



Heritage Academy's

INDEPENDENCE

Winter 2017

PROBLEMS AND
SOLUTIONS

Our Mission

It is the mission of the Independence to share the messages of Heritage Academy scholars with their community, and to promote ideas of freedom and American ideals.

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Education: The Foundation of Our Future

By Jacob Hill

Today, we are facing a crisis. America boasts of its freedom and so-called limitless possibilities. And yet, beneath this golden shell, a festering and unsavoury truth lurks. The United States of America are struggling, and it isn't a fight that we are winning. Many things, people, and events are preventing our nation from rising up and regaining the glory and prestige it once held. And one of our greatest and most difficult roadblocks? Education. Our schools are not what they should be. Students are not learning so much as reciting facts and formulas for a test that will likely never impact their lives again. When it comes to overall knowledge, our "great nation" is grossly represented. In a number of studies done over the past few years, some disturbing data was collected. Out of all the adults in America, only 40% have completed at least an Associate's Degree. And even just basic education is lacking in our society. In a test to discover the average

literacy rate in the 50 states, it was found that 14% of all adults in the U.S. can't even read. That's around 32 million adults. How come our national educational standards are so low? Why can't we figure out a way to learn and teach more effectively? Fortunately for us, there may be a solution. And it comes from the unlikely country of Finland.

School in Finland is drastically different than ours. We go sit in classrooms for eight hours, four or five days a week. Finnish students have only an hour or two of class time, and little or no homework ever. But contrary to what might be expected, they have the number one educational system in the entire world. Their secret lies in the fact that most of the school the kids go to in Finland, they spend outdoors. They run around, play games, explore, or whatever they please. This builds large amounts of self-reliance, communication, cooperation, and connection with others. On top of that,

because they discover and learn and grow on their own, these changes are never forgotten. In America, children are essentially trained to be factory workers. We sit in straight lines, do exactly as we're told, and raise our hands to speak. We have small breaks, and eight-hour school days. That sounds an awful lot like a normal workday in a factory. Why don't we give each student their own personal education? In Finland, students are often one-on-one with their teachers. This allows them to learn at their own level and pace. When a class is simply lectured at from a podium, some people understand while others struggle. The classroom society of our schools kills originality and self-reliance because other people can help with what you don't know. This is not right. A change must be made.

Now, I'm not pleading drastic changes all at once. Frankly, that could

cause even more problems, but it also reveals another point of conflict. Americans are so dependent on what we know and have right now that we're afraid to change something, and not understand it. Our schools are suffering, yet no wants to risk doing anything different. We must take a stand, those few that are willing to risk it. If we try, others will join us. Regardless, we cannot simply allow our education to plummet in value, and drag our nation right along with it. We students should be taught to prepare them for the future, not to live in the past. We students are the future of our nation. It rests on our shoulders alone. If we are not ready for the weight, what will happen when we fall? Education is the foundation to a truly "great" America. And our foundation is cracked and worn. It's time to make a change, and lay a new foundation.

America: Problems and Solutions

By Emily Gregg

When a television show or movie no longer interests its viewers, often the source of the problem can be traced to the producers straying from the show's original thoughts. How many become disappointed when a film adaptation of a popular book creates an entirely new story? As people apply what they call "literary license" into anything, discontent is a widely feared possibility. Just as changing a story affects all who view it, changing the law affects all those subjected to it. In law, there is no room for literary license, yet it is painfully present. Thomas Jefferson warned, "The greatest danger to American freedom is a government that ignores the Constitution." While American politicians and their constituents claim an allegiance to the self-evident truths presented in the nation's founding documents, poorly made executive decisions in times of proclaimed crises constantly oppose those principles.

Benjamin Franklin observed that "Only a virtuous people are capable of

freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters."

When the freely made decisions of one limit another's ability to exercise his inalienable rights, the idea of positive liberty is implemented. In essence, positive liberty provides additional legislation as a safeguard to protect those affected by others' misdeeds. The events following the attack on the World Trade Centers on September 11th, 2001, highlight how this concept is applied. Because the terrorists were able to overtake multiple flights, many concluded that the airports needed to be reinforced with security. Therefore, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) was created. Although citizens believe their liberties are protected in another law, surrendering freedom to an intangible entity is nothing less than subjecting to manipulation. Benjamin Franklin additionally declared that "Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve

neither liberty nor safety,” and the United States has not received much protection from the manipulation of the law. The right to deny unwarranted search and seizure should always be practiced, or it will become forgotten. Once an exception is made in one case, the foundation withers away.

Since the aforementioned example, and even previous to it, a myriad of additional rights have been relinquished for trivial purposes. Immediately following the United States’ entrance into World War II, laws were put into place to make sure that arming the nation and supplying the Allied forces in the war was of the utmost importance. There were limitations on the quantity of food one could buy, the amount of money one was paid for work, and how frequently unions could assemble. Previous to the war, union strikes were seen as a danger and often caused panic—something the government did not desire in wartime lest it distract from the proclaimed priority. In fact, in 1943, Congress passed the Smith-Connally Anti-Strike Act, which prohibited strikes in any designated war plants and

limited the activity of labor unions (“Southern Labor Archives”). Consequently, the government placed a temporary tyrannical seal on the people, therefore restricting their Constitutional rights. A government’s role is to directly serve the people and protect their rights—both innate and legal. Since the government focused its efforts on winning the war and made executive decisions, it momentarily denied its citizens their freedom to choose.

Denying unions the opportunity to strike goes against the founding ideals within the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. The Declaration reads, “when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security” (US 1776). This applies to any destructive power, including one in the workforce. Certainly, because the government was regulating the workforce at that time, it would become even more applicable. Furthermore, restricting the

activities of unions restricts an individual's right to assemble, guaranteed in the first amendment to the Constitution. In 1943, when the Act was passed, 57.6% of the country was in the labor force (Bureau of Labor Statistics). More than half of the population's freedom was under attack in at least one additional way. While the United States battled overseas to preserve President Franklin D. Roosevelt's fourth freedom from fear in foreign lands, it forgot the fear that had been present and would continue to be within the nation. Usually citizens feel a certain degree of dedication or patriotism towards their country and mechanically entrust their free will to the rulers without considering the lasting consequences. While the majority of the country was in support of the Second World War, the danger of allowing the government to restrict simple and plain liberty is the people then enable it to continuously infringe on a myriad of more closely guarded rights.

Along with the importance of following the Constitution comes the importance of retaining a moral society.

Originally, Thomas Jefferson desired the words of the Declaration of Independent to read, "We hold these truths to be sacred and undeniable," for so he believed they were (US 1776). Indeed, those rights have been endowed by the Creator, so why do people so quickly forget His statutes? Some may argue that moral law does not come from God, and therefore we do not need him to have an ethical society. However, man cannot give himself inalienable rights, such as the right to live, the right to have liberty, and the right to be happy. Robert Winthrop said, "Men, in a word, must necessarily be controlled either by a power within them or by a power without them; either by the Word of God or by the strong arm of man; either by the Bible or by the bayonet." Certainly, with the example of an occasionally necessarily brutal police corps, the reality of this quote is confirmed. Walter Williams continues this thought, saying, "Policemen and laws can never replace customs, traditions and moral values as a means for regulating human behavior. At best, the police and criminal justice system are the last desperate line of defense for a

civilized society. Our increased reliance on laws to regulate behavior is a measure of how uncivilized we've become" (Williams). When it takes strict force to maintain a decent people, morality is already absent.

Put simply, if the citizens of the United States would remember what is good and right and uphold those standards laid out in the Constitution, society could change for the better (which a naturally moral people would be willing to do). Although it may seem unpopular to put such faith in a so-called "antiquated" document, the principles displayed within are the ones that allow those opinions to be voiced without reprimand. As an increasing number of issues are linked to hurt feelings, one would

do well to remember these words: "To be offended is a choice we make; it is not a condition inflicted upon us by someone or something else" (Bednar). With this mindset, the United States can begin making the right decisions without being blinded by emotion. As Jane Eyre said, "feeling without judgment is a washy draught indeed, but judgment untampered by feeling is too bitter and husky a morsel for human deglutition" (Brontë 253). Because the people of America have used their own doctrine to create law instead of remembering the "sacred and undeniable truths" in the Constitution, the true nature of freedom has ceased to have meaning (US 1776).

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America: Problems and Solutions: Debates

By Zoey Jones

Although the people of America have been given the right of free speech, they have become intolerant when hearing other people's opinions. They have become shallow minded in the art of debating. People such as politicians enter debates without being willing to understand their opponent's argument. There is no room for adjustment in this day and age because people are too busy debating with no reasonable end. People get rallied up and even out of control in some scenarios. A solution to this growing problem would be to have more open minds. The people in this country need to be more tolerant to those around them. They don't necessarily have to all agree with one central opinion, but if they were willing to listen to one another, things would be simpler. The freedom of speech only works when the freedom of being heard is existent. If the citizens of America recognized their outbursts and did

something to fix them, then there would be less protest groups and more unity. Unity, or totality as combining all parts into one, is an important quality for a country to have because it reduces the chance of starting a civil war within the country. Just a typical debate, though, wouldn't be the cause of such war; it would have to be a much more seriously discussed and argued point. In the case of unity, there is more peace. Peace enables people to look beyond their own lives and to help protect the lives of others around them. If America created peace and unity within the country, then it would be able to help the surrounding countries with other problems. President Donald Trump says that, "We must speak our minds openly, debate our disagreements honestly, but always pursue solidarity." In order to keep our country unified, the American citizens need to use their right of free speech wisely and be indulgent when debating.



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NEW FOUNDATION.”

—JACOB HILL



HERITAGE ACADEMY
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