



Heritage Academy's

# INDEPENDENCE

February 2015

THE PATRICK HENRY EDITION

## **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.*

## **Staff**

Editor-in-Chief

Kyle Cloud, *Class of 2015*

Head of Submissions

Kathryn Hill, *Class of 2016*

Head of Reviews/Public Relations

Sarah West, *Class of 2016*

Head of Design/IT

Ethan Berglund, *Class of 2016*

Board of Reviews

Kate Price, *Class of 2016*

Daniel Pang, *Class of 2017*

Diana Harms, *Class of 2016*

Laura Pang, *Class of 2016*

Presiding Faculty

Cara M. Palmer M. Ed.

Assistant Faculty

Melanie Hale

Janette Patch

## **Table of Contents**

*Freedom Through Self-Discipline*

Rebecca Stapley, Class of 2016

*Why Stand We Here Idle?*

Samuel Reynolds, Class of 2017

*Once Upon a Time*

Diana Harms, Class of 2016

*Take a Stand*

Sarah Taylor, Class of 2015

### **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 fortunates 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.

# Freedom Through Self-Discipline

## Rebecca Stapley

When my descendants are looking back, when they are wandering the cavernous alcoves of history, when they wonder at the past existence of which I was once a part, let it not be said that I did nothing. Let it not be said that my hands were still and my voice was silent. Let it not be said that I sat motionless as time, life, and history ran its course—that as time grew old, life pressed continuously forward, and history was etched onto paper, into minds, into hearts—that I not once played a part in the change that would befall me, the change that would befall my future.

Let it instead be said that I was a hero—a hero who conquered the villainous silence that corrupts intelligent minds and murders truth. Let it be said that I destroyed the vicious cycle of immobility and ignorance. Let this utterance be written across history, engraved into the glass that holds the sands of time so that many lives may be changed, so that many others will take up their titles and fight for their own liberation from limitation, incarceration, suppression, and subordination.

I do not mean to say vainly that I grace them with my voice. I am no better than they in the sense that “all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights” (Declaration). That truth is self-evident. But there is one truth that defies the laws of common sense, a truth one must dig deeply into the roots of their heritage and the base of their foundation to find: no man is incompetent of his own freedom. Ronald Reagan (40th American President) said in his first inaugural address on January 20, 1981, “We, as Americans, have the capacity now, as we have had in the past, to do whatever needs to be done to preserve this last and greatest bastion of freedom” (Reagan 147).

Every man is capable of this end, but it cannot be given him. Our founding fathers created a system—a system in which all men must govern themselves in order to attain freedom. This is why I say I do not grace others with my voice. I mean to present this conjecture, naked in the open air, that nothing can be graced with this silence.

The American Constitution did not write itself; there was a hand involved. The American flag did not sew itself; there were hands involved. The Statue of Liberty did not build itself, nor did the national anthem, “The Star Spangled Banner”, write itself; there were hands involved. In every aspect of American freedom,

there are more than mere voices. Political silence is not defined merely by the lack of sound, but also by the lack of action. We are told that we can make a change, but the importance of that conjecture is too often untold: how. The how is not hidden, not difficult to find, if we diligently seek for it. To wrought a change in the world, we must first make a change in ourselves.

Ronald Reagan also stated that “putting America back to work means putting all Americans back to work” (Reagan 148). The reason why America was so great in the past was because a sense of intimacy in this drive towards freedom constituted every man to look within themselves for his own power, independent of federal contribution and grant. People found strength in themselves through their work as citizens, and there they found their own personal freedom. We cannot expect to rely on welfare. We cannot expect to rely on the pocket change of America’s treasury. Welfare soon becomes a crutch as others jump on the wagon and America no longer has the strength and support to provide for all their needs. Much like a teeter-totter in an elementary school playground, if you take weight from the side of working citizens and add it to the lazy, self-centered side, the former becomes lighter and the latter becomes heavier. The balance is disrupted and soon the working end stands high in the air, unable to support the other end. In a good nation, the working citizens’ end should always be planted firmly into the ground.

How was freedom conceived so long ago? Calvin Coolidge (30th American President) said in a speech on July 5, 1926 in commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence that “a people had arisen determined to make every necessary sacrifice for the support of these truths” (Coolidge 66). These truths were that all men are created equal, freedom is attainable, and morality is important in law. They are the same today as they were in this nation’s yesterdays, but sometimes we are blind to the truth. We deny ourselves this freedom because of doubt, because of greed, and because of our unwillingness to govern ourselves. It is easy to sit back and let others come up with the answers, but we will never learn that way. It is easy to sit back and let a garden grow, but it will never survive that way. It is easy to sit back and let the nation grow, but it will never succeed that way. It is by careful observance and by determination that something becomes so great, and it is by this same road that it

continues to be that way. Success is hard and failure is easy, but in every struggle we find our strength, our accomplishment, and our knowledge.

Time has found a gradual change in the wrong direction of freedom as many have abused the freedom their founding fathers have laid out for them. It is ripe for the taking, but we must work to keep it alive. Although the tracks behind us turn gradually into the wrong path, we must make a sharp turn back to the main road if we expect freedom to last. Martin Luther King Jr. (American pastor, activist, humanitarian, and leader) said in a speech during a march to Washington D.C. on August 28, 1963, "This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism" (King 135). A fisherman at sea knows that to keep his tackle in working order, he must clean and prepare it daily. This keeps the salty spray from clogging up the gears and immobilizing the reel. Tackle left too long unattended becomes inoperative and unproductive. If the fisherman notices this abuse, he will be quick to take it all apart, mending it and cleaning it thoroughly for the next use. If he doesn't take it all apart, taking care to minor detail, there will still be gears left untended. If the fisherman expects to gradually clean and gradually begin caring for his tackle, it will never be of use.

Martin Luther King Jr. also said, "We cannot walk alone." Although every man must take care to his own self-discipline and his own self-government, it is also important that we stand together on this, for there is no greater calling. A man cannot fight for freedom alone. There is a need for us to be compassionate, responsive, and caring to others. There is a duty for us, in our protection of freedom, to protect others who hold part of that freedom in their own hands. On September 19, 1796, George Washington spoke to the people of America in his farewell address, saying, "You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together: the independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint counsels, and joint efforts of common dangers, sufferings, and successes" (Washington 89). As we suffer for our freedom, our fellow men are right there beside us, suffering, though many do not realize it yet.

Patrick Henry, an American attorney, planter, and politician, stated in his final speech on March 4, 1799,

*"Oh! Thus be it ever when freedom shall stand  
Between their loved home and the war's desolation!  
Blest with victory and peace, may the heav'n rescued land  
Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation.  
That conquer we must, when our cause it is just,*

"United we stand, divided we fall" (Auster). He did not mean that we should always agree with each other, for that is impossible. He understood the importance of compromise, and he didn't mean just by settling differences by mutual concessions. There is another way to compromise that doesn't involve words. We can all compromise together by all striving to maintain a personal self-discipline and self-government. We all know we have differences, so there will always be disputations and arguments. The way we can all stay united is to work and prepare ourselves. We can learn to learn, learn to develop, learn to grow, and learn to do the right thing when the majority stands against us. Mrs. Palmer, a teacher of American History, said in a lesson on April 29, 2014, "Make a mark in each other's hearts. Be that memory."

Many do not realize how our nation has fallen. But some do. Franklin D. Roosevelt stated in an undelivered address he prepared for Jefferson Day on April 13, 1945, "Today we have learned in the agony of war that great power involves great responsibility." Those that understand the pressures and captivity in America have a duty to open the minds of the many around them, even to cut the ties with which the people have established a welfare system from their federal government. Man must take up a cause for freedom, a title of liberty that will fly over the highest peaks of America saying, much like Martin Treptow, a soldier of the western front, said, "America must win this war. Therefore, I will work, I will save, I will sacrifice, I will endure, I will fight cheerfully and do my utmost, as if the issue of the whole struggle depended on me alone" (Reagan 151).

This is the day, my friends. This is the day we take up a title of liberty and a badge of courage. This is the day we take freedom into our own hands. We cannot wait until tomorrow, for the time is already late. Our knowledge is our weapon and our shield is our principle. This will be our pledge, and with it we will stand against injustices, work for our own gain, till our own lands, and fight for our own freedom until at our ending days we can cry in a loud voice:

*And this be our motto: 'In God is our trust.'  
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!"* (Key 109)

---

## Why Stand We Here Idle? Samuel Reynolds

Defined in the Webster's Dictionary, freedom means: "The state of being free or at liberty rather than in confinement or under physical restraint." Over the years, the word freedom has seen many hardships, and has been present and nonexistent through the generations. What does this simple word mean to us today? Is it a word that is practically meaningless, in a country that was born because of it? Is there a possibility, in what will come as the darkest hours of our country, that we may rise up and reclaim what was once ours? Let us look at the facts, warnings, and admonitions given by the Founders, and truly decipher this question: "What does American freedom mean to you?"

One of the most inspiring orators during the Revolutionary War was Patrick Henry. In an address given at the Virginia Convention in 1775, he sounded this cry (emphasis added):

*There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free...if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained--we must fight! I repeat it, sir, we must fight!* (32)

In a world where many have forgotten the duties of a patriot, Henry perfectly points us in the right direction. Freedom requires action, not inaction. If the colonists were to gain independence from the British Crown, the Revolutionary War was the imminent course of action. The struggle for freedom was real, and only through the actions of those united with a purpose would success become reality. Emphasis on "Never" in the previous quotation is added to bring up a point. The Framers believed that the cause of ever-lasting liberty was an eternal one. Freedom could not simply be bought, traded for, or secured with ease. The same principle is constant today. Fighting for freedom is an eternal since the beginning of time, one that began long

ago, and one that will never end. For someone to abandon such a cause would be for them to succumb to submission and slavery. As Patrick Henry cried to the patriots of old, if we ever want to be free from oppression and tyranny today, then we must fight now! I second this motion!

When Washington was appointed as Commander of the Continental Army, he wrote to his wife regarding the matter. Among other things, his greatest desire was for her to be happy. He said, "But, as it has been a kind of destiny that has thrown me upon this Service, I shall hope that my undertaking of it, designed to answer some good purpose" (Washington 48). Though he wished to stay with his family, Washington knew he could not and would not "avoid this appointment." Unquestionably, many things in the world today distract us. Cell phones, the Internet, entertainment, etc. can cause us to lose sight of what matters most. The duty of every American citizen is to uphold and defend the Constitution, as the President and all elected officials swear to as they are put into office. We all have busy lives, and other things seem more important than going to political rallies, or meeting with state representatives to discuss current issues. The heroic leader of the Autobots, Optimus Prime, said the following: "Fate rarely calls upon us at a moment of our choosing." It may not be the most popular decision, or "best" thing to do with your time, but the fight for freedom is persistent. It does not have time to wait for others to join the ranks, and has to move forward with the army it has to fight. Fate calls upon each of us, and though we may not know it, we each have an essential role to play in the incessant battle for freedom. The time to join the ranks is now.

Before George Washington retired from his Presidency, he gave his famous farewell address. He delivered great counsel, and great words of wisdom that if followed, would guide this nation through even the most difficult of times. He advised:

Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing vows that heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence; that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free Constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained...It is worth a fair and full experiment. (82, 85)

Washington knew that if our country would follow this counsel, and try with all our might to maintain the free Constitution, that America would not falter. What does a free Constitution mean now? Is our Constitution today immune from attack, from forces both internal and external trying to break it down till nothing is left but a strand? As history has proven over and over again, the documents that govern America today have not always been followed, and that many do not realize that these documents are in danger. When we awaken and realize that the documents that established our free nation are hanging by mere threads, we will be better equipped to not only restore the Constitution to its full purpose, but bring America back to the Founders' intentions...free and independent.

"These are [indeed] the times that try men's souls" (Paine 50). There has never been a more true statement about the state of our world today. Left and right, evil is everywhere, and there has never been a time like today where liberty has been under such intense attack. There are many documents in our American History booklets that all lead to a common theme of liberty, freedom, and the struggle to maintain and preserve it. I could go on for pages and pages describing my feelings and thoughts of American Freedom, but my focus is towards you. What will YOU do? The times that

the Founders warned us about are already here. They are already upon us, and most of America is asleep. We need to be the ones to wake them up. When they awaken to a sense of their awful situation, they will understand their responsibilities in defending freedom. Liberty and responsibility are inseparable. It has been proven time and time again, and the longer I live, the longer I see that there are many responsibilities that are not accounted for, and many people who still need to wake up and work. As Patrick Henry posed, "Why stand we here idle?" (Henry 33). That is my question to our country. Why are WE standing idly by as our government becomes corrupt? Why are WE allowing OUR personal liberties and freedoms to be stripped away from us? Why are WE not putting up a fight? And, what are WE going to do about it? The answer is simple: fight back. We all need to be alert for corrupt government, throw them out, and institute those who will assuredly defend the liberty of all of us. Are you willing to join the noble fight? Or stand idly by and be held accountable when any shred of freedom you had is gone, you are tied up, and you have a gun aimed at your forehead? Citizens must realize how precious the gift of freedom is, and understand their divine duties to defend it, no matter the cost. In 2009, a band called "Sons of Liberty" released their debut album titled "Brush Fires of the Mind". One song, "Our Dying Republic", speaks my final message: Our lives should define freedom. Our lives, to live in our own way. Our lives must define freedom. Or will we let them take it away? RISE UP to define freedom. RISE UP, to live in your own way. RISE UP, to define freedom. Or will we let them take it away? Liberty or Tyranny? It's your choice to make.

---

## Once Upon A Time

### Diana Harms

Once upon a time, the words "The land of the free and the home of the brave" rang out through all of the states (Key 108). And once upon a time, these words held true. However, the test of time has proven almost too much for the people of the United States. Where is the patriotism that was once found in the hearts of all Americans? Where is the sense of responsibility to country that every man and woman once felt? Where have the true Americans gone? Americans once had the strongest loyalty to country of all the peoples in the

world. Yet, today there is something that sets this generation apart from that of those two or three generations previous. It is not technology. It is not medical advances. It is simply disloyalty, ignorance, and apathy. The United States was once a country of pride, action, and education. Since then, the country's ideals have not changed; the citizens have changed.

In early America, patriotism was allowed to and even encouraged to run rampant through the streets. In modern day America, patriotism is forgotten and pushed

off to the side. There was a time that if patriotism was not taught at home, “you could get a sense of patriotism from school. And if all else failed you could get a sense of patriotism from the popular culture. The movies celebrated democratic values and implicitly reinforced the idea that America was special. TV was like that, too, through the mid-sixties. But now...well-grounded patriotism is no longer the style” (Reagan). Moreover, few understand that patriotism is so much more than simply an emotion. It is not temporary. It is not idle. True patriotism is long-lasting and inspires action. The most influential patriots that America has ever known, the Founding Fathers, sought change because they loved their country. Patriotism turns the hearts of the people to their country. And a love of country creates loyal, hardworking citizens. You must choose to be patriotic. For the sake of this nation, allow your hearts to be changed. Love this country that has given you every freedom you have ever known. Protect it. And help to heal it.

Yet another undesirable quality that the American people have seemed to develop is ignorance. Ignorance is a funny thing: it is not a disease yet it plagues the nation; it is not a weapon yet it kills opportunity; it is not a fire but it spreads like one; it is not a strength but few see its weakness. The trouble with ignorance is the difficulty which lies in recognizing it within ourselves. It is impossible to fix a problem that has not been observed. The only solution to this dilemma is perpetual vigilance. If you are constantly checking yourself, you can see the problem and fix it before it’s too late. When you fix that problem, the possibilities for your influence on the nation are endless. However to fix such problem you must obtain not only knowledge of government, but a real understanding of government. And just as the pencil who is speaking in “I, Pencil” points out, “if you can become aware of the miraculousness which I symbolize, you can help save the freedom mankind is so unhappily losing” (Read 126). If we were to change this to read instead as, “if you can become aware of the miraculousness which you are capable of, you can help save the freedom mankind is so unhappily losing,” would you see your worth to this

nation? You are capable of amazing things. If you can become less ignorant in government and public concerns you will be a good citizen. But if you can become less ignorant too in your true capabilities, you can become a great citizen. When you fully rise above ignorance, you can truly become a force for good.

Perhaps the most terrible force plaguing the U.S. is apathy. People fail to defend their freedoms because they just don’t care. Good men and women empower government to slowly encircle them about by the chains of tyranny because they have allowed themselves to be lulled into a false sense of security. All the way back in 1958, W. Cleon Skousen noticed that “The biggest mistake of the West has been allowing itself to drift into a state of mental stagnation, apathy and inaction...Authorities say there is an urgent need for a revolutionary change in our state of mind” (119). If this was true in 1958, how much more true is it in our times? Apathy leads to passiveness which leads to enslavement. The person that does not care will fall prey to the government’s schemes and lying. On the other hand, the concerned citizen that will take the initiative to research such problems and find the truth for himself will gain protection. Imagine our nation consisting only of people who are always active in the protection of their freedoms: government could not force socialism upon us; government could not take responsibilities upon itself that the Constitution had not granted it; government could not suppress us. The responsibility for the continual

loss of freedom in the U.S. does not lie solely on the shoulders of government. Every citizen must accept at least partial responsibility for this tragic occurrence. After accepting that you had a part to play in the impairment to the American Dream, the responsibility falls to you to do what you can to repair it. You have something to care about. You are a citizen of a great nation that requires your aid to rise to where it once stood, tall and proud.

So many citizens of America do not understand what it means to be American. Being American goes far beyond citizenship. You are not a true American just because you live in America. Truly being American is a

*“Ignorance is a funny thing: it is not a disease yet it plagues the nation; it is not a weapon yet it kills opportunity; it is not a fire but it spreads like one; it is not a strength but few see its weakness.”*



choice. You must choose whether you will be a part of America or simply live in America. You must choose to travel the hard and lonely path that will preserve this country and all that it stands for or take the easy pass that will surely lead to slavery. Kennedy's words ring true even today, "It is time to act in the Congress, in your State and local legislative body and, above all, in all of our daily lives" (140). Our nation is headed down a path that we will soon be too far down to ever come back. We must act now. The time for waiting until we are older is long gone. Now is the time that we must begin our efforts to return America to her rightful place

as the "land of the free and the home of the brave" (Key 108). I echo the words that Reagan spoke at his first inaugural address over 30 years ago, "I believe we, the Americans of today, are ready to act worthy of ourselves, ready to do what must be done to ensure happiness and liberty for ourselves, our children and our children's children" (149). I implore you with all my heart to join me on a journey that will be hard but it will be worth it. Let us take back the freedoms that are ours hand in hand. I am only one person but I am ready to make a difference, are you?

---

## Take a Stand

### Sarah Taylor

In a book by Dr. Seuss, a creature called the Lorax says, "Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not." Unfortunately, many people don't care an awful lot about our degrading society. Instead of speaking up, they go with the flow and try to blend in with their peers. This is a danger to both the community and to the nation. Our situation will not improve unless we have individuals who will stand up and become strong leaders who care enough to take action. During the American Revolution, many individuals arose who fit this description. Some were politicians, some were military leaders, some were orators, and some were writers. Only a few men claim all of these titles. One such man had a rough start as a young lawyer in Virginia. In an important court argument, his poor delivery embarrassed both himself and his family. Once he became a member of the House of Burgesses, however, he began voicing his opinions with both confidence and eloquence. Thus began the political career of Patrick Henry. Soon, Henry became best known for his skills as an orator. Through powerful speeches that articulated his firm Anti-Federalist viewpoints, Patrick Henry was able to rally his fellow politicians to take action as they began to create the United States of America.

Before the War for Independence began, Patrick Henry resisted the oppressive rule of Great Britain and endeavored to convince the House of Burgesses to preserve American freedom. Like his Anti-Federalist contemporaries, Henry was opposed to the structure of a strong central government ("Antifederalists"). When the British Parliament imposed the Stamp Act on the

American colonies, Henry was one of the first to speak out against this unfair tax. In the first of his seven Resolutions Against the Stamp Act, Henry wrote that, "the Taxation of the People by themselves, or by Persons chosen by themselves to represent them, who can only know what Taxes the People are able to bear... and must themselves be affected by every Tax laid upon the People, is the only Security against a burdensome Taxation" ("Patrick Henry's Resolutions"). This argument was found throughout his seven resolutions. The people, he reasoned, are the only ones which can properly determine a fair tax; they are also the only ones that should possess the power to tax. A ruler or group of rulers across the ocean has no power to impose a tax on a people without their consent. In his third resolution, Henry boldly stated that "every Attempt to vest such Authority in any other Person or Persons whatsoever, has a Manifest Tendency to Destroy AMERICAN FREEDOM" ("Patrick Henry's Resolutions"). By "any other Person or Persons," Henry meant any ruler or group of people other than the self-instituted government of the colonies. These people have a "Manifest Destiny to Destroy", meaning that they would take away the freedoms of the Americans. These ideas and resolutions were presented as speeches to the other burgesses, and Henry's initial address to the House created quite an uproar. The older burgesses had hoped to pass the Stamp Act quickly and without much debate, so they completely ignored Henry's objections. Still, Henry was ultimately able to gain favor with many of the other members. In the words of Edmund Randolph, "They rallied around the man who was one of themselves, and

who showed himself able to cope with the ablest of the old leaders" (Uncer 37).

Although many politicians disagreed with Henry's adamant stance against the Stamp Act, Henry was able to argue his views successfully and persuasively enough that four of his resolutions were passed by the House of Burgesses. All seven resolutions were also "printed and distributed to other colonies" ("Patrick Henry." Biography.com). As many of the colonists and other leaders began to agree with Henry's written resolutions against the unpopular Stamp Act, they added their support to the cause of the war. Because of the power of his language and the strength of his ideas, Patrick Henry's Virginia Stamp Act Resolutions of 1765 are "commonly referred to as one of the significant causes of the Revolutionary War" ("Who"). In fact, many sources agree that "His Stamp Act Resolutions were, arguably, the first shot fired in the Revolutionary War" (Kindig). The colonists rebelled more in the following years as more unfair laws and taxes were imposed upon them, including the Townshend Acts and the Tea Act. These led to other main events such as the Boston Tea Party, which was an open rebellion against the Tea Act. Because Patrick Henry had spoken out so blatantly, others were emboldened to think and act in ways that were considered treasonous. Henry's courageous words as a young politician spurred other members of the House of Burgesses to unite as they defied Great Britain in order to maintain the rights and freedoms that the American colonies desperately desired.

Ten years later, the country was indeed on the verge of war, and Henry was one of the primary protagonists of the revolution. The crisis between America and Great Britain was intense, and while many Americans wanted to maintain peace and resolve the issues through diplomatic means, others insisted that America must go to war. In the Virginia Convention, Henry rose to his feet amidst a heated debate and gave a rousing speech. He ended with a resounding call to action in perhaps his most famous words: "Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!" (Henry, "Liberty") This was a very emotional appeal to his audience. Henry used imagery: the peace they were trying to maintain was "purchased at the price of chains and slavery." This brought others to see the true danger of the situation. Next he incorporated a religious reference, paraphrasing the words of the Biblical prophet Joshua. Each realizes the opportunity of choice, and both Joshua and Patrick

Henry end in a firm resolve. Henry's cry is "give me liberty, or give me death!" This brave command portrays Henry's conviction and patriotism; it also penetrated his listeners. In this speech, he also argued that the only way to resolve the problems with the mother country was through war. He asked, "Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years" (Henry, "Liberty"). Great Britain, he stated, had already begun to wage war on the American colonies. They had inflicted so many injuries, both in government acts and in violence, said Henry, that there was no other option but war. That day, the delegates voted on whether they should respond through peaceful means or military resistance. Those who agreed with Henry won the vote, and several militia groups were soon dispatched. Henry's speech became legendary, and "in every county across the state, men and boys sewed the words 'Liberty or death' on their shirt fronts and rode to their country courthouses to join local militias and fight the British" (Uncer 100). Henry appealed to ethos, pathos, and logos as he reasoned using words of fire. These words united many of the delegates, resulting in the vote that would begin the war.

Patrick Henry also encouraged the other colonists to look to the Creator as the author of their independence. Through powerful language, he was able to effectively portray his belief that God would help them both to fight the war and to form their government. In 1775 he proclaimed, "we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the desires of nations, and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us" (Henry, "Liberty"). While many were doubtful that the American forces could beat out the mighty British forces, Henry was positive that the help of their God would be sufficient to provide victory. Still, he recognized the immense advantage of the British forces. But this only added to his vigorous statement: "We must fight! An appeal to arms and the God of Hosts is all that is left us!" (Liberty) Certainly the colonists were much weaker than Englishmen in their influence on the government. The only way for them to overcome the oppressive forces from across the sea was to call upon God for help, said Henry. This struck his audience members in a way that combined patriotism with religion. James P. Byrd, associate dean at Vanderbilt University, points out, "Colonists fought the Revolutionary War in a society in which the Bible was the most read, owned, and respected book." By encouraging his Christian colleagues to appeal to their God, Henry was able to carry his convictions with added support.

In 1787, the Americans, now independent from Great Britain, drafted a Constitution, but Henry's absence from the Philadelphia Convention prohibited Henry from further conveying his ideas to the other delegates. When governor Edmund Randolph invited Patrick Henry to participate in the federal constitutional convention, Henry actually refused to attend (Uncer 186). In later letters, he expressed his concern that the Constitution would prove to be tyrannical, destroying the country. He said it was "the most fatal plan that could possibly be conceived to enslave a free people" (qtd. in "Patrick Henry: Fight"). For this reason, he would not support or participate in such meetings. When he later received a copy of the drafted Constitution, Henry wrote to Washington, "I cannot bring my mind in accord with the proposed Constitution. The concern I feel on this account is really greater than I am able to express" (qtd. in Uncer 199). Henry believed that the new Constitution would take the rights away from the people and place the power in the government. This concern reflected the concerns of the other Anti-Federalists, who considered the Constitution incomplete.

As an Anti-Federalist leader in the Virginia Ratifying Convention, Henry argued viewpoints that were highly critical of the new Constitution. Like many in the Convention, Henry would not approve a constitution that lacked a Bill of Rights. In a speech in the Virginia Convention, Henry began: "Mr. Chairman, the necessity of a bill of rights appears to me to be greater in this government than ever it was in any government before" ("Bill of Rights"). The Constitution must not be adopted in its present form, he exclaimed. It must first be amended to secure the rights of the states and the people. Amendments, said Henry, "secure the dearest rights of human nature" ("Amendments Needed"). Without power in the people, he worried, the president could easily seize power over rights not provided by the Constitution. He also tried to discourage the states from ratifying the Constitution in its present state: "Every possible opportunity of procuring amendments is gone," he said, "...if we ratify unconditionally" ("Amendments Needed"). He insisted that doing so would be "dangerous to liberty" and lead to the death of "so great a nation" ("Bill of Rights"). His passionate cries from the floor of the Convention met with resounding yells and whoops of agreement. Journalist and historian Harlow Giles Uncer reports:

Henry would not be silenced.  
After proposing a rapid-fire series of

amendments, including a bill of rights, his voice rose to a crescendo as he called upon God's wrath to punish the authors of the Constitution... Lightning struck the ground outside, then an explosion of thunder shook the entire hall. Henry closed his eyes and lifted his face to the heavens, as his ghostly words continued echoing through the chamber: "I see it! I feel it!" And the heavens responded with another bolt of lightning and a jolt of thunder... The lion of liberty had summoned the very heavens to set men free of government tyranny. (230)

Henry's arguments were ultimately successful in part: Federalist leader James Madison was compelled to commit to the addition of a bill of rights, but only once the Constitution was approved. With these promises, the Virginia Convention decided to ratify the Constitution ("Patrick Henry Biography"). Although Henry was not the only statesman to compel the Federalists to comply, "James Madison regarded Patrick Henry as the greatest threat to ratification by Virginia" ("Patrick Henry: Voice"). And although Patrick Henry never supported the final Constitution, 10 amendments were ratified and took effect in 1791, three years after the Virginia Ratifying Convention had met (Carey).

Shakespeare said, "Cowards die many times before their deaths; the valiant never taste of death but once." Patrick Henry died but once, in 1799. Through his life, he had never shown any cowardice; instead, he had been a valiant patriot who spoke up even in the face of death. Before America was an independent nation, his bold speeches could be considered treason, punishable by the most cruel forms of death. In the years that followed America's independence, "Patrick Henry was arguably the leading and most influential member of the Anti-Federalist Party" ("Who"). His words brought others to see his way of thinking and feel the passion of his patriotism. This country needs patriots today who will stand up for the freedoms that men like Patrick Henry worked so hard to institute and preserve. Only by speaking out can we protect ourselves and future generations. As our national anthem states, "Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just!" (Key). Patrick Henry is proof that one voice can make a difference. Let us shrug off the chains of apathy and stand up for our convictions.

## Works Cited

### Freedom Through Self Discipline

- "Declaration of Independence." The Charters of Freedom: "A New World Is at Hand." NARA, n.d. Web. 5 May 2014.
- Reagan, Ronald. "First Inaugural Address." Reading for Scholars of American History: Semester 2. Comp. Cara Palmer. Mesa: Heritage Academy, 2013. 147-152. Print.
- Coolidge, Calvin. "The Inspiration of the Declaration." Reading for Scholars of American History: Semester 2. Comp. Cara Palmer. Mesa: Heritage Academy, 2013. 64-74. Print.
- King, Martin Luther, Jr. "I Have a Dream." Reading for Scholars of American History: Semester 2. Comp. Cara Palmer. Mesa: Heritage Academy, 2013. 134-139. Print.
- Washington, George. "Washington's Farewell Address." Reading for Scholars of American History: Semester 2. Comp. Cara Palmer. Mesa: Heritage Academy, 2013. 85-103. Print.
- Auster, Lawrence. "Patrick Henry's Last Speech." View from the Right. N.p., n.d. Web. 5 May 2014.
- Palmer, Cara. Heritage Academy. Heritage Academy, Mesa. 29 Apr. 2014. Lecture.
- Franklin D. Roosevelt: "Undelivered Address Prepared for Jefferson Day." April 13, 1945. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project. Web. 5 May 2014
- Key, Francis Scott. "The Star-Spangled Banner." Reading for Scholars of American History: Semester 2. Comp. Cara Palmer. Mesa: Heritage Academy, 2013. 108-109. Print.

### Why Stand We Here Idle?

- Henry, Patrick. "Give Me Liberty, or Give Me Death." Reading for Scholars of American History: Semester 1. Comp. Cara Palmer. Mesa: Heritage Academy, 2013. 29-33. Print.
- Paine, Thomas. "The Crisis." Reading for Scholars of American History: Semester 1. Comp. Cara Palmer. Mesa: Heritage, Academy, 2013. 49-51. Print.
- Sons of Liberty. "Our Dying Republic." Brush Fires of the Mind. 2009. CD.
- Washington, George. "George Washington to Martha Washington." Reading for Scholars of American History: Semester 1. Comp. Cara Palmer. Mesa: Heritage Academy, 2013. 48-49. Print.
- Washington, George. "Washington's Farewell Address." Reading for Scholars of American History: Semester 1. Comp. Cara Palmer. Mesa: Heritage Academy, 2013. 80-98. Print.

### Once Upon a Time

- Kennedy, John F. "Civil Rights Address." Readings for Scholars of American History: Semester 2. Comp. Cara Palmer. Mesa: Heritage Academy, 2014. 139-141. Print.
- Key, Francis Scott. "The Star-Spangled Banner." Readings for Scholars of American History: Semester 1. Comp. Cara Palmer. Mesa: Heritage Academy, 2013. 108-109. Print.
- Read, Leonard E. "I, Pencil." Readings for Scholars of American History: Semester 2. Comp. Cara Palmer. Mesa: Heritage Academy, 2014. 126-132. Print.
- Reagan, Ronald. "Farewell Address to the Nation," January 11, 1989. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project.
- Reagan, Ronald. "First Inaugural Address." Readings for Scholars of American History: Semester 2. Comp. Cara Palmer. Mesa: Heritage Academy, 2014. 147-152. Print.
- Skousen, W. Cleon. "The Psychological War Against America." Readings for Scholars of American History: Semester 2. Comp. Cara Palmer. Mesa: Heritage Academy, 2014. 119-124. Print.

### Take a Stand

- "Antifederalists." Ushistory.org. U.S. History: Pre-Columbian to the New Millenium, 2014. Web. 3 May 2014.
- Byrd, James P. "Was the American Revolution a holy war?" washingtonpost.com. Washington Post, 5 Jul 2013. Web. 5 May 2014.
- Carey, George. "Bill of Rights." teacher.scholastic.com. Scholastic, 2003. Web. 5 May 2014.
- Geisel, Theodor Seuss. The Lorax. New York: Random House, 1971. Print.
- Henry, Patrick. "Amendments Needed." constitution.org. N.p., n.d. Web. 3 May 2014.
- Henry, Patrick. "Bill of Rights." constitution.org. N.p., n.d. Web. 3 May 2014.
- Henry, Patrick. "Liberty or Death." patrickhenrycenter.com. Patrick Henry Center For Individual Liberty. N.p., n.d. Web. 3 May 2014.
- Key, Francis Scott. "Star Spangled Banner." USA-flag-site.org. USA Flag Site, n.d. Web. 4 May 2014.
- Kindig, Thomas. "Patrick Henry." Ushistory.org. U.S. History: Pre-Columbian to the New Millenium, 2014. Web. 3 May 2014.
- "Patrick Henry Biography." Billofrightsinstitute.org. Bill of Rights Institute, 2010. Web. 3 May 2014.
- "Patrick Henry." Biography.com. N.p., 2014. Web. 3 May 2014.
- "Patrick Henry: Fight Against the Constitution." 123HelpMe.com. 123HelpMe, 2013. Web. 3 May 2014.
- "Patrick Henry's Resolutions Against the Stamp Act." redhill.org. Red Hill Patrick Henry National Memorial, n.d. Web. 5 May 2014.
- "Patrick Henry: Voice of the American Revolution." redhill.org. Red Hill Patrick Henry National Memorial, n.d. Web. 5 May 2014.
- Shakespeare. "The Tragedy of Julius Caesar." opensourceshakespeare.org. Open Source Shakespeare, n.d. Web. 5 May 2014.
- Uncer, Harlow Giles. Lion of Liberty: Patrick Henry And The Call To A New Nation. Cambridge: Da Capo, 2010. Print.
- "Who is Patrick Henry." Constitution.laws.com. Laws.com, 2013. Web. 3 May 2014.



I KNOW NOT WHAT COURSE OTHERS MAY  
TAKE; BUT AS FOR ME, GIVE ME LIBERTY, OR  
GIVE ME DEATH!



**HERITAGE ACADEMY**  
*"Building America's Heroes"*