



Independence

The Scholarly Journal of Heritage Academy

Our Mission

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

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Patriotism

Quincy Davis

A patriot can be defined as “a person who vigorously supports their country and is prepared to defend it against detractors.” This defense can be foreign or domestic, local or national, but it does not have to be public or overdramatized. Being a patriot does not demand that you fight in a war or serve in the military. It does not require you profess your love for your country aloud. It does not insist that you love your president or your mayor or your senator. Instead, being a patriot asks for much more subtle acknowledgments.

We create the patriot in ourselves by expressing our feelings and speaking up for what we believe is right for the nation. Whether that means protesting injustice, preaching about the Constitution, voting, debating, etc., displays of patriotism are up to the individual. Patriots are all around us. They are our neighbors who display flags on the 4th of July. They are our teachers who

tell of the strength and prosperity of America. They are also our friends and family who vote to strengthen the country, despite opposition. They are conservatives who defend the word of the Constitution, and they are liberals who strive for equality and progression.

We create the patriot in ourselves by expressing our feelings and speaking up for what we believe benefits our nation. To me, patriotism is ensuring that my own voice will be heard without conforming to the influences of my community. Me being a Democrat does not make me any more of a patriot than my staunch Republican friend. Our differing viewpoints on the way this country should function do not make one of us more loyal than the other. We are simply two different fish in a sea of a 150 million American creatures, each unique in their own way. Opposing political arguments do not define a person’s affection for their

country. At the end of the day, every politician, citizen, and president should have the same goal, to maintain this country's reputation and move it in the right direction. That alone is enough to uphold the ideals of patriotism.

Patriotism vs. Nationalism

Shannon Erickson

Patriotism is the reason for change. It is the reason for growth. It is the refining power each citizen has authority to exercise. Many would believe too much support for one's country does not exist; however, I disagree.

Nationalism is described as "devotion, especially excessive or indiscriminating...to the interests or culture of a particular nation-state" ("Nationalism"). The excessive love Hitler's Nazis had for Germany led them to become nationalists. Following blindly for the supposed good of the country, this group was willing to sacrifice anything for their country, even their honor, integrity, and virtue.

Patriotism is necessary for virtuous nations. It is defined as "love for or devotion to one's country" ("Patriotism"). This differs from nationalism because the word "excessive" is not mentioned. Martin Luther King Jr. was a perfect example of a patriot. He loved America with a passion, but when

he was told that neither he nor his children would live in a country where they would be treated equally, he refused to accept this fate. He refused to blindly follow his leaders who told him he did not measure up to others because of his race. MLK loved his country, but he still dreamed of improvement.

Through these two examples, we can learn from their triumphs and mistakes. Too much love for one's own country exists, but this does not mean that patriotism should not. Rather than diminish moral values, patriotism helps them thrive. Being patriotic should refine the citizen and the nation. We each hold the power to create a healthier country. Patriotism is not recognition for being great. It is not haughty or puffed up. It is something others only see if they look at you on the inside. Like King, it is standing for what is right. It is making your country a place you are proud to call home.

What Patriotism Means to Me

Carmina Garey

When we think of the word patriotism, we often imagine a majestic eagle soaring over Americans clad in red, white, and blue. However, to me, patriotism is not waving an American flag or singing the national anthem. Patriotism is more than an act. It is a way of thinking. Despite what popular American culture portrays, patriotism comes when one has a true and deep understanding of what our country stands for and then acting on that understanding.

The United States of America is a country founded on the principles of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Although some argue that we have deviated from these founding principles, we must understand and uphold these truths in order to be patriots and citizens of America. But how can we do that in today's society? The answer lies in the examples set for us by our Founding Fathers. These incredible men were the essence of patriotism. These men

were not only patriots in action, they were patriots because they fully understood liberty. They spent their time studying governments and ideas, then they used this understanding to create a strong country with a strong representative democracy. Thomas Jefferson penned the Declaration of Independence as one of the greatest acts of patriotism in our country's history. Study of documents such as the Virginia Declaration of Rights gave Thomas Jefferson a deep understanding of what freedom meant and how crucial it was for the betterment of the colonists. Only through years of study was he able to write that hallowed document.

It is our duty to become true patriots by participating in our government through educating ourselves, knowing who our representatives are, and voting. We have a much larger role than just waving flags. It is our job as heirs of this magnificent country to learn all we can and be involved.

Patriotism Made Personal

Michael Mosley

If someone were to view patriotism as a recipe it would have three main ingredients.

The most obvious ingredient is love of country. Deeply caring for the people and principles upon which this country was founded is integral to what makes up a patriot. My grandfather who is now passed, volunteered for the most controversial war of the 20th century (Vietnam) for one main reason, love. Despite the obvious danger inevitably attached to war, my grandfather decided he loved his fellow Americans more than his life. He couldn't stand the thought of his brothers fighting and dying without him.

The second ingredient for a patriot is the will that leads to action. As powerful as words and ideas may be, they are just ink on paper unless citizens respond to a call for action. I'm not just addressing those who have fought in war. I am writing of patriots like my mother whose love of country compels her to stand. I'm speaking of my

father who, is thought not a wealthy man, but puts aside money for Americans stricken by disasters. A patriot is not just an American who loves their country. A patriot is someone who loves their country enough to do something.

The final ingredient is pride. As Senior Patrol Leader in my Boy Scout troop, I lead Boy Scouts of all ages in a fundraiser: we post flags in front of houses for every national holiday throughout the year. Oftentimes, an inexperienced or inattentive scout will procrastinate taking down flags until after dusk. This understandably aggravates the older clients that we serve. This older generation doesn't tolerate disrespect towards the flag; it offends their American pride. And I agree wholeheartedly agree with them. To the older generation, the flag means brotherly love and substantial sacrifice and they're proud of that. Pride and love of country drove these citizens to pick up the phone and give me an irate phone call. Patriotism means love of country,

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desire to serve, and pride. That is what a patriot is. That is what patriotism to me.

Education and Patriotism

Laine Norton

I show my patriotism by educating people about what it means to live in a self-governing society. A free country only remains free from oppression and chaos when its people are educated about their system of government. Learning about current American government and history of the United States keeps a culture of self-governance alive.

Learning history helps us to preserve liberty in the United States. A patriot is someone who is educated about past events so that he can make informed decisions on current issues. Maximilien Robespierre explained, “The secret of freedom lies in educating people, whereas the secret of tyranny is in keeping them ignorant” (Robespierre). Patriots do not want their people to live under tyranny, so they initiate education of the masses.

In the summer of 2016, I spoke at The Young Americans for Liberty national convention in Washington D.C. At this convention, I spoke about the importance of the Constitution and how it is still applicable today. A first step towards more liberty, is to learn the rules of the Republic. We can educate ourselves about the rulebooks, the U.S. and State Constitutions..

Education preserves liberty. Thomas Jefferson is the classical example of a patriot one who shared his thoughts on liberty for everyone to hear without fearing any consequences. He wrote, “An enlightened citizenry is indispensable for the proper functioning of a republic” (Jefferson). A patriot is someone who teaches people about what is closest to their heart-- freedom.

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