

A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty of Alfred University

Inspiring Freedom: Works by The Philosophers Who
Influenced The American Revolution

by
Noah T. Howard

In Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirement for
The Alfred University Honors Program

December 6, 2021

Under the Supervision of:

Chair:

Dr. Emrys Westacott

Committee Members:

Dr. Allen Grove

Dr. Melissa Ryan

Introduction

As a patriotic citizen and as an English major soon to be pursuing a law degree, I looked for a thesis project that would encompass several aspects of my personality. Eventually, I found a rewarding combination of my greatest interests in deciding to create and edit an anthology that is related to my passions. This is not the first anthology I've created, though. I have already published another anthology, entitled *Defining Freedom: Works by America's Founding Fathers*, thanks to a publishing class offered by Alfred University, and instructed by Dr. Allen Grove. In this first anthology, I include specific, yet diverse works by Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, James Madison, John Jay, Thomas Paine, Alexander Hamilton, Benjamin Franklin, and George Washington. These works were placed alongside one another with the intention of reminding ourselves of the ideas, beliefs, desires, and visions that the Founding Fathers held for the new nation that they were in the process of creating. I wanted to draw attention to the differences between the vision that they had and the reality in which we live.

Now, for my thesis, I've created a second anthology for a slightly different purpose: I wanted to dig even deeper into the beliefs of the Fathers in order to highlight the values and visions that they held for our nation, but I also wanted to show the origin of these ideas, rather than just the embodiment of them. I realized that, rather than just looking back and seeing the face-value of what the Fathers believed, it's important to look deeper and understand *exactly what* they believed, *where* they obtained these ideas, and, most importantly, *why* they believed what they did. This will enable us to obtain a stronger sense of the philosophies of our nation and, therefore, help us ensure that our citizens, government, and policies of both, will not only be reminiscent of our founding ideals, but also remain so in the future. Additionally, we can be

more confident that, as we make changes to our nation's policies, they will not only highlight our original ideas, but even expand upon them.

In order to accomplish this goal, I have compiled several excerpts from writings by the philosophers that had the most impact on the thinking of the Founding Fathers. The works I have chosen are as follows: *Leviathan* by Thomas Hobbes, *Second Treatise of Government* by John Locke, *Spirit of the Laws* by Charles Montesquieu, and *The Social Contract* by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Additionally, I have also included several objections and replies to Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws*, as well as part of Rousseau's "Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men." Each of these philosophers, especially in these specific works, had a major impact when it comes to the principles that the Founding Fathers used to create the United States.

I try to remain cognizant of the environment in which I find myself, whether it's my immediate environment or a larger, more general one, such as society as a whole. In pondering my surroundings, I've realized that our nation's identity has become one that accentuates and encourages the polarization of its citizenry. It has become common for my fellow Americans to look upon one another through the lens of politics, which often highlights only the outermost layers, rather than through an appreciation of each other's differences. One of the worst consequences of the way this polarization has permeated American society is that it not only commands the direction of our politics, but it also bleeds into our domestic lives.

I am disheartened by this lack of understanding that so heavily pervades each facet of contemporary American society. While it is true that we are more likely to support someone who shares similar beliefs to ourselves, it is foolish to believe that each individual's support for a person is intrinsically linked to the entirety of that person's values. If it's not bad enough that our

domestic sphere is being ravaged by this polarity, the state of our politics is ever-languishing and declining into frailty and infighting. This is what prompted me to choose the topic of both of my anthologies and I realized that it was important to fully understand the ideas of the Founding Fathers on a deeper level, which is what led me to create this second anthology. It's important to note, though, that the Founding Fathers did not always agree with everything that one said. There are countless examples of them bickering amongst themselves and slandering each other through writings under pseudonyms. What is especially important to realize is that, even though the Fathers didn't always agree (and even vehemently opposed one another at times), they were able to make compromises and decisions when it counted. Instead of using their differences in backgrounds and ideas as a justification for excluding each other's policies, they utilized them in a way that allowed them to bring different perceptions into each discussion. In the end, they found a middle ground that was more beneficial for the country and its citizens than any of their thoughts would have been alone.

For the process of creating the anthology, I first researched and pondered what philosophers were most influential to the Founding Fathers. I, obviously, found that the four greatest influencers were Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Charles Montesquieu, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. I then found which of their works were the most influential and I selected those to be included. I looked online for pdf versions of the works that I decided to include and, when I located them, I looked through the works and selected specific sections that highlighted the ideas of the authors and gave the best summary of what the writings were actually about. After I made my selections, I pasted them into Google Docs and edited them. Once this was complete, I placed the edited selections into an InDesign document and spent a lot of time properly formatting them. After I placed the works into InDesign, I went through and actually created the

layout for the entire book, including a table of contents, the space for my introduction, the writings, and a further reading section. I also went online and located, and then edited, some pictures of the philosophers to include in their respective chapters. Once I had my works selected and I had a pretty good grasp of what ideas they contained, I was able to move onto writing the introductory essay to my anthology. In it, I discussed the reasons for creating the book, followed by a section for each philosopher that gave a summary of the included works, and then detailed their impact on the Founding Fathers, including the specific contributions that the authors made to the Founding Fathers ideas and, ultimately, the United States. The essay, of course, underwent many rounds of revision. Once it was completed, I put it in its rightful place in the anthology and I moved onto designing the cover in another InDesign document. Once the cover was complete, I was finally finished with my second publication.

The process of writing anything involves substantial intellectual effort as well as time. Going through and revising every minute detail, making sure that they're as close to perfect as possible, can be incredibly challenging. Ensuring that every idea is conveyed fully and accurately is also difficult to do. When it comes time to push all of that to the next level and create something that's worthy of being published, everything becomes much harder. Second-guessing becomes second nature. I realize that I'm harshly critical of myself, constantly looking for a second, third, even fourth pair of eyes to look over my writing and point out as many flaws as possible. The tricky part about writing, though, is that there is no right answer. Oftentimes, there isn't even a *better* answer. Yet, you can still find yourself feeling like your writing just isn't cutting it. I've found that to be the case, especially with writing and editing something with as many layers as an anthology. I think that was the hardest part for me during this process. I'm able to read convoluted writings and extrapolate deeper meanings. I can take

these meanings and put them into ideas and discussions. Yet, when it comes time to refine my work, I feel as though I can never do that enough. It's not necessarily a bad thing, but it does become challenging when you have to eventually come to a close and, ultimately, publish something.

However, the process itself is incredibly humbling and results in much learning. In writing, I often learn a lot about my writing and myself and, the more I revise, the more I learn. In addition to being humbling, creating an anthology is also rewarding. Further than rewarding me with skills and a wider vocabulary, writing instills in me a sense of pride that can only be obtained through diligence. There are times that I may falter throughout a lengthy process, but I can always lean on my teachers and professors from the past and present that have granted me the necessary tools to be successful. When I feel as though my toolbelt has run out, I can always rely on one of them to help me find another item to add to my collection.

Some of the most important high school teachers for me were my English teacher, Justin Pawlak, and my U.S. History teacher, Heather Schantz. They instilled in me an undying interest in writing and history, but most importantly, they taught me to love learning. When it comes to my college professors, I have a few that immediately come to mind. First of all, Dr. Allen Grove has taught me an immense amount about the conventions of the English language, as well as how to bring my writing to a higher level. Dr. Juliana Gray is another professor whom I've taken several classes with. From Dr. Gray, I've learned a lot about analytical thinking and how to form stronger sentences that carry deeper meaning. Dr. Susan Mayberry taught me how to *relate* to the works I'm reading and to actually *care* about the characters and ideas that I'm learning about. Dr. Emrys Westacott taught me how to think outside the box, as a philosopher, and look at anything through an incredibly generalized view, or an extraordinarily specific lens. Dr. Desmond Wallace

and Dr. Melissa Ryan reminded me about my passion for history and obsession with how it relates to today's world. Finally, Coach Robert Rankl taught me that it's important that you "don't trade what you want *most* for what you want most *right now*." I could spend an eternity thanking every individual person that contributed to my success as a student, a friend, a son, a brother, and any other role that I find myself in, but I try to show them in daily life how thankful I am for their help, teachings, and words of encouragement.

In reflecting on this process, and also on my academic career as a whole, I'm humbled that I've been able to accomplish many of the things I have. It's all thanks to the people who have helped me along the way. They've encouraged me to take more calculated risks and not beat myself up too much. With respect to this specific journey of creating this anthology (in addition to the related one before), I'm incredibly grateful that I've been granted an opportunity to publicly voice my beliefs and show where they come from. I've been given a great gift that allows me to take an early initiative in trying to help better my country as a whole. That's the real reason that I wanted to create both anthologies, but specifically my thesis. In my thesis, I wrote a longer introduction in which I was able to express exactly how I felt about the state of my nation and what I thought could be done to help address that. I will be forever grateful to Alfred University and the staff members that have helped refine my career path and skillset. I hope that the reader finds this thesis as interesting, informative, and rewarding as I have and I hope that it can spark, at least, a small patriotic flame which will give rise to a wildfire of emotion and belief in this country's future.



We The People live in a declining state of our nation, which is losing its identity, uniqueness, and sense of duty. We fail to embrace our differences as Americans and, instead of focusing on what makes us united, we focus on what divorces our citizenry from itself. This division ravages both our political and domestic lives. Included in this anthology are excerpts from works by Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Charles Montesquieu, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. These philosophers heavily influenced the ideas and beliefs of the Founding Fathers. It is crucial to not only comprehend what the Founding Fathers envisioned for the United States, but also to understand where they acquired these views, as well as why they maintained them.



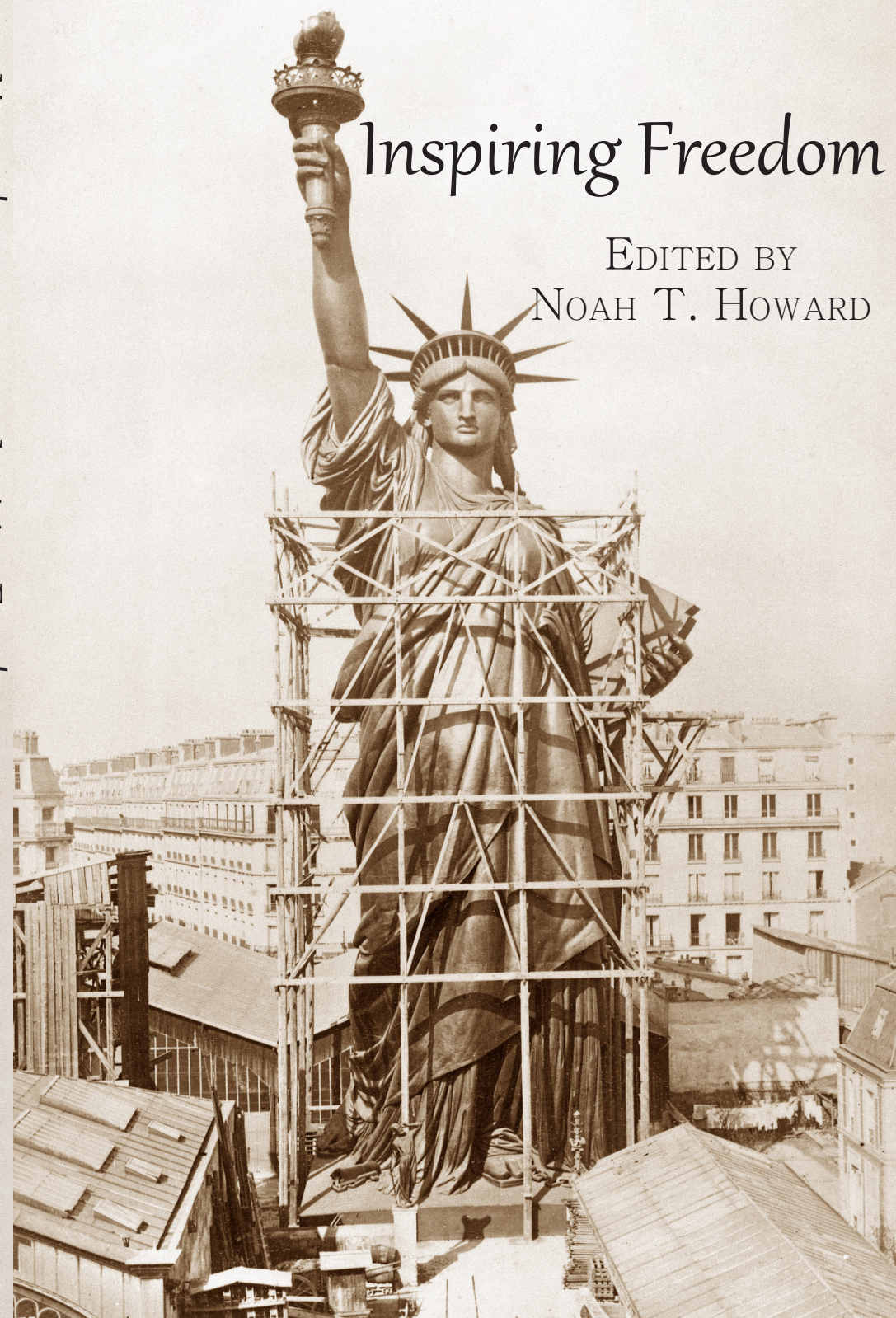
Whitlock Publishing
Alfred, NY

Howard

Inspiring Freedom

Inspiring Freedom

EDITED BY
NOAH T. HOWARD



5.50 x 8.50
216 mm x 140 mm

.610
15.49mm

5.50 x 8.50
216 mm x 140 mm

Content Type: Black & White
Paper Type: Creme
Page Count: 270
File Type: InDesign
Request ID: CSS3554459



INSPIRING FREEDOM

WORKS BY
THE PHILOSOPHERS WHO INFLUENCED
THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Edited with an introduction by
Noah T. Howard

WHITLOCK PUBLISHING
Alfred, New York

First Whitlock Publishing edition 2021

Whitlock Publishing

Alfred, New York

<http://www.whitlockpublishing.com>

Editorial Matter © Noah T. Howard

ISBN: 978-1-943115-48-8

This book was set in Adobe Garamond Pro on 50# acid-free paper
that meets ANSI standards for archival quality.

For my family; for my teachers, past and present;
for my countrymen; and for my country.

A NOTE ON THE TEXT

In editing these texts, I elected to keep them in the condition they were in when I discovered them. That is, I have essentially made no edits, save for formatting. All spellings, abbreviations, etc. are true to their original nature, so as to preserve the true words of the authors. Additionally, I have chosen to include the entirety of each selected section or chapter so that all of the context might be maintained. All texts were taken from either the Online Library of Liberty (OLL) or Project Gutenberg. All images were taken from the public domain sites of Flickr or Wikimedia Commons.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	ix
THOMAS HOBBS (1588-1679)	1
Excerpts from <i>Leviathan</i>	3
JOHN LOCKE (1632-1704)	45
Excerpts from <i>Second Treatise of Government</i>	47
CHARLES MONTESQUIEU (1689-1755)	115
Excerpts from <i>The Spirit of the Laws</i>	117
Some Objections and Replies to <i>The Spirit of the Laws</i>	149
JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU (1712-1778)	169
Excerpts from <i>The Social Contract</i>	171
Excerpts From “A Dissertation on The Origin and Foundation of The Inequality of Mankind”	193
FURTHER READING	229