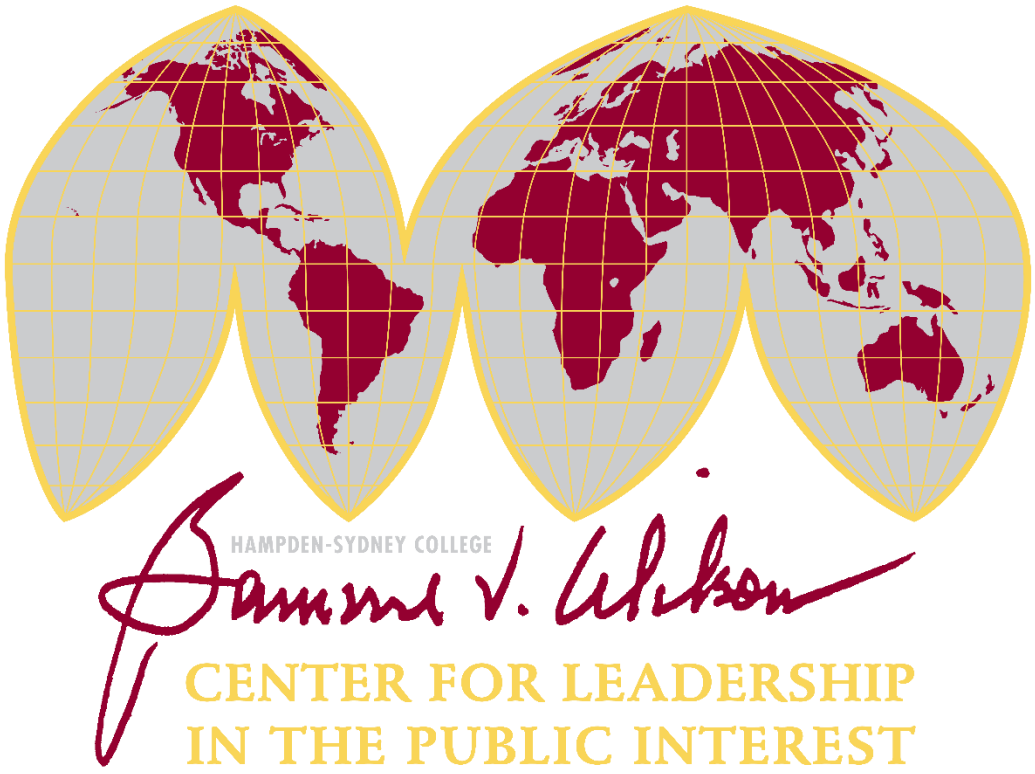

Wilson Center for Leadership in the Public Interest
Hampden-Sydney College

Constitution Day | September 17, 2020

Collected Remarks and Readings

Introduction from the Director

We are fond of saying that every day at Hampden-Sydney is Citizenship and Constitution Day. The rights and responsibilities of citizenship in our democratic republic are imprinted on the hearts and minds of all of our students. Every day our students take classes in natural sciences and mathematics, humanities, and the social sciences. They learn about our natural environment and how to weigh and compare facts and figures. They learn about human nature, social movements and human interaction, the nature of markets and commerce, histories of civilizations, and ways people govern themselves. They read the best things ever written so they may transport themselves in time and space.

Empathy. Respect. Courage. Compassion. Moderation. Sound judgment. Foresight. These characteristics are imprinted in the mind of each student in the classroom.

Outside of the classroom our young men live by an honor code and code of student conduct administered by students. They compete on courts, fields, in the UPLS hall and at Ethics Bowl tournaments. They say hello to everyone they pass as an acknowledgement of the worth and dignity of every human being. Honesty. Collegiality. Teamwork. Fairness. Humility. Loyalty. Civility. These characteristics are imprinted in the heart of each student during his time on this Hill.

These characteristics were in the forefront of the minds when our founders dreamed of building Hampden-Sydney College. The same patriots who founded our country founded our college with the specific desire to prepare leaders of our republic. In other words, to form good men and good citizens. According to Wilson Center founder and legendary Professor David Marion, "our founders understood that a healthy civic culture that fosters responsible citizenship was even more important to the integrity and viability of a decent and competent democratic-republic than well-devised governmental institutions."

As we celebrate Citizenship and Constitution Day we acknowledge that we have not always lived up to these lofty ideals as a nation or a college. We also recognize that our Constitution provides us with the best road map to deal with our current and future challenges.

Now more than ever our nation needs leaders at the local, state, and national levels who embody the best ideals our students learn every day. Empathy. Respect. Courage. Compassion. Moderation. Sound judgment. Foresight. Honesty. Collegiality. Teamwork. Fairness. Humility. Loyalty. Civility.

On May 7, 2000, in his last official act as Hampden-Sydney College President, General Sam left the graduating seniors with these parting thoughts: "it is now your world; it is not mine anymore…and it is a beautiful, blue jewel… a shining sphere. Love, cherish it, protect it, and keep it."

We celebrate Citizenship and Constitution Day because we endeavor to perpetuate our democratic republic. The founders built this College and passed on the legacy to General Wilson. General Wilson passed on this legacy to our students, and our students will do so for future generations. The articles in this pamphlet are examples of the thoughts and work of our faculty and alumni who strive to serve as good men and good citizens. It is our hope that these values and ideals become imprinted in the hearts and minds of those who read this work so that our republic continues to remain strong on behalf of its citizens.

Thank you,
Dr. Ryan Pemberton '00
Director, Wilson Center for Leadership in the Public Interest

Featured Materials

Constitution Day Lecture 2018 (video)
Speaker: Dr. Roger Barrus, Professor of Government & Foreign Affairs

Dean Drew is not done teaching you (*The Record of Hampden-Sydney College*)
Author: Lewis H. Drew ’60, Former Dean of Students, Hampden-Sydney College

The view from the most important room in America, on Constitution Day (*Richmond Times-Dispatch*)
Author: The Honorable Dr. Eugene Hickok ’72, Member of the Board of Trustees

2019 Baccalaureate Address at Hampden-Sydney College
Speaker: The Honorable Dr. John Hillen, Wheat Professor of Leadership and former Trustee

Engaged Citizenship and the Liberal Arts Tradition (ACTA Podcast)
Speakers: The Honorable Dr. John Hillen, Wheat Professor of Leadership and former Trustee, and Dr. Ryan Pemberton, Director of the Wilson Center for Leadership in the Public Interest

Citizen Legislator: Mr. Coburn Goes to Washington (*Washington Times)*
Author: Charles Hurt ’95, *Washington Times* Opinion Editor and Fox News Contributor

Our Constitution's simple but ample essence: four larger-than-life pages (*Richmond Times-Dispatch*)
Author: The Honorable Robert Hurt ’91, former Member of Congress (VA-5)

Honorable Ambition and American Exceptionalism (*Washington Times*)
Author: Dr. David Marion, Elliott Emeritus Professor of Government and Wilson Center Founder and Fellow

Is It Time for a 28th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution to Regulate Marijuana Like Alcohol? (*Alcohol Law Review*)
Author: Paul Pisano ’89, Wilson Center Board of Advisors

The Responsibility of American Citizenship: Constitution Day Lecture 2019
Author: Henrik Rasmussen ’03, Vice Chair, Wilson Center Board of Advisors

Cause for optimism about America's future
Author: Henrik Rasmussen ’03, Vice Chair, Wilson Center Board of Advisors

Featured Materials – Full Text

Dean Drew is not done teaching you

The Record of Hampden-Sydney College, December 2011
By Lewis H. Drew ’60

“If you don’t know where you’re going, you will wind up somewhere else,” according to Yogi Bera. Hampden-Sydney does not have to worry, for it has a mission which has guided the College since its founding: “… to form good men and good citizens.”

This was our benchmark in student affairs during my years as dean of students, and everything we did as a staff we tried to relate to that institutional mission. Thus, it is very natural for me to offer to alumni in this article some observations, based on my own experience, concerning what qualities help make someone a better person, a good man and good citizen, in our terminology, and, also, an effective leader throughout life.

As dean of students, I saw many young men struggle with a multitude of decisions they had to make. Helping them grow into mature men was my job and my life. For many students, I was a bit like a father, a teacher, and a counselor—perhaps at times like Darth Vader—all rolled into one. While I was challenged as dean with determining the correct course of action for individual students experiencing difficulty, I also celebrated the successes of many more young men.

Now these former students are grown men. Some even have seen their own sons graduate from Hampden-Sydney. Because these men may now themselves be faced with moments when they must help a son or another young person recover from a bad decision, weigh multiple choice options, foster positive habits, or celebrate the simple victories of life—these are all things I experienced as dean—I have collected some thoughts and opinions on life and leadership that may be of help.

Much of what I relate here was the basis of remarks made to the student leadership group The Society of ’91 at their graduation ceremony in the spring of 2010; hence the occasional reference to books or articles read by the group and the emphasis on leadership. The principles espoused represent to this day some of my core beliefs and philosophically formed the basis of my work with students.

I urge you to keep in your library John W. Gardner’s book, On Leadership; The Power of Character by Michael S. Josephson and Wes Hanson; Steven L. Carter’s book Integrity; and Letter from Birmingham Jail by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Leaf through them from time to time, as continuing tools of inspiration and renewal as you go through the various phases of your adult life. Doing so will help you stay focused on, and be committed to, these ideals, which, in turn, will help you live a life worth living.

My mind goes back to a hot August day about thirty years ago, at the beginning of pre-season football camp—two-a-days. Coach Stokeley Fulton ’54, a legendary coach after whom our

football field is named, was talking to the one hundred or so players gathered in the stadium. I was finishing up my three-mile walk and thought I would just stop and listen.

Those of us who knew Coach Fulton—he was my pitching coach in baseball and later became a dear friend and colleague—knew how competitive he was. He wanted to win—no doubt about it—and especially to beat Macon. In a word, he was intense. But, he also was a coach who believed he was a teacher, who saw himself as someone who wanted to use football and baseball to teach his players how to live.

As I stood on the road listening, Coach Fulton was talking about his expectations for their behavior on and off the football field. He was explaining how one could spend years building up a reputation for good character and how fast—in an instant almost—one could lose it by a foolish act or egregious
behavior. He urged them to think, to anticipate outcomes before acting, and to remember they were representing not only themselves but also their families and the College.

That moment has stuck with me, for it reinforced my already strong belief that coaches (and others) can have an enormous influence on their players and that the best coaches teach both X's and O's and about character, sportsmanship, and how to live life.

Coach Fulton was a wonderful example for his players. We need to remember, though, that we are all examples to those around us, for better or worse.

Think about it. When people reflect on their lives and describe who influenced them the most for the better, it is almost always someone who was genuine and trustworthy; someone who was consistent, "walked the talk," as we say; and someone who had high standards and held us to them. In other words, these people had integrity. They were who they seemed to us to be. What a joy it is for any of us to have people in our lives who don't disappoint, who don't let us down. And, what a challenge it is to us to strive to be among those people who influence others for the better.

Most often we look to the famous or well positioned for our examples, for our inspiration. But, they are obviously not the only ones. I have been reminded time and time again—and moved, I might add—by how many ordinary people provide us with solid examples of leadership, good citizenship, and service to others. This lesson was driven home to me often when, as dean of students, I attended funerals of students' family members and was struck by the wonderful examples of the deceased, who had given of themselves in service to others and had lived lives which were inspirations to those whom they had influenced, without themselves necessarily having been "big wheels." So, what makes some, whether famous or not, worthy of being emulated as models for the rest of us? Well, in no particular order, let's try these characteristics, among others:

- Exhibiting substance over flash.
- Being committed to long-term goals that are principled and then relating what you do on a regular basis to those goals—having a sense of purpose.

- Being strong enough not to let resistance and momentary, even intense, unpopularity sway you from doing what you believe is right. This means you have to understand that you, as leader, may not even be around when some goals are realized. Your role may be to move the organization forward toward a worthy vision. Someone else may have to come in and complete the task. Think long-term, not short-term.
- Doing the right thing when doing such might be costly. Indeed, doing the right thing when risk or consequences are absent does not require much courage.
- Showing moral courage—standing on principle when facing adversity—typically is tougher than demonstrating physical courage.
- Being truthful and trustworthy. You can be at peace and can take a lot of heat if you know you have been honest.
- Being the same in private as in public— being genuine, having no guile.
- Being a giver, not a taker.

Coach John Wooden, the great UCLA basketball coach, with ten NCAA titles, the most ever, is reported to have said that the four things mankind craves the most are freedom, happiness, peace, and love, none of which can be obtained without first giving it to someone else.

So, how do you get to be one of those people worthy of emulation? Well, as I observed students and others at Hampden-Sydney and elsewhere over the years, those who were most worthy of setting the example knew who they were, "at bottom."

Many issues and problems in life come at us without warning, giving us little or no time to prepare a response or to consult with someone else. At such times, it is especially important for us to know who we are "at bottom."

Yes, in school we may have spent time on case studies and on ethics problems posed to generate discussion and presumed solutions. But in the type of situation to which I am referring, we are just "out there," alone on a figurative island. What to do? Indeed, what to do if you are in your early years in business, for instance, and your boss suggests strongly that you take a shortcut, an unethical one, to make a business action work out, at least in the short run?

Well, it is in your most private, reflective moments, when you do have time to consider who you are, what you really believe, and the principles and values that mean most to you and on which you will base your life—it is then that you have the chance to internalize these values so that when faced with an ethical or moral dilemma, unanticipated or otherwise, you react instinctively, your feeling of unease immediately letting you know that something is wrong here, and act accordingly.

You might well now be thinking, "This is all well and good, but very idealistic. How in the world can anyone measure up? After all, we are human!" But it is also human to strive, to reach for the best, for excellence.

Walter Lippman, a columnist for Newsweek magazine, years ago commented on this by writing (and I am paraphrasing) that striving always to do the right thing does not require that you be a "goody-goody." Rather, it requires that you be strong, have moral courage, and act on principle. I

like that because it is all too easy for us to fall back on the old line of excusing ourselves because we are "only human." Remember, the key here is not being perfect; rather, it is striving for the best.

The Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius spoke to this human dilemma: "Do not be distressed; do not despond or give up in despair if now and again practice falls short of perfect. Return to the attack after each failure, and be thankful if on the whole you can acquit yourself in the majority of cases as a man should."

Stephen Carter, in his book Integrity, similarly refers to a sermon preached about two hundred years ago: "…not that one never fails to live a life governed by a duty to the good and the right, but rather that one always tries to."

In other words, the overall tone of one's life should be that when one falls short, that failure is recognized as atypical. This idea of persistence, of striving, is captured well by Sir Winston Churchill's famous statement in 1941, before Pearl Harbor brought the U.S. into World War II, at a time when England was being devastated by German bombings. With great emotion, he rose and said, "Never give in. Never give in. Never, never, never, never—in nothing great or small, large or petty—never give in, except to convictions of honor and good sense."

Clearly, then, leadership is not only about being, but also about acting. It's all about having convictions, acting on them, and being in the arena. Outside Graham Hall is a plaque on which is printed that wonderful, inspirational statement by Theodore Roosevelt:

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes up short again and again…who spends himself in a worthy cause; who, at the best, knows in the end, the triumph ofhigh achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly."

Since its first classes, Hampden-Sydney College has been committed to developing the best possible men by stressing the importance of integrity and character. Some in our society today might question the relevance of an institution of higher education placing so much emphasis on these personal values. In response to an alumnus who had expressed some doubt about the relevance of the College's mission in these modern times, then-President Samuel V. Wilson said, "Sound leadership has an essential requirement. It is called character. But the very first and most important ingredient of character is honor. Since 10 November 1775, Hampden-Sydney has been steadfastly producing men of character, men with honor. Disproportionately, our men have become leaders in far fields and numerous disciplines throughout the world. I submit that no college or university in this nation of ours does this
better then we do."

Hampden-Sydney definitely makes a difference in the lives of its alumni. Paraphrasing Winston Churchill, I urge all of us alumni never to forget the best of what we learned on this Hill and to act on that knowledge and those values throughout our lives.

I want to end with these high thoughts from Paul's letter to the Philippians to guide you as you think about the obligations and consequences of being a Hampden-Sydney Man: "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."

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The view from the most important room in America, on Constitution Day
Richmond Times-Dispatch, September 16, 2017
By Eugene Hickok '72

It isn't that large: approximately 20 feet by 14 feet. It isn't a grand space. There is no domed or coffered ceiling, no marble columns or statuary. There is no fine woodwork lining the walls. The floor is made of pine, not granite or marble.

It sits on the second floor of a house that sits in the Piedmont of Virginia, facing west toward the Blue Ridge Mountains and beyond. In its day, the room served as a library. At one point in time, it housed about 4,000 volumes, so strewn and scattered about that it was a challenge traversing from one side of the room to the other. This was a "working man's" library, not some neatly arranged and catalogued space.

The books were written in several languages and many (most) had been shipped from Europe. There were treatises in English, Spanish, Hebrew, Latin, Greek, and French and others. They focused on the widest array of subjects imaginable. They fed the hungry intellect of a man seeking to understand better the idea of self-government.

The man was rather unimpressive in stature and appearance. Approximately five feet, four inches tall, he spoke in hushed tones. He was not an orator. He was not inclined to pontificate or push his views and ideas on others. He was, nevertheless, a man of ideas; an intellectual who spent hours with his books seeking to translate the lessons of history, politics, and philosophy into the practical challenges of government.

The owner of this library was no intellectual hermit who stayed safely in his study, however. He was engaged in the public pursuits almost his entire adult life. After college in New Jersey (today's Princeton) he became active in the cause of religious liberty in his home state of Virginia, where the persecution of individuals for their religious beliefs was not uncommon.

He went on to a distinguished career in public service and government at every level: local, state and national. He served in the Virginia General Assembly, the Continental Congress, the United States Congress, became secretary of state and then president of the United States.

But he always returned to this room, where all that he accomplished in a rich, rewarding and meaningful life began. It all began because of what he did in his library, with his books, his

experience, his intellect and his commitment to good government. His greatest contribution — to his country and to the world — was rooted in this room. It was in this room that a new approach to self-government was born.

As the 13 states achieved their independence from Great Britain, they formed a “league of friendship” under the Articles of Confederation. But from the very start things did not go well.

There were constant struggles among the various states over such things as trade and commerce and finances. Moreover, the Articles did not provide any mechanism for resolving such disputes. There was no executive branch and the congress had to rely upon the states to provide the revenues necessary to accomplish what little it was authorized to accomplish under the Articles. There was the very real possibility that all that had been achieved through the struggle for independence might be lost.

Recognizing the problems associated with the Articles, delegates from some of the states gathered to consider how best to correct the deficiencies of the “league.” Meeting in Annapolis, Maryland, they began to recognize the scope of the challenge and resolved to meet again the next year in Philadelphia. That meeting, in 1787, produced the Constitution. But it is what happened prior to the Philadelphia gathering that made that Constitution possible.

James Madison, in his library at his estate, Montpelier, set out to study the history of republics and democracies in an attempt to determine the true source of their vices and virtues so that he might come up with a strategy to correct the deficiencies of the Articles. In other words, he did his homework.

The product of his efforts was entitled “Vices of the Political System of the United States.” He shared his thoughts through correspondence with others concerned about the fate of their country: Washington, Jefferson, and Monroe, among them. Then, as he waited during the spring of 1787 for the delegates to arrive in Philadelphia, he drafted what became known as “The Virginia Plan” and it helped to establish the terms of the debate for the remainder of the summer, and that produced the Constitution.

Madison the scholar and intellectual was also Madison the practical and prudent politician. He understood the problems the young nation confronted and the challenges associated with getting prominent and politically powerful individuals to agree on a strategy to resolve those problems. He embraced and espoused principled politics while simultaneously recognizing the need to compromise in order to remain true to his principles.

On this Constitution Day, it might be wise for all of us to retreat from the chatter in the media and seek to find quiet time to think and read and study about what Madison and his contemporaries sought to accomplish. They created the conditions that made the current discussion of race and gender and equality and governing inevitable. They didn’t solve the problems. They forced us to confront them.

And it all started in a library with a window that looked out upon the potential of America. It would benefit us all to take the time to do that as well.

The Founders created the conditions that made the current discussion of race and gender and equality and governing inevitable. They didn't solve the problems. They forced us to confront them.

Eugene Hickok, a resident of Richmond, for many years taught political science and law at Dickinson College and The Dickinson School of Law, both in Carlisle, Pa. The author/editor of several books and articles relating to the Constitution, he serves on the Foundation Board of James Madison's Montpelier.

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The American Experiment and the Role of the Hampden-Sydney Man in Preserving It

The Baccalareuate Address at Hampden-Sydney College, May 10, 2019
Delivered by Dr. John Hillen

President Stimpert, Reverend Leach, trustees, faculty and staff of the College, guests, and most especially, the families and the men who graduate from this historic college tomorrow, thank you for the honor of sharing some thoughts with you at this important ceremony.

John Hillen giving his addressAs you know, in the collegiate tradition, the baccalaureate ceremony is, of the two big graduation events, the more solemn, reflective, spiritual and religious ceremony. Tonight, we reflect on our place in the greater scheme of things, on our own development over these past years at the College, on wisdom, and on God.

So, why we schedule the Baccalaureate ceremony at cocktail hour and Commencement at the hour for church is just a mystery to me.

Our creator, whom we honor tonight in addition to the soon to-be-graduates, created love, the greatest virtue according to Saint Paul. So I want to start this talk with the story of a love affair—my love affair with America. What do I mean by that? Not the physical America necessarily, although this country is an extraordinary physical place and I've traveled over most of it, from climbing its mountains to diving in its seas. And I don't mean the cultural America necessarily, although I love its sports, music, art, and food more than most anywhere I've been. And I'm not talking about the American government, although I've served it most of my life. No, I'm in love with the idea of America—a peculiar and particular idea.

The idea of America I love is the idea of a unique experiment in self-government and civil society – set up by founders of this college among others – and left in our hands to perpetuate. More apropos for you graduates, I'm in love with an idea for which you will now increasingly be responsible.

Now, that may seem hopelessly large and impossible to grasp. You might be thinking, "Wait – did he just say I'm responsible for the idea of America? Here's a guy that two weeks ago would

probably not have let me borrow his car, but tonight he's going to commission me to lead and preserve the idea of America as a Hampden-Sydney alumnus?"

Yes, I am. And yes, you will.

When did I become aware of this idea of America? The first time really was this exact same day for me in my college graduation. The day before I graduated from Duke, I was commissioned as an Army officer, and my late father – after whom the seminar room in the Wilson Center is named – gave me the oath of office. He paused before administering the oath and gave a little preamble to all those assembled about the uniqueness of taking an oath to the Constitution of the United States rather than to a king, or queen, or country, or government—still the dominant traditions for oaths in most other countries.

An oath to support and defend the Constitution—what did that mean to me? Did I just swear an oath to a piece of paper? Well, no, not literally of course. Did I take it to a system of government or some type of political arrangement at the federal level? Closer to the point, so yes, but still not a complete interpretation. In actuality, underpinning that oath to the Constitution was an explicit pledge not just to a governmental system, but rather to a system of self-governing and an implicit pledge to the arrangement of levels of government and roles for civil society that the Constitution assumes will run the vast majority of American affairs.

This Constitution to which I swore an oath, with its Bill of Rights and amendments, is also a view of human nature, an interpretation of natural laws and existence, and a foundational comment on the nature of a good society in America.

Our founders, especially Hampden-Sydney Trustee James Madison, who drew up that Constitution and its Bill of Rights, knew that ultimately America is a country with a government, not vice versa. And by enumerating the powers of the government, and limiting them especially, it was not just laying down a system of government. It was in fact determining the entire arrangement of who does what in a well-functioning, free, and just society. That is the idea of America I fell in love with – not the American government per se – but the entirety of the idea of a free society with hundreds of thousands of free private associations cooperating with multiple levels of government in a messy and wonderful experiment in self-government.

Now, this arrangement has been far from perfect. Those founders denied the enslaved peoples of the U.S. the very same basic human rights they claimed for America and Americans. They made little provision for women's participation in this system. They made little provision for native Americans as Americans. And other ills. These are among the original sins to which we still apply energies today in order to create a more perfect union.

And that was and still is the job – our task as good men and good citizens – to create a more perfect union. The founders' job in making the document to which I've sworn the oath four times in different capacities was, in their words, to create a more perfect union. We must recognize that a more perfect union is not a destination—it is a journey. And now you will take your place as framers on the journey.

Before I give you with some thoughts on how to be a living custodian of this American experiment, and why being a Hampden-Sydney man gives you a special commission to do so, let me mention the unique, radical, and odd idea that is at the heart of this idea of America.

Despite studying political science at great universities, it never really came to me until I had spent a number of years in places other than America. I have lived, worked, fought, taught, and traveled in 85 countries of every imaginable sort and in every possible state of development. This gave me insight into what makes America wonderfully strange and different.

What makes the American experiment in self-government unique is that no one is in charge—on purpose! And everything still works!

Now, there are plenty of places in the world where no one is in charge, and it's not on purpose. Or, no one is in charge, and things don't work. I've been to many of those, sadly. But here we have a radical principle of self-organization and distributed responsibilities, and yet at the same time accompanied by broadly shared standards and expectations of good outcomes: order, security, prosperity, advancement, fairness, education, and general well-being. And mostly in the hands of civil society, not government.

Let me give you an example about the uniqueness of the American experiment to make the point. In most other countries around the world, there are government departments or ministries around culture, sports, youth affairs, religion, and the like. Many other governments have a ministry for industry or technology—to direct traffic, not just to make policy. Many governments own part or all of the most important companies in those countries. In the U.S. can you imagine if we had a ministry of culture? Or technology and manufacturing? Or government ownership of our leading companies? How long would it take a government ministry to design McDonalds? Or Uber? Or Amazon? Or make Avengers Endgame for that matter? No, we leave those things – and much more – in private or civic hands in ways very different from much of the rest of the planet.

So, too with religion. Thanks to the wisdom of our founders, and unlike many other countries, we do not have an official religion. Instead we have a diverse and fascinating array of faith traditions. The late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, with whom I once went on a men's retreat, used to tell of a French jurist who said that the essential difference between the United States and France was that France had two religions and three hundred cheeses while the U.S. had two cheeses and three hundred religions. Diversity in our belief systems gives this country great strength and reinforces its freedoms.

This combination of a self-governing democracy, vigorous non-governmental civil society, economic freedom, religious freedom, and the role of private life has led, over the time this college has been in existence, to the most extraordinary acceleration in prosperity and well-being history has ever seen. Long may this semi-directed orchestra and unplanned symphony play on.

So here is the hook for you. I've said, glibly of course, that the secret to the American experiment is that no one in charge. So, who's in charge, really? Answer: You are in charge! All of you.

Now, President Stimpert is a noted management scholar and he will tell you that this is a terrible answer in management theory and practice. In the management consulting world when you ask a suffering organization who is in charge of some broken process and the answer is "everybody," then that organization is doomed. But for a large, vigorous, free, and diverse society, it's the only answer, as James Madison reminded us in Federalist 10.

Of course, at some level in society, when it comes to tasks, someone is always in charge, but at the idea of America level – the creating a more perfect union task level – no one is in charge. Rather, many are. We are! We are not only shareholders in the idea, we are also the management, employees, and customers—all at the same time!

So, what does that mean for you – leaving here and taking charge of this radical American experiment? Well, here is the bad news: This radical – radically successful – idea is also an incredibly fragile one. Preserving the American experiment, let alone improving it, requires wisdom and engagement from its citizenry. It requires us to have virtue, education, energy, and good will. The founders of Hampden-Sydney College knew that and baked it into our purpose and mission.

Why do you need to take this on—you 210 soon-to-be graduates of Hampden-Sydney College? There are tens of thousands of students graduating from thousands of colleges all over America this May. Why you?

Well, firstly, you are heirs to a unique tradition and legacy in this school. From the very men for whom this historic college was named, to the American founders involved in its development, to its unique mission— you are singularly charged. You are not just joining a brotherhood of alumni. You are heirs to a distinct heritage and mission. The mission of this ancient college is to seek to form good men and good citizens in an atmosphere of sound learning. You are linked through time and space to all that went before you here by what President Abraham Lincoln called the mystic chords of memory.

Secondly, you are also heirs to a unique atmosphere, and nowadays a unique style of education. I heard President Stimpert say recently that Hampden-Sydney teaches you how to think, not what to think. This is critical in forming the citizens of a free society. Not the accumulation of specialized knowledge by which you might get a job or make your living, but rather the ability to understand how it all connects in forming a good, just, and free society.

You've likely been focused on creating what we can call professional man, trained for the workforce and looking forward to jobs and careers. Or, perhaps, scientific or technical or educational man—taking on a specialized role in graduate schools or elsewhere to learn more about the scholarship in your field or push the boundaries of knowledge in a certain subject area. All that is great.

But among others, the great theologian and educator John Henry Newman told us that the real purpose of your education in college is to create civilized man. And by that I don't mean minding your manners and not taking fraternity circle habits with you to meet your future mother in law. Although, that is a really good time to act civilized!

No, what I mean by civilized man is the graduate who is equipped to lead for and care for his civilization—in our case the slice of it that is the unique and peculiar civilization of the American experiment. Yours is not simply to get a job, raise a family, and all the rest. You have a broader calling than those noble pursuits.

Regardless of what was your major here, at Hampden-Sydney – more so than at many so-called elite colleges – you've received the kind of well-rounded college experience that thinkers from Plato to Newman told us was necessary to sustain self-governing democracies. A truly free people must also be a wise people. As we heard just now in our reading about wisdom, you must be able to see the broad picture and to take the long view. Smarts and wisdom are two different things. They even use different parts of the brain. You analyze with your smarts: break things down. On the other hand, you synthesize with your wisdom: You pull things back together to make connections and simple sense of complex or even conflicting ideas.

I know some of you look back with little love on some of the required courses you took here that were far outside your chief field of study or your personal interests. But you may well, later in life, come to treasure those the most. Literature, philosophy, history, science, art, religion, economics, mathematics. All are needed by all to equip the good man and the good citizen to lead in a free society.

So, to your specific commission tonight. Your job, in a nut shell, is to go forth and create a more perfect union. Preserving and improving on the American experiment.

Okay? No problem, Hillen, I'll put it on my calendar. Friday night, try to stay upright. Saturday, graduate. Sunday, take Mom to brunch for Mother's Day. Monday, create a more perfect union in America. No worries. I've got this, bro.

Well, look: Here's how to do it.

First, get qualified to be "in charge" of the experiment where no one is in charge.

You have this remarkable running start that I just mentioned with a Hampden-Sydney education, degree, and community. Now you need to commit to be a lifelong student. Last week was the last day of school. Tomorrow is day 1 of your education. I know that's the last thing you want to hear after the four-year – or was it six-year? – grind at H-SC. But your mind changes as you get older. Your capacity to take in ideas and understand them shifts as you age and encounter more experiences and people. You need to be a student of self-discovery with a self-guided curriculum. I would suggest starting with the simple habit of reading or listening to five to ten books not in your field every year, ranging from fiction to science to biography. And since reading alone is a little bit akin to drinking alone, try to find groups – live or virtual – to discuss and debate what you've read. Read, debate, travel, be curious—be interesting!

Second, get involved. Between work, friends, and family, you'll feel as if you have no time to get involved in anything else. But some kind of sustained civic engagement needs to be built into your plan of life.

Scores of recent studies have shown that, except in some pockets, civic engagement is fading from American life. Participation in almost every aspect of American civic life, from political engagement to religious engagement to free associations of citizenry, is diminishing. And no, your followers on Instagram do not count as a free association of citizens!

Non-involvement by you leaves the playing field to hyper-committed single-minded activists—factions, in the words of founding Trustee James Madison. We need normal people with day jobs who are also out there leading civic, community, religious, and volunteer organizations and insisting on their prominence in the American experiment. Right now, I get the strong feeling that everybody is tweeting but nobody is playing.

Third, give before you ask to get. I'm sure many of you – staring with your parents down the barrel of the student debt cannon – find attractive the recent proposals to forgive or retire college debt in the U.S. I can understand their appeal. But think about what a radically different proposition are these recent proposals than something like the World War II GI Bill or John F. Kennedy's entreaty to think not what your country can do for you, but rather what you can do for your country. These ideas represent not only different value propositions but produce a very different society. Any decent proposal to shift this college debt burden to the public domain needs to be accompanied by a call to service. To give back.

When I say give back—give to whom? I think it's great if you serve in the military, or Teach for America, or some other government role. I've spent over half my adult life in service in the federal government. But I want you to serve the whole project, the entirety of the American experiment. Get involved with an NGO, a community organization, your church, a charity, any one of thousands of independent institutions that make up the real energy and genius of our unique system of political order and self-governance.

When I encourage you to get involved as a citizen, don't necessarily think that I am talking about political engagement or even political activism—although we need that too, of course. But there is so much more to shaping America than politics. In our times, we have too much politics and not enough civics. One of the keys to the American experiment is that we, we the people, we run things and we fix problems—not wait for politicians to do so. Be a part of the "we."

Don't treat politics as a religion. Too many do these days. Politics is not a religion; religion is religion. Our over-emphasis on political solutions to everything in life has crowded out religion from the public square. And the founders' guarantee of no official religion by which the government could compel Americans has been misinterpreted – not so much by the courts, but by public sentiment – to mean that there is little place for religion in public life. That is wrong-headed on many levels and robs the American experiment of much of what makes it special, diverse, and free.

Fourth, take it upon yourself to develop, practice, enforce, and then teach the skills of creating a more perfect union in a diverse, sprawling society. For that to succeed, we do not need safe spaces from ideas or speech. Rather, we need to rediscover the art of principled disagreements in civil discourse, compromise, and understanding multiple perspectives while sticking to your

own. Every good society is composed of a series of values that are constantly in tension with one another. You cannot effectively articulate your own beliefs until you take time to truly understand that of others with different ideas. Demand this of yourself and others. Shouting down, shutting out, or disinviting are not qualities of a free society. They are the qualities of totalitarianism.

Finally, place this experiment in human development and the evolution of a good society in context. We honor here tonight our creator and the different faith traditions we all bring to approaching him. Have the humility, no matter what you believe, to recognize that this – what we see around us and what we can study and understand – might not in fact be all that there is.

CS Lewis wrote, "If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world." Make space for that mystery, that possibility, in your thinking and actions. It will ground you.

Men of the graduating class of 2019, I want to congratulate you for your achievement. Tomorrow you join the long and illustrious line of the garnet and grey alumni. Parents, congratulations to you on raising these men and seeing them through to this latest chapter in their development.

It has been my great honor and privilege to be associated with this College for a decade, and to join you as a degree holder tomorrow. But with honor and privilege come duty and responsibility. As the apostle Luke tells us, ""For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."

God Bless this College, God Bless our new graduates, and God Bless America. Thank you.

A former trustee of Hampden-Sydney College, The Honorable Dr. John Hillen is an award-winning CEO and leadership expert, former assistant secretary of state, public intellectual, decorated combat veteran, board chairman of several companies, and a popular business school professor. He is the author of several books, most recently What Happens Now? Reinvent Yourself as a Leader Before Your Business Outruns You, which was recognized as one of the top business books of 2018. He is currently the CEO of Everwatch Solutions.

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Citizen Legislator: Mr. Coburn Goes to Washington
Washington Times, March 30, 2020
By Charles Hurt

Tom Coburn was the last honest man in Washington.

In politics today, you have Democrats and Republicans. You have so-called liberals and conservatives. And you have self-styled "progressives" and libertarians.

These people love labels. They love being labeled. That's because they love talking about themselves. And they love it even more to hear other people talking about them.

"She's a real 'progressive,'" people say about the newest child-legislator as she pounds on the rostrum demanding that more of the money you earned be taken from you and used on old, broken-down, evil socialist scams that have been debunked for over a hundred years now. "Progressive?"

Or, "Look at that great libertarian talk!" they say about some old coot demanding an end to the "war on drugs" in America— a truly cockamamie scheme that always winds up having you and me pay more taxes rehabbing losers, jailing them for other crimes or supplying them directly with needles and methadone.

This was not Tom Coburn.

He was a doctor. He delivered babies. If he screwed up, if he failed to know exactly what he was doing, if he decided to grand-stand in the delivery room, somebody would die.

Such principles, of course, run counter to all that Washington stands for today. When Dr. Coburn refused to give up his practice back home, Senate Democrat Leader Harry Reid — one of the most dishonest and destructive people to ever occupy a seat in Congress — slapped Dr. Coburn with "ethics charges" for earning outside income.

You see, in Washington, open theft is the only acceptable form of income. Dr. Coburn retaliated and settled the "ethics charges" by continuing to deliver babies back home — for free.

Dr. Coburn came to Washington to represent the good people of Oklahoma with the purest of intentions. He came as a citizen legislator — precisely as the founders intended — to ferociously guard the interests of his constituents back home.

Those interests also happened to line up exactly with the interests of most constituents around the country.

In a perfect display of his electoral humility, Dr. Coburn is among the rarest of politicians who kept every promise he ever made limiting his own terms in Congress. Why does it always seem like only the good are cut down by principles?

Dr. Coburn did not mount the barricades and proclaim that the federal government served no purpose whatsoever. Nor was he a demagogue who claimed the federal government was the answer to every problem.

He understood — as the founders did — that there are functions only a federal government can perform. Dr. Coburn just wanted the government to perform those functions wisely, effectively and economically.

Most important — and this is what really set Dr. Coburn apart from so many of the gasbags in Washington these days — Dr. Coburn was not interested in grandstanding without result. Or, even worse, grandstanding only to emerge with a legislative product that was even worse.

He was never a member of any Suicide Caucus. He was not interested in "poison pills" or legislative Scud missiles.

Dr. Coburn never held a leadership position. He was never a committee chairman. He learned the rules of the House and the Senate and used those rules to chip away at the federal Leviathan.

Certainly, he was an agonizing thorn in the side of Republican leadership. Yet even Republican leader Mitch McConnell realized Dr. Coburn's genius, saying that his nickname "Dr. No" failed to fully capture him.

Dr. Coburn "did not let his strong principles sideline him from creative policymaking or bipartisan cooperation," Mr. McConnell said.

"Tom's convictions did not drive him away from the table. They inspired him to become a central player."

Dr. Coburn was intelligent, diligent and utterly without self-regard. If you made the mistake of calling him "Senator Coburn," he might correct you. "Dr. Coburn" was fine.

###

Our Constitution's simple but ample essence: four larger-than-life pages
Richmond Times-Dispatch, September 16, 2017
By Robert Hurt

Stop for a minute and consider this: it is just four pages — four very important pages.

To see these four pages, you can travel to the National Archives in Washington and view our U.S. Constitution as it is preserved in an impenetrable marble case under a massive cathedral-like rotunda.

Protected under the watchful eye of uniformed guards, our Constitution is visited by more than a million people who pass by its case every year. On my first visit to the National Archives, I remember being struck right away by the power and the simplicity of this larger-than-life document — that is only four pages.

The remarkable power of these four pages might perhaps be measured in the sheer volume of the seemingly infinite body of American law that has flowed from them — in the form of constitutional amendments, legislative statutes, executive orders and rulemakings, and, of course, judicial rulings and opinions.

However, the real measure of the power of the Constitution stems from the fact that it is a document of action — one that gives life and breath to our American form of self-government; to our system of free enterprise; and the indispensable principle that is the Rule of Law.

It is the animating spirit of the political and economic freedoms we hold dear. As adopted, it was a document that was a full expression — while not perfect — of our new nation's devotion to the "certain unalienable Rights" recognized in our Declaration of Independence and guaranteed to each of us by our Creator.

In many ways, the straightforward simplicity of the Constitution is reflected in those who demanded it and those who wrote, debated, and adopted it 230 years ago. Indeed, there were no think-tank experts, consultants, or lobbyists hanging around the doorways of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in the summer of 1787.

To the contrary, our founders were well-meaning citizens of uncommon courage and vision who relied upon their own personal experiences and wisdom, along with their scientific approach to the study of human nature and the study of human government — with its natural tendency to suppress freedom.

Likewise, the simplicity of the Constitution is also reflected in its ubiquity. While thorny constitutional arguments can be highly complex, the most fundamental elements of the Constitution can be heard being argued in our society every day of the week.

On any given day in local traffic court, a citizen might be asserting his Fourth Amendment right in arguing that a police officer did not possess a reasonable articulable suspicion to stop him on the street. While in the highest court in the land, a group of citizens might be asserting their First Amendment right to engage in campaign speech unencumbered by the unconstitutional restrictions of the Federal Election Commission. And while different cases argued at different levels of the judicial system may have different practical impacts, the importance of the principles at stake is always the same — whether the litigant is an ordinary citizen in a small town or a multi-national corporation with billions of dollars in contention.

And these discussions of constitutional issues are not just confined to the courtroom. In fact, they can be heard everywhere from state capitols to city council chambers, and from schoolhouses to coffeehouses to jailhouses. These discussions of our Constitution consume barrels of newspaper ink and endless hours of cable news and talk radio every day.

However, the greatest enduring power of the Constitution is embodied in the simplicity of its fundamental structure.

In 1788, James Madison wrote in support of the newly adopted Constitution — then making its way from state to state for ratification: "The accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive, and judiciary, in the same hands, whether of one, a few, or many, and whether hereditary, self-appointed, or elective, may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny."

In crafting our Constitution, the framers built into its fundamental structure a separation of powers and a system of checks and balances designed to serve as a bulwark against the concentration of power and, yes, tyranny. This structure is perhaps best illustrated by simply looking at the four pages of the document and how the powers of the three branches of government were laid out on parchment.

The powers of the legislative branch arguably were considered the most important because Congress was viewed as the voice of the people. The powers set forth in Article I clearly consume the most ink of any of the three branches. However, this power is diffused between distinctly different legislative houses and is checked by the power of the judicial branch to invalidate those laws that are deemed unconstitutional.

The powers of the executive branch laid out in Article II consume the second most amount of ink. The powers of the President are constrained by the legislative wisdom — or lack thereof — of the Congress, and, like the Congress, the powers of the executive branch are subject to the limitations set out by the judicial branch.

Interestingly, and perhaps ironically, the judicial branch set forth in Article III is given the least amount of ink and was considered the least powerful, that is, until Marbury v. Madison firmly established the power of judicial review. The judicial branch is constrained by the laws of Congress and the judicial appointment process.

In the end, it is this enduring fundamental structure that has produced the greatest experiment in freedom the world has ever known.

Today marks the 230th year since the adoption of the Constitution. At Liberty University, the Center for Law & Government is pleased to be hosting a week-long program devoted to our Constitution — with an exciting schedule of guests that can be found at www.liberty.edu/clg.

At a time when our country often seems hopelessly divided, it is especially fitting that each of us as Americans come together and take a few minutes this week to learn a little more about our Constitution and to give thanks for the precious freedoms it protects.

In crafting our Constitution, the framers built into its fundamental structure a separation of powers and a system of checks and balances designed to serve as a bulwark against the concentration of power and, yes, tyranny.

Robert Hurt represented Virginia's Fifth District in Congress for six years and now serves as the director of Liberty University's new Center for Law & Government. Contact him at rhurt1@liberty.edu.

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Honorable Ambition and American Exceptionalism
Washington Times, June 30, 2020
By David Marion

It is a natural human impulse to seek distinction or at least some measure of significance. Who, after all, wants to be a "nobody"? While the desire to be "somebody" is natural, and therefore should be accepted as a fact of life by policy-makers, not all paths to distinction are honorable or even simply tolerable.

If they are prudent, policy-makers will offer people a realistic path to meaningful significance that simultaneously promotes the best interests of the larger community of which they are a part. Leaving the choice of a path to distinction to chance is never a wise policy. Membership in a violent gang can be a source of personal significance, but not one that is beneficial for the greater community.

Monuments erected to honor historical figures such as George Washington and Thomas Jefferson should not blind us to the fact that they were flesh and blood human beings with desires common to all human beings. It does not diminish their reputations to acknowledge that they were in search of distinction. For them, the path to historical significance led to the creation of the new American republic.

What has been lost from sight in many historical accounts of the Founding is the invitation that was extended to all Americans to acquire historical significance by advancing the success of our ambitious experiment in democratic-republican government. That invitation has been broadly extended to many groups over time.

Writing at a crucial moment in the ratification process, Alexander Hamilton argued that the American people would deserve and could expect to receive the admiration of all “mankind” by demonstrating, in ratifying the Constitution, that good government could be the product of “reflection and choice.”

Hamilton was convinced that what was happening in America was “exceptional.” Beyond this, he also believed that it would be beneficial for the people to be self-conscious actors who knew that they were part of something special.

What was “special” was the opportunity to be a self-constructed people engaged in constitutional politics, not raw power politics. The difference is significant. Constitutional politics promotes moderation, deliberation and coalition-building as constitutional principles and rules establish important boundaries regarding what constitutes legitimate and illegitimate action.

The alternative to constitutional politics is power politics that does not set boundaries other than the will or passions of individuals or groups and this is a breeding ground for factious politics. Constitutional politics, and this includes constitutionally-constrained interest group politics, encourages us to recognize each other as fellow citizens—power politics unconstrained by the Constitution divides people into allies and enemies, and enslaves us to our passions and follies.

Abraham Lincoln never doubted the exceptionalism of the American republic and, like leading Founders, understood the importance of general public participation in the work of protecting what was exceptional about the nation. For Lincoln, participation in this activity occurs everywhere, from the service of teachers and ministers, to the sacrifices of public employees and members of the military, to the labors of farmers and entrepreneurs.

There is abundant evidence that the men and women of the "Greatest Generation" believed that they were protecting something exceptional in their struggle to defeat fascism and authoritarianism. To say that they believed that America was exceptional is not to argue that they thought the nation was perfect—but they did believe that something special was going on that was reflected in a "way of life" that drew their immigrants parents, grandparents and great-grandparents to our shores.

What makes the "American way of life" exceptional is a combination of remarkable ingredients from constitutional protection for freedom of expression and religion, to a commitment to due process of law and equal protection of the laws, to the encouragement given to entrepreneurialism via protection for property and contract rights. No comparable combination can be found anywhere else.

Significantly, cultural changes over the last several decades have emboldened the critics of American exceptionalism while putting its proponents on the defensive. Anti-foundationalism, reflected in speech codes, violations of property rights and the defilement of monuments recognizing the achievements of the Founding generation, seems to be everywhere, while references to American exceptionalism are scarce.

From business leaders who are preoccupied with global markets to educators who are preoccupied with victimhood, American exceptionalism is out of sight or out of favor. As a result, the significance that generations of Americans proudly associated with U.S. citizenship has sadly been rendered problematical.

If appeals to American exceptionalism are no longer available as a very important way to satisfy the natural impulse for distinction, then what is left? While the uncertainty that fills the void can be a source of beneficial reforms, it is also the breeding ground for dysfunctional conduct. The conviction that there is something special about America provides a stable source of general support for the republic that enables reformist rhetoric and actions to effect changes without general chaos.

The cultural challenge to American exceptionalism endangers the kind of broad public support that any political community needs to endure. A common, reason-based, faith in the foundational principles of the nation, and also in the exceptionalism of a nation committed to constitutional politics and deliberative governance, is what Lincoln believed would be necessary to transform a mass of self-regarding individuals into a community of productive and law-abiding citizens.

An appreciation for what history can teach us about the cultural and historical identity of America and its foundational principles, as well as about the sobering complexities of political

existence, would serve us well as we contend with mounting challenges to the integrity and vitality of the republic. It is instructive to understand, for example, how the French Revolution gave rise to a Reign of Terror and how communist idealism gave rise to Stalinist totalitarianism.

In keeping with the advice of Lincoln, public officials, educators, ministers, among other persons who shape public opinion, would do this nation a valuable service by illuminating how the American people can lead consequential lives by engaging in the kind of constructive constitutional politics that protects as well as enriches the exceptional nation that has been left to their care.

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Is It Time for a 28th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution to Regulate Marijuana Like Alcohol?

Alcohol Law Review, July 15, 2016
By Paul Pisano

There is a certain appeal to the sound-bite of the pro marijuana legalization forces when they claim they want to "regulate marijuana like alcohol," but the devil is always in the details. The conversation about regulating marijuana like alcohol is incomplete without mentioning the unique constitutional nature of alcohol regulation. A previous post suggested that the marijuana debate can serve as a refresher on how and why alcohol is regulated like it is today. Those sincerely interested in advocating that marijuana be regulated like alcohol should consider supporting passage of a 28th Amendment to the Constitution patterned after the 21st Amendment. The 21st Amendment repealed the federal prohibition of the manufacture, sale and transportation of alcohol but allowed states to continue to restrict or prohibit it. The 21st Amendment also set up the state-based regulatory structure used for alcohol today.

The United States Was Unified on the Passage of the 21st Amendment

An overlooked highlight of the 21st Amendment was the fact that ratification secured national consensus with its passage. States that wanted to remain "dry" and states that wanted to allow alcohol throughout the state both supported the 21st Amendment. This enthusiasm was reflected in polling from around the time of the 21st Amendment. In 1932, 74 percent of respondents indicated they were for repeal of the 18th Amendment — and in fact, this percentage matches perfectly with the official vote on repeal in the 39 states that put prohibition up for a vote after the repeal of national prohibition. (1)

[1] http://www.1920-30.com/prohibition/repeal-prohibition.html

And there was no buyer's remorse for giving states the right to regulate alcohol as they wished. A poll from Gallup in December 1936 asked "If the question of national prohibition should come up again, would you vote to make the country dry?" Sixty-seven percent of respondents answered "no" to that question. (2) Contrast this to the recent experience in Colorado where stories of regret over their marijuana legalization efforts continue with nearly 50 percent of Coloradans still against legalization. (3)

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[2] Roper Center Public Opinion Archives. USGALLUP.DC2036.R01; See also: https://twitter.com/ropercenter/status/673192627345362944

[3] http://www.thedenverchannel.com/news/local-news/marijuana/50-percent-of-coloradans-disagree-with-decision-to-legalize-marijuana-poll-finds

Marijuana legalization in 2016 is a far more confusing polling question. The mixing of polling questions and separate issues related to medical marijuana, decriminalization of marijuana offenses and full scale marijuana legalization often create uncertainty with the polling related to legalization. For example, there is much broader support for the concept of marijuana as medicine than for the complete recreational legalization and commercialization of marijuana. The Gallup poll and other surveys have recently found that recreational marijuana legalization support floats between 49 and 58 percent, which is far less than the 75 percent national consensus that was achieved in 1933 to create America's system of alcohol regulation.

The Lack of a High Profile Opponent Turned Proponent

One of the remarkable features of the passage of the 18th Amendment and the subsequent movement for passage of the 21st Amendment to repeal Prohibition was the high profile role of leading industrialists and businessmen for both laws.

Leaders such as John D. Rockefeller, Jr. strongly pushed for alcohol prohibition. They were strong supporters of the Anti-Saloon league and Temperance movements. Whether it was for moral, temperance or business reasons, Rockefeller and other leading industrialists pushed the cause of prohibition. A sober workforce or a moral society motivated different leaders in the pre-18th Amendment cause. However, the role of Rockefeller, the richest man of his day, was unparalleled.

Rockefeller was a very high profile critic of alcohol and supported passage of prohibition. After the goal of national prohibition was achieved he eventually became deeply disturbed by the widespread civil disobedience and flouting of the law by society. He came to view the 18th Amendment as a mistake and his letter published on the front page of the New York Times on June 7, 1932 changing his position was a powerful turning point for the debate on the repeal of the 18th Amendment.

In modern times, to replicate Rockefeller's influence there would need to be someone as economically wealthy and powerful as Bill Gates or Warren Buffet. Imagine Gates or Buffet publically pushing for passage of prohibition, then publically disclaiming their previous support, supporting Repeal, and impartially funding a thoughtful public administration study to provide guidance to government bodies as they turn to regulating a formerly prohibited product.

Rockefeller did not end his involvement in the alcohol debate with a letter to the New York Times disclaiming his previous position. Rockefeller hired researchers and funded the seminal treatise on how to regulate a formerly banned product, Toward Liquor Control. The Center for Alcohol Policy has republished an unabridged version of this book to educate all about the lessons. In Toward Liquor Control, Rockefeller's researchers, Raymond Fosdick and Albert Scott, studied alcohol systems around the world and suggested different models for states and the federal government to consider as they approached creating systems to regulate alcohol. Concepts in use today such as state liquor stores, tied house laws and other regulation that provides for separation of the alcohol producers, wholesalers and retailers, education programs and retail licensing distinctions all flow from the work of this book. A similar unbiased treatise published by someone not invested in the marijuana industry is lacking at this point.

The Constitutional Amendment Process Is Designed To Forge Consensus

It is not common to amend the Constitution but the amendment process lays out a plan to ensure that all Americans at least have a voice in the system. The current marijuana state-by-state debate on the other hand does not. To amend the United States Constitution, an amendment starts in Congress and requires passage by a two-thirds vote. The President has no role. Neither does the judicial branch. After passing Congress, an amendment must be passed by three quarters of the states. This can be by ballot, state conventions or convening of state legislatures.

The 21st Amendment required the amendment to be ratified within seven years of its passage. It also specified that state conventions (not state legislatures) would be the method to ratify the amendment.

The 21st Amendment was introduced on December 6, 1932. It passed Congress on February 20, 1933. Michigan was the first state to ratify it on April 10, 1933. Many states quickly followed with passage. The Amendment was officially ratified when Utah ratified the amendment on December 5, 1933. Utah passed this Amendment not necessarily to legalize alcohol, but to ensure that they would be able to control alcohol regulation.

The problems of the 18th Amendment and National Prohibition were a top of mind political issue in the first third of the 20th Century. The alternating 50.1 percent forcing communities to take various "wet" or "dry" positions and oscillating back and forth created the first "single-issue" politics in this country. The 21st Amendment process made sure that the previous ping pong debate was firmly resolved with national consensus allowing each state to handle the issue the way the local population wanted without federal interference.

Protections of Constitutional Amendment

Section two of the 21st Amendment contains an important provision that has created the atmosphere for resolution of alcohol debates. (4)

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[4] The transportation or importation into any State, Territory, or possession of the United States for delivery or use therein of intoxicating liquors, in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby prohibited.

This provision has been used to help create fifty different state markets for alcohol in the United States. It has created a system where 17 states serve as the wholesaler and/or retailer for alcohol

and all 50 states have various refinements to how they license those that produce the alcohol, those that distribute it and those that retail it. The Twenty-first Amendment granted the States "virtually complete control over whether to permit importation or sale of liquor and how to structure the liquor distribution system." *Cal. Retail Liquor Dealers Ass'n v. Midcal Aluminum, Inc*., 445 U.S. 97,110 (1980).

Without a constitutional amendment for marijuana, states risk their regulatory structures being or declared invalid. For example, a state law banning alcohol would fit nicely into the protections of state rights of section two of the 21st Amendment. However a federal law would have no difficulty trumping and preempting all state laws on marijuana. Whether the federal government loosens or tightens marijuana regulation, there is nothing for states to protect their prerogatives that approaches the protections of the 21st Amendment.

The Lessons From the Wilson Act and the Webb-Kenyon Act

Some may feel a constitutional amendment is overkill and that federal legislation is sufficient to regulate. However, history again is our guide. Those seeking a true balance will realize the tentativeness of federal legislation to settle this controversial issue. The concerns of the federal government preempting a pro-marijuana state or frustrating the regulation of an anti-marijuana state is not a theoretical or alarmist concern. The very need for the 18th and then 21st Amendment grew out of this very concern.(5) Those states that wanted to remain "dry" or tightly regulate alcohol were frustrated by litigation and constitutional assertions against the states striking down their laws. Because alcohol moves in interstate commerce, constitutional protections attach to it. Congress passed the Wilson Act in 1890 as an attempt to provide protections for the states that sought to regulate alcohol. (6) However, court cases narrowed this law significantly. Congress again intervened with federal legislation with the Webb-Kenyon of 1913 to provide further protections from federal power. (7)

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[5] "One of the most important, as well as one of the most difficult problems in the disputed zone between the police powers of the commonwealths of the United States and Congressional authority over interstate commerce, is as to validity of legislation which attempts to restrict the importation into a state of shipments of intoxicating liquor." Rogers, Virginia Law Review, Vol 4. No. 3, (Dec 1916) p.174.

[6] 27 USC 121 All fermented, distilled, or other intoxicating liquors or liquids transported into any State or Territory or remaining therein for use, consumption, sale, or storage therein, shall upon arrival in such State or Territory be subject to the operation and effect of the laws of such State or Territory enacted in the exercise of its police powers, to the same extent and in the same manner as though such liquids or liquors had been produced in such State or Territory, and shall not be exempt therefrom by reason of being introduced therein in original packages or otherwise.

[7] 27 USC 122 The shipment or transportation, in any manner or by any means whatsoever, of any spirituous, vinous, malted, fermented, or other intoxicating liquor of any kind, from one State, Territory, or District of the United States, or place noncontiguous to but subject to the jurisdiction thereof, into any other State, Territory, or District of the United States, or place noncontiguous to but subject to the jurisdiction thereof, or from any foreign country into any State, Territory, or District of the United States, or place noncontiguous to but subject to the jurisdiction thereof, which said spirituous, vinous, malted, fermented, or other intoxicating liquor is intended, by any person interested therein, to be received, possessed, sold, or in any manner used, either in the original package or otherwise, in violation of any law of such State, Territory, or District of the United States, or place noncontiguous to but subject to the jurisdiction thereof, is prohibited.

Nevertheless, these federal statutes did not resolve the "ping-pong" debate of wet and dry across the country. Rather the passages of these federal laws and the subsequent erosions of these laws in court cases helped serve as motivation for those seeking stronger protection. Because of the

frustrations at the vitality of federal statutes to resolve this issue, the strongest protections were sought after- constitutional protection- in order to properly ensure the right to regulate alcohol. That is a theme for both passage of the 18th and 21st Amendment.

The Future: Full Embrace of Alcohol Regulation? Or Lip Service

The forces that seek to legalize "marijuana like alcohol" appear to be pursuing a catchy public relations slogan, but the substance behind their rhetoric is incomplete without a plan for a constitutional amendment that would allow for comprehensive and effective regulation and revenue collection by the States. (8) State laws allowing or prohibiting marijuana are both at risk without constitutional protections. The history of alcohol legislation prior to the 18th Amendment shows that federal legislation is a tenuous barrier for states against federal storms. Ironically, the pro-marijuana forces risk losing all they purport to gain in a few states without constitutional protection. These forces risk taking an unfortunate short-cut to a long-term, time-tested national consensus that the alcohol debate eventually achieved in order to pursue short term wins. This short term focus appears to be a repeat of the 18th Amendment strategy of the prohibitionists working their narrow constituency rather than the ultimate broad, winning 21st Amendment coalition which brought wet, dries and those in between into the debate. Without a constitutional amendment for marijuana, history likely will repeat itself with the marijuana debate bouncing back and forth like a metronome.

Paul Pisano, NBWA

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[8] The lack of pursuing a constitutional amendment raises obvious questions. Do these advocates truly want to regulate marijuana like alcohol? And why is alcohol regulation the default discussion on the marijuana debate? Should marijuana instead be regulated like tobacco? Or like prescription drugs? Or over-the-counter drugs? Do consumers drinking a beer or one glass of wine with dinner seek to get drunk? Does a person using marijuana not seek to get buzzed? These are all important policy decisions that do not lend itself well to debate limiting ballot initiatives but remain important issues for those interested in long-term workable policies and a framework for regulating marijuana.

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The Responsibility of American Citizenship

Constitution Day Lecture, Hampden-Sydney College, September 16, 2019
By Henrik F. Rasmussen

It is an honor and a privilege to be back at Hampden-Sydney. This campus is where I first landed as an immigrant to the United States 19 years ago, and I will always consider Hampden-Sydney a special home within this great country that I now call home.

During the past 19 years, I have had the privilege of living in three American states, all of which have relevance for my talk tonight. I have spent nine years here in Virginia, my favorite state and the home of so many American founders and statesmen. I lived for nine years in Springfield, Illinois, the home of Abraham Lincoln, who defended the ideas of the founders and assured, in his own words, "a new birth of freedom" in the United States. And I lived one year in Philadelphia where the Constitution was signed on September 17, 1787, which we mark here tonight and tomorrow on Constitution Day.

So while I was not born in the United States, I would like to think that my observations tonight are not simply academic but also rooted in specific places and communities that have their own deep connections to American history.

My subject tonight is "The Responsibility of American Citizenship." This subject is, of course, intimately connected to Hampden-Sydney's mission to "form good men and good citizens in an atmosphere of sound learning." After all, we cannot hope to become good citizens unless we think deeply and seriously about our responsibility as citizens. Patriotic fervor is useless and even dangerous if we use it to charge the wrong hill.

I can think of no better place to think deeply and seriously about our responsibility as citizens than right here at Hampden-Sydney. Walking on this campus, you are surrounded by American history, by the beautiful nature of Southside Virginia, and most importantly, by people who care deeply about America and about Southside. This is the kind of place where you can plant deep and strong roots as a young man. In turbulent times, which we will all face, those roots will give you strength and help you stay true.

Many of us here had the privilege of knowing General Sam Wilson, the former President of Hampden-Sydney. In the words of General Sam:

"Hampden-Sydney for me is family. It's where my roots are. And if you are aware of your roots, and if you derive strength and motivation from your roots, you try to keep close to them."
Now, let me turn to my topic tonight, "The Responsibility of American Citizenship."

On April 9, 2010, I had the privilege of taking the Oath of Allegiance to become an American citizen in the Old State Capitol of Springfield, Illinois, where Lincoln once sat as a state legislator and where he gave his famous House Divided Speech in 1858.

To help us define what our responsibility as Americans is today, I think it would be useful to look back and see how Lincoln defined his responsibility as an American.

Lincoln is a useful guide for at least three reasons:

First, Lincoln, came after the founding generation and therefore faced the same fundamental question that we do today. In his own words from July 4, 1861:

"Our popular government has often been called an experiment. Two points in it our people have already settled – the successful establishing and the successful administering of it. One still remains – its successful maintenance against a formidable internal attempt to overthrow it."

Lincoln was, of course, referring to the Declaration of Independence, which established the United States, the Constitution, which laid out how to administer the United States, and the Civil War, which tested the ability of the American people to maintain the Republic that they had inherited from the Founders.

When Benjamin Franklin left the Constitutional Convention in 1787, he was asked if the Founders had created a republic or a monarchy. His famous answer was: *"A republic, if you can keep it."*

Lincoln, like us, was charged with keeping the Republic, not with creating it.

Second, Lincoln faced a deep existential threat to the American Republic that forced him to act decisively and to sharpen his own understanding of his responsibility as an American. And he dealt with this threat successfully in a sublime example of statesmanship and wartime leadership. We could probably do worse than trying to learn a lesson or two from a battle-tested statesman like Lincoln.

Third, Lincoln left behind a treasure trove of speeches and letters explaining his thinking and his actions, which makes him an accessible teacher. Lincoln is like a professor here at Hampden-Sydney who invites you into his office for a deep discussion on the responsibility of American citizenship.

What does Lincoln, the teacher, have to tell us?

In April 1859, Lincoln, then a country lawyer in Springfield, wrote the following in a letter:

"All honor to Jefferson – to the man who, in the concrete pressure of a struggle for national independence by a single people, had the coolness, forecast, and capacity to introduce into a merely revolutionary document, an abstract truth, applicable to all men and all times, and so to embalm it there, that today, and in all coming days, it shall be a rebuke and a stumbling block to the very harbingers of reappearing tyranny and oppression."

Lincoln was, of course, referring to the Declaration of Independence where Thomas Jefferson stated the timeless and universal truths *"that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."*

For Jefferson and for Lincoln, America was an idea first and a country second. But building the country was absolutely necessary in order to advance and safeguard the idea. In fact, the country – America – was extra precious because it was a free country. Old-fashioned love of the land, which can be found anywhere in the world, became extra pronounced in America because Americans knew that the land was not simply a cultural and geographical unit but also the concrete expression of a universal principle of liberty.

In his eulogy on Henry Clay in 1852, Lincoln stated:

"He loved his country partly because it was his own country, but mostly because it was a free country; and he burned with a zeal for its advancement, prosperity and glory, because he saw in such, the advancement, prosperity and glory, of human liberty, human right and human nature. He desired the prosperity of his countrymen partly because they were his countrymen, but chiefly to show the world that freemen could be prosperous."

Clay's mission "to show the world that freemen could be prosperous" was also Lincoln's own mission. Let me quote from his most famous speech, the Gettysburg Address:

"It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us – that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion – that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain – that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom – and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

For Lincoln, the essence of patriotism was devotion to an America that could and should be the world's foremost embodiment of its own founding principles.

Lincoln gave his perhaps best interpretation of America's founding principles in a speech in Springfield on June 26, 1857. Allow me to quote this speech at length. Speaking of the authors of the Declaration of Independence, Lincoln said:

"I think the authors of that notable instrument intended to include all men, but they did not intend to declare all men equal in all respects. They did not mean to say all were equal in color, size, intellect, moral developments, or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness, in what respects they did consider all men created equal – equal in 'certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.' This they said, and this they meant.

They did not mean to assert the obvious untruth, that all were then actually enjoying that equality, nor yet, that they were about to confer it immediately upon them. In fact they had no power to confer such a boon. They meant simply to declare the right, so that the enforcement of it might follow as fast as circumstances should permit.

"They meant to set up a standard maxim for free society, which should be familiar to all, and revered by all; constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and even though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading and deepening its influence, and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people of all colors everywhere."

These days, when students and faculty members at American universities are busy covering up statues of Thomas Jefferson – as if he were somehow comparable to Lenin or Saddam Hussein – I think we would do well to observe the Great Emancipator's admiration and reverence for Jefferson. Lincoln knew that the Founders weren't perfect, but he did not let that fact prevent him from seeing the perfection in the Founders' vision.

Reverence for the Declaration of Independence was at the very core of Lincoln's opposition to slavery. Here is what he said of slavery in a speech in Peoria, Illinois, on October 16, 1854:

"It hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world – enables the enemies of free institutions, with plausibility, to taunt us as hypocrites – causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our

sincerity, and especially because it forces so many really good men amongst ourselves into an open war with the very fundamental principles of civil liberty – criticizing the Declaration of Independence, and insisting that there is no right principle of action but self-interest."

If Lincoln were alive today, I think he would be deeply disturbed by the pervasive cynicism about the Founders and, by extension, about the vision of the Founders. He would certainly be saddened to see the leading newspaper in the nation refer to 1619 and the introduction of slavery in the American colonies as our "true founding." Lincoln might even draw parallels between the cynicism of today and the cynicism of pro-slavery advocates such as John C. Calhoun who in 1848 called the core principle in the Declaration of Independence an "error." But this is a subject for another lecture at another time.

For now, suffice it to say that the first and most important lesson we can learn from Lincoln is this: If we want to keep our Republic, we must revere the Founders for the timeless ideals of individual dignity that they espoused and for their courage to take the first steps towards the fulfillment of those ideals. Or put more bluntly: Good citizens do not cover up statues of Thomas Jefferson.

The dangers of cynicism are especially pronounced in times of war and crisis when the Republic must muster all its strength to win. In the classroom, the consequences of cynicism amount to a few arrogant and angry students in a sea of disengaged students. On the battlefield, the consequences of cynicism appear in the deadly shape of a breakdown in morale and the snatching of defeat from the claws of victory. The American military withdrawals from South Vietnam in 1973 and from Iraq in 2011 come to mind as examples from recent history. The tragic history of those two wars is also a subject for another lecture at another time.

But let me just note this important fact. War, not peace, is the tragic normal state of human affairs. Just look at American history: The War of Independence, the Barbary Wars, the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War, the Opium Wars, the Civil War, countless Indian Wars, the Spanish-American War, the Philippine-American War, the Boxer Rebellion, the Border War with Mexico, World War I, the American engagement in the Russian Civil War, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, the Gulf War, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria.

Furthermore, waging war is the primary function of government for the simple reason that if the government does not wage war, it will quickly be defeated and put out of business by other governments, terrorists or criminal gangs willing to wage war. We enjoy peace and prosperity in today's America because of the willingness of our ancestors and our fellow citizens in uniform to wage war on our behalf far away from our shores.

America has always had a conflicted relationship with war – and rightly so. As a nation committed to the right of every individual to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, we should abhor war, which inherently destroys life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Yet we often need to wage war in order to prevent even greater destruction.

James Madison, another great Virginian, captured this tragic paradox of human life in Federalist

51 when he stated:

"What is government itself but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: You must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place, oblige it to control itself."

Madison has rightly been called the "Father of the Constitution," and one might regard the Constitution as the most sublime example in human history of balancing the need for a strong government with the need for a limited government.

Madison, of course, worked together with Alexander Hamilton in writing the series of essays that became known as the Federalist Papers, interpreting and explaining the Constitution and advocating for its ratification. They were the perfect team, at least at that point in history.

Somewhat oversimplified, one might say that Madison had a clear eye for the need to limit government through checks and balances due to the tendency of power to corrupt those who hold it while Hamilton understood the need for military strength and decisive government action in a dangerous world marked by tyranny and war.

The theoretical near-perfection of the Constitution did not make the Founders blind to the fact that the Constitution would ultimately have to be defended and upheld by real leaders in real time, most importantly by the commander-in-chief whose powers were laid out in Article II of the Constitution.

There simply is no escaping the need for a strong, dynamic, and decisive commander-in-chief in war, but you do not want that commander-in-chief to start behaving like an unaccountable monarch and tyrant who turns every imaginable problem in society into a war that requires the exercise of war powers. The Founders would likely be deeply disturbed by catchy modern phrases such as "the war on poverty" and the "war on drugs."

A strong but limited government should ideally be led by a strong but self-controlled President. Character matters in government officials, especially the President, and thankfully our first President was a man of sublime character. George Washington's decisions to twice give up supreme power voluntarily, first by resigning his commission after the Revolutionary War and second by stepping down as President after two terms, set an example for all future Presidents to follow. Washington was truly a good man and a good citizen.

Alexander Hamilton warned against future Presidents lacking in character. Please allow me to quote at length from a letter from Hamilton to Washington dated August 18, 1792:

"The truth unquestionably is, that the only path to a subversion of the republican system of the Country is, by flattering the prejudices of the people, and exciting their jealousies and apprehensions, to throw affairs into confusion, and bring on civil commotion. Tired at length of anarchy, or want of government, they may take shelter in the arms of monarchy for repose and

security."

[…]

"When a man unprincipled in private life, desperate in his fortune, bold in his temper, possessed of considerable talents, having the advantage of military habits – despotic in his ordinary demeanor – known to have scoffed in private at the principles of liberty – when such a man is seen to mount the hobby horse of popularity – to join in the cry of danger to liberty – to take every opportunity of embarrassing the General Government and bringing it under suspicion – to flatter and fall in with all the nonsense of the zealots of the day – It may justly be suspected that his object is to throw things into confusion that he may 'ride the storm and direct the whirlwind.'"

I would like to offer up Abraham Lincoln as the perfect anti-thesis to the kind of demagogue described by Hamilton. Like Washington, Lincoln combined strength with self-control. Given how passionately Lincoln opposed slavery and revered the Declaration of Independence, his approach to the Southern states was an exercise in supreme self-restraint and deep respect for the Constitution. Lincoln did not want a civil war. In a famous speech on March 6, 1860, he explained why he preferred a slow, deliberate and constitutional approach to the abolition of slavery in the South:

"If I saw a venomous snake crawling in the road, any man would say I might seize the nearest stick and kill it; but if I found a snake in bed with my children, that would be another question. I might hurt the children more than the snake, and it might bite them."

Lincoln also insisted that he would not be the one to fire the first shot in an armed conflict with the Southern states, even after they seceded from the Union.

But once the conflict did start, Lincoln pursued it decisively, even ruthlessly, to the point of complete victory. Unlike Washington, Lincoln did not have an impressive military resume when he entered high office. But he taught himself military affairs with the same energy that he had taught himself law as a young man.

In the words of historian T. Harry Williams: *"Lincoln stands out as a great war president, probably the greatest in our history, and a great natural strategist, a better one than any of his generals."*

Or the words of Union General William F. Smith: *"I have long held the opinion that at the close of the war Mr. Lincoln was the superior of his generals in his comprehension of the effect of strategic movements and the proper method of following up victories to their legitimate conclusions."*

The second lesson from Lincoln is that the President and the executive branch of government must combine military competence and strength with self-control and deep respect for the constitutional limits of power.

Article II of the Constitution specifies one role and one role only for the President: Commander-in-chief. Everything else was clearly secondary in the minds of the Founders.

I think we need to consider very seriously whether the growth in governmental departments and the size of government since 1787 is running contrary to the Federalist philosophy of a strong and limited government. A President who is distracted by too many minor issues cannot give adequate attention to the main presidential task: Serving as commander-in-chief. We risk focusing our attention on the wrong issues when we elect our Presidents. My favorite example is the question to Jeb Bush in a nationally televised debate in 2015 concerning the regulation of fantasy football.

In fact, I might take it one step further and argue that an over-intrusive government helps fertilize the ground for exactly the kind of demagogue that Hamilton warned us against. As the economist Friedrich Hayek explained in his book "The Road to Serfdom," published in 1944, the rise of Hitler was facilitated by the social democratic philosophy of the Weimar Republic. Central planning of the economy invariably leads to chaos, which leads to calls for a strong man who can clean house and make the trains run on time.

The last lesson I want to draw from Lincoln tonight is more personal for me and concerns the attitude of the United States towards the rest of the world, and particularly towards immigrants. As I mentioned earlier, reverence for the Declaration of Independence was at the core of Lincoln's notion of good American citizenship. Therefore, importantly, you did not have to be born in America to become an American patriot. Here is what Lincoln had to say about immigrants in a speech on July 4, 1858:

"When they look through that old Declaration of Independence they find that those old men say that 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal,' and then they feel that that moral sentiment taught in that day evidences their relation to those men, that it is the father of all moral principle in them, and that they have a right to claim it as though they were blood of the blood, and flesh of the flesh of the men who wrote that Declaration and so they are."

It is fitting that the first Homestead Act, which opened up millions of acres of federal land to immigrants as well as U.S. citizens willing to cultivate the land, was signed into law by Abraham Lincoln in 1862.

As usual, Lincoln was in lockstep with the Founders. Thomas Jefferson famously advocated for a vast "Empire of Liberty" and followed through on his principles by completing the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. James Madison argued in Federalist 10 that a large republic would be better than a small republic because the larger number of citizens would result in so many competing interests that no small-minded faction could gain a permanent upper hand. And Hamilton was, of course, himself an immigrant.

Immigration supports the ideals of both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Immigrants are living proof that all men are created equal and that you can come from anywhere and make it in America. As the inscription on the Statue of Liberty declares:

"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

And immigrants strengthen constitutional federalism in at least two ways:

First, they help make the republic larger.

Second, as a highly mobile labor force, they tend to settle in states with sound policies, thus amplifying healthy competition between the states.

Harnessed in the right way, immigrants can also be a tremendous force for American diplomacy, trade, and personal and charitable engagement around the world, which I am sure is what the Founders would have wanted. Despite their frequent disagreements regarding tariffs – which was just as much tax policy as trade policy in the days before the income tax – the Founders and Lincoln were in broad agreement that America would benefit from vibrant cultural, diplomatic and commercial interaction with the rest of the world.

The Founders did not envision a Fortress America that would close off its borders and refuse to play its part on the world stage. Neither did General Sam. Here is one of my favorite quotes from a TV interview with General Sam in 1999:

"It is an American characteristic, when there is a flood somewhere, an earthquake somewhere, somebody is in difficulty, who in the world is the first to respond? The American."

Let me sum up the essential lessons in civic responsibility that I have tried to illustrate through the examples of Lincoln and the Founders:

First, we must study and honor the Founders and base our political debates on a thorough understanding of the timeless vision of liberty laid out in the Declaration of Independence. We must reject all cynicism and, like Henry Clay, love our country, partly because it is our own country, but mostly because it is a free country.

Second, we must take the Federalist philosophy of a strong but limited government seriously. This means giving national defense, wartime leadership, and presidential character the public attention that these issues deserve while rolling back all the less important activities of the federal government that take up scarce space in the public square.

Third, we must follow Jefferson's and Lincoln's vision of an America that embraces the world, draws strength from the world and provides leadership for the world through diplomacy, trade, and immigration.

The charge for those who end up serving in leadership positions in politics, defense, or

diplomacy is clear. But we have to realize that every single one of us has a responsibility as citizens to influence politics, defense and diplomacy in the right direction.

Even if we do not run for office ourselves, we have a responsibility to demand that our political candidates take America's founding principles seriously and give these principles the place of honor in all political rhetoric.

Even if we do not serve in uniform ourselves, we have a responsibility to educate ourselves about military matters, to put national defense at the top of the public debate, to support the troops, and to demand military competence, strength and self-control from the President.

Even if we do not become diplomats ourselves, we have a responsibility to engage the world by welcoming immigrants, engaging foreign trade partners, and representing our country well while traveling abroad.

I would submit to you that Hampden-Sydney College is ideally and perhaps uniquely suited to help us meet these responsibilities.

First, the college is deeply connected to the Founders. We should be especially proud of James Madison's intimate connection to Hampden-Sydney College. Not only was Madison one of the original trustees of the college; he was also deeply influenced by the teachings of John Witherspoon, the only clergyman to sign the Declaration of the Independence and the father-in-law and teacher of Samuel Stanhope Smith, the founding president of Hampden-Sydney.

An immigrant from Scotland, Witherspoon became the president of the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University, in 1768. Witherspoon presided over the graduation of a future U.S. President, a Vice President, a Secretary of State, 49 U.S. Representatives and 28 U.S. Senators. His college rightly became known as "the school of statesmen" – perhaps an example for Hampden-Sydney to emulate today.

Second, Hampden-Sydney's emphasis on rhetoric lends itself to the kind of moral leadership that is necessary to restore America's founding principles to the forefront of our political debates. Incidentally, John Witherspoon has rightly been credited with developing a theory and practice of rhetoric in line with what one author has referred to as "the Ciceronian ideal of the good man speaking well on civic issues in public forums." This is also a subject for another lecture at another time!

Third, Hampden-Sydney's robust ROTC program and the Wilson Center give students unique opportunities to study military matters and interact with current and former members of the armed forces.

Fourth, Hampden-Sydney's strong economics and science programs give students the necessary insights into the kind of dynamic business leadership and technology development that ultimately underpin military power.

Fifth, Hampden-Sydney's fine arts and languages programs give students the ability to engage

the world and understand it. One of General Sam's mentors was General Edward Lansdale, a pioneer in counter-insurgency from the 1940s to the 1970s. Lansdale had a fondness for folk music as a way to understand and engage local cultures, which illustrates the value of being well-rounded in the liberal arts when you engage in diplomacy. Perhaps the fine arts department at Hampden-Sydney should consider a collaborative project with the Wilson Center and the new archive of General Sam's papers. Just a thought.

Did I forget any academic departments?

That's right, I did leave out philosophy and religion, which, of course, represent the constructive dialogue between reason and faith that Witherspoon encouraged as president of the College of New Jersey, as the convener of the First General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and as the most important transmitter of the ideas of the Scottish Enlightenment to America. Perhaps also a subject for another lecture at another time.

As I started by saying, there really is no better place to think deeply about our responsibility as American citizens than right here at Hampden-Sydney College.

Thank you very much.

###

Cause for optimism about America's future

Op-Ed, July 18, 2010
By Henrik F. Rasmussen

I am a new citizen of the United States. In the months preceding my naturalization ceremony, many people asked me, half-seriously, half-jokingly, "Are you sure you want to do this?"

They were alluding, of course, to the dire forecasts of impending American decline. Commentators speak of imperial overstretch, government overspending and a broken political culture. Allusions to the final days of the Roman Empire are commonplace.

My answer was "Absolutely. I am sure." And I am in good company, too.

In 2008, a record 1,046,539 new citizens took the naturalization oath.

Evidently, not everyone buys into the gloom and doom.

Optimism is an imperative for the immigrant. After all, it is never easy to start from scratch in a new country. When I came to the United States as a student almost 10 years ago, I took a big chance. I only knew a handful of Americans. I had to take out significant loans to pay for tuition, and there was no clear or guaranteed career path ahead of me. Yet I vividly remember how free and confident I felt. I was defining myself in a new country full of opportunities.

The immigrant's sense of rebirth and adventure has always been at the heart of the American experience. America is a country of people on the move and on a mission. Many native-born Americans are "immigrants" in a sense, having moved from another part of the country to start a new life.

America was deliberately designed to be vast, dynamic and mobile.

James Madison, in Federalist No. 10, argued that a large republic is better than a small one because the larger number of citizens results in so many competing interests that no small-minded faction can ever gain a permanent upper hand. Abraham Lincoln resented parochial stasis and fought to preserve a vibrant Union with opportunities for the kind of self-driven upward mobility that he had experienced.

It may be fashionable to speak of decline these days, but it will take a lot more than our current problems to wreck a republic as strongly rooted in the ideas of Lincoln and Madison as the United States remains today.

American dynamism strengthens the fabric of society rather than weakening it. Breathing room for the individual fosters good citizenship and strong communities. Alexis de Tocqueville noted the difference between the vibrant associations in the young American republic and the near absence of public spiritedness created by the repressive old regime in France.

Even today, the social democracies of Europe struggle to integrate young and restless immigrants while communities all over America welcome newcomers. In much of the world, ethnic and religious differences remain a recipe for violence, yet citizens of all races and religions live together in peace in modern day America. The difference is individual opportunity.

One of the first things I noticed when I arrived in this country was how often Americans use the word "leadership." In America, anyone can aspire to be a leader. American society actively encourages and celebrates leadership at every level in business, public service and voluntary associations.

The United States is unique in this cultivation of individual leadership. Raw leadership material exists in every nation, but most other countries tend to suppress aspiring leaders instead of developing them. Totalitarian regimes are the most obvious examples, but even many democracies are marred by cultural traits that discourage leadership. Take, for instance, the "tall poppy syndrome" in many English-speaking countries or the "Jante Law" in Scandinavia — social rules telling you to stay in your place and not stick your head up too far.

No wonder America continues to attract ambitious people from all over the world. Millions of people — both native-born and new arrivals — have their hopes and dreams invested in America. We will not let this country decline.

An immigrant from Denmark, Henrik F. Rasmussen became a U.S. citizen on April 9. He lives in Springfield and is an international public affairs consultant.