not just to speak, but to communicate. It was frustrating for me to not hear and talk, so it must be frustrating for countries that don't have freedoms like us, especially lacking the freedom of speech. Jefferson stated once that we need to stick with our principles and not fall away from them. Falling from your morals is never suitable because it's like falling away from your purpose of life, therefore not knowing what to do in life any longer. I'm

thankful for a personal experience similar to this concept. We all are able to express our opinions and apply our own knowledge and beliefs to being a part of this country and being beneficial to it.

Additionally, it really means a lot that we have freedom to choose among the many other freedoms we possess endure. Becoming one united nation, God was on the citizens' side because he wanted to allow them to have the experience of building a free nation, which was is part of his plan. There is a quote that I really honor that reflects this: "I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past" (Henry 30). Religious freedom impacted individuals' further happiness because religion provided personal happiness. Also, the freedom of choice for the country's leaders is a remarkable thing. When it allows the people of the country to choose their own leaders, it makes the people more confident in their decision. As the candidates gain office by being voted in by the majority, they are likely to be a worthy candidate.

There are numerous things that are allowed and not fully limited like in other nations around the world. Having a higher education, according to their own desires, is limited for girls and women. Unfortunately, a couple of those countries are Afghanistan and China.

Without education, my life and many others' lives would be very different and less effective. Education is the key to the mind. Our minds' have a large capacity to be filled, but not when it is limited, and where those who rule us are selfish unto themselves of freedom. Also, Saudi Arabia restricts females from driving for religious reasons. This conflicts with being able to travel to their indicated destination at any time. Though men were allowed to drive them, they weren't always available because of their profession. Previously in America, women were viewed as less capable, but in reality everyone's intelligent despite their own beliefs. Men and women have equal rights in America as all people are valued.

Freedom is a valued privilege in life. Freedom must is always fought for and defended by many citizens. America has a special meaning to it as freedom was recognized by people in the past and treasured. Through freedom, a variety of circumstances are available to people and mistakes are learned from. This can guide future generations and influence them to do the good that we have done because of many people before us including the builders of our nation. Are your choices constructive or counterproductive?

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