

Volume I, Issue 1 – Fall 2016

MENTOR

JOHN ADAMS ACADEMY FACULTY ACADEMIC JOURNAL



Appreciation of our National Heritage

John Adams 
ACADEMY

MENTOR is the faculty journal of John Adams Academy. The purpose of this journal is to uncover the alliance between the enduring pathways of Classical curricula and the timeless guideposts of our Ten Core Values. As educators and members of an intellectual community that inherits and relates a legacy of truth, wisdom, and beauty, we perceive the abundance in each contribution to the Great Conversation.

We take our name from the complementary sources of the Latin word *mens, mentis* (mind, thought, intention) and the Homeric character Mentor (Μέντωρ), to whom great Odysseus entrusted care of his home and family, and in the guise of whom the goddess Athena gave counsel to the young Telemachus. The former origin recalls our human tradition of sentience, the latter our divine duties of love and loyalty. Taken together, the essence of mentoring is sharing with others the beauty and truth that has fallen to us.

Each issue, *Mentor* invites all John Adams Academy faculty to examine how particular Core Values, on a rotating basis, are expressed within the very texts, histories, artifacts, mathematics, sciences etc. that we uncover with our scholars. Whether the themes be humble, aimed for the heart of the youngest child, or rich and complex and intended for the minds of the mature and wise, the legacy of the classics and the presence of Ten Core Values offer invaluable insight into life.



John Adams Academy, founded in 2010, is Northern California's only tuition-free, TK-12 classical leadership education charter school. Its main campus, located in Roseville, serves more than 1300 scholars and two more campuses are planned to open in Lincoln and El Dorado Hills in 2017.

John Adams Academy is restoring America's heritage by developing servant-leaders who are keepers and defenders of the principles of freedom for which our Founding Fathers pledged their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor. By combining classical education with servant leadership training and core values, John Adams Academy develops scholars who are leaders in their homes, communities and country. Through classics, mentoring, and modeling, scholars are inspired to prepare for their unique mission and will naturally hunger for oncoming responsibilities and future contributions in society. They are the change that is needed in the world.

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Message from the Founder

By Dean Forman, Ph.D.

The United States of America is exceptional among all the nations of the world. Unlike other nations founded on a shared culture or language, America was built upon several core principles that have become a force for good in the world, including 1) liberty, 2) equality under the law, 3) natural rights, 4) consent of the people, and 5) limited government. Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and property are not the products of men or governments making laws. These rights exist and emanate from a higher power.

Scholars at John Adams Academy recognize that these core principles form the organic documents of our founding. They are taught to understand how they developed throughout history from the literary and philosophical traditions of not only Judeo/Christian era, but also within Classical Hellenistic and Roman periods, and throughout the Middle Ages. So important are these that they include the ideas tantamount to the importance of human freedom as ferreted out of the periods of the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, Romanticism, Neoclassicism, and Existentialism. Our scholars seek to incorporate core American principles in their own lives and to promote them in their communities. They know America's history and the great men and women who played key



Dean Forman, along with his wife Linda, founded John Adams Academy in 2010. He currently serves as Chairman of the Board of Trustees and mentors scholars in a variety of subjects including constitutional studies.

roles in its founding and development. Scholars love their country and show respect for its traditions and national symbols.

This heritage is a legacy of pioneers and patriots, who have sacrificed their lives to protect the rights of all Americans, regardless of their nationality, race, religion, or cultural background. Furthermore, their dedication was to protect life and vouchsafe for all the inalienable presence of laws and safety measures that guarantee the longevity of life. Manifestations of patriotism are found in the Pledge of Allegiance, our National Anthem, and holidays that remember our heroes and ancestral roots. Equally important to these rights are responsibilities that require all to be participatory citizens in this democratic republic of self-government.

Message from the Headmaster

By Heather Brown

As a young child, I remember dragging a dining chair across the linoleum floor and placing it alongside the kitchen sink. This perch provided the ideal vantage point for me to view a miraculous transformation as my granny polished her silver for the holiday festivities to come. Each piece carefully inspected, each instrument vigorously scrubbed, all with a careful rinsing. Through my eyes of a child, the restoration was nothing short of magical. I often wondered, what would require so much care? What was the value that needed restoring? What was the original luster of something forged so perfectly for its intended purpose?



Heather Brown was one of the first teachers to join the faculty at John Adams Academy in 2010, teaching 4th grade. In 2013 she became the Dean of Elementary Education and in 2015 the Headmaster where she continues to serve today.

Now that I have matured I understand that restoring something first requires that we find the true meaning of its value. Why would you restore something fleeting or a decaying object beyond repair? Our nation was founded on principles that have withstood the test of time. These enduring truths provide the blessings of liberty, justice, equality and freedom to the citizens of our republic.

In a letter to James Monroe in 1785, Thomas Jefferson stated, “My God? How little do my countrymen know what precious blessings they are in possession of, and which no other people on

earth enjoy!" Jefferson understood the unique value of these enduring principals, and over two centuries later, John Adams Academy agrees. We not only hold these blessings dear, but they are the guiding principles of our academy.

Just like the silver of my childhood, carefully polished to its original splendor, the heritage of our nation must be restored and maintained. John Adams Academy is committed to that restoration by developing servant leaders who will be the keepers and defenders of the principles of freedom for which our founding fathers gave their lives, fortunes and sacred honor. Everyday our scholars polish this silver by demonstrating their virtue, by attacking their academics with respect and zeal, by creating a culture that should be the envy of the adult world. This is place of civility, a place of peace and a place where big ideas serve the betterment of man.

I am truly humbled as I walk the halls of John Adams Academy and see the dedication of our faculty. They see the promise in our scholars and create the opportunity for refinement and restoration. Our teachers, who dedicate themselves to this noble cause, are refined themselves as they place the Classics at the feet of our scholars, where they feast together on their greatness. This journal, *Mentor*, is a glimpse into that magic; a magic that we are all blessed to take part in, resulting in a restoration that will bless generations to come.

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The Declaration of Independence: Our National Birthright & Heritage

By Dean Forman, Ph.D.

Heritage:

- 1) An estate that passes from an ancestor to an heir by descent or course of law; that which is inherited.
- 2) The saints or people of God are called His heritage, as being claimed by him, and the objects of his special care

(Noah Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language*, 1828.)

Twelve years ago I went to Washington D.C. with my son Daniel. As part of this trip we visited the Jefferson Memorial. We stood and read all the wall panels with quotes from Jefferson. As we concluded and were leaving, Daniel made a profound foundational connection regarding rights. He said to me, “Dad, did you read that?”

God who gave us life gave us liberty. Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed the conviction that these liberties are the gift of God?” Then he said, “If God is the grantor of our liberties and rights then government cannot take them from us because they are unalienable and are a gift from a higher power than government.” This was one of those seminal moments where an epiphany of thought laid foundational truths for his life.

The importance of these enduring principles of liberty for posterity and citizens was expressed in correspondence from Jefferson to James Madison dated August 30, 1823, “...cherish



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the principles of the instruments in the bosom of our own citizens: and it is a heavenly comfort to see that these principles are yet so strongly felt....I pray God that these principles may be eternal..." (Jefferson XV: 464).

So what are these eternal principles or truths? Where did they come from? According to Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence (US 1776) they came from Nature's God. Furthermore, natural law entitles "one people" to equality of station with other nations. Jefferson may have been

influenced from John Locke's *Two Treatises on Government* in the terms life and liberty; it was Jefferson that substituted so eloquently the pursuit of happiness in lieu of the word property that was preferred by Locke. His was a holistic view of property using the word estates for real property, but also including the intangible talents, virtues or abilities of each citizen. We have, as it were, property in our rights and natural born talents. Pursuit of happiness may be then defined as the liberty to discover the good life. As we apply our genius and faculties to create and improve our lives and those around us, we find happiness. Thus the more poetic "pursuit of happiness" was a term for the broad interpretation of property. He commented that his role was to harmonize the political thinking of his day:

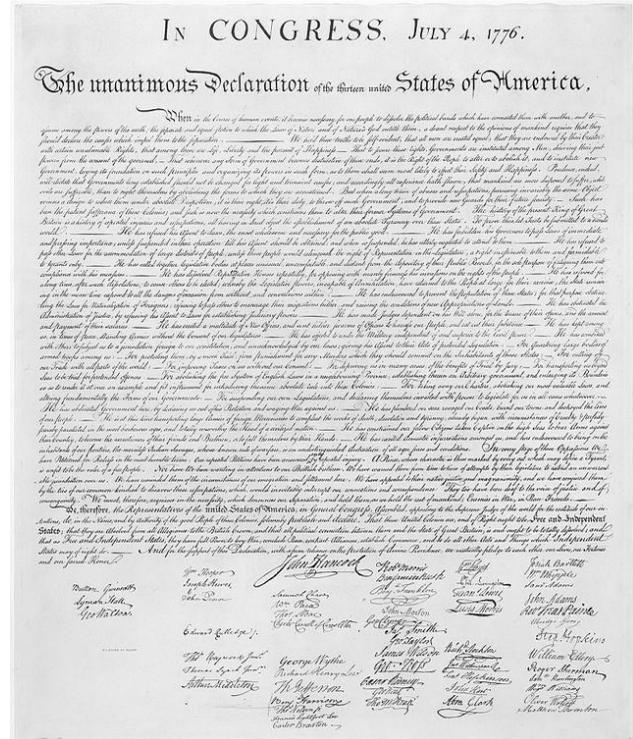


Jefferson Memorial, Washington D.C.
(Image source: Wikipedia)

This was the object of the Declaration of Independence. Not to find out new principles, or new arguments, never before thought of, not merely to say things which had never been said before; but to place before mankind the common sense of the subject, in terms so plain and firm as to command their assent, and to justify ourselves in the independent stand we are compelled to take. Neither aiming at originality of principle or sentiment, nor yet copied from any particular and previous writing, it was intended to be an expression of the American mind, and to give to that expression the proper tone and spirit called for by the occasion. All its authority rests then on the harmonizing sentiments of the day, whether expressed in conversation, in letters, printed essays, or in the elementary books of public right, as Aristotle, Cicero, Locke, Sidney, etc. (XVI: 118).

What were these ancient rights? There are a multitude of rights that exist, enumerated as the following: The freedoms of religion, speech, the press, assembly, self-defense, self-government, free conscience, etc. All liberties may be conceived as the consequence of the three greatest rights—life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. As the reciprocal, the violation of these rights justifies a penance, punishment or forfeiture of such liberty upon the perpetrator. According to John Locke in *Two Treatises on Government*, these natural rights precede government. Therefore, when people create government, it is the duty of government to find the law in nature. For nature is the foundation of all law (Ebenstein 430, 444). “True law is defined as right reason in agreement with nature” (141). Indeed—so long as this “nature” includes the fundamental concept that these rights exist independent of man’s law and are gifts from the Creator to which each citizen is ultimately held accountable, then this agreement with Nature’s God is in force and real guarantor of true freedom.

We must go into the second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence to find the purpose of why people coalesce and agree to come together to form government. Jefferson states it is most likely to further the cause of safety and happiness. As Cicero points out in *The Republic and the Laws*, “For there is really no other occupation in which human virtue approaches more closely the august function of the gods than that of founding new States or preserving those already in existence” (Ebenstein 147). When we form government



The Declaration of Independence, 1776. National Archives, Washington D.C.

by the consent of the governed or voting, we delegate authority to government agencies such as the military, police, firemen, etc. to keep our person and property protected. This provides our communities with safety so we can pursue happiness. What needs safeguarding? Our lives. Absent this basic protection, we would have little time to do anything else other than forage for food and protect our lives and property. Happiness is fully achieved by combining time, labor and liberty to create goodness and beauty. Labor then creates property and happiness when we, as stewards, put our special virtue, excellence or imprint on our posterity, professions and property.

These three broad rights are self-evident under the umbrella of all men being created equal. Equality is not the provision of equal things to all, but the establishment of three untransferable endowments or gifts from the Creator: life, liberty and to pursue happiness. These three rights are then protected by three powers delegated by people to government; 1) to create or

make laws, 2) to judge laws and 3) to execute laws. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us (*The Holy Bible*, Isa. 33:22). If two or more of these three powers ever become concentrated into the hands of one person or body, tyranny or despotism is the likely outcome.

Under such adverse conditions, society's delegated authority may be reclaimed by the people with a duty to throw off such government. In democratic countries this peaceful revolution or change is commonly performed at the ballot box. Ironically, more freedom usually means less revolution, for in the exercise of free will, liberty or choice is consummated. People delegate government power by consent, and people retain the right to dissent. In despotic governments this frequently may take the form of riots or armed revolution because natural, civil, political or religious freedoms are absent. In the case of Great Britain from the time of Magna Carta in 1215 to the late 18th century, the King and Parliament were in many instances concentrating and usurping two or three of these powers in one person or entity resulting in the Declaration of Independence's "absolute tyranny." Thomas Jefferson said:

...all will attain representative government, more or less perfect. This is now well understood to be a necessary check on kings, whom they will probably think it more prudent to chain and tame, than to exterminate. To attain all this, however, rivers of blood must yet flow, and years of desolation pass over; yet the object is worth rivers of blood, and years of desolation. For what inheritance so valuable, can man leave to his posterity (Jefferson XV, 464-465)?

The Declaration of Independence then advances with twenty-eight grievances of the colonists against the incursions of the King in making, judging and executing laws with little or no

colonial representation. Every single remonstrance dealt with an abuse or concentration of more than one of the three powers in the hands of the king/governor, legislature or judge. Aristotle suggests when you combine the tyranny of royalty with the oligarchy of the rich and the democracy of the needy it was impossible to reach the common good of all (Ebenstein 111). Rebellion was the last choice, but the final solution after a “long train of abuses and usurpations resulting in absolute Despotism” (DOI). Independence from Great Britain was a difficult thing to do because many of the colonists thought of themselves as British citizens. That’s why, Jefferson explained, there were “ties of common kindred and consanguinity,” meaning family and kin with or of the same blood.

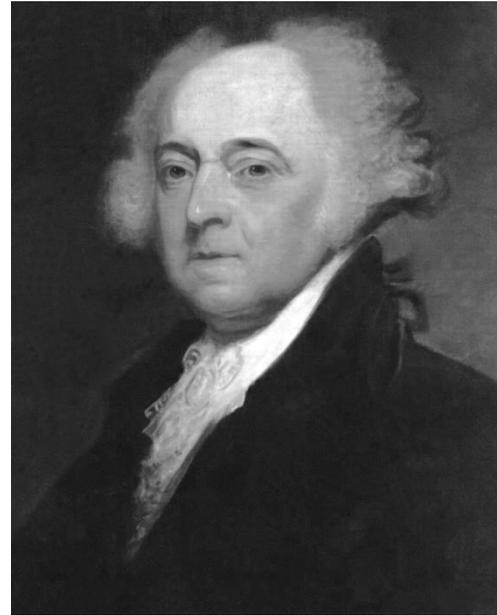
As the Declaration of Independence reveals, these colonists were well read and their leaders were educated in the philosophy, histories and political forms of Greece and Rome. They were scholars in the classics. Ultimately, these courageous pioneers and patriots appealed to a higher power than that of kings, parliaments, or judges. For them, it was at first a matter of inconceivability, but after careful consideration a thoroughly organized notion whose arrival at the final solution was contained in this all important question: Who could and would create, legislate, execute and judge their cause? In the Declaration of Independence they laid down why they could rebel and where they would turn. They directed their hearts and heads to an appeal of natural law: that Nature’s God was for equality. In an uncompromising manner, God was identified as the sole Creator of the three unalienable rights. Therefore, justice could only be dispensed in looking to the Supreme Judge for the rectitude of their intentions, and to the protection of divine Providence to execute their path. “Where there is no judicature on earth to decide controversies amongst men, God in Heaven is judge” (Ebenstein 454). These principles, rights and duties were then signed in a solemn, courageous act pledging their lives, fortunes and sacred honor.

John Adams shared the events of that memorable day with his wife Abigail from Philadelphia on July 3, 1776:

The second day of July 1776, will be the most memorable Epoque, in the history of America. -I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated, by succeeding Generations, as the great anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated, as the Day of Deliverance by solemn Acts of Devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with Pomp and Parade, with Shews, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires, and Illuminations from one End of the Continent to the other from the Time forward forever more. You will think me transported with Enthusiasm but I am not. -I am well aware of the Toil and Blood and Treasure, that it will cost Us to maintain this Declaration, and support and defend these States. -Yet through all the Gloom I can see that End is more than worth all the Means. And that Posterity will triumph in that Days Transaction, even altho We should rue it, which I trust in God We shall not (Butterfield 30-31, original spelling maintained).

Why John Adams?

Many have asked why our school carries the name of John Adams. In Congress on July 2nd, 1776 John Adams persuaded many of the representatives who were wavering on voting for the Declaration of Independence to vote yes. Thomas Jefferson, who penned the DOI said of Adams' speech that day, "it moved the delegates from their seats" (McCullough 127) and ever after Jefferson would refer to Adams as the "Colossus of Independence" (163). Thomas Jefferson further said this of Adams: ".....this however I will say for Mr. Adams, that he supported the Declaration with zeal and ability, fighting fearlessly for every word of it" (XV: 463).



Asher Durand, *John Adams (1735-1826)*, 1835.
Naval Historical Center, Washington D. C.

John and Abigail Adams were faithful to each other and had six children, one of whom, John Quincy, also became president. They abhorred slavery. They loved education and learning. John and his son, Quincy, served as ambassadors to several European Countries and Russia. The Adams family knew that a citizen in a republican form of government requires public and private virtue.

Adams was a scholar of the Classics and history. He understood government forms and loved the ancient Roman orator and statesman Cicero. Adams' knowledge of government and the importance of the separation of powers (legislative, executive and judicial) were the basis for the Massachusetts Constitution which in turn was a cradle for the United States Constitution.

In a letter to his friend Benjamin Rush Adams wrote, “Mausoleums, statues, monuments will never be erected to me. I wish them not. Panegyric romances will never be written, nor flattering orations spoken, to transmit me to posterity in brilliant colors. No, nor in true colors. All but the last I loathe” (Skousen 202).

When I read these words years ago, I thought we would transmit the legacy of John Adams in true and beautiful colors with a school that bears his name and his passion for moral virtues, classical education, and participatory citizen government.

The revolution of 1776 was inspired by principles that guided nations and people in the past. The ancient principles of equality under natural law, and unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are self-evident in nature. Rights are entitlements emanating from the Creator who has shared the three ruling powers of constitutional mixed government to promote our liberty, safety and happiness. These rights may be temporarily delegated to government, but ultimately reside in the people. The legacy of our founding fathers was to inspire a revolution and restoration of the ancient principles with ordered liberty under Nature’s God.

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The Story of the American Flag

By Greg Blankenbehler

The famous painting of *George Washington's Crossing of the Delaware* on the night of Christmas Day 1776 portrays a vivid scene of the courage and determination of the continental troops in defending their vision of America against the invading British. Featured prominently in the very center of the painting, the young Lieutenant James Monroe, future president, embraces the familiar and iconic American flag, symbol of all the ideals for which the rebellious colonists were fighting.



Greg Blankenbehler joined the faculty at John Adams Academy in 2011. He currently teaches 7th-12th grade core music and directs five choir ensembles.

While this moving image certainly expresses the feelings that Americans shared for their beloved Stars and Stripes when it was painted by Emanuel Leutze in 1851, it could not be accurate to the real historical event because, in fact, the “stars and stripes” design would not even be determined by Congress until some six months later. At the time the first “star-spangled” American flag was flown in Sept. 1777 it attracted very little attention from the general public. Its main function was that of identifying ships and military installations. The citizens of the new American nation instead expressed their patriotism and nationalistic ideals through other symbols: the eagle, Lady Liberty, and the iconic image of George Washington (Smithsonian, “Legacy”). The great ideals of Liberty, Self-Governance, Equality before the law, and Courage to protect one’s rights carried the fledgling nation through its birthing struggle, but



Emanuel Leutze, *George Washington's Crossing of the Delaware*, 1851.
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

these ideals had not yet become fused to the image of the American flag until a young lawyer from Maryland penned a simple poem that would resound throughout the nation and the world.

War of 1812

British General Cornwallis' humiliating defeat at the Battle of Yorktown in 1781 signaled the end of the Revolutionary War and was a moment of great pride for the United States. With this triumph over the most powerful military in the world, the young country felt that it had proved to all nations that it could conduct its own affairs independently. It was not even three decades later, however, that the United States again felt itself under the controlling hand of Britain. Offended at the trade restrictions Britain enforced between the U.S. and France, and angry at the British practice of boarding sovereign American vessels and impressing American sailors into the

royal navy, the young nation once again stepped up and entered into war with Britain in 1812. As the war progressed, though, a series of stunning defeats culminating with the sacking and burning of state buildings in Washington D.C. left Americans demoralized and anxious about America's future (Smithsonian, "War").

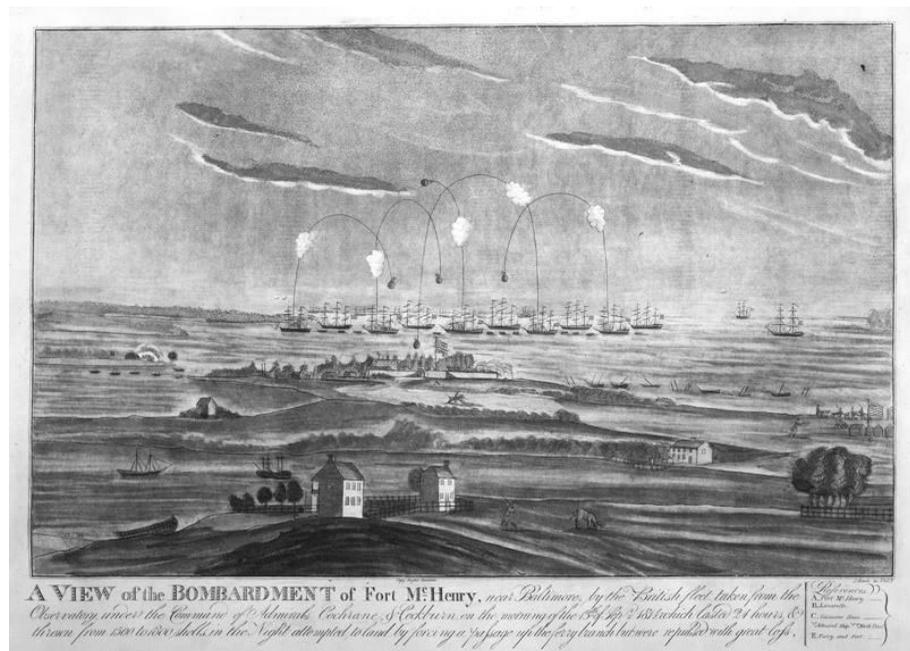
After overrunning the nation's capitol, the British force turned their sights further up the Chesapeake Bay to the vital seaport city of Baltimore. They sailed an armada of 16 ships up the Patapsco River and

positioned themselves for an attack on the city.

The British landed a ground force of 5,000 men who were quickly met by a defending American force of over 10,000 army regulars

and volunteers. Desiring to get their bomb ships

in closer to provide artillery support for the battle, the British decided to pound Baltimore's last major naval defense, Fort McHenry, into submission. Anchoring two and a half miles back to remain out of range of the fort's most powerful canons, the superior British artillery bombarded the fort for 25 hours with 15,000-18,000 shrapnel bombs and rockets to light up the night. For a long, harrowing day and night the fort's Defending force of 1,000 had no choice but to hunker



J. Bower, *A View of the Bombardment of Fort McHenry, 1816.*
Smithsonian, Washington D.C.

down and try to survive the onslaught, like “pigeons tied by the legs to be shot at” (Armistead; Smithsonian, “War”).

One unique observer of this fight was Francis Scott Key, who had boarded a British ship as a diplomat to negotiate the release of American prisoners but was then detained for the remainder of the operation. A Maryland native and spirited American, one can imagine the kinds of feelings that Key felt as he watched the events unfold through that day and night. As the first rays of the morning dawned on the battered fort, he strained to see whether the American flag still flew, or if the fort had surrendered. He felt a thrill of excitement when through the smoke and fog he caught sight of the humungous 30- by 40-foot garrison flag flowing defiantly in the morning breeze. He scribbled the first verse of his “Defense of Fort McHenry” on the back of an envelope and the following day completed four stanzas to be sung to a popular British song (Barton; Smithsonian, “Song”).

The Star-Spangled Banner by Francis Scott Key (1814)

O say can you see, by the dawn's early light,
 What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming,
 Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight
 O'er the ramparts we watch'd were so gallantly streaming?
 And the rocket's red glare, the bomb bursting in air,
 Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there,
 O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep
 Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
 What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
 As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
 Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
 In full glory reflected now shines in the stream,
 'Tis the star-spangled banner - O long may it wave
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore,
 That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
 A home and a Country should leave us no more?
 Their blood has wash'd out their foul footsteps' pollution.
 No refuge could save the hireling and slave
 From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave,
 And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

O thus be it ever when freemen shall stand
 Between their lov'd home and the war's desolation!
 Blest with vict'ry and peace may the heav'n rescued land
 Praise the power that hath made and preserv'd us a nation!
 Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
 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.

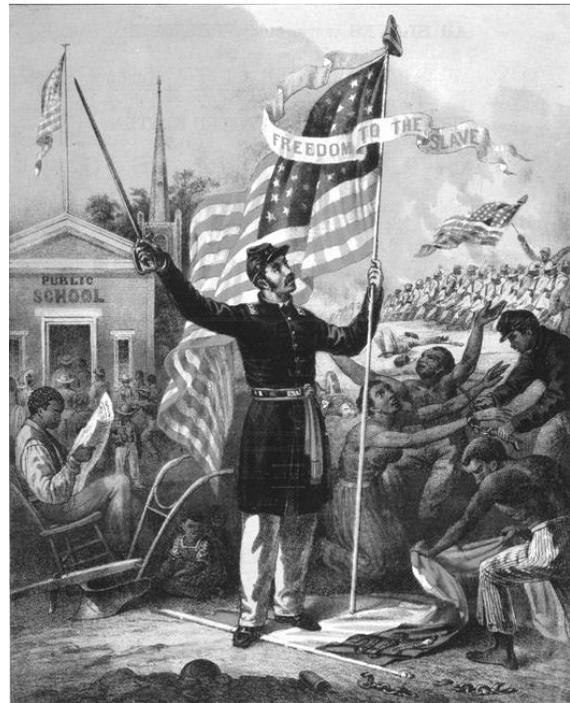
Francis Scott Key's new patriotic song was soon published throughout the states and became very popular. The image of the almost mockingly-large garrison flag flying confidently through the rain of shrapnel and rockets struck a personal chord with the American people. "Many shots pierc[ed] it, but it still remained firm to the staff" (Purdy). Instead of simply being an identifier of sovereignty, the flag became a national symbol of courage, resilience, and the fight for freedom from tyranny. Key set a sharp contrast in the song between the "hireling and slave" of the British forces—most likely representing Britain's practice of hiring German mercenaries and impressing unwilling merchant seamen into their navy (Becker)—and the "freemen" of the U. S. forces who simply fought to defend their "loved homes" and to "preserve us a nation" by the good grace of God. Across the nation, patriotic Americans felt a personal connection with the American flag, and felt a swell of pride as they looked up and saw that "our flag was still there...o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave" (Smithsonian, "Flag," "Legacy").

Civil War

Throughout history, regimental flags served the practical role of identifying friend from foe in the heat of battle. Through deafening noise, cannon smoke, and a variety of uniforms, they were the only way to make sure that you were firing upon the right people. But for the actual soldiers who carried and followed these flags into battle, they took on a deeper meaning as heart of the unit itself. The flag led the way as the unit rushed into enemy lines. As one flag bearer was shot, another would pick up the standard and rally the unit. It was the ultimate defeat to surrender your flag to the enemy.

It is therefore not surprising that the American flag took on yet a new meaning for Union soldiers during the Civil War. Northern soldiers literally carried the Stars and Stripes into hailstorms of bullets and cannon fire as they fought to keep the union together. African-American soldiers and civilians saw the flag as a promise of freedom and citizenship throughout the union. With the secession of each of the 11 Confederate states, the flag came to stand for each citizen's loyalty to preserving the union of the United States and, more and more, the enfranchisement of all African-Americans as equal citizens. For members of the southern confederacy, meanwhile, the symbol that they had once loved came to stand for an oppressive federal government that did not respect their states' rights and threatened their way of life. In response, they created the rival Confederate flag, the "Stars and Bars" (Smithsonian, "Legacy").

The future of the American flag would certainly have been different had the outcome of the Civil War been different, but with the defeat of the Confederates rebels at such a cost of life—historians estimate 620,000-850,000 military dead (Civil War Trust)—the American flag became a sacred relic that bore witness to the great courage and sacrifice of the soldiers who defended the union and the principle of freedom for all (Smithsonian, "Legacy"). It also picked up a new nickname from Captain William Driver's personal American flag, "Old Glory" which he famously hid from the Confederate forces in Nashville until he was able to proudly fly it at the city's capture by the union forces (Jenkins).



Union Recruitment Handbill, circa 1863.
Smithsonian.

Adoption of Flag and Anthem

With this augmented reverence for the American Flag, Civil War Veterans fought to uphold its sacred character by outlawing its use in commercial advertising and making its desecration a crime. By the turn of the century, most states had adopted flag codes which were upheld by the Supreme Court in 1907. The first federal flag code, published in 1923 and officially adopted by Congress in 1942, stated that the American Flag “represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing.” The sanctity of the flag was protected through national custom and force of law up until the Supreme Court struck down all statutory flag enforcement in 1989 as an infringement upon free speech.

In 1889 the Navy ordered Key’s “Star-Spangled Banner” to be played at all their flag-raising and lowering ceremonies and the other armed forces soon followed suit. Through the efforts of Mrs. Reuben Ross Holloway, president of the Maryland State Society, and Congressman J. Charles Linthicum of Baltimore, Congress officially made the song the national anthem in 1931. (Smithsonian, “Legacy”).



Patriots Text Book, circa 1925.
Smithsonian.

WWII

The empire of Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 began a new chapter in the evolving meaning of the American flag. Images of the beloved Stars and Stripes once again flying tattered in the wind against the onslaught of an invasion on American soil spurred America into an unprecedented full mobilization for war against two major enemies across two oceans. The flag again symbolized



Joe Rosenthal, *Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima*, 1945.
Associated Press. (Image source: Wikipedia)

America's desperate struggle to maintain its values and freedom against threatening totalitarianism. It represented sacrifice on the field of battle for the enlisting soldiers, as well as sacrifice back home for the citizens who bought war bonds, collected scrap metal, and participated in the wartime rationing (Smithsonian, "Legacy").

But as World War II saw America into its new international role as a world diplomatic and military superpower, the flag also began to take on international meanings. As it was carried across sea and raised over hard-fought conquests like Mt. Suribachi on Iwo Jima, Hitler's house in Berchtesgaden, and Okinawa, the flag began to symbolize America's new role as the world's defender of freedom and promoter of democracy for all the people of the world.

Today

Ever since Francis Scott Key's dramatic song seared into the hearts of all Americans the image of the Stars and Stripes flying defiantly in the face of all opposition to American values, the flag has served as a barometer of the patriotism of the American people and their commitment to the country's values. There is no other country in the world that reveres their flag to the extent of the United States. In times of national mourning or solidarity, such as after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, it is flown from nearly every house and business and worn on the lapel of politicians. In times of civil protest and dissatisfaction, it is sometimes disrespected and desecrated. Other times, protesting parties have proudly flown the flag as an ironic reminder to the country to live up to the values that it claims. As we navigate through today's challenges of terrorist attacks, class warfare and political turmoil, may we all remember the sacred legacy of ideals and courage that our Stars and Stripes represents.

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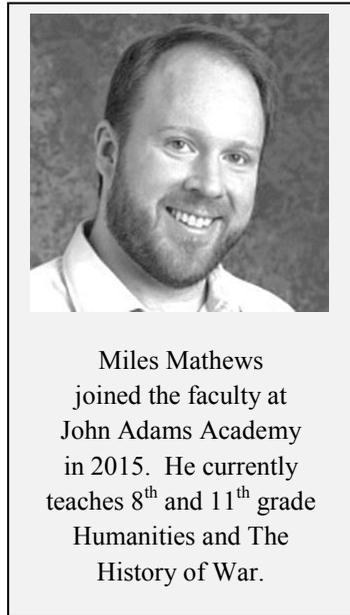
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More Than the Dirt: Appreciating American National Heritage Through Michael Shaara's *The Killer Angels*

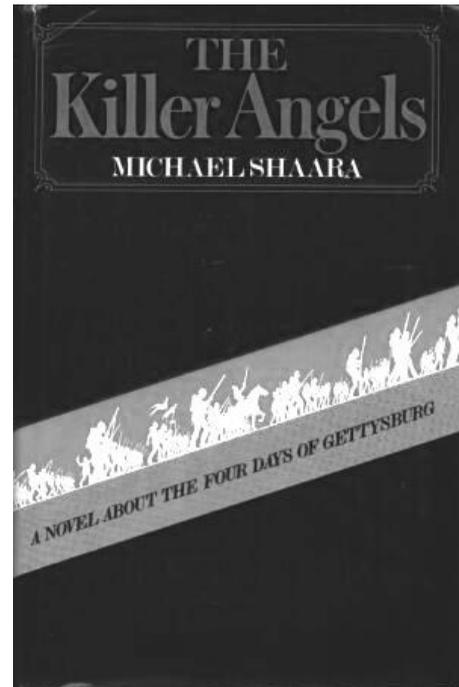
By Miles Mathews

Much like individual people, nations have character. One of the purposes of history, as a discipline, is to instruct individuals in knowledge of their history and heritage so that they know something of the character of their nation. When any nation loses connection with its collective past, its experiences, and its heritage, society is cast adrift, the connection of individuals to their country is weakened, and national and social illnesses are worsened. Given these facts, it is no accident that "Appreciation of our National Heritage" is the first of the Ten Core Values espoused by John Adams Academy –indeed, it



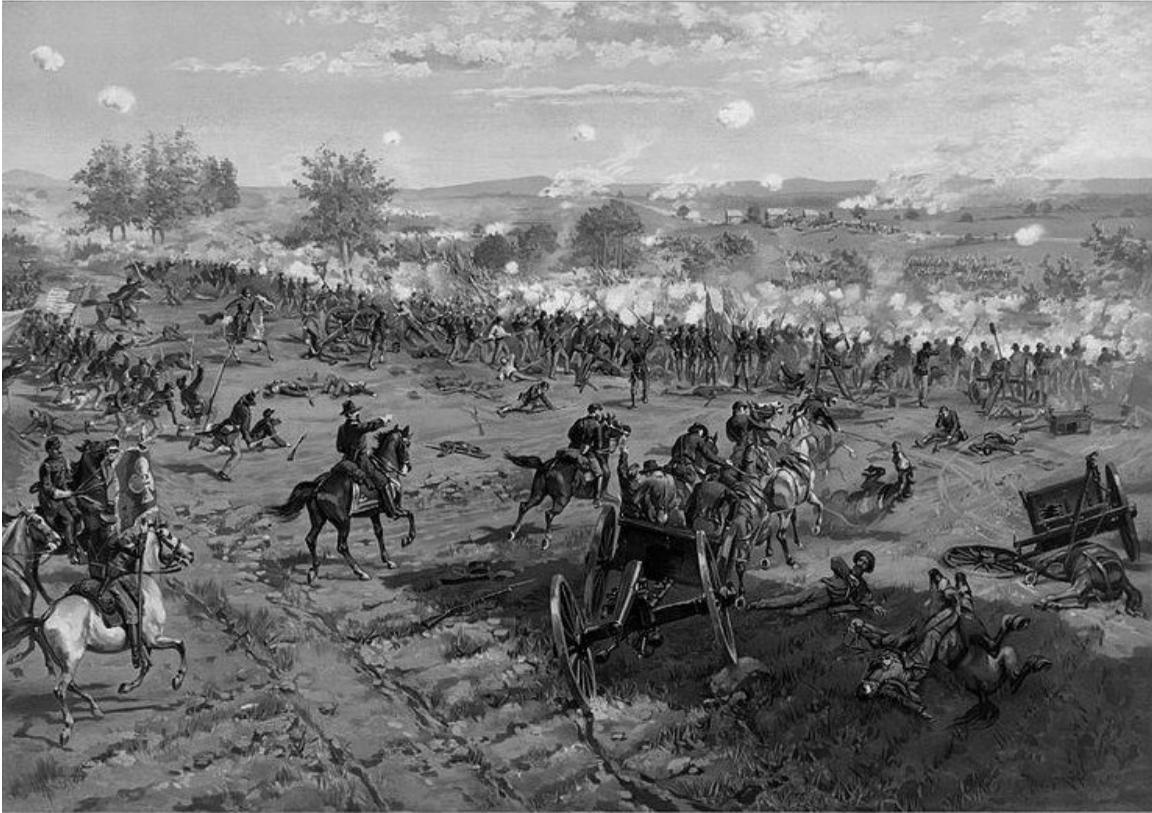
permeates everything that we do and who we are as an institution. Popular historian Shelby Foote famously asserted "Any understanding of this nation has to be based, and I mean really based, on an understanding of the Civil War...It defined us.... It was the Crossroads of our being" (Ward XVI). At the convergence of this "national crossroads" lies The Battle of Gettysburg. Michael Shaara's engaging, Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *The Killer Angels* dramatizes that three-day battle during the summer of 1863 and allows readers an inside-understanding of the junction of that quintessential American conflict. Shaara's novel is a work of historical fiction, but one which utilized real people as its characters. The author wanted to avoid 20th Century arguments over the

meaning of the Civil War and used “the words of the men themselves, their letters and other documents” to portray the conflict from the perspective of various participants, but acknowledged his own “interpretation of character” (Shaara xvii). For Shaara, the Civil War was essentially a clash of old and new – old and new approaches to warfare and, more importantly, Old World vs. New World ideas of society and freedom. Additionally, the Civil War was a human tragedy which pitted friends and fellow-Americans against each other, which adds another layer of sadness to the conflict. To understand the Civil War, what it was about and what it accomplished, is to understand essential elements of American heritage.



The Killer Angels, 1st edition cover.
(Image source: Wikipedia)

In many ways, the Civil War was both the last old war and the first new war. Led by France, European military doctrine called for massed frontal attacks in the Napoleonic tradition, and glittering, romantic cavalry charges were the expectation in the Old World. While influenced by this heritage, some Civil War leaders – both Union and Confederate – recognized the need for change; however, some still sought to emulate European practices. In *The Killer Angels*, new American military doctrine is introduced by Union cavalry General John Buford and Confederate General James Longstreet. Buford recognized that the days of the Napoleonic cavalry charge were gone; he advocated a new use for horse soldiers – that of mounted infantry which used horses only as a means of transportation to the battlefield. Cavalry troops armed with breech-loading weapons could entrench and thus delay enemy infantry (foot soldiers) much more efficiently (Shaara 38-42).



Thure de Thulstrup, *Battle of Gettysburg*, showing Pickett's Charge.
L. Prang and Co, circa 1887.
Library of Congress, Washington D. C.

This method was used effectively on the first day of Gettysburg and it resulted in an effective defense of the hills and ridges south of the town on which the Union Army of the Potomac made its stand. In similar fashion, Confederate General James Longstreet advocated a move away from massed frontal assaults in favor of the tactical defensive, in part due to American advances in weapons and technology. Longstreet clashed with his traditionally-minded commander, General Robert E. Lee, over the feasibility of the frontal assault which became known as Pickett's Charge. Longstreet understood that such charges held little chance of success at that stage of the war - especially given the use of modern weapons. To a much-annoyed Lee, Longstreet argued in vain for a flanking movement which would allow Confederate troops to assume the defensive (Shaara

280-287). Longstreet is the exception among the Confederate characters in the book, as the other principle officers tended to favor emulation of European models of combat. The repulse of Pickett's Charge, thoroughly and movingly detailed in the last third of Shaara's novel, signaled the end of massed Confederate frontal assaults and the transition of the Civil War into a more modern phase – indeed a phase less influenced by past European military heritage and into a more forward-looking American one.

Just as important as the military events in Shaara's novel are his portrayal of social and political causes central to the conflict. While other works – both fiction and non-fiction – rightly focus on the institution of slavery as a cause of the war, Shaara takes a larger view of freedom and liberty in his work. He portrays the Civil War as a contest of conflicting European and American ideas of social class and freedom. As portrayed in the novel, the Confederates adopt a stratified, class-based society like that of contemporary Europe, and the Union fights for a society free from such constraints – which includes the abolition of slavery. *The Killer Angels* uses the perspectives of three characters to contrast the two points of view: British observer Colonel Arthur Freemantle, Buster Kilrain an Irish immigrant fighting in the Union Army, and Colonel Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, a college professor-turned Union officer. Though he personally finds slavery objectionable, Freemantle admires British and Confederate similarities. He argues that the United States, as a political experiment, has failed and that America will overcome its ideas of equality, saying “the point is they do it all exactly as we do in Europe. And the North does not. *That's* what the war is really about” (Shaara 156). In contrast, Kilrain, Shaara's sole fictional main character, fights to escape the tyranny and heritage of the Old World, though he stops short of endorsing equality:

No two things on earth are equal or have an equal chance, not a leaf nor a tree....what matters is justice. Tis why I'm here. I'll be treated as I deserve, not as my father deserved....The point is that we have a country here where the past cannot keep a good man in chains, and that's the nature of the war. It's the aristocracy I'm after (Shaara 170).

Chamberlain similarly argues that what makes the United States great is the fact that it is not like Europe. Speaking to motivate flagging spirits among some of his troops, Chamberlain movingly tells the soldiers "This hasn't happened much in the history of the world. We're an army going out to set other men free....No man has to bow. No man born to royalty. Here, we judge you by what *you* do, not by what your father was" (Shaara 28). Chamberlain and Kilrain, desire an American heritage different than flawed European predecessors, a desire which provides a cause worthy of Union sacrifices.

While military, social, and political matters are amply dealt with in the novel, perhaps the most poignant and memorable chapters of *The Killer Angels* are those which deal with the tragedy of lifelong friends and fellow-Americans forced to fight each other over differing political and social ideals. This aspect of the conflict is explored through the close friendship of Union General Winfield Scott Hancock and Confederate General Lewis Armistead. "They had been closer than brothers before the war" (Shaara 57). At the beginning of the war, Hancock hosted a party for officers departing the next day – some to serve the Confederacy and some to serve the Union. It was there that Armistead made a tearful vow to Hancock: "Win, so help me, if I ever lift my hand against you, may God strike me dead," and it troubled Armistead to fight on the same field as his friend for those reasons (Shaara 246-247). During the climactic event of the battle, Pickett's

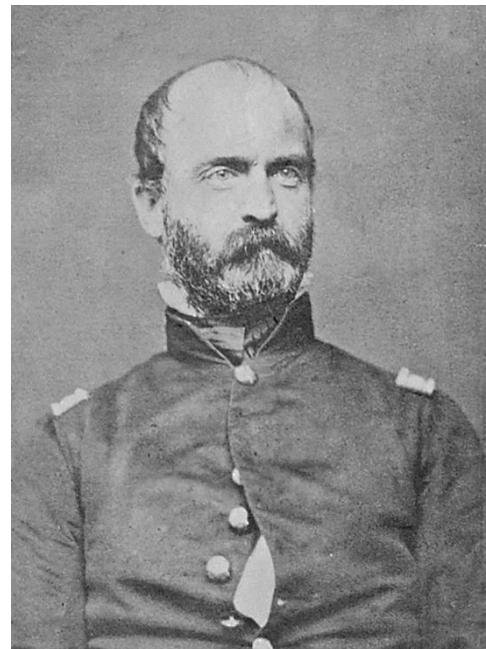
Charge, Armistead dutifully leads his troops into the Union position defended by his old friend Hancock and is mortally wounded and captured. Armistead asks to see Hancock, is informed by a Union soldier that his friend has also been terribly wounded in the attack, and Armistead asks “Will you tell General Hancock, please, that General Armistead sends his regrets. Will you tell him...how very sorry I am” (Shaara 316).

The Civil War was essentially a conflict over American heritage. *The Killer Angels*, as both a work of history and literature, amply and eloquently details the military, social, political, and personal aspects of the defining battle of the Civil War. Perhaps the character Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain summed up the connection between the Civil War and national heritage best when he stated that the conflict was not just about the United States of America as a political entity, but rather “the idea that we all have value, you and me, we’re worth something more than the dirt” (Shaara 28). America’s heritage is, in part, the history of evolving ideas of freedom and how that elevates and raises Americans to realize their potential.

Those who read Shaara’s masterful novel will gain an “Appreciation of our National Heritage” by



General Winfield Scott Hancock, circa 1860.
Library of Congress.



General Lewis Armistead, circa 1860.
Photograph location unknown.

getting inside the minds of the Civil War's most brilliant military leaders who fought each other to decide what that American heritage would become.

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Reflections of a Humanities Teacher on Freedom

By Zeta Cammarota

Freedom is a concept easily commandeered to suit any revolution, a slave in the mouth of the revolutionary. When the American Revolutionaries began fighting for independence in 1775, were they implicitly fighting for the right of Americans to use marijuana as a recreational drug? Yes and no. The Founders wanted Americans to have the freedom to make their own laws using the appropriate channels. However, they also expected the populace to be educated or “enlightened,” to use the phrase of that era. The Founders stressed the importance of citizens receiving the kind of education needed to give them the intellectual capacity to discern the difference between what could be done and what should be done. Furthermore, of additional necessity to the education needed for said discernment was the will of a virtuous people to choose the good. As John Adams famously said, "Liberty can no more exist without virtue and independence than the body can live and move without a soul" (31). Acts done in the name of freedom are not automatically good and just. John Milton illustrates this fact in his epic poem *Paradise Lost*. Upon finding himself and his followers in their new fiery dwelling, a confounded Satan comforts himself by declaring, “Here at least we shall be free” (I. 259). Somehow I don’t think this is the kind of freedom the Founding Fathers had in mind.



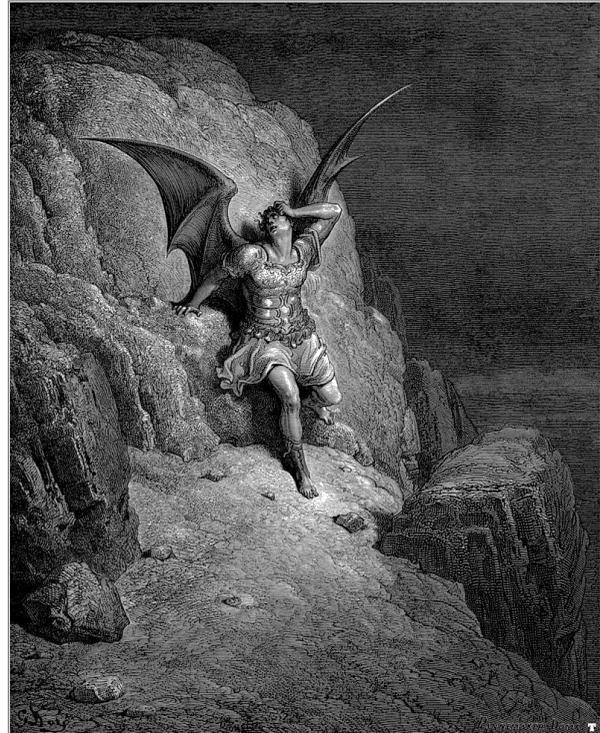
Zeta Cammarota joined the faculty at John Adams Academy in 2013. She currently teaches high school Honors English, and the senior capstone course.

So we come to the question, what is freedom? A contemporary definition, from the Oxford Dictionary, is “the power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint.” We can easily see why freedom is so easily confused with license. As an alternative, Abraham Lincoln offered this understanding of the concept: “Freedom is not the right to do what we want, but what we ought. Let us have faith that right makes might and in that faith let us...to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it”

(75). Having the right to do what we ought

requires: first, the ability to discern what we ought to do which comes through education, second, the will to do what we ought which is possible only through the practice of virtue, and finally, the freedom to exercise that right. These three support each other: education, virtue, and freedom. Several of the great works we study at John Adams Academy demonstrate various aspects of this truth. I will limit myself to discussing only three: Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*, and De Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America*.

In the *Divine Comedy*, Dante’s pilgrimage through Hell and Purgatory is an allegorical journey of a soul seeking to be rid of vice in order to be free. First, Dante must be educated. Each circle in Hell is an example of how we chain ourselves to vice. All souls are given the chance to repent and choose differently, but the truly vicious choose their vice for all eternity. As the souls wait to cross the River Acheron into Hell, “they yearn for what they fear” (Dante 34). Once in



Gustave Doré, “The Fall of Satan.” 1865.
Illustration for Milton’s *Paradise Lost*.

Hell, the Lustful are carried about on a wind amid debris and filth representing their choice to follow their passions above all else. The Violent against Neighbors spend eternity fighting with their fellow human beings in a Lake of Fire. The Treacherous against Kin, Country, and Benefactors are frozen in ice representing their choice to break all bonds with humanity. They will never see light or feel warmth again. It is a scary reminder that when we repeat vicious acts over and over again, they become habitual so that we can no longer choose anything else. We become a slave to our vices.

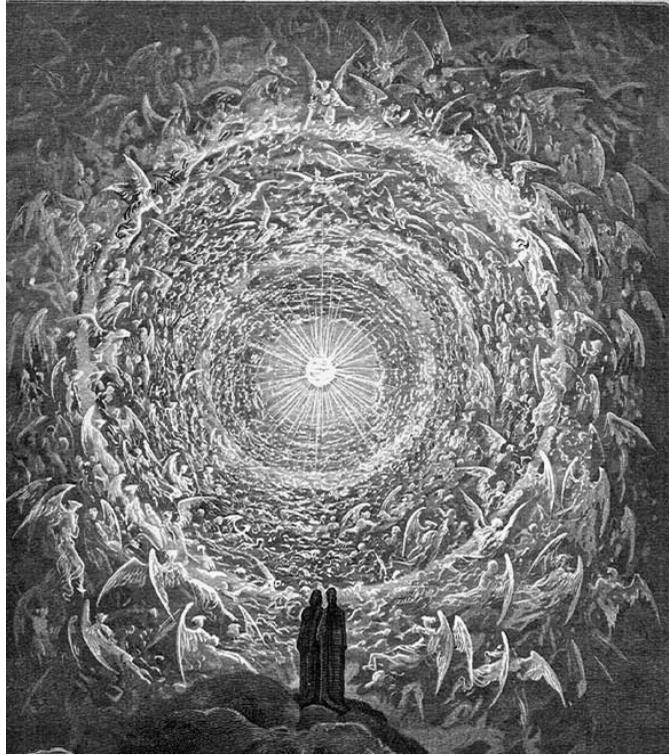
In Purgatory, the punishments are no longer retributive, but remedial. After learning the true nature of vice, Dante must learn to be virtuous. These souls may have been as vicious as those in Hell, but they repented at some point in their lives, even if at the point of death. This represents every person's ability to make a change. We do have free will and before it is too late, we can turn from our vices and embrace virtue. But it is hard. Like the souls in Hell, those in Purgatory must also suffer. Some are compelled to practice the opposite virtue until they have rid themselves of

all traces of their chosen vice. The Slothful run continually around the mountain of Purgatory shouting examples of zeal. The Lustful perform acts of chaste love. The Gluttonous habituate themselves to deny food and drink in the face of celestial temptation. Picture yourself emaciated from hunger and thirst while delicious pieces of fruit hang just beyond your reach as you listen



Gustave Doré, "Inferno Canto 5 lines 105-106." 1857.
Illustration for Dante's *Inferno*.

to the sounds of a waterfall. The pain is excruciating, but necessary if one is to learn temperance. All the souls in Purgatory choose to be free of their vices and willingly embrace the purging penances. At the end of Purgatorio, Vergil leaves Dante saying “lord of yourself I crown and mitre you” (524). Free of all vice, Dante can now go on to experience the joys of heaven. According to the author, since every human being is created for eternal beatitude, Dante is now free to fulfill his destiny.



Gustave Doré, “Rosa celeste.” 1857.
Illustration for Dante's *Inferno*.

Interestingly, Dante is initially sent on this journey by Beatrice, a symbol of Divine love, but is guided through Hell and Purgatory by the pagan author Vergil, the symbol of the best that human reason can achieve. Any human person, by the use of his or her reason alone, can choose virtue over vice, freedom over slavery. Dante’s allegory illustrates how the human person must first be educated, and then trained in virtue in order to be free to do what he or she ought.

Moving from Dante’s medieval Florence to England’s Regency Period, we discover these same truths at work in the small society of the Bennet family in Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*. Although flawed, both Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet are educated and virtuous. They have high standards for themselves and for their future spouses. In fact, they think so highly of themselves they almost lose the one person who could make them happy. Thankfully, Austen forces them into a confrontation where they are given the opportunity to be brutally honest with

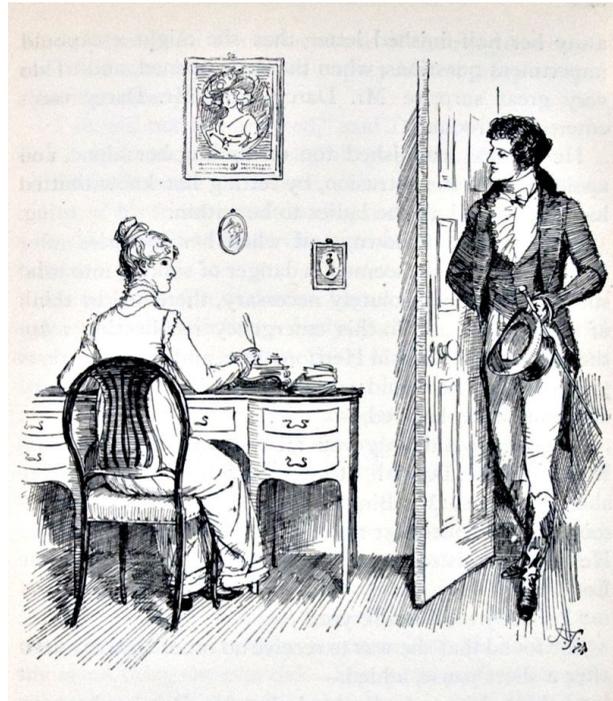
each other and themselves. Like Dante in *Inferno*, Darcy and Lizzy must face the truth of their respective vices, pride and prejudice. Like Dante in *Purgatorio*, freeing themselves of their defects is painful and hard.

Against his natural inclinations, Darcy forces himself to become amiable. Once he and Lizzy are reconciled he admits, “Your reproof, so well applied, I shall never forget...how they

tortured me; - though it was some time, I confess, before I was reasonable enough to allow

their justice” (Austen 246). Darcy does not allow his pride to conquer him. He fights it with his reason and gives himself another chance to earn Lizzy’s love. After pondering over the contents of Darcy’s letter, Lizzy realizes she is in fact prejudicial and mends her views. “She grew absolutely ashamed of herself...‘How despicably have I acted!’ She cried. - ‘I, who have prided myself on my discernment!...But vanity, not love, has been my folly...I have courted prepossession and ignorance, and driven reason away, where either were concerned. Till this moment, I never knew myself” (141). Lizzy must also conquer her propensity to love her own judgments. She knows she has been unreasonable. How much easier it would have been to be self-righteous! But like Dante, both Darcy and Lizzy choose the path to authentic freedom and become masters of themselves.

In contrast, we find Mr. Wickham and Lydia. Neither is interested in book learning or the virtue of self-control. They are looking for an easy path to a lucrative marriage. Wickham is a



Hugh Thomson, “Elizabeth and Mr Darcy.”
Pride and Prejudice. London: George Allen, 1894.

slave to his gambling addiction, and Lydia is a slave to her vanity. They run off together without any consideration of the consequences to those around them. Only the love of Mr. Darcy for Elizabeth (and his wealth) saves the entire Bennet family from ruin. After Wickham and Lydia are married, Lizzie surmises, “How Wickham and Lydia were to be supported in tolerable independence, she could not imagine. But how little of permanent happiness could belong to a couple who were brought together because their passions were stronger than their virtue, she could easily conjecture” (209). In Austen’s world, the virtuous find happiness, are free to live as they ought, and fulfill their role in society; the unvirtuous are pitiable, dependent upon the charity of their betters, and are a continual drain upon family and friends.

Leaving the literary world, let us proceed to the lessons of history and political philosophy. A remarkable French aristocrat named Alexis de Tocqueville toured the newly-formed United States in 1831. He filtered his observations of the young country through the lens of his considerable knowledge of history and philosophy to produce a brilliant, albeit very large, tome entitled *Democracy in America*. Although he believed wholeheartedly in the inevitability of democracy, within its pages, he critiqued the strengths and weaknesses of American Democracy as he saw it. Like the Founders before him, he emphasized the need for an enlightened populace. “Democratic government, which is founded on an idea so simple and natural, nevertheless always supposes the existence of a very civilized and very learned society” (De Tocqueville 199). What could be more natural than freedom? The problem is that only civilized and educated societies can successfully overcome the pitfalls that inevitably threaten the stability of free nations. One such pitfall is the potentially dangerous influence of a free press. Do we dare allow free rein to an entity that “makes its power felt not only over political opinions, but also over all opinions of men? It modifies not only laws, but mores” (172). To answer, De Tocqueville observes that freedom

and censorship are contradictory concepts. We “must surely recognize [each citizen’s] capacity to choose among the different opinions that agitate his contemporaries and to appreciate different facts, the knowledge of which can guide him” (174). Thus education of the citizenry is a necessary part of combatting the potential tyranny of the press. In further chapters, De Tocqueville goes on to describe how education plays a vital role in tempering other dangers to democracy such as the omnipotence of the majority.

Equal in importance, De Tocqueville saw the need for the citizens to be virtuous. He attributed the prosperity he saw in the US to two major factors. The first factor was the natural gift of the continent, which gave the people the means to remain equal and free for a long time. The second was the legacy of the Puritans who brought “equality of conditions and of intelligence...and the most appropriate habits, ideas, and mores to make a republic flourish” (267). De Tocqueville so thoroughly recognized the debt that all Americans owe the Puritans that he went on to say, “I

see the whole destiny of America contained in the first Puritan who landed on its shores” (267). The Puritans brought with them a tradition of education along with a moral code that supported a life of virtue. These qualities set the groundwork for a republic dedicated to freedom and equality. Our nation owes these pioneers our gratitude.



Currier and Ives, “Landing of Pilgrim Fathers at Plymouth.”
17th century.

De Tocqueville goes on to further shock his European peers with the claim that Americans disprove the progressive belief that “religious zeal...will be extinguished as freedom and enlightenment increase” (282). He experienced the opposite: “In America, one sees one of the freest and most enlightened peoples in the world eagerly fulfill all the external duties of religion” (282). Why is this important? Religion has often been portrayed as the enemy of freedom. Using the



Chassériau, “Alexis de Tocqueville.” 1850.

contemporary definition of freedom, that may be true. But in a society devoted to separation of church and state, De Tocqueville is rather astonished to find that by “diminishing the apparent force of a religion, one came to increase its real power” (283), a power which gains strength in influencing the mores of the people and encouraging virtue in the populace. De Tocqueville saw religion as a great aid in protecting the virtue of the people which in turn would protect the authentic freedom that Americans so fully enjoyed.

De Tocqueville calls freedom an art, a very complex art that takes over 600 pages to describe. On each page are insights into the unique qualities of this country that every person working towards Restoring America’s Heritage should read. For on the other side of the kind of freedom that relies upon education and virtue, the kind of freedom that is America’s Heritage, is tyranny. Establishing and maintaining a free society is a continual struggle. De Tocqueville so eloquently expresses this truth in the following:

There is nothing more prolific in marvels than the art of being free: but there is nothing harder than the apprenticeship of freedom. It is not the same with despotism. Despotism often

presents itself as the mender of all ills suffered; it is the support of good law, the sustainer of the oppressed, and the founder of order. Peoples fall asleep in the bosom of the temporary prosperity to which it gives birth; and when they awaken, they are miserable. Freedom, in contrast, is ordinarily born in the midst of storms, it is established painfully among civil discords, and only when it is old can one know its benefits (229).

Dante's journey was such an apprenticeship in freedom. He had to be educated and trained in virtue before becoming master of himself. Darcy and Lizzy too had to admit and then repair their faults before earning the ability to love each other freely, whereas Lydia and Wickham continued in slavery to their vices and could only look to a future dependent on others.

I will close with an observation from William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. We have all heard the seemingly good advice of Polonius to his son, Laertes: "This above all: to thine ownself be true, / And it must follow, as the night the day, / Thou canst not then be false to any man" (Shakespeare I.3.78-82). I have often wondered why Shakespeare put these words into the mouth of an obsequious fool. Such advice is popular in our culture. "Follow your Heart", "Follow your Passion", "Do what Feels Good", "Do What Your Heart Tells You". Although well-intentioned, all of these need some serious qualifiers. Was Shakespeare, in his own sly way, letting us know that such advice taken at face value is foolish? My question was answered a couple years ago while Christmas shopping at Barnes and Noble. I was leafing through a book called *Humans of New York* and saw a photograph of a young girl sitting on a suitcase in what looked like Grand Central Station with the following caption: "I wish I'd partied a little less. People always say 'be true to yourself.' But that's misleading, because there are two selves. There's your short term self, and there's your long term self. And if you're only true to your short term self, your long term self slowly decays". This girl had learned the foolishness of such advice the hard way. I wonder if she

knows that Shakespeare's fool was the first to utter it. And I wonder if her English teachers ever read Dante or Jane Austen with her. Returning to De Tocqueville, he notes that the "great privilege of the Americans is ... to have the ability to make repairable mistakes" (De Tocqueville 216). Hopefully De Tocqueville is right, and this young girl is able to recover from her mistakes, as our nation is from ours. It is unlikely that a magical Mr. Darcy or a celestial Beatrice is coming to save us from our present predicament.

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Appreciation of Heritage in Vergil's *Aeneid*

By Michael Boal

As wings to migration, so are generations of men to the flight of a sovereign nation. Great men alone, or even an age of collective excellence is not enough to sustain a republic, whether Roman or American, through the passage of time. Men die, and all but stolen with them into the grave is their ration of virtue and fitness. To continue, a nation must raise sons and daughters who love her too, a difficult thing, for even in golden ages, she is exposed and fragile. At the borders enemies maneuver; inside, many of the best wander and indulge until her forward motion is reduced and imperiled and sinks to ruin. Vital then to the arching glide of a nation are generations who harbor an affection for greatness—a confidence that winds of dissent and storms of discouragement do not abide, but soon give way to mild and temperate glades.

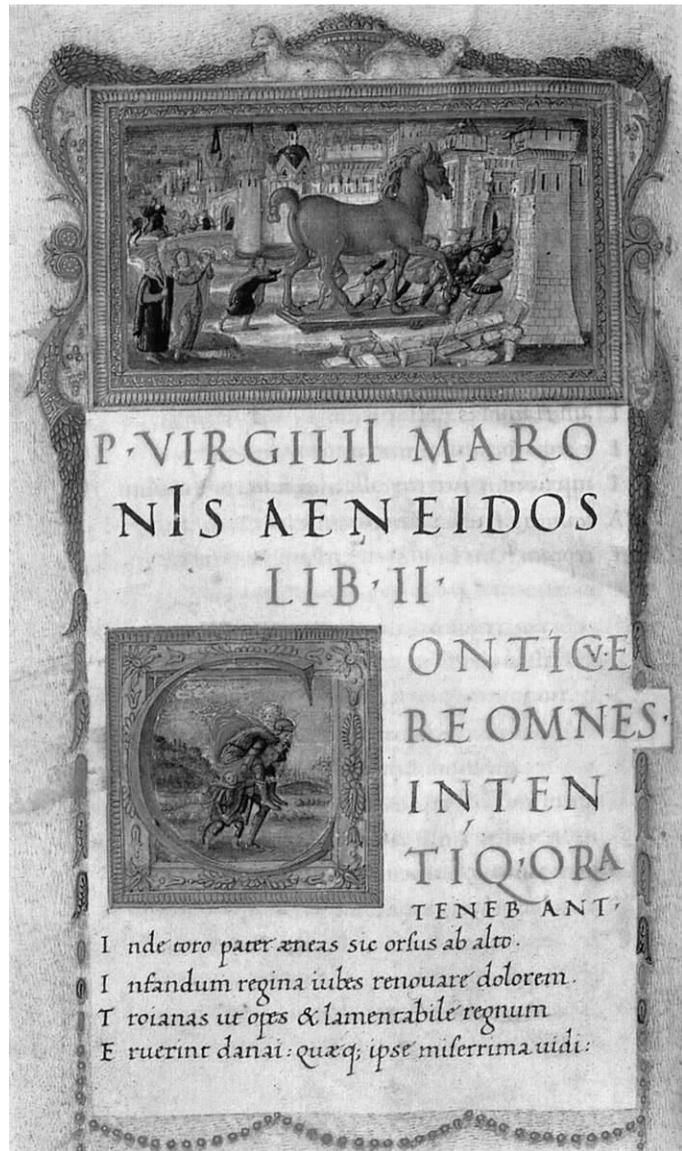
Quietly or overtly, residents of a land must nourish an appreciation for their nation and its heritage. In many instances, admiration is cultivated nationally. Holidays and parades, patriotic pastimes, and somber, stirring ceremonies foster and inflame a renewing love of country. These traditions however, wondrous as they are, are dampened by their recurring nature. Pomp and circumstance recall virtue, and put our minds aright toward it, but they are not the article itself.



Michael Boal joined the faculty at John Adams Academy in 2015. He currently teaches Latin 1-3 to 8th-12th grade scholars and is an advisor to scholar counsel.

Spontaneous, intimate examples of patriotism are what renew—and send stretching roots around the bedrock of our heart. Love of country is reborn through new acts of courage, new miracles of sacrifice and selflessness, new acclamations of honor where honor is due. Perhaps the crescendo of our national appreciation occurs when the inspiration for a pleasant surge of ardor is someone who is known and trusted, marked prior for their courage and virtue—a brother in arms, a credulous teacher, a beloved parent.

In Vergil's *Aeneid*, we discover such a diamond when an appreciation for the Roman heritage is lovingly relayed from father to son. In a marvelous episode that intertwines the metaphysical, the political, and the personal, the breathless shade of Anchises, *pater* of the Trojan Aeneas, climbs a grassy knoll in the Elysian Fields of the underworld and vividly narrates a parade of unborn, future Roman heroes to his son. In the dramatic context of the poem, with the hero not yet established in Italy and still harboring seven long years of sorrow and grief, there could not have been words more welcoming. Aeneas is figuratively and literally in hell; although just a sojourner in the realm



15th century manuscript of Virgil's *Aeneid*, Book II.
Padua, Italy, 1690.
British Library, London.

of the dead, emotionally he is wasted. He is nothing of the hero he had been or would become; though a heroic survivor in the highest sense, he remains a refugee of the ashes of fallen Troy, scarcely more a man than the pallid scepter of his father.

A few lines prior in the poem, the hope of the great Aeneas had tumbled to its nadir. After finally reaching his father, the two men sharing warm tears and words, he pleaded for the familiar grasp of Anchises' hand, reaching out toward him in the ardor of a last embrace:

So Aeneas pleaded, his face streaming tears,
three times he tried to fling his hands around his neck,
three times he embraced—nothing...the phantom
sifting through his fingers,
light as a wind, quick as a dream in flight.

(Aen. VI.807-11, trans. R. Fagles)

Though his father denies him this solace—forbidden by the gods and fates—he would not withhold a moment of his love. Vergil too, with his poetic touch, lessens and dissolves the terrible grief in a graceful simile between crowds of shades pouring toward the river Lethe and bees swirling among summer flowers.

Around [the waters] hovered numberless races, nations of souls
like bees in meadowlands on a cloudless summer day
that settle in flowers, riots of color, swarming round
the lilies' lustrous sheen, and the whole field comes alive
with a humming murmur.

(idem VI.815-19)



Dosso Dossi, *Aeneas at the Entrance to the Elysian Fields*. Ferrara, Italy, circa 1520.
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

Where in Homer's *Iliad* Achilles could find no comfort in his station among the shades, and offered none to Odysseus, the wise Anchises does not linger on his troubles; like a seed fallen and shattered in the soil, he reaches round toward the light and portends the great oak that will spread forth from his life. Anchises at last reverses the tragedy and begins to lead his boy forward, mingling joy and longing, out of their elegant anguish, forward out of their shattered identity as Trojans toward an appreciation of their arriving Roman heritage in an ecstatic flight of words.

How long I have yearned to tell you, to show them to you,
face-to-face, yes, as I count the tally out
of all my children's children. So all the more you can
rejoice with me in Italy, found at last.

(*idem* VI.827-30)

After narrating a curious but compelling eschatological vision that explains why, exactly, future generations of heroes and statesmen are lounging around the underworld as fully grown men waiting to be born, Anchises tugs his son's attention toward the noble soul of each and every one. First in line, as chance would have it in the grand procession is Silvius—no one less than the

future son of Aeneas himself, then “Capys, Numitor, and the one who revives your name, Silvius Aeneas, your equal in arms and duty.”

The position of these three is fitting on two accounts. First, his early descendants serve as living inspirations and pledges of success. With his own eyes, pious Aeneas may finally see the glory of his sufferings, and the purpose, or at least the advantage, of his survival. But the greater magic of their grouping is chronological. With short stokes of the stylus, Vergil transports his hero—and his readers—down a rolling stream of centuries, welling from the times of his son and grandson Silvius and Silvius Aeneas, tumbling over the middling years of Capys, all the way down to the realm of Numitor, who as the rumored grandfather of the wolf-raised twins Remus and Romulus, hints the dawn of coming Rome. Now at last death and loss are all but forgotten, and the pride of Anchises’ hope is unrestrainable. Indeed, a few hexameters later he is unable to contain the boast:

My son, our brilliant Rome will extend her empire far
and wide as the earth, her spirits high as Olympus.
Within her single wall she will gird her seven hills,
blest in her breed of men: like the Berecynthian Mother
crowned with her turrets, riding her victor’s chariot
through the Phrygian cities, glad in her brood of gods,
embracing a hundred grandsons. All dwell in the heavens,
all command the heights.

(*idem* VI.902-08)

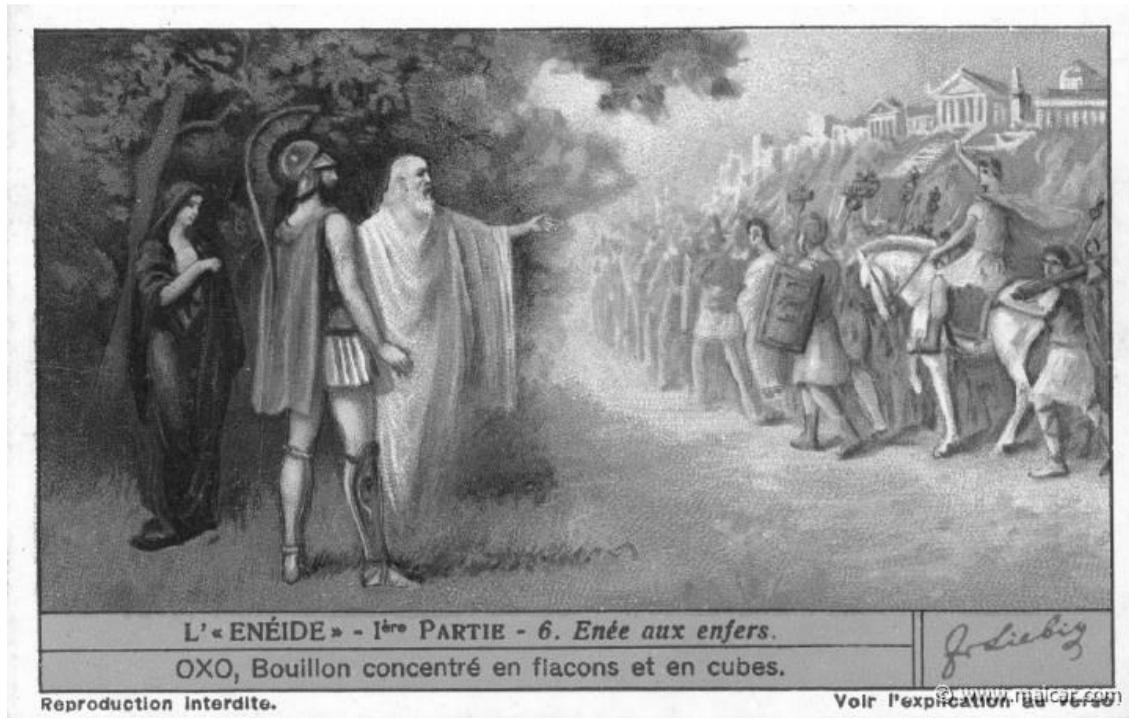
Aside from the exhilarating promise of power—which echoes Jupiter’s earlier pledge of *imperium sine fine* (dominion without end) for Aeneas and his descendant city, the inclusion of the simile of the Berecynthian Mother (Cybele, the Mother of the gods) rejoicing in her chariot offers testament to the future Romans’ joy in military triumphs, and to Aeneas’ present enchantment. As Viktor Poschl unfolded in *The Art of Vergil*, the poem’s many similes are “transparent signs for inner events” (65). Ostensibly, a goddess on a chariot is unremarkable, or at least inferior to the glowing splendor of natural beauty (such as the murmuring meadow above), or even the majestic artifices of heroic or human achievement. Quietly, however, the accumulate collection of joy, the goddess for her immortal grandsons, the Roman readers—Vergil’s contemporaries—for their national triumphs, the modern for his own loves, meld together into an intimate appreciation of the Roman national heritage.

A touch of glory established, the catalogue of heroes properly begins—with pride of place offered to the man who held the reins of Rome. Anchises resumes with a soaring encomium:

Here is the man, he’s here! Time and again
 You’ve heard his coming promised—Caesar Augustus!
 Son of a god, he will bring back the Age of Gold...
 ...expand his empire...to a land beyond the stars...
 Do we still flinch from turning our valor into deeds?
 Or fear to make our home on Western soil?

(*idem* VI.913-15;17;18;31-2)

From Augustus, Vergil wings us swiftly over the ranks of Roman statesmen, craftsmen, and orators—some contemporary, many noble heroes of old. Each man sets a moral standard or



“Aeneas in Hell,” Liebig’s collector card, 1930.

virtuous example; a few lend a wrenching admonition for all. Often the beautiful relief of the poet’s Latin is the only comfort for the telling, such as when he culminates Anchises’ descriptions of the legendary Lucius Junius Brutus, he who freed Rome from Etruscan tyrants, and yet he who was also, miserably, the father who chose to capture and kill his own sons after discovering them plotting for the kings’ return. However later generations might view these deeds, Vergil concludes, so tender in the original—*vincet amor patriae laudumque immensa cupido*—his love of country and immense desire for praise will prevail. Next in the assembly of shades, Anchises singles out the arch-generals, and reluctant captains of Rome’s terrible civil war, Pompey and Julius Caesar, refulgent in their arms in the Elysian plains. Harmonious souls, he explains to Aeneas, for the time being, and every instant they are pressed in by the night of Hades, but *alas* if they should ever touch the light of life! Next he marks Lucius Mummius Achaicus, the person who effectively

bridled the last wild throes of ancient Greece, stealing away her Corinthian treasures and potent seeds of classical culture back to the rich soils of then agrarian Rome. In the following breath, gasping, Anchises cries out to Cato, the bulwark of moral conservatism; in the next to the Gracchi brothers, the populist anathema of the senatorial elite.

Quis te, magne Cato, tacitum aut te, Cosse, relinquat?

Quis Gracchi genus aut geminos, duo fulmina belli,

Scipiadas cladem Libyae...?

Who, noble Cato, could pass you by in silence? Or you, Cossus?

Or the Gracchi, and their kin? Or the two Scipios,

Both thunderbolts of battle, Libya's scourge?

(*idem* VI.967-70)

Death, the poet knows, softens and humiliates the grinding differences of countrymen. Like a pastor distributing solace, Vergil labored to sow in his readers an appreciation of their national heritage in its variety of hues, even if, at press time, the *pax Romana* of Augustus was adumbrating prior achievements, especially the Hellenistic triumphs of art and science. In one of the most famous passages of the poem, Anchises waxes poetic in a long apostrophe to his future Romans:

Others, I have no doubt,

Will forge the bronze to breathe with suppler lines,

Draw from the block of marble features quick with life,

Plead their cases better, chart with their rods the stars

That climb the sky and foretell the times they rise.
But you, Roman, remember, rule with all your power
The peoples of the earth—these will be your arts:
To put your stamp on the works and ways of peace,
To spare the defeated, to war down the proud.

(*idem* VI.977-84)

The Romans were necessarily clear-eyed and pragmatic. So many nations, crowded with great men and great achievements in art, science, and policy, were presently a ruin of stones. Athenian civilization, the paragon of all, had reached dizzying heights of artistic and philosophical grandeur, and was even still trundling on in a powerful sense through the affections of generations of scholars, poets, and architects, but the citizens themselves, the people of Athens, had lost their liberties and their culture of greatness a long time ago. As an artist sensitive to the eternal motives of beauty, Vergil would have had untold tenderness for the “bronze with suppler lines” and the “marbles quick with life,” but as a citizen and oracle of Rome, he could only concede that the sustaining and therefore superior art was political: “sparing the defeated, and warring down the proud.”

Anchises’ intimate but rough-edged narrative consecrated an appreciation for national heritage, the most rational of loves, within the affections of Aeneas. With such a legacy to anticipate, the long suffering hero did not falter in the adversities and tragedies ahead. He could see past the losses of the transient present to imagine a more permanent day. Glory, in the highest sense, had become the mature offspring of the inferior heroism of Aeneas’ earlier days. Through the enduring ascension of nationality, all fallen heroes, whether ones who had died for Troy, *pater*

Anchises, or those who would perish for Rome, assumed a nobility and honor which invites imitation and summons tears to this day. While not all in this country will contribute so fully to the gliding course of their nation, all may yet strive, in the words of Thomas Jefferson, to “advance with obedience to the work,” (115) and to learn from the *Aeneid* the privilege and duty of appreciating our national heritage.

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A Connection Between Abraham Lincoln and Euclid

By Martin O'Hara

Could there be any connection between Abraham Lincoln, one of our greatest presidents, the president who shepherded our country through a civil war and the abolition of slavery, and Euclid, the Greek mathematician responsible for ordering geometry and arithmetic into sciences? Astonishingly, yes.

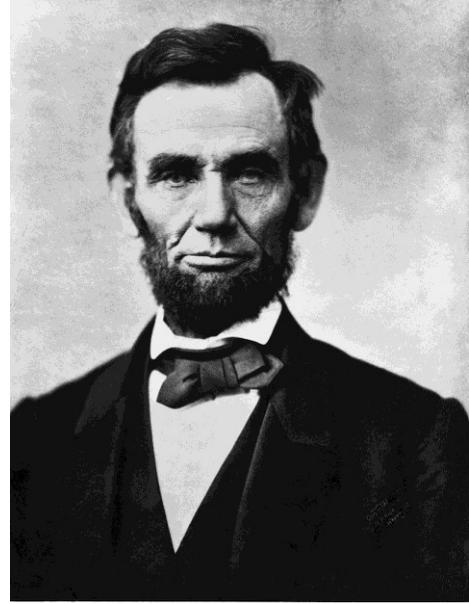
Billy Herndon, Abraham Lincoln's law partner and biographer, reported that Lincoln spent long hours studying and mastering the first six books of Euclid's work, *The Elements*, and that Lincoln often carried a copy of *The Elements* with him while a lawyer

and member of the House of Representatives. The first six books of *The Elements* is a systematic presentation of linear and plane geometry. Euclid begins with definitions and ten self-evident propositions and then proceeds to establish the existence of and demonstrate the properties of the various linear and plane figures. Since Lincoln is a statesman and lawyer, we must ask a couple questions. Why were *The Elements* so important to him? Why does Lincoln spend so much time mastering the numerous propositions of the first six books? We find the explanation in the great President's letters:



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In the course of my law reading I constantly came upon the word “demonstrate”. I thought at first that I understood its meaning, but soon became satisfied that I did not. I said to myself, What do I do when I demonstrate more than when I reason or prove? How does demonstration differ from any other proof? I consulted Webster’s Dictionary. They told of ‘certain proof,’ ‘proof beyond the possibility of doubt’; but I could form no idea of what sort of proof that was. I thought a great many things were proved beyond the possibility of doubt, without recourse to any such extraordinary process of reasoning as I understood demonstration to be. I consulted all the dictionaries and books of reference I could find, but with no better results. You might as well have defined blue to a blind man.



Alexander Gardner, “Abraham Lincoln.”
1863. Library of Congress.

At last I said, [to myself] “Lincoln, you never can make a lawyer if you do not understand what demonstrate means”; and I left my situation in Springfield, went home to my father’s house, and stayed there till I could give any proposition in the six books of Euclid at sight. I then found out what demonstrate means, and went back to my law studies. (Robinson)

From this reading we surmise that, on the one hand, Abraham Lincoln was convinced that “a great many things were proven beyond the possibility of doubt.” He believed human beings are

able to demonstrate that many things are necessarily true. On the other hand, Lincoln did not have personal experience of demonstrating anything. Without this real first-hand experience, all the talk about demonstrating propositions to be true was meaningless to him. ‘You might as well have defined blue to a blind man.’

To his credit, Lincoln had the humility to recognize that his experience was lacking. Lincoln abandoned his study of law and went on a quest to amend what was lacking in him. It would be

interesting to know how Lincoln ended up with a copy of *The Elements*; Lincoln doesn’t mention how he came upon Euclid’s work. Yet, Lincoln’s quest led him back to his father’s home where he remained until he mastered the first six books of *The Elements*. This is a significant task. These are the same six books that our scholars at John Adams Academy study in the course of a year. The study of *The Elements* gave Lincoln the experience of proving something ‘beyond the possibility of a doubt.’ Fortified with this experience, Lincoln felt adequately equipped to return to his law studies.

Educators can learn many lessons from this chapter in Abraham Lincoln’s life. A most significant lesson is the importance of having first-hand experience of proving that something is necessarily true. That we are able to prove that a proposition is necessarily true is a wondrous thing. Let’s consider this for a moment.

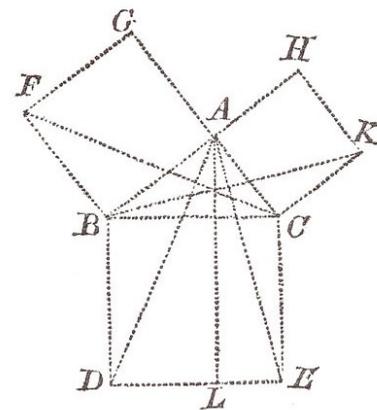


Andre de Thevet, “Euclid.” 1584 engraving.

Just as the eye is made to know color or the ear is made to know sound, the human mind is made to know truth. That we can know truth should seem obvious and a matter of common sense, yet our ability to know truth is not universally recognized in the halls of academia. The Modernist academic view is that truth is relative and inaccessible; what is true for one person is false for another. The Classical view is precisely what Abraham Lincoln affirms in his letter, that ‘a great many things are proved beyond the possibility of doubt.’ The Classical view, Lincoln’s and Euclid’s, affirms that the human mind is able to prove that propositions are universally true. The scholar who takes the time to master the proposition of *The Elements* knows ‘beyond the possibility of doubt’ that the Pythagorean Theorem, for example, is necessarily true. It is not true for one person and false for another; it is true for all people, in all times and in all places. The Pythagorean Theorem and every proposition proven in *The Elements* are universally true. They are some of those great many things, to which Abraham Lincoln refers, which are proved beyond the possibility of doubt.

In a world where intellectual relativity abounds, it is important that the young mind have first-hand experience of proving propositions to be true. Scholars who, like Abraham Lincoln, master the propositions in *The Elements*, are given that experience. Fortified with this experience, scholars can evaluate the certitude of other ideas.

The DEMONSTRATION.



Proof of the Pythagorean Theorem
in Euclid's *Elements*.

The claim is not that every proposition we hold is true. Many of our opinions are false or half-truths at best. Some of the truths we hold are held without sufficient cause. What Lincoln recognized is that there are rational processes by which we can prove propositions to be necessarily true. It is the task therefore of Classical education to familiarize the scholar with the various rational processes by which we test the truth of our ideas. The lesson we learn from Abraham Lincoln is that we must also obtain first-hand experience in which the certitude of ideas is weighed.



Raphael, "The School of Athens," detail.
Circa 1510. Vatican Museum

In his logical works, Aristotle, the Greek philosopher, identifies five rational processes by which we assess the certitude of our ideas: analytical reasoning, dialectal reasoning, rhetoric, poetic reasoning and sophistry. It is by analytical reasoning that scientific certitude is produced. We reason analytically when we reason validly from true principles. This is what Euclid does in *The Elements* and what any thinker does when one discovers the principles of a discipline and reasons validly from those principles. Analytical reasoning produces scientific knowledge.

We reason dialectically when we reason validly from propositions which are only possibly true; ideas which are commonly held or held by the experienced or wise. We often use dialectical reasoning, yet dialectics is specifically used in the scientific method, where hypotheses, which are

only possibly true, are used to explain observable phenomena. Dialectical reasoning produces opinion.

We reason rhetorically when our aim is to persuade an audience to accept something as true and good or to reject something as false or wrong. The rhetorician knows the audience and chooses the most appropriate means to move the audience to accept the position. Since emotion often plays a significant role in persuasion, the rhetorician is able to manage the emotions of the audience. In the end the rhetorician chooses the best way to persuade.

True poetic reasoning employs images to move the listener to appreciate what is good and despise what is evil. The poet moves the listener by appealing to the imagination and by using things which are familiar as likenesses or similes that shed light on things which are less familiar. While the rhetorician often appeals to emotion, the poet moves the mind by appealing to the imagination. Poetry produces appreciation or its opposite.

Finally, sophistry is faulty reasoning, reasoning which produces error. One studies sophistry for the same reason the doctor studies disease. One studies disease to identify disease and remove it. One studies sophistry to identify faulty reasoning so as to prevent the spread of error.

Being able to describe of the various rational processes does not constitute a Classical education. We learn through first-hand experience. Just as Abraham Lincoln turned to Euclid to gain both first-hand experience and confidence in the rational processes that produce demonstration, Classical education provides the scholar with first-hand experience of each of the five rational processes so as to build confidence in reason. The scholar familiar with the various

rational processes and fortified with the experience of using them will have the intellectual skill needed to discern the true and false in everyday life and will be poised, like our great President, for a life-long pursuit of knowledge and Wisdom.

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Call for Submissions

The editors of *Mentor* would like to graciously invite all John Adams Academy faculty to contribute submissions to this journal. As educators, we have secretly appreciated how your actions and words contribute to our academic community; as writers we have jealously admired how you see the good in things beyond our view. Whether your main vantage point is a Kindergarten classroom, an administrative office, or places beyond or between, you have valuable perspectives on the ways our Core Values intersect with the curricula of our Academy.

On a rotating basis, *Mentor* will focus on a particular Core Value; the theme of the first volume therefore was our First Core Value, “Appreciation of our National Heritage.” The theme of our upcoming second volume then will be our 2nd Core value, *Public and Private Virtue*.

All articles within the journal aim simply to connect the thematic Core Value with a classic written text, song, or artifact that is presently studied at school. Whether you admire the public and private virtue in Washington’s *Farewell Address*, or you delight in *Charlotte’s Web* and have always wanted to contrast the public and private virtue of Wilbur the Pig with the insatiable tummy of Templeton the Rat, we invite you to submit an essay for consideration. Do not hide your light—you are wise and observant and we would love to hear from you!

Article prompt:

Having selected a written text, artefact, or musical score from the Academy’s curricula, discuss and persuade in an essay of 1000 to 1500 words how John Adams Academy’s 2nd Core Value *Public and Private Virtue* is evident in (your chosen) musical score, artefact, or written text. Cite and credit all sources according to MLA format, including a Works Cited page.

Review/Publication Process:

1. Submission Deadline: Friday, April 21st
2. Saturday, April 22nd–Friday, April 28th: Submissions will be read and reviewed by active John Adams School Board, who will select essays for publication.
3. Saturday, April 29th–Friday, May 5th Editing and proof-reading of nominated essays by *Mentor* editors Greg Blankenbeler and Michael Boal.
4. Distribution: Monday, May 22nd through Friday, May 26th.

Nota Bene: during the week of 4/29 through 5/5, submitted essays may be returned to their authors for suggested revision. As editors, we will make every effort to maintain the integrity of all original essays in their entirety, but given the need for timely printing and distribution, we must reserve the right to make all final revisions.



MENTOR

JOHN ADAMS ACADEMY FACULTY ACADEMIC JOURNAL

Volume I, Issue 1 – Fall 2016

Appreciation of our National Heritage

Public & Private Virtue

Emphasis on Mentors & Classics

Scholar Empowered Learning

Fostering Creativity & Entrepreneurial Spirit

High Standards of Academic Excellence

Modeling what we Teach

Abundance Mentality

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Self-governance, Personal Responsibility & Accountability



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